

Rays of
The Harmonist

Gaudiya Vedanta Publications

Mauni Amāvasyā 2011



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Dedicated to

Ācārya keśarī nityā-līlā praviṣṭa
om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata śrī

Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Founder-Ācārya
of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti

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

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FOUNDER-ĀCĀRYA
and founder of *Rays of The Harmonist*
nityā-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata śrī
Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

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We would like to sincerely thank all those devotees who have kindly made a financial contribution toward the publication of this Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā memorial edition of *Rays of The Harmonist*.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSES

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

EDITORIAL

EVERY YEAR, ON THE MOST AUSPICIOUS OCCASION of the appearance day of *śrī śrī gurupāda-padma*, the Gaudīyas celebrate *śrī vyāsa-pūjā mahā-mahotsava*.

Almost one month has passed since Śrī Gurudeva manifested his disappearance pastime. Upon seeing that Kṛṣṇatna Prabhu¹ has called back his eternal, intimate associate – who is a jewel that illuminates this entire universe – the genuine servants of that associate who are left behind are feeling intense pangs of separation from him and are passing their time with great difficulty. On the other hand, some, taking shelter of opportunism, are trying to establish their own prominence. Instead of following the transcendental instructions of Śrī Gurudeva, they illegally imitate him and instead compete with each other. Therefore, seeing our pitiable condition, Śrila Gurudeva mercifully manifested his most auspicious appearance day very shortly after his disappearance pastime, thus giving us another opportunity to remember his transcendental instructions and teachings, which are the very purpose of his appearance in this world.

By appearing on Maunī Amāvasyā, the dark moon day of the coldest month, the month of Māgha, he, like the sun, dispelled the darkness of ignorance and the coldness of inertia. His appearance had a specific purpose: to widely impart to the entire world the truth about the inner reasons for the advent of Śrī Gaurasundara, the most compassionate incarnation of Bhagavān, as revealed in the verse *anarpita-carīṁ cirāt karuṇayāvatīrṇaḥ kalau*. Consequently, his appearance day is not just to be held in high esteem by us alone; it is adorable for the whole world. By preaching service to Śrī Gaura-Kṛṣṇa's name (*nāma*), Śrī Gaura-Kṛṣṇa's holy abode (*dhāma*) and Śrī Gaura-Kṛṣṇa's desire (*kāma*), he has, by his personal example, fully exhibited the compassion of *śrī guru* – a genuine representative of Śrī Vyāsadeva.

Seeing that some persons were devoid of *gurutva* – the immovable gravity which exemplifies the position of a genuine *guru* – were inappropriately attempting to take the sacred position of *guru*, thus creating chaos in the devotees' hearts and causing people in general to lose faith, Śrila Gurudeva mercifully accepted the pastime of an *ācārya*. In this role, he shone like a beacon, heralding the true legacy of the *rūpānuga* line, thus standing firm, in full opposition to their deviation.

There are a great deal of so-called *gurus* who steal the wealth of their disciples, whereas a *guru* who has the capacity to purify one's heart and make one affluent with the wealth of *kṛṣṇa-prema* is extremely rare in this world. Fortunately, we somehow attained the opportunity to come to the lotus feet of such an extremely rare *guru*.

By his mercy, we learned that the *svarūpa-lakṣaṇa*, or intrinsic characteristic, of a real *guru* manifests only in a *mahā-bhāgavata*, for such a *mahā-bhāgavata* is constantly engaged in service to Kṛṣṇa and has completely conquered the urges of speech, mind, anger, tongue, belly and genitals. He alone is eligible to bestow *mantra* and the *mahā-mantra*, for he alone has a completely pure heart, saturated with *prema* and illuminated with the very nature of *mantra* (*mantra-svarūpa*) and *nāma* (*nāma-svarūpa*). If a person has neither attained *mantra-siddhi* nor realized the non-difference between the holy name and the possessor of the name (*nāma* and *nāmī*) then his efforts to bestow *mantras* are nothing but hypocrisy.

¹ A title given by Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda to Śrī Śrimad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, which means 'a radiant jewel among disciples because of transcendental deeds'. It also means 'he whose every act and accomplishment is a jewel'.

We also learned from him that to engage in preaching (*pracāra*) of the order of one's *guru* is one's *bhajana*, but such *bhajana* is only executed through proper conduct (*ācāra*). By neglecting the instructions of the scriptures in regard to one's eligibility (*adhibkāra*), one's conduct (*ācāra*) is not maintained and consequently, one's only destiny will be to fall down.



O Gurudeva! By constantly making us understand the intrinsic nature of *uttamā-bhakti*, which is free from all extrinsic desires (*anyabhilāṣa*) and uneclipsed by the pursuit of knowledge or reward seeking endeavours, you have given us the clue as to how one can immerse oneself in the ocean of the nectar of *bhakti-rasa* (*bhakti-rasāṁṛta-sindhu*). By illuminating the treasure chest of Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana and the other *gosvāmīs* – in other words, by publishing and thus revealing to the world the very nature of their sacred writings – you have granted eternal auspiciousness to the residents of the world.

By your example, you have taught us how to sing the glories of the special contribution of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, who is *priya-svarūpa* (the most dear to Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī), *dayita-svarūpa* (the most dear to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu) and *prema-svarūpa* (the very form of Mahāprabhu's ecstatic love). In your proclamation of these glories, your heart becomes overwhelmed with *prema* and you sing the verse of Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, “*ādadānas tṛṇām dantair idam yāce punah punaḥ śrīmad rūpa-padāmbhoja dhūliḥ syām janma-janmani* – Taking a straw between my teeth, I beg again and again to become the dust of the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda, birth after birth.”

O Gurudeva, you always directed our vision and aspirations towards the unprecedented teachings of Śrī Śrī Rūpa Raghunātha and instructed us to preach those teachings throughout the world. But today, in your physical absence, the Gauḍīya sky has become bleak and overcast, and in deep sadness, all are speechless. Who now will affectionately impart sweet instructions and firm reprimands? Who will care for us and nourish us with the same *vātsalya* you had for us, and give us wretched souls the eligibility to serve pure Vaiṣṇavas and Bhagavān?

We do not qualify to touch even one drop of the ocean of your glories. Still, only by *kīrtana*, by proclaiming your glories, will remembrance of you remain awake within us. At the same time, “*ekāki āmāra, nāhi pāya bala, harināma-saṅkīrtane* – alone I have no strength to perform *harināma-saṅkīrtana*.” If those of us who have taken shelter of your lotus feet do not remain united, we will not have the strength to engage in *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana* and *kṛṣṇa-sevā*, and consequently we will become lost. If by accepting the consideration, “*guru sevaka haya mānya āpanāra* – the servant of śrī guru is to be revered by me,” we mutually respect and honour each other without duplicity, only then can we fulfil the *mano'bhista* of śrī guru and the *guru-paramparā*.



So that we may always remain steeped in the supremely auspicious, sweet remembrance of that Gauḍīya *ācārya* who, like a sun, illuminates and purifies the entire world; and so that his memories remain forever in our hearts, thus driving away all inauspiciousness and awarding our eternal welfare by awakening our service moods toward Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga Rādhā-Vinoda Bihārijī; we humbly submit this attempt at broadcasting his transcendental glories in this special *śrī vyāsa-pūjā* edition of *Rays of The Harmonist*.

*Jaya Śrīla Gurudeva – nitya-lilā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara śata
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja ki! jaya!*

[The spirit of this editorial is adapted from
Gauḍīya, Year 2, Issue 3]

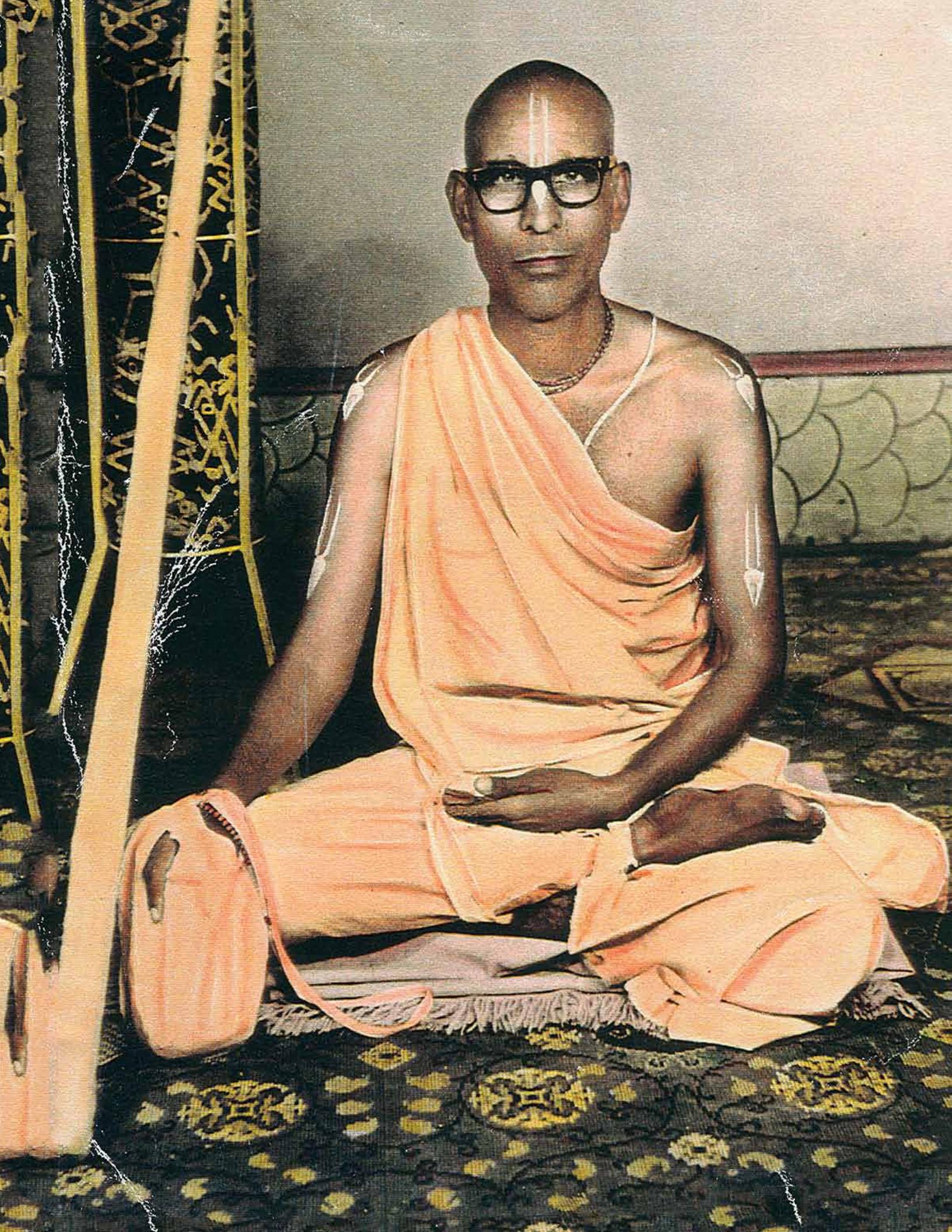
A GLIMPSE OF THE LIFE OF

nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

On February 16, 1921, the new moon day of the month of Māgha, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja took his divine birth in a highly educated and respected *brāhmaṇa* family in the village of Tiwāripura, in the Buxar district of Bihar, India. He was given the name Śrīman Nārāyaṇa. His parents were devout Vaiṣṇavas of the Śrī *sampradāya*, and from the time he was a small baby, Śrīman Nārāyaṇa was regularly taken by his father to recitations of the *Rāmāyaṇa*, which he grew to love.

In February, 1946, he met his *gurudeva*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and his life of complete and exemplary dedication to the path of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* began. Upon receiving *barināma* and *dikṣā* initiation from his *gurudeva*, he received the name ‘Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa’. He accompanied his *gurudeva* on his extensive preaching tours throughout India, rendering him personal service and also actively assisting him in preaching. This included regularly hosting the thousands of



pilgrims attending the yearly *Navadvīpa-dhāma parikramā* and *Vraja-maṇḍala parikramā*, which, years later, would draw thousands of devotees from the world over.

Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa was known for his respectful and affectionate dealings with all Vaiṣṇavas, in particular with his two Godbrothers, Śrī Sajjana-sevaka Brahmacārī and Śrī Rādhānātha dāsa. These three stalwart Vaiṣṇavas of the highest calibre assumed responsibility for their *gurudeva*'s mission in a mood of harmony and cooperation that would last the duration of their lives. In 1952, all three were given *sannyāsa*, and Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa became Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.¹ In his early *maṭha* life, he met Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, the world famous preacher of Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavism. In the future, he would render superlative service to Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja by nurturing the tender seeds of *bhakti* in the hearts of so many of his dear disciples and followers around the globe.



In 1954 Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja was given responsibility for Śrī Keśavajī Gaudīya Maṭha in Mathurā. Under him, the *maṭha* flourished, as the local residents of Vraja came to experience the consummate care of one who is truly an eternal resident of Vraja. His *gurudeva* had instructed him to translate the writings of prominent Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas into Hindi, a task he assiduously assumed throughout his entire life and which resulted in the publication of nearly fifty Hindi texts. These invaluable masterpieces are currently being translated into the major languages of the world.

Since his heart brimmed with the most profound realizations of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, which automatically include all *tattva-siddhānta*, it was radiant with the deepest affection. Those who heard his *harikathā* felt supreme protection from the onslaught of material miseries and experienced a deeper commitment to the path of *bhakti*. When he uttered the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* at the time of initiation, it bore the same effect. He was famous throughout Vraja-maṇḍala and the entire world for how he transformed people's hearts in these ways.

For many years, he travelled throughout India to spread the message of Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavism. In the mid 1980's, the first Western devotees came to receive his guidance, and in 1996, at their repeated request, he went to Europe

and America. During the next fourteen years, he circled the globe more than thirty times. Whether he was in India or abroad, his preaching always bore the distinctive characteristic of boldly unmasking any misconception obscuring the specific purposes of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's advent, in strict adherence with the desire of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda² and in perfect congruence with the conceptions of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Thus, in upholding the glorious tenets of the *sampradāya*, he performed the function of a true *ācārya*.



A most endearing hallmark of his preaching was the heart-stealing affection he showed to all. As an *uttama-bhāgavata*, he entered the deepest recesses of the heart to give the unmistakable reassurance that he is one's eternal well-wisher. The depth of his affection is a tangible reality for all who have experienced it, and this in itself bears subjective testimony to the fact that he was a true emissary of the Supreme Lord. As thousands of devotees will affirm, his genuine interest in the spiritual well-being of all souls was evident in his equal love and affection for all. He cared not if a person were his disciple, the disciple of another, or of another philosophical school altogether. His divine affection knew no bounds.



At the age of ninety years, on December 29, 2010, at 3.00 am, at Cakra Tīrtha, Śrī Jagannātha Puri-dhāma, he concluded his pastimes in this world. That day was the sacred appearance day of his beloved Godbrother, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Maharaja. The following day, in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, Śrī Gaurasundara's fully empowered emissary, the very embodiment of His unique compassion, was given *saṁādhi*. He will never cease to reside in his divine instructions and in the hearts of those who are devoted to him. He used to say, "Do not think that I will ever leave you – never, ever. I am always with you."

In a mood of insignificance and longing for his mercy, we fall at his lotus feet and pray that he bless our attempts to always be able to render him some service. We humbly offer this *Vyāsa-pūjā* memorial edition unto him.

1 Śrī Sajjana-sevaka Brahmacārī and Śrī Rādhānātha dāsa were given the names Śrī Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrī Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja, respectively.

2 Refer to "Raising the Divine Temple of the Bhāgavat", page 21



*samsāra-dāvānala-līdha-loka-
trāṇāya kāruṇya-ghanāghanatvam
prāptasya kalyāṇa-guṇārṇavasya
vande guroḥ śrī caraṇāravindam (1)*

samsāra – material existence; *dāva* – forest; *anala* – fire; *līdha* – afflicted, devoured; *loka* – people; *trāṇāya* – to deliver; *kāruṇya* – of mercy; *ghanāghana* (*ghana-aghana*) condensation and liquefaction, the quality of a cloud; *tvam* – you; *prāptasya* – who has obtained; *kalyāṇa* – auspicious; *guna* – qualities; *arṇavasya* – of an ocean; *vande* – worship; *guroḥ* – of my gurudeva; *śrī* – graceful and auspicious; *caraṇa-aravindam* – the lotus feet.

Just as a cloud extinguishes a blazing forest fire by showering it with rain, so *śrī gurudeva*, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities, manifests like a condensed cloud

which showers the rain of his divine mercy and delivers the living beings scorched by the fire of material existence. I adore the lotus feet of that *śrī gurudeva*, which are the abode of grace and auspiciousness.



*mahāprabhoḥ kīrtana-nṛtya-gīta-
vāditra-mādyan-manaso rasena
romañca-kampāśru-taraṅga-bhājō
vande guroḥ śrī caraṇāravindam (2)*

mahāprabhoḥ – of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; *kīrtana* – chanting; *nṛtya* – dancing; *gīta* – singing; *vāditra* – playing musical instruments; *mādyat* – intoxicated, maddened; *manasab* – whose mind; *rasena* – due to the mellows of pure devotion; *roma-añca* – standing of the hair; *kampa* – quivering of the body; *āśru-taraṅga* – torrents,

Guruāstakam

By Śrīla Viśvanātha
Cakravartī Ṭhākura



Dancing, singing and playing musical instruments in *saṅkīrtana*, śrī gurudeva is perpetually intoxicated as he relishes the divine love of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in his heart. In this state, he sometimes exhibits ecstatic symptoms and his hairs stand on end, he shivers, and torrents of tears flow from his eyes. I adore the lotus feet of that śrī gurudeva, which are the abode of grace and auspiciousness.



**śrī-vigrahārādhana-nitya-nānā-
śringāra-tan-mandira-mārjanādau
yuktasya bhaktāṁś ca niyuñjato 'pi
vande guroḥ śrī caraṇāravindam (3)**

waves of tears; *bhājaḥ* – who experiences; *vande* – worship; *guroḥ* – of my gurudeva; *śrī* – graceful and auspicious; *caraṇāravindam* – the lotus feet.

śrī-vigraha – the *arcā-murti* (deities); *ārādhana* – the worship; *nitya* – daily; *nānā* – various; *śringāra* – attire and ornaments; *tat* – of the Supreme Lord; *mandira* – the temple; *mārjana-ādau* – in the cleaning and other services; *yuktasya* – who is himself engaged; *bhaktāṁś* – his *anugata* devotees (disciples); *ca* – and; *niyuñjataḥ* –



who engages; *api* – also; *vande* – worship; *guroḥ* – of my *gurudeva*; *śrī* – graceful and auspicious; *carāṇa-aravindam* – the lotus feet.

Śrī gurudeva himself always worships and serves *śrī vigraha*, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, by dressing Them in varieties of exquisite raiments and ornaments that stimulate Their meetings (*śringāra-rasa*), by cleansing the temple and by serving Them in so many ways. He also engages his *anugata* assistants – his disciples – in these services. I adore the lotus feet of that *śrī gurudeva*, which are the abode of grace and auspiciousness.



**catur-vidha-śrī-bhagavat-prasāda-
svād-anna-trptān hari-bhakta-saṅghān
kṛtvāiva trptim bhajataḥ sadaiva
vande guroḥ śrī caraṇāravindam (4)**

catuḥ – four; *vidha* – kinds; *śrī* – sacred; *bhagavat-prasāda* – divine mercy of Śrī Bhagavān in the form of His food remnants; *svādu* – palatable; *anna* – food grains; *trptān* – spiritually satisfied; *hari* – Kṛṣṇa; *bhakta-saṅghān* – the multitude of devotees; *kṛtvā* – having made; *eva* – thus; *trptim* – satisfaction; *bhajataḥ* – who

experiences; *sadā* – always; *eva* – certainly; *vande* – worship; *guroḥ* – of my *gurudeva*; *śrī* – graceful and auspicious; *carāṇa-aravindam* – the lotus feet.

Śrī gurudeva becomes satisfied by satiating Śrī Kṛṣṇa's devotees with delicious *mahāprasāda* that is of four kinds: that which is chewed, sucked, licked and drunk. (In other words, by *śrī gurudeva* having his disciples accept *prasāda* in a mood of service, their material life is destroyed, and the bliss of divine love awakens within their hearts.) I adore the lotus feet of that *śrī gurudeva*, which are the abode of grace and auspiciousness.



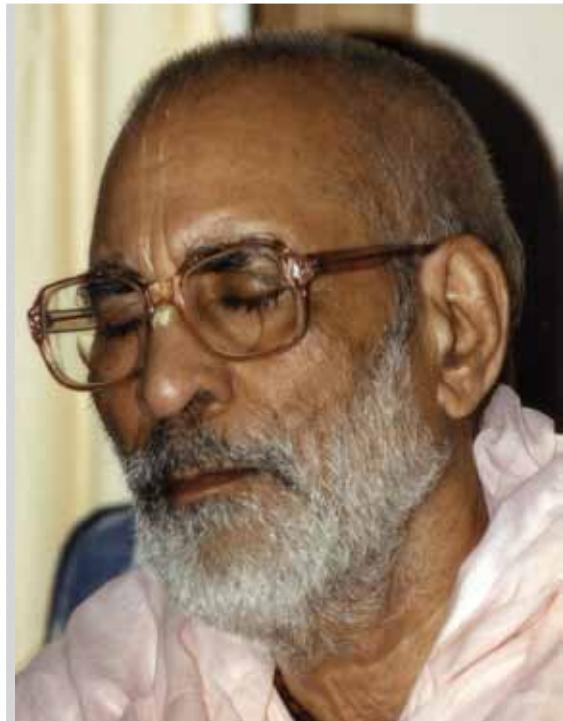
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**śrī-rādhikā-mādhavayor apāra-
mādhurya-līlā-guṇa-rūpa-nāmnām
prati-kṣaṇāsvādana-lolupasya
vande guroḥ śrī caranāravindam (5)**

śrī-rādhikā – Śrīmatī Rādhikā; *mādhavayoh* – of Śrī Mādhava (Kṛṣṇa); *apāra* – unlimited; *mādhurya* – sweetness of; *līlā* – pastimes; *guṇa* – qualities; *rūpa* – forms; *nāmnām* – of the holy names; *prati-kṣaṇa* – at every moment; *āsvādana* – relishing; *lolupasya* – transcendently greedy; *vande* – worship; *guroḥ* – of my gurudeva; *śrī* – graceful and auspicious; *carana-aravindam* – the lotus feet.

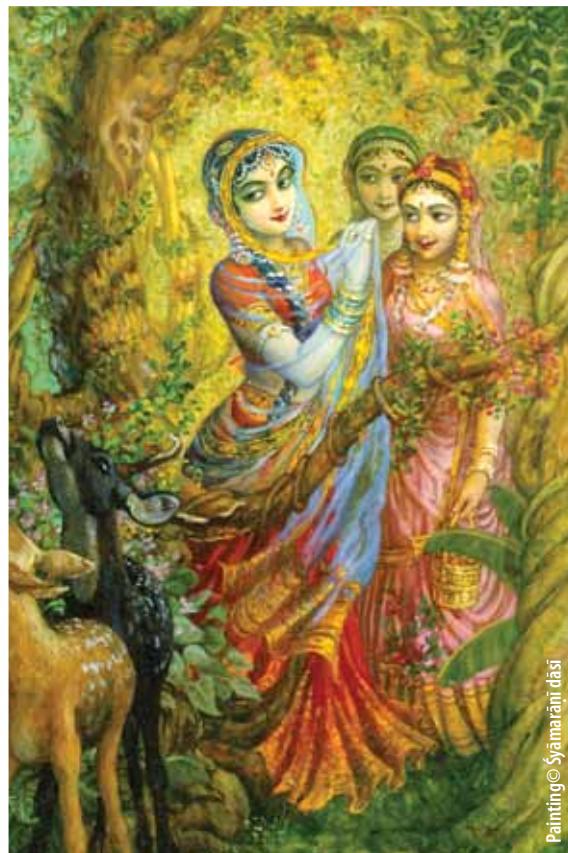
At every moment, *śrī gurudeva* is experiencing intense greed in his heart to taste the unlimited sweetness of the holy names, forms, qualities and pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava in Vṛndāvana. I adore the lotus feet of that *śrī gurudeva*, which are the abode of grace and auspiciousness.



**nikuñja-yūno rati-keli-siddhyai
yā yālibhir yuktir apekṣanīyā
tatrāti-dākṣyād ati-vallabhasya
vande guroḥ śrī caranāravindam (6)**

nikuñja-yūnab – the Divine Couple’s pastime groves and bowers in Vṛndāvana; *rati* – amorous love; *keli* – pastimes; *siddhyai* – for the perfection; *yā yā* – whatever; *ālibhib* – by the *sakhīs*, or young, female companions; *yuktib* – arrangements; *apekṣanīyā* – desirable; *tatra* – in that connection; *ati-dākṣyāt* – because of being very expert; *ati-vallabhasya* – who is very dear (to Them); *vande* – worship; *guroḥ* – of my gurudeva; *śrī* – graceful and auspicious; *carana-aravindam* – the lotus feet.

Śrī gurudeva is expert in executing the arrangements made by the *sakhīs* for the perfection of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s amorous pastimes within the groves of Vṛndāvana, and thus he is very dear to the Divine Couple. I adore the lotus feet of that *śrī gurudeva*, which are the abode of grace and auspiciousness.



Painting© Syamarani dasi



**yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto’pi
dhyāyan stuvaṁs tasya yaśas tri-sandhyam
vande guroḥ śrī caranāravindam (8)**

yasya – of whom (*śrī guru*); *prasādāt* – by the grace; *bhagavat* – Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord; *prasādaḥ* – the mercy; *yasya* – of whom; *aprāsādāt* – without the grace; *na* – not; *gatiḥ* – means of spiritual progress; *kutah api* – anywhere; *dhyāyan* – meditating upon; *stuvaṁ* – praising; *tasya* – of him (*śrī guru*); *yaśah* – the glory; *tri-sandhyam* – three times a day (the transitional periods of sunrise, noon and sunset); *vande* – worship; *guroḥ* – of my *gurudeva*; *śrī* – graceful and auspicious; *carana-aravindam* – lotus feet.

Solely by the mercy of *śrī gurudeva* one can receive the mercy of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, for without *śrī gurudeva*'s being pleased, one cannot make any advancement. Meditating on and singing his glories three times a day (in the transitional periods of sunrise, noon and sunset), I adore the lotus feet of that *śrī gurudeva*, which are the abode of grace and auspiciousness.

**sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvyata eva sadbhīḥ
kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī caranāravindam (7)**

sākṣāt – directly; *hari-tvena* – with the quality of Supreme Lord Śrī Hari; *samasta* – all; *śāstraḥ* – by scriptures; *uktah* – acknowledged; *tathā* – thus; *bhāvyate* – is considered; *eva* – also; *sadbhīḥ* – by great saintly persons; *kintu* – however; *prabhoḥ* – to the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari; *yaḥ* – who; *priyah* – dear; *eva* – certainly; *tasya* – of him (*śrī guru*); *vande* – worship; *guroḥ* – of my *gurudeva*; *śrī* – graceful and auspicious; *carana-aravindam* – the lotus feet.

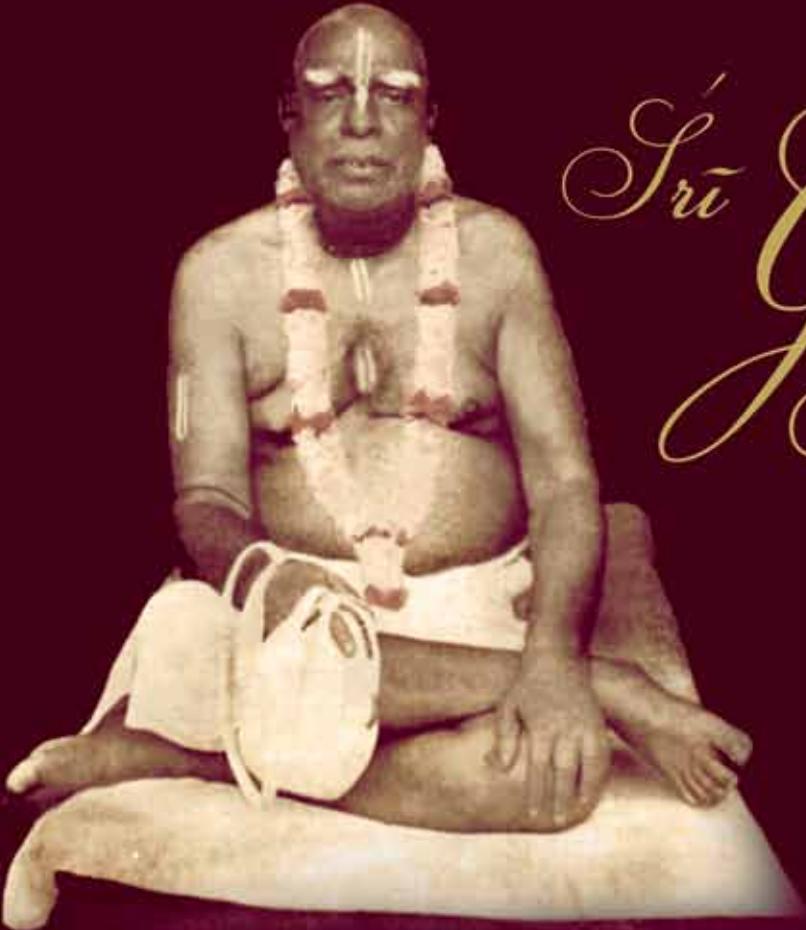
All scriptures proclaim *śrī gurudeva* to be *sākṣāt-hari*, non-different from the Lord, and this is acknowledged by all saintly persons. Yet this is because *śrī gurudeva* is so extremely dear to the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari, being His most confidential servitor (*acintya-bhedābheda-prakāśa-vigraha*, the inconceivable manifestation who is one with and different from the Lord). I adore the lotus feet of that *śrī gurudeva*, which are the abode of grace and auspiciousness.

**śrīmad-guror-aṣṭakam etad uccair
brāhma muhūrte paṭhati prayatnāt
yas tena vṛndāvana-nātha-sākṣāt-
sevaiva labhyā januṣo’nta eva (9)**

śrimat – adorned with grace and auspiciousness; *guroḥ* – of *śrī guru*; *aṣṭakam* – a glorification consisting of eight hymns; *etad* – this; *uccaiḥ* – loudly; *brāhma muhūrta* – in the transcendental time (one hour thirty-six minutes before sunrise); *paṭhati* – recites; *prayatnāt* – with great care; *yaḥ* – whoever; *tena* – him; *vṛndāvana-nātha* – the Lord of Vṛndāvana; *sākṣāt* – direct; *sevā* – loving service; *eva* – certainly; *labhyā* – attains; *januḥ* – life; *anta* – at the end; *eva* – certainly.

That person who, during the transcendental time of *brāhma-muhūrta*, loudly and attentively recites this *aṣṭakam* of *śrī gurudeva* is sure to achieve direct service to the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the very life and soul of Vṛndāvana, at the end of his life [that is, upon attaining *vastu-siddhi*, one's pure spiritual form].





Śrī Guru-bhakti

By Śrila Saccidānanda
Bhaktivedanta Ṭhākura

Śraddhā – the Key to True Happiness

The *jīva* who is blinded by the delusion of *māyā* and bound in the widespread network of material existence wanders here and there. Having been captivated by the hope for happiness, he searches for happiness in knowledge, intelligence, wealth, honour, etc., but by no means can he make himself happy. In this way, the *jīva* passes many lives. As a result of accruing great spiritual merit over many births, faith in *bhajana* is transmitted into the *jīva*'s heart. His only chance of attaining true happiness is in *bhajana*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Svayam Bhagavān, and the *jīvas* are His eternal servants. Śraddhā is the very strong and determined faith that by performing *bhakti* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, all sufferings are dispelled, and one becomes situated in *kṛṣṇa-dāsyā*, one's constitutional position as a servant of Kṛṣṇa. With this faith, the *jīva* soon takes the shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide *guru* and attains all types of perfection, solely by the virtue of śrī *guru*'s grace.

The Real Friend of the *Jīva*

The boundlessly merciful Vaiṣnavas are the supreme friends of the fallen *jīvas* in this world. Knowing the *jīvas* to be averse to Kṛṣṇa, the Vaiṣnavas instruct them on *bhakti-tattva*, the fundamental principles of pure devotion. When faith develops in this, the *jīva* takes shelter of the lotus feet of a Vaiṣṇava, who now instructs him on *bhagavat-bhajana*. Then, when the disciple exhibits suitable qualification, having developed single-mindedness and expertise in *bhajana*, śrī *guru* bestows his mercy upon him by granting the power to behold the storehouse of transcendence, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Such is the endless mercy of the Vaiṣṇava.

As śrī *guru*, the Vaiṣṇava blesses the extremely fallen and insignificant *jīva* – who is filled with hundreds of *anarthas*, tormented by *māyā* in various ways, and completely drowning in the ocean of material existence – with a place at his feet. He accepts responsibility for the *jīva*'s life, which is presently devoid of *bhajana*. Inspiring him with the example

of his own supremely pure character and strong *bhajana*, *śrī guru* captivates the heart of the *jīva* and transmits potency into it. The disciple imbibes this strength and gradually moves forward along the path of *bhajana*. Indeed, the mercy of such a *guru* is boundless, endless and wonderful, and for this reason Narottama Thākura Mahāśaya has written:

*śrī guru karuṇā-sindhu, adhama janāra bandhu,
lokanātha lokera jīvana
hā hā prabhu kara doyā, deho more pada-chāyā,
ebe jaśa gbuṣuka tribhuvana*

Śrī gurudeva is the ocean of mercy and the greatest friend of the most fallen. As the refuge of the whole world, he is the life and soul of everyone. Alas, O master, be merciful, and give me the shade of your lotus feet. By doing so now, your fame [as the greatest friend of the fallen] shall be spread all over the three worlds.

*cakṣu-dāna dilā jei, janme janme prabhu sei,
divya-jñāna hṛde prakaśito
prema-bhakti jāhā hoite, avidyā vināśa jāte,
vede gāya jahāra carito*

He who gives me the gift of transcendental vision and enlightens my heart with divine knowledge is my master, birth after birth. *Prema-bhakti*, divine loving devotion, by which ignorance is destroyed, emanates from him. His character is eulogized by the Vedas.

The Mantra Guru and the Instructing Guru are Intrinsically the Same

Śrī guru can be distinguished according to his function as either *dīkṣā-guru* or *śikṣā-guru*. *Dīkṣā-guru* is he from whom the *mantra* is obtained, and *śikṣā-guru* is he from whom *bhajana-śikṣā*, instruction on how to progress along the devotional path, is received. A disciple should show equal respect to both, and he should understand that both are the manifestation of Kṛṣṇa's *śakti*, or potency. If he maintains the attitude that they are different, he will be an offender.

In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi-lilā* 1.44, 45, 47) it is said:

*yadyapi āmāra guru—caitanyera dāsa
tathāpi jāniye āmi tānbāra prakāśa*

Even though I am aware that my *gurudeva* is the devoted servant of Śrī Caitanya, I am also conscious that he is a complete manifestation (*prakāśa*) of the Supreme Lord (Śrī Caitanya).

*guru-krṣṇa-rūpa bana śāstrera pramāṇe
guru-rūpe krṣṇa kṛpā karena bhakta-gaṇe*

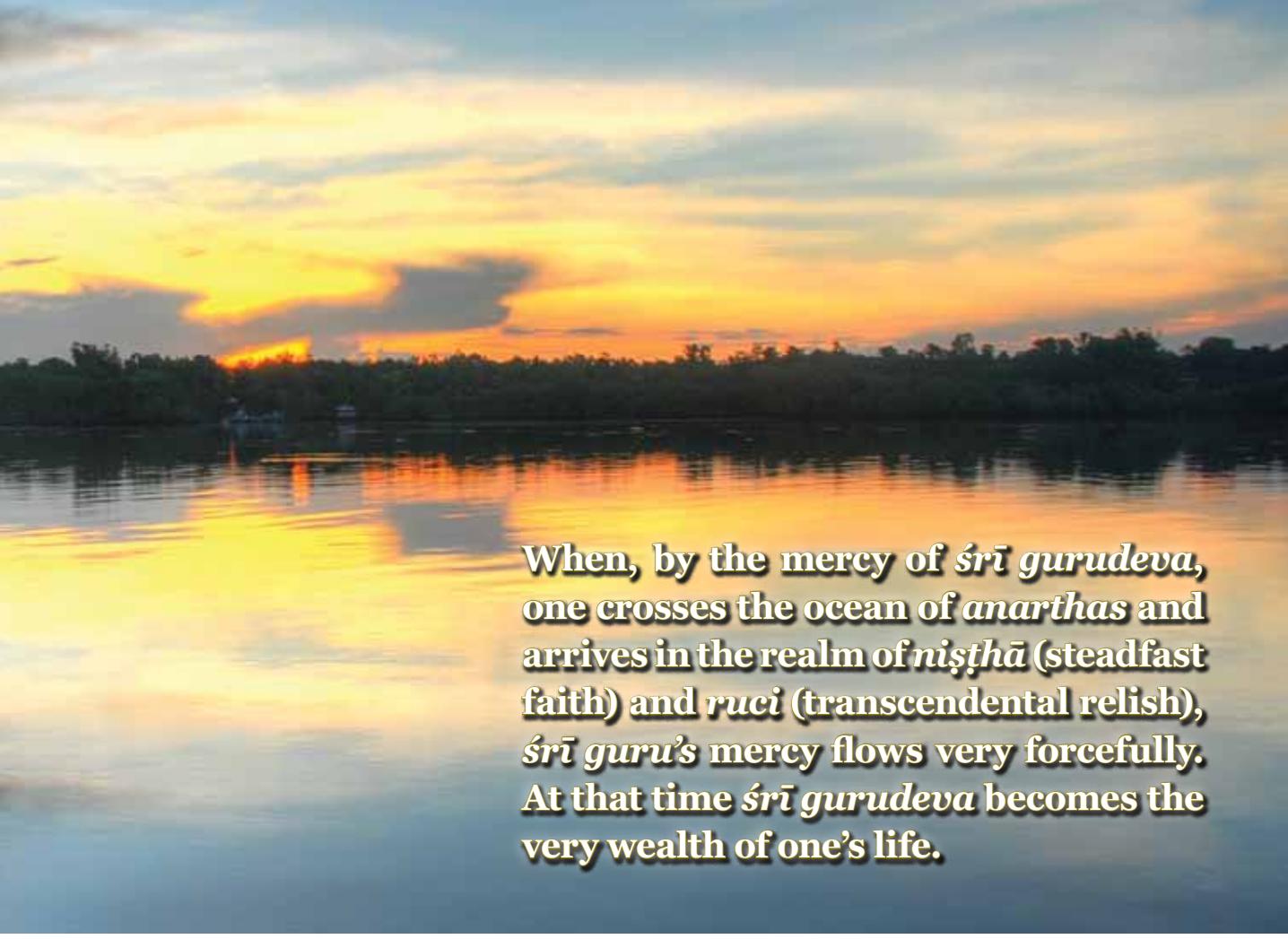


Authentic evidence from the entirety of revealed scriptures declares *śrī guru* to be identical with Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Indeed, Śrī Kṛṣṇa comes in the form of *śrī guru* to shower mercy upon His devotees.

*sikṣā-guruke ta' jāni krṣṇera svarūpa
antaryāmī, bhakta-śreṣṭha—ei dui rūpa*

Know that the *śikṣā-guru*, or the instructing spiritual master, is in fact the *svarūpa*, or intrinsic nature, of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who manifests Himself as the indwelling witness and as the topmost of *bhaktas*.

It is offensive to consider *gurudeva* as the Supreme Personality of Godhead directly. Indeed, such a thought leads to the conception that the *jīva* and Īśvara are one, which is the philosophy of the *māyāvādīs*. But if one performs *bhakti* with the understanding that *śrī guru* is the special manifestation of Śrī Bhagavān, in other words, that he is His *śakti*, then there will be no fault. “Śrī Bhagavān, who is the embodiment of *prema*, has manifested as *śrī gurudeva* and given me initiation.” Blessed is that disciple who remains fixed in this understanding. Such a disciple then nurtures firm faith in the words of *śrī guru* and develops unshakeable devotion to him.



When, by the mercy of *śrī gurudeva*, one crosses the ocean of *anarthas* and arrives in the realm of *niṣṭhā* (steadfast faith) and *ruci* (transcendental relish), *śrī guru*'s mercy flows very forcefully. At that time *śrī gurudeva* becomes the very wealth of one's life.

The Qualification to Develop a Guru-Disciple Relationship

Those *jīvas* who possess faith should take shelter of a bona fide *guru*, with great care and determination. Vaiṣṇava ācārya Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī compiled information from various *śāstras* and delineated the symptoms of *śrī guru* and the symptoms of a disciple in his book, *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*. The purport of these words from *śāstra* is that one whose powerful character stems from *bhakti*, who is a topmost pure devotee (*viśuddha-bhakta*) and who is the best among the *bhagavatas* (exalted devotees) is alone the *guru* of the *jīvas*. And that disciple who is free from sin, pure-hearted and submissive is alone fit to receive instruction. If this guidance is disregarded, it is most certain that *anarthas* will appear on the pathway of one's devotion.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu has said in His own words, “*yei kṛṣṇa-tattva-vettā sei ‘guru’ haya* – he who is enlightened in the science of Kṛṣṇa is *guru*,” and “*guru yatha bhakti-sūnya tathā śiṣya-gaṇa* – when the *guru* is without *bhakti*, his disciples will also be like that.” In all respects, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's words always hold true. Of this there is not the slightest doubt.

It is said in the *śāstra* that the *guru* will examine the disciple for a considerable amount of time, and the disciple will also

observe the character of the *guru*. In this manner, after they apprehend each other's purity, they establish a relationship. The *guru*-disciple relationship is not ephemeral, lasting only a few days; it continues to exist even after this life. If, for various reasons, the disciple cannot properly accept the shelter of a bona fide *guru*, despite having searched for such a *guru* with great care, he will not be able to maintain unflinching devotion to him. Consequently, he becomes deviated from the path toward the supreme goal, due to the fault of neglect. If the *guru* is unfit, the disciple, having abandoned him, should accept a bona fide *guru*. And if the disciple is fallen and *śrī guru* is unable to reform him, *śrī guru* can give him up.

Guru-kṛpa, the Real Fortune

It is appropriate for the disciple to follow with determined faith whatever instruction is given to him by *śrī gurudeva*. If the disciple fails to do so and instead, due to the fault of having unnecessary hankерings, accepts instructions from various other people, he will not be capable of doing *bhajana*. If it appears that *śrī guru* has given an order contrary to *śāstra*, then, with a simple heart, the disciple should openly express his doubts before *śrī guru*'s lotus feet, so that he will be able to reconcile his understandings with the words of *śāstra*. But that disciple who does not carry out the direction of *śrī*

gurudeva with particular attention and determination cannot attain his mercy by any means.

Simply by his desire, that *gurudeva* who is the topmost of *bhagavatas* (exalted devotees) can transmit potency to the heart of the disciple and thus make him a topmost *bhagavata*. Naturally, though, the inclination to instil that potency in an unfit disciple does not arise in *śrī gurudeva*. That disciple who, with great vigilance, carries out the instructions of *śrī guru*, soon becomes qualified to receive real fortune: the mercy of his *gurudeva* (*guru-krpa*). Only then can he realize the true meaning of *guru-krpa*.

Self-Satisfaction is Achieved by Serving Guru with Natural Affection

As long as *anarthas* remain in the disciple's practice of *bhajana*, he should continue to move forward on the path of *bhajana* as instructed by *śrī gurudeva*, by prudently following the laws and prohibitions of *śāstra*. When, by the mercy of *śrī gurudeva*, one crosses the ocean of *anarthas* and arrives in the realm of *niṣṭhā* (steadfast faith) and *ruci* (transcendental relish), *śrī guru*'s mercy flows very forcefully. At that time *śrī gurudeva* becomes the very wealth of one's life. *Mamatā*, possessiveness, for one's *gurudeva* appears in the heart of the disciple, and gradually, one's attachment to *bhajana* increases. Consequently, as *mamatā* ripens and expands, an unprecedented service mood towards *gurudeva* unfolds, and with great care and attention, the disciple fully offers his life at his lotus feet.

While the disciple's natural affection for *gurudeva* has not arisen, it is imperative that he dedicate himself to *śrī gurudeva*'s service. In this way, he will obtain his mercy. To meticulously obey *śrī gurudeva*'s every order is his principal *sevā*. There are many people who do not exhibit any determination to follow the instructions of *śrī gurudeva*, although they are seen to be quite busy in some way or another, trying to massage his feet or fan him. If these services are performed with a natural, inborn affection, much benefit is derived. But if, while doing them, the disciple carries some insincerity within his heart that manifests as the hope that he will become dear to *śrī gurudeva* by that particular service, he will receive no benefit at all, for it is not possible to endear oneself to *gurudeva* in that way. Rather, by carrying out the orders of *gurudeva*, great satisfaction is conferred upon the disciple. Certainly, though, it is not inappropriate to massage his feet or fan him, and the result of such service is that strength develops to follow his instructions with determination, which is the sole means to obtain his real mercy. Ultimately, self-satisfaction is only achieved when one performs such service with natural affection. ☺

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*M*y *śrī gurupāda-padma* is not a teacher of any of the illusory subjects of this world, which are aimed only at enjoyment. Yet, at the same time, he alone is the indisputable genius in every subject in this world. Sadly, because I am deprived and fallen, because of my own weaknesses, not all of my *gurupāda-padma*'s teachings have entered my heart.

But in order to speak all the teachings that, by my *gurupāda-padma*'s mercy, have somehow entered through the pathways of my ears, may I possess millions upon millions of tongues, millions upon millions of heads and millions upon millions of years to live. Then I will sing about the unparalleled compassion and benevolence (*amandodaya-dayā*) of my *gurupāda-padma* throughout the unlimited universes with millions and millions of tongues and millions and millions of heads for millions and millions of years. Only then will I have truly performed *guru-pūjā*. Only then will he be pleased with me and shower his perpetual blessings upon me so that I can sing the glory of his matchless compassion with another million tongues. On that day I will finally be liberated from singing about fleeting illusory matters. On that day I will be released from the captivity of all the mundane teachings of this world.

Rūpānuga Guru

Considering my favourite worldly topics to be very important and valuable, I accept them deeply into my

Śrī Gaura-Kiśora

— The Deity of Ideal Renunciation

Excerpts from a glorification of
Śrīla Gaura-Kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja
on his disappearance day

heart. Thus I remain madly infatuated with the unconscious world. However, my *gurudeva* has repeatedly instructed,

*śrī-caitanya-mano-'bhīṣṭair sthāpitarin yena bhū-tale
svayam rūpah kadā mahyam dadāti sva-padāntikam*

When will such a master as Śrī Rūpa, who has propagated and established the deepest desire of Śrī Caitanyadeva's heart throughout the world, personally give me the shelter of his own lotus feet?

When will I behold Śrī Gurupāda-padma's extraordinary transcendental beauty and take shelter single-mindedly at his beautiful feet? When will such a day be mine?

I have heard from Śrī Gurupāda-padma that those who adopt this mentality are *rūpānuga* and are therefore very dear to Śrī Gaurasundara. And as for those who even endeavour to become *rūpānuga*, Śrī Brahmā himself could not finish extolling their good fortune, even if he spent his entire life trying.

Śrī Gurupāda-padma has eradicated all my doubts and instructed me on the matter of *nāma-bhajana*. Through this I came to know that one should not disobey *guru* — that is, one should not disobey *śrauta-vāṇī*, the divine message, which descends through the succession of bona fide *gurus*. Nor should one regard *guru-bruva*, or so-called *gurus*, as worshipful, and thereby disrespect *śrī gurupāda-padma*. One should know that without taking refuge of the non-dual Absolute Truth, Vrajendra-nandana, there is no auspiciousness for the living entity.



Give Up Everything and Stay with Me

“My *gurudeva*!” I am audacious to say “my *gurudeva*.” Is my heart so qualified that I can utter this? How exalted are even the toenails of my *guru*, and where am I, a dwarf on the lowest platform? How can I even serve Gurupāda-padma? While I sleep, I am robbed of Gurupāda-padma’s service. At that time I remain deeply immersed in selfish pleasure, and I spend the rest of my time feeding and dressing myself. Being bereft of service to Gurupāda-padma, I am unqualified, fallen and weak. Therefore, had he not profusely showered me with his compassion, I would have even more aggressively exploited the very nature of his mercy than I was doing already. My *gurupāda-padma* is the ocean of mercy, and even one drop of his mercy can drown me in an ocean of bliss.

How merciful was he that he used to say to me, “Your scholarship, your purity and your aristocracy – give it all up and come stay with me. You will not have to go anywhere else. Whatever you need – a cottage, a house, a mansion, a palace – whatever scholarship and prestige you need, or whatever degree of self-control and renunciation you wish to attain, you will get it all by being here. Just come to me. Do not run here and there, impelled by desires like, ‘I must have a nice home, I must find a good means to achieve material success and I must become vastly learned’. Do not aspire to achieve that what ordinary people value so much.”

I Was A Fearsome Logician

I was a fearsome logician. But out of immense compassion he kicked my pride aside. Thus he showed me his mercy. If I were to try to find the limit of his mercy, I would not succeed even if I continued searching for unlimited lifetimes. In fact, no one will ever find its limit. I am in no way qualified to introduce myself as his servant. Still, he has suffused me with the hope that I can identify myself as his servant, and through that hope I can always stay alive.

I used to feel that I was drowning in joylessness (*nirānanda*), and that I was absorbed in so many temporary activities. It is clear that I am weak, so I felt that when my *śrī gurudeva* would disappear I would go astray, for then I would not be able to hear his teachings. But today many, many incarnations of Śrī Gurupāda-padma have mercifully presented themselves before me.¹ They do *kirtana* in front of me, and they read the *Bhāgavatam* and explain it to me. When they reveal ever-fresh explanations in accordance with my *śrī gurupāda-padma*’s heart, they bring life back to my dying body. Only because of this, I regain consciousness and attain the good fortune of hearing and speaking *hari-kathā* twenty-four hours a day, every day.

¹ Here, Śrīla Prabhupāda refers to his pure disciples, or *sad-śiṣyas*, as incarnations of his *gurudeva*.

The Ideal Deity of Renunciation

Renunciation is something I had only read about in stories or had read instructions on in books like *Vairāgya-śataka* (A Hundred Verses Regarding Renunciation), *Śānti-śataka* (A Hundred Verses Regarding Peace) and *Moha-mudgara* (The Hammer that Demolishes Illusion). But when the mercy of that most compassionate Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and of that most compassionate Kārṣṇa (Kṛṣṇa’s devotee) both fell upon me, the personification of Bhagavān’s own renunciation (*vairāgya*) appeared before me.

Although it is not possible for such renunciation to inhabit a human form, I nevertheless had the opportunity to see it in Śrī Gurupāda-padma. Yet, despite seeing him, I have somehow remained in the same darkness. My body gives me obstacles and I am unable to serve Gurupāda-padma twenty-four hours a day. The deity of ideal renunciation, whom I personally beheld, was not the embodiment of renunciation that merely demolishes illusion, nor of pretentious renunciation (*phalgu-vairāgya*). The renunciation he embodied was replete with the pinnacle of service to Kṛṣṇa, completely steeped in *mahābhāva*.

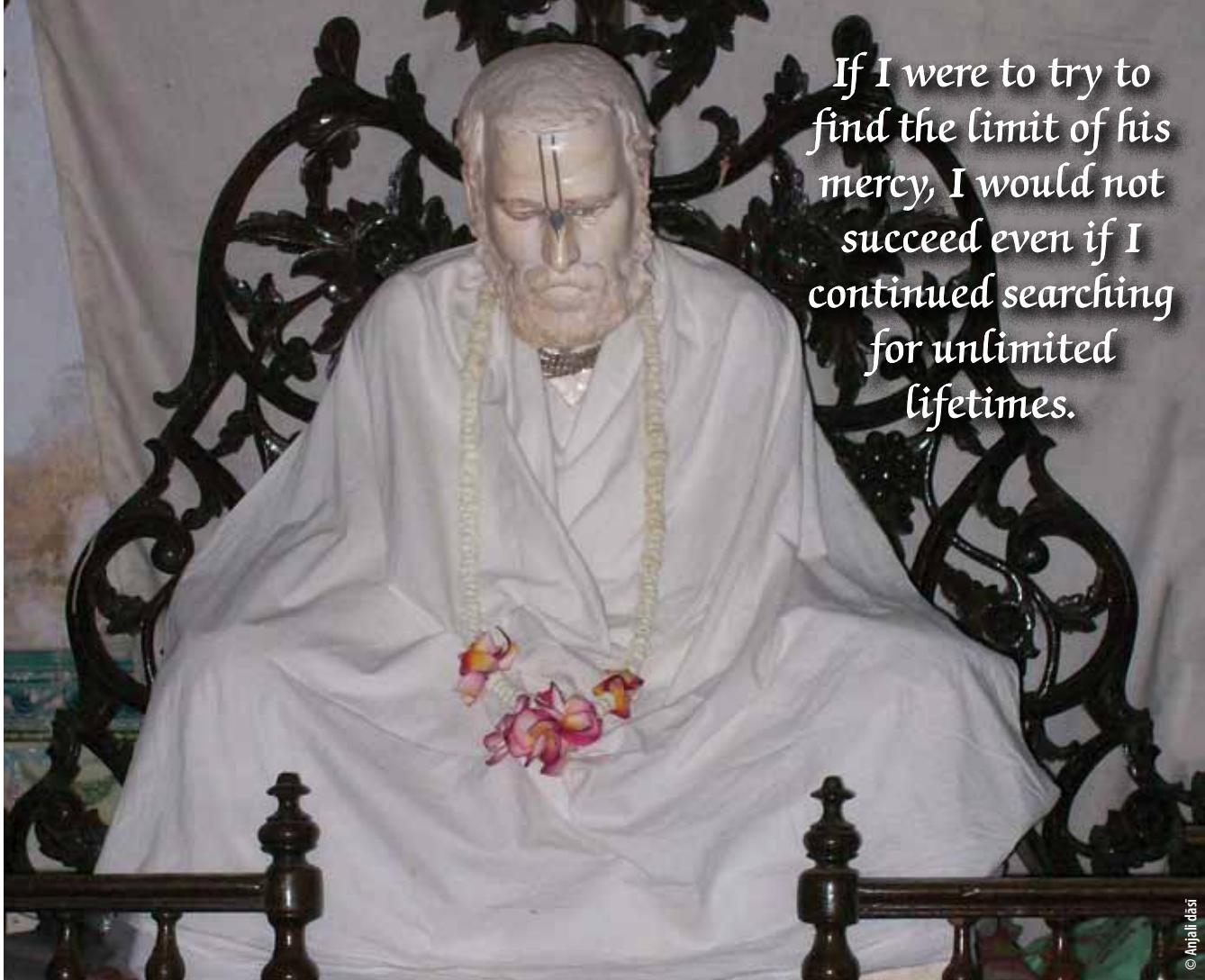
May he whose renunciation extends not only to wealth and women, but to personal prestige as well, be my object of worship. I aspired for the lotus feet of such a *śrī guru*, who would not accept even a single disciple. Still, I presented myself before him and begged for his mercy. He told me “I made one disciple previously, but that disciple cheated me and left, so I have decided not to make any more disciples.” Although I was distressed by his reply, I made a firm vow: “I will see how many times I am rejected, but without his mercy I will not venture out into the world.”

He Pulverized My Pride

When I came before that very *gurupāda-padma*, I could understand by his mercy that what I had considered to be the topmost ideal and the best way of life was to him the lowest of all. Although my ideal was extraordinary compared to the ideals of the people of this world, my *śrī gurupāda-padma* showed me one conception that was truly and absolutely transcendent. Prior to this revelation, I had studied many books by impersonalists expounding the idea of “*neti neti*”², a systematic negation of mundane attachments and designations. Now I had found an actual exemplar of it. Śrī Gurupāda-padma told me, “The ideal you now seek is not your true ideal.”

² The phrase “*na iti, na iti*”, or “it is not this, it is not this”, is the answer to the question, “Is this *brahma*?” In other words, if someone seeks the Absolute Spirit through empirical investigation, he will inevitably engage in negating all perceivable objects and designations, deeming them non-absolute.

If I were to try to
find the limit of his
mercy, I would not
succeed even if I
continued searching
for unlimited
lifetimes.



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I used to think that my *gurupāda-padma*'s calibre of renunciation was second to none, but that his erudition was somewhat lacking. He pulverized my pride in my book knowledge by the mallet of his mercy and made me understand that my topmost ideal was in fact the most despicable. When these words of his entered my ears, when I received his mercy, my tiny brain did not have the strength to hold that divine knowledge. He had given an opportunity to a fool and a know-it-all like me to hear such a profound matter.

My *gurupāda-padma* never became involved in any matter of this world, but he pretended to bestow his mercy upon an unqualified person like me. The renunciation of the world's most renounced personalities cannot compare to even a tiny fraction of a hundredth part of his renunciation. Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami Prabhu's renunciation was fully manifest in my Prabhu. If the account of his life is published in the world, if my *guru-varga*³ publishes an account of his transcendental life in simple language and propagates it everywhere, then the entire world will be

vastly benefited. My *gurupāda-padma* did not only say that one should give up wealth and women, rather he instructed that even the urge to portray oneself as a great saint must be renounced. He was a *bhagavata paramahaṁsa*.

Open Your Eyes

People say that today is the disappearance day of my *gurupāda-padma*. However, I consider that today is his appearance day, and that I may worship him for eternity by glorifying him with a million mouths and millions of other senses.

Compelled by compassion, my *śrī gurupāda-padma* has appeared in this world to bestow upon me, by the collyrium of knowledge, the divine realization that I am the servant of Nanda-nandana. Due to my ignorance, I had come to believe that enjoying the objects of the senses was my duty and purpose in life. Thus I had completely lost sight of my real duty. But my *śrī gurupāda-padma* has appeared in this world to dispel the darkness of my ignorance.

Unable to see that supreme object, which is impossible to see with these eyes – eyes that simply obstruct what I am meant to hold in my sight eternally – and unable to see that

³ Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada here refers to his disciples as his *guru-varga*.

supreme object, which is the only thing worth seeing, all I can see is the sensual veil that covers my eyes. Thus all I see is sense gratification within this transient world.

However, Śrī Gurupāda-padma removes the veil from my eyes and grants me true sight by divine knowledge. He pulls away the veil that covers my eyes, slightly parts my eyelids and instructs me, "Open your eyes and look." For so long I thought I could see with my eyes shut.

So I am abandoning my pride and offering *namaskāra* to Śrī Gurupāda-padma. This indeed is the ingredient (*arghya*) of my worship. The act of renouncing the arrogant conception that I am the seer and enjoyer is called '*namaskāra*'. When I was nurturing the misconception that I am the doer, Śrī Gurupāda-padma opened my eyes and dismissed my notions of reality, which were improperly conceived. Driven by some other knowledge, I was following the blind. Gurupāda-padma made me realize that I must not follow the blind, that I must follow śrī gurupāda-padma, who is possessed of divine vision, and that to worship śrī gurupāda-padma was my duty.

Service to Śrī Gurupāda-padma is the Real Activity of My Being

By Gurupāda-padma's grace, I have developed the conviction that service to him is my one and only duty and is, in fact, the real activity of my being. And after having *darśana* of Gurupāda-padma, the conviction that there is any necessity of doing something other than serving him was totally dispelled. Just to rescue me from the clutches of arrogance, Bhagavān's beloved servant, His most cherished companion, revealed to me eternal service to Nanda-nandana, for he was overwhelmed by compassion. Only then could I understand that in relation to the living entity's true identity, there is no duty and no source of auspiciousness apart from satisfying the senses of Nanda-nandana. The son of Nanda is the sole object of the living entity's spiritual practice, and attaining Him is the one and only goal; and śrī gurupāda-padma is Nanda-nandana's very dearly beloved.

Service to that *gurupāda-padma* cannot be performed by inept persons like me; not by body, not by mind, not by words and not by any other type of instrument. However, Śrī Gurupāda-padma infuses me with potency, and looks at me with loving eyes. Perhaps if I can obtain his grace, then by his causeless, heartfelt mercy, I may achieve the qualification to serve him.

I am not speaking theoretically. The day Śrī Gurupāda-padma placed his lotus feet, which are unattainable even for

demigods, upon the head of such an undeserving person as me and bathed me in their dust was the day I was first able to understand what my supreme auspiciousness was. A spiritual master such as Śrī Gurupāda-padma wields the power to give service to the Supreme. May I have the ability to assimilate that awesome mercy. From that day, I certainly sought to receive such incomparable auspiciousness from Śrī Gurupāda-padma.

Śrī Gurupāda-padma is an exclusive servant of the Lord. If I cannot obtain his mercy, if I cannot obtain divine knowledge, then I will not even be able to comprehend the glory of Gurupāda-padma. Śrī Gurupāda-padma is eternal. May I not be bereft of his company for even a moment. Within even a moment of time, my bond with Gurupāda-padma can be broken. So, may I never abandon Gurupāda-

padma for even one eleventh of a second, enticed by some mundane temptation. May I never cheat myself of my connection to Gurupāda-padma on account of heeding useless advice from worldly people who are fully averse to him.

Śrī Gurupāda-padma can protect me from all these deceptive perils, so at the beginning of every year, of every month, of every day, and of every moment, it is my duty to worship that Śrī Gurupāda-padma.

My *gurudeva* is present in various forms. If he did not exist in so many

forms, then who would protect me? Those who my *gurudeva* took to be his own are my saviours. But as for those who blaspheme my *gurupāda-padma* or anyone who gives shelter to those who blaspheme him, may those inauspicious wretches never cross the path of my vision.

At every moment, he draws me to his lotus feet to keep me there. The moment I stray from Gurupāda-padma, the moment I forget Gurupāda-padma, is the moment I verily fall from Truth. If I do not remember Gurupāda-padma at the onset of every year, month, day and moment, I will surely meet with more and more peril. I will desire to be *guru* and will adopt the wicked mentality that others ought to call me *guru* and worship me. Thus I will have succumbed to meaningless infatuations (*dvitiya-abhiniveśa*). So it should not be that I came to perform *guru-pūjā* today. It should be that at every moment we are engaging in an eternal *guru-pūjā*. 

Translated from *Nikaṭa-kāla-vartti Cāra Rūpānuga Vaiṣṇava Ācārya*
(*Exalted Rūpānuga Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas of Present Times*)

Compiled, translated and edited by
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja
Originally published in the weekly *Gaudīya*



Excerpts from

Raising the Divine Temple of the Bhāgavat and Unfolding the Ultimate Conception of Parakīya

By Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī
Thākura Prabhupāda
(from *Śrīla Prabhupādera
Harikathāṁṛtam*
—The Immortal Nectar of
Śrīla Prabhupāda’s
Sermons on Lord Hari)

The vast palace of the Gaudīya Matha has been externally manifest, but now there are several important sacred texts that must also be manifested in this world in order to perfectly establish and preserve the subject matter of internalized pure devotional service to Śrī Hari (*hari-bhajana*). By manifesting the temple¹ made of both *grantha-bhāgavat*, the sacred texts related to Bhagavān, and *bhakta-bhāgavat*, the devoted worshippers

of Bhagavān who constantly sing His divine glories, the transcendent topics about Śrī Hari will be propagated throughout the world for far longer than by manifesting temples of marble and brick.

A person’s lifelong accrue of assets has been engaged in establishing a place of refuge, a fort from which to preach the message of the Supreme Lord. Yet one taking shelter there must still protect himself from the fellowship of ungodly folk. That is to say, he must save himself from the chaotic sway of this degraded age and preach the message of Godhead from his own station. Consequently, there is a need to disseminate many more sacred texts. The topic of devotional service to the Supreme Lord (*bhagavat-bhakti*) will remain in

¹ In the original Bengali article, the words used were *kirtana-carcā-mandira* and *nātya-mandira*. A *kirtana-carcā-mandira* is the part of the temple wherein the message of Godhead is discussed, and the *nātya-mandira* is the section in front of the altar where the devotees worship the Lord, especially through *saṅkirtana*.

this world if the temple made of these sacred texts and of the ideal lives of His devoted worshippers is manifest.

The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

It is essential that a genuine elucidation on the Tenth Canto of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam be written. It must not merely be the excess verbosity of scholars who are expert in utterance, nor an exhibition of *prākṛtā-sahajiyās*, the capricious imitationists who accept their cheaply conceived fantasies as part of absolute reality. Rather, for those who earnestly thirst to serve Transcendent Beauty, and in whom ardent spiritual greed for such service has arisen, this commentary will be considered most desirable to read.

There is no treatise in existence that compares to the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. Its narrations are not mythology. One who makes a truly impartial study will realize that a sacred text like the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam has never been excelled, nor can it ever be. Within the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, progressively evolved conceptions of the Absolute are demonstrated in sequence. The preliminary conception is doubtfulness of the existence of any supreme truth (*sarīṣaya*). Then come denial of the personal Absolute (*nāstikya*), acceptance of the Absolute as impersonal and featureless (*nirguṇa*), the theory that God exists but is neuter (*klīva*), the potent Godhead (*puruṣa*) and then the Potent and His Potency (*mithuna*). The conception next evolves to *svakīya*, the eternal matrimony of the Supreme Male and His consort, and finally *parakīya*, the paramour conception of the Divine Couple.

This final theme, *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, appears in the Tenth Canto, so what was the necessity of composing the previous nine cantos? In these, a foundation is made in preparation for introducing the absolutely autocratic loving affairs of the supremely independent Śrī Kṛṣṇa. These loving affairs are the paramount subject of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. The first nine cantos present the rudimentary theories of doubt up to the conception of wedded love of God, and in the Tenth Canto, in chapters like *Gopī-gīta*, the paramour conception is revealed.

Prior to the appearance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, many may have examined the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, but only those who have read the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam after reading His biographical anthology Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta – which was compiled by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's foremost adherent, Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī – and have made their study of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam while remaining inside its shelter, take to heart its real purpose and explicit theme.

Professional orators and *prākṛtā-sahajiyās* conceal the divinely intended method of narrating the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. The Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam must be expressed in virtue of Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta and in line with the path of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. The genuine commentary of the Tenth

Canto shall not be written so as to conceal this method. Countless *sahajiyās* have delivered such commentaries simply for the gratification of general people. Thus they have cleared a path to hell for themselves and others.

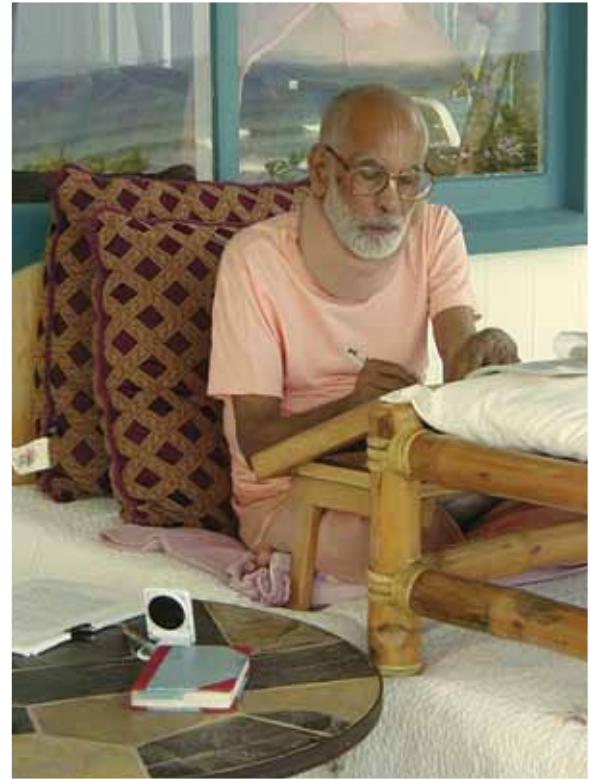


Within the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam the increasing excellence of the intrinsic love between the Supreme Lord (*viśaya*, or *sevyā*) and His servitors (*āśraya*, or *sevaka*) is readily traced through each of the successive stages from contracted (*saṅkucita*); to slightly budding (*iṣat-mukulita*); developing, or flowering (*puṣpita*); expanding, or blooming (*vardhita*); mature, or fully developed (*paripuṣṭa*); and finally profusely exuberant, or perfected (*prapakva*).²

Similarly, as the wish-fulfilling tree of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam unfolds, all conceptions of the Supreme Absolute are chronicled as they evolve through doubt, the denial of the absolute, the impersonal absolute, the personal but impotent God, the Potent, the Potent with His Potency, the conception of wedded love with the Supreme, and finally the superlative conception of *parakīya*, the Supreme as a paramour. For one who

² Compare with the story of Gopa-kumāra in Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta.

In each successive chapter, Gopa-kumāra meets devotees who possess progressively higher degrees of love for Bhagavān.



anxiously longs to serve Transcendent Beauty through the *parakīya* conception, there is no entity that can award the fruit of their determined endeavour other than the wish-fulfilling tree of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Throughout all the material universes, or beyond them, or across the Virajā in Brahmaloka (the endless incorporeal firmament), or even in any of the innumerable Vaikuṇṭha planets, there is no entity besides the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that is capable of yielding the desired fruit of such aspirations.

In considering the *parakīya* conception, four gradations of increasing excellence are observed. Initially it is overly tender and immature (*taruṇa*). Gradually it becomes astringent (*kaṣāya*), then ripe (*pakva*), and finally fully ripened (*prapakva*).³ These gradations can be perceived by the

³ These four gradations are illustrated as follows: The stage of *taruṇa* is seen in the tender love of the *gopīs* before their first meeting with Kṛṣṇa (*pūrvā-rāga*). The stage of *kaṣāya* is seen in the love of those *gopīs* who were checked by their husbands and other family members when Kṛṣṇa called them with His flute, whereas the stage of *pakva* is seen in the love of the *gopīs* who abandoned everything and were able to go to Him at that time. When Kṛṣṇa left the *gopīs* after *rāsa-lilā*, He submerged them in separation from Him and removed their pride (each *gopī* had perceived that Kṛṣṇa was dancing exclusively with her and thus she developed pride in her extreme good fortune – *saubhāgya-mada*). Subsequently, they sang *Gopī-gīta* feeling

topmost devotees who earnestly long to serve Transcendent Beauty. That is to say, it can be perceived by the *rasika* and *bhāvuka bhaktas* as they relish the transcendental nectar of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.



By hearing the explanations of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* sung by a liberated *paramahānsa* like Śukadeva Gosvāmī, a qualified listener like Parīkṣit Mahārāja, who was fully convinced regarding the temporary nature of human life,⁴ will at once become immersed in relishing the nectar of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and remain there forever. Thereafter, such a qualified listener forgets all his prior lower interests that were unrelated to Kṛṣṇa and becomes completely untouched by any worldly attachment.

A precise, written explanation of the Tenth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* grounded in profound and thorough

the severe pain of separation from Him. When He reappeared, *mahā-rāsa* began. The *gopīs*' condition at that time illustrates *prapakva*, or fully ripened *parakīya-bhāva*. It is solely this final stage of *parakīya-bhāva* that Kṛṣṇa wants to relish.

⁴ The world emperor, Parīkṣit Mahārāja, had been cursed to die in seven days. Thus he renounced his kingdom and heard *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī without interruption until his death.

"A precise, written explanation of the Tenth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* grounded in profound and thorough deliberation is indispensable. Indeed, such a composition, arranged in congruence with the *rūpānuga-gauḍīya* conception, elucidating the Tenth Canto's chapters such as *Rāsa-pañcādhāya*, *Bhramara-gīta*, and *Gopī-gīta*, must be set forth without fail."



"Abolishing their misguided interpretations is requisite, as is composing the actual commentaries on *Bhramara-gīta*, *Gopī-gīta* and the rest."



deliberation is indispensable. Indeed, such a composition, arranged in congruence with the *rūpānuga-gauḍīya* conception (the conception of Śrī Caitanyadeva's most distinguished apostles headed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī), elucidating the Tenth Canto's chapters such as *Rāsa-pāñcādhāya*, *Bhramara-gīta* and *Gopī-gīta*, must be set forth without fail. The world is in want of actual beauty or *rūpa*, the conceptions propounded by Śrī Rūpa, for currently only *ku-rūpa* abounds, misshapen conceptions that are opposed to his. In order to broadcast their cleverness and prematurely profess their own elevated status, the *sahajiyās* recklessly amuse themselves by dallying with these lofty branches of the Tenth Canto. Abolishing their misguided interpretations is requisite, as is composing the actual commentaries on *Bhramara-gīta*, *Gopī-gīta* and the rest.

Negation is not Enough

Until now we have simply occupied ourselves in the process of negation, rejecting *ata* (literally, 'that which is not'). For eight years our periodical, *Gauḍīya*, has extensively discussed such issues. The *sahajiyās* can be greatly benefited by studying these articles. However, it is not possible to become advanced in the subject matter of *hari-bhajana* if we limit the scope of our endeavours either to simply negating *ata* or to performing favourable action.

While the benefit of singly performing favourable actions that are related to *bhakti* is not lost even after unlimited lifetimes, still, in this very lifetime, those actions will grant neither emancipation from the mortal sphere, nor the perfection of the soul, nor the ability to perform real *hari-bhajana*. The attainment of Kṛṣṇa will remain completely out of reach for one who does not become captivated by His graceful, beautiful form and qualities. But those who have developed real greed for *rūpa*, Graceful Beauty, who are longing to serve Graceful Beauty, they alone gain intimacy with Kṛṣṇa.



“The lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Mañjari
are their sole object of adoration and
service... The commentary on the Tenth
Canto of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam
must be fashioned for them.”



“...we must also provide the real explanations in place of the condemned ones.”



Searching for Graceful Beauty

The name ‘Śrī Rūpa’ is what is understood by the word *rūpa*, or ‘Graceful Beauty’. Only they who long to serve Graceful Beauty know the meaning of *hari-bhajana*. They completely depend on the guidance of Śrī Rūpa and place all their hopes in following him. The lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī are their sole object of adoration and service, and eternally remaining at her lotus feet is the only perfection for which they yearn. It is they who are truly searching for Graceful Beauty. The commentary on the Tenth Canto of the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* must be fashioned for them.

It is true that we do not approve of the fraudulent interpretations of *Bhramara-gīta* and *Gopī-gīta* propounded by the *sahajīyās*, but then we must also provide the real explanations in place of the condemned ones. Simply rejecting adverse elements by declaring ‘not this, not this’ offers no real assistance. The positive element, ‘it is this’, must be established. Rejecting adverse elements is but negation in the absence of any positive activity.

The impersonal aspect of the Absolute, which is without any comprehensible features, is designated by the word *tat*, which literally means ‘that’. Simply trying to realize *tat* by exhaustively negating all limited matter is not enough. Leaving aside the dry investigation of *tat*, one must enter into the pastimes of *sah*, which literally means ‘He’. He – the Absolute Personality⁵, the infinite reservoir and original perfection of all transcendent features. One must enter into His pastimes, by sequentially realizing the true and absolute nature of His name, His form, His qualities, and the unique glories of His intimate associates.



He is the divine nectar (*rasa*).⁶ He is the absolute form of all sublime nectarean humours in their entirety. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains:

akhila-rasāmr̥ta-mūrtib
prasrmara-ruci-ruddha-tārakā-pālīb
kalita-śyāmā-lalito
rādhā-preyān vidhur jayati
Bhakti-rasāmr̥ta-sindhu (1.1.1)

⁵ ‘Absolute Personality’ appears in English in the original Bengali article.

Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra is supremely glorious! He is the condensed form of all the eternal, supra-mundane *rasas*. Indeed, He has not neglected the full expression of any divine sentiment. Just see how He subjugates the extremely submissive *gopī* Tāraka, just as the vernal full moon outshines a tiny star – her own effulgence totally engulfed by His brilliance. And Pāli, who is also controlled by Him, is just like a constellation, keeping the moon at her bosom. His rays overpower her as well. When the vernal full moon accepts the night sky as a playground, the atmosphere becomes ideal for love dalliance. In the same way, Śrī Kṛṣṇa makes Śyāmā, who is like the dark blue vault, and Lalitā, who is love dalliance personified, His very own. He comes under the control of the *prema* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who is the embodiment of *mahābhāva* and the origin of all the *yūtheśvarīs*, just as the full moon comes under the powerful influence of the Rādhā-constellation in the spring season. Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s love completely eclipses and defeats Him. She is His everything, without which He is just the lonely moon.



The Pinnacle of All Our Expectations

We will follow Śrī *Upadeśāmr̥ta*, the essential ambrosial commandments propounded by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. We will abandon what is unfavourable and accept what is favourable, but we will never consider the practice of accepting what is favourable to be enough to maintain the progressive flow of our *bhakti*. We will not become degraded, losing our healthy spiritual consciousness like the epileptic who, tortured by recurring seizures, violently falls to the ground unconscious.

Filled with intense enthusiasm, we will actively cultivate the tendencies of our minds, bodies and words in the service of Kṛṣṇa’s name and character (*kṛṣṇa-anuśilana*), situate ourselves in Mathurā and Vraja – the fully transcendental facsimiles of Kṛṣṇa’s unmanifest eternal abodes – and sing the glorification of His holy name and sublime nature. Thus we will follow the clear path set forth by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Then we will be able to engage in *smarana* (the

act of meditating on Kṛṣṇa and thus remembering Him constantly).

We will attain permanent residence on the bank of Rādhā-kuṇḍa in the beautiful forest grove belonging to our most worshipful Goddess. Remaining there forever, we will engage in service to the Divine Couple under the direction of our eternal guides, whose hearts are the permanent resting place of love for Kṛṣṇa (*āśraya*). Outwardly we will never leave the shelter of Kṛṣṇa's holy name, and internally, enveloped in spiritual time – the eternal eightfold divisions of the day (*aṣṭa-kāla*) – we will serve the most cherished beloved of King Vṛśabhānu's daughter. That is, we will serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the most beloved of Rādhārāṇī, for all time. This achievement is the pinnacle of all our expectations. We have no aspiration besides this. Furthermore, we cannot conceive that any higher aspiration exists even for greatly liberated souls.

The Compassionate Gift of Śrī Caitanya

In truth, our divine guide (*śrī guru*), who is the beloved servant of Kṛṣṇa; the holy name of Kṛṣṇa; the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, which unfolds the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa; Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda Themselves; and Śrī Caitanya who is known as Śrī Gaurasundara, the combined form of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, are all non-different features of the Absolute Truth. We need not become like the fruitive workers and empiricists, who try to fulfil all their separate interests by the worship of five deities (*pañcopāsana*⁶). Their service is never meant for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa. Instead, we will render truly pleasing service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in five ways to His five non-different features. First we will serve Him in His aspect of His own beloved servant, our divine guide. Second, we will serve Him as His holy name, His incarnation as transcendental sound. Third, we will serve Him as the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*. Fourth, we will serve Him as Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. And fifth, we will serve Him as Śrī Gaurasundara.

Furthermore, we will worship Kṛṣṇa with all five primary transcendental humours (*pañca-rasa*) – as devotee, servant, friend, guardian and lover. By becoming the devoted follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (*rūpānuga*), we will worship Kṛṣṇa in the paramour conception of *madhura-rasa*, which completely contains all five *rasas*.

We will not be content simply by rejecting the unfavourable, nor will we expect to flourish in *bhakti* simply by accepting the favourable. Rather, we will always actively

⁶ The unauthorized system of *pañcopāsanā* entails worship of five principal controllers of the material universe: Viṣṇu, Śiva, Ganeśa, Sūrya and Durgā. Adherents of the *pañcopāsanā* system consider the forms of these five deities temporary and imaginary and meditate on them as a means to ultimately merge in impersonal *brahma*.

cultivate the tendency to arrange for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure (*kṛṣṇa-anuśilana*).

Śrī Caitanyadeva appeared before us as embodiment of infinite magnanimity, compassion and kindness (*audārya-vigraha*), for He freely bestowed upon us *unnata-ujvala-rasa*, the most elevated, brilliant conception of devotional service in paramour love, which had not been revealed for millions of aeons.

By immersing ourselves in the endless ocean of His magnanimity we will become the rightful recipients of that same rare treasure. Following in the footsteps of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Prabhu, His most confidential companion, we will recite:

*beloddhūnita-khedayā viśadaya pronmīlad-āmodayā
śāmyac-chāstra-vivādayā rasa-dayā cittārpitonmādayā
śāśvad-bhakti-vinodayā sa-madayā mādburya-maryādayā
śrī-caitanya dayā-nidhe tava dayā bhūyād amandodayā*

Śrī Caitanya-candrody-a-nātaka (8.14) quoted in
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 10.119)

O Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, ocean of compassion! May Your auspicious mercy be awakened everywhere. It easily dispels all kinds of mundane lamentation, and it illuminates everything with purity. It thoroughly awakens supreme transcendental bliss and removes all confusion arising from disparities among scriptures. Your auspicious mercy bestows all of the transcendental humours headed by paramour love and intoxicates the soul, thus vanquishing his absorption in his mortal frame. In other words, because he is situated in the fully condensed bliss of separation, his heart surges with divine madness and delusion. Your mercy perpetually stimulates *bhakti*'s own delightful nature, so that by the influence of the original transcendental Cupid, profuse ecstatic transformations are aroused that plunder the soul's faculty of discrimination between right and wrong. The appearance of Your mercy heralds the complete cessation of all of the soul's selfish desires and at the same time, it confers the last limit of divine sweetness. Your boundless mercy, in the freedom of unmeasuring love, recklessly distributes the most valuable benediction without any restriction. Please, awaken Your causeless mercy within my heart. 

Translated from Śrīla Prabhupādā *Harikathāmṛtam*

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Excerpts from

Remembering Śrīla Prabhupāda in Separation on His Appearance Day

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna
Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Praying for Mercy on the Occasion of Vyāsa-pūjā

*tāte kṛṣṇa bhaje, kare gurur sevana
māyā-jāla chute, pāya kṛṣṇera caraṇa*
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 22.25)

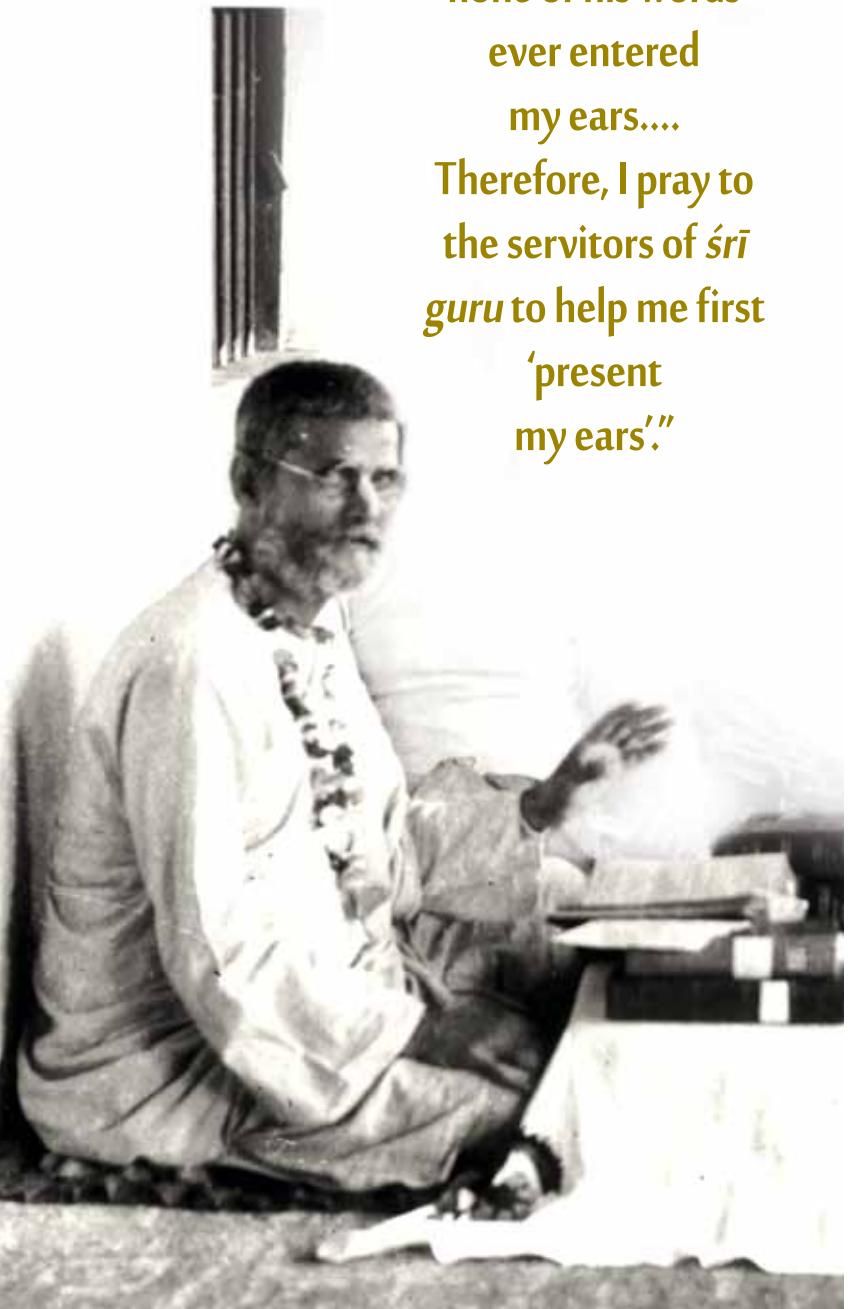
Only by simultaneously performing *guru-sevā* and *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* does a bound *jīva* become liberated from the web of *māyā* and attain the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

These words from Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta are echoed in the following statement: “By performing śrī vyāsa-pūjā, one simultaneously serves *guru* and Kṛṣṇa.”¹ Hence, the regulation to perform *vyāsa-pūjā* on the appearance day of *jagad-guru* Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is most worshipful, is established according to the teachings of the Gauḍīya ācāryas.

¹ From the *vyāsa-pūjā* offering of a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, published in the weekly *Gauḍīya*, Year 4, Issue 26, p. 590



“Because I
 maintained the
 conception that
 Śrīla Prabhupāda
 was an ordinary
 human being,
 none of his words
 ever entered
 my ears....
 Therefore, I pray to
 the servitors of śrī
 guru to help me first
 ‘present
 my ears’.”



On this occasion of *vyāsa-pūjā*, I have been ordered to serve this spiritual magazine, which is like one of Śrīla Gurudeva’s bodily limbs. I fully realize my complete incapacity to do so, and am therefore calculating my misfortune. Those who are *guru-dāsa*, honourable servants of *śrī guru*, are my sole well-wishers, able to deliver me from this calamity. To remain under their guidance is the pinnacle of service to *śrī guru*. I therefore offer my sincere prostrated obeisances at the lotus feet of all of the servitors of Śrīla Gurudeva.

Regarding them to be my fellow Godbrothers and dealing with them in a mood of friendship, or *sakhya*, I have differed with them. But now, after Śrīla Prabhupāda’s disappearance, I realize in the core of my heart just what I have done, and am thus condemning my life. O servitors of Śrī Guru, it is you who are the true worshippers of *vyāsa-pūjā*. Please bestow your merciful glance upon me. Please do not neglect me upon seeing my worthlessness, but kindly engage me in *dāsyā*, or servitude, through glorification of Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga. This is my heartfelt prayer at your lotus feet.

The Svarūpa, or Embodiment, of Śrīla Gurudeva

Following in the footsteps of Śrī Vyāsa and Vaiyāsaki (Śrī Śukadeva), the servitors of *śrī guru* have informed me about Śrī Gurudeva through scriptural statements such as “*gaura-jana-saṅga kara gaurāṅga baliyā* – associate with the followers of Gaura, knowing them to be non-different from Gaurāṅga”; “*ācāryam mām vijānīyāt* – know the *ācārya* to be My own self”; and “*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta sāstraḥ* – all scriptures concur that *śrī guru* is Hari Himself”. At the same time, however, the servitors of *śrī guru* have instructed me to consider him as the dearest associate of Hari – *kinto prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya*.

In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi-līlā* 1.45), Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī has also elucidated the position of *śrī guru* by saying, “*guru krṣṇa-rūpa hana śāstrera pramāṇe* – all *śāstras* corroborate that Śrī Guru is non-different from Kṛṣṇa.” He continues, “*guru-rūpe krṣṇa krpa karena bhakta-gane* – in the form of *guru*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa bestows mercy upon His devotees.”

Accordingly, the statements of the *mahājanas* and the examples provided in the scriptures establish clearly that *śrī guru* is the *svarūpa*, or embodiment, of Bhagavān. In the same way, I acknowledge the servitors of *śrī guru* as non-different from Bhagavān also, and consider them my *śikṣā-gurus*. In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi-līlā* 1.47), Śrīla Kavirāja Gosvāmī has said, “*śikṣā-guruke ta’ jāni krṣṇera svarūpa* – one should know the *śikṣā-guru* to be the *svarūpa*, or embodiment, of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

O eternal servitors of *śrī guru*, the sole reason you have appeared in this material world is to deliver those like me, the lowest of mankind, who have fallen in the mire of

sin. Although I have heard your transcendental teachings about the supra-mundane nature of Śrīla Gurudeva, my conception of him as a mortal being has not dimmed even slightly. Delusion and malice are the root cause of this.

Vāṇī-kīrtana – Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Innermost Desire

Vāṇī, or sound, is received through one sensory organ only – the ears. In other words, the other four senses are impotent to receive it. It is impossible to approach an object that lies beyond the senses, through the medium of the senses. Indeed, we attain auspiciousness to the extent we are able to limit the involvement of the senses. This is precisely why śravaṇa (hearing) and kīrtana (chanting) are considered superior to the other limbs of bhakti.

If my mentality of considering śī guru to be a mere mortal has not vanished after hearing the kīrtana of transcendental instructions from your lotus mouths, then my performance of the limbs of bhakti executed through the other senses is futile also. What doubt can there be about this? In the present age, every limb of bhakti needs to be performed in conjunction with kīrtana. Although limbs of bhakti other than śravaṇa and kīrtana exist, they do not bestow the highest result without kīrtana. Therefore, by the boundless mercy of you all, I have been able to understand that kīrtana is independent and the topmost sādhana.

Only bhakti characterized by śravaṇa and kīrtana constitutes preaching and is bhāgvata-mata, the mano’bhīṣṭa of Śrī Caitanya, whereas bhakti that involves the construction of mathas and temples, service to the deities (arcana) and so on, is pāñcarātrika-mata (the system of formal deity worship). You have allowed me to understand that the sole ontological reason for Śrīla Prabhupāda’s appearance was to preach the conceptions of the bhāgavat-paramparā.

Kīrtana is the sole fruit of kīrtana. Kīrtana alone is sevā, and kīrtana is also prema. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has written in his Krama-sandarbha: “yadyapyanyā bhaktiḥ kalaub kartavya tada kīrtanākhyā bhakti-samyogenaiva ityuktam – in Kali-yuga, the limbs of bhakti other than kīrtana are also to be performed, but only in conjunction with kīrtana.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda has himself said, “Let there be representatives of the pāñcarātrika process. Let the temples be constructed and the deities worshipped. But those who belong to the better class, the higher class, engage in preaching activities. To propagate vaikuṇṭha-nāma everywhere is the most cherished desire of Mahāprabhu. ... Our preaching process should be like this. Let pamphlets be printed profusely; it does not matter whether or not the mathas and temples are erected.”

Even in his final instructions, Śrīla Prabhupāda specifically cautioned us: “We have not come to this world as masons to deal with stone or wood. We are the peons of

Śrī Caitanyadeva’s message.” Let people practise any one or several of the limbs of bhakti independently of kīrtana: we shall practise only kīrtanākhyā-bhakti, as instructed by Śrīla Prabhupāda.

One Must “Present One’s Ears” to Hear the Vāṇī

Because I maintained the conception that Śrīla Prabhupāda was an ordinary human being, none of his words ever entered my ears. Therefore, he would often say, “First prepare your ears (develop transcendental śraddhā). By doing so, you will attain the qualification to hear the siddhānta of the Bhāgavata.”

Now I realize in the core of my heart the essence of this instruction. Although I remained by Śrīla Prabhupāda for about eighteen years (till 1937), his teachings on what is ultimately beneficial and what is temporarily pleasing (śreyah and preyah), on following and mere imitation (anusarāya and anukarana), on what is real and what is fake (asala and nakala), on ontology and morphology, on spirituality and ordinary conduct (pāramārthika and vyavahārika), and on associating with a transcendental personality’s form and teachings (vapu and vāṇī), as embodied by the Gauḍiya magazine, did not enter my ears, nor could I realize the difference between these categories.

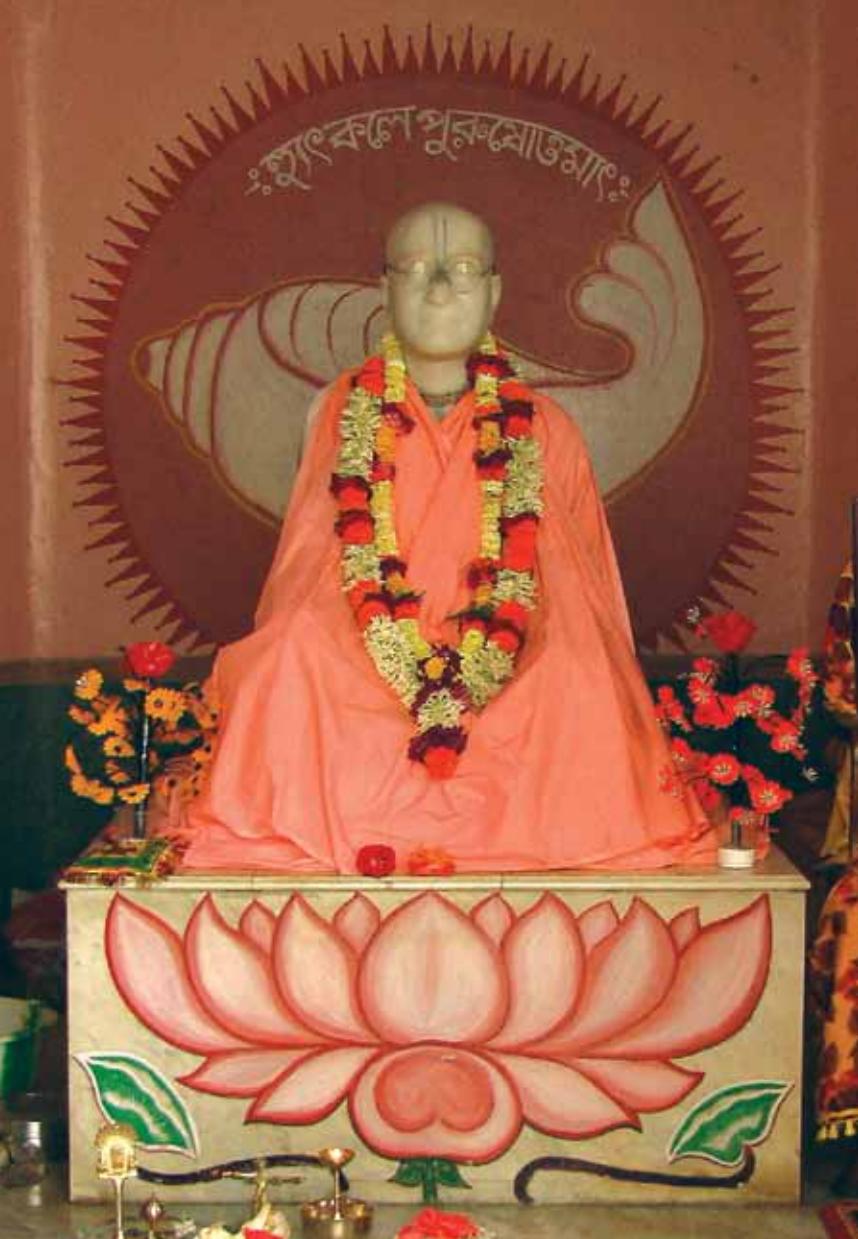
Therefore, I pray to the servitors of Śrī Guru to help me first ‘present my ears’. Until I ready my ears for this purpose, I will be the subject of the statement “upadeśo hi murkhānam prakopaya na sāntaye – instructions given to fools serve only to anger them, not pacify them.”

The Transcendental Body of Śrīla Prabhupāda

Due to my misfortune, I never became qualified to perceive the body of Śrīla Prabhupāda as a transcendental, eternal deity full of knowledge and bliss – although you all educated me on this repeatedly. Upon noting my mundane conception of him, Śrīla Prabhupāda would, from time to time, sweetly and knowingly enact being ill. Endowed with wicked intelligence, I would approach to serve him, trying to touch his body with my material hands, etc.; but remaining autonomous, he would at once present his illusory form (māyā-deha) and captivate my demoniac propensity [to ‘serve’ him for my own interest].

In reality the transcendental body of Śrīla Prabhupāda cannot be diseased or possess any abnormality – but at that time I could not understand this even slightly. How can I, a complete sense enjoyer (kāmī) and a yogī, like Rāvaṇa, touch anything other than māyā – in other words, the illusory Sītā? Where is the qualification to touch Sītā, the embodiment of the transcendental potency (cit-sakti), who is Lakṣmī, residing on the lap of Śrī Rāma?

I could not realize anything about the transcendental nature of Śrīla Prabhupāda, having been cheated of his real



"The eternal form of the ācāryadeva is composed of knowledge and bliss, and remains constitutionally unchangeable.... The appearance and disappearance of the spiritual conscious form of the atimartya ācārya, who is beyond the control of the material nature, is full of joy."

mercy – and thus I have been deprived forever. Such is the result of not allowing his fully conscious words to enter my ears. This indeed is my extreme misfortune.

Disappearance Pastime of the Ācārya

Śrīla Prabhupāda observed that a wicked person like me, who egotistically considered himself to be his servant, had started brimming with such arrogance that at every step and every moment he was intent on usurping Śrīla Prabhupāda's position, regarding himself to be equal to him. At that time, Śrīla Prabhupāda decided to teach a lesson to a sinful person like me, who is eternally conditioned and whose mentality is harder than stone, non-combustible like mica and dry like fire, by suddenly manifesting an extremely unbearable pastime that was harder than a thunderbolt and had even more burning power than fire.

In 1936, just before concealing his manifest pastimes, Śrīla Prabhupāda was residing at Puruṣottama Maṭha atop Caṭaka-parvata in his appearance place, Śrī Puri-dhāma. Observing my reluctance to follow his instructions, he said to me, "No one understands and accepts my message anymore. There is therefore no use for me to remain in this world; it is best that I leave." At that time, I was unable to understand his compassionate intention and protested. And to my great misfortune, he unexpectedly struck me with this thunderbolt at dawn on Thursday, 1st January 1937.

Śrīla Prabhupāda saw me as a sense enjoyer and an *ahaṅgraha-upāsaka*, one who identifies himself with his object of worship. To bestow upon me the teaching of *bhakti-rasa* endowed with renunciation (*vairāgya-yuga bhakti-rasa*), he many times expressed his desire for me to accept the renounced order of life (*sannyāsa*); but because of my misfortune, I could not accept it at that time. Therefore, to teach me renunciation, which can destroy my mentality of identifying myself with the body and the attachment to anything related to the body, he enacted his disappearance pastime.

Words of Consolation at the Time of His Departure

To console me, the dear most associates of *guru* have acquainted me with the statements of Śrī Śukadeva, the son of Vyāsa, in the thirty-first chapter of the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which recount Śrī Hari's departure:

*rājan parasya tanu-bhṛj-jananāpyayebā
māyā-viḍambanam avebi yathā naṭasya
sr̄ṣṭvātmanedam anuviśya vibṛtya cānte
samābhṛtya cātmā-mahinoparataḥ sa āste*
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.31.11)

O King, you should apprehend that a stage actor remains unchanged, even though while on stage before his audience he accepts various roles in which he enacts birth and death. Similarly, the acts of Kṛṣṇa, the Supersoul of all, in which He takes birth and disappears in the Yadu dynasty, may resemble the birth and death of embodied beings, but this is simply an act of His illusory potency. In reality the Supreme Personality, Bhagavān Himself, has created this universe and entered it as its Supersoul, to enact His divine play. Again, at the time of destruction, He annihilates and winds up the entire creation within Himself, and then passively situates Himself in His own transcendental glory.

The eternal form of the *ācāryadeva* is composed of knowledge and bliss and remains constitutionally unchangeable – just like a dramatic performer [who appears to go through various transformations during his performance, but remains the same unaltered person]. On the stage of this world, the *ācāryadeva* merely acts out birth, death and so forth, all of which we can perceive using our knowledge-acquiring senses. The birth and death of an ordinary living entity is filled with pain and suffering, but the appearance and disappearance of the spiritual conscious form of the *atimartya ācārya*, who is beyond the control of the material nature, is full of joy. To astonish his audience, a magician may use a weapon to execute a person standing before him. An ignorant child cries upon seeing this, but those who know better understand that the killing is merely an illusion and do not lament for the person ‘slain’.

While the unbearable disappearance pastime of the *ācārya* is like a stage act, an ignorant person like me who does not comprehend this cannot be consoled. Thus, I perceive his disappearance pastime, which is full of joy, to be extremely painful and heart-rending. Thus, while the servants of *śrī guru* are feeling true separation, I am lamenting like a *sūdra*.

I have heard from you all that *viraha*, separation, enhances the elegance of service; and when anything that stimulates remembrance of one’s object of worship appears on the path of one’s vision, it progressively makes one’s attachment for that object unflinching. Separation looks to enhance the highest pleasure of one’s worshipful object.

In the state of lamentation, however, the bound *jīva* becomes bewildered, and thus inactive: his energy and

capacity disappear and he becomes afflicted by grief. Due to the absence of service, one cannot see in him any transformation akin to an enhancement of joy. Thus, I – like an ignorant fool, a *sūdra* – have become overwhelmed by lamentation. I am unable to discover any enthusiasm within. “*Hṛṣikena hṛṣikeśa-sevanam...* – to serve the master of the senses with my senses” has become a formidable task for me.

The Ācārya’s Affection For His Devotees

On the appearance day of Śrīla Prabhupāda, all that stirs in my mind is the account of his disappearance. That is why I am experiencing grief at a time of joy. Seeing my misery, the embodiment of auspiciousness, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in order to inspire me, exhibits his appearance day each year soon after the day of his disappearance. With the hope of again

having his *darśana* through you, his dear-most associates, I have presented myself at your lotus feet. When one is deprived of meeting, the intense pain of separation is relieved only by death. Therefore, to console his devotees’ affliction caused by separation, Śrīla Prabhupāda has shown his mercy by manifesting his appearance pastime shortly after that of his disappearance. This is the distinctive quality of his tremendous compassion and *bhaktavatsalya*, which I am unable to properly express in words.

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The Ācārya’s Arrival in Śrī Dhāma

Śrīla Prabhupāda doubted that we would heed his instructions. Full of natural pride in his eternal identity, he adopted a grave and silent mood, intending to come to the bank of his ever-dear Śrī Rādhā-kundā. Understanding his inner intention, the Vaiṣṇavas, as Viṣṇudūtas, carried him on their heads and placed him in an especially well-decorated chariot that had many compartments (a metaphor for the special train that carried his body). As Śrīla Prabhupāda entered the largest and most exquisite compartment with his dearest servants, other servants followed, entering their respective chambers.

That Goloka chariot on the Earth planet had come for Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s dearest, and it now travelled at high speed and, without interruption, reached Śrī Kṛṣṇa-dhāma (a metaphor for Kṛṣṇanagara, near Navadvīpa) in the blink of an eye. The *rāṇa-kṣetra*, or battlefield (a metaphor for Rāṇa-ghāṭa, the place of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s maternal home where he had spent his early childhood), is where the battle between knowledge and realization (*vidya* and *vedana*) took place. As the driver stopped here, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

the *ācārya*, reminded me of his childhood pastime of acquiring knowledge, even though he was inherently possessed of realized knowledge. Like Badhva Ṛṣi, he apprised me of many things, without actually speaking.²

At that time, I could not understand anything he was saying to me, due to my ignorance; but I fully realized that any attempt to hear the *vāṇī*, or divine instructions, from the personification of transcendental *vāṇī* using one's material ears is futile.

Travelling from Kṛṣṇa-dhāma, the embodiment of Śrī-*vāṇī*, Śrīla Sarasvatī Prabhu, reached Gaura-dhāma, which is non-different from Kṛṣṇa-dhāma. There, at Śrī Svānanda-sukhada-kuñja he met with Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura to inform him of his arrival. From there he went to the bank of Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa, which was manifested by the *ācārya* of Śrī Caitanya Maṭha on the premises of Candraśekhara Ācārya-bhavana at Śrī-Dhāma Māyāpura, where he met with Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja.

Nearby, on the bank of the *kunḍa* in Sevā-kuñja, he was decorated with flowers, garlands, sandalwood paste and various other ingredients collected by this degraded person. After this unfortunate person beautified his bodily lustre (*lāvanya*)³ Śrīla Prabhupāda situated himself in *samādhi* as the dear most associate of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Madana-mohana. To give me the eligibility to render service to the Divine Couple under his guidance, he took up residence there forever. I now pray to the servants of Gurudeva that they may mercifully bestow upon me a fraction of the qualification needed to serve Gurupāda-padma in fulfilling his most cherished desire.

*namah om visnu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-presthāya bhūtale
śrimate bhakti-siddhānta-sarasvatīti-nāmine
namaste gaura-vāṇī śrī-mūrtaye dīna-tārīne
rūpānuga-virudhāpa siddhānta-dhvānta-hāriṇe* ☺

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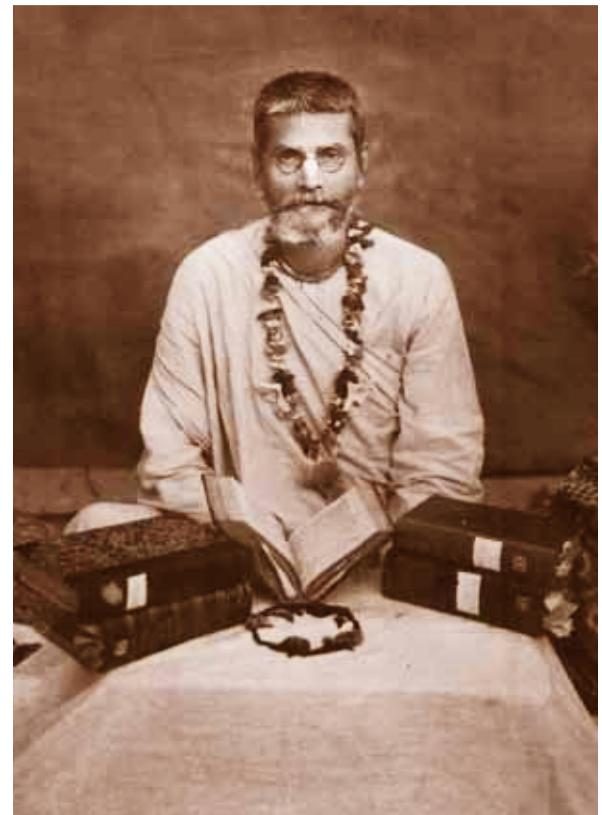
2 Vāskali, the disciple of Badhva Ṛṣi, inquired from his teacher three times about the nature of *brahma*. By maintaining silence, Badhva Ṛṣi satisfied his enquiry. Since *brahma* lies beyond material words, silence was the appropriate response to his question. Similarly, Śrīla Prabhupāda spoke to Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja through his silence – and reminded him of the teaching that the material ears have no power at all to grasp the divine instructions of *śrī guru*.

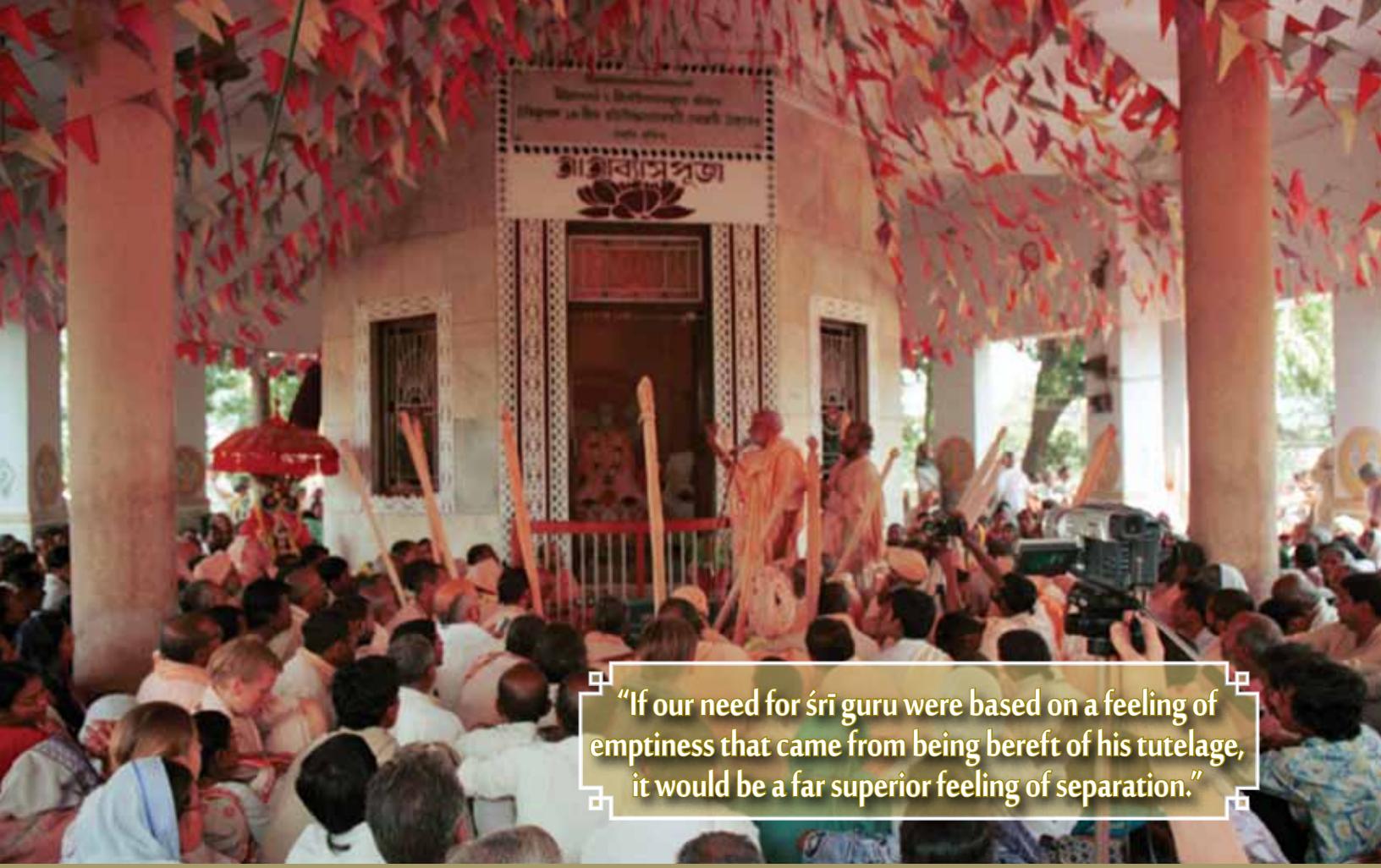
3 This refers to the placing of salt around his body.

Excerpts from

Separation From Śrīla Prabhupāda

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna
Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja





"If our need for śrī guru were based on a feeling of emptiness that came from being bereft of his tutelage, it would be a far superior feeling of separation."

What to Reflect Upon in Times of Separation

On this 23rd day of the month of Agrahāyaṇa (Friday, 9th December 1949) falls the disappearance day of Śrīla Prabhupāda. It is essential to understand what a disciple must do on the disappearance day of his beloved spiritual master. We should all certainly perform whatever ritualistic ceremonies are recommended for this occasion, and perform them, as far as possible, according to Vaiṣṇava practices. But rather than consider this any further, I request everyone to remember the *mano'bhiṣṭa*, or most cherished desire, of Śrīla Prabhupāda. This unfortunate soul is presenting, in the form of a grief-stricken humble offering, only a few aspects of what awakens fully in his heart as he recalls the disappearance of his spiritual master.

Consolation is usually necessary at times of separation. Upon receiving it, the heart afflicted by the grief of separation finds relief. Without such solace, the affliction brings a person closer to the tenth stage of life - unconsciousness or death. One will feel separation from the lotus feet of śrī guru to the extent that one is attached to them.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's Act of Depriving Us

Śrīla Gurupādapadma has mercifully withheld *bhakti* from those of us who were proud of our learning, and to ensure

our natural benefit, he did not interfere with our miserable condition [our unwillingness to follow his instructions] and independence. Witnessing and reflecting upon this unprecedented foresightedness, I am forever sold at his lotus feet. What can Śrī Gurudeva do for those who desire to be deprived? To interfere with another's independence is to lash his very existence as a conscious being, and is fully contrary to Śrī Bhagavān's desire. Śrī Gurudeva exhibits the pinnacle of service to Śrī Bhagavān, and therefore such interference would be at odds with his nature.

That said, Śrī Guru is bestowing mercy upon his followers even in depriving them so, and he thereby lives up to the title 'Ocean of Mercy'. Who will understand the hidden intention behind his actions? The way to transform my heart, which is intoxicated by the desire to enjoy mundane sense objects, is *vañcayet draviñādibhibhīḥ*: to deprive me by offering me mere worldly commodities. We have the tendency to fulfil our desires by enjoying the wealth and belongings of Śrīla Gurudeva, and our foremost duty on this day is to cast this habit into the fire of separation from him, thereby reducing it to ashes. During his physical presence, Śrīla Prabhupāda was merciful to me by supplying me with many comforts. Today, in his absence, I no longer receive this free supply, and therefore I feel acute pain in separation from him. If our need for Śrī Guru were based

on a feeling of emptiness that came from being bereft of his tutelage, it would be a far superior feeling of separation.

Śrīla Gurudeva's Perspective, which Befits a Paramahaṁsa

Observing my weakness of heart, Śrīla Gurudeva heaped praise and honour on me, and thus engaged me in service. Encouraging words filled with admiration delight the human senses, and therefore, sadly, I have engaged Śrīla Gurudeva in my own sense-gratification, expecting such words from him. What is more, my foolish mind considers itself to be the sole object of Gurudeva's praise, which is in fact wholly false, and has thus reached the zenith of pride. Thus, I have buried in the ground the verse *trṇād api sunīcena* as taught by Śrīman Mahāprabhu.

Śrīla Gurudeva's transcendental, liberated position is such that he forever exemplifies the statements "yāñhā yāñhā netra pade, tāñhā krṣṇa sphure - wherever he looks and whatever he sees reminds him of Kṛṣṇa", and "yāhā nadi dekhe, tāñhā mānaye—'kālindi' – whenever he sees a river, he sees it as the Kālindi". This is the nature of Śrīla Gurudeva. Therefore, I, who am like a drain brimming with the foul-smelling sewage of this mundane world, appear to the *mahā-bhāgavata* to be the most sacred Kālindī, although I am thoroughly aware of the filth in my heart and can never consider myself to be the Kālindī. Not just any mountain is Giri-Govardhana. But the *mahā-bhāgavata* sees my stony mountain-like pride as Govardhana, although that mountain is hardly Govardhana for me.

Śrīla Gurupāda-padma has made a special effort to help me progress by praising me profusely. Unable to understand the deeply esoteric nature of his heart, I have become inflated with pride from receiving this praise and constantly claim it from him. Now, in his absence, my 'sixth sense' (the mind) is no longer gratified by his words of admiration, and as I think about this, I long to be with him. But today, on his disappearance day, my duty is to fully obliterate my mountain-like pride by remembering his teachings, which are devastating enough to shake the earth and as grave as a clap of thunder.

The Essence of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Teachings

When Śrīla Prabhupāda instructed us, it was like the roar of a lion; and when he chastised us, it struck us like a thunderbolt. He used language that made the heart quiver. One principal teaching delivered in this way stirs in my heart today. After reflecting upon our bleak future, Śrīla Prabhupāda disseminated elevated teachings pertaining to the path of *sādhana*, in an attempt to save us. Foremost among them is to please Kṛṣṇa by performing *harināma-kirtana* while remaining in the association of *sādhus* and

Vaiṣṇavas. Indeed, *kīrtana* of Kṛṣṇa is the only *bhajana*. This in itself encapsulates the teaching of Śrīla Rūpa and Raghunātha Gosvāmīs.

Those who have compiled the Vedic scriptures have never explained *bhajana* to mean remaining hidden in a secluded place and gratifying one's senses by fostering laziness. Those attached to sense gratification, who desire recognition and are lazy, are unable to understand the nature of *bhajana*. On the pretext of doing *harināma*, they live in a corner of their homes, which are like dark wells. They consider the mere 'pulling of rope', as Śrīla Prabhupāda would call it, to be *harināma*; and thus they become degraded.

All those who are lazy and weak due to a lack of *kṛṣṇa-sakti* consider service to *śrī guru*, who is actively absorbed in serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to be *karma*, or ordinary worldly activity. Their inability to differentiate between *karma* and *bhakti* pierces the heart of Śrīla Prabhupāda on his disappearance day with a pointed javelin. If engaging all of one's senses in the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *karma*, are we to consider that paralyzing them is *bhagavad-bhakti*?

Today, on Śrīla Prabhupāda's disappearance day, my heart is feeling pain as I remember the description of the *guru-drohitā*, insurrection against *śrī guru*, of those *jīvas* who are afflicted with weakness of heart and who crave fame. Śrīla Prabhupāda uses the word 'seclusion' (*nirjana*) to advise us to renounce the association of wicked persons (*durjana*) and stay in the association of saintly persons (*sajjana*). All other meanings of 'seclusion' are against the Vedic scriptures, against rational thought, and against the missionary spirit that is the most cherished desire of Śrīla Gurupāda-padma.

The request of Śrī Gaudīya Vedānta Samiti is that you do not engage in behaviour that is adverse to the internal desire of *om viṣṇupāda paramahaṁsa-svāmī aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Ṭhākura. You must all assist favourably to bring about his cherished will. For our welfare, Śrīla Prabhupāda preserved his most prized instructions in the form of a song (*duṣta mana! tumi kisera vaiṣṇava?*). Today, on his disappearance day, let that song become our life and soul.

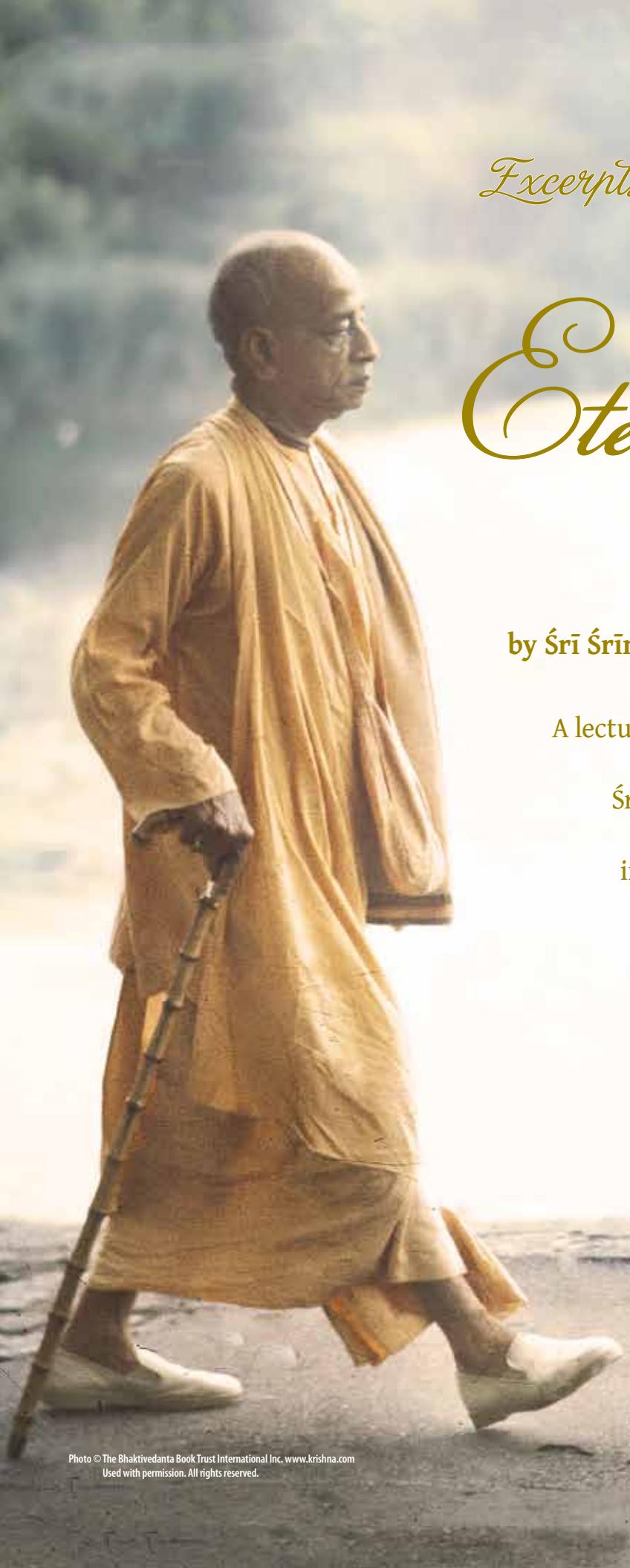
In this song, Śrīla Prabhupāda has saved, in golden words, the essence of all teachings, so that we may attain service to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in *parama-unnata-ujjvala-rasa*, the very highest and most dazzling relationship with the Divine Couple. On his disappearance day, we should remember these instructions through the medium of *kīrtana*.

Translated From *Śrī Gaudīya Patrikā*

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Excerpts from
Our
Eternal Guide

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja

A lecture delivered on 12th February, 1936
on the appearance day of
Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī
Ṭhākura Prabhupāda
in Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Bombay

*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvyata eva sadbhīḥ
kintu prabbor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī caraṇāravindam
Śrī Gurvāṣṭakam (7)*

All scriptures proclaim *śrī gurudeva* to be *sākṣāt-hari*, non-different from the Lord, and this is acknowledged by all saintly persons. Yet this is because *śrī gurudeva* is also extremely dear to the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari, being His most confidential servitor (*acintya-bhedābheda-prakāśa-vigraha*, the inconceivable manifestation who is one with and different from the Lord). I adore the lotus feet of that *śrī gurudeva*, which are the abode of grace and auspiciousness.

Gentlemen, on behalf of the members of the Bombay branch of the Gaudiya Maṭha, let me welcome you all, because you have so kindly joined us tonight in our congregational offerings of homage to the lotus feet of the world teacher, Ācāryadeva, who is the founder of this Gaudiya Mission and is the president *ācārya* of Śrī Śrī Viśva-vaiṣṇava Rāja-sabhbā – I am referring to my eternal divine master, *paramahaṁsa parivrājakācārya* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Sixty-two years ago, on this auspicious day, Ācāryadeva made his appearance by the call of Thākura Bhaktivinoda at Śrī Kṣetra Jagannātha-dhāma, Purī.

Gentlemen, the offering of such a homage as has been arranged this evening to Ācāryadeva is not a sectarian concern, for when we speak of the fundamental principle of *gurudeva*, or *ācāryadeva*, we speak of something that is of universal application. There does not arise any question of discriminating my *guru* from yours or anyone else's. There is only one *guru*, who appears in an infinite number of forms to teach you, me and all others.

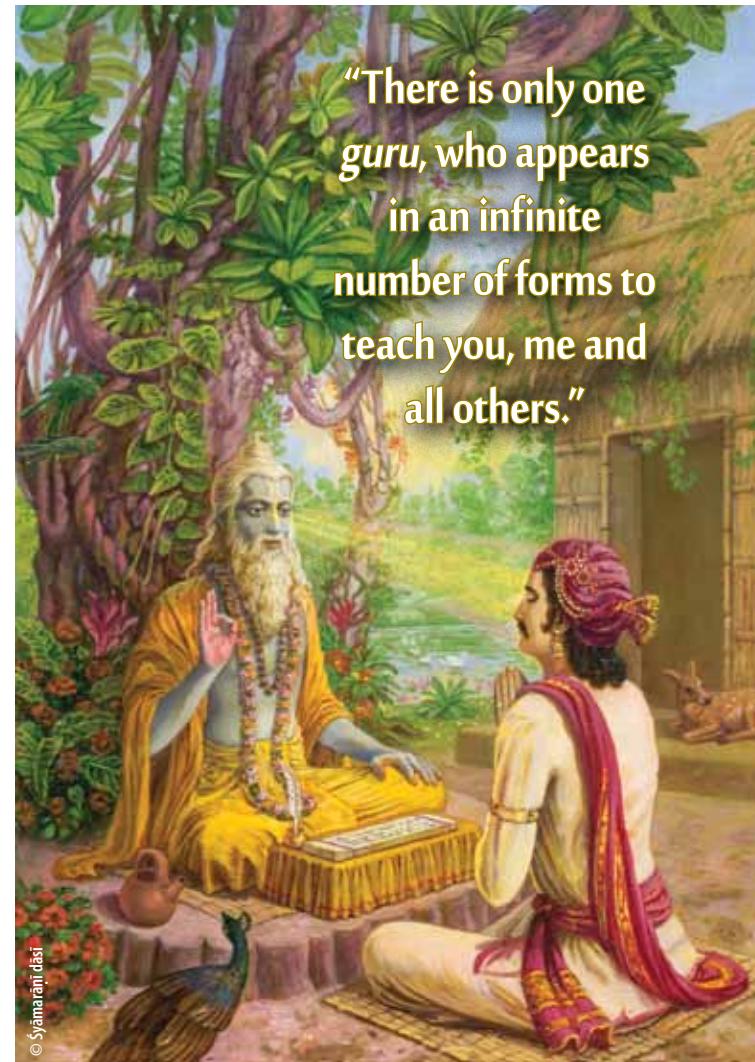
Śrī Guru – As Good as Śrī Bhagavān

The *guru*, or *ācāryadeva*, as we learn from the bona fide scriptures, delivers the message of the absolute world, the transcendental abode of the Absolute Personality, where everything non-differentially serves the Absolute Truth. We have heard so many times, “*mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ* – traverse the trail upon which the previous *ācāryas* have passed;” but we have hardly tried to understand the real purport of this *śloka*. If we scrutinize this proposition, we understand that the *mahājana* is one, and the royal road to the transcendental world is also one. In the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (1.2.12) it is said:

*tad-vijñānārthan sa gurum evābhigacchet
samit-pāṇih śrotriyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham*

In order to learn the transcendental science, one must approach the bona fide spiritual master in disciplic succession who is fixed in the Absolute Truth.

Thus it has been enjoined herewith that in order to receive that transcendental knowledge, one must approach the *guru*. Therefore, if the Absolute Truth is one, about which we think there is no difference of opinion, the *guru*, also, cannot be two. The *ācāryadeva* for whom we have assembled tonight to offer our humble homage is not the *guru* of a sectarian institution or one of many differing exponents of the truth. On the contrary, he is the *jagad-guru*, or the *guru* of all of us; the only difference is that some obey him wholeheartedly, while others do not obey him directly.



“There is only one guru, who appears in an infinite number of forms to teach you, me and all others.”

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.17.27) it is said:

*ācāryam māṁ vijānīyān nāvamanyeta karhicit
na martya-buddhyāśūyeta sarva-devamayo guruḥ*

“One should understand the spiritual master to be as good as I am,” the Blessed Lord said. “Nobody should be jealous of the spiritual master or think of him as an ordinary man, because the spiritual master is the sum total of all demigods.”

That is, the *ācārya* has been identified with God Himself. He has nothing to do with the affairs of this mundane world. He does not descend here to meddle with the affairs of temporary necessities, but to deliver the fallen, conditioned souls, or entities who have come here to the material world with a motive of enjoying by the mind and the five organs of sense perception. He appears before us to reveal the light of the Vedas and to bestow upon us the blessings of full-fledged freedom, for which we should hanker at every step of our life's journey.

“...all of us can lend our
eager ears for the aural reception of
the transcendental sound transmitted
from that region to this through the
unadulterated medium of *śrī gurudeva*,
or *Śrī Vyāsadeva*.”

The transcendental knowledge of the Vedas was first uttered by God to Brahmā, the creator of this particular universe. From Brahmā the knowledge descended to Nārada, from Nārada to Vyāsadeva, from Vyāsadeva to Madhva, and in this process of disciplic succession the transcendental knowledge was transmitted by one disciple to another till it reached Lord Gaurāṅga, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, who posed as the disciple and successor of Śrī Īśvara Purī. The present *ācāryadeva* is the tenth disciplic representative from Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, the original representative of Lord Caitanya who preached this transcendental tradition in its fullness. The knowledge that we receive from our *gurudeva* is not different from that imparted by God Himself and the succession of the *ācāryas* in the preceptorial line of Brahmā. We adore this auspicious day as *śrī vyāsa-pūjā-tithi*, because the *ācārya* is the living representative of Vyāsadeva, the divine compiler of the Vedas, the Purāṇas, the *Bhagavad-gītā*, the *Mahābhārata* and the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*.

Surrender to Śrī Gurudeva is Essential to Enter the Absolute Realm

Gentlemen, our knowledge is so poor, our senses are so imperfect, and our sources are so limited that it is not possible for us to have even the slightest knowledge of the absolute region without surrendering ourselves at the lotus feet of Śrī Vyāsadeva or his bona fide representative. Every moment we are being deceived by the knowledge of our direct perception. It is all the creation, or concoction, of the mind, which is always deceiving, changing and flickering. We cannot know anything of the transcendental region by our limited, perverted method of observation and experiment. But all of us can lend our eager ears for the aural reception of the transcendental sound transmitted from that region to this through the unadulterated medium of *śrī gurudeva*, or Śrī Vyāsadeva. Therefore, gentlemen, we should surrender ourselves today at the feet

of the representative of Śrī Vyāsadeva for the elimination of all our differences bred by our unsubmissive attitude. It is accordingly said in *Śrī Gītā* (4.34):

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

Understand that transcendental knowledge by offering your prostrated obeisances to the spiritual master who imparts such knowledge, asking him relevant questions and rendering service to him. Those who have direct perception of the Supreme Absolute Truth and are well-versed in the imports of the scriptures can enlighten you by instructing you on that science.

To receive the transcendental knowledge we must completely surrender ourselves to the real *ācārya* in a spirit of ardent inquiry and service. Actual performance of service to the Absolute under the guidance of the *ācārya* is the only vehicle by which we can assimilate the transcendental knowledge. Today's meeting for offering our humble services and homage to the feet of the *ācāryadeva* will enable us to be favored with the capacity for assimilating the transcendental knowledge so kindly transmitted by him to all persons, without distinction.

Gentlemen, we are all more or less proud of our past Indian civilization, but we actually do not know the real nature of that civilization. We cannot be proud of our past material civilization, which is now a thousand times greater than in days gone by. It is said that we are passing through the age of darkness, the Kali-yuga.

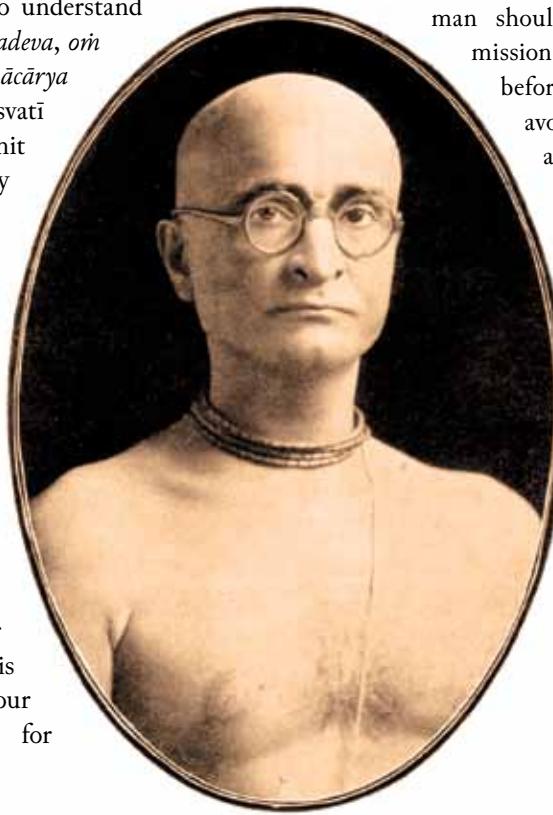
Śrī Guru's Divine Message is the Congenial Medicine for Suffering Humanity

Thus, while others were yet in the womb of historical oblivion, the sages of India had developed a different kind of civilization, which enabled them to know themselves. They had discovered that we are not at all material entities, but that we are all spiritual, permanent and indestructible servants of the Absolute. But because we have, against our better judgment, chosen to completely identify ourselves with this present material existence, our sufferings have multiplied according to the inexorable law of birth and death, with its consequent diseases and anxieties.

These sufferings cannot be really mitigated by any provision of material happiness, because matter and spirit are completely different elements. It is just as if you took an aquatic animal out of water and put it on the land, supplying all manner of happiness possible on land. The deadly sufferings of the animal are not capable of being relieved at all until it is taken out of its foreign environment. Spirit and matter are completely contradictory things. All of us

are spiritual entities. We cannot have perfect happiness, which is our birthright, however much we may meddle with the affairs of mundane things. Perfect happiness can be ours only when we are restored to our natural state of spiritual existence. This is the distinctive message of our ancient Indian civilization, this is the message of the *Gītā*, this is the message of the Vedas and the Purāṇas, and this is the message of all the real *ācāryas*, including our present *ācāryadeva*, in the line of Lord Caitanya.

Gentlemen, although it is imperfectly that we have been enabled by his grace to understand the sublime messages of our *ācāryadeva*, *om viṣṇupāda paramahāṁsa parivrājakaśāra* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, we must admit that we have realized definitely that the divine message from his holy lips is the congenial thing for suffering humanity. All of us should hear him patiently. If we listen to the transcendental sound without unnecessary opposition, he will surely have mercy upon us. The *ācārya*'s message is to take us back to our original home, back to God. Let me repeat, therefore, that we should hear him patiently, follow him in the measure of our conviction, and bow down at his lotus feet for releasing us from our present causeless unwillingness for serving the Absolute and all souls.



Śrī Guru Fully Develops the Rational Portion of Our Life

We have scarcely tried to give any food to the soul, which is distinct from the body and mind; therefore we are all committing suicide in the proper sense of the term. The message of the *ācāryadeva* is to give us a warning to halt such wrong activities. Let us therefore bow down at his lotus feet for the unalloyed mercy and kindness he has bestowed upon us.

Gentlemen, do not for a moment think that my *gurudeva* wants to put a complete brake on the modern civilization – an impossible feat. But let us learn from him the art of making the best use of a bad bargain, and let us understand the importance of this human life, which is fit for the highest development of true consciousness. The best use of

this rare human life should not be neglected. As it is said in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.9.29):

*labdhvā sudurlabham idam babu-sambhavānte
mānuṣyam arthatad amityam apīha dhīrah
tūrṇan̄ yateta na pated anu mr̄tyu yāvan
niḥśreyasāya viṣayāḥ khalu sarvataḥ syāt*

This human form of life is obtained after many, many births, and although it is not permanent, it can offer the highest benefits. Therefore a sober and intelligent man should immediately try to fulfil his mission and attain the highest profit in life before another death occurs. He should avoid sense gratification, which is available in all circumstances.

Let us not misuse this human life in the vain pursuit of material enjoyment, or, in other words, for the sake of only eating, sleeping, fearing and sensuous activities. The *ācāryadeva*'s message is conveyed by the words of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī (*Bhakti-rasāmr̄ta-sindhu* 1.2.255–256):

*anāsaktasya viṣayān
yathārham upayuñjataḥ
nirbandhabh krsna-sambandhe
yuktam vairāgyam ucyate
prāpañcikatayā buddhyā
hari-sambandhi-vastunaḥ
mumukṣubhiḥ parityāgo
vairāgyam phalgu kathyate*

**"He is our eye-opener,
our eternal father,
our eternal preceptor
and our eternal guide."**

One is said to be situated in the fully renounced order of life if he lives in accordance with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He should be without attachment for sense gratification and should accept only what is necessary for the upkeep of the body. On the other hand, one who renounces things that could be used in the service of Kṛṣṇa, under the pretext that such things are material, does not practice complete renunciation.

The purport of these *ślokas* can only be realized by fully developing the rational portion of our life, not the animal portion. Sitting at the feet of the *ācāryadeva*, let us try to understand from this transcendental source of knowledge what we are, what this universe is, what God is, and what our relationship with Him is. The message of

Lord Caitanya is the message for the living entities and the message of the living world. Lord Caitanya did not bother Himself for the upliftment of this dead world, which is suitably named Martyaloka, the world where everything is destined to die. He appeared before us four hundred fifty years ago to tell us something of the transcendental universe, where everything is permanent and everything is for the service of the Absolute. But recently Lord Caitanya has been misrepresented by some unscrupulous persons, and the highest philosophy of the Lord has been misinterpreted to be the cult of the lowest type of society. We are glad to announce tonight that our *ācāryadeva*, with his usual kindness, saved us from this horrible type of degradation, and therefore we bow down at his lotus feet with all humility.

Shun the Empiricists

Gentlemen, it has been a mania of the cultured (or uncultured) society of the present day to accredit the Personality of Godhead with merely impersonal features and to stultify Him by claiming that He has no senses, no form, no activity, no head, no legs and no enjoyment. This has also been the pleasure of the modern scholars due to their sheer lack of proper guidance and true introspection in the spiritual realm. All these empiricists think alike: all the enjoyable things should be monopolized by the human society, or by a particular class only, and the impersonal God should be a mere order-supplier for their whimsical feats. We are happy that we have been relieved of this horrible type of malady by the mercy of His Divine Grace *paramahansa parivrājakācārya* Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He is our eye-opener, our eternal father, our eternal preceptor and our eternal guide. Let us therefore bow down at his lotus feet on this auspicious day.

Gentlemen, although we are like ignorant children regarding knowledge of the Transcendence, still His Divine Grace, my *gurudeva*, has kindled a small fire within us to dissipate the invincible darkness of empirical knowledge. We are now so much on the safe side that no amount of philosophical argument by the empiric schools of thought can deviate us an inch from the position of our eternal dependence on the lotus feet of His Divine Grace. Furthermore, we are prepared to challenge the most erudite scholars of the *māyāvāda* school and prove that the Personality of Godhead and His transcendental sports in Goloka alone constitute the sublime information of the Vedas. There are explicit indications of this in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (8.13.1 and *Rg Veda*, 1.22.20):

śyāmāc chavalām prapadye
śavalāc chyāmām prapadye

To receive the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, I surrender unto His energy (Rādhā), and to receive the mercy of His energy, I surrender unto Kṛṣṇa.

The Secret of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā

The plain truth so vividly explained in the *Gītā*, which is the central lesson of the Vedas, is not understood or even suspected by the most powerful scholars of the empiric schools. Herein lies the secret of *śrī vyāsa-pūjā*. When we meditate on the transcendental pastimes of the Absolute Godhead, we are proud to feel that we are His eternal servitors, and we become jubilant and dance with joy. All glory to my divine master, for it is he who has out of his unceasing flow of mercy stirred up within us such a movement of eternal existence. Let us bow down at his lotus feet.

Gentlemen, had he not appeared before us to deliver us from the thrall of this gross worldly delusion, surely we should have remained for lives and ages in the darkness of helpless captivity. Had he not appeared before us, we would not have been able to understand the eternal truth of the sublime teachings of Lord Caitanya. Had he not appeared before us, we could not have been able to know the significance of the first *śloka* of the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.1):

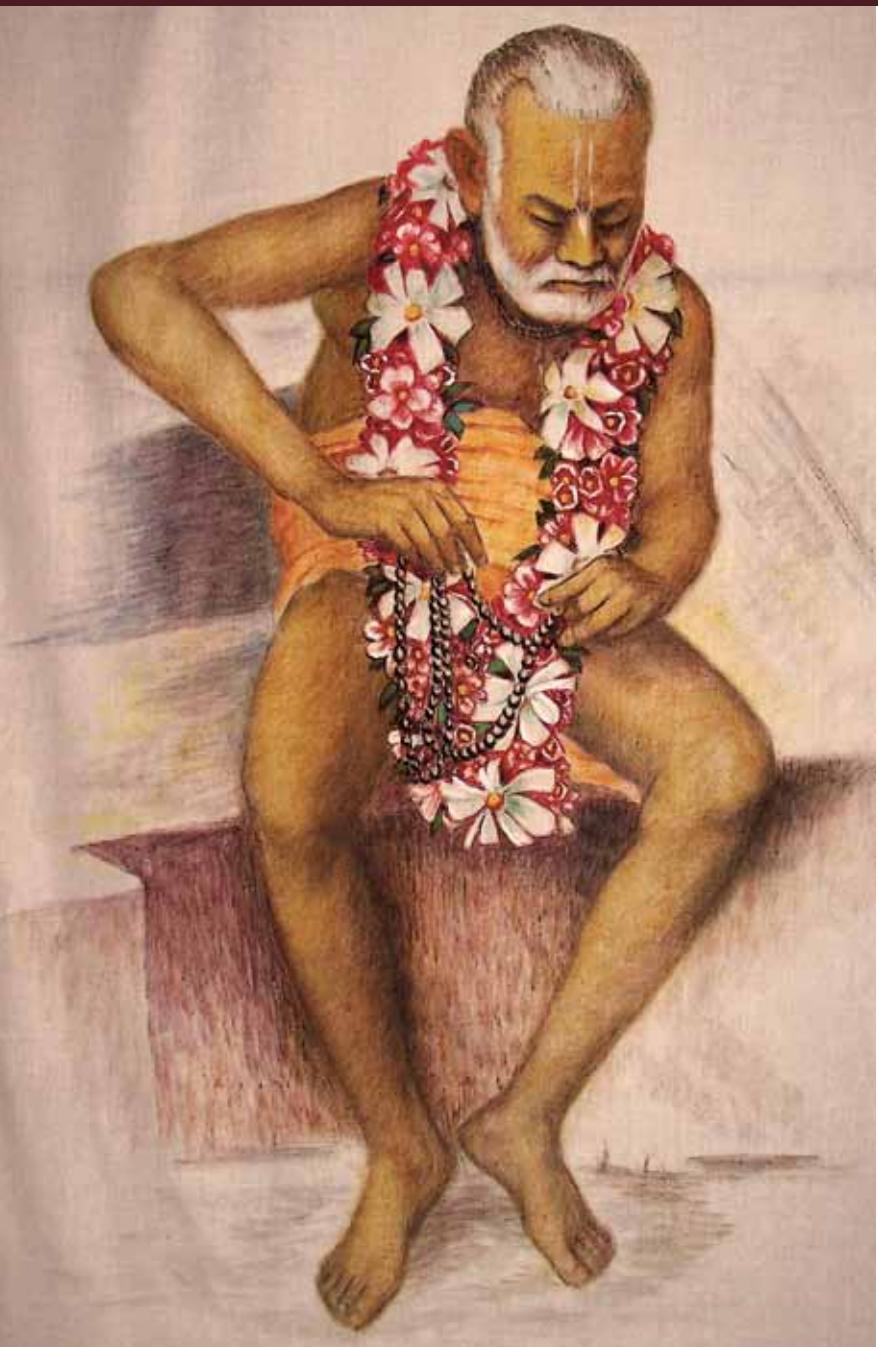
īśvarāḥ paramāḥ kṛṣṇāḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, is the embodiment of eternity, knowledge and bliss. He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the controller of all lesser controllers, and the source of all incarnations. He has no beginning or origin, though He is the source of everything and the cause of all causes.

Personally, I have no hope for any direct service for the coming *crores* of births of the sojourn of my life, but I am confident that some day or other I shall be delivered from this mire of delusion in which I am at present so deeply sunk. Therefore let me with all my earnestness pray at the lotus feet of my divine master to allow me to suffer the lot for which I am destined due to my past misdoings, but to let me have this power of recollection: that I am nothing but a tiny servant of the Almighty Absolute Godhead, realized through the unflinching mercy of my divine master. Let me therefore bow down at his lotus feet with all the humility at my command. 

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Fulfilling Śrī Guru's



Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja is the eternal object of worship for Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is, in turn, the dear-most associate of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī. This secret will never be embraced in the hearts of those who try to calculate, on the basis of their external vision, someone's intimacy with *śrī guru* or any exalted personality.

Śrīla Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda was not the *dikṣā* disciple of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī, according to the *pāñcarātrika* system. Furthermore, he did not massage the hands, feet and limbs of Śrīla Bābājī Mahārāja, nor did he cook for him or render other personal services. Also, he never performed the service of carrying the elderly Bābājī Mahārāja from one place to another on his shoulders, as some other disciples did. Nor, from an ordinary perspective, did he continually remain by his side. Yet, in the *śrī rūpānuga* lineage, it was Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura alone who completely fulfilled the innermost desires of *vaiṣṇava-sārvabhauma* Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja and is thus his dear-most servant (*preṣṭha-sevaka*) and intimate associate (*antarāṅga nija-jana*). This was solely because the *citta-vṛtti*, or inclination of heart, and philosophical conceptions of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura were identical with those of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja.

Innermost Desire

by the disciples of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda

An excerpt from *Rūpānuga Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas in the Gauḍīya Sampradāya*
from the chapter on the life of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja
by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

In that place where the *guru* and disciple share the same propensity of heart, then, like *hari-hara** , the qualities of intimacy (*antaraṅgatā*) and dearness (*preṣṭhatā*) manifest. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura advented solely to fulfil the heart's desire (*mano'bhiṣṭa*) of Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī, and he performed *guru-sevā* by offering him everything he possessed. He did not perform partial service, nor did he cheat himself by accepting wealth, women, prestige or any other type of deception as remuneration for his *guru-sevā*.

The crest jewel of bona fide spiritual masters, *vaiṣṇava-sārvabhauma* Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, therefore entrusted Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura with the responsibility of disseminating the message of Śrī Gaurasundara among the scholarly section of society by writing books to propagate Gaura's holy abode (*gaura-dhāma*), Gaura's holy name (*gaura-nāma*) and Gaura's very desires (*gaura-kāma*). Indeed, Śrīla Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja's own intense enthusiasm to preach the *dharma* of *śuddha-bhakti* manifested exclusively in his true follower, Śrī Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Thus inspired, the *nitya-siddha* associate of Gaura, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, fully dedicated his life and soul to preach the inner heart's desire of Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga. ☺

Translated from
Rūpānuga Vaiṣṇava Ācāryas in the Gauḍīya Sampradāya
Compiled and translated into Hindi by
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja



* At Harihara-kṣetra Navadvīpa, Śrī Hari (Viṣṇu) and Śrī Hara (Śiva) are manifest together in one deity, signifying that as the topmost Vaiṣṇava, Sadaśiva is very dear to Śrī Hari, and therefore non-different from Him.



Excerpts from

Glorification Vaiṣṇavas

Śrī Bhagavān Comes as Vyāsa to Reveal Himself

Today is a special day. On the occasion of someone's¹ appearance day, an arrangement is made for the special worship of śrī guru, Vaiṣṇavas and Bhagavān. Those in the *sannyāsa* order coming in the line of Śrī Vyāsa, perform the worship of previous *gurus* on their respective appearance days. The invocation and performance of *vyāsa-pūjā* on the *guru*'s appearance day, includes the worship of Bhagavān Śrī Vyāsadeva and that of the whole Vaiyāsaki *sampradāya* (that *sampradāya* in which *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is spoken by Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the son of Vyāsadeva). Without following Vyāsa, there is no real fruit of *guru-pūjā*. As His *prakāśa-vigraha*, Śrī Vyāsadeva is non-different from Bhagavān Himself. In order to reveal Himself, Bhagavān has manifested Himself in the form of transcendental sound as *veda-śāstra*. Furthermore, since the Vedas are incomprehensible by ordinary intelligence, there was a need to expand and explain them. Therefore, Bhagavān Himself, as Vyāsa, performed the act of expanding the Vedas. He Himself is *tattva-vastu*, the Absolute Reality, and unless He makes Himself known to others, no one can know Him in truth.

*vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyo
vedānta-kṛd veda vid eva cāham*

Bhagavad-gītā (15.15)

1 Since this lecture was given on his own appearance day, Śrīla Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja uses the pronoun 'someone', in his humility.

of Śrī Hari, Guru & on Vyāsa-pūjā Day

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

7 January 2002

at Śrī Keśava Gosvāmī Gauḍīya Matha, Siliguri
(on the occasion of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā)



Śrī Kṛṣṇa has said: "I am indeed that *vastu* (entity) that is established by the Vedas, I alone know the import of the Vedas, and I alone have manifested Vedānta. Therefore, without the guidance of Vyāsa, there is no other bona fide or proper means to know Bhagavān."

Śrī gurudeva, as the representative of Śrī Vyāsadeva, reveals *bhagavat-tattva*. Through *guru-pūjā*, *vyāsa-pūjā* is indeed accomplished, and this is the speciality of the Vyāsānuga *sampradāya*. Śrī *guru-tattva* and śrī *vyāsa-tattva* are the same. For this reason, śrī *vyāsa-pūjā* means to offer *pādya*, foot-bathing water, to the lotus feet of śrī *guru*. The disciple who knows the inner heart's desire of śrī *gurudeva* understands that he wants him to engage in perfect *bhajana*. That distinguished service to Bhagavān is not merely external; it is the real offering of *pādya*.

The Necessity of Accepting a Guru

Śāstra says:

*tad-vijñānārthatam sa gurum evābbigacchet
samit-pāṇih śrotriyan brahma-niṣṭham*

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (1.2.12)

To realize the science of the Absolute Truth, Śrī Bhagavān, one must humbly approach, with firewood in hand, a spiritual master who is learned in the Vedas and firmly devoted to the Absolute Truth.

The word *tad-vijñānārthatam* does not only mean *tattva-jñāna* (knowledge of the Absolute Truth), but rather *tattva-jñāna* endowed with realization. In other words, one has to attain the *tattva-jñāna* of *prema-bhakti*.

Śrī Vyāsadeva has said in the very beginning of his *Vedānta-sūtra*, "athāto brahma jijñāsa – I do not know the identity of *brahma* and I do not know my relationship with Him. I want to know these truths. If this knowledge were within me, I would not have made such inquiry. I therefore need a teacher who can bestow such knowledge." This *sūtra* gives instruction on the necessity of accepting a genuine *guru* who knows the identity of *brahma*.

Gurum eva abbigacchet. The words *gurum eva* declare that it is imperative to approach a *guru*. One cannot know that Supreme Absolute Being through any other source. Therefore, one has to do *abbigamana* to that *guru*. *Abbigamana* means to approach *guru* with service temperament and honest enquiry.

*tad viddhi pranipātena paripraśnena sevayā
upadeksyanti te jñānam jñāninas tattva-darśinah*

Bhagavad-gītā (4.34)

Acquire this knowledge by offering prostrated obeisances to a *guru* who imparts transcendental knowledge, by asking relevant questions from him and by rendering service to him. The *tattva-darśīs*, who are expert in the imports of the scriptures, and the *jñānīs*



who have realized the Absolute Reality, will enlighten you with that knowledge.

The explanation of *abbigamana* is found in this verse from the *Gītā*. *Abbigamana* means approaching *guru* with *pranipata* (self-surrender), *paripraśna* (sincere and honest inquiry, devoid of a challenging mood), and *sevā* (a serving temperament). In the absence of these three, there will not be proper reciprocation with him.

*dadāti pratigr̥hṇāti guhyam ākhyāti pṛcchati
bhuṅkte bhojayate caiva ṣaḍ-vidham priti-lakṣaṇam*

Upadeśāmr̥ta (Verse 4)

Offering pure devotees items in accordance with their requirements; accepting *prasāda*, the remnant items given by pure devotees; revealing to pure devotees one's confidential realizations concerning *bhajana*; inquiring from them about their confidential realizations; honouring the *prasāda* remnants given by devotees with great love; and affectionately feeding them *prasāda* – these are the six symptoms of loving association with devotees.

Śrī Guru is Witness to the Absolute Truth

A person devoid of complete love for that *guru* will not be able to understand the moods of his heart. Thus, without *abbigamana*, a person cannot obtain *tattva-jñāna* and will only waste time. Yet one must also consider the nature and speciality of the person he is thinking to approach. *Śāstra* says *śrotriyāṁ brahma-niṣṭham*. The *guru* must be *brahma-niṣṭhā*, steadfast in realization of transcendental Reality, and he must be in the path, or succession, of *gurus* who have heard the divine message from an authentic source (*śrauta-panthā*).

*tasmād gurum prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare ca niṣṇātāṁ brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.3.21)

How can a person who is desirous of knowing what duty is and what it is not obtain the topmost benefit? In order to understand this, one must approach the lotus feet of


“*Bhagavān’s eternal associates render service to Him, and it is gurudeva who manifests that service. Therefore the quality of being guru (gurutva) is fundamental in an eternal associate.*”


a bona fide *guru*. One who is expert in understanding all the conclusions of the revealed scriptures such as the Vedas, who has direct experience and realization of Bhagavān, and who is not influenced by any kind of material agitation is known as a bona fide *guru*.

Those who want to know and understand the topmost, complete and eternal auspiciousness and how to attain it should surrender to a *guru* who is expert in the realization of *śabda-brahma* (the Vedas) and in realization of *para-brahma* (Bhagavān). *Śabda-brahma* means *nāma-brahma – vācaka-brahma*, the transcendental sound vibration of the names of Bhagavān, and *para-brahma* means *nāmi-brahma – vācyā-brahma*, Bhagavān Himself. The bona fide *guru* is a realized soul. He is well-versed in both of these *svarūpas* of Bhagavān. He is not a professional priest, nor is he a platform speaker. He is *tattva-darśī* – he sees *tattva-vastu* and realizes it. *Tattva-vastu* means Bhagavān and His name, form, qualities, associates, pastimes and abode. These are all *tattva-vastu*, and *śrī gurudeva* is *tattva-darśī*.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa has described that only that *gurudeva* who is realized in the Absolute Truth, is in fact His very own nature (*svarūpa*):

*ācāryam mām vijāniyān nāvamanyeta karhicit
na martya-buddhyāsūyeta sarva-deva-mayo guru*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.17.27)

One should know the *ācārya* to be Me and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative (sum total) of all the demigods.

Śrī Guru is Bhagavān's Direct Manifestation and His Devoted Servant

One should not think that *śrī gurudeva* is directly Kṛṣṇa Himself. Those who conclude this have been condemned by *śāstra* as wicked and possessed of a hellish mentality. Although Bhagavān and His associates are in truth non-different, it does not mean they are the same entity. Bhagavān's eternal associates render service to Him, and it is *gurudeva* who manifests that service. Therefore the quality of being *guru* (*gurutva*) is fundamental in an eternal associate.

*yadyapi āmāra guru—caitanyaera dāsa
tathāpi jāniye āmi tāṁhāra prakāśa*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 1.44)

Even though I am aware that my *gurudeva* is the devoted servant of Śrī Caitanya, I am also conscious that he is a complete manifestation (*prakāśa*) of the Supreme Lord (Śrī Caitanya).

Just as sunlight cannot be separated from the sun and is therefore non-different from the sun, similarly, *gurudeva* cannot be separated from Bhagavān. Furthermore, just as sunlight is subordinate to the sun, *gurudeva* as *guru-tattva* is subordinate to Bhagavān; he is Bhagavān's *sevaka-tattva*. For this reason, *śāstra* describes *gurudeva* as non-different from Kṛṣṇa.

*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvyata eva sadbhīḥ
kintu prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī caranāravindam*

All scriptures proclaim *śrī gurudeva* to be *sākṣat-hari*, non-different from the Lord, and this is acknowledged by all saintly persons. Yet this is because *śrī gurudeva* is also extremely dear to the Supreme Lord Śrī Hari, being His most confidential servitor (*acintya-bhedābheda-prakāśa-vigraba*, the inconceivable manifestation who is one with and different from the Lord). I adore the lotus feet of that *śrī gurudeva*, which are the abode of grace and auspiciousness.

Thus, it has been described everywhere that *gurudeva* is most dear to Bhagavān. It is for this reason that he is non-different from Bhagavān. Śrila Sarasvatī Prabhupāda has therefore said that one aspect of Kṛṣṇa is *viṣaya-jātiya* (the object of love) and the other aspect is *āśraya-jātiya* (the abode of love). In these two wonderful aspects of revelry, variegatedness finds its completeness.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *viṣaya-jātiya* in full, and *śrī gurupāda-padma* is *āśraya-jātiya* in full. It is for this reason that *gurudeva* has been described as *kṛṣṇa-svarūpa*. He has not been described as Kṛṣṇa Himself. Why is this?

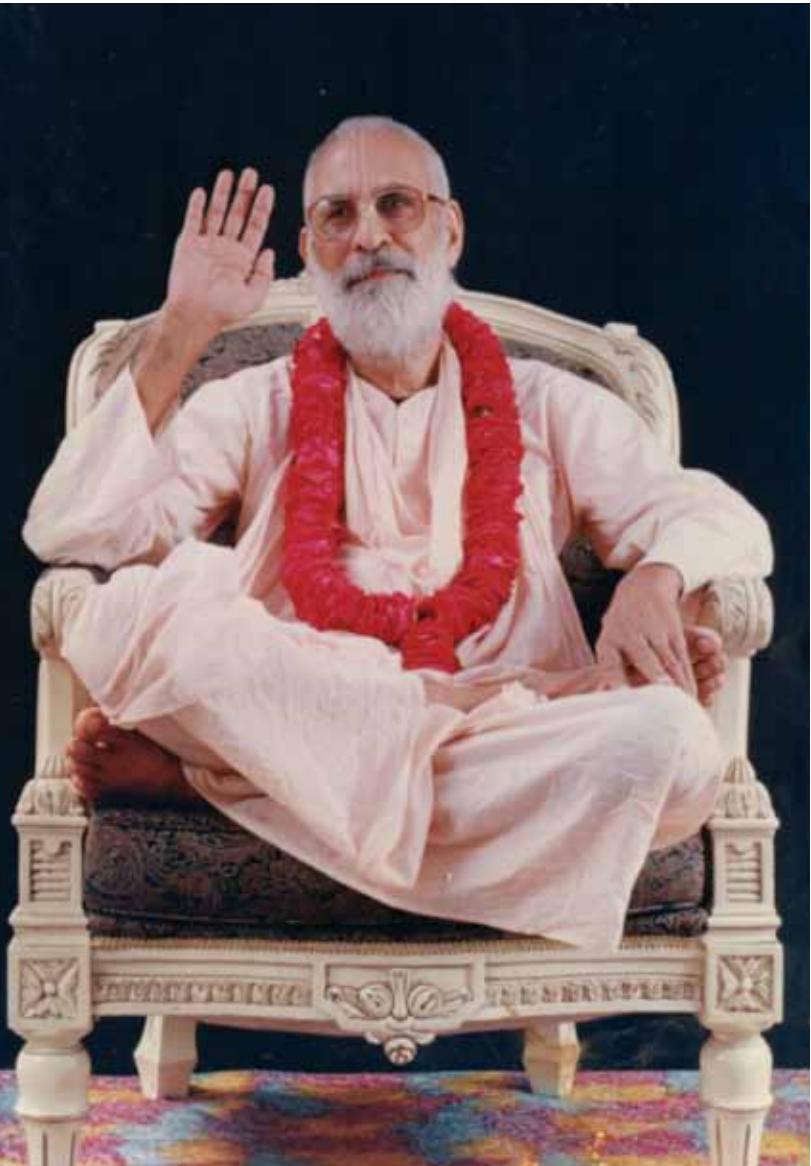
kṛṣṇa-bhakte kṛṣṇera guna sakali sañcāre

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 22.75)

All the transcendental qualities of Kṛṣṇa gradually develop in Kṛṣṇa's devotee.

Śrī Guru endows the living being with Gurutva, the greatness found in Kṛṣṇa

In the association of the pure devotee, the knot consisting of all types of *avidyā* is removed from the *jīva*'s heart, all doubt is cut asunder, and all *karma* is destroyed. In this way, all types of paltriness in the *jīva* are removed, and *gurutva*, the quality of greatness which is inherent within Kṛṣṇa, is transmitted into him. “*Parama durmati chila, tā' re gorā uddhārila, tān'rā haila patita-pāvana* – when extremely wretched and sinful persons were delivered by Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, they, in turn, became the deliverers of the fallen” (*Prārthanā*, song 37 – “Gaurāṅga-niṣṭhā”).



"Unless the potency of Bhagavān is transmitted to the jīva, the jīva does not attain the quality of guru."



*kibā vipra, kibā nyāsī, śūdra kene naya
jei krṣṇa-tattva-vettā, sei 'guru' haya*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 8.127)

Whether one is a *brāhmaṇa*, a *sannyāsī*, or a *śūdra*, if he is fully conversant with all the truths regarding the transcendental knowledge of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he can become a *guru*.

Gurutva, the quality of greatness, is not ascertained by external mundane vision. One's *gurutva* manifests to the same degree that his eternal function (*svarūpa-dharma*) develops within him. It has therefore been said, "śūdra kene naya – whether one is a *śūdra* or not." But is a devotee of Bhagavān a *śūdra*? Never!

Investing his potency in those who are under His shelter, Bhagavān sends them as *guru* to this world for the welfare of the *jīvas*. Unless the potency of Bhagavān is transmitted to the *jīva*, the *jīva* does not attain the quality of *guru*. Lacking in this potency, the insignificant *jīva* thus falls into the waves of materialism. But this does not happen to a *guru* who is empowered by the potency of Kṛṣṇa. It is therefore said, "kabhu nā bādhibe tomāra viṣaya-taraṅga – the waves of materialism will not hinder you."

Real Guru Never Performs any Act of Violence

Elucidating on this statement by Mahāprabhu (*kabhu nā bādhibe...*), Śrīla Sarasvatī Prabhupāda has said, "Give up *hiṁsā* (malice, envy and violence) and be compassionate to the *jīvas*. Do not act as *guru* to commit violence. Do not act as *guru* to sink into materialism. But if you can become My sincere servant and attain My potency, you will have nothing to fear."

This means that the potency of Bhagavān is transmitted into Bhagavān's devotee when the devotee is free from deceit. Without obtaining that potency, one's compassion for the *jīvas* is actually *jīva-hiṁsā*, violence to the living entity.

What does *jīva-hiṁsā* mean? Śrīla Prabhupāda defines it as being narrow-minded or miserly in propagating *śuddha-bhakti* and giving shelter to *Māyāvādīs*, *anyābhilāśīs* (those who act for personal, selfish motives) and *karmīs*, or speaking to please them." *Jīva-hiṁsā* actually means to give fuel to the *jīva*'s desire for liberation and their hunger for sense enjoyment, to conceal the impartial truth of *śāstra*, and to support the whims of the mind. *Karmīs*, *jñānīs* and *yogīs* are selfish and not surrendered, and they follow the ascending process. Donning the dress of a *guru*, they commit great *jīva-hiṁsā*. It is never possible for the inherent function of the spirit soul to manifest through their endeavours in *karma*, *jñāna* or *yoga*. Such persons are non-Vaiṣṇavas.

One Cannot Perform Kṛṣṇa-bhajana Without Becoming Gurudevatātmā

Viśaya-vigraha Bhagavān, the Supreme Lord who is the object of the devotee's *prema*, is the controller of all controllers, the omnipotent Lord of all lords (*sarveśvareśvara*). In the same way āśraya-vigraha śrī gurudeva, the abode of *prema*, is not an ordinary *jīva*, but the sum total of all the demigods (*sarva-devamaya*). He is *iśvara* in that he has the qualities of the Supreme Controller. One who does not adopt this understanding will consider *gurudeva* to be an ordinary human being. As a result, he will have to face great danger, since his attachment to worldliness, or mundane qualities, will never be removed.

For this reason, the phrase *gurudevatātmā* has been used (*Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.37). Only that person who knows his *gurudeva* to be *devatā*, his worshipful lord, and who regards him as *ātmā*, meaning *priya*, or dear like his own self, is *gurudevatātmā*. Unless one becomes *gurudevatātmā*, one cannot render intimate service to *guru* (*viśrambheṇa guroḥ sevā*); and unless one becomes *gurudevatātmā* one cannot perform *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*.

tāte kṛṣṇa bhaje, kare gurura sevana
māyā-jāla chute, pāya kṛṣṇera caraṇa

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 22.25)

If the conditioned soul engages in the service of the Lord and simultaneously carries out the orders of his spiritual master and serves him, he can get out of the clutches of *māyā* and become eligible for shelter at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

The relationship between *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* and *guru-sevā* is inseparable.

The Awakening Jīva Meets the Succession of Gurus

When the *jīva* becomes ready to renounce his absorption in *māyā*, the indwelling Lord (*antaryāmī*) awakens the *jīva*'s sense of wisdom regarding *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* and externally manifests as an exalted saint. At that time, the successive appearance of the *vartma-pradarśaka-guru* (who first introduces one to the path of *bhakti*), the *śravaṇa-guru* (from whom one hears knowledge of the *bhaktas*, *bhakti* and *bhagavat-tattva*), the *dikṣā-guru* (who confers spiritual initiation by giving sacred *mantras*), the *bhajana-guru* (who gives instruction on how to perform *bhajana*) and so on occurs in the life of that *jīva*. Śrīla Sarasvatī Prabhupāda said, "The abodes of love (āśraya-jātiya) – that is, our *guru-varga* – appear in various forms to bestow mercy upon me. All are the special manifestation of *gurupāda-padma*, he who bestows transcendental knowledge."

Often the *vartma-pradarśaka-guru* and the *śravaṇa-guru* are the same person. If the *śikṣā-guru* did not instruct us on how to take shelter of *guru-pādapadma* and how to behave towards him, we would not achieve any auspiciousness. He teaches the importance of the *dikṣā-guru* and how to worship him. We must submissively obtain the *mantra* from the *dikṣā-guru*, he who bestows *sambandha-jñāna*, and we receive instructions on the process of *bhajana* from the *bhajana-śikṣā-guru*.

The *dikṣā-guru* and *śikṣā-guru* are one; they are never different. Both are the manifestation of *gurupāda-padma*, he who bestows transcendental knowledge. If someone perceives a difference between them due to their mundane conception, he commits a great offence. Until the conception that *gurudeva* is a mortal being is dispelled, such thoughts cause disturbance. If one is not particularly vigilant in dealing with such thoughts, his pitiable condition will never be rectified. For this reason it has been said:

śrī-guru-caraṇa-padma kevala bhakati-sadma
vando mui sāvadhāna mate

Śrī Prema-bhakti-candrikā

With great care I worship and serve śrī guru's lotus feet, which are a treasure house of unalloyed *prema-bhakti* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

My Gurupāda-padma is the Living Embodiment of Guru-sevā

On this special day (*vyāsa-pūjā*), I remember the supra-human (*atimartya*) character of my *gurupāda-padma*. His foremost characteristic (*vaiśiṣṭya*) is his unparalleled *guru-niṣṭhā*. He is the glowing example of *gurudevatātmā*, as he perceives his *gurudeva* as *devatā*, his worshipful lord, and regards him as more dear than his very own *ātmā*, or soul. My *gurupāda-padma* yearns to perform *guru-sevā* at every moment, just like a highly chaste wife always meditates on her service to her husband. In every respect he offers his own soul, mind, body and everything at the lotus feet of Śrīla Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. Śrī Kureśa, the disciple of Śrī Rāmānuja, set a stellar example of *guru-sevā* by offering his very life in service to his *gurudeva*. My śrī *gurupāda-padma* similarly offered his life to his *guru*, protecting Śrīla Prabhupāda from the challenging uproars of people with a demoniac mentality.²

² Once, to protect his *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, from a violent mob, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja exchanged clothes with him. For a full account of this pastime, refer to *Ācārya Kesari Śrī Śrimad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī: His Life and Teachings* by Śrī Śrimad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Prabhupāda manifested this pastime to reveal the incomparable *guru-niṣṭhā* in the heart of Gurupāda-padma. If we compare the *guru-niṣṭhā* of some of the disciples bearing the appellation *mahopadeśaka* (great scholarly instructor) and *mabā-mahopadeśaka* (most exalted scholarly instructor)³ with the *guru-niṣṭhā* of one who is a mere *upadeśaka pāṇḍita*⁴ (instructing scholar) but who is quietly engaged in performing deep and intimate service, it is like holding a glow-worm to the sun. By this pastime, Prabhupāda destroyed their boastful pride.

Gurupāda-padma had so much *guru-niṣṭhā* in the *tattva-siddhānta* of Prabhupāda that it astounded people. When there was an attempt to challenge the *vicāra-dhārā* (current of conception) of Śrīla Prabhupāda, Gurupāda-padma roared like a lion and powerfully refuted them. “I do not know the previous *gosvāmīs*, but I accept the *vicāra-dhārā* of Śrīla Prabhupāda as the unmistakable truth, and I shall try to know and understand the previous *gosvāmīs* in light of that. Ācāryera yei mata, sei mata sāra āra yata mata yānka chārakhāra – The opinion of the ācārya is the sum and substance. Let all other opinions be destroyed.’ This is my conclusion.” Upon hearing this, all were amazed and bowed their heads. This incident is most instructive.

Often, the words *guru-niṣṭhā* and *guru-bhakti* are not used in their proper context. A person who has *niṣṭhā* in one who is *guru* in name only inevitably becomes degraded. *Guru* means ‘he who is *vāstava-vastu*, non-different from Reality, and he who is *kṛṣṇa-vastu*, non-different from Kṛṣṇa’. The so-called *gurus* in various *apa-sampradāyas* are not *kṛṣṇa-svarūpa*, the very nature of Kṛṣṇa. When a *jīva* attributes *niṣṭhā* or *bhakti* to them it is simply the product of his ignorance. Our attempts to place our faith in such persons can never be called *ādau guru-niṣṭhā* (the beginning of *guru-niṣṭhā*) or *guru-bhakti*.

Gurupāda-padma’s Unprecedented Guru-niṣṭhā

The *guru-niṣṭhā* of Gurupāda-padma for Prabhupāda identifies his internal confidential relationship with him and his deep relationship with *vāstava-vastu*. Gurupāda-padma understood that the conception (*vicāra*) of the previous *gosvāmīs* was faultless, but *jīvas* gripped by ignorance are likely to misunderstand these conclusions. If, however, one adopts the ideal, or the line of thought of Prabhupāda,

3 Titles given by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda to a number of his followers

4 Title attributed to Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

there is not even the slightest possibility of coming to an erroneous conclusion.

Whenever one who had had any connection with Prabhupāda came to Gurupāda-padma, be he a temple devotee, a renunciant, a householder or an ordinary person, Gurupāda-padma would become overwhelmed with bliss, thereby open-heartedly manifesting his deep intimacy with Prabhupāda. “*Guru-sevaka haya mānya āpanāra* – the servant of *guru* is honourable for us.”

Gurupāda-padma would feel grateful and indebted to anyone who had served Prabhupāda in any way and thus would develop a relationship with that person. And since Prabhupāda was the sole object of his heart’s affection, he would even offer that person financial assistance if needed. He was naturally bound in affection with those connected

to Prabhupāda. On the other hand, he was as hard as a thunderbolt with those who, on the pretext of performing *sevā* for Prabhupāda, acted against him. All this is natural when there is a true relationship.

Gurudeva is the sole custodian of all service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. Any type of service to Them is in fact service to *gurupāda-padma*. *Gurudeva* is so adjusted with the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa that his only bliss lies in giving Him pleasure – he has no other source of happiness. Therefore, in rendering service to Kṛṣṇa for His pleasure, one indeed performs service to *śrī gurudeva*. In this way, everyone is in fact the servant of *gurudeva*. Since Prabhupāda is the only wealth of his heart, Gurupāda-padma would feel indebted to anyone who had ever served him, even if for but a moment.

This unprecedented *guru-niṣṭhā* of Gurupāda-padma is his primary quality. His countless other qualities, specialties and characteristics are all subordinate to this main quality. For want of time, it is impossible to appreciate or discuss all these divine characteristics. *Vyāsa-pūjā* means to take shelter at the lotus feet of *guru* and offer oneself at those lotus feet. I have tried to accomplish this to the best of my ability. My humble prayer is that out of his causeless mercy, Gurupāda-padma be pleased with me. I also beseech all of you to bestow your blessings upon me so that Gurupāda-padma will always be pleased with me.

*vāñchā-kalpataruḥyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhyeva ca
patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namah*

I offer *pranāmas* unto the Vaiṣṇavas who are just like desire trees, who are an ocean of mercy, and who deliver the fallen, conditioned souls. 

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WHO CAN BE A REAL GURU?

Excerpts from a lecture by
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama
Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Śrī Devānanda Gaudiya Maṭha, Navadvīpa
8 March 1998

A Conditioned Soul is Never Equivalent to Guru

A person perceives the significance (*gurutva*) of a substance according to his qualification. Our endeavour to acquire objects with our senses often meets with failure, and we give up trying. Our senses are especially incapable of attaining that which is beyond this material nature. For this reason the scriptures state:

*aprākṛta vastu nahe prākṛta-gocara
veda-purāṇete ei kabe nirantara*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 9.194)

The Vedas and Purāṇas assess spiritual substance as being perpetually beyond the comprehension of mundane senses.

There is a difference of heaven and hell between my narration of the glories of the spiritual master and the narration of one who is really *tattva-jñā*, well-versed in the conclusions of the scriptures. A soul who is conditioned carries egotistical pride in being a disciple; therefore, his descriptions of his *gurudeva*'s glories lack the potency of one who is a true disciple. My chanting of the holy names of the Lord does not have the same quality as the chanting of a truly qualified person, and the *hari-kathā* spoken by an unqualified person such as me is vastly different from the *hari-kathā* narrated by one who is actually qualified.



With his lotus lips the spiritual master initiates a person by uttering the *mahā-mantra* into his ear: *hare krṣṇa hare krṣṇa krṣṇa krṣṇa hare hare, hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*. A disciple who is still conditioned is never as potent as his spiritual master in uttering the *mahā-mantra*, because he lacks the qualification of his *guru*.

How Many of Us Are Real Disciples?

All of us have accepted a spiritual master, but in doing so, have we acquired the spiritual master's qualities? Among a *guru*'s thousands of disciples, how many actually realize his significance? This calls for serious contemplation. Not all disciples of a spiritual master share the same qualification. There is great variation.

To formally accept initiation from the spiritual master and to take initiation from him in the true sense are quite different. The disciple receives the *dīkṣā-mantras* from *śrī guru*, and when he becomes qualified, he too can become a spiritual master. There is no fault in his doing so. But if the disciple himself accepts disciples before he is qualified, he is not acting in accordance with his level of realization. This is the verdict of the scriptures. It is important to always consider a person's qualification.

Śāstra tells us that ordinary sound vibration (*śabda-samanya*) and transcendental sound vibration (*śabda-brhma*) are completely different. "I am just giving the same *dīkṣā-mantras* that my *gurudeva* gave me, and therefore, the effect will be the same." But this is not so at all. If one accepts formal *dīkṣā* and does not endeavour to advance, he cannot become a real disciple. Only that disciple who possesses the qualities of a *guru* as described in *śāstra* can become *guru*.

*vāco vegarī manasaḥ krodha-vegarī
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam
etān vegān yo viṣabeta dhīraḥ
sarvām apīmāṁ pṛthivīn sa śisyāt*

Śrī Upadesāmrta (1)

A wise and self composed person who can subdue the impetus to speak, the agitation of the mind, the onset of anger, the vehemence of the tongue, the urge of the belly and the agitation of the genitals can instruct the entire world. In other words, all may become disciples of such a self-controlled person.

Such a genuine *guru* can make the whole world his disciple. He is a *govīmī*; his senses are under his control. One who is a *godāsa* is subordinate to his senses. *Godāsa* means 'slave to one's senses' and *govīmī* means 'a master of one's senses'. Their meanings are opposite. Now, when I sincerely analyse my own qualities, the daring concept of



becoming a *guru* is eliminated. If I contemplate becoming *guru* because I am tempted by the fame and worship that this position easily awards, I will never be able to perform the true function of a *guru*.

A Guru Practices What He Preaches

Who is a Vaiṣṇava?

*kanaka-kāminī paratiṣṭhā-bāghinī¹
chāḍiyāche yāre sei ta' vaiṣṇava*

Duṣṭa Mana! Tumi kisera Vaiṣṇava (11)

[Desires for] money, women and fame are like tigresses. Those who have relinquished them are indeed Vaiṣṇavas. Vaiṣṇavas alone are pure and detached devotees who can conquer material existence.

With this qualification, a genuine *guru* can make disciples throughout the world. Simply chanting the *mahā-mantra* - *hare krṣṇa hare krṣṇa krṣṇa hare hare, hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*, does not indicate a person's *gurutva*, qualification to be *guru*.

*āpani ācari dharma jīvere śikhāya
āpani nā kaile dharma śikhāna nā jāya*

One must teach *dharma* to the *jīvas* by personally practising it. If one does not practise, he should not teach others.

*ācinoti yaḥ śāstrārtham ācāre sthāpayaty api
svayam ācarate yasmād ācāryas tena kīrtitaḥ*

Vāyu Purāṇa



“If one accepts
formal *dīkṣā* and
does not endeavour
to advance, he
cannot become a
real disciple.”

An *ācārya* is one who fully understands the conclusions of the revealed scriptures and whose behaviour reflects his deep realization. He is a living example, for he teaches the meaning of the scriptures by both words and deeds.

The above *ślokas* were spoken to emphasize that one who assumes the position of *guru* and gives instruction to others must himself be following that instruction. If he does not, his preaching will never be effective. If a person takes intoxication and then tells others not to do so, his instruction will carry no potency.

The scriptures do not sanction a person becoming *guru* if his behaviour is improper. They explain that he must have realization of *śabda-brahma* (transcendental sound vibration), be must be endowed with realization of *para-brahma* (the Lord's transcendental form) and have full realization of transcendental subjects, such a *kṛṣṇa-tattva*. If he has no such realization, he cannot impart transcendental knowledge to his disciple by speaking mere words. To give *dikṣā* means to bestow transcendental knowledge.

*divyam jñānam yato dadyāt
kuryāt pāpasya saṅkṣayam
tasmat-dikṣetī sā proktā
deśikais tattva-kovidaiḥ*

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa (2.3–4)

One who is fully conversant with *tattva*, philosophical truth, knows that the process of *dikṣā* can awaken a person's transcendental knowledge and annihilate the reactions of his sins.

Qualification is Crucial

One cannot become a *guru* just by memorizing the verses of scriptures, such as the Vedas, and then concocting an explanation for them.

*nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo
na medhayā na babudhā śrutenā
yam evaiṣa vṛṇyute lena labhyas
tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇyute tanurū svām*

Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.23)

Eloquent discourses, outstanding intelligence or extensive and astute hearing will not enable one to attain the Supreme Personality. The Supreme Lord selects who He wants to attain Him. Those persons alone are successful and receive His *darśana*.

We need to deliberate on how much of this transcendental knowledge we have absorbed. Many devotees may take shelter of the same spiritual master. Among them, some have been illuminated by transcendental knowledge, while others are still covered by ignorance. It is inappropriate to blame *śrī guru* for this. Such a difference is based on the different qualifications and endeavours of his disciples. A teacher may give the same lesson to all students, but one student tops the class with excellent marks, while another fails miserably, and yet another barely passes. The teacher has taught them equally well, but their results vary according to their ability. In the same way, one cannot become a spiritual master simply by being a disciple, unless one has the necessary qualification.

Sri Guru is Endowed with Realizations

The Upaniṣads say “*apāni apādau* – the supreme entity (*brahma*) has no hands or legs”. This simply tells us that He does not possess material hands or legs.

In fact, the verse *apāni apādau* has been spoken to establish His transcendental nature and make sure we abandon our material conception of Him. It does not mean He actually possesses no hands or legs. He is described as having a form of eternity, cognizance and bliss (*sac-cid-ānanda*).

What is the meaning of a form composed of *sac-cid-ānanda*? We have heard this from the lips of the previous Vaiṣṇava ācāryas and we are repeating that, but in actuality we have no realization of whether that form is soft, or hard like wood or iron. Only those who have experienced His form can become a *guru*. One who claims to be *guru* without such realization is a false *guru* and his attempts at being a *guru* will fail.

“Come! Come! Embrace Lord Jagannātha!” Saying this, the priests may forcibly make a person embrace the Lord.

“Oh!” the person cries, “I am embracing Lord Jagannātha!”

But what was it like? Did you feel Him burning [in separation] like fire? No, because you do not have experience of Him.

Or someone may say, “I touched the deity of Kṛṣṇa. How cold it was. Since the deity is made of stone, touching Him is like touching ice!”

When someone is devoid of transcendental realization, how can he give transcendental realization to others? I myself do not have that transcendental knowledge, but I proclaim, “Come! Come! I shall bestow transcendental knowledge upon you!” Yet how is this possible?

Measuring Our Progress

*bhaktiḥ pareśānubhavo viraktir
anyatra caiṣa trika eka-kālah
prapadyamānasya yathāśnataḥ syus
tuṣṭiḥ puṣṭiḥ kṣud-apāyo 'nu-ghāsam*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.42)

With each morsel of food that a hungry person eats, he simultaneously experiences satisfaction, nourishment and relief from hunger. Similarly, a surrendered devotee, who is engaged in the performance of *bhakti*, simultaneously realizes his worshipful deity, strengthens his relationship with that deity and

becomes detached from this temporary world of material relationships.

This is the barometer of progress for a person claiming to be performing *bhakti*. Has he left material enjoyment? Has he become naturally renounced? Is he still fascinated by material objects pertaining to taste, smell, touch and hearing, or to money, women and so forth, and thus desires to enjoy them? Do we perceive these objects in the same way as one who is *tattva-jñā* and use them accordingly?

The following example will clarify this. I may address a lady as “Kṛṣṇa dāsī”, but merely calling her Kṛṣṇa dāsī does not mean I actually perceive her as such. Am I instead nurturing the desire to make her my own servant (*dāsī*)? How can anyone with such desires in the heart become a *guru*? When transcendental *bhakti* arises in the heart, one will have realization of the Lord.

When a person performs *bhakti* and develops a relationship with the Lord, he feels attachment to Him and considers Him to be his dearly beloved. He feels related to the Lord in the mood of servitude, friendship, parenthood or amorous affection. It is then that he realizes the *tattva* of the Lord.

If someone were to tell me that they had seen Lord Kṛṣṇa lying lifeless on the ground, I would not cry or feel upset, nor would I undergo any internal transformation.

But if someone were to tell me that my wife had been hit by a bus and he had seen her lying dead. I would immediately begin to lament and weep. We would not be so affected if Kṛṣṇa left us, and yet we claim to be devotees. When the *gopīs* heard from Nārada Muni that Kṛṣṇa’s severe pain could only be relieved by a devotee’s foot-dust, they immediately gathered up a full bag of foot-dust and said, “Take it right now! Even if we have to go to hell forever, we do not mind.”

Have we developed such a relationship with Kṛṣṇa, or such a service attitude to Him? We keep an account of the money we give to *gurudeva* and consider ourselves great servants! Does a person keep any account of the money he gives to his wife? Can you show us that account? “Oh, so am I not a *guru-sevaka*? Do you know not how much I have served him?”

We have a barometer for gauging *bhakti*. A bona fide *guru* is completely detached from anything material and he is fully acquainted with the *tattva-vastu*.

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SELECTED AMBROSIAL *Quotes*

From the Hari-kathā of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa
Gosvāmī Mahārāja

[Except where noted, all excerpts are
compliments of the Hari-kathā team]





The Meaning and Purpose of Vyāsa-pūjā

Vyāsa is the personality who delineated the glories of the names, form, qualities and pastimes of Bhagavān in this world. The ceremony to honour the ācārya who, sitting on a throne in the service of Bhagavān, preaches His glories and attracts people towards Him is called *vyāsa-pūjā*. Another name for *vyāsa-pūjā* is *guru-pūjā*. In India, the general convention is that *guru-pūjā* is observed on the day of Guru-pūrnimā. It is considered Vyāsa's appearance day, and on that day all *sampradāyas* worship their respective *gurus*. But in accordance with the scriptures, the primary ācārya of modern times, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, established special worship of the *guru* on that *guru*'s own specific appearance day. Real *guru-pūjā* is when, on his appearance day, the *guru* worships his whole *guru-paramparā* and instructs his disciples on how to do the same.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.17.27) Śrī Kṛṣṇa says:

*ācāryam māṁ vijānīyān nāvamanyeta karhicit
na martya-buddhyāśūyeta sarva-deva-mayo guruḥ*

Know the ācārya, or spiritual preceptor, to be Me. One should never disrespect him under any circumstance, nor should one envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the embodiment of all the demigods.

There are numerous demigods and goddesses, and amongst them Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Maheśa are primary. The *guru* is the embodiment of Brahmā, the embodiment of Viṣṇu, and also the embodiment of Maheśa. He is compared to Brahmā because just as Brahmā creates this world, the *guru* creates *bhakti* by sowing the seed of devotion in our hearts. Viṣṇu is the maintainer, and *gurudeva* is he who maintains our *bhakti*. As long as we haven't attained the stage of *prema*, he continues to strengthen our devotion. As conditioned souls, we cannot even imagine how much endeavour he makes for even one disciple. And as Maheśa is the destroyer, the *guru* destroys all of our *anarthas* and *aparādhas*. This is why the *guru* is said to be the embodiment of all the demigods.

There are so many *jīvas* in this world, and although some are inclined toward Bhagavān, most are averse to Him. Their intrinsic forms are as eternal servants of Kṛṣṇa, but forgetting this, they are wandering in material existence. Without *bhakti* they will never possess any auspiciousness. Therefore sometimes Kṛṣṇa Himself descends into this world, sometimes He assumes different incarnations, and sometimes He sends His *śakti* in the form of the *guru*. Otherwise it would be impossible for the *jīvas* to ever receive auspiciousness. Only by *bhakti* can they attain their

ultimate good fortune; yet *bhakti* is not a thing of this world. Inside the eternally perfected associates of Kṛṣṇa, the essence of the *samvit-* and *hlādinī-sakti* is always present in the form of *prema-bhakti*. Until the *jīva* receives that essence, he will not possess any real auspiciousness. The *guru* is a resident of the spiritual world, and he descends into this world. He brings the *prema* of Goloka Vraja to this world and bestows it upon the conditioned souls. Such a great personality, an eternally perfected *rāgātmikā* devotee who possesses *vraja-prema* and brings it to this world, is known as a *śuddha-guru*.

As the current of the Gaṅgā carries water from the Himālayas down to the ocean, there is a current flowing through our *guru-paramparā* which, beginning from Kṛṣṇa Himself, has come down to the modern *ācāryas* and is presently flooding the entire material world with *kṛṣṇa-prema*. This is the primary function of the *guru*. If someone is not able to give this *prema*, then he is not really a *guru* at all. Being capable of bestowing *kṛṣṇa-prema* is the primary attribute of a genuine Vaiṣṇava *guru*.

Śri Prabandhbāvalī, Chapter One
The Appearance Day of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī
Mahārāja



Have strong faith in *guru*, more than in Kṛṣṇa. Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa have sent him as Their own messenger. We should always remember this, especially on the auspicious day of *vyāsa-pūjā*.

[My *gurudeva* said:] “Not only we Indians but the whole world is eternally indebted to Śrī Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana Vyāsa. He divided the Vedas into four parts to help general people who are trying to study them. He compiled Vedānta, or *Brahma-sūtra*, in order to reconcile apparent contradictions between Vedānta and the Upaniṣads, the essence of the Vedas. He composed the different Purāṇas and the *Mahābhārata* and finally, in order to make Vedānta-sūtra easily understandable, he himself manifested the spotless *mahā-purāṇa*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, as the commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra*.

“All the religious societies in India believe that somehow or other they are followers of Vyāsa (*vyāsānuga*). However, when we carefully study the literature composed by Śrī Vyāsadeva, we can clearly see that *bhagavad-bhakti* is the main subject matter. He has not mentioned the words *jñāna* and *mukti* anywhere in the 550 *sūtras* of his famous *Brahmā-sūtra*. On the contrary, he has established *bhakti* everywhere in the genuine commentary of his *Brahma-sūtra*, namely *paramahaṁsi saṁhitā Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.”

[My *gurudeva* said:] Śrī Vyāsadeva is worshipped properly in the Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*. Nowadays, we see that, in the name of *vyāsa-pūjā*, so-called *gurus* everywhere accept *puspāñjali* and *arcāñjali* offered to their own feet, and they hear and accept praise given to them by their own disciples. However, those who only accept *puspāñjali* and *arcāñjali* offered to their own feet and who do not follow śrī *vyāsa-pūjā-paddhati* (the process of *vyāsa-pūjā* which was discerned by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda) are not actually performing *vyāsa-pūjā*. On *vyāsa-pūjā* day an *ācārya* will worship *guru*, *guru-paramparā* and *upāsya*. According to this *pūjā-paddhati*, on that day one should worship the following:

- (1) *guru-pañcaka* (*śrī guru, paramaguru, parameṣṭhīguru, parātparguru, paramparātparguru*);
- (2) *ācārya-pañcaka* (*Śrī Śukadeva, Rāmānuja, Madhva, Viṣṇusvāmī, Nimbāditya*);
- (3) *vyāsa-pañcaka* (*Śrī Vedavyāsa, Pail, Vaiśampāyana, Jaiminī, Sumanta*);
- (4) *sanakādi-pañcaka* (*Śrī Sanaka, Sanatkumār, Sanātan, Sanandan, Viṣvakṣena*);
- (5) *kṛṣṇa-pañcaka* (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha*);
- (6) *upāsya-pañcaka* (*Śrī Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa, Gaura, Gadādhara, śrī gurudeva*) and
- (7) *pañca-tattva* (*Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, Nityānanda, Advaita Ācārya, Gadādhara, Śrīvāsa*).

“It is the supreme duty of Śrī Gaudīya Sārasvata Vaiṣṇavas to follow the *vyāsa-pūjā-paddhati* used by Śrīla Prabhupāda.”

Ācārya Keśari Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja – His Life and Teachings, Third Part.

(The *vyāsa-pūjā* of *om viṣṇupāda*
Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Jīvana Janardana Gosvāmī Mahārāja
at Śrī Gauravāṇī-Vinoda Āśrama in Khaḍagpura,
8 February, 1958)



Vedavyāsa explained that the essence of the meaning of the *brahma-gāyatrī* comes from *omkara*. *Gāyatrī* is feminine in gender. Who is *Gāyatrī*? We hear that she is the wife of Brahmā, but you should know what has been told in the *gāyatrī-mantra* – *bhargo devasya dhīmahi*.

Bharga means ‘power’; that is, *hlādinī-sakti*, or *mahābhāva-svarūpa* (*Śrīmatī Rādhikā*). The supreme

reservoir of *kṛṣṇa-prema* is Rādhikā. We learn that Gāyatrī is the wife of Brahmā, but who is she actually? She is a *gopī*. Kṛṣṇa had told Yogamāyā, “You should somehow try to give this *gopī* to Brahmā; otherwise she cannot be *parakīya* (My paramour beloved).”

All the *gopīs* are married to other *gopas* and in this way, *parakīya-rasa* takes place. Kṛṣṇa therefore ordered Yogamāyā to arrange a marriage for Gāyatrī-devī also, so that her love for Kṛṣṇa and her relationship with Him could also be *parakīya*. This is why Gāyatrī came to be given to Brahmā in marriage. She actually had no love for Brahmā; she loved only Kṛṣṇa. This *parakīya* mood is topmost, and because she had that mood, Gāyatrī became the maid servant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. We see that Gāyatrī is the essence of all the Vedic literatures. Gāyatrī is Rādhikā, or Her maid servant, so that mood may come to anyone who serves the *gāyatrī-mantra*.

This is a special thing. I have never told this before.

Vyāsa-pūjā

Alachua, Florida, 1 February 2003



What is *vyāsa*? The line that touches the opposite sides of the circumference of a circle, by going through the central point, is called the diameter, or *vyāsa*. What is the meaning? Kṛṣṇa is the centre of all. This circle comprises not only this world, but so many universes – crores and crores of universes. Vyāsa is touching Kṛṣṇa and going to all the innumerable ends of material existence. Who is Vyāsa? He who is preaching the glories of Kṛṣṇa to all, teaching everyone: “You should serve Kṛṣṇa; otherwise no one can save you from this endless chain of birth and suffering.” Vyāsa is he who is always serving Kṛṣṇa from one end of this creation to another – everywhere in this world.

After some time Vyāsadeva divided the Vedas in four – *R̥g Veda*, *Sāma Veda*, *Yajur Veda* and *Atharva Veda*. After that he wrote the essence of all the Vedas, and that was called *Brahma-sūtra*, *Sarika-sūtra*, or *Vedānta-sūtra*. After that he wrote thirty-six kinds of Purāṇas: Purāṇas, Upa-Purāṇas and Śakha-Purāṇas. Then, for all persons: for ladies, for śūdras and for those who always lament and who are entangled in worldly intoxications, he wrote the *Mahābhārata*; and in that he gave the jewel-like *Gitopadeśa*. Prior to this he gave *Catub-ślokī Bhāgavatam*, which Nārada had received from Brahmā. But still Vyāsadeva had not realized *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, yet and so he was not satisfied. Nārada came to him and asked, “Why you are so upset?”

Vyāsadeva replied, “Gurudeva, I do not know.”

Nārada then told him, “You have not glorified Kṛṣṇa and His Vṛndāvana pastimes, and you have not discussed how the *gopīs* and all the Vrajavāsīs serve Him. You should glorify Him, and especially His many devotees, His *preyasis* (the *gopīs*) and His beloved Rādhikā.”

Vyāsadeva then saw all the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and His associates in his trance, and thus he wrote *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and became happy. The essence, therefore, of all Vedic literature – the Upanisads, Purāṇas and Bhāgavatam – is *vraja-prema*, or *gopī-prema*, and especially the love and affection of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, who controls Kṛṣṇa and always keeps Him in Her heart.

A *guru* can give these truths; without receiving them from him, it is not possible to understand these mysterious truths. A *guru* gives all this to the *śiṣya* (disciple) so that the *śiṣya* will one day become happy.

Appearance Day of

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Singapore, 11 February 2001



On this day, a disciple or *ācārya* bows down at the lotus feet of *śrī gurudeva*, from whom he has obtained all kinds of knowledge. You should especially know that *tattva-jñāna*, knowledge of established philosophical truths, is not sufficient. From where will the mood come to weep, as the *gopīs* used to weep? Śrīmatī Rādhikā is always weeping, intoxicated in *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Kṛṣṇa laments and suffers for Her, but He does not become as maddened with love as She does. There are many manifestations of Rādhā dancing with Kṛṣṇa, but for Rādhikā there is only one Kṛṣṇa. Vyāsadeva is himself Nārāyaṇa, and he has revealed all this.

Vyāsa-pūjā

Alachua, Florida, 1 February 2003



We are all in one Gauḍiya family. Our *gurudeva* is serving Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in the line of Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. Money and other material things will not suffice as a presentation for *vyāsa-pūjā*. The only worthwhile present is absorption in *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*. This is real *puṣpāñjali*.

Appearance Day of

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Mathurā, 22 February 2000



Vyāsa-pūjā Includes the Worship of the Whole Guru-paramaparā

*S*in our Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍiya *sampradāya* it is the custom for any *ācārya* who is widely spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, under the guidance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Dvaipayana Vyāsadeva, to worship Śrīla Vyāsadeva and the *guru-paramparā* on his birthday. This worship is called *guru-pūjā* and also *vyāsa-pūjā*.

Why do we perform *bhakti* to Śrī Kṛṣṇa? Why is it that we pay so much respect to Śrī gurudeva? If we are spiritually advancing under someone's guidance, we respect that person. No gain, no respect. Śrī gurudeva always feels indebted to his *gurudeva* and the *guru-paramparā*. Without *guru*, *guru-paramparā*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, what is there? Nothing. In other words, without them, there can be no spiritual advancement. Śrī guru considers that all of his *tattva-jñāna*, knowledge of established truths, and

all of his *bhakti* is the mercy of Śrī gurudeva and his *guru-paramparā*. Śrīla gurudeva is not independent of his *guru-paramparā*, which comes from Śrīla Vyāsadeva. He is fully dependent on them.

Being a manifestation of Lord Nārāyaṇa Himself, Śrīla Vyāsadeva is the root of all *gurus*, and he has written in his books – *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, *Purāṇas* and all other scriptures – about the great debt we owe to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Alone, a person is never able to seek out a bona fide *guru*. If you search on your own, you will select a bogus *guru*, because you do not know who is *guru* nor do you know his qualities and standards. You will have to judge by the words of Vyāsadeva:

*tasmād gurum prapadyeta
jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare ca niṣṇātāṁ
brahmaṇy-upaśamāśrayam*

Śrimad-Bhāgavatam (11.3.21)

Therefore, one who wishes to know about the ultimate goal of life should take shelter of a bona fide *guru*. Such a *guru* will be fully conversant with the Vedic scriptures and have direct realization of the Supreme Lord. Consequently, he will be wholly detached from worldly life.

Śrīla Vyāsadeva has given this definition of *guru*, and our *guru-paramparā* has accepted it. If you are going to search out your *gurudeva* independently, I think that most of you will select a bogus *guru* who is fallen. You will choose Australian kan-guroos – nothing more than that. When you have the association of a high class devotee you will have power to judge – not before that.

Vyāsa-pūjā
Hilo, Hawaii, 21 January 2004



On this special day, I pray to my *gurudeva* and our entire *guru-paramparā* up to Lord Brahmā, to all the associates of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and to all the associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. I pray that they will sprinkle their mercy upon all of you.

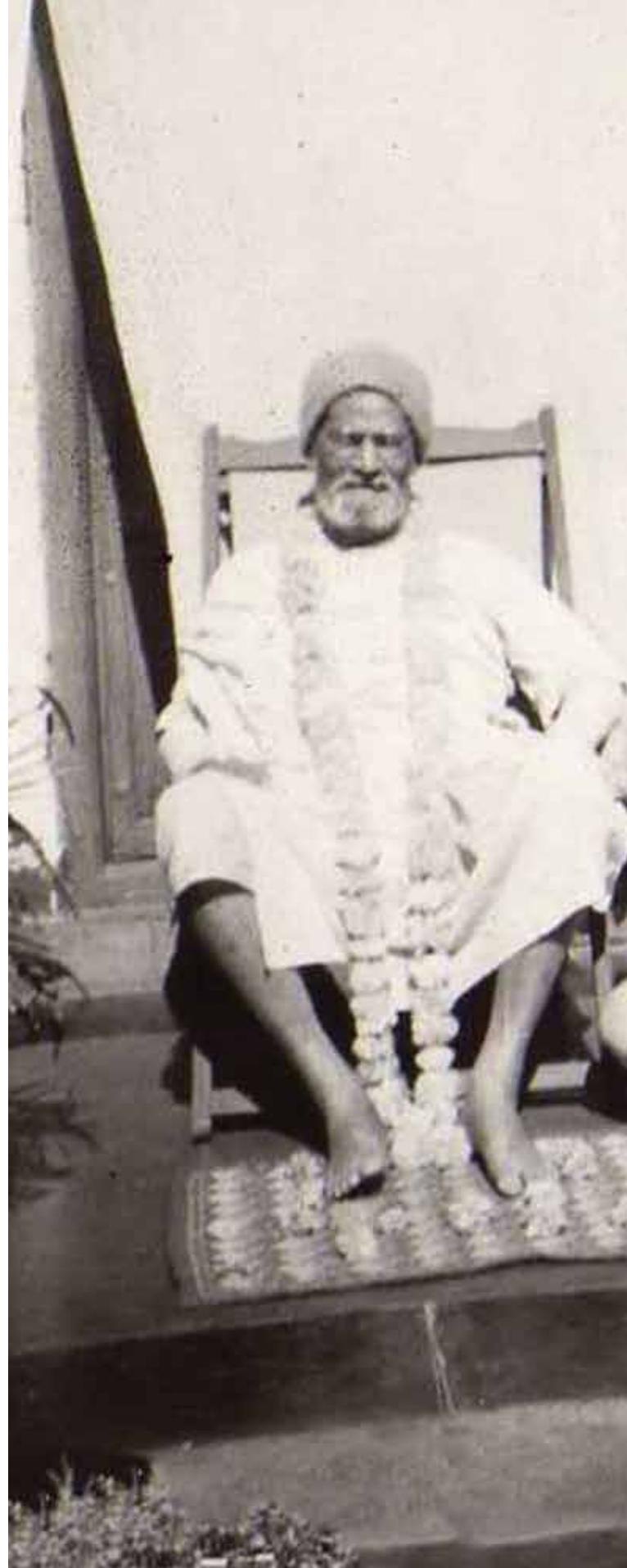
I pray that they will also be merciful to all the devotees in the world, wherever they may be, who are giving their *puspāñjali* today. I pray that they will bestow their mercy, even upon those who are not giving any *puspāñjali*, but simply remembering, wherever they are. I pray to all these associates of the Lord to be merciful and take away the entirety of your *anarthas*, to place *vraja-prema*, *vraja-bhakti*, in your hearts, and to sprinkle upon you the goal of our life.

Vyāsa-pūjā
Hilo, Hawaii, 8 February 2005



My *gurudeva* used to say, “On my birthday I should give proper honour to all *guru-paramparā* ācāryas, Godbrothers and all senior Vaiṣṇavas. What I have and what I am preaching is not coming from me. It is not that I am so intelligent or that I am preaching – the credit belongs to my *gurudeva*. By the mercy of my *gurudeva* I know the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana, Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha and other *guru-paramparā* ācāryas.”

Murwillumbah, Australia, 9 February 2004



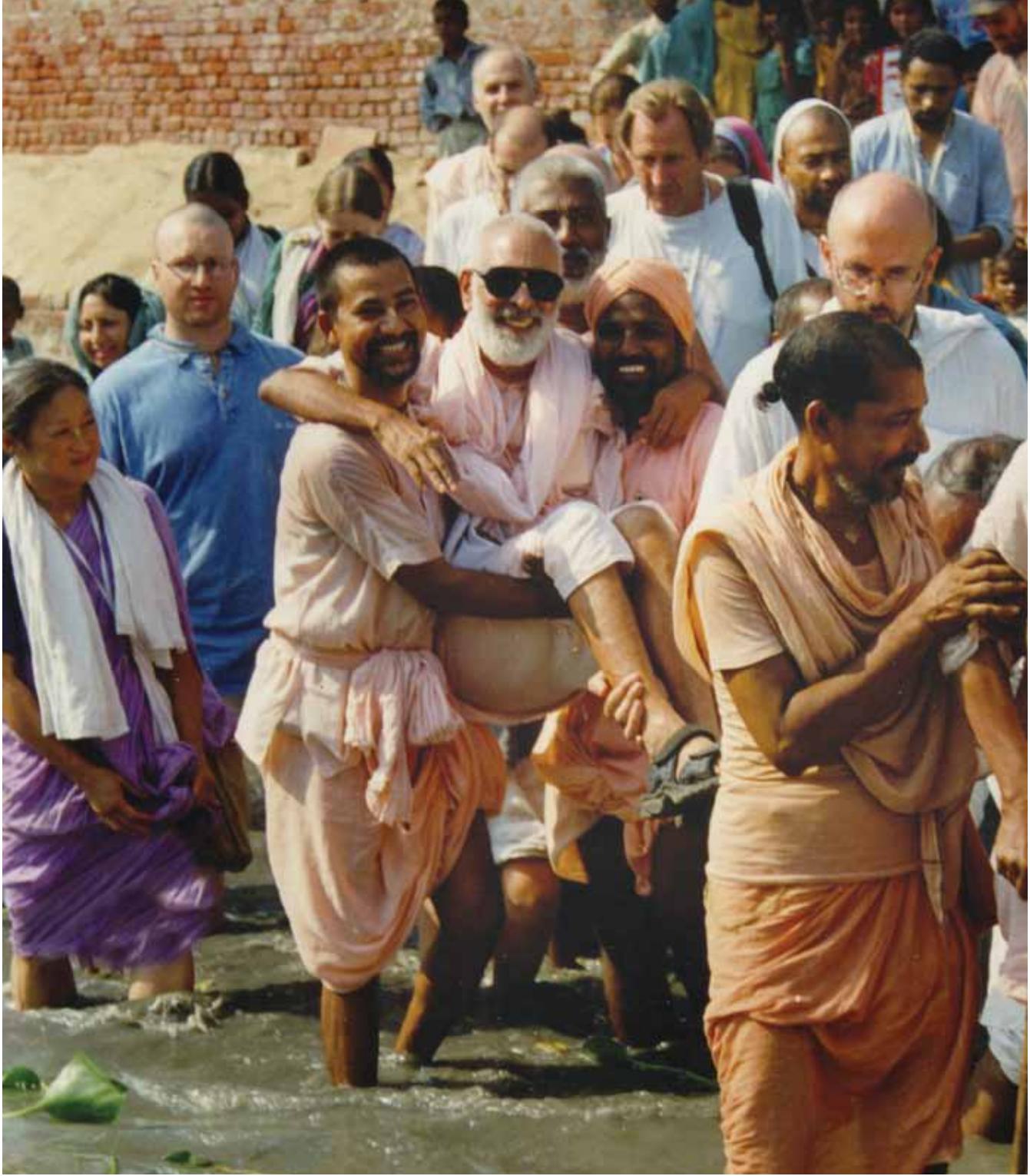


Śrī Guru's Mercy Can Do Anything

*S*wami was not a learned person. Whatever understandings I have today, I received by the special mercy of śrī guru and the Vaiṣṇavas. I gave my whole heart to my gurudeva and offered all that I possessed at his lotus feet. When I joined the *māṭha*, I told my gurudeva, “I am giving my heart to you. I am giving you the love and affection I had for my wife, my children, my father and everything else. I am taking that love and affection, and in total surrender, I am placing it at your lotus feet.”

He heard my words and accepted them. Tears came into his eyes and he wept, saying, “Until now, no one has told me this.” I thus received his causeless mercy. Now, only because of that mercy, people all over the world are hearing from me. If you surrender to your gurudeva, you will receive everything you require to attain the perfection of life and to make others perfect. No material knowledge is needed.

Vyāsa-pūjā
Hilo, Hawaii, 8 February 2005



Śrī Guru Is Not An Ordinary Mortal Being

*S*t may seem like *guru* is going to the bathroom or that he is eating because he is hungry. But do not see him as you would see an ordinary person, otherwise you will be cheated forever. Have strong faith in *guru*, more than in Kṛṣṇa. Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa have sent him as Their own messenger. We should always remember this, especially on the auspicious day of *vyāsa-pūjā*.

I especially fear that sometimes false ego comes in the hearts of learned disciples and they think, "I am more than my *gurudeva*." This is a very dangerous offense, and such offenders are ultimately lost forever. Do not have false ego regarding any aptitude you may have. Always be the servant of *gurudeva*. There are so many examples of pure servants, such as Śrīla Īśvara Puripāda, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī.

Vyāsa-pūjā

Hilo, Hawai'i, 8 February 2005



The Speciality of Our Guru-paramparā

*O*ne of the specialities of our *paramparā* is that when they actually sprinkle their mercy upon you, you will enter *rāgānuga-bhakti*. Under the guidance of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Rūpa Mañjari) you will serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, with an inclination towards Śrīmatī Rādhikā. This truth is very confidential, and I have brought you here to understand it. Following in the line of our *ācāryas* and by their desire, I am revealing many things about *rāgānugā-bhakti*.

No one else is speaking like this. All are silent, but I am not silent. In our entire *paramparā* hardly anyone will give this. I want you all to have *rāgānugā-bhakti*. To get it, however, you will have to surrender.

Vyāsa-pūjā

Hilo, Hawaii, 8 February 2005





© Śāmatī dasī

Śrī Guru's Role in Kṛṣṇa-līlā

*W*hat is the meaning of *nikuñja-yūno rati-keli-siddhyai?*
What is that *guru* doing?

Guru must be like this: *nikuñja-yūno rati-keli-siddhyai*. He must be serving Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa Conjugal, especially Rādhikā. The *gopīs* make so many arrangements for Them to meet. *Yā yālibhir yuktir apekṣaniyā*. They know how to cheat their fathers, mothers and husbands in so many ways, to ensure the successful meeting of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Conjugal and to serve Them. A *guru* is very expert in all these activities.

We see in our *guru-gāyatrī, kṛṣṇānandāya dhīmahi*. This refers to both Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇā. Any male can serve Kṛṣṇa, but no male can serve Kṛṣṇā. Kṛṣṇā is Rādhikā. Therefore, in *śrī guru*'s service to Rādhikā for *rati-keli-siddhyai* – the perfection of Her amorous pastimes with Kṛṣṇa, he cannot serve in his male form. Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja and my *gurudeva* both serve there as *gopīs*. My *gurudeva* is Vinoda Mañjarī, Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura is Nayana Mañjarī, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is Kamala Mañjarī, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī is Vilāsa Mañjarī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī is Rūpa Mañjarī, and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī is Rati Mañjarī. These *mañjarīs* can serve Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Conjugal.

I offer *pranāma* to my *gurudeva* in that very form. He is cheating others, and he is even cheating Kṛṣṇa. By such 'cheating', he brings Kṛṣṇa to serve His most beloved Rādhikā. In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it has been very openly told that Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the *guru* of Kṛṣṇa. Why not take shelter in the lotus feet of She who is the *guru* of Kṛṣṇa? Our *guru* is there, in Goloka Vṛndāvana, serving Rādhikā.

Actually, *guru* is one who can serve Rādhikā. If a *guru* has fully controlled his senses, but he is not directly serving Rādhikā, he is only partially *guru*.

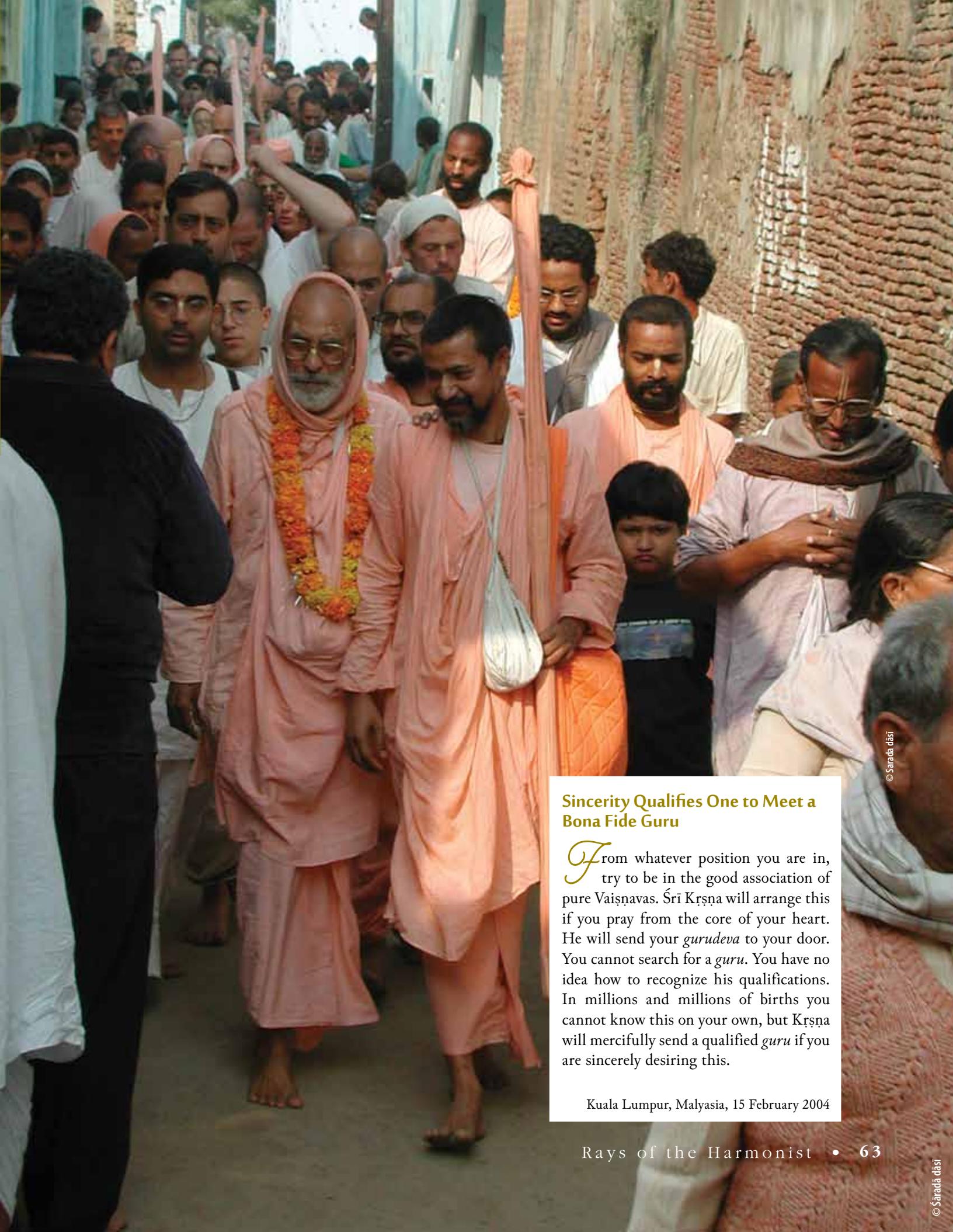
If *guru* is not like Rūpa Mañjarī and Rati Mañjarī, and if he is not serving them, he may be a *guru* in part but not in full. The *guru*'s most exalted quality is that he is a servant of Rādhikā. In this way, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura is writing, *vande guroḥ śrī caranāravindam*. I bow down to my *gurudeva* and all *gurus* in the line of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. Such a *guru* is not only the *prakāśa* (manifestation) of Nityānanda Prabhu, or Baladeva Prabhu, but he is also the *prakāśa* of Rādhikā. Such a *guru* is the most exalted. Even Baladeva Prabhu, as Anaṅga Mañjarī, takes shelter of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's lotus feet. How beautiful and glorious She is.

Vyāsa-pūjā
Murwillumbah, Australia, 12 February 2002



It is necessary that one understand Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's special contribution to our *sampradāya* and why Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared in this world. In essence, it was to specify our life's highest and most prominent goal: to become a particle of dust at the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, to become a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā under the guidance of Śrīla Rūpa Mañjarī. This is the sole cherished aspiration for all our previous *guru-varga*.

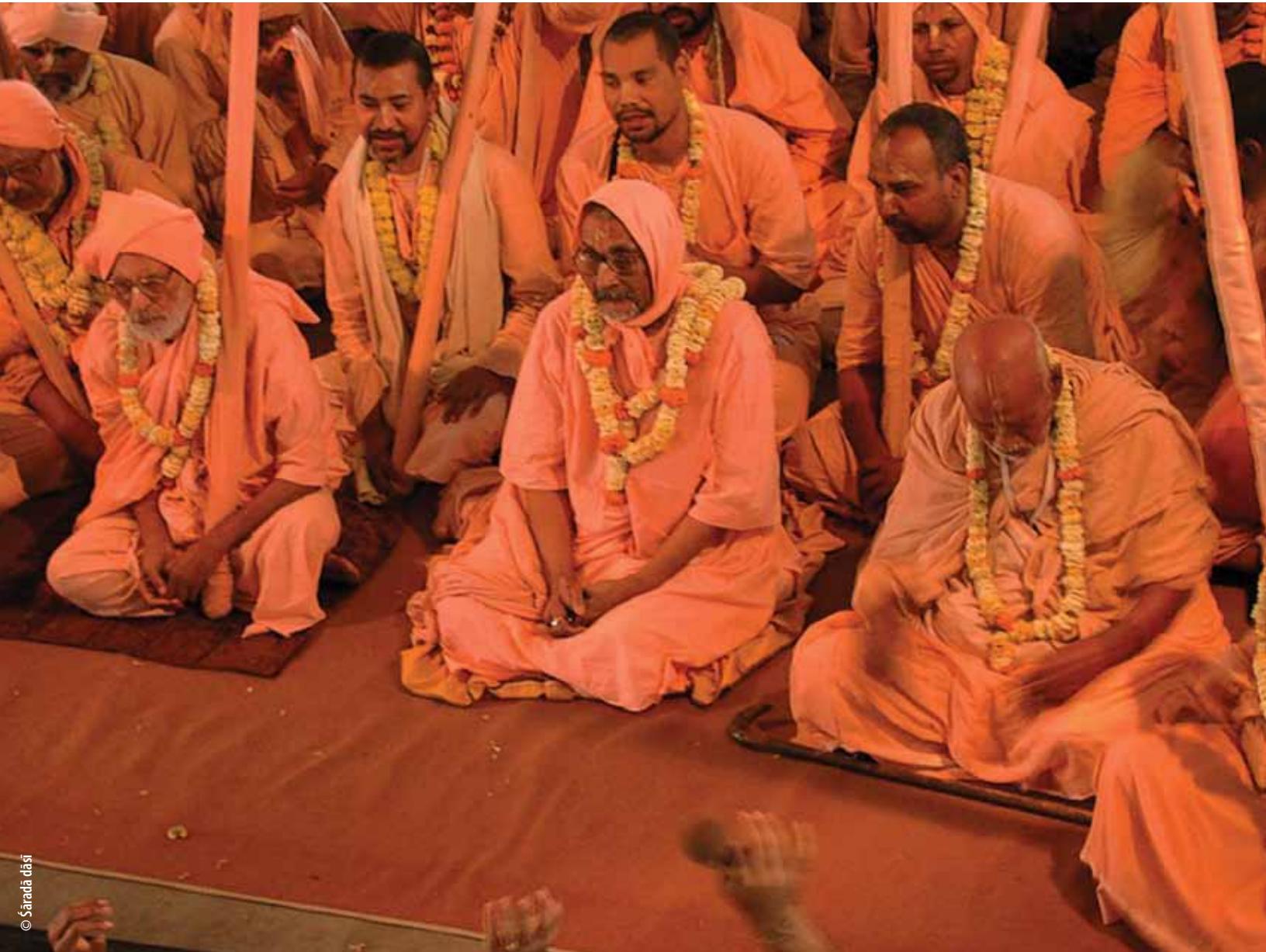
The eve of Śrī Guru-pūrṇimā
Śrī Keśavajī Gaudīya Maṭha, Mathurā, 16 July 2008



Sincerity Qualifies One to Meet a Bona Fide Guru

From whatever position you are in, try to be in the good association of pure Vaiṣnavas. Śrī Kṛṣṇa will arrange this if you pray from the core of your heart. He will send your *gurudeva* to your door. You cannot search for a *guru*. You have no idea how to recognize his qualifications. In millions and millions of births you cannot know this on your own, but Kṛṣṇa will mercifully send a qualified *guru* if you are sincerely desiring this.

Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 15 February 2004



Guru-niṣṭhā – the Backbone of Bhakti

What is the symptom of one who has *guru-niṣṭhā*? He will give proper respect even to a dog that is related to his *guru*. If he does not give proper respect to everyone related to his *guru*, whether they are initiated or not, if he has no regard and honour for them, then his honour for his *guru* is actually a show. He has no real *guru-niṣṭhā*.

The symptom of *guru-niṣṭhā* is that one always offers respect to superiors – especially to Godbrothers. Nowadays, I see that Godbrothers quarrel with each other. They do not want to be together, to glorify their *guru*.

Murwillumbah, Australia, 9 February 2004



Even if one has *ananyā-bhakti* to Śrīmatī Rādhikā but no *guru-niṣṭhā*, his *bhakti* will be zero. One should take one's life in the palm of one's hand. In other words, the disciple should perform any service, even a dangerous one, for śrī *gurudeva*. He should sacrifice any mundane relationship, any desire and any activity, for *guru-sevā*.

Appearance day of
Śrī Śrimad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja
Mathurā, 22 February 2000



© Vasantī dāsī

Remembering the Glory and Mercy of Śrī Guru

If we can please our *gurudeva*, not only externally but internally as well, then *vyāsa-pūjā* is truly observed. We should try to realize the internal ways our *gurudeva* pleases his *gurudeva*.

Apply this *śloka* (*anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam...*), totally and fully, at the lotus feet of your *gurudeva*. Now, I realize something of the glories of my *gurudeva*, and I cannot express the feelings of my heart for him. He was a great ocean of mercy. He took me from the well of stool, and he wanted to place me in the ocean of *rasa* – *Bhakti-rasāmrta-sindhu* and *Śrī Ujjvalanīlamanī*. By his special mercy, I touched something of the glory of the truths these literatures contain regarding *prema*, *sneha*, *māna*, *prāṇaya*, *rāga*, *anurāga*, *bhāva* and *mahābhāva*.

up to *madanākhyā*. I have understood something, but whose glory is this? I was not a learned person, and I was very insignificant. I know that I had no qualification at all; I was fully ignorant. However, by touching Gurudeva's lotus feet and by hearing his *hari-kathā*, I received from him all the various kinds of knowledge that I am giving to the world. I am not giving it; my *guru-varga* are inspiring me, and everything is taking place by their mercy.

When I remember my *gurudeva*'s mercy in this way, I become overwhelmed. How glorious is his mercy! If one does not touch the real glory of one's *gurudeva* and serve him totally, how can he ever please him?

Gurudeva is *sarva-bhūta sthitam* (situated in everyone's heart), like Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is everywhere, and so is *gurudeva*. So you can never hide anything from him. You want to

hide so many things, like your lust and worldly desires, but since *gurudeva* knows even more than Kṛṣṇa, because he is so near to Kṛṣṇa, you cannot cheat him. If you try to cheat him, you will simply be cheating yourself – so do not try to do so. Reveal your heart to the lotus feet of your *gurudeva* and then you will know how to please him.

Vyāsa-pūjā

Alachua, Florida, 1 February 2003



We should pray to the lotus feet of śrī *gurudeva*, and remember him. We pray that he gives us a drop of his mercy, so that we can become more humble than a blade of



grass. We may try to achieve that humility on our own, but without śrī *guru*'s mercy, our attempts will be ruined and disturbed. In order to become *amāninā mānadena*, that is, in order to have the power to give all respect to others and be free from any desire for self-respect, we must weep for śrī *gurudeva* and get his mercy.

Appearance day of

Śrī Śrimad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja
Mathurā, 22 February 2000



One should think that one's *guru* is always powerful enough to enter one's heart – directly and indirectly – and that he can save his disciples. Then that disciple is really a disciple, otherwise not. Śrī *guru* can somehow, directly or indirectly, come and help a person if he has so much faith in him, otherwise not.

Moscow, 30 July 2000



I have given you very high *sādhu-saṅga*. If you do not take advantage of all the facilities you have been given or of your favourable circumstances, you will be hurled into the cycle of endless birth and death – coming, going, coming, going – for many future births. If you have all these facilities but are envious, quarrelsome and critical, always searching for some flaw in others; if you are not seeing what you yourself are doing wrong, you will commit spiritual suicide. You will be the killer of your own soul and the souls of others, as well.

Badger, California, 17 June 2005



Just like the omniscient Supersoul present in the core of everyone's heart, the *guru* has the special characteristic of perfectly knowing our heart. He knows the eternal constitutional mood of our soul – our eternal relationship with Bhagavān – and accordingly, he connects us with Him. Then, by supplying the water of hearing, chanting and remembering, he nourishes that relationship and cuts down anything that obstructs that nourishment with the sharp axe of his words. He does this so expertly that the *sādhaka* barely notices, but all the while the needful is accomplished.

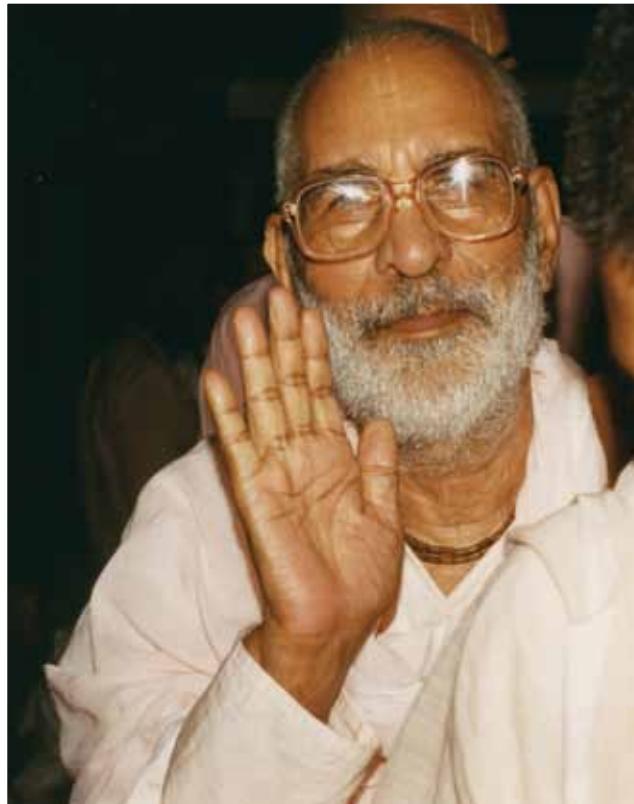
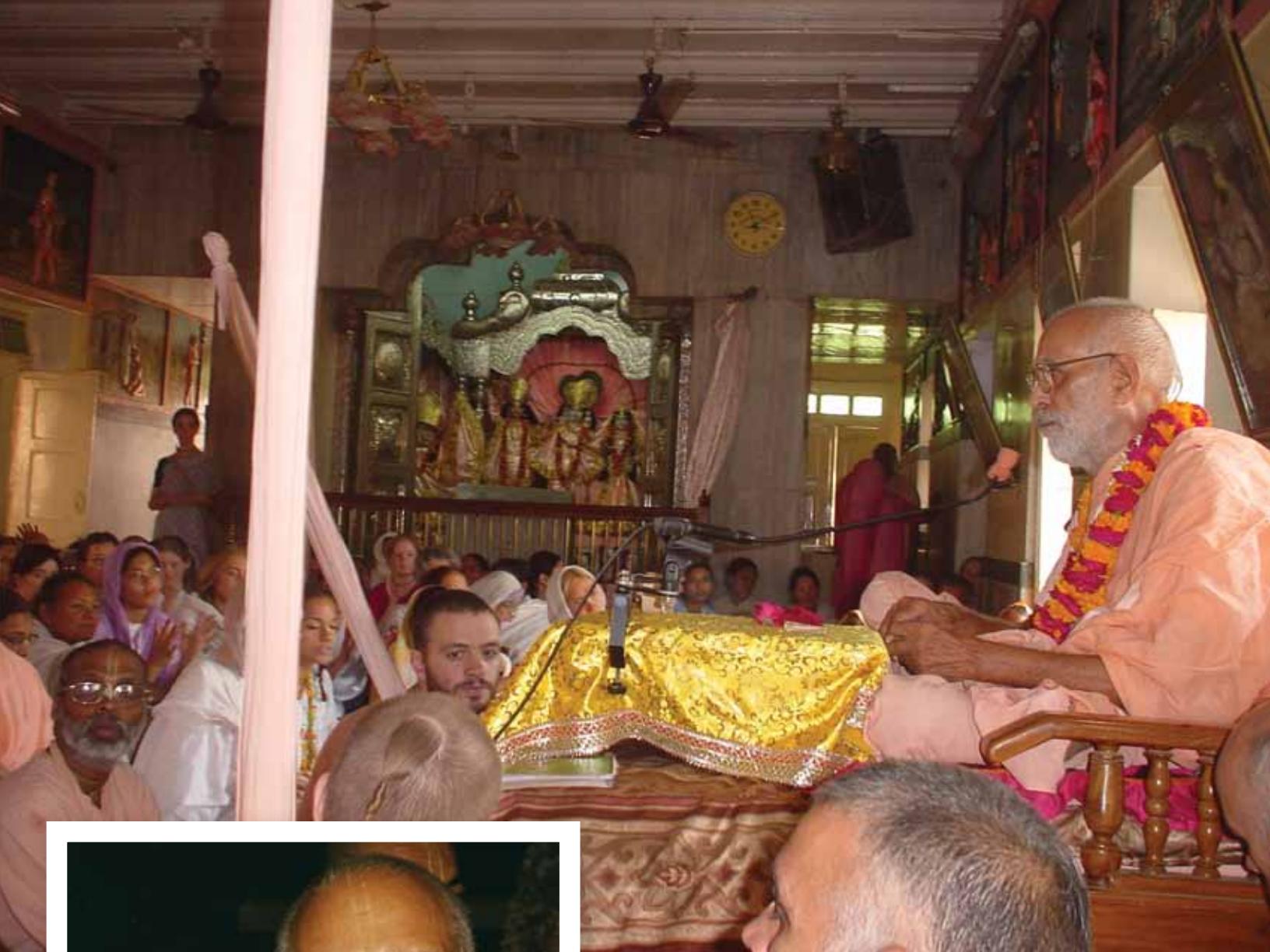
This is what the bona fide *guru* and genuine Vaiṣṇavas do. They do not have bodies of flesh and bone, which are subject to change and which may die at any moment. They are the eternal associates of the most merciful incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who descended to deliver the fallen souls in this age of Kali. *Guru* and Vaiṣṇavas are among the intimate companions of the Divine Couple, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. The way Śrī Bhagavān extends His loving mercy to the souls bound by *māyā* is by sending associates like these in the form of Vaiṣṇavas.

Śrī Dāmodarāṣṭakam, Verse 5



Guru is like that. If you pray to him, new understandings will enter your heart, solely by his inspiration. Do not think he is mortal. He is like Kṛṣṇa, and like Kṛṣṇa, his mercy is causeless, so pray to him, and he will inspire you.

Murwillumbah, Australia, 28 April 2005



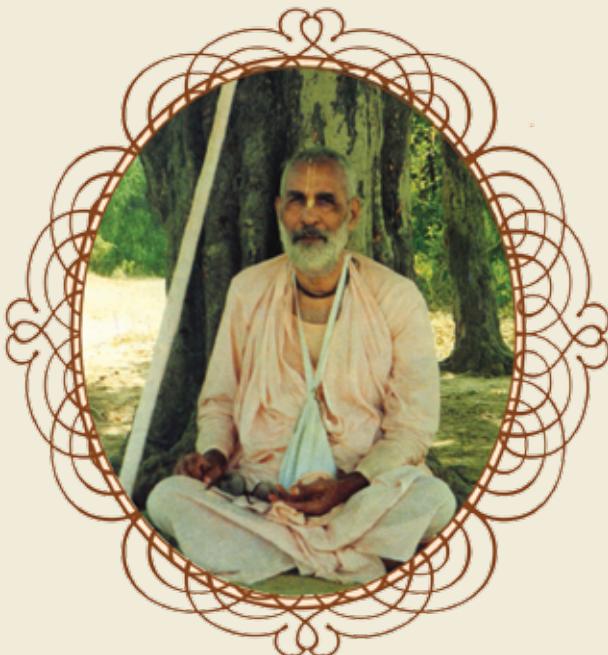
The Duty of an Ideal Disciple

*W*hat is the duty of an ideal disciple (*śisya*)? He should not merely always stay with *gurudeva*; he should try to give his energy to trying to serve him, according to *gurudeva*'s desires – by body, mind and words. He should not stay close to his *guru* physically, anticipating some excitement, all the while remaining unenthusiastic to serve. That is not a *śisya* but rather something quite opposite. A true disciple always desires, with all his heart and mind, to better serve *gurudeva*.

If a disciple is sacrificing as my *gurudeva* did, keeping all difficulties to himself, never complaining but continuing to serve his *gurudeva*, then *gurudeva* will be so pleased and the disciple will get his mercy. External blessings are no blessings. When blessings pour forth from the core of the *guru*'s heart, then they are real blessings.

Appearance day of
Śrī Śrimad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja
Mathurā, Kārtika 2000





Srī Bhagavān is the possessor of all potencies, and therefore His relationship with His internal potency is indestructible (*śakti-śaktimatayor abhedah*); they are always inseparable. Still, His pastime potency, which makes the impossible possible, manifests separation (*viraha*), even in eternal meeting. Its purpose is to arouse astonishing varieties of *rasa* (*rasa-vaicityra*). This is one of the unprecedented stages of *prema*.

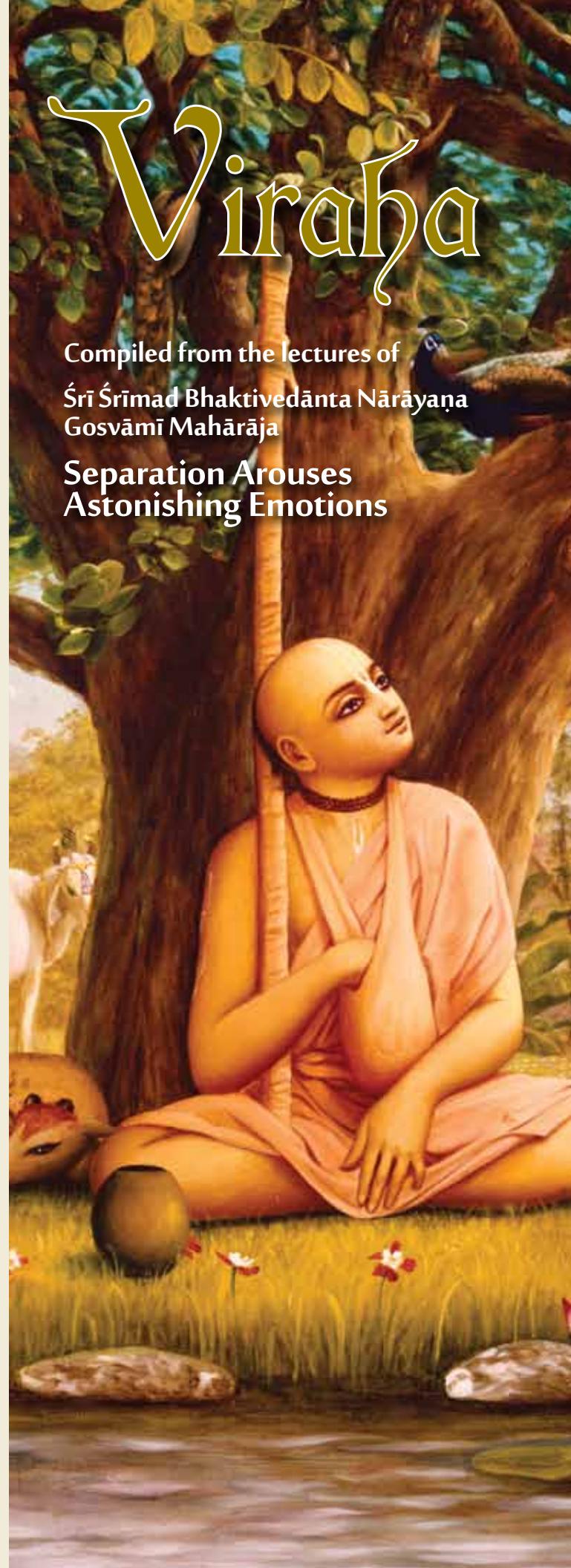
The first sprout of the wish-fulfilling tree of *prema* in this world was Śrīla Mādhavendra Purīpāda. He sang an unparalleled verse in his state of perfection.

*ayi dīna-dayārdra nātha he
 mathurā-nātha kadāvalokyase
 bṛdayāṁ tvad-aloka-kātarām
 dayita bbrāmyati kiṁ karomy aham*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 4.197)

O Master, whose heart melts in compassion for the destitute! O Lord of Mathurā! When will I see You again? O beloved Lord of My life, I fervently hanker to see You, so much so that My heart has become intensely restless. What shall I do now?

This verse was originally manifested by Śrīmatī Rādhikā in the agony of Her separation from Śrī Kṛṣṇa when He went to Mathurā. Thus Mādhavendra Purīpāda planted in this world the seed of devotion in the amorous sentiment. This *śloka* is the outpouring of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's *mahā prema* (*mahābhāva*) after Kṛṣṇa left for Mathurā. *Bhajana* performed following Śrīmatī Rādhikā's mood in this condition constitutes the topmost *bhajana*.



Bhajana



Feeling Separation is Essential for the Sādhaka

For the practitioner of *bhakti*, it is natural to perform *bhajana* in a mood of separation from Kṛṣṇa. The devotees of *śrīgāra-rasa*, feeling themselves to be the most destitute, call out fervently to *dina-dayārdra nātha* Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the destitute.

Only three persons could taste the essence of this verse: Śrīmatī Rādhikā Herself, Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī and Śrīman Mahāprabhu (who is Kṛṣṇa covered by the complexion and sentiments of Śrīmatī Rādhikā). To manifest this *śloka*, Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī, an eternal follower of Śrī Rādhā, has imbibed the emotions of *mathurā-virahinī* Śrī Rādhā.

Śrī Gauracandra says,

*yugāyitam nimesena cakṣuṣā prāvṛṣāyitam
śūnyāyitam jagat sarvam govinda-virabheṇa me*

Śikṣāṣṭaka (7)

O *sakhī*, in separation from Govinda, even a moment seems like a millennium. Tears pour from My eyes like torrents of rain in the monsoon season and this entire world seems void.

In *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali* (102), Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī has said,

*āśā bharair amrta-sindhu-mayaīḥ kathañcit
kālo mayātigamitaḥ kila sāmpratam hi
tvam cet kṛpām mayi viḍhāsyasi naiva kiṁ me
prāṇair vrajena ca varoru bakāriṇāpi*

O Varoru (girl with beautiful thighs), I am passing my time with the sole hope of being able to serve You. If You withhold Your mercy, what value to me are this life, the land of Vraja, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Baka?

Without receiving the mercy of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, it is impossible to attain the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But when one's heart becomes extremely restless for Her mercy, then the mercy of Rādhānātha Śrī Kṛṣṇa becomes easily accessible.

Śrī gurudeva is the identical manifestation of Śrīmatī Vṛśabhānu-nandinī, the crest jewel of *āśraya-tattva* (those who are the abode of love for Kṛṣṇa). Śrī gurudeva expertly adopts the means devised by the *sakhis* for serving the Divine Couple in Their transcendental love-laden pastimes. For this reason, he is extremely dear to Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. How will one receive the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa if he is not receiving the mercy of a *guru* on this level? Therefore, those who remain under the shelter of *śrī guru* will experience intense waves of separation from him when he is no longer manifest, and those waves will surely increase to their utmost magnitude.

Attachment Intensifies Through Separation

Out of compassion, Śrī Bhagavān, in the form of *śrī guru*, expands His manifest pastimes. In the same way, *śrī guru* enacts the pastime of disappearing from this world to enter his eternal pastimes. His sole purpose in doing so is to stimulate the full service and full possessiveness of his dependents. Those fortunate enough to have taken shelter of a *rūpānuga-guru* during his manifest presence, experience a constant increase in their attachment to serving him. And after his disappearance, their attachment to him continues to increase many times over. Consequently, the fire of separation from him intensifies day by day; by this alone one's *bhajana* remains ever-fresh.

There are two kinds of *bhajana*. The first is performed by chanting and remembering pastimes of separation (*vipralambha-līlā*) and the second is performed by remembering pastimes of meeting (*sambhoga-līlā*). Although the *gopīs* and Vrajavāsīs always prefer meeting with Kṛṣṇa over separation from Him, He plays with them by making them enjoy *vipralambha-rasa*.

The *sādhaka* should cultivate the mood of separation from Kṛṣṇa by thinking, "I am not seeing Kṛṣṇa, nor am I seeing Śrīmatī Rādhikā, nor Vraja. I am not realizing anything and I am unable to serve my *gurudeva*."

The Height of Intense Separation

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī showed us how to feel separation from Kṛṣṇa, and especially from Śrīmatī Rādhikā. A *sādhaka* should be immersed in such feelings. Śrīla Raghunātha Gosvāmī also lamented in separation from his *śikṣā-gurus*, "I am so unfortunate! First Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu departed from this world, leaving me behind. I then lived in the constant association of Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, but he also left this world. Next I caught hold of Śrī Gadādhara Paṇḍita's lotus feet, but he also departed. From then on I experienced that every place and every dust particle of Jagannātha Purī reminded me of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Svarūpa Dāmodara, Gadādhara Paṇḍita and their associates; and therefore I left Purī to come to Vṛndāvana."

In Vraja, Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī performed *bhajana* at Rādhā-kundā under the guidance of Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmīs. When Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī entered his unmanifest pastimes, Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī lamented as follows in separation from him:

*śūnyāyate mahā-goṣṭham girīndro 'jagarāyate
vyāghra-tuṇḍāyate kuṇḍam jīvatu rabitasya me*

Śrī Prārthanāśraya-caturdaśaka (11)

Now that I am without that person who sustains my life,
the land of Vraja seems empty and desolate, Govardhana



Hill appears like a great python, and Rādhā-kuṇḍa appears like the gaping mouth of a tigress.

Who Can Realize Separation from Guru?

Although our *gurudeva* has also entered his unmanifest, eternal pastimes, we happily remain in this world. On the occasion of special days, like his appearance or disappearance day, we might remember him, but often we are involved in arranging the festival in his honour, and there is very little chance to contemplate our separation from him. A tear may come to our eye as we speak something about him; but it may not come. If the festival is very elaborate, there is much to manage, such as the *abhiṣeka*, *guru-pūjā* and distribution of *mahā-prasādam* to the Vaiṣṇavas. Consequently, there is less chance of us finding time to think about him and weep. For the most part, we arrange these festivals for the benefit of the general people who have no intimate connection with him, but on that day we should ensure that a feeling of separation from him enters our own hearts. This is called *bhajana*.

Special persons, who have realized their immense obligation and indebtedness to *gurudeva* for all they have received from him, and who have rendered profuse service to him with *viśrambha-bhāva* (spontaneous intimacy) will feel separation from him, and weep. Such devotees will not think, "I am so lowly and my *gurudeva* is so elevated." One with such awe and reverence cannot weep.

Sāstra states, "*viśrambhenā guror sevā* – the *sevaka* performs such intimate service to *gurudeva* that *gurudeva* is always pleased with him." The *guru* will not see him as his servant or disciple for a single moment, but instead he

“Śrī guru enacts the pastime of disappearing from this world to enter his eternal pastimes. His sole purpose in doing so is to stimulate the full service and full possessiveness of his dependents... after his disappearance, their attachment to him continues to increase many times over. Consequently, the fire of separation from him intensifies day by day; by this alone one’s bhajana remains ever-fresh.”

will see him as his own heart. Śrī Īśvara Purīpāda (a disciple of Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī) and Govinda (a disciple of Śrī Īśvara Purī) were servants of this calibre. Although such a relationship with śrī guru is rare, it is absolutely necessary for *rāgānugā-bhakti*. In its absence, we are unable to weep like Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

Gradations of Separation

A devotee will experience different degrees of separation from *gurudeva*, according to his level of *bhakti*. When we contemplate the mercy he showed us and his superiority to us, we feel a certain type of sentiment. But when we recall our intimate relationship with him and his immense love for us, we will weep for him incessantly.

Nanda Bābā weeps in separation from Kṛṣṇa, but Yaśodā Mā can weep more than Nanda Bābā can. The *gopīs*, however, can even weep considerably more than Yaśodā. This is because they have a more intimate relationship with Kṛṣṇa. We should have such an intimate relationship with our *gurudeva*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrīmatī Rādhikā, Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and all such personalities. It is then that we will be able to weep for their mercy. Without that intimate service-relationship with our *gurudeva*, there is no possibility of us imagining our relationship with Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī or Śrīmatī Rādhikā and Kṛṣṇa.

Our advancement is solely dependent on the intensity of our service to our *gurudeva*. It is the platform on which all other relationships and experiences develop. If we can weep for *gurudeva*, we will be able to weep for Śrīmatī Rādhikā; and if we cannot weep for him, we will not be able to weep for Her. Whatever we have learned we have learned from our *gurudeva*, and we should weep for him from the core of our hearts.

How to Lament

How shall we weep? Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has given instructions in the sixth verse of *Śrī Śikṣāṣṭakam*:

*nayanāṁ galad-aśru-dhārayā
vadanāṁ gadgada-ruddhayā girā
pulakair nicitāṁ vapuḥ kada
tava nāma-grahane bhavisyati*

O Lord, when will tears flow from my eyes, my voice falter and all the hairs on my body stand erect as I chant Your holy names?

“When will I feel so much lamentation that I weep while chanting the names Hare Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā-Govinda or Vṛndāvaneśvarī?” Weeping like this is our *dharma*, the essence of our religious principles. One day, by the mercy of those who sincerely feel this mood of separation, and by the grace of our *gurudeva* and our *guru-paramparā*, we will have realization of this fact. This is our real prayer, and while praying, our mood should be “*tava nāma-grahane bhavisyati* – when will I weep while chanting *harināma* and remembering and hearing Your pastimes?” Those who are most fortunate can lament and weep for these moods and thereby experience them.

While softly uttering *harināma*, chanting *harināma*, praying to *harināma*, or simply while remembering *harināma*, we should experience a mood of separation. If we are not yet doing this, we will have to gradually develop this mood in our practice of *sādhana-bhakti*. By reading about the pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His associates, their moods of separation will enter our hearts and someday we will also experience them. Realization is the result of remembering śrī *gurudeva*; therefore we should always remember him. If we do not understand the mercy of *gurudeva*, we will not understand anything.

Our Ultimate Goal

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda writes that meeting and separation eternally stand side by side. Only that person who has some realization of *vipralambha* (separation) can relish and serve *sambhoga-līlā* (the meeting of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa). One who has not tasted *vipralambha* cannot relish *sambhoga-līlā*. The main objective, or the ultimate goal, of our *sādhana-bhajana* is to attain realization of the mood of separation. Once that is achieved, all else can be realized. 

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EXCERPTS FROM

The Speciality GIFT OF

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

I offer *pranāma* unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, who is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. Having assumed the golden hue of Śrimatī Rādhikā, He is most munificently bestowing *krṣṇa-prema*, the rarest of all gifts.

*V*rajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the condensed essence of eternity, cognizance and bliss, the topmost aspect of the Supreme Absolute Truth. He is Svayam Bhagavān, that form of the Lord who has no source other than Himself and who from beginningless time makes appearances in unlimited forms. Among all these manifestations (*prakāśa*), Vāsudeva, Nārāyaṇa, Rāma, Nṛsiṁha, etc., are His expansions, or *āṁśas*. This is the philosophical conclusion (*siddhānta*) established in the Śruti-s, Smṛti-s and other scriptures, including the crest jewel of all Purāṇas, *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*.

Svayam Bhagavān's Two Original, Eternal Svarūpas

Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the origin of all other incarnations of Godhead, has another eternal form, or *svarūpa*, that is not His expansion and is eternally manifest

of the ŚRĪMAN MAHĀPRABHU

by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Written on the 500th anniversary of the advent of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

with the very quality of being Svayam Bhagavān. Yet the complexion of that *svarūpa* is not the bluish-black *śyāma* hue of Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa; rather it is the colour of gold.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Karabhājana Ṛṣi speaks of the worshipful form of Bhagavān in Kali-yuga and the process of worshipping Him:

*kṛṣṇa-varṇam twiṣākṛṣṇam
sāṅgopāṅgāstra-pārṣadam
yajñaiḥ saṅkīrtana-prāyair
yajanti hi su-medhasah*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.32)

O King, He who perpetually performs the *kīrtana* of the two syllables *kṛṣṇa* and *na*; whose complexion is *a-kṛṣṇa* (the opposite of deep bluish-black), or *gaura* (golden); who is surrounded by His own expansions (*anāga*) such as Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and Śrī Advaita Ācārya, His attendant servants (*upāṅgas*) such as Śrīvāsa Pañḍita and other pure devotees, His powerful armaments (*astra*) in the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's holy names and His dear companions (*pārṣadas*) such as Śrī Gadādhara, Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara and Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda, is worshipped by those with deep intelligence through the *saṅkīrtana-yajña*, by which they make their lives successful.

The prominent commentators on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* such as Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, expound the meaning of this verse on the unshakeable foundation of scriptural evidence and irrefutable logic. They explain that *kṛṣṇa-varṇam* means the two syllables *kṛṣṇa* and *na*, or He who performs the *kīrtana* of Kṛṣṇa's name, form, qualities, pastimes and associates. And they define *twiṣākṛṣṇam* as *gaura*, or adorned with a golden complexion.

Furthermore, it is stated in *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad*:

*yadā paśyāḥ paśyate rukma-varṇam
kartāram iśāṁ puruṣāṁ brahma-yonim
tadā vidvān puṇya-pāpe vidhūya
nirañjanāḥ paramām sāmyam upaiti*

Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.1.3)

When the living being sees that the Supreme Personality of Godhead – He whose complexion is beautiful like brilliant gold, He who is the Supersoul of all and He who is the Supreme Mover – has manifested this universe, and when he understands that this Supreme Personality is the basis of the impersonal *brahma*, then that sagacious living being attains transcendental knowledge and becomes free from both pious and sinful karmic reactions. Thus freed from his connection with the material energy



"The multitude of jīvas is the prominent object of Śrī Bhagavān's karuṇā, or tender compassion."

and the body comprised of that energy, he attains supreme, qualitative equality with the Lord, attaining a spiritual form akin to His.

This evidence clearly proves that this golden complexioned personality is also Svayam Bhagavān Himself. The complexion of Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa is deep bluish-black (*śyāma*), and the complexion of Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Gaurasundara is golden (*pīta*). At this point, a doubt could well arise: is Svayam Bhagavān, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, actually two persons?

But no, this is not possible. Svayam Bhagavān is “*ekam eva dvitiyam – one without a second*” (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.2.1). This alone is the *siddhānta* of the Śrutis. Parabrahma Svayam Bhagavān is the non-dual Absolute Truth (*advaya-jñāna-paratattva*), and therefore, Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Gaurasundara can never be two persons.

In the above verse, the word *sāmyam* means ‘possessing qualities or ingenuity like His’. In other words, upon receiving the *darśana* of Śrī Gaurasundara, the residents of this world become full of *prema* like He is. Furthermore, the potency to bestow that *prema* upon others is transmitted to them. It is stated:

*yāre dekbe, tāre kabe,—kaba krṣṇa-nāma
ei-mata 'vaiṣṇava' kaila saba nija-grāma*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-lilā 7.101)

As empowered representatives of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu they would ask whomever they met to chant the names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In this way they transformed all of their fellow villagers into Vaiṣṇavas.

Therefore, it is the absolute conclusion of the Śrutis, Smṛtis, the fifth Veda – *Mahābhārata* – and the crest jewel of all scriptural evidence, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, that Śrīman Mahāprabhu is Svayam Bhagavān, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.

Śrī Gaurasundara's Astonishing Compassion Unfolds

The compassion (*karuṇā*) of golden-complexioned Śrī Śacī-nandana is more extraordinary than His compassion when He appears as *śyāma*-coloured Śrī Nanda-nandana.

Śrī Bhagavān is the ocean of compassion and He is condensed joy personified. His compassion is present within every pastime He performs. In fact, each of His forms – His every incarnation – is replete with compassion, for this quality is the inherent quality (*dharma*) of Bhagavān's nature (*svarūpa*). The essence of *bhagavattā* (Godhood)

is certainly His *mādhurya*, or sweetness, and it is in His compassion alone that this *mādhurya* manifests. Without the unfolding of His compassion, it would be rare, nay impossible, for one's mind and intelligence to conceive, remember or realize the Lord's opulence and sweetness or His transcendental qualities and pastimes, which attract the hearts of all the *jīvas* of this world, what to speak of actually being able to behold them.

The multitude of *jīvas* is the prominent object of Śrī Bhagavān's *karuṇā*, or tender compassion. To immerse the *jīvas* who are favourably disposed towards Him, in the ocean of the *rasa* of His pastimes, which are full of opulence and sweetness, is surely the unprecedented unfolding of His merciful compassion. To make *jīvas* who are averse to Him, favourably inclined, through any means possible, is also the unfolding of His compassion. And to annihilate the wicked demons who are opposed to Him and His *bhaktas* and to grant them liberation is even further evidence of the variegated nature of the unfolding of His tender compassion.

The root cause of the advent of all the Lord's *avatāras*, or incarnations in this material world, is stated in the following verses of Śrī *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.7–8):

*yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati bhārata
abhyutthānam adharmasya tadātmānam srījāmy aham

paritrāṇāya sādhuṇām vināśaya ca duṣkṛtām
dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāya sambhavāmi yuge yuge*

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

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

In this way, if we reflect upon the root cause of the advent of all incarnations of Bhagavān, we can conclude that it is to protect the *sādhus*, annihilate the demons and establish proper religious conduct by destroying irreligion. However, there are three other special reasons that are the root cause of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's advent. Not even one of these is to be seen in relation to the advent of any other *avatāra*.

The Unique Purposes of Śrī Gaurahari's Advent

First, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu incarnated as a result of becoming subservient to His own *karuṇā*, or tender compassion. Second, He descended to bestow the wealth

of His supremely radiant *bbakti* (*sva-bhakti*), which is full of *rasa*. Third, He appeared with a greed to taste His own unparalleled variegated sweetness, as relished by Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He did this by accepting Her mood and complexion. In the following *śloka*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, providing the backdrop of Śrī Sacī-nandana Gaurahari's appearance, mentions the first two reasons:

*anarpita-carīm cirāt karuṇāyāvatīrṇaḥ kalau
samarpayitum unnatojjvala-rasām sva-bhakti-śriyam
hariḥ puraṭa-sundara-dyuti-kadamba sandipitaḥ
sadā bṛdaya-kandare sphuratu vah śacī-nandanaḥ*

Śrī *Vidagdha-mādhava* (1.2)

May the son of Śrīmatī Śacī-devī, Śrī Gaurahari, forever manifest spontaneously within the innermost core of your heart. Adorned with the radiant splendour of molten gold, He has descended (*avatīrṇaḥ*) in the Age of Kali out of His causeless compassion (*karuṇā*) to bestow upon the world that which has not been given for a long time – the beauty of His own brilliantly radiant *ujjvala-prema-rasa bbakti*, service in the highest mellow of amorous love.

Regarding the third reason, Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī has said:

*śrī-rādhāyāḥ pranaya-mahimā kīdṛśo vānayaivā-
svādyo yenādbhuta-madburimā kīdṛśo vā madīyah
saukhyām cāsyā mad-anubhavataḥ kīdṛśam veti lobhāt
tad-bhāvādhyāḥ samajani śacī-garbha-sindhau harīnduḥ*

Śrī *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi-līlā 1.6)

“How great is the deeply intense love (*pranaya*) of Śrī Rādhā? What is the nature of My astonishing sweetness, which She alone relishes? And what special kind of happiness does She experience on tasting My sweetness?” A greed to taste these three things arose within the heart of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and to fulfil that intense desire, He took birth from the womb of Śrī Sacī Mātā like the full moon rising from the ocean.

Although the fundamental reasons behind all the incarnations – protecting the devotees, annihilating the demons and establishing true religion – exhibit Bhagavān's compassion for all living beings, the word *karuṇā* is not clearly stated as being the reason for the appearance of any incarnation other than Śrī Gaurahari. Therefore, compared to the compassion of other *avatāras*, the compassion of Bhagavān's incarnation as Śrī Gaura bears unprecedented distinctiveness. In this regard, we present the following considerations:



**“Śrī Caitanya
Mahāprabhu incarnated
as a result of becoming
subservient to His
own karuṇā, or tender
compassion.”**

The Compassion of Śrī Gaura is Distinctly Unprecedented

(1) As previously stated, the purpose of Śrī Bhagavān’s accepting unlimited incarnations is to protect devotees, annihilate demons and establish true religion. Among them, there is no question of incarnations such as Matsya, Kūrma and Varāha bestowing *bhakti*. And *avatāras* such as Śrī Nr̄ṣimha, Vāmana and Paraśurāma remain exclusively confined to the main purpose of Their respective advents. *Avatāras* such as Kapila and Dattātreya only instructed *sāṅkhya-yoga*, and the concept of bestowing *bhakti* is not found in *avatāras* like Buddha. Of all the *avatāras*, it was only Śrī Rāmacandra and Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra who attracted the *jīvas*. But in regard to bestowing devotion (*bhakti*), They did not exhibit particular magnanimity even to Their own close associates.

Śrī Rāmacandra offered the benedictions of sense enjoyment (*bhoga*) and liberation (*mokṣa*) to associates such as Lomaśa Ṛṣi, Śarabhaṅga, Sutīkṣṇa, the ṛṣis of Daṇḍakāraṇya and even to Kakabhuṣaṇḍi. In this way, He kept *bhakti* concealed. Śrī Rāmacandra is *maryādā-puruṣottama* (that incarnation of the Lord who establishes the rules of proper religious etiquette and conduct). It can therefore be understood that His concealing [*rāga*] *bhakti* is appropriate, for by His withholding the bestowal of [*rāga*] *bhakti*, *maryādā* was not transgressed. Yet, for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is *līlā-puruṣottama* (that incarnation of the Lord who relishes superlative, ever-fresh pastimes) and who transgressed *maryādā* to some extent, it was certainly appropriate to grant [*rāga*] *bhakti*. But He, also, to a large degree, concealed devotion to Himself.

*rājan patir gurur alam bhavatām yadūnām
daivam priyah kula-patiḥ kva ca kiñkaro vah
astv evam aṅga bhagavān bhajataīm mukundo
muktīm dadāti karhicit sma na bhakti-yogam*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.6.18)

O King, it is true that Bhagavān Mukunda has become the maintainer, *guru*, worshipful deity, beloved, master and sometimes even the servant of you and the Yādavas. Yet although that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa easily grants *mukti* to those who worship Him, He does not easily bestow *bhakti* upon them.

*kṛṣṇa yadi chute bhakte bhukti mukti diyā
kabhu prema-bhakti nā dena rākhena lukāiyā*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-līlā 8.18)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa immediately delivers *mukti* (liberation) or *bhukti* (mundane sense pleasure), according to the

devotee's desires, but He does not so easily give *prema-bhakti*. Indeed, He keeps that hidden.

(2) In this way, in all His forms, the Lord who can make the impossible possible keeps His *bhakti* hidden, even from those who worship Him. In His form of Śrī Gaurāṅga, however, in order to inundate all *jivas* in *bhakti-rasa* by means of His instructions, touch, glance and inspiration, He accepted *sannyāsa* and travelled broadly, and He sent His associates throughout the land as His emissaries, manifesting *śrī vigrahas* and devotional scriptures through them. Thus He freely and generously, with both hands, distributed *hari-nāma-prema*. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states:

*santv avatārā bahavaḥ pañkaja-nābhasya sarvato-bhadrāḥ
krṣṇād anyāḥ ko vā latāś api premado bhavati*

Laghu-bhāgavatāmrta (*Pūrva-khaṇḍa*, 303)

Let there be unlimited incarnations, replete with all auspiciousness, of that Bhagavān who has a lotus stemming from His navel. Yet besides Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who else bestows *prema* upon surrendered souls?

This is indeed true, but according to the *Gītā* verse (4.11), *ye yathā māṁ prapadyante*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa bestows *bhakti* in proportion to one's faith and qualification, neither less nor more, but the exact proportion only. Furthermore, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's name is also supremely magnanimous and merciful. In the past, present and future – when chanted to indicate something else (*sāṅketa*), jokingly (*parihāsa*), antagonistically (*stobha*) or even disrespectfully (*belā*) – His name has delivered, is delivering and will continue to deliver even those who chant *nāmābhāsa*, a semblance of the name. This, also, is a fact.

*'krṣṇa-nāma' kare aparādhera vicāra
krṣṇa balile aparādhīra nā haya vikāra*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmrta (*Ādi-līlā* 8.24)

In the chanting of *krṣṇa-nāma* (the Hare Kṛṣṇa *māhā-mantra*), offences are seriously considered. For this reason only, an offender does not experience any spiritual transformation while chanting.

However,

*caitanya-nityānande nābi esaba vicāra
nāma laite prema dena, baba aśrudhāra*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmrta (*Ādi-līlā* 8.31)

In regard to chanting the names of Śrī Caitanya and Nityānanda Prabhu, these considerations do not exist. Rather, these names bestow *prema* upon the chanter and tears cascade from his eyes.

Not only this,

*ei mana dayālu prabhu nāhi tribhuvane
krṣṇa prema janmāya yara dura darśane*

In the three worlds, there is no master so merciful as He by whose mere *darśana*, *krṣṇa-prema* awakens.

Śrī Gaurahari Surrendered to His Mercy Potency

(3) Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *karuṇā*, His compassionate mercy, did not consider who was deserving and who was not, in the matter of bestowing *prema*. Whomever she met, considering them all as deserving, she immediately granted them *prema*. She personally made those who were undeserving eligible and filled them with the nectar of *prema*. *Unnata-ujjvala sva-bhakti* is extremely difficult to obtain even for the Lord's dear-most associates such as Śrī Nārada; however, when Śrī Gaura's *karuṇā* extended herself without any obstruction, fully retaining her independence, that *unnata-ujjvala prema* inundated the whole world like a powerful flood. Śrīman Mahāprabhu gave full freedom to His unprecedented *karuṇā* potency, telling her, "Karuṇā, I surrender unto you. In whichever direction you choose, however far you want to go, and to whatever place you want to travel, drown everyone – the offenders, the antagonists, the neutral, the faithful, the faithless, the ordinary devotees and the special devotees – in the flood of *prema*."

Śrī Gaura's tender compassion has such unparalleled sweetness, such astonishing gaiety, such incomparable magnanimity and such unprecedented speciality that it is not seen even in *līlā-puruṣottama*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who can also bestow *prema*.

(4) All other *svarūpas* of Bhagavān that appear in this world exhibit Their self-same form from the beginning of Their advent until the end. Only in Śrī Kṛṣṇa's appearance did He reveal other forms. He showed His four-armed form to Devakī and Vasudeva and to the *gopīs*, His universal form to Arjuna, and His Rāma *svarūpa* to Hanumān in Dvārakā. This is possible for Kṛṣṇa because He is Svayam Bhagavān, that form of the Supreme Lord who has no source other than Himself. But other *avatāras*, such as Matsya, Kūrma, Varāha, Nr̄siṁha and Śrī Rāma, did not at any point manifest a form other than Their own.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, however, showed devotees the particular form of Bhagavān that they cherished. And He did this before all present. He showed His Nr̄siṁha form to Śrīvāsa and to Nr̄siṁhānanda, and His Śrī Rāma form, along with Śrī Rāma's associates, to Murāri Gupta. He manifested His *yajña-varāha*, *caturbhuja*, *ṣadbhuja* or *aṣṭabhuja* form to some, and His form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa holding



Painting by Śyāma āmī dāsī © BBT

*"Simply by being touched
by air that has mingled
with the sound of pure
nāma, a person is certain
to be delivered."*

a flute to others. And He manifested His form as *rasarāja-mahābhāva* to Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda. This, along with His very attribute of being Svayam Bhagavān, establishes His prominence among all of His *svarūpas*.

Śrī Gaurahari's Compassion Unfolds Fully

(5) In all of Bhagavān's other incarnations, He protected the saintly persons, and in this way, they directly experienced His tender compassion. By establishing true religion, the Lord benefited sincere adherents of the Absolute Truth, and thus they also experienced His mercy.

In those incarnations, Bhagavān annihilated the demons and granted them a spiritual destination (*gati*). Thus He is known as *hatāri-gati-dāyaka*, He who bestows a spiritual destination upon those demoniac persons He kills. Śrī Kṛṣṇa not only gave liberation (*mukti*) to the demons He slayed Himself, but He even granted liberation to those who were killed by Arjuna and Bhīma. The Lord's compassion for the demons is an instance of wonder; the demoness Pūtanā was even given the status of His nurse.

But at what moment did the demons have any realization of the compassion Śrī Bhagavān bestowed upon them? It was only after their death, upon attaining a place at His lotus feet, that they realized it. As long as they were alive, they had no experience of it at all. None of their relatives either, such as their sons or wives, could realize that *karuṇā* (save Kāliya and his wives). Up until their very last breath, they were convinced that Kṛṣṇa had dealt with them in a cruel way. For these reasons, in all of Bhagavān's other incarnations, the unfolding of the sweetness of His *karuṇā* was incomplete.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, on the other hand, never carried any type of weapon, nor did He ever take anyone's life. Rather, He purified the consciousness of all by giving them the holy name of the Lord. The unique speciality of annihilating not the demons themselves, but their demoniac qualities, is exclusively witnessed in the Śrī Gaura *avatāra*. Examples of this are Jagāi and Mādhāi, Chand Kazi, the blasphemous students in Navadvīpa, and the impersonalist Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī of Kāśī and his disciples; all were antagonistic toward Śrī Viṣṇu and the Vaiṣṇavas and thus were severe offenders. Yet by the tender compassion of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, they all became *mahā-bhāgavatas*. Along with their wives, sons and disciples, respectively, in their very lifetime, they realized and relished the sweetness of His unprecedented compassion. Thus they were blessed and their lives became successful.

Śrī Caitanya's Eagerness to Deliver All Jīvas

(6) Whenever Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu would meet with His associates, He would inquire from them how the *jīvas* could be delivered, including the animals, birds, grass, creepers, shrubs

and other non-moving living beings. Associates such as Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, Śrī Advaita Prabhu and Śrī Haridāsa Ṭhākura would reply, “Through Your resounding *harināma-saṅkirtana*, congregational chanting of the holy names of the Lord, all moving and non-moving living beings will certainly be delivered.” Simply by being touched by air that has mingled with the sound of pure *nāma*, a person is certain to be delivered. In fact, through the propagation of loud *śrī-nāma-saṅkirtana*, the unprecedented manner in which *karuṇā* unfolds, as witnessed in the *avatāra* of Śrī Gaura, is not seen in any other incarnation. Nor do we see that any other incarnation possesses such a mood of eagerness to deliver the *jīvas*, as is vested in Śrī Gaura. Besides Gaura, no other form of Bhagavān personally imparted teachings related to the precepts and conduct (*pracāra* and *ācāra*) of *bhakti*, to the *jīvas* of this world.

(7) It is stated in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi-līlā 4.16), “*rasika-śekhara kṛṣṇa parama-karuṇa* – Kṛṣṇa is ‘He who relishes *rasa* to the highest extent’ and ‘He who is supremely merciful to all.’” Upon reflecting on this, we can see that it is indeed true that Kṛṣṇa is *rasika* (an enjoyer of *rasa*) and *karuṇika* (compassionate). However, as long as He does not accept the mood (*bhāva*) and complexion (*kānti*) of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and appear as Śrīman Mahāprabhu, He can not be *rasika-śekhara* or *parama-karuṇa*. This is because in *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, His three desires remained unfulfilled. It was in His *gaura-līlā* that He fulfilled and relished them.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa stole butter and He also stole the hearts of the *gopīs*, but He could not steal Śrī Rādhā’s complexion or Her moods of *mādana*, *modana* and *mohana*, which are Her very own nature. For this reason, Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda says: “*rādhā-bhāva dyuti suvalitaiḥ naumi kṛṣṇa svarūpam* – I offer my obeisances again and again to that Kṛṣṇa who is resplendent with the lustre and intrinsic mood of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.” By granting *mukti* to the demons, Kṛṣṇa relieved the burden of the earth, and thus He is *karuṇa*, or merciful. Śrīman Mahāprabhu, however, without the slightest hesitation, distributed – even to offenders – that divine love, or *prema*, which is difficult for Brahmā himself to attain. For this reason, the superlative adjective is used and He is known as *parama-karuṇā*, supremely merciful and compassionate.

An Astonishing Speciality of Gaura-līlā

(8) There is yet another exceptional speciality of Śrīman Mahāprabhu’s *karuṇā*. This is that *kṛṣṇa-prema* will awaken in the heart of whoever utters the name of Gaurāṅga. He who accepts the shelter of Gaurāṅga will attain Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His associates. One who takes shelter of the land of Gaura-maṇḍala will attain eternal residence in Vraja. Aho! Those who drown in the ocean

of *gaura-prema-rasa* will float in the waves of *prema* for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, as stated by Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura:

*je gaurāṅgera nāma loya, tā'ra hoyā premodaya,
 tāre mui jāi bolibārī*

Prema will awaken for that person who utters Gaurāṅga’s holy names. I give my heart and soul to him and exclaim, “Excellent! Bravo!”

*gaurāṅgera saṅgī gane, nitya-siddha kari māne,
 se jāya vrajendra-suta-pāśa
śrī gauḍa-maṇḍala bhūmi, jebā jāne cintāmani,
 tā'ra hoyā vraja-bhūme vāsa*

That person who accepts that Gaurāṅga’s personal associates are eternally perfected souls (*nitya-siddha*) is promoted to the transcendental abode of Vrajendra-suta, the son of Vraja’s king. One who knows the divine land of Śrī Gauḍa-maṇḍala, Śrī Navadvīpa, to be transcendental touchstone (*cintāmani*) is in truth a resident of Vraja-bhūmi, Śrī Vṛndāvana.

*gaura-prema rasārṇave, se tarange jebā dūbe,
 se rādhā-mādhava-antaraṅga*

Gaura-prema is an ocean of *rasa*. One who dives deep in the waves of that ocean becomes a confidential associate of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava.

How astonishing! One drowns in the Indian Ocean and arises in the Pacific Ocean. One drowns in the ocean of *gaura-prema* and surfaces in the ocean of *rādhā-kṛṣṇa prema*. One accepts the shelter of the associates of Gaura and becomes the maid servant (*dāsī*) of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. This is an astonishing speciality of *gaura-līlā*.

Mahāprabhu’s Special Gift – Parakīya-bhāva

Also, in the realm of *sādhyā-sādhana* and *upāsana*: the goal, the spiritual practice to attain it, and the process of worship, the significance of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s gift stands as even more radiant and incomparable.

Lucid insight into the subject of *parakīya-bhāva* is found in *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta*, in *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*’s *rāsa-pañcādhyāya* – the five chapters describing Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *rāsa-līlā*, and in the songs of Śrī Caṇḍīdāsa and Vidyāpati. However, prior to the advent of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, no other Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* had imparted such articulate teachings on *parakīya-bhāva* in regard to *sādhyā* and *sādhana*. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s one-pointed followers, who fulfil His inner heart’s desire (*mano’bhiṣṭa*), such as Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Kṛṣṇa dāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, have established in their authoritative

books – *Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmrta*, *Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamani* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmrta*, respectively – that *parakīya-bhāva* alone is the ultimate conclusive truth (*siddhānta*) in the matter of the transcendental objective and the means to obtain it (*sādhya* and *sādbhana*).

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmrta (*Ādi-lilā* 4.47–49), states:

*parakīyā-bhāve ati rasera ullāsa
vraja vinā ibhāra anyatra nāhi vāsa*

In *parakīya-bhāva*, the mood of paramour love, there is extreme jubilation in *rasa*. This mood does not reside anywhere other than Vraja.

*vraja-vadhū-gaṇera ei bhāva niravadhi
tāra madhye śrī-rādhāya bhāvera avadhi*

This mood is without limit in the young brides of Vraja. Among them, it culminates in *Śrī Rādhā*.

*praudha nirmala-bhāva prema sarvottama
krṣṇera mādhurya-rasa-āsvāda-kāraṇa*

Her mature, immaculate love surpasses that of all others and is the sole cause of *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*'s relishing *mādhurya-rasa*.

Śrīla Premānanda dāsa Ṭhākura has also sung with great joy:

*emana śacīra nandana vine
'prema' bali' nāma, ati-adbhuta, śruta haita kā'ra kāne?* (1)

Aho! Without the mercy of *Śrī Gaurasundara*, the son of *Śacī*, who could have heard that extremely wonderful word, *prema*?

*śrī-krṣṇa-nāmera, sva-guṇa mahimā, kevā jānāita āra?
vṛndā-vipinera, mahā madburimā, praveśa haita kā'ra?* (2)

Who else would have told us the unlimited glories and transcendental qualities of *śrī-krṣṇa-nāma*? If *Śrī Gaurahari*, who is *Kṛṣṇa* endowed with the *bhāva* and complexion of *Śrī Rādhā*, had not appeared and described the great unparalleled sweetness of the forest of *Vṛndāvana*, and if He had not poured His causeless mercy upon the fallen *jīvas* of *Kali-yuga* without discrimination, then who could have become immersed in the sweetness of that *Vṛndāvana*?

*kevā jānāita, rādhāra mādhurya, rasa-yaśa camatkāra?
tā'ra anubhāva, sāttvika vikāra, gocara chila vā kā'ra?* (3)

Without *rasika-śekhara* *Śrī Gaurahari*, who else could have informed us of the sweetness relished by *Śrī Rādhā* and of the astonishing glories of Her *madhura-rasa*, which embodies the highest stages of *māhābhāva* –

adbirūḍha, modana, mādana and various other ecstasies? Before *Śrī Śacī-nandana Gaurahari* revealed Her *anubhāvas* and divine *sāttvika* transformations, who was able to comprehend this subject?

*vraje je vilāsa, rāsa mahā-rāsa, prema parakīya tattva
gopīra mahimā, vyabhicārī simā, kā'ra avagati chila eta?* (4)

Without Him, who could have understood the transcendental pastimes of Vraja such as *rāsa* and *mahā-rāsa*, loving affairs in the reality (*tattva*) of *parakīya-rasa* [as shared between *akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrti* *Śrī Kṛṣṇa* and *māhābhāva-māyi* *Śrī Rādhā* and Her *kāya-vyuha-svarūpā gopīs*]? Who made it possible to know the glories of the *gopīs* and the limits of their transcendental *vyabhicārī-bhāvas*?

*dhanya kali dhanya, nitāi-caitanya, parama karuṇā kari'
vidhi-agocara, je prema-vikāra, prakāše jagata-bhari'* (5)

O Kali, you are most blessed and highly glorious, for in your time, the age of Kali, *Śrī Gaurahari* and *Nityānanda Prabhu* have appeared on this earth out of Their supreme compassion. They filled the world with the revelation of such superlative transformations of *prema*, which were incomprehensible even to *Brahmājī*.

*uttama adhama, kichu nā bāchila, yāciyā dileka kola
kabe premānande, emana gaurāṅge, antare dhariyā dola* (6)

Without discriminating between who is elevated and who is fallen, They embraced everyone. *Śrī Premānanda* says, “O brothers, live [in this world] by keeping that *Śrī Gaurasundara* locked in the core of your heart.”

The joyfulness and saturation of extreme sweetness that exists in the speciality of *Śrī Gaura*'s *karuṇā* as she unfolds and reveals herself is wholly indescribable and incomparable. This is seen in His manifesting His very own nature (*svarūpa*); His purifying degraded persons; His bestowing *sva-bhakti* (His own loving devotion); His delivering the *jīvas* of the future; His illuminating the very nature of the living beings, or in other words, His revealing the utmost limit of their *krṣṇa-prema*; His distributing *nāma-prema*; and above all, His relishing the incomparable sweetness of *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*. The sweetness of this unfolding of *Śrī Gaura*'s divine compassion is not witnessed in any other *yuga* or revealed in any other form of *Bhagavān*.

Therefore, O *sādhaka*, my sincere request is that you place everything else at a distance and develop deep, single-pointed attachment to the lotus feet of *Śrī Caitanyacandra*. 

Translated from *Śrī Gauḍiya Patrikā*
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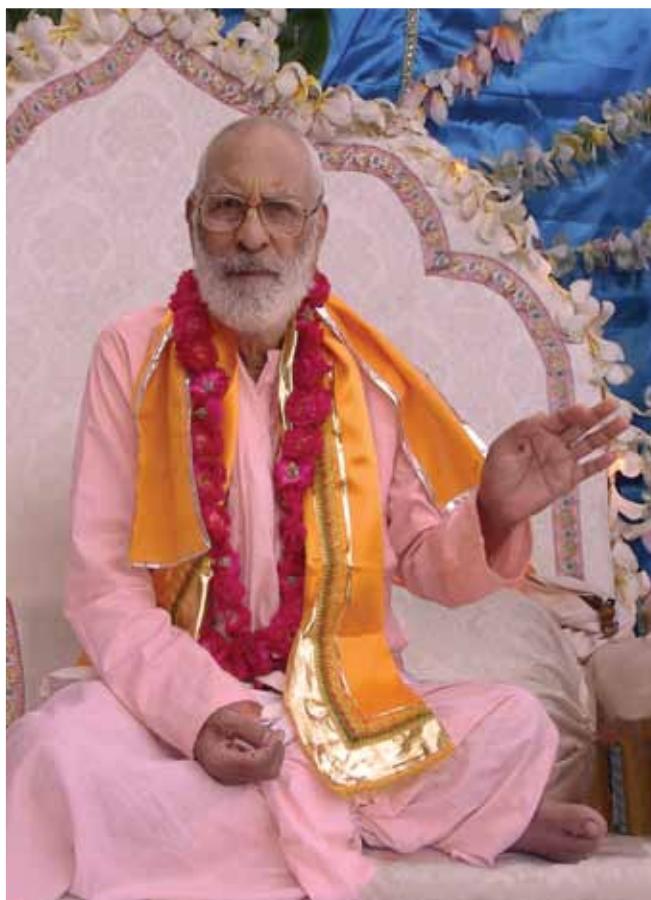
vikṛīḍitam vṛaja-vadhūbhīr
*Continuously Hear
About Rāsa-līlā.*



An explanation of the
commentaries of
Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī
and Śrīla Viśvanātha
Cakravartī Ṭhākura

by Śrī Śrīmad
Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa
Gosvāmī Mahārāja

Originally spoken in English,
19 February 1994, at
Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍiya Maṭha,
Mathurā



vikṛīditaṁ vraja-vadhūbbhir idam ca viṣṇoḥ
 śraddhānvit ‘nuśnuyād attha varṇayed yaḥ
 bhaktim parām bhagavati pratilabhyā kāmam
 hr̥d-rogam āśv apabinoty acireṇa dbirah
 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.33.39)

vikṛīditaṁ – the playful pastimes; *vraja-vadhūbbih* – with the newly married girls of Vraja; *idam* – this; *ca* – and; *viṣṇoḥ* – by Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the all-pervading Lord; *śraddhā-anvitāḥ* – imbued with faith; *anuśnuyāt* – continually hears; *atba* – or; *var ayet* – describes; *yaḥ* – one who; *bhaktim* – devotional service; *parām* – supremely transcendental; *bbagavati* – unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *pratilabhyā* – obtaining; *kāmam* – mundane lust; *hr̥t* – of the heart; *rogam* – the disease; *āśu* – quickly and easily; *apabinoti* – sends far away; *acire a* – without delay; *dbirah* – sober.

A sober person who, with full faith, continuously hears or describes Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa's transcendental *rāsa-līlā* with the damsels of Vraja will first attain *parā-bhakti* for the lotus feet of Bhagavān. Thereafter, he will quickly conquer his senses and become forever free from the disease of the heart – worldly lust.

Vikṛīditaṁ vraja-vadhūbbhir idam ca viṣṇoḥ. The *gopīs* are Kṛṣṇa's *vadhūs*. A *vadhū* is a young, newly married girl. A newly married girl will be so careful not to act shamefully. She will not talk very much, she will look very beautiful and she will have so many other qualities. The *gopīs* are described in this way.

If anyone listens with *śraddhā* (deep faith) to descriptions of the unprecedented and unparalleled *rāsa-līlā*, he will receive *prema-bhakti* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa within his heart. The word *anuśnuyāt* indicates continuous hearing. The word *varṇaye* means 'to explain'. First he will engage in continuous *śravana*, or hearing, and then he will engage in continuous *kirtana*, or singing about and describing this pastime. And after that he will be able to engage in continuous *smarana*, or remembrance.

The word *anumodana* means appreciation. Even if someone cannot engage in continuous *śravana*, *kirtana* and *smarana* (auditory reception, vocal explication and mental recollection) of *rāsa-līlā*, yet still feels appreciation for it, then he, too, will receive *prema-bhakti*, the topmost *bhakti*, for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, within the core of his heart. First *prema-bhakti*, the most elevated form of devotional service (*parā-bhakti*), will enter his heart and then, afterward,

hr̥d-rogam āśv apabinoti – the disease of the heart will be driven out very quickly.

The term *hr̥d-roga*, or 'disease of the heart', primarily indicates lust, or *kāma*. It also means attraction to any illusory entity (*mayika-vastu*), including mundane adoration, name and fame, and every other attractive feature of this world. A man's love for his dog, for a girl, for his father, mother, wife or anyone else, is included in the term *hr̥d-roga*. All forms of attraction to anything in this world – the attainment of residence in the heavenly sphere, sense enjoyment and so on – are included in the term *hr̥d-roga*. But *hr̥d-roga* especially refers to lust, or *kāma*.

So, at first, *prema-bhakti*, the topmost form of devotional service (*parā-bhakti*), will enter a person's heart, and then, after that, he will forever be *jitendriya*, the conqueror of his senses. All forms of mundane attraction will permanently go far away and he will happily and continuously engage in *śravana*, *kirtana* and *smarana* of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *rāsa-līlā*. Then, at last, he will attain residence in the abode of that topmost *bhakti*, Goloka Vṛndāvana.



“If a person never hears rāsa-līlā kathā, his birth is useless.”

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is *līlā-puruṣottama*, the supreme personality of all *līlā*, and the *gopīs* are *līlā-puruṣottamā*. The meaning of *puruṣottamā* is *līlā-parā-śakti*, the supreme potency of all *līlā*. And the *rāsa-līlā* between Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* is the best of all *līlās*, in which every other *līlā* may arise. For example, *dola-līlā*, wherein Śrī Kṛṣṇa plays with the *gopīs* on beautiful swings, has so many special features of its own. In this *līlā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa wants to embrace the *gopīs*, but they are too shy to embrace Him in front of each other. However, when the swing they are seated upon is pushed higher and higher, the *gopīs* become afraid and tightly embrace Him. All the special features of this pastime and all the features of hundreds of thousands of other *līlās* are included within *rāsa-līlā*.

As such, *rāsa-līlā* is known as *cakravartī* – the emperor of all *līlā*. One who hears about *rāsa-līlā*, and even one who only longs to hear about it, is to be known as the *cakravartī* among all those who listen to *hari-kathā*. One who explains this *līlā* and sings about it is to be known as the *cakravartī* among all those who explain the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. But what is the proof of this? The proof is also *cakravartī*, for this explanation is given by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.

If someone longs to hear about these pastimes, his longing is also to be known as *cakravartī*. By continuously hearing Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *rāsa-līlā*, he will become qualified to explain it. And by continuously explaining it and hearing about it, *rāsa-līlā* will automatically appear in his heart, without any tiresome endeavour. Such proof of the efficacy of this process is the *cakravartī* of all proof.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura further clarifies that by hearing about this *rāsa-līlā* and by explaining it; by remembering it and even by *anumodana*, appreciating it, a man will obtain *gopī-prema*. First he will enter *rāgānugā-bhakti*¹ in *gopī-bhāva*, then he will achieve *svarūpa-siddhi*² in that same *bhāva* and at last *vāstu-siddhi*³. And in *gopī-bhāva* he will directly join in that same *rāsa-līlā* with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*. This is certain. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has stressed this point by using the affix *nu* – ‘surely’.....

- 1 Devotional service following in the footsteps of an eternal associate in Vraja is called *rāgānuga-bhakti*.
- 2 The perfection of realizing the inherent form of one’s own soul is called *svarūpa-siddhi*.
- 3 The attainment of one’s eternal, fully spiritual body, which is completely untouched by the material energy, is called *vāstu-siddhi*.



If a person never hears *rāsa-līlā kathā*, his birth is useless. He should die, for he is actually a *nāma-aparādhī* and a *vaiṣṇava-aparādhī*. This is a very strong statement, and although it is beneficial for all to hear it, not all are qualified. Previously, when we were in Jagannātha Purī during the month of Puruṣottama, I expressed the same truth Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura is explaining here. It is essential to hear all of these truths, for one who fails to understand them is bound to become a *nāma-aparādhī*.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has also commented on this verse. In his commentary he explains that, through this verse, Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī has given blessings to all *śrautas* (listeners) and all *bhaktas* who are to come after him – to all those who will explain this *rāsa-līlā kathā*, to all those who will hear it, to all those who will remember it, and also to those who will have appreciation for it. He has given blessings to all of them.

What blessings has he given? With the words *bhaktim parām bhagavati pratilabhyā*, Śrīla Śukadeva has blessed all those who hear, speak, remember and appreciate this *kathā* to surely attain that *parā-bhakti*. The term *parā-bhakti*, or the topmost *bhakti*, refers to *prema-bhakti*. But which form of *prema-bhakti*? *Vātsalya-prema?* *Sakhya-prema?* No. They will surely attain *mādhurya-bhāva*. They will become *gopīs*, just as the personified Śrūtis did. But while the personified Śrūtis took a very, very long time to attain the positions of *gopīs*, those who receive Śrīla Śukadeva’s blessings will attain *mādhurya-bhāva* in a very short time.

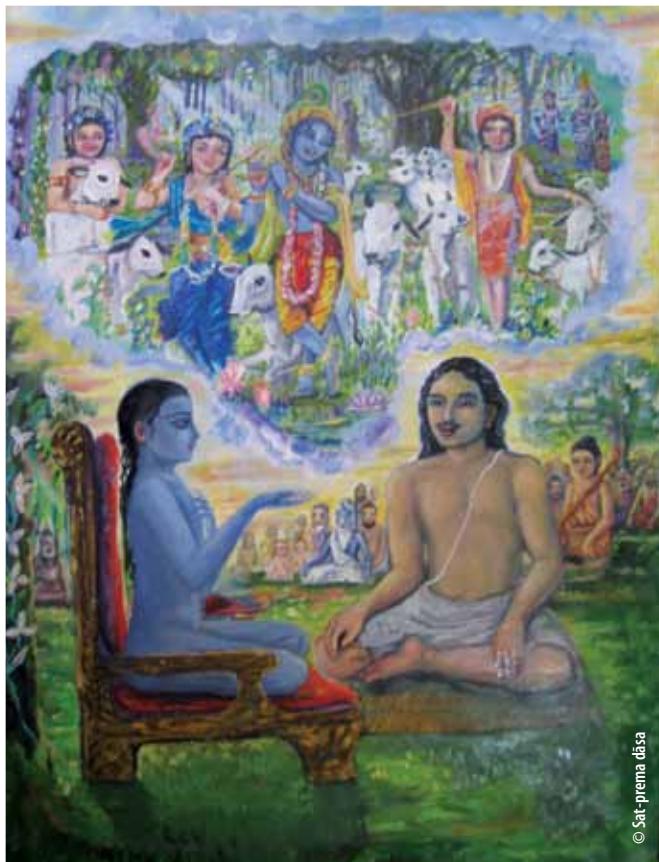
If you hear about, explain, remember and appreciate these pastimes then you will obtain the *darśana* and blessings of Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, as well as Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura.



In his commentary, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī quotes a verse from the *Gītā*:

*brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā
na śocati na kāṅkṣati
samāḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu
mad-bhaktirin labhate parām*

Bhagavad-gītā (18.54)



“Śrīla Śukadeva has blessed all those who hear, speak, remember and appreciate this kathā to surely attain that parā-bhakti.”

this method, even if one attains *prema-bhakti*, it will only develop to the point of *śānta-rasa*.

But in the verse beginning *vikṛiditam*, we find that first *parā-bhakti* enters the heart and then lust and all other *anarthas* will automatically disappear. Those who follow the process that is described in the verse beginning *brahma-bhūta prasannātmā* will have to labour so much to become free from lust and all other *anarthas*. And they may not succeed. Among hundreds of thousands of *brahma-jñānīs*, perhaps one will succeed. There is no guarantee. But through the process described in the verse beginning *vikṛiditam*, anyone with *śraddhā* is qualified, and they do not have to make any laborious endeavour. They must simply hear, *anuśr̥ṇyād*, and the topmost *prema-bhakti*, *gopi-prema*, will enter their heart, what to speak of *śānta-rasa*. This gives us great hope.



A person thus situated in transcendence becomes fully joyful. He never laments or desires anything. Being equally disposed to all beings, he attains *bhakti* to Me, which is blessed with the symptoms of *prema*.

Those who are *brahma-bhūtabh* constantly remember *brahma*, *brahma*, *brahma*. They are no longer in the grips of *māyā*, which primarily refers to mundane lust. All their desires have been removed and all their *anarthas* have disappeared. Such personalities do not desire anything. *Brahma-bhūtabh prasannātmā*. They are always *prasanna*, or pleased, since they are *ātmā-rāma* (one who rejoices in the self) and do not crave anything in the entire world. And they never experience any regret or sorrow. If they lose something, they never hanker (*kāṅkṣati*) for it.

Then, *sarveṣu bhūteṣu*, they are equal to all. At that stage, *mad-bhaktim labbate parā*, they may attain *parā-bhakti* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Here, one's progress toward the attainment of *parā-bhakti* is the opposite of what we have previously discussed, for it is in relation to *brahma-jñānīs*. This verse describes that such *brahma-jñānīs* will first have to conquer lust and all of their *anarthas*. They will have to give up all their desires, which will take a long, long time. Only then will they attain *parā-bhakti*, as Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī or Sanaka, Sananda, Sanātana and Sanat-kumāra did. And by

The words *idam ca* indicate that we will not only enter *rāsa-lilā*, but also so many other varieties of *vilāsa* like it. That we will be so fortunate is our greatest hope. The word *idam* (in this) specifically indicates *rāsa-lilā*, the apex of all *lilā*, while *ca* (also) indicates all other *lilās* like it, such as *holi-lilā*, wherein Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* battle each other with water that has been dyed all different colours; *dola-lilā*, or swing pastimes; *jala-lilā*, or pastimes of playing in the water; *gamana-lilā*, wherein the *gopīs* wander about with Śrī Kṛṣṇa while holding His hands; and all others. He will enter *māna-lilā*, the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa trying to counteract the angry jealousy of the *gopīs*; He will enter *dāna-lilā*, wherein Śrī Kṛṣṇa harasses the *gopīs* for taxes before he allows them to pass by Him; He will enter *kuñja-lilā*, wherein Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* play together in beautifully decorated forest gardens; He will enter every *lilā*. What great fortune he shall attain!

Why has the name Viṣṇu, the all-pervasive one, been used in *idam ca viṣṇobh*? During *rāsa-lilā*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa has manifested Himself beside hundreds of thousands of *gopīs*, expanding one form for each of them. Viṣṇu, in this context, refers to that Kṛṣṇa, that Viṣṇu, not the Viṣṇu who resides within each atom of the material creation.



“But if someone has even a trace of śraddhā, if he hears rāsa-līlā kathā he will attain full-blown śraddhā and thus become truly qualified to hear”

Continuing his explanation, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura gives an elucidation of the term *śraddhānvitāḥ*, or “imbued (*anvitāḥ*) with complete faith (*śraddhā*)”.

*śraddhā'-śabde viśvāsa kabe sudṛḍha niścaya
krṣṇe bhakti kaile sarva-karma krta haya*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā 22.62)

The word *śraddhā* means the immovable trust that by engaging in *krṣṇa-bhakti* one will undoubtedly fulfil all of one’s duties, on every level.

In this context, *śraddhā* refers to the conviction that if one continuously hears *rāsa-līlā*, continuously explains it, and continuously remembers it and appreciates it, then he will attain *gopī-prema* and eventually attain the position of a *gopi*. The words *sudṛḍha niścaya* indicate the immovable determination that ‘surely it will come to pass’. If one is imbued with this kind of conviction then he is *śraddhā-anvitāḥ*.

In relation to a man who possesses such *śraddhā*, the word *nu* has been used which means ‘certainly’. In other words, those who possess this kind of *śraddhā* will certainly attain *gopī-prema* and enter into *rāsa-līlā* with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*; of this there is no doubt. Also it is explained that if someone has faith in his *gurudeva* and faith in *śāstra* then his conviction shall be called *śraddhā*. This is the verdict of *śāstra*, of *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, of Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī.



If someone is deeply convinced that “surely it will come to pass” and hears *rāsa-līlā kathā* with such conviction, then he is qualified to hear it and will certainly attain *prema-bhakti*. He will attain a form of *prema* in accordance with what the *gopīs* experience in relation to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. First he will attain *krṣṇa-prema* – *bhaktiṁ parāṁ bhagavati pratilabhyā* – and then the disease of the heart, which includes all forms of mundane attraction, especially lust for the opposite sex, will go far away.

Lastly, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura says *dhīraḥ*. One who is *dhīraḥ* is also described as a *pandita*, a deeply realized person, or as *muni-vara*, the best of saints. Who is being referred to as *dhīra* in this verse? Those who proclaim, “In *śāstra* it has been written that we should

hear *hari-kathā*, and specifically the apex of all *hari-kathā*. By such hearing, the disease of lust will go far away.” One who believes in this fact very firmly is called *dhīra* – a deeply realized, saintly personality.

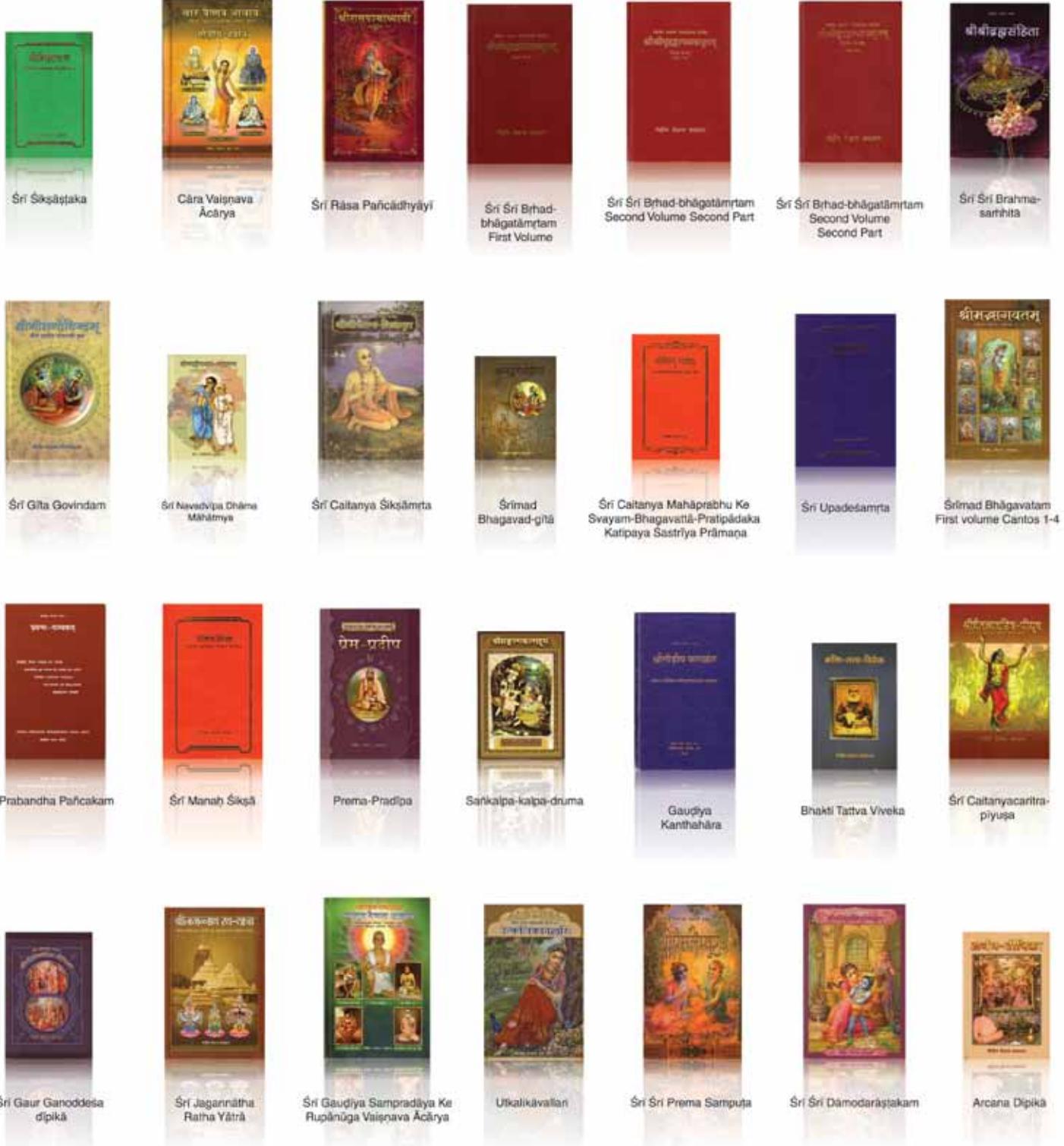
On the other hand, those who hear this *śloka* and other *ślokas* in this line but do not believe in them, are not qualified, and the disease of lust will not leave their hearts. They proclaim, “First give up lust and only then can you hear all these topics. First become qualified and then hear about *rāsa-līlā*.” Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura has referred to such people as *nāstika* (atheists) and *nāma-aparādhīs* (offenders of the holy name). He explains: such people are not *dhīraḥ*, rather they are *nāma-aparādhīs*. But those who very thoughtfully consider Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī’s words and hear *rāsa-līlā kathā* with the conviction that ‘surely it will come to pass’ are truly *dhīraḥ*. Those who do not believe in the precepts of *śāstra*, thinking instead, “We should first become qualified by giving up lust and all other forms of mundane attraction, and only after that should we hear *rāsa-līlā kathā*,” are in fact *nāma-aparādhīs*. They do not believe in the words of Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the words of *śāstra*, and are therefore *nāma-aparādhīs*. Those who do not depend on the words of Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī, with full confidence, are actually atheistic.

Those who have no faith in the precepts of *śāstra* cannot attain *prema* because they are *nāma-aparādhīs*. But if someone has even a trace of *śraddhā*, if he hears *rāsa-līlā kathā* he will attain full-blown *śraddhā* and thus become truly qualified to hear. Even for him, *prema* will first enter his heart, and then lust will go, completely and permanently.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī concludes his commentary on this verse by saying, “He Prabhu! He Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, it is You who gave this idea to the world. It is You who are making me dance inside and outside, inspiring me to explain all of this and to realize those explanations. You are making a person like me, a mundane fool like me, dance internally and externally. Because of the impetus of love for that Caitanya Mahāprabhu, I am writing all of these things.”

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura has concluded his own commentary in a similar manner.

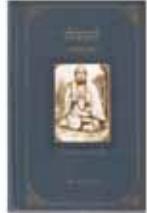
Originally published in English in
Rays of The Harmonist No.20, Kārttika 2009



Transcendental Gifts from Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja



Srimad Bhāgavatīya
Venu-gīta



Jaiya Dharmā



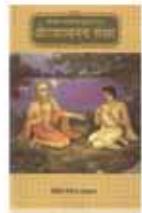
Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa
Gānōdēsa dīpikā



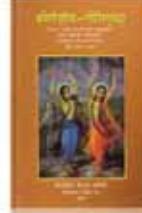
Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā



Ujjvala-nīlamāṇī



Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda-
Sārvāda



Śrī Gaudīya-gītiguccha



Śrīmad Bhāgavatam
Tenth Canto First Volume
Chapter 1-8



Maharsi Durvāsā Āṇi
Śrī Durvāsā-āśrama



Śrī Bhāgatīmṛta-kāṇḍa



Śrīmad Bhagavatīya
Catuh Śloki



Śrīmad Bhagavad-
gītā-sāra



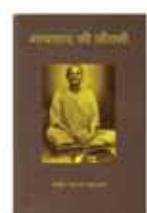
Rīga Vartma Candrikā



Śrī Braja Mandala
Parikramā



Ācārya Kesari Śrī Śrīmad
Bhaktiprajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī



Māyāvāda
Kī Jīvanī



Nāmācārya Śrīla
Haridāsa Ṭhākura



Śrī Hari-nāmā
Maḥāmantra



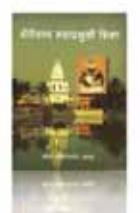
Śrī Navadvīpa
Dhāma Parikramā



Śrī Śrī Bhāgavata
Patrikā



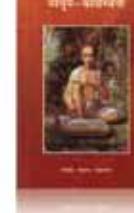
Śrī
Bhagavatārakamārcimālā



Śrī Caitanya
Mahāprabhu Ki Śikṣā



Śrī Černatkāra Candrikā



Mādhurya Kādambī



Śrī Sri Bhakti-rasāmṛta-
sindhu Bindu



Vaiṣṇava Siddhānta Mālā



Śrī Śrī
Bhajanarāhasaya



Ujjvala-nīlamāṇī-
kīraṇa

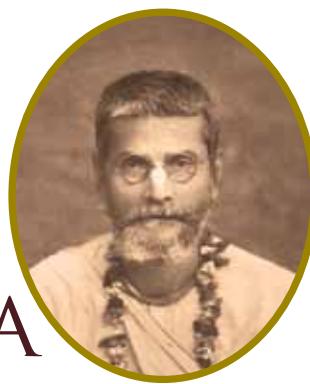
"If you have any desire to know the siddhāntas of viśuddha rūpānuga Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, of the methodology of Gauḍīya bhajana, and of the spotlessly pure vraja-rasa in the line of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, then you must study the granthas translated and published by the object of my affection, Śrīpad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja."

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja



Affectionate Blessings from Guru-varga

Blessings from ŚRĪ GURUPĀDA-PADMA



[In the closing words to his introduction to the Hindi edition of *Jaiva-dharma*, *oṁ viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Maharāja wrote the following:]

The original *Jaiva-dharma* was written in Bengali, but the book uses Sanskrit extensively, for it contains many quotations from *śāstra*. In a very short time at least twelve large editions of this book have already been published in Bengali, which shows how popular it is. This present Hindi edition of *Jaiva-dharma* has been printed according to the system used for the most recent Bengali edition of *Jaiva-dharma*, published in a new format by the Gaudīya Vedānta Samiti. *Tridāṇḍi-svāmī* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, the highly competent editor of the Hindi monthly spiritual magazine *Śrī Bhāgavata Patrikā*, took great pains to translate this book into Hindi, and published it in the magazine in a series of articles spanning a period of six years. At the repeated request of many faithful readers, he has now published these articles in book form for the benefit of the Hindi-speaking religious populace.

In this connection, I feel compelled to note that our highly distinguished translator's mother-tongue is Hindi, and he learned Bengali in order to study this book. After thoroughly mastering both the language and the subject matter, he accepted the difficulty and substantial labor of translating it into Hindi. I am very pleased at heart that he

has expertly preserved the rigorous philosophy, the deeply profound analysis of *rasa*, and the lofty and subtle moods of the original book. The Hindi-speaking world will remain indebted to him for this monumental work. In particular, Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura will definitely bestow great mercy on him for his tireless service.

Above all, I must say that it is only because the *sādhakas* who were involved in the production of this book hold me in some esteem that my name has been used in connection with the editing of this book. In reality, it is the translator and publisher, *tridāṇḍi-svāmī* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, who has done all the editing work, and who is thus the object of my special affection and blessings.

I have complete faith that by studying this book, both the faithful public and the learned scholars of this country will gain knowledge of the fundamental truths of *sambandha*, *abhidheya* and *prayojana*, which were practised and preached by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. By so doing, they will become eligible to enter the *prema-dharma* of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In conclusion, I pray that the readers will bestow profuse blessings upon us by reading this book very carefully.

Śrīla Prabhupāda Kiṅkara
Tridaṇḍi-bhikṣu Śrī Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava
Śrī Keśavajī Gaudīya Maṭha
Mathurā, U.P. 1966

Words of Affection from ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTIVEDĀNTA SVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA



I received your letter, dated 20.9.66 on time. Our relationship is certainly based on spontaneous love. That is why there is no chance of us forgetting one another. By the mercy of *guru* and Gaurāṅga may everything be auspicious for you. This is my constant prayer. From the first time I saw you I have been your constant well-wisher. At his first sight of me Śrīla Prabhupāda also saw me with such love. It was in my very first *darśana* of Śrīla Prabhupāda that I learned how to love. It is his boundless mercy that he has engaged an unworthy person like me, in fulfilling some of his desires. It is his causeless mercy to engage me in preaching the message of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunātha.

The following letter excerpt was originally written in Bengali by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja on the occasion of the disappearance of Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. It was addressed to Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja and later translated into Hindi by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. In December 1968 it was printed in *Śrī Bhāgavata Patrikā*. The following is the English translation of that letter excerpt.



All glories to Śrī Guru & Gaurāṅga



My room is locked in Delhi. If you or any of your faithful preachers want to preach in Delhi, let me know. If you want to work in Delhi, you can use that room and preach. If you continue going to Delhi, then my publication work can be taken care of, under your observation.

You wrote to me, "You can engage me in any preaching work in India according to my ability. I shall always be ready to do so." So I can preach whole-heartedly by your good wishes.

I was a staunch *grhamedī* [one whose thoughts are absorbed in household affairs]. Śrīla Prabhupāda used to come to me in dreams from time to time and call me to renounce family life and come along with him. The dreams would frighten me and make me think that I would have to accept *sannyāsa*. I didn't have any desire to take *sannyāsa*. But upon the repeated insistence of Śrīpāda Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, Śrīla Keśava Mahārāja bestowed boundless mercy upon this unwilling and blind person, by forcibly giving me *sannyāsa*. It seems that this desire of Śrīla Prabhupāda's was transmitted into his heart, and it was thus that my *sannyāsa* was accomplished.

Excerpts from a letter to
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja,
28 September 1966

Excerpt from a letter to
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja
22 October 1968, posted from Seattle, Washington

Blessings from ŚRĪLA BHAKTI KUMUDA SANTA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA



Śrīla Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is the last disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda in the *sannyāsa* order who is present today. Śrīla Bhakti Hṛdaya Bon Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja brought him to the lotus feet of his spiritual master at the tender age of eleven. Upon initiating him, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura named him Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa dāsā, and carefully arranged for his education.

After his disappearance from this manifest world, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda appeared to Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa Brahmacārī in a dream and ordered him to accept the renounced order and preach the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu widely. Thus, in 1942, Śrī Rādhā-ramaṇa Brahmacārī accepted *sannyāsa* from Śrīla Bhakti Gaurava Vaikhānas Mahārāja in Remuṇā, Orissa. Later he founded Śrī Caitanya Āśrama, which has several branches in India.

Śrīla Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmī Mahārāja would never refuse even the tiniest order of Śrīla Prabhupāda or any of his disciples, and had utmost regard for anyone who had even brief contact with his spiritual master. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja would regularly write to Śrīla Bhakti Kumuda Santa Gosvāmī Mahārāja to report on his preaching outside India, and Śrīla Santa Gosvāmī Mahārāja would reply with great pleasure, always bestowing his profuse blessings.

ALL GLORY TO ŚRĪ ŚRĪ GURU AND GOURANGA

TRIDANDISWAMI B.K. Santa Maharaj

FOUNDER & PRESIDENT

ŚRĪ CAITANYA ASHRAM 23, BHUPEN ROY ROAD Behala, Cal.-34

Dated: 21.12.97

Ref. No.

Recipient of my Affection
Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja!

I became extremely happy upon receiving your letter and learning that you are again going abroad to preach. Your śrī gurudeva, my elder Godbrother [Śrī Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja] was especially affectionate to me. You are enhancing the splendour of the institution founded by him, as well as of the entire Gauḍiya world. This is a cause of immense joy. I am praying that Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga bestow upon you profuse potency for this great preaching work. Knowing that you will visit at my place after you return from your preaching brings me profound happiness. At that time I will speak to you directly and also hear from you. I am going to Purī on December 23rd. On the January 26th I will be in Khaḍagapur, and from there I will return to the Calcutta Maṭha on the 30th of January. Please take my blessings and give them to all. What more should I write?

Blessings From
Śrī Bhakti Kumuda Santa

ALL GLORY TO ŚRĪ ŚRĪ GURU AND GOURANGA
TRIDANDISWAMI B.K. Santa Maharaj
FOUNDER & PRESIDENT
ŚRĪ CAITANYA ASHRAM
23, BHUPEN ROY ROAD Behala, Cal.-34

Dated: 28/01/2000

Ref. No.

Recipient of auspiciousness

Object of my affection, Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja!

Receiving your letter of January 10th, 2000, I was extremely pleased. Ample preaching is going on, and knowing that makes me even more happy. You have remembered me even in the midst of so much engagement; therefore, I am praying to Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga that they will transmit even more *sakti* into you for the preaching of *hari-kathā*. Some obstacles will come in the performance of virtuous acts, but you should not worry for them and continue your preaching service fearlessly. If, in every respect, we can preach the *kathā* of Śrīla Prabhupāda along with practising it, then our lives will be successful. What else to write? Please accept my blessings and pass them on to all.

Blessings from
Śrī Bhakti Kumuda Santa

ALL GLORY TO ŚRĪ ŚRĪ GURU AND GOURANGA
TRIDANDISWAMI B.K. Santa Maharaj
FOUNDER & PRESIDENT
ŚRĪ CAITANYA ASHRAM
23, BHUPEN ROY ROAD Behala, Cal.-34

Dated: 3/02/2001

Ref. No.

With much affection for my dear Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja:

I am wishing for your eternal well-being.

I became extremely pleased to receive your letter from far-off England. You have *śraddhā* in me; therefore, even in such a far-away place, you remembered me and wrote me a letter. The *kṛpa-sakti* (mercy potency) of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Ṭhākura Prabhupāda and of your *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, has been profusely transmitted to you; there is not even a scent of doubt about this. This is obvious from seeing the way large numbers of people outside of India are becoming attracted by your *hari-kathā*. The way they are following you as well as assembling wherever you go is not ordinary.

I have crossed my eighty-seventh year and am now eighty-eight years old. Due to my advanced age, I cannot move about as I used to. It is greatly inspiring to witness

how you are preaching the message of Śrīla Prabhupāda. May your success ever increase – this is my heartfelt prayer at the lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Accept my affection and blessings and give them to the others as well. What else should I write?

Blessings from:
Śrī Bhakti Kumuda Santa

ALL GLORY TO ŚRĪ ŚRĪ GURU AND GOURANGA
TRIDANDISWAMI B.K. Santa Maharaj
FOUNDER & PRESIDENT
ŚRĪ CAITANYA ASHRAM
23, BHUPEN ROY ROAD Behala, Cal.-34

Dated: 27/01/2004

Ref. No.

Recipient of auspiciousness

Abode of my affection, Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja!

I was greatly pleased upon receiving your letter from the remote island of Hawaii. Having slipped and fallen, I have been bedridden for many days due to the bones in my back being broken. What's more, a few days after that, I lost my balance and broke bones in two more places. After being admitted in hospital for some days, now I am back in the *māṭha*. My walking and strolling have been completely stopped.

In this situation, I received a letter from you, written in such a way that it leaves me speechless. You have *śraddhā* in me. You have said, "By keeping you on the path of my remembrance, I have attained success in my preaching, and by informing you of this I have become very peaceful." I consider this to be the manifestation of the boundless compassion of my *śrī gurudeva* upon me. Knowing this I became extremely happy. The unlimited mercy of Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga as well as the mercy of your *śrī gurudeva* is certainly upon you. There is no doubt in this regard. May the supremely merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda bestow even more *sakti* upon you, so that you are crowned with success in progressively preaching the message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu throughout the entire earth. Many obstacles will come, but overlooking them, you should continue with your task.

Ninety years of my life is now complete. Because of old age, I am in a feeble condition. Even still, upon hearing the news of your success in preaching, I am experiencing great pleasure. Please accept my blessings and give them to all those who are preaching with you. What else should I write?

Blessings from
Śrī Bhakti Kumuda Santa

Well-wishes & Words of Affection

from Godbrothers



Well-wishes from ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTIVEDĀNTA VĀMANA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA



[On the occasion of Śrīla Gurudeva's – Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's – first journey to Western countries for the purpose of preaching the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the President Ācārya of ŚRĪ GAUDĪYA VEDĀNTA SAMITI (Regd.) conveyed his good wishes.]

All Glories to Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga
Phone: 461596

SHRI GOUDIYA VEDANTA SAMITI (Regd.)
SHRI SHYAM SUNDAR GOUDIYA MATHMILANPALLY
P. O. Siliguri-734405 • Dist. Darjeeling(North Bengal)

Ref. No..... Dated 25th, April, 1996

śrī vaisnava-carane dandavan-nati pūrvikeyam
I bow down like a stick at the feet of the Vaiṣṇavas,
Pūjyapāda Mahārāja!

Yesterday, I received your merciful letter dated 12th April 1996, after considerable delay. I hope that by the causeless mercy of our most worshipful Śrīla Gurupāda-padma, you are well in all respects.

I became extremely gladdened and enthused to know that on the repeated insistence of the foreign devotees, you are preparing for an auspicious journey to Western countries, with the objective of preaching the *prema-dharma* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu in the lands of Holland, England, America and Canada. I came to know that devotees from those countries are bearing the travel expenses for three people, and that your visa and tickets have been duly arranged. But why should the lands of Singapore and Hong Kong be deprived of the *prema-vāñi* of Śrī Gaurasundara?¹

¹ Singapore and Hong Kong are places of entry into China. Thus, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja was indirectly indicating that according to the desire of Śrī

You are going abroad solely to preach the message of pure *bhakti* (*suddha-bhakti kathā*), and therefore, I am not at all concerned about your profit or loss, for I consider that for the inhabitants of those countries, your travels are a golden opportunity and exceptional good fortune. May the causeless and auspicious blessings of Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga-Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī, Śrī Nṛsiṁhadeva, and he who is topmost among those who fulfil all desires – Śrī Girirāja Mahārāja – forever shower upon you. By your preaching of their message, their inner heart's desire (*mano'bhiṣṭa*) will certainly be protected. This is indeed my firm belief. At an elderly age, your enthusiasm and patience to preach the message of Śrī Gaura in the West is undoubtedly true bravery. To label this 'bravado' would be a denial of the truth.

May you be victorious, along with your associates. I have come to know that the day of your auspicious journey is fixed for May 5th 1996. Kindly accept my *sāstāṅga dandavat-pranāmas*.

I will conclude here.

Śrī Vaiṣṇava-dāsābhāsa
Humbly bowing down,
Śrī Bhaktivedānta Vāmana

[Translated from
Śrī Gaudīya Patrikā, Year 48, Issue 4]

Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Thākura, the message of *prema-dharma* of Mahāprabhu would also be spread in China.

A Heartly Welcome

Originally written in Bengali by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja on the occasion of Śrī Gaudīya Vedānta Samiti's vice-president *parivrājakācārya tridaṇḍi-svāmī* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's return to India from preaching the message of Śrī Gaura in Eastern countries.

Odīna-vatsala, you who are affectionately disposed to the fallen! My heartly welcome, upon your return to your own nation after extensively preaching the message of Śrī Gaura in the prominent Eastern countries of Malaysia, Australia, Indonesia, Singapore and so forth. Your preaching travels are in every way distinct from the leisure travels of ordinary people. *Mahāntera-svabhāva ei tārite pāmara nija kārya nāhi tabu yāna para ghara*. [The magnanimous nature of the saintly persons is that they always deliver the fallen and sinful souls. They have no personal business of their own, nor do they seek self-profit. Still for the benefit of the living entities, they visit their homes for the sole purpose of delivering the fallen souls.]

The *sādhus'* travel is solely for this reason. *Sādhavo dīna-vatsalāḥ*. The *sādhus* are the friends of the fallen and become distressed at the suffering of others. Their hearts naturally melt with compassion upon seeing the incredible misfortune of the conditioned souls as a result of their forgetfulness of Bhagavān. The kindness they bestow upon such souls is not ordinary or mundane; the supremely compassionate *sādhus* awaken in them a yearning to develop their *ātma-dharma*, the constitutional occupation of their very self.

O Keśavānuga-jana, dear follower of Keśava! For the purpose of fulfilling the inner heart's desire (*mano'bhīṣṭa*) of *paramārādhyatama* (supremely worshipful) *jagad-guru* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Prabhu, you, not caring for your own happiness or distress, took a vow to preach the message of Śrī Gaudīya Vedānta. Our unlimited gratefulness is to you. Śrī Gaurasundara, has said, "jagat vyāpiyā mora habe pūnya-khyāti, śukhī haitā loka mora gāhibe ka kirti." [My virtuous glories will pervade the whole world, and with untold satisfaction, people will sing of My fame.]

In order to actualize His prophecy, Śrī Gaurasundara transmitted both inspiration and ability into the hearts of His *anugata* devotees, His keen followers; otherwise, without

surmounting the obstacle of old age and with a bodily condition that is not stable, it would have been entirely impossible [for you] to preach the message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's *prema-dharma* with such irrepressible vigour.

O Vaikuṇṭha vārttā-vābaka, messenger bearing news of Vaikuṇṭha! The original founder of the worldwide Gaudīya Maṭha and Mission, *jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, declared himself to be the messenger of Śrī Caitanya. This means that to uphold, carry and distribute the message of Śrī Caitanya as it is, is indeed the distinctive feature of Gaudīya preachers. They never tamper with the divine message of Godhead, as heard from authentic sources (*śrauta-vāṇī*), by altering it, rejecting it or speculating about it, to achieve their own comforts, out of fear of their own weakness being exposed, or for the enhancement of their own prestige. All the associates and followers of Śrī Keśava are extremely joyful by your resolve to preach the non-deceptive Gaura-Sārasvata message, without the slightest alteration.

O Conqueror of the East and West! By inundating and nourishing the whole world with a flood of *prema*, Viśvambhara Śrī Gauracandra, the maintainer of the entire universe, bequeathed a code of conduct. By following that code, you have conquered the Eastern and Western countries.

In the past, many persons from India crossed the great ocean, with the doctrines of *karma* and *jñāna* in hand. The heroes of the path of *karma*, who dutifully perform their religious activities for the purpose of enjoying the fruits, proclaim that one can attain eternal peace through the performance of *karma*, yet this is only cheating. And the cultivation of impersonal knowledge [by *jñānis*] paralyzes the existence of Supreme Absolute Entity. Persons adhering to this philosophy claim that it brings peace by bringing about the absolute cessation of misery, but this is completely illusory.



The living entities are eternal servitors of Śrī Bhagavān, and He is the eternal object of their service. This platform of causeless service encompasses the fifth and final goal of human life, *kṛṣṇa-prema*. You have conquered the native persons of those countries by shining upon them a new light containing that very message (*vāñi*) of *prema-prayojana*. Consequently, all the devotees of Śrī Gaura are filled with bliss.

O beneficiary of all living entities! *Bhārata-bhūmite baila manusya janma yāra, janma sārthaka kari' karo para-upakāra.* [One who has taken birth as a human being in Bhārata-varṣa (the land of India) should make his life successful by performing acts to eternally benefit others.] The land of Bhārata, alone, is the birthplace of true welfare workers.

In the above statement, Śrīman Mahāprabhu specifically confers upon the residents of India the responsibility to truly benefit others. *Para* means ‘topmost’. Since Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī established the *mano'bhiṣṭa* of Śrī Gaurasundara in this world, the conception of highest welfare is expressed solely in his guidance. You indeed proclaim, with great specificity, the attributes of a true and topmost beneficiary, as displayed by Śrī Rūpa Prabhu and his followers on this earth, who illuminated the most confidential truths (*tattva*) and service to Śrī Gaura-Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārījī.

O best of those who preach āmnāya-vā ī, the immaculate instructions received through the succession of bona fide gurus! The residents of Bhārat, India, who are *paropakārī*, great benefactors, possess an abundance of wealth to bestow upon the inhabitants of the West, but they having nothing worthwhile to take from them. For

the devotees of Sarveśvara, the Lord of all Lords, there is never any worldly dearth that makes them dependent on inhabitants of foreign lands.

According to the statement, “*sarvam khalvidam brahma* – every thing belongs to *brahma*,” every being in the universe and everything within the universe are servants of Bhagavān and instruments to be used in service to Him. But because a certain group of foreign devotees are not established in this statement’s meaning, solely due to fearing a loss of profit, adoration and prestige, they are creating obstacles to your preaching of Śrī Gaura’s divine message. “*Karindre bhrājamāne pi stūyamāne supurūṣeb, vukkanti sārameyāśca kā kṣatiśtaśya jāyate* – What harm can the barking of the street dogs do to a person who is brilliantly situated upon a royal elephant and extolled by virtuous persons?”

Wise persons are gradually becoming enlightened regarding the essence and purpose of your preaching of āmnāya-vāñi, so the hubbub raised by those opposing you is proving to be fruitless.

To conclude, may your life be long and may you remain in excellent health, so that you can preach the eternal message of the Śrī Brahma-Madhva-Gaudīya-Sārasvata *sampradāya*, as it is, all the over the world. This alone is my fervent prayer at the lotus feet of Śrī Gaura-Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī, Śrī Girirāja and Śrī Lakṣmī-Nṛsiṁhadeva.

Śrī Vaiṣṇava-dāsānudāsa,
Śrī Bhaktivedānta Vāmana

5 March 1997

Śrī Vinoda-bihārī Gaudīya Maṭha
Calcutta-4

[Translated From Śrī Gaudīya Patrikā Year 49, Issue 2]

Cordial Reception

TO HIS HOLINESS

parivrājakācārya tridandī-svāmī
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

[Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja penned this letter in English]

Śrī Vinod-bihāri Gauḍīya Matha,
28 Halder Bagan Lane, Calcutta, 700004
9 March 1997

Revered Svāmījī,

My heartiest congratulations to you at your happy return to India after completion of your successful preaching tour of Malaysia, Australia, Indonesia and Singapore. A few months ago you had to pay a visit to the West in response to the calls of devotees in Holland, England, America and Canada.

Your preaching tour is far different from that of the excursion made by the people for sensual pleasure or that of loitering about by worthless vagabonds. It is because the Vaiṣṇavas are causelessly merciful to all en fettered souls and alone grieved by their misery – misery due to indifference towards the Transcendental Truth. In spite of having no business of their own, they roam about to relieve humanity from the terrible afflictions of births and rebirths.

Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura left us an invaluable prediction made by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the Original fountainhead, that His name would be introduced in every town and village on Earth. And again Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, the greatest pioneer of the movement of pure unalloyed devotion in the modern age, professed that the movement of pure devotion would soon be broadcast all over the world by a specially powerful individual. This prophecy is found to be fulfilled in the divine personage of Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, who at that time moved heaven and earth to establish pure theism in large scale. He time and again employed his Gauḍīya expounders of extraordinary merit to dispel all nescience prevailing in the lands of the Eastern and Western hemispheres. Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, the most affectionate disciple of Śrīla Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, had founded the world-reputed Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti to preserve Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's message of unflinching devotion. Knowing his inner desire, you stepped forward to carry the responsibility of conveying the Gauḍīya Vedānta expositions beyond the seas, ignoring the bondage of your old age. Such is your benevolence.

India has always been the homeland of spiritual movement. In times like the present, when the minds of men were distracted by multiplicity of material considerations, it has become the utmost necessity for mankind to be spiritually awakened. No other doctrine can really bring eternal bliss to the distressed souls, but the divine message of love, propounded by Śrī Caitanyadeva, who has appointed Śrīla Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī as the Original Apostles. You, being the worthy messenger of them, would certainly be successful in imparting the true spirit of their teachings to fallible beings, by the divine grace of Śrī Guru-Gaura-Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī, Śrī Lakṣmi-Varāha-Nṛsiṁhadeva. I earnestly pray to Them, so that you remain hale and hearty and be blessed with long life to broadcast the sublime message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu all the world over.

Amen.

Vaiṣṇava dāsanudāsa
Tridandī-bhikṣu
Bhaktivedānta Vāmana

[From *Śrī Gauḍīya Patrikā*, Year 49, Issue 2]



Excerpts from Letters by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja

"You are indeed the executive of the management committee and sub-committee of the *mathas*. Therefore, in regard to those servants who are trying to see and create a difference between you and me, identify them and, immediately after reading this letter, expel them from the *matha* and the mission. Let the point be made that such persons have no place in the Samiti or any of its branch *mathas*."

Letter to Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa
Gosvāmī Mahārāja, dated 4 November 1994



"It is particularly essential to publish Hindi editions of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Śrī Bhagavad-gītā and Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta."

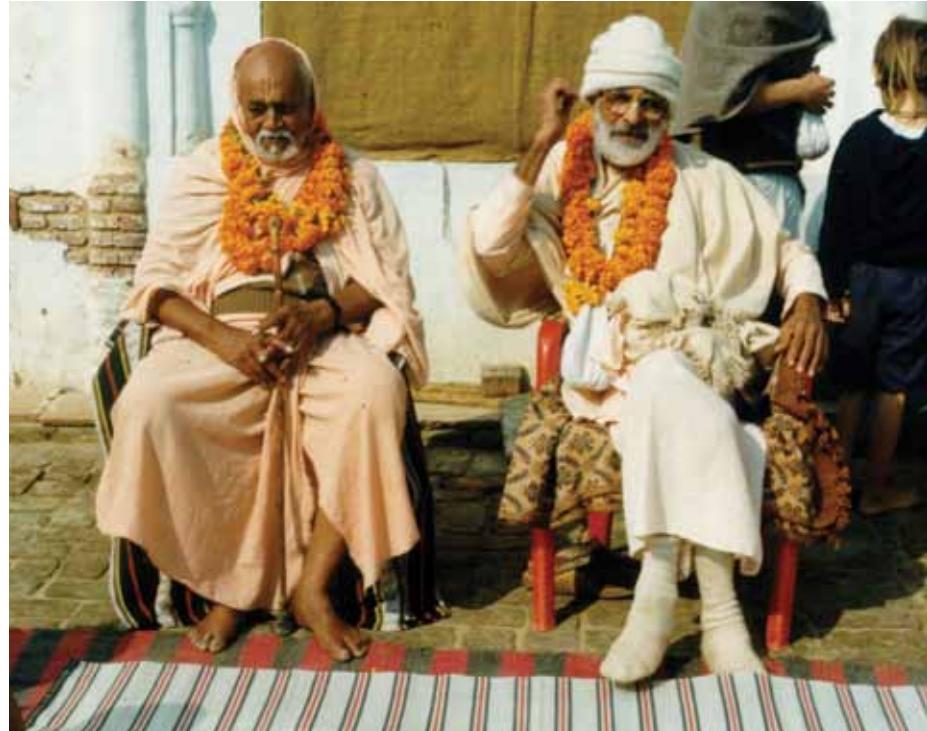
Letter to Śrīpad B. V. Govinda Mahārāja (previously Satyārāja
Brahmacārī) in reference to Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa
Gosvāmī Mahārāja, dated 29 January 1994

An exchange of letters between

om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja
 & om viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

[Editor's note: Although *mahā-bhāgavata* Vaiṣṇavas are fully conversant with *tattva-siddhānta*, to teach the *sādhakas* how to make proper inquiry and in what mood, they sometimes ask questions of each other, as if ignorant. In such exchanges, the love and intimacy they have for each other, the humility of their dealings, and their regard for each other as *guru*, is most apparent. By their exemplary behaviour, they clearly show that it is imperative for one on the spiritual path to lead a life full of *anugatya*, taking guidance from a superior Vaiṣṇava, and to continue this until the end of one's life.]

With the loving purpose of revealing to others, for their eternal benefit, the deep philosophical understanding of Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta* within the heart of his Godbrother (Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja), Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja wrote the following letter, just one year before his disappearance from this world. This exchange of letters reveals something of the intimate transcendental affection these two Godbrothers have for each other.]



Śrī Devānanda Gauḍīya Maṭha
 Navadvīpa
 8 September 2001

vaiṣṇava-carane dandavat-nati-pūrvikeśam
 I bow down like a stick at the feet of the Vaiṣṇavas,
 Pūjyapāda Śrīla Mahārāja!

I offer unlimited *dandavat-praṇāmas* unto your feet and pray to you that you mercifully accept them. I hope that by the causeless mercy of Śrī Gurupāda-padma, your *bhajana* is continuing in a most prosperous way. It is likely that you have returned from your preaching engagement in Jaipur. Thinking this, I am addressing this letter to you in Mathurā. I hope that your *bhāgavat-saptiāha* and preaching there was conducted beautifully and was most successful.

Being incompetent in, and incapable of, practising *sādhana-bhajana*, I cannot understand the true meanings of a few *siddhāntas*, at this time [in my old age]. I am therefore writing this letter to you, with the desire to inquire about some *siddhāntas* from you. Upon your illuminating me with

the proper understanding, I shall be ever grateful to you and will be blessed.

- (1) There is a distinction between the body and the embodied, namely, the corporeality and the soul, of the bound *jīva*. But would you mercifully explain if there exists a difference between the body and embodied (the soul) of the *sādhana-siddha-* or *nitya-siddha jīvas*¹, or not?
- (2) “*Muktāpi vigrahāṁ kṛtvā bhagavāntarī bhajante* – even those who are liberated accept a form, worship and serve the Lord.” This description is found in *śāstra*. Accordingly, do the liberated living entities (*mukta-jīvas*) obtain a perfected body (*siddha-deha*), or not? There is a *kīrtana* [of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura] that states, “*siddha deha diyā vṛṇdāvana mājhe sevāmṛta karo dāna* – please bestow upon me my eternal spiritual form.

¹ *sādhana-siddha-jīvas* – those souls who successfully performed spiritual practice to attain perfection; *nitya-siddha-jīvas* – eternally liberated and perfected souls



Place me in the midst of Vṛndāvana, and shower upon me the nectar of Your devotional service.” Here, we find a description of the *sādbhana-siddha-jīvas* obtaining a perfected form, also. Would you also mercifully clarify this point?

- (3) Is the *aṇu-caitanya jīvātmā* (the atomic portion of consciousness known as the living entity) a portion of the Entity (*vastu*) – Paramātmā – or a portion of the *śakti* of that Entity? Is there absolutely no distinction between the body and the soul of both Paramātmā and the liberated soul?
- (4) According to *Śrī Brhma-saṁhitā* (5.32): “*āṅgāni yasya sakalendriya-vṛttimanti* – each and every limb or sense of His [Śrī Bhagavān’s] transcendental body is inherently endowed with all the functions of all the other senses.” Does this consideration only apply to Govinda or is it also applicable to His *tad-ekātma-rūpa* (expanded forms of the Divinity, who are one in *tattva*), His *līlā-avatāras* (pastime incarnations), His *āṁśa-avatāras* (partial incarnations), and also to His *vibhinnāṁśa-rūpas* (separated expansions), the liberated *jīvas*? Are the limbs of the eternally perfected *jīvas* also endowed with potency (*śakti*) like those of Bhagavān? Like Him, can any of their limbs perform the activities of any of their other limbs?

My body is not well, and moreover, my mental faculties and my memory are almost non-existent. Therefore, if there are any errors found in this letter, kindly forgive them by dint of your good qualities. This is my prayer.

Bowing humbly,
A lowly servant
Trivikrama


 Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja’s Response

Śrī Keśavajī Gaudīya Maṭha
Mathurā, 29 October 2001

śrī śrī vaisnava caraṇe dandavat-nati-pūrvike�am
I bow down like a stick at the feet of the Vaiṣṇavas,
Prapūjya-caraṇa Mahārāja!

I pray that you accept the *dandavat-pranāma* of this lowly servant. I have received your merciful letter, dated 8 September 2001, and have noted the contents.

Our nine-day preaching program in Jaipur was adorned with significant success. After that, our Puruṣottama *vrata* in Śrī Puruṣottama-kṣetra, at the lotus feet of Puruṣottama-deva Śrī Kṛṣṇa, was splendidly performed. Approximately



*"On the strength of one's bhajana,
one should accept the pure
sentiment in the descriptions given
by the śuddha-bhaktas."*



550–600 devotees from India and abroad were present, along with the *sannyāsīs* and *brahmacārīs*. I hope that you have come to know of this from the devotees in Navadvīpa.

I have always considered you my *śikṣā-guru* and will always continue to do so. You are completely full with and well-versed in every type of *siddhānta*. The intentions of your heart are deeply hidden, remaining unintelligible even to the demigods. Still, in your humility, you have presented some questions before me. In matters of *siddhānta*, I maintain a particular regard for *saptama-gosvāmī* (the seventh Gosvāmī) Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He has expressed the most abstruse *siddhānta* in natural, simple and intelligible language. I will now try to present the answers to your questions.

(1) In regard to the *sādbhana-siddha-* and *nitya-siddha-jīvas*, who are also called *parikāra-jīvas* (companions of the Lord), there is no possibility of there being a difference between their body and their soul. Just as there is no difference between gold produced from bell metal by means of a chemical process and the gold found in a mine. In the same way, for the *sādbhana-siddha-jīvas*, who have attained the status of being *parikāra-jīvas*, or for the *nitya-siddha-jīvas* [who are already *parikāras*], there is no tripartite difference between the soul, the subtle body and the gross body. For them only one pure transcendental body exists, and with this transcendental (*cintamaya*) body, they perform service to Bhagavān. It cannot be found anywhere in *śāstra* that a subtle or gross body exists for a *parikāra-jīva*.

(2) In reference to the *vicāra* (consideration) of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, in the description *muktāpi līlā-vigrahām krtvā bhagavāntām bhajante*, there is some limitation, due to the inadequacy of worldly vernacular. On the strength of one's *bhajana*, one should accept the pure sentiment in the descriptions given by the *śuddha-bhaktas*. One should also understand the meaning of the *kīrtana* 'siddha-deha diyā' in the same way. But in relation to the *parikāras*, it is not appropriate to maintain the

attitude that there is a difference between a *sādbhana-siddha* [form] or a *nitya-siddha* [form]. The *parikāras'* forms are completely absorbed in service to Bhagavān. It should be understood in this way.

- (3) Indeed, it is established that in any state [liberated or bound], the existence of the *jīva*, who is *anu-caitanya* (an atomic conscious particle) is that he is the *amṛta-* or *vibhinnāṁśa-tattva* of the potency of the Supreme Entity, the *vastu-śakti*. Both the Paramātmā and the liberated *jīvas*, the *parikāras*, are principles, or *tattvas*, devoid of the difference between the body and embodied (soul).
- (4) *Āṅgāni yasya sakalendriya-vṛttimanti*. This *vicāra* (consideration) is not only for Śrī Govinda, but is possible for His *tad-ekātma-rūpa*, *līlā-avatāras* and even His liberated associates. For the nourishment of His pastimes (*līlā-puṣṭi*), by the influence of Krṣṇa's own *yogamāyā*, the omniscience (*sarvajñatva*) and the wondrous capacity of the senses of those liberated companions, which can perform the activities of any of their other senses, remains covered. It is only under particular circumstances that this capability becomes manifest.

The innumerable *vigrabhas* of Śrī Nanda Bābā, Yaśodā Mā, the *sakhās*, *sakhīs* and other dear associates situated in innumerable universes, or in innumerable *prakoṣṭhas* (sections of the *dhāma*) are described in Śrī *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmr̄ta*. Especially, having studied Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Sanmodana-bhāṣya* commentary on the *Śikṣāṣṭaka* and having listened to the *vicāra* (considerations) of Śrīla Guru Mahārāja presented in an assembly in Mathurā, which was attended by Gaudiya Vaiṣṇava ācāryas such as *pūjyapāda* Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja, *pūjyapāda* Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, *pūjyapāda* Bhakti Vicāra Yayāvara Gosvāmī Mahārāja, *pūjyapāda* Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja and *pūjyapāda* Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, my doubts on the topic of *jīva-tattva* have been dispelled.

Certainly, you please read the *Sanmodana-bhāṣya* of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura on the first *śloka* of Śrī *Śikṣāṣṭaka*. By reading the portion of the commentary that begins from *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjana*, *nityādinā jīvasya...* up until *gopikādehamapi prakāyatati*, all your doubts will be dispelled and your conceptions will become lucid. What more shall I write?

The rest is fine.

I conclude here.

Your lowly servant,
Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa

Appreciations from Contemporary Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas



ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTI BALLABHA TĪRTHA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA'S *Loving Recollections*

[Written during Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja final residence at Jaya Śrī Dāmodara Gauḍīya Maṭha, Cakra-tīrtha, Śrī Jagannātha Purī-dhāma]

Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga-Rādhā-Dāmodara-Jīu

To *pūjyapāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, who has resided at Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍiya Maṭha, Karṇsa-ṭilā, and Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍiya Maṭha, Sevā-kuñja

Remembrances of the affection you showed me are still so fresh in my heart, even though I am unworthy of such affection, in all respects. Remembrance of how you received me at your own place, Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍiya Maṭha, Karṇsa-ṭilā, and with your whole heart you enthused me and made all kinds of efforts for my welfare, must also be engraved on the canvas of your memory.

Although we all became grief-stricken at the sad news of your grave illness, upon hearing that by Śrī Kṛṣṇa's desire, you have recovered somewhat, we all felt heartened and encouraged. You also might have heard the news of my grave illness. Five stents (tubes) were inserted during an angioplasty to open artery blockage. The doctor has advised me to take proper, regular rest. My movements have been checked.

I have a desire to meet with you. If you desire, everything is possible.
Please accept my countless prostrated obeisances.

Yours affectionately
Dāsabhāsa
Bhakti Ballabha Tīrtha
19 December 2010



Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Ballabha Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāja is the present *ācārya* of the Śrī Caitanya Gauḍiya Maṭha and is the prominent disciple of its founder *ācārya*, *nitya-lilā praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. In the later part of his life, he has travelled the globe extensively, to mercifully propagate the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

The following excerpt has been taken from a report by Prahlāda dāsa, the servant of *pūjyapāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Ballabha Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāja, upon conveying to his *gurudeva* that *oṁ viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja had entered *samādhi*.



*A*fter hearing the news of *param-pujyapāda* Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's disappearance, Śrīla Gurudeva remembered that he had recently written some words of affection to Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja. I said, "Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja received them and felt happy to hear the contents. Śrī Mādhava-priya Prabhu conveyed to me that when he read your words to *pūjyapāda* Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja: 'I have a desire to meet you,' he had said that if Kṛṣṇa desires, it is possible." Śrīla Gurudeva then said, "Now it is not possible."

After some time passed Śrīla Gurudeva said, "It is not that it is impossible. It happens on few occasions. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura met Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, even though Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī was not physically present at that time. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī fed milk to Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura."

Prahlāda dāsa
29 December 2010
Śrī Caitanya Gauḍiya Maṭha

Contemplating

CHARMING MEMORIES OF HIM IN SEPARATION

By Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vijñāna Bhāratī Gosvāmī Mahārāja



Introduction

Pujyapāda Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja appeared in the village of Tivāripura, in the Buxar district of Bihar. His parents named him Nārāyaṇa Tivārī. After receiving *dīkṣā* from his *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, his name became Gaura Nārāyaṇa dāsa. When his *gurudeva* saw the intense taste (*ruci*) Gaura Nārāyaṇa dāsa had in the conceptions of the Gauḍiya *paramparā*, he used to say, “I have now conquered north-west India.” After Gaura Nārāyaṇa dāsa had resided in the *māṭha* only for a short period of time, his *gurudeva* gave him *sannyāsa*, and his name became Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja.

Residence In Mathurā Māṭha

On the order of his *gurudeva*, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja took complete responsibility for Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍiya Māṭha in Mathurā. Back then, even though funds were extremely

scarce and even though there were few people in the *māṭha*, Śrīla Mahārājajī managed the *māṭha* very nicely, even in those conditions.

The Epitome of Vaiṣṇava-sevā

Śrīla Mahārājajī never failed to perform *vaiṣṇava-sevā* in accordance with proper etiquette. Once, I was invited to the Mathurā *māṭha* for a festival. After the devotees had honoured *prasāda*, we then sat to honour *prasāda*, and leaf plates for Mahārājajī and me were placed side by side. Just as the *brahmacāris* began to serve, *prapūjya-carana* Śrī Bhakti Prāpaṇa Dāmodara Mahārāja, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, suddenly arrived. Immediately upon seeing him, Mahārājajī stood up. He turned to me and said, “You please take *prasāda*. I will arrange for Bhakti Prāpaṇa Dāmodara Mahārāja to take bath, a place for him to do *āhnika*, and so forth. I said, “But why should I take *prasāda* now, by myself? We’ll take together later.” And we did just that.

Bṛhad-mṛdaṅga Sevā

Prapūjya-caraṇa Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja had noted that Śrīla Prabhupāda's Hindi magazine, *Bhāgavata*, was no longer being published, and he expressed his desire that a magazine entitled *Śrī Bhāgavat Patrikā* be published from the Mathurā *mathā*. He gave the responsibility for this task to his highly qualified, Hindi-speaking disciple, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, along with the service of translating other sacred literatures from Bengali. To fulfil the desire of his *gurudeva*, Śrīla Mahārājāji learned the Bengali language. First of all, he presented a most beautiful translation of *Jaiva-dharma* by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. In this way, he afforded the Hindi-speaking public an opportunity to learn the conceptions of Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavism.

Later, he translated and propagated the treasure of many Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava scriptures, not only in Hindi, but in various languages of the world. When those people who previously could never speak out against the Gaudīya *Mathā* attacked it upon seeing that the people in the Gaudīya *Mathā* were somewhat weak in understanding their sampradayika conceptions, Śrīla Mahārājāji roared loudly, in the form of publishing a book named *Prabhanda Pañcakam*, thereby sealing their lips tight.

After the Disappearance of Gurupāda-padma

After the disappearance of *prapūjya-caraṇa* Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrī Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja was appointed *ācārya* of Śrī Gaudīya Vedānta Samiti, yet the running of the *mathā*, especially the Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā* was performed by Śrīla Mahārājāji. Śrīla Vāmana Mahārāja, Śrīla Trivikrama Mahārāja and Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja used to stay together in all three *dhāmas*: Vraja-maṇḍala, Navadvīpa-maṇḍala and Puruṣottama-dhāma Kṣetra-maṇḍala.

Expert in the Conceptions of Our Śrī Rupānuga Gaudīya Paramparā

Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's service mood is such that She becomes indebted to any *sakhī* who helps Her serve Kṛṣṇa, even if just a little. She does not care whether someone performs service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa independently or not, because She considers that all services to Him are Her responsibility. She is more tolerant than a tree as far as the responsibility to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa is concerned, and although She is the highest abode of devotion, she feels humbler than grass, expressing Her gratitude to those who assist Her, even slightly. Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha accepted this mood of Śrī Rādhārāṇī – *trṇād*

api sunicena taror api sabiṣṇunā – as their lives' ideal. Those who want to become the dust of the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī must also embrace within their hearts his ideal of *kṛṣṇa-sevā* and genuine humility (*dīnatā*) as the treasure of their lives. Śrīla Mahārājāji, being thoroughly established in all these conceptions, which are the essence of *śrī rūpānuga* Gaudīya *paramparā*, has performed true welfare for many fortunate people of this world.

The Sickness Pastime of the Ācārya

I, also, was ill when news came to me of Śrīla Mahārāja's sickness pastime. When I arrived in Delhi on my way to Chandigarh for my treatment, I heard that Śrīla Mahārāja was also in Delhi. Even though there was an intense desire within me to go and take his *darśana*, I could not, due to my own physical incapability.

Actually, it is very difficult to externally understand the sickness pastime of a Vaiṣṇava, which is also a pastime of Bhagavān. Over sixty years ago there was a very expert group of dramatic performers in Bengal, who were depicting the pitiable condition of women in Indian society at that time. One of the main female roles was played by a man, because in those days, in Indian society, women of good repute did not participate in theatre plays. When one very distinguished scholar of that time, Īśvaracanda Vidyasāgara, heard of the play, he attended one performance. He was so fascinated by the performance and so charmed by the role of one particular Indian woman (that was being played by a man), that he took off his shoes and struck the man who was torturing that 'woman'. The theatre company were overjoyed that one so erudite could be put into a state of bewilderment by their artists' performance that they preserved the shoes of Vidyasāgara. The other actors, though simple people, were not at all bewildered and remained unaffected.

In the same way, even though Vaiṣṇavas are always healthy and independent, they sometimes enact being unhealthy in such a way that bewilders big scholars. The surrendered devotee, however, even one who is most insignificant, has no confusion or doubt. This may seem quite odd, but it is the glory of the Vaiṣṇavas. It is solely with the intention of bestowing service to servitors that the Vaiṣṇavas perform sickness pastimes.

The illness pastime of the *ācārya* cannot be understood by material eyes. Therefore, for those who are still *kaniṣṭha-adhikāri*, it is recommended that they take his association in the form of offering prayers and *stutis*. Is it so easy to differentiate the leprosy of Vāsudeva-vipra from that of Gopāla Cāpāla? Yet Vāsudeva-vipra stated that his disease was a good and just thing, whereas Gopāla Cāpāla only lamented his condition.



How can Arjuna, who attained the direct association of Bhagavān, ever fall into illusion? And can that Bhagavān who protected Parīkṣit in the womb of Uttarā actually neglect Parīkṣit upon his receiving the curse of a *brāhmaṇa*'s son? How can such occurrences be justified?

Actually, there are many deep secrets behind these pastimes, but they can only be understood by one who is surrendered. Similarly, there are many deep secrets behind the Vaiṣṇavas' sickness pastimes that can only be understood by one who is qualified.

His Disappearance Pastime

Śrīla Mahārāja displayed his disappearance pastime on the appearance day of his senior Godbrother, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja, and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja disappeared on the disappearance day of Godbrother, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Mahārāja. By this, all three have bestowed information about their mutual eternal relationship and have established that their relationship existed before this life, manifested during this

life, and will continue in the future, without the slightest hindrance.

Samādhi

The meaning of *samādhī* is to become absorbed in the service of *nitya-vastu* (Śrī Bhagavān) free from any anxiety.

Separation

Who actually feels separation from *śrī guru* after he disappears from this world? To the extent that one has endeavoured to understand his behaviour and conceptions (*ācāra-vicāra*), his ideals and his words, one will feel separation from him. The meaning of *viraha* (separation) is *vipralambha*, that is, one remembers him in every situation, at every step. The words a person speaks do not reveal his feeling of separation. Rather, inner feeling of separation will be understood by how one conducts one's life after the disappearance of *guru*. It is not that separation is felt by everyone in the same way. A feeling of humility may fill the

heart upon singing *je ānilo prema dhana, karuṇā pracura* by Śrīla Narottama Ṭhākura, and one will lament, “Oh! What should one’s condition in separation from śrī guru actually be, and what is my condition? I am not feeling a trace of separation from him, even though *gurudeva* has disappeared from this world.” Someone else will think, “Arjuna was so afflicted by separation from Kṛṣṇa that he could not even pick up his Gāndīva bow, yet I am continuing to perform the same activities I was performing before.” In fact, actual separation can be felt by one who is cultivating the conceptions and precepts of *gurudeva*.

When worldly people cry and weep in separation, their feelings are but fleeting. In actuality, however, the principle of separation is eternal. We must keep that mood permanent. In other words, we must follow, with utmost enthusiasm and strong determination, the very ideal śrī guru adhered to and practised in his own life. Śrīla Gurudeva’s conceptions are not any different from those of Śrī Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha and Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura.

Who is Śrī Guru’s Real Successor?

A person in the ordinary world of *karma* always strives for *dharma, artha, kāma* and *mokṣa*, and when he leaves this world, his sons divide his property among themselves equally. In the realm of *hari-bhakti*, however, especially in the Gauḍīya *saṃpradāya*, the *bhaktas* completely discard *dharma, artha, kāma* and *mokṣa*, and solely accept *pañcama puruṣārtha* (the fifth objective of human life) – *kṛṣṇa-prema* – as the exclusive goal of their lives. When they leave this world, the sole inheritance they leave behind is their ideal example, their *ācāra* and *pracāra* regarding that *pañcama puruṣārtha*. Therefore, a person will receive his *gurudeva*’s true inheritance, his unlimited transcendental wealth to the extent that he is surrendered to him.

Under the guidance of the personal associates of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Śrīla Mahārājāji practised *uttamā-bhakti*, characterized by his practice and preaching of the topmost conception of *ānukūlyena* [Ānukūlā is Rādhārāṇī, in other words, being under the guidance of Rādhārāṇī] *kṛṣṇānuśilanam* [seeking Śrī Kṛṣṇa]. Due to being fully realized in the conceptions of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, he knew the importance of being under Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī’s guidance. The *gopīs* themselves were deprived of *darśana* of Kṛṣṇa’s two-armed form when, at Paiṭhā-grāma, they approached Him without being under Her guidance. What, then, can be said of how others are deprived of the *darśana* of the two-armed form of Kṛṣṇa without Her guidance. In other words, when those very *gopīs* who were prepared to give their foot-dust to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and who were ready and willing to go to hell for eternity, ran ahead of Her to search for Him, He showed them His four-armed form,

because they were not under the guidance of the favourable potency (*anakūlā-śakti*), Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. But those *gopīs* who followed behind Rādhārāṇī received the good fortune of seeing Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s two-armed form, that is, the form of Svayam Bhagavān Vrajendra-nandana.

Thus, the perfect ideal of *uttamā-bhakti*, characterized by *ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśilanam*, which Śrīla Mahārāja has left for us, is his actual wealth. This wealth is such that a person can certainly take as much as he wants and no one will ever object or oppose him.

An Opportunity to Serve Śrīla Mahārāja

Once, there was a deity installation festival in Viśākhāpṛtaṇam, at the temple established by Śrī Bhakti Vijaya Puruṣottama Tīrtha, who was under the shelter of *prapūjya-caranya* Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja and I were present for that occasion. While there, Śrīla Mahārājāji expressed his desire to go to Jagannātha Purī. “But,” he said, “as yet, there is no proper facility to live at our Śrī Nīlācala Gauḍīya Maṭha, which is under construction.”

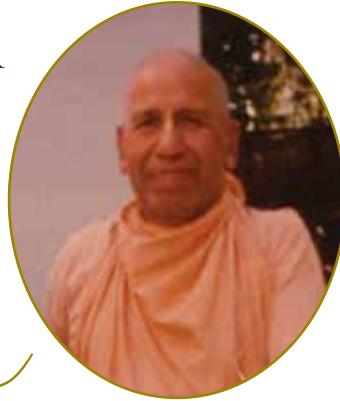
Upon hearing his desire, I immediately told him that he could stay at our *maṭha* and that I would make the proper arrangements for his stay. Śrīla Mahārājāji was very pleased. Although we had made train reservations to travel together the next day, I decided to leave that very same day, even without a reservation, because I wanted him to stay in my own room there. I thought that if he saw me removing my belongings from the room, he would have not wanted to inconvenience me and would have hesitated to stay there. Therefore, I came before him. I put my things in the *brahmācārī āśrama* and made the room neat and clean. My *guru mahārāja* had previously ordered me, “As soon as the opportunity to serve the Vaiṣṇavas presents itself, immediately avail of it, otherwise an opportunity to serve them may never come again.” And so it happened that, after that time, when Mahārājāji came to Purī, he would stay at the house of Singhāniyā Prabhu.

*vāñcā-kalpataruḥbyāś ca krpa-sindhubhyeva ca
patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo vaisṇavebhyo namo namah* 

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vijñāna Bhāratī Gosvāmī Mahārāja is one of the three prominent disciples of *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, the founder of Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha. He has continuously travelled throughout India, preaching the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He is known for his profound knowledge of *tattva-siddhānta* and as the encyclopaedia of Gauḍīya Maṭha history.

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTI PRASĀDA PURĪ MAHĀRĀJA'S

Loving Memories



Śrīpāda Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's language was transcendental and his choice of words unique. He has done tremendous service to Mahāprabhu's *sampradāya*, through the medium of publishing scriptures. I am his remnant-eating servant.

His *guru mahārāja* had entrusted him with the responsibility of taking care of Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Mathurā, and my *guru mahārāja* had entrusted me with the responsibility of taking care of our Vṛndāvana maṭha. So we both used to be in Vraja and would often meet each other. His every activity was transcendental. Whenever we met, he bestowed transcendental affection upon me. He also helped me in my publication services, telling me, "Whatever text you need for your Hindi publications, you can take from our books and use without any hesitation," and he very enthusiastically answered all my questions regarding publishing.

He brought me back again to the service of my *guru mahārāja*. He belongs to the transcendental world. I have heard the internal meanings of the scriptures from him; he would speak very deep and profound things. I have seen Śrīpāda Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja crying for each other. What kind of transcendental love does a *guru* have for his disciple such that I have seen in Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja? This love is very rare. The relationship between him and his *guru mahārāja* cannot be understood by everyone. When he left Mathurā to live in Govardhana, he used to cry for his *gurudeva*. The *līlā* he performed is very difficult to understand. ☩

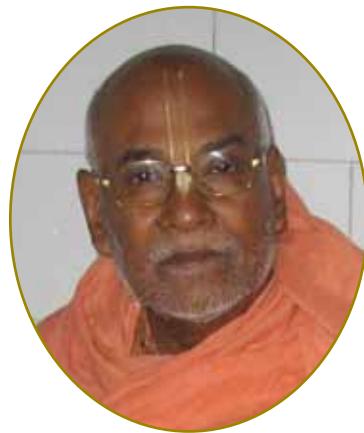
Recorded in Śri Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha, Puri

Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prasāda Purī Mahārāja is one of the three prominent disciples of *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, the founder of Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha. His *guru mahārāja* entrusted him with the responsibility of taking care of the Vṛndāvana branch of Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha and publishing the books of the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* in Hindi. He spent most of his time serving in Vṛndāvana and now in old age is residing in Śrī Jagannātha Purī, in Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha, the appearance place of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Homages from Other Prominent Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas

Exalted Devotees ARE HOLY PLACES PERSONIFIED

by Śrīmad Bhakti Jīvana Ācārya Mahārāja
written for the auspicious occasion of the vyāsa-pūjā of
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja



In the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* (1.13.10) Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhīra said to Śrī Vidura, the topmost of devotees:

*bbavad-vidhā bhāgavatās tīrtha-bhūtāḥ svayam vibho
tīrthī-kurvanti tīrthāni svāntab-sthenā gadābhṛtā*

My Lord, devotees like your good self are verily holy places personified. Because you carry the Personality of Godhead within your heart, you turn all places into places of pilgrimage.

Śrī Yudhiṣṭhīra Mahārāja said to Śrī Vidura, “For a *mahā-bhāgavata* like you, what is the necessity of wandering around various *tīrthas*? You have kept Gadābhṛta Bhagavān (the Supreme Lord who holds a mace) within your heart, and therefore, you have become the very form of a *tīrtha* yourself. Why, then, do great devotees like you wander from *tīrtha* to another? The sole reason must be that by doing so, you make the *tīrthas* into *tīrthas*. Accordingly, the great (*mahā*) *tīrtha* in the form of the auspicious appearance day of *parama-pūjyapāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is now present before us as an example of this. [By appearing on this day, he has converted the auspicious day of Maunī Amāvasyā, which was already a *tīrtha*, into a great, or *mahā*, *tīrtha*.]



Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja appeared in the state of Bihar and he worked as a government police officer in the area

of Sāhibganj, Bihar. At that time my *parama-ārādhya śrīla gurudeva*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja (who at that time was known as Śrī Narottamānanda Brahmacārī) came to preach at Sāhibganj after having preached in Raj Mahal and other areas of Bihar. It was then that Śrīla Mahārāja had his first direct audience of my *śrīla gurudeva*. He (Śrīla Mahārāja) is Mahāprabhu's very own associate; therefore, simply by the *darśana* of a genuine *sādhu*, he became attracted to him. He passed the entire night asking questions in Hindi and English and hearing *hari-kathā*. Consequently, he obtained complete renunciation from *samsāra*, the cycle of material existence.

He later took shelter at the lotus feet of the founder president *ācārya* of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and received *vaiṣṇava-dīkṣā*, along with the necessary *saṃskāras*. After some time, he received *sannyāsa* from his *gurupāda-padma*, and Śrīla Mahārāja became known as Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja.

On the strength of my great fortune, I resided in Mathurā at Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha for some days and obtained his transcendental association. For as long as I resided there, I was completely captured by his affectionate dealings, which were incomparable. Every day he would take me with him for a morning stroll in the park. At that

time, I would hear him speak the various topics of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

He was stronger than a thunderbolt for those who opposed *bhakti* and the *bhaktas*, and he was softer than the petals of a flower to the devotees. I would pass all of my time listening to *tattva-siddhānta kathā* related to Śrī Hari as he would speak untiringly. Anyone who heard the nectarean *hari-kathā* emanating from his lotus mouth certainly became attracted to him. In present times, he was a foremost preacher of *gaura-vāñī*, the message of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, in the world. His sweet nectarean dealings and Vaiṣṇava behaviour has attracted the entire world and he has delivered many fallen individuals.

Despite having attained the divine association of such a *mahā-bhāgavata mahā-purusa*, we did not take advantage of that association by benefiting ourselves in regard to spiritual (*pāramārthika*) matters. This is due to the fact that in current times, everyone is enjoying the fallen state of being opulent. Our goal, however, is to attain the most opulent state of feeling fallen (humble), which is the foundation of the *śloka*, *trñād api sunicena*.

The following is an example of the fallen state of being opulent. Once Śrī Rāmānujācārya went to Vyankaṭāncala to take *darśana* of Śrī Bālājī. He stopped in a nearby village, where two of his household disciples lived. One disciple was rich and the other, extremely poor. Śrī Rāmānujācārya asked his servant to inform the rich disciple about his visiting his house. The servant went to the home of the rich disciple and conveyed Śrī Rāmānujācārya's message. As soon as he heard that his *gurudeva* would soon arrive in his house, he went inside to discuss with his wife all the arrangements that were to be made to greet and accommodate Gurudeva. In doing so, he completely forgot to properly tend to the servant of *śrī guru* who had brought the message or to even ask him to kindly bring their *gurudeva* to their home without delay.

The servant waited at the door of those wealthy persons for some time and then returned to Śrī Rāmānujācārya. He informed him that he had given the message to his wealthy disciple but after waiting for a long time for a response for him, he had returned to Śrī Rāmānujācārya. (Generally, a person intoxicated by opulence is blind to the necessity of following proper etiquette in the matter of receiving Godbrothers and Vaiṣṇavas. This is what is meant by 'the fallen state of being opulent')

The next part of the story exemplifies the opulence of feeling fallen in a mood of humility.

Upon hearing this news from his servant, Śrī Rāmānujācārya then asked him to go to the house of the poor disciple and inform him about their proposed arrival there. That poor disciple was not at home at the time,

but his good wife was. Because of their poverty, she had only old and torn clothes to wear. As soon as she saw her Godbrother at her door, she offered obeisances to him, and as soon she heard his message, she requested him to bring their *gurudeva* to their home without delay.

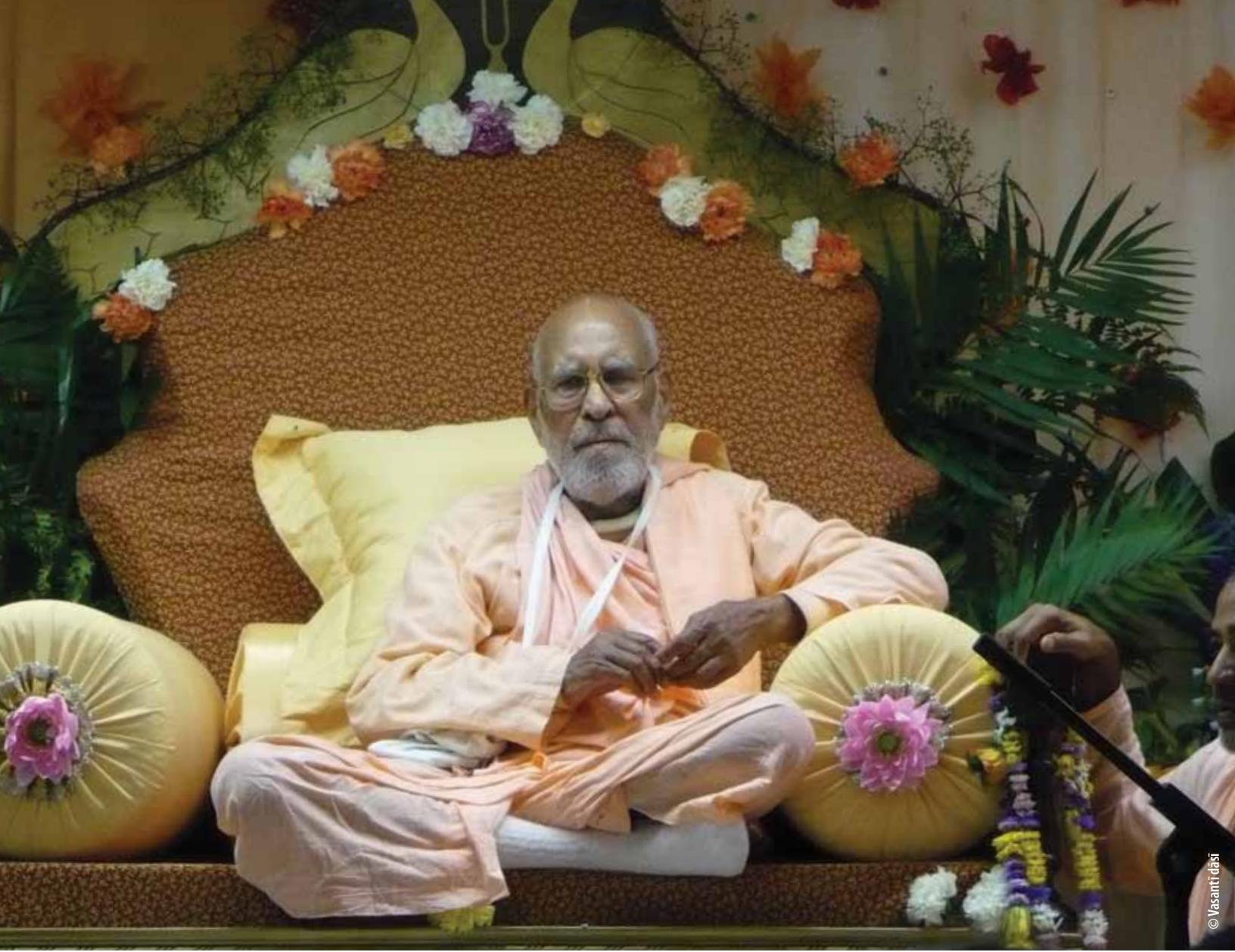
When the servant left, she thought, "What great fortune it is that Gurudeva is coming to our house! But we do not even have one handful of rice to offer him, to appropriately receive and serve him." She remembered the rich merchant in the village who, for along time, had been attracted by her beauty, wanting to enjoy her. Since she was a highly chaste woman, however, she kept well away from him. But now she thought that if her body, which was made of blood, flesh, stool, urine, etc., could be used so that she could perform some service to her *gurudeva*, then that would be the success of her body. She approached that merchant and told him of her situation and proposal. He immediately gave her all the ingredients she needed and also new clothing and she returned home to prepare an offering. Śrī Rāmānujācārya came to her home and honoured *prasāda*. Then, to keep her promise, that night she went to the merchant, taking some remnants of Śrī Rāmānujācārya's *mahā-prasāda* for him to honour.

As soon as the merchant took that *mahā-prasāda*, his heart was transformed, and he fell weeping at the feet of that chaste *brahmaṇi*, asking her forgiveness. Soon after, he accepted shelter of Śrī Rāmānujācārya.

This is an example of opulence, being able to serve *śrī guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas to their satisfaction, even accepting a fallen condition in a mood of complete humility.

What Mahāprabhu taught to be true humility, tolerance, and respect for others is our greatest wealth. The wealth available in this material world is never our true wealth. The fallen state of being proud of one's material opulence renders the *jīva* a beggar, blind and lame. In such a state he can never perform *guru-sevā* or *guru-pūjā*. He will never be able to worship Bhagavān. Yet by the massive opulence of feeling fallen (or humble) true *guru-pūjā* is possible.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu would only ever eat from the hands of those who were *lakṣa-pati*. (Generally, this means 'one who possesses hundreds and thousands of rupees', but here, *lakṣa-pati* means 'one who has accumulated the wealth of chanting one *lākha* – 100,000 – names of the Lord every day'.) Without being humble one cannot chant *nāma* proper. Similarly, devoid of the opulent state of humility, one cannot truly perform *hari-bhajana* (service to Śrī Hari). A person proud of his worldly opulence is completely devoid of everything. He cannot give anything to *guru* and Bhagavān. Bhagavān, also, does not accept *sevā* from such a person.



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That personality for whom this article was being composed was present in this world at the article's inception, but by the time it was completed, he had left this world for *nitya-līlā*, thus drowning his thousands of followers in an ocean of tears. Although not perceivable by external vision, he will be ever present in the hearts of his devotees through the medium of his glories and his service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. He was the very embodiment of ideal service. His unprecedented *vaiṣṇavatā*, his adamant adherence to *bhakti-siddhānta*, his very form, which was affection personified for his devotees and auspiciousness personified for all Vaiṣṇavas and all inhabitants of the world – will brilliantly shine forever.

I pray at his lotus feet, which grant fearlessness, that he may be pleased with me and with everyone. May he kindly

bless us to remain under the shelter of śrī *gurupāda-padma* and to be forever engaged in the service of Śrī Śrī Gaurā-Nityānanda and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. ☺

Śrī Bhakti Jīvana Ācārya
Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Maṭha
Vardhamāna, West Bengal

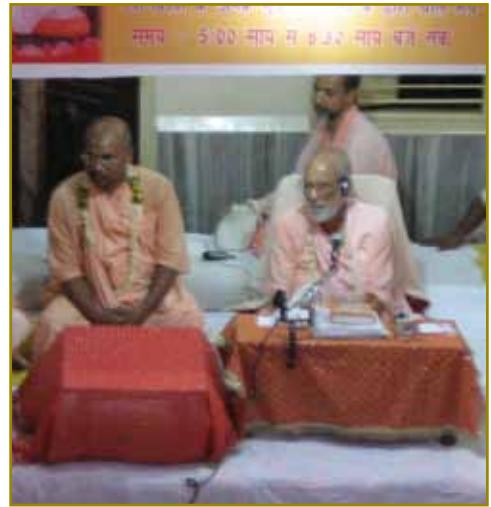
Pujyapāda Śrīmad Bhakti Jīvana Ācārya Maharaja is the disciple of *nitya-līlā pravīṣṭa om visṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Mahārāja, formerly, Śrī Narottamānada Brahmācārī, the *vartma-pradarśaka guru* of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He is the present *ācārya* of the Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Maṭha, which was founded by his *gurudeva*.

A Humble Offering

FOR THE OCCASION OF

ŚRĪ ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYANA
GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA'S APPEARANCE DAY

by Śrīmad Bhakti Sarvasva Govinda Mahārāja



*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya gaura-kṛṣṇa-priyāya ca
śrimate bhaktivedānta nārāyaṇaya te nāmaḥ (1)*

I offer my obeisances over and over again unto *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who is very dear to Gaurahari and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or to that Kṛṣṇa whose form is golden [Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī].

*rūpānuga-rasajñāya rāga-bhakti-pradāyine
visva-pracarakottama-yatīndrāya namo nāmaḥ (2)*

He is exceptionally enlightened in the mellites of service (*sevā-rasa*) under the keen guidance of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, he bestows the *rāga-bhakti* specific to Vraja, and he is one of the greatest world preachers. I offer my obeisances repeatedly unto that king among *sannyāsīs*.

*ramaṇa-mañjari-nāmnā nikuñja-yugalarcaṇe
vinoda-saṅga-rangāya dhīmate prabhave nāmaḥ (3)*

As Śrī Ramaṇa Mañjari, in a secret grove, he serves Śrī Śrī Yugala-Kiṣora in the festive company of Śrī Vinoda Mañjari. I offer my obeisances unto that highly enlightened master, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.



Today is *guru-pūjā*. Another name for *guru-pūjā* is *śrī vyāsa-pūjā*. In truth, *śrī gurudeva* is the non-different manifestation of Vyāsa, and being synonymous with Vyāsa, he reveals and expands the meaning of the Vedas in the hearts of his surrendered disciples.

Because divine knowledge emanates from him, he is known as *guru*. Because he establishes others in proper conduct by setting an example himself, he is known as *ācārya*. Because he imparts matters of the truth (*tattva*), he

is known as *deśika*, or preceptor – *diśati upadiśati iti deśikah*. Also, *vyasyate anena iti vyāsah* – because he expands or adds insight to the meaning of the Vedas, he is known as *vyāsa*. And because he has attained Viṣṇu, the Lord, he is known as *viṣṇupāda-viṣṇuḥ-padyate labhyate yena sa viṣṇupādaḥ*. As stated in the verses *guru kṛṣṇa-rūpa hana sāstrera pramāne* (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-lilā* 1.45); *ācāryam māma vijāniyāt* (*Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.17.27); and *gurum-upāsita madātmakam* (*Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, 11.10.5), *gurudeva* is the very nature of Kṛṣṇa (*kṛṣṇa-svarūpa*).

From the statements, “*Śikṣā-guru* is Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the form of an exalted devotee”, and “*śikṣā-gurus-ca bhagavān sikhi-puccha-maulih* – my *śikṣā-guru* is the Lord, who wears a peacock feather on His head,” it is posited that Kṛṣṇa is the *śikṣā-guru* of all. What this means is that Kṛṣṇa Himself as the *vartma-deśika*, or preceptor of the spiritual path, imparts instructions on *dharma*, the true principles of religion. As the *caitya-guru*, He inspires one in the practice of religion; as the *dīksā-guru*, He bestows upon one the *mantras* to one’s worshipful deity (*iṣṭa-mantras*); and as the *śikṣā-guru*, He imparts the secrets of *bhajana*. Like Kṛṣṇa, *guru* is the embodiment of the unlimited loving mellow (*akhila-rasa-mūrti*), but he is *āśraya-jātiya*, a receptacle of loving sentiments, or in other words, a devotee.

Liberating surrendered souls from material existence and engaging them in drinking the nectar of love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa are *guru*’s activities of compassion. And engaging himself in his own mellow of love, that is, in *madhura-rasa*, as a *sakhī* or *mañjari*, and drinking the nectar of service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, who enjoy in the groves of Vṛndāvana, is the activity of his own constitutional state (*svarūpa*).

For a *guru* in *dāsy-a-rasa*, his *svarūpa*, or very nature, is of Raktaka and Patraka. In *sakhya-rasa*, the *svarūpa* of *gurudeva* is of Subala and others. In *vātsalya-rasa*, his *svarūpa* is of Nanda, Yaśodā and others, and in *madhura-*

rasa, his very nature is of Śrī Rādhā, Lalitā and others as the origin of *madhura-rasa*. Śrīla Prabhupāda has said, “In *madhura-rasa*, *gurudeva* is Vārsabhbānī, the daughter of Vṛṣabhbānu Mahārāja.”

All of the Gauḍīya *guru-varga*, in their eternal forms, are *nitya-sakhīs* (*mañjarīs*) of Śrī Rādhā and are occupied in serving the Divine Couple in the groves of Vraja.

Guru’s knowledge of *tattva* (*tattvajñatva*) is truly for enlightening the disciple and in helping him determine his duties; *guru’s* knowledge of *rasa* (*rasajñatva*) is actually for the purpose of relishing the mellow of love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *guru’s* mastery of his senses (*gosvāmitva*) is really to demonstrate his steadfastness and perpetuity in relishing *rasa*. One who is a servant of his senses (*go-dāsa*) is wholly unqualified and ineligible to serve in the sacred groves of Vrndāvana and is an offender. Only those who are exclusively dedicated to the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are genuinely worthy of the title Gosvāmī.

Those who are diseased by their attachment to worldly existence do not possess the quality of a real *guru*, nor do they have any eligibility to be disciples even. Qualification to be *guru* is exclusively signified by one’s intoxication by the nectar of the *rasa* of *kṛṣṇa-tattva* alone. Such a *gurudeva* is to be worshipped and served eternally as the representative of the Lord Himself. Externally, *guru* and disciple are related as master and servant. In their eternal forms, however, they are friends. In other words, in the eternal pastimes, *guru* is factually the *guru-rūpa sakhi* or *sakhā*, and along with the disciple, is attached to drinking the nectar of transcendental service.

Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is one such *gurupāda-padma*. On the new moon day of the month of Māgha, in Bihar in 1921, he appeared in a respectable *brāhmaṇa* Vaiṣṇava family. He completed his studies with special distinction and entered family life. However, due to an intense thirst for *kṛṣṇa-bhajana*, he renounced the bondage of familial attachment and presented himself at the lotus feet of the foremost associate of Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. After taking *harināma* and *dikṣā*, he was known as Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa Bhakta-bāndhava, and he immersed himself in performing *bhajana* and *sādhana* in a regulated manner. Within a short time, he obtained special grasp of the books of the Gosvāmīs. He was entrusted with the responsibility of taking charge of Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Mathurā.

His exemplary Vaiṣṇava character, sweet behaviour and dedication to *bhajana* charmed the pious and those with devotional merit (*sukṛti*). In truth, on the strength of his *akiñcanā-bhakti*, he is the abode of all good qualities, because all of Kṛṣṇa’s qualities are infused into his devotees. “*Kali-kālera dharma—kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā*

nabe tāra pravartana – the religion in Kali-yuga is *nāma-saṅkīrtana*, and without the potency of Kṛṣṇa, it cannot be propagated” (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā* 7.11). By this logic, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is the potency of Kṛṣṇa, *kṛṣṇa-śakti*, and indeed, was most notable among world-wide preachers. The speciality of his conduct, conceptions and preaching signify that he was imbued with the potency of Kṛṣṇa. Situated in the moods of the supremely pure followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, he was the foremost preacher of *rāgānugā-bhakti* in the entire world. Although possessed of divine opulences, such as birth in a high class (*brāhmaṇa*) family, wealth, learning, fame and beauty, he displayed ideal character devoid of pride; giving respect to others but not expecting it in return. Even though consideration of birth according to caste is not applicable to Vaiṣṇavas, and there is a specific hell for those who judge Vaiṣṇavas based on their birth, his high birth simply proves that his *vaiṣṇavatā* is in every respect free from pride and arrogance.

He was foremost among the preachers of the Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti. He is most distinguished for his descriptions of the speciality of Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s gift to the world. And he is *jagad-guru* when it comes to drinking the nectar of the unlimited sweetness of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava.

In regard to successfully propagating in this world *rāga-mārga-bhakti*, which is very dear to Śrī Caitanya’s heart, he is the ornament of the Sārasvata family [the family of Śrīla Sarasvatī Prabhupāda]. In regard to refuting that which is not truth (*atat*), that is, *apa-siddhānta* that opposes the *rūpānuga* line, as well as in regard to *tat-anuśilana*, that is, in cultivating the immaculately pure line of worship in the mood of loving attachment (*rāgānuga-bhajana*), the most honourable Mahārāja was an exemplary and distinguished preceptor (*ācārya-pravara*). In morality and dedication (*naiṣṭhika*), his Vaiṣṇavism was highly effulgent and sincere. The beauty of his ethics and inclinations was resplendent in his example of *bhajana*. His own *guru* is the lord of his heart and soul (*gurudevatātmā*). This quality of his is praised by learned scholars. His friendship with his Godbrothers and peers, and his affection for his disciples demands profound admiration. As the servant of the servant of the incarnation of compassion, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, he saw no fault in others (*adoṣa-darśi*). He is immensely compassionate (*mahā-kārunika*), tolerant (*kṣamāśila*), the saviour of the fallen (*patita-pāvana*), and the abode of all good qualities. Imbued with *bhāgavat-dharma*, which is characteristically free from all forms of deceit, he lived to dispel the darkness of ignorance. Although, in every respect, his glory as *guru* is replete with the majesty of being established in servitude (*dāsatva*) to the *rūpānugas*, his personality was



very accessible, or simple and childlike. In other words, he was free from illusion and envy. To have attained him as one's *guru* is to bless one's entire dynasty.

*janmāni ca karmāni ca dhanāni ca gunāni ca
vara-vaiṣṇavamāśādya saphalatām prayānti hi*

Birth, all activities (*karma*), all wealth, as well as all qualities certainly become successful by attaining the association of an exalted Vaiṣṇava.

*na vaiṣṇavam vinā bandhuḥ na vaiṣṇavam vinā gurub
na vaiṣṇavam vinā sastram na vaiṣṇavam vinā gatiḥ*

No one is a friend, other than a Vaiṣṇava. No one is *guru*, other than a Vaiṣṇava. Without the Vaiṣṇavas, the scriptures do not exist. Without the Vaiṣṇavas, there is no hope for spiritual attainment.

*iṣṭo guroḥ paro nāsti guror-jñānam param smṛtam
guror-dāsyam param loke gurau ratib parāgatiḥ*

There is no one more worshipful than *guru*. The knowledge *guru* imparts is supreme. Servitude of *guru* is supreme. And transcendental attachment for *guru* guarantees the supreme destination.

As the recipient of Śrī Caitanya's special mercy, he inherited, and was established in, that *dharma* which is free from material designations (*nirupādbika*) whereby one gives respect to others (*mānada*) and expects none in return (*amāni*). As a follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, to fulfil the heartfelt desire (*mano'bhiṣṭa*) of Śrī Caitanya, he has manifested the deity worship of Śrī Gaurasundara and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī in his own country (India) and elsewhere. He propounded the correct behaviour for devotional life, and he published the books of the Gosvāmīs in many languages, along with magazines like *Śrī Bhāgavat Patrikā* (in Hindi) and *Rays of The Harmonist* (in English).

Having the character and qualities of the topmost *bhāgavata* – complete absorption in Bhagavān – his conceptions are completely free from the illusion of perceiving the difference between what is mine and what is others'. In other words, his vision is completely equipoised. As the recipient of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's affection, he was the best of *sādbakas*; he expressed intense feelings of complete emptiness and therefore felt a need to receive Her abundant mercy. In protecting the dignity of his *guru-varga* he had the vigour of a lion. He is the embodiment of the verse “*sabde pare ca niṣṇāta
brahmaṇy upasamāśrayam*” – One who is expert in understanding all the conclusions of the revealed scriptures such as the Vedas, who has direct experience and realization of Bhagavān, and who is not influenced by any kind of material agitation is known as a bona fide *guru*” *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* (11.3.21). His disposition for *kṛṣṇa-anuṣṭhana* was vast and powerful. His glorious qualities are what genuinely constitute the fame of a Vaiṣṇava.

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May his pastimes as Ramaṇa Mañjarī in the *nikuñja*, in the *anugatya* of Nayanamaṇī Mañjarī and Vinoda Mañjarī awaken us to *rāgānuga-bhajana*. With this prayer I offer my *puṣpāñjali* of prostrated obeisances at his lotus feet, which grant śreya, eternal well being. Attaining *pujyapāda* Mahārāja as *śiksā-guru*, we felt ourselves fortunate and blessed. His genuine affection and blessings are a matter of remembrance forever. However, now, in his physical absence, we are feeling completely helpless and void.

*śrī-caitanya-mahāprabhoḥ yena vijñāpitaṁ matam
kva gato bhaktivedānta-nārāyaṇo yatiḥ mahān* (1)

That great personality and topmost of *sannyāsīs*, who spread the doctrine of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu upon this earth, oh, where has Śrila Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmipāda gone?

*vijñāta-śāstra tātparyaḥ sad-guṇa kirti-manditaḥ
kva gato rāga-mārgaika-vaiśiṣṭa-gāyakāgraṇī* (2)

He who knows the meaning of all scripture, who is glorified as being ornamented with all good qualities, and who is the foremost singer of the specialty of the path of *rāga*, oh, where has Śrila Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmipāda gone?

*sārasvata-kulottamīśo bhāgavata-guṇānvayī
kva gataḥ pañcitarīmānyo gaura-kṛṣṇaika pāśardabḥ* (3)

He who is an ornament of the family of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda and who took complete shelter in the qualities of exalted devotees mentioned in the *Bhāgavatam*, he who is renowned among great scholars and who is an associate of Śrī Gaura and Kṛṣṇa, oh, where has Śrila Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmipāda gone?

*apa-siddhānta-dhvāntārkaḥ sad-dharma-kaumudīndukāḥ
kva gato-gurvvabhbīṣṭakṛdgosvāmyādarśa-mandirabḥ* (4)

He who was powerful like the sun in destroying the darkness of *apa-siddhānta*, who was soothing like the rays of the moon in nourishing the evening lotuses – the flowers of *sad-dharma*; he who fulfilled the heart's desire of his *guru-varga* and was the ideal example of those who are self-controlled (*gosvāmīs*), oh, where has Śrila Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmipāda gone?

*prīti-maitrī-krpā-kando nityānanda-prakāśakah
kva gataḥ keśava-svāmī-śridhara-pada-sampadabḥ* (5)

He who was full of the qualities of love, friendship and mercy; he who was the embodiment of the manifestation of Nityānanda Prabhu; he who is the very asset of Śrila Keśava Mahārāja, Śrila Svāmī Mahārāja and Śrila

Śrīdhāra Mahārāja; oh, where has Śrila Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmipāda gone?

*dikṣā-śiksā-guruḥ satāṁ siddhayaṁ vartmadeśikāḥ
kva gato dīnavatsalo vara-patita-pāvanaḥ* (6)

He who is the *dikṣā-* and *śiksā-guru* of saintly people and who illuminates the path of *dharma* for sincere seekers of truth, he who is affectionate upon the fallen, and who is the great purifier of the fallen and destitute, oh, where has Śrila Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmipāda gone?

*hā hā guru tirodhāne tvayi sajana-vaiṣṇavāḥ
guṇāni te smarantāḥo vilapanti sadāśayāḥ* (7)

Hā Gurudeva! Due to your disappearance, the saintly persons and Vaiṣṇavas are lamenting mournfully, while remembering your qualities.

*kadā te caraṇoprānte vasan tava kathāmṛtam
piṇvāni vaiṣṇavaīḥ punāḥ-tadvidhebi kṛpānidhe* (8)

Oh, when will I again sit at your lotus feet and drink the nectar beverage of *hari-kathā* emanating from your lotus-like lips? O ocean of mercy, please make an arrangement for this!

*aānnidhyam te mahodaya yāce janmani janmani
ādarśante tathā prāthyām kṛpām kuru namo 'stu te* (9)

O great personality, we beg to be in your purifying proximity life after life. We pray to live up to the ideal example you set for us. Please be merciful, I offer my obeisance unto you.

*ramana-mañjarī nāmnī vinoda-mañjarī-sakhib
yugala-sevane jīyān-nityā-lilā-vilāsinī* (10)

May the dear *sakhi* of Vinoda Mañjarī who is absorbed in the eternal pleasure pastimes and is renowned by the name Ramaṇa Mañjarī, be glorious in the service of Śrī Śrī Yugala-Kiṣora.

May he forever be gloriously situated in the hearts of faithful persons in his eternal pastime form (*svarūpa-vilāsa mūrti*) as they utter his *jaya-dhvani*:

Nitya-lilā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupada Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja ki jaya! 

Śrī Bhakti Sarvasva Govinda
Śrī Rūpānuga Sevāśrama, Rādhā-kuṇḍa

Śrīmad Bhakti Sarvasva Govinda Mahārāja is a *dikṣā* disciple of *nitya-lilā praviṣṭa* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Vilāsa Tīrtha Gosvāmī Mahārāja and a *sannyāsa* disciple of *nitya-lilā praviṣṭa* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

A Heartfelt Tribute

BY ŚRIMAD BHAKTI-VIKĀSA GOVINDA MAHĀRĀJA



*J*was requested by the devotees from Śrī Keśavajī Gaudīya Maṭha to write an offering for the souvenir magazine to be published on the occasion of the *vyāsa-pūjā* of *pūjyapāda* Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Even though I not qualified, I will try to mention some of his glories.

I first had Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's *darśana* approximately forty ago, in Śrī Caitanya Gaudīya Maṭha, Satish Mukherjee Road, Kolkata. My *guru mahārāja*, Śrīla Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, was present there at that time. Śrīla Guru Mahārāja asked *pūjyapāda* Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja to speak *hari-kathā*, and he spoke in Bengali, very sweet *hari-kathā*, full of *siddhānta*, by which the audience present was enchanted. The listeners later discussed among themselves how amazing it was that although Mahārāja was not a Bengali, he had given such beautiful *hari-kathā* in Bengali.

In truth, all of us were enchanted by his *hari-kathā*. Whenever he would come to our *maṭha*, his influence was such that it could be remembered forever. He has always been a well-wisher of our *maṭha*. Whenever any problem came, he always helped to solve it by sending his servants to our *maṭha* in Vṛndāvana. For example, during the construction of the boundary walls of Śrī Vinoda-vāṇī Gaudīya Maṭha, the neighbours here created obstacles, even going so far as to disrobe one of the servants of the *maṭha*. When we informed Mahārājāji, he sent a local bold and sturdy person to warn them, "The servants of all the Gaudīya Maṭhas are one. You should not think that Vinoda-vāṇī Gaudīya Maṭha is alone."

Another time, in Gokula, a group of people belonging to a particular caste seized the land belonging to Śrī Caitanya Gaudīya Maṭha and established an idol of Ambedkar [an Indian political activist]. Mahārājāji sent Śrīpāda Kuñjabihārī Brahmācārī and other servants to support us, giving us much courage.

When Vinoda-vāṇī Gaudīya Maṭha was being attacked by an opposing party, I came to *pūjyapāda* Mahārāja in Keśavajī Gaudīya Maṭha; then, sitting on a rickshaw with me, he personally went to the court official, Śrī Sunaharī Lālajī, and strongly requested him to pursue the case with higher officials.

The special quality of *pūjyapāda* Mahārājāji was that he was equal to all. He never saw any difference between devotees of his own *maṭha* and those from other *mathas*.

Upon the departure of our *guru-varga*, we obtained Mahārājāji as our shelter. Stationed in the post as guardian of Vraja-Sārasvata Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava Saṅgha [the association of Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas in Vraja-maṇḍala, in the line of Śrīla Sarasvatī Thākura Prabhupāda], he showered his merciful glance upon all. By writing the book *Five Essential Essays*, he, on the basis of scriptural evidence, very bravely slapped the face of those *bābājīs* who said that we are without a *paramparā* and who were opposed to traditional Gaudīya *sanniyāsa* and the wearing of saffron cloth.

By touring the world many times, he preached pure *gaura-vāṇī* in various non-Hindu nations. Now, thousands of foreigners have forsaken eating non-eatable things and in the form of devotees are performing pure devotional practice either in Vraja or while staying in their own country.

Mahārājāji was so affectionate in his dealings with me. For that, I will be ever-indebted.

While writing this homage, I have suddenly heard the news of *pūjyapāda* Mahārāja entrance into *nitya-līlā*. I and all the residents of the *maṭha* have been deeply afflicted with grief.

O Mahārājāji, upon your departure we all are feeling devoid of shelter. When the disciples of Prabhupāda one by one went to Goloka-dhāma, we obtained you as our shelter. Now, Bhagavān has also taken that shelter from us. Our prayer to Mahāprabhu is that we always get the association of such great and pure Vaiṣṇavas. Now we will be forever deprived of performing direct *vyāsa-pūjā* to you.

A beggar for the mercy of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas,

Śrī Bhakti-vikāsa Govinda
Vinoda-vāṇī Gaudīya Maṭha,
Kaliya-daha, Vṛndāvana

Śrīmad Bhakti-vikāsa Govinda Mahārāja is a disciple of *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Dayita Mādhava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and is in charge of Vinoda-vāṇī Gaudīya Maṭha, Vṛndāvana. He had a very affectionate relationship with Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.



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An Appreciation

BY ŚRĪMAD BHAKTI BIBHUDA BODHĀYAN MAHĀRĀJA

Dear Devotees and Well-wishers,

Please accept the blessings of my Śrīla Gurudeva.

From today we will miss the physical association of an exalted Vaiṣṇava, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who traveled abroad tirelessly even at his advanced age to deliver many fallen souls.

Whenever I would go to His Grace for guidance, Śrīla Mahārāja happily addressed all my questions. My beloved *gurudeva*, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, entered his eternal pastimes on the 22nd of November, 1999. After this, I went to Devānanda Gaudīya Math in Navadvīpa-dhāma to receive instructions. At that time, Śrīla Mahārāja sweetly instructed me to remain tolerant and to continue to carry out the mission of Mahāprabhu under the shelter of my *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja. To this day I am following this instruction, which allows me to feel the benefit of being tolerant while living in Vaiṣṇava society so that I may follow the path of devotion peacefully.

On the 29th of December at Jagannātha Purī-dhāma, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja physically left the mortal world, but Śrīla Mahārāja is always with us in spirit when

we follow in his footsteps. We must practice his message of *hari-kathā* and read his valuable devotional books; then we will be able to glimpse and understand the teachings of the six Gosvāmīs and henceforth become eligible to deliver ourselves from the misery of the mortal world. From today, our only opportunity to serve Śrīla Mahārāja is to follow his *vāñī* (instructions). In reality, *vāñī-sevā* will keep us close to this exalted personality.

I humbly pray to the lotus feet of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja; please give me the strength to engage in your *vāñī-sevā* and allow me to carry out the mission of Mahāprabhu with purity for the rest of my life under the shelter of *guru-paramparā* (disciplic succession).

Nitāi Gaura Haribol

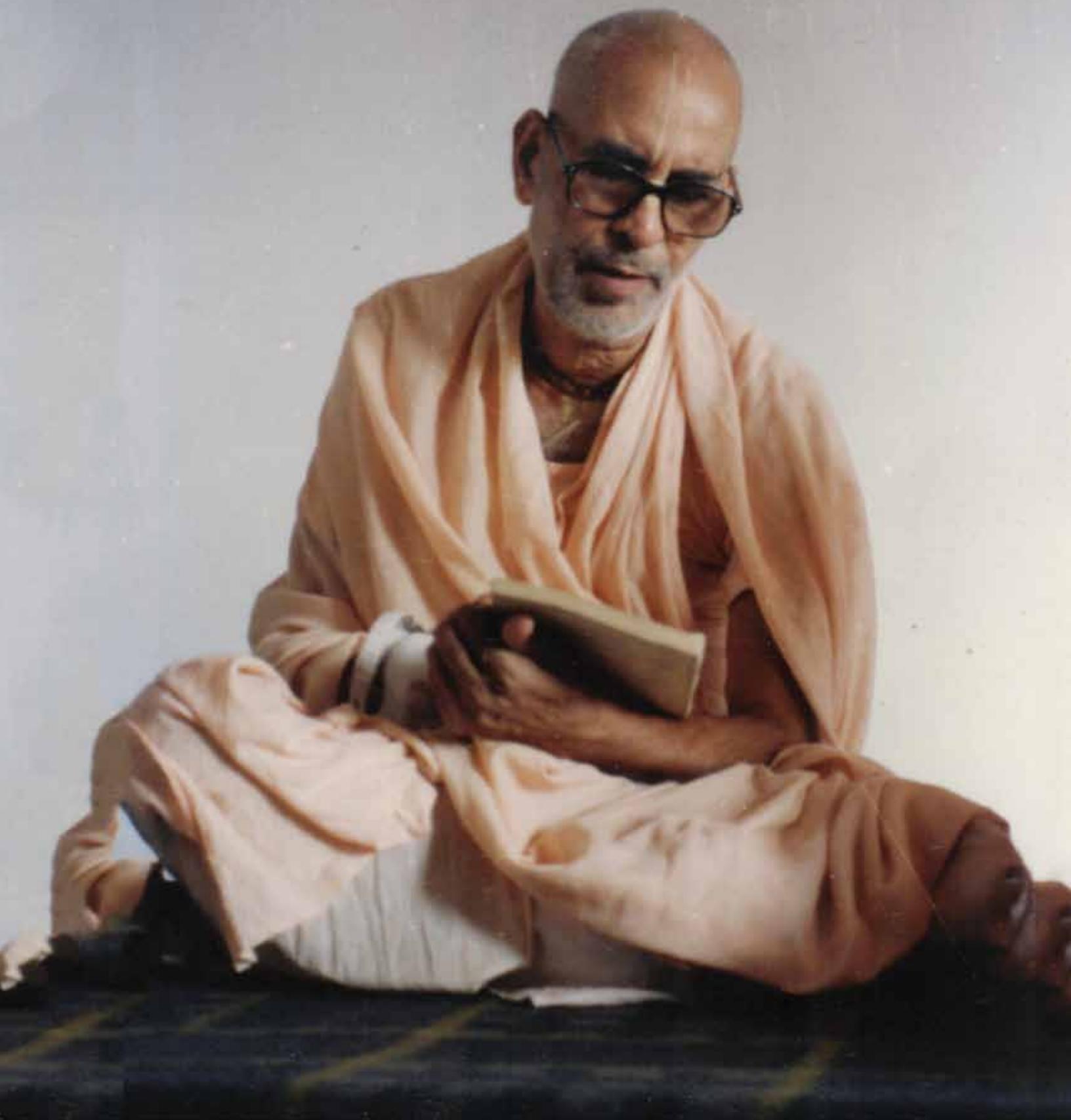
Seeking specks of the dust from the feet of pure devotees,

Svāmī B. B. Bodhāyan

29 Dec. 2010

Śrīmad B. B. Bodhāyan Mahārāja is a disciple of *nityalilā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He is the present *ācārya* of Śrī Gopinātha Gaudīya Maṭha founded by his *gurudeva*, and he travels throughout India and the world propagating the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

*Homages from Reputable
Scholars of Vrāja*



His Blessings Upon Me

BY DR. VĀSUDEVA KRŚNA CATURVEDĪ

Chief of the Editorial Board, *Śrī Śrī Bhāgavat Patrikā*¹

The first auspicious blessing I received from *astottaraśata śrī tridandī-svāmī* Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja was in 1964 when he engaged me in service as chief of the editorial board for *Śrī Bhāgavat Patrikā*. He has always been so kind and encouraging, and would sometimes publish my articles in the magazine. My service in this capacity has continued to this day.

In this way, he always gave honour to learned persons, especially on ceremonious occasions. Each time the *mathā* celebrated a special function he would invite me to attend. During the disappearance festival of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, in Vṛndāvana, he would even honour me with the role of chairperson and he himself would sit as an ordinary participant. His love was so magnanimous because of his inner mood, which was drenched in *rasa*. A love such as his cannot be expressed in words.

He used to tell me that research should be done on the *Bhāgavatam* as has never been done before by anyone in the world. Once he told me that many scholars have written commentaries on the *Bhāgavatam* in Hindi, but none have indexed the names and places etc., “so you should make an index of all the names, places and people, such as *gopas* and *gopīs*, Yamunā, Hari, Gokula and so forth that appear in the *Bhāgavatam* and note how many times each is mentioned and in which verses.” He instructed me in this way and thus gave me a unique direction for my research. Therefore, upon his request I prepared that index, which was first published in *Śrī Bhāgavata Patrikā*, and then later as a book. He alone is to be given the credit for this.

Even the greatest of scholars could not say how many times, and in which places, the *brahma-sūtras* are found in the *Bhāgavatam*, but by his mercy I found this out, wrote a book on it and got a PhD. It is not an easy thing to discern which *Bhāgavatam* verses correspond with *brahma-sūtras* and the verses from the Upaniṣads. Please do not mind my saying, but not every scholar can determine this. They may be able to locate a few of the *sūtras* within the *Bhāgavatam*, but not all. However, every one of the *brahma-sūtras* is in fact there. By Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja’s mercy, I made an index from the first verse of *Bhāgavatam* till the last, noting where all the *brahma-sūtras* appear.

Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja expressed the essence of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in various ways, which are of



such immense value that they are fit to be compiled into a separate book. As a supreme lover of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, he would repeatedly quote this verse and also express the *tattva* it contains in *Śrī Bhāgavat Patrikā*:

ārādhyo bhagavān vrajeśa-tanayas tad-dhāma vṛṇḍāvanam
ramya kaścid upāsanā vraja-vadhu-varga-viryā kalpita
śrīmad-bhāgavatam amalāṁ purāṇam premā pum-arthaḥ mahān
śrī-caitanya mahāprabhor matam idam tatradarāḥ na paraḥ

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura

Bhagavān Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa is our only worshipful object. In the same way that He is worshipful, so is His transcendental abode, Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma. The mood in which the young brides of Vraja (the *gopīs*, especially Śrīmatī Rādhikā) worship Him is the highest perfectional form of love of God. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* alone is the immaculate scriptural evidence of this (*śabda-pramāṇa*) and *kṛṣṇa-prema* is the supreme objective of life (the fifth and highest goal of human life, beyond mundane religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and impersonal liberation). This is the teaching of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (*gaura-vāṇi*). We hold this conclusion (*siddhānta*) in supreme regard and have no inclination or respect for any other conclusion or cheating opinions.

¹ The monthly Hindi magazine founded by Śrīla Gurudeva

Even though I had compiled the indexes and noted the verse correlations with the *brahma-sūtra*, as guided by him, still he would say, “śrī caitanya mahāprabhor matam idam tatrādaro naḥ paraḥ – we hold the conclusion of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in supreme regard and have no inclination or respect for any other conclusion or cheating opinions.” Just as in the eyes of Mahāprabhu, no one was either a scholar or a fool, similarly, in a mood of affection, free from discrimination, Śrimad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja brought people from all over the world to the land of Vraja to help them understand this teaching: śrī caitanya mahāprabhor matam idam tatrādaro naḥ paraḥ.

He therefore did more than just perform the function of an instructor; he truly cared for the welfare of others and was a shelter for all.

Once, when the government issued a list of the world’s languages, Sanskrit was placed number seven. Śrī Mahārājāji objected to this and pressed me to raise this point with government officials in an attempt to ensure that Sanskrit would be given due honour by being placed number one. By his mercy, I was able to do so.

His *kathā* on any topic showered nectar upon those who heard it or read it in his books. I never saw him disrespect anyone, nor did he have any desire for prestige and position. One particular speciality of his nature was that he never criticized anyone but praised the qualities of all, however minute. Śrimad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja can never be forgotten by people who regularly chant the holy name and read the scriptures. However highly I glorify his knowledge of scriptures and his devotional sentiments, it will be insufficient. He had unlimited glorious attributes. Unable to begin to enumerate them all, I will cease my prayers here.

I offer my obeisance at his feet.

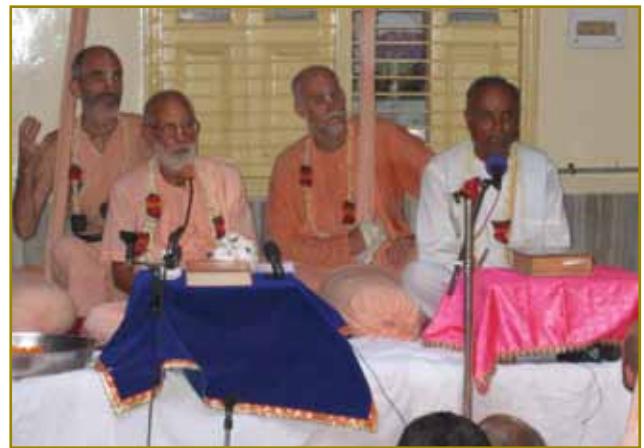
Jaya Śrī Rādhe
Dr. Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa Caturvedī

PhD, D. Lit., Sāhityaratna [Jewel of philosophy], U.P. Ratna [Jewel of Uttar Pradesh], Vijayratna [Jewel in understanding of the conceptions of Vijayadhvaja, a commentator on the *Bhāgavatam* from the Madhva *sampradāya*], Śuddhādvaita-ratna [Jewel of the Śuddhādvaita *sampradāya*], Nimbārka-ratna [Jewel in understanding the conceptions of the Nimbārka *sampradāya*]

Gataśrama-ṭīlā, Mathurā

Foremost Among ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYAÑA

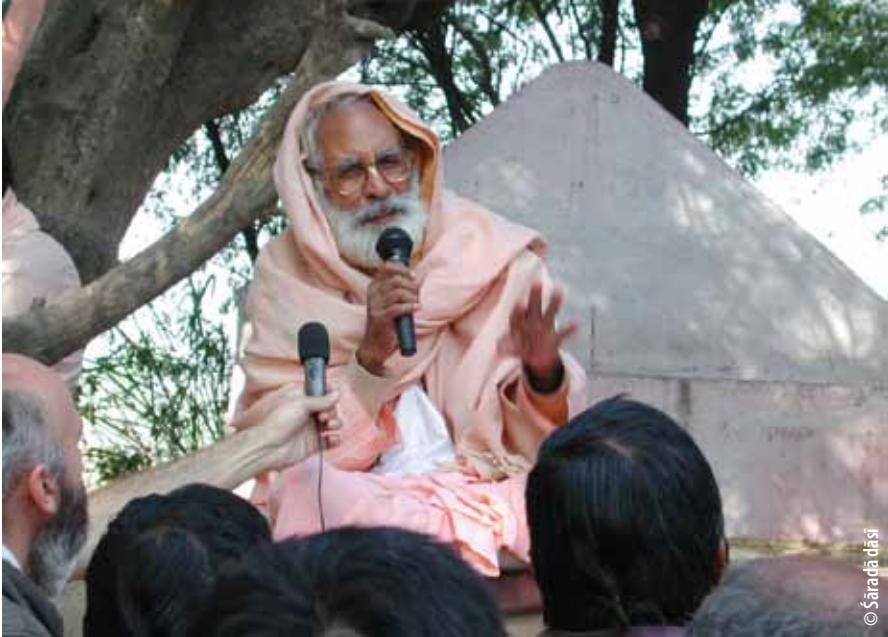
by Dr. Gosvāmī Acyuta Lal Bhaṭṭa



My Respectful Obeisances.

In other countries of the world, in the battle between the present and the past, the present always emerges victorious, while the past is cast into oblivion and considered irrelevant. Although in India, that pattern may also exist to some extent, and although in India one can certainly bear witness to the influence of modern times, the past continues to be useful and meaningful. Even though it struggles to exist, the past is a source of inspiration, for this nation has a scripture such as *Bhagavad-gītā*, which cannot be refuted by any other scripture. Therefore, here, the past is still alive and incalculably valuable.

Among those great thinkers who have made a significant contribution in the great work of preserving the values of past, Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja’s contribution has been foremost. Śrī *Bhagavad-gītā* has given principles for attaining eternality by applying them even within this perishable body. For example, it teaches the principle of *niṣkāma-karma-yoga*, renouncing the mood of being the doer, and the principle of deliberating on one’s real self (*ātmā-svarūpa*), in other words, developing the understanding “I am not this body, this body is not mine, I am not for the body.” The *Gītā* describes how souls are the parts and parcels of God and are his *tatasthā-śakti*. The perfect utility of this destructible body and the changing material world is as instruments to establish one in pure consciousness of the soul, by which one attains the happiness of serving Bhagavān (*bhāgavat-sevā-sukha*). And the sole



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sādhana to attain this is *śaraṇāgati*, full surrender of the self, wherein one renounces the mood of being the performer of *karma-*, *jñāna-* and *bhakti-sādhana*, and wherein one's surrender finds ultimate success in attaining loving service (*prema-sevā*).

And the basis and the highest form of *bhagavat-sevā-sukha* (the happiness of absorption in service to Bhagavān) is *rāga*, or *laukika-sadbandhu-vat-bhāva*. The highest limit of this is the *prema* of Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī Śrī Rādhikā, known as *mādanākhyā-mahābhāva*, which is only possible for Her. It is only possible for a *sādhaka* to have some taste of it by attaining *mañjari-bhāva*.

The incarnation of love (*prema-avatāra*), Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva, the combined form of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, adorned with the mood and complexion of Śrī Rādhā, bestowed upon the *sādhakas* the gift of this very *sva-bhakti śrī*, the supreme beauty of devotion to Him. In other words, he gave them *mañjari-bhāva*, which had not been bestowed for a very long time. Śrī Kṛṣṇa was unable to give such *bhakti śrī* to the *sādhakas*, even after deeply deliberating how to do so. He could only give *śuddha-bhakti*, pure *bhakti*. Śrī Rādhikā, on the other hand, gives *bhakti śrī* only to Her [eternal] associates. But Śrī Gaurahari bestowed invaluable wealth upon the entire world: the qualification to attain *mañjari-bhāva*. Furthermore, the sole qualification for this is simply the greed to attain it.

In the *śrī rūpānuga* process of worship, for a person who has developed greed, *harināma-sādhana* is the primary method of attaining *mañjari-bhāva*. Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja cultivated this greed in the hearts of *sādhakas* from both India and far off lands, along with giving them direction and guidance. Thus he is foremost among those *ācāryas* who made such mercy available to all.

Saints and scholars are the two eyes of a country's

culture. But the saints not only themselves cross the ocean of material existence by their performance of *bhakti*, but also leave behind a boat in the form of the *bhakti-sampradāya*, by which future generations can also cross this ocean. Śrī Bhagavān is known as *sat-anugraha*, He bestows real, or eternal, mercy. Such auspiciousness is generally bestowed upon the world by Him, through the medium of saints. Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has beautifully developed the *sampradāyika* mood of worship that had been established by Śrīman Mahāprabhu and brought to light by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. He has done so in such a way that many generations will benefit. He was a great *yuga-puruṣa*. A *yuga-puruṣa* is one who affects society in every possible way, and by illuminating society's path enables all to reach the supreme destination of life.

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is gifted with the aptitude of being able to extract from *śāstra*, the very essence of all śāstric conclusions (*śāra-grāhi*). To collect this essence, there are two processes. One is likened to the way in which the ant discriminately extracts the sugary substance from anything, and the other is likened to how the honeybee randomly collects pollen from everywhere. Both renounce the useless portion and collect the useful portion, but an ant discerns where it can extract the sweet substance, while in collecting pollen, the honeybee does not. Now, in terms of deliberation on the scriptures, Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja showed such ant-like discernment, extracting the very essence. On the order of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī extracted *siddhānta* from the Sumeru-like mountain of *śāstra* and presented the ideal form of *śrī rūpānuga* worship. That ideal bore fruit in Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

In terms of bestowing mercy, however, he was like the honeybee, in that he freely accepted everyone without

any discrimination. In this country and abroad, whoever became attracted to Śrīla Mahārāja was so influenced by him that they bowed down and surrendered to his feet. Like Śrīman Mahāprabhu, he brought all he met to the path of *bhakti*, with the purpose of bestowing *prema* upon them. In this way, he embodied both qualities: purity of *siddhānta* and generosity in bestowing mercy.

We can easily observe his distinguished status in the crowds of preachers in the field of religion. Whereas some preachers are busy in the competitive struggle to collect money and followers, Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja instead engaged in permanent welfare work by publishing instructive and beneficial scriptures that are fundamental to the tenets of the *sampradāya*. His many publishing projects included Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāṁṛtam, Śrimad-Bhāgavatam's *Rāsa-pañcādhyayī*, along with commentaries, *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*, along with commentaries, and many of the invaluable and profound scriptures of Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura, like *Camatkāra-candrikā*. These publications are excellent and attractive in terms of both the quality of the translation and also the presentation. In this regard, the establishment of a publication house like "Gaudīya Vedānta Publication" is due ample felicitation.

He recognized many people like me who are inquisitive about *bhakti-siddhānta* and who like to research this subject, and he made them attached to him. I first attained a closeness with him and became acquainted with him and his mercy, on the platform of pure *siddhānta* and worship. That was on the occasion of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's disappearance day in Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gaudīya Maṭha, Vṛndāvana, in about the year 2000. Afterwards I became so connected with him that the affection and mercy I felt from him kept increasing. He dealt with me with such regard and showed so much affection that I became his. I have associated with him in many of his projects. He gave me the opportunity and good fortune to do the service of translating the commentaries of *sāmpradāyika* books, such as *Ujjvala-nīlamanī*. Every year, in various festivals such as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī in Śrī Keśavajī Gaudīya Maṭha in Mathurā and Śrī Giridhari Gaudīya Maṭha in Govardhana; and on Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's disappearance day in Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gaudīya Maṭha in Vṛndāvana; the pleasure I received from giving my heart-felt offering (*bhāvāñjali*) in his distinguished presence was very special. He included me on the editorial board of Śrī Śrī Bhāgavat Patrikā.

One noteworthy speciality of Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has been that the assembly of devotees associated with him is also sensible and dedicated to devotional worship. They are deeply filled with *śraddhā*, confidence and are committed to *sādhana*. Their devotion is not blind sentimentalism. It stands on the strong

platform that has been thoroughly established by Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmīs, and it is completely fixed on the current of proper conceptions and reasoning. This is why people from the West who were searching for a better conception of life also became his followers. After Śrī Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda, he was the foremost *ācārya* to preach the *siddhānta* of Śrīman Mahāprabhu throughout globe and to influence the whole world. His influence and glories were such they could be compared a storm over the entire world.

He was also a most adept lecturer, his words being full of unprecedented sweetness, balance, relevance and power. His lectures and *hari-kathā* exuded praise of others' qualities and a mood of nurturing affection (*vātsalya*). The way he used to call his learned female disciples "daughter" and male disciples "dear", made it seem that *vātsalya* was actually dancing. How precious were his benedictions, such as, "May the mercy of śrī guru and Govinda shower upon you!" What greater benediction could a disciple ask for? His grasp of Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta* was so clear and powerful that he even caught the small-small mistakes of big-big speakers. His capacity to thoroughly analyze something was astounding, as were his extremely sweet words of correction. For these reasons, all speakers would carefully listen to his analysis and with respect and eagerness they would accept his comments on their speeches.

Publishing scriptures, establishing many *mathas* and organizing yearly *parikramās* gives life to the *bhakti* movement. These three are essential factors for making a *sampradāya* stable. Many times, Śrīla Mahārāja addressed controversial topics that verily confuse many of those in the *sampradāya*. His book, *Prabandha Pañcakam*, is an example of this, as it contains illuminating evidence of his intelligent and perspicacious vision. He would establish any point he wanted to make without fear.

Since ancient times, the temples and *mathas* have been the causes of expanding the *sampradāya*. They are the parameters of the *sāmpradāyika* culture. *Parikramās* are like a light that encompasses everyone, while the scriptures are like light posts that guide the direction.

Śrīla Mahārāja was greatly devoted to serving. He was a dedicated *sādhaka*, a thoughtful visionary and an indefatigable leader of the world. He possessed firmness in *siddhānta*, energy to bring forth fresh conceptions, the greatness of broad-mindedness and adeptness in dealing with others. My countless obeisances to such a *yuga-puruṣa*.

Bowing respectfully,

(Dr.) Gosvāmī Acyuta Lāl Bhaṭṭā,
PhD, Śrī Bhāgavat-bhūṣāṇa,
Aṭhakhambhā
Śrī Dhāma Vṛndāvana 

Śraddhā Puṣpañjali from Dīkṣā and Śikṣā Disciples



[Editor's note: Thousands of esteemed devotees have been profoundly transformed by the mercy of Śrīla Gurudeva and many could have made invaluable contributions to this Puṣpañjali section of the magazine, but our ability to accommodate everyone's homage was limited due to lack of time and page-space. We sincerely beg forgiveness from anyone who may have liked to contribute. We hope that we will be able to provide another opportunity for this in the next edition.]

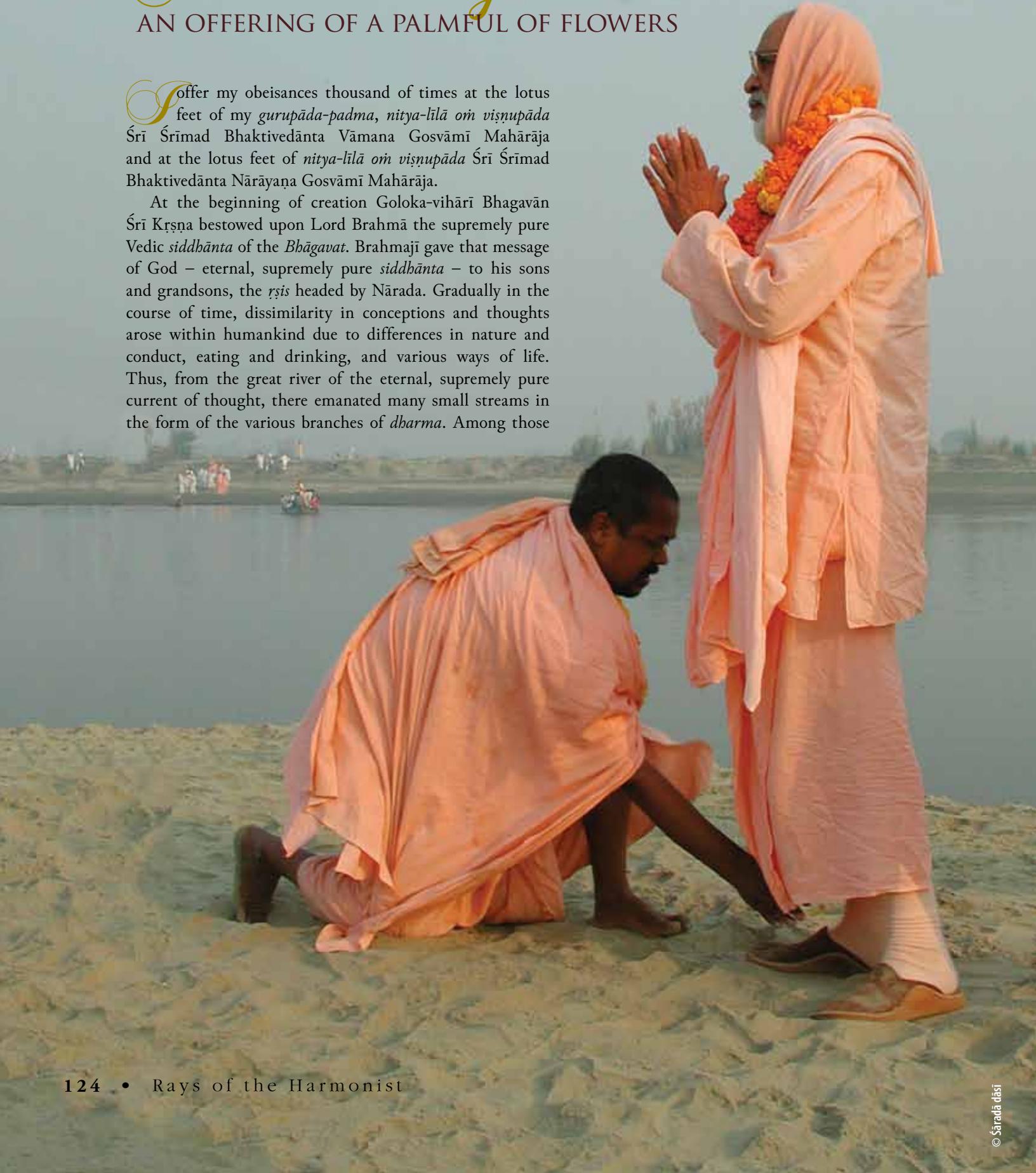
Sri Prasānañjali

AN OFFERING OF A PALMFUL OF FLOWERS



*O*ffer my obeisances thousand of times at the lotus feet of my *gurupāda-padma*, *nitya-līlā om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and at the lotus feet of *nitya-līlā om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

At the beginning of creation Goloka-vihārī Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa bestowed upon Lord Brahmā the supremely pure Vedic *siddhānta* of the *Bhāgavat*. Brahmajī gave that message of God – eternal, supremely pure *siddhānta* – to his sons and grandsons, the ṛṣis headed by Nārada. Gradually in the course of time, dissimilarity in conceptions and thoughts arose within humankind due to differences in nature and conduct, eating and drinking, and various ways of life. Thus, from the great river of the eternal, supremely pure current of thought, there emanated many small streams in the form of the various branches of *dharma*. Among those



many streams, however, the Śrī Brahma-Madhva-Gaudīya-Rūpanuga-Vaiṣṇava *paramparā* alone is able to make that supremely pure, eternal current flow throughout the world. This *paramparā* sprinkled the entire world with the nectar of the perfectly pure current of *bhakti-rasa* and also bestowed upon the world the nectar of the highest *prema*. In recent times, śrī rūpānuga Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava ācārya, oṁ viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-sata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is the foremost ācārya in this particular *paramparā*.

Along with the development of material science, the human race becomes more and more materialistic, and engulfed by voidism, non-dualism, secularism and hedonism. Thus mankind becomes cast into a deep, perpetually dark hole – the prison of material existence – where it is gripped by snakes, scorpions and lions, the malicious creatures of lust, anger, greed, infatuation, intoxication and envy. During such a dark time, the confidential maidservant of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī Rādhājī, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, descended in a Tivāri brāhmaṇa family in the village of Tivāripura located in the Buxar district of Bihar.

Śrīla Mahārāja became fully adept in all aspects of knowledge and tradition, and from childhood, he remained immersed in the current of *bhakti* for Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa. To tend to his responsibility for his worldly family, he entered government service, but he was unable to absorb his mind, spirit and words in his occupation. This is because the internal current of *nitya-siddha bhakti*, present in the depth of the ocean of his heart, was as if obstructed. This current of *nitya-siddha bhakti* hidden within the heart of Śrīla Mahārāja, in the form of *unnata-ujjivala bhakti-rasa* (that *rasa* that was tasted by the embodiment of *vipralambha-rasa*, *rasarāja-mahābhāva-svarūpa* Śrī Śacīnandana Gaurahari), was surfaced by the moonshine of good fortune – the boundless mercy of śrī gurupāda-padma. Although unaware of this, he was naturally attracted to the current of thought that was within the heart of his *guru-varga* Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and he thus entered the *āśrama* of his *guru*. He uttered from his own lotus lips the words, “*emana durmati, saṁsāra-bhitare, paḍiyā āchinu āmi tava nije-jana, kona mahājane, pāthāiyā dile tumi* – O Lord, I am so foolish and evil minded that I have fallen into this material existence, but out of your extreme compassion you have sent one of Your own associates, an exalted devotee, to deliver me.” In this way he took shelter of the teachings of śrī *guru* and Gaura and dedicated his entire life to the service of śrī *guru*. He thus accepted the deeply significant and weighty responsibility of propagating the teachings of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha, not only in India, but throughout the entire world.

Many religionists and learned scholars have preached in the West, but some have taught the incorrect path, some have propagated their own self-concocted paths, some succumbed to material wantonness, and many have swayed from the subtle current of *bhakti* and become distracted by profit, worship and prestige or simply blinded by greed for wealth. Yet we saw in the ideal life of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, that he followed the strict rules of Vaiṣṇava conduct, maintained a life of full *vairāgya*, remained aloof from attachment to material sense objects, displayed exclusive dedication complete indifference to all else, and was endowed with intense hankering for the great *prema-anurāga* of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Thus, as an exalted devotee, he was adorned with every symptom of the elevated state of *bhāva* (*bhāva-siddha-bhakta*). By his own life's example, he displayed the astonishing nature of *rūpānugā-bhakti* before all the inhabitants of the world.

In the dry, desert-like hearts of the *jivas*, he sowed the seeds of *bhakti-rasa*. Nurturing the *bhakti* creeper, he revealed the importance and dignity of attaining the position of a *kiṅkari* of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Such a stage is extremely difficult to attain for the inhabitants of this world, and it is rarely described even in the Vedas and Āgamas. Most of the Vaiṣṇavas in the line of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda are completely engaged in establishing Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta* by defeating the arguments of other schools of thought, yet Śrīla Mahārāja revealed the dormant secrets of *bhajana* of his *guru-varga* and thus revealed the novel speciality of the *paramparā*.

During the British rule in India, the world of religion was enveloped in a period of darkness. At that time, there were so many *apa-sampradāyas*, the heterodox schools of Vaiṣṇava thought such as *sabajiya*, *sakhī-bheki*, *smārtā*, *atibādī*, *cūḍādhārī*, *aula*, *bāula*, *karttābhāja*, etc. It was then that Śrī Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura descended to this world and reinitiated the nectareous current of *bhakti* in the line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He illuminated *gaura-kāma*, *gaura-dhāma*, *gaura-nāma* – Gaura's holy desire, Gaura's holy abode and Gaura's holy name. He gathered the essence of all the writings of the Gosvāmīs, which express the mood and sentiments of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, and based on this, he composed over one hundred books in very lucid and easy to understand language.

Just as Bhāgīratha Muni initiated the flow of the Gaṅgā, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura initiated the flow of the Bhakti-Gaṅgā throughout the entire world. He predicted that hundreds of thousands of fair-complexioned devotees would join the current of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *harināma-saṅkirtana* movement, and that they would all become affluent with the wealth of love for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. It is written, “*sarasvatī krṣṇa-priyā, krṣṇa bhakti-tāra*

biyā, vinodera seī se vaibhava – Sarasvatī, or transcendental knowledge personified, is the beloved of Kṛṣṇa, because her heart is the abode of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. That Sarasvatī is the extended opulence of Bhaktivinoda". In other words, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura manifested Vimalā-prasāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī.

Jagad-guru Prabhupāda Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī took a vow that for the duration of his life, he would deliver this *bhakti-rasa* to the doorstep of all *jīvas*. He stated, "Birth after birth we aim to become the dust at the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (who is Śrī Rūpa Mañjari). This is the sole and highest aspiration of our lives and our only desirable object." And among the associates of Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, with great influence and intense austerity, dedicated his entire life to the service of *śrī gurupāda-padma*, keeping the lamp of Bhaktisiddhānta ignited. In this way he gave light to the entire world. He reinitiated Śrī Dhāma *parikramā*, large-scale preaching, and the publication of books, thus preventing the line of Bhaktivinoda from becoming blocked. By doing so, he was successful in bringing *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa* to the hearts of the *jīvas*.

Thus, bathing in the current of Śrī Bhaktivinoda, in the waters of the *bhakti-siddhānta* of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, in the stream of Śrī Keśava (Bhakti Prajñāna), in the Gaṅgā coming from the feet of Śrī Vāmanadeva [Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja], Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja brought that same water – *bhakti-rasa* – to the entire world and cooled the dry, lifeless and almost scorched hearts of the living entities. He extinguished the great forest fire of improper desires, misconceptions and ill logic, burning in the hearts of the *jīvas* throughout the world, and he sprinkled upon them the nectar of the teachings of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha. He upheld the *rūpānuga-vicāra-dhārā* and showered upon the hearts of the *jīvas* the deep, hidden secrets of the nectar of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

Some individuals, although performing exclusive *bhakti* to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, had confined themselves to the path of worship in awe and reverence – the mood of Dvārakā, or the path of rules and regulations. But being on a higher platform, he always inspired others to become endowed with greed for *vraja-bhakti*, to have enthusiasm for *anurāga* and to obtain real *sambandha* by following in the footsteps of the Vrajavāīs. Even among those who aspire for the amorous mood (*madhura-bhāva*), some had become confined to *kāmānugā-bhakti*. But he was on a higher platform than that, also, and manifested *tat-tat-bhāvecchāmayī-bhakti*, in which the desire for separate personal happiness is completely abolished. And he generated within others

the aspiration to become the *kiñkarī* of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, by following their (the *kiñkarīs*) footsteps.

Our entire *rūpānuga guru-varga* carry these moods and sentiments. Since he had embraced these moods within his heart, he exhibited the ideal for performing *bhajana* under the guidance of *śrī guru*, and he gifted that ideal to the whole world. To such a *guru*, I offer my *pranāma*.

Viraha-vidhura (Bereaved in Separation)

4 January 2011

Gurudeva! Today, the earth has become devoid of all beauty (*śrī*). The brilliant smiles on everyone's faces have been stolen away, and all are becoming dishevelled due to being cast into the mood of deep separation. You were able to edit and proofread your commentaries on the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* up until the description of *vraja-lilā* along with the *māthura-viraha-lilā*. At that point, you became drowned in *vipralambha-bhāva* and told us, "I am unable to continue any further, because of poor health. I am extremely satisfied with this work on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and I want to see it published before I leave this world."

When the first part of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*'s Tenth Canto commentaries was published and presented to you during the month of Kārttika in Govardhana, you showered your blessings upon us with the order that this work is to be completed in full, along with the publication of other books. In Govardhana, you gave all the devotees your divine *darśana* for the last time and bade us farewell. Speaking over the microphone you directed us to continue to attend Śrī Vraja-mandala *parikramā* and Śrī Navadvīpa *parikramā*. You told, "With great enthusiasm, the message of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu should be preached throughout the world. Working together, my mission should flourish. You need only remain on the path I showed and I will take you with me and deliver you." Even in your last days, your enthusiasm, effort and inner strength never broke. As a truly gallant personality, you made your departure in great glory, chanting the names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

O personified deity of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*! O most brilliant example of *bhakta-bhāgavata*! Today you have entered into the direct service of Bhagavān and, as Their dear associate, you eternally and blissfully serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. May you kindly accept this tear-filled offering of this lowly, fallen and most unfortunate person at your lotus feet.

The unfortunate,

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Tīrtha

A Heartfelt Puṣṭāñjali

IN SEPARATION AT THE LOTUS FEET OF ŚRILA GURUDEVA

Āratī Song to Śrīla Gurudeva

*jaya jaya gurudever āratiko śobhā
yamunā-taṭa braja-tīrtha bhakta-mana lobhā*



All glories, all glories to the beautiful āratī ceremony of Śrīla Gurudeva, performed on the banks of the Yamunā in the sacred Vraja, attracting the minds of the devotees.

(Navadvīpa is situated on the western bank of the Gaṅgā, which is where Yamunā flows. So *yamunā-taṭa braja-tīrtha*, at this Yamunā in Navadvīpa which is non-different from Vraja, Śrīla Gurudeva's ārati is being performed. *Braja-tīrtha* can also mean 'attracting the minds of the devotees headed by Śrīpad Tīrtha Mahārāja and Brajanātha Prabhu').

*rāga-mārga siddhāntera mūrtimanta ati
keśavera priya tumi nārāyaṇa yati*

O Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, you are the complete embodiment of the conclusive truths (*siddhāntas*) of the path of *rāgānuga-bhakti*, and you are the beloved *sannyāsī* disciple of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

*gaura-vāṇi dhūpa tava śrī vedānta dīpa
pāscātya pracārakera tumi hao bhūpa*

In your āratī the message of Śrī Gaurasundara is the incense, and *śrī vedānta* is the ghee lamp (just as the ghee lamp dispels darkness, the *bhaktivedānta sannyāsīs* under your shelter dissipate the darkness in the *jīvas'* hearts with their *hari-kathā*). You are the monarch among those who preached in the West. (Another meaning of *bhūpa*: *bhū* – earth, *pa* – to maintain. In other words you maintain and nourish the *bhakti-latā*, the creeper of devotion, of all of your disciples and followers on the whole earth.)

*sārasvata-keśava-dhārā jala-śāṅkha dbāra
pālyā-dāsī madhu-snehe mugdha carācara*

The water in the conch shell is the current, that is, the line of thought, of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda and Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. By the honey-like affection (*madhu-sneha*) of Śrī Rādhā's maidservants, Her *pālyā-dāsīs*, all beings – moving and non-moving alike – are enchanted.

*tila-phula jinni nāsā śrī arīga sundara
deśī videśī bhakta tava puṣṭa sambhāra*



© Vasanti dasi

Your nose is like a sesame flower and your limbs are very beautiful. The Indian and foreign devotees are the flowers and other ingredients of your worship.

*sevānande premānanda cāmara dulāya
madhukanṭhe krṣṇa-dāsa nīrājana gāya*

Śrīpad Premānanda Prabhu waves the *cāmara* in the bliss of serving you in uncountable ways, while Kṛṣṇa dāsa sings your āratī in a sweet beautiful voice.

(Kṛṣṇa dāsa – the living entities situated in the constitutional nature of being the servant of Kṛṣṇa, or devotees whose name includes the word *kṛṣṇa*, or the *kīrtaniya* Kṛṣṇa dāsa)

*māhanande bhakta-vrnda bājāya mṛdaṅga**
*mādhava vana** akātare māge tava saṅga*

In great joy, throngs of devotees are playing the *mṛdaṅga*. [But,] Mādhava and Vana, fervently beg for your association.

[* *Mṛdaṅga* – *bṛhat-mṛdaṅga*. This refers to the publishing department. The devotees who are engaged in publishing services in any language anywhere on Earth are joyfully beating that *mṛdaṅga* for your pleasure.

** *Mādhava vana* – Śrīpad Mādhava Mahārāja and Śrīpad Vana Mahārāja]



Time of Appearance

My supremely worshipful *siksā-gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja appeared on 16 February 1921, on Māghī Amāvasyā, or Maunī Amāvasyā in Tivāripura, in the Buxar district of present state of Bihar. His childhood name was Śrīman Nārāyaṇa Tivārī and his father's name was Pandita Bāleśvara Nātha Tivārī and his mother's name was Śrīmatī Laxmī-devī. Both were initiated Vaiṣṇavas of the Rāmānuja *saṃpradāya*. Since childhood Śrīman Nārāyaṇa Tivārī was very attached to listening, reading and thinking of śrī rāma-līlā.

The Boundless Mercy of Bhagavān

Later he accepted a government post as a police officer. Once, Śrī Narottamānanda Brahmacārī (*prapūjya-carana* Śrīla Bhakti Kamala Madhusūdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja) went to preach in Sāhebaganj, Bihar. During his stay there, Śrīman Nārāyaṇa Tivārī listened to the *Bhāgavatam* and the message of Śrī Caitanya from him, and afterwards exchanged letters with Parama-gurudeva.

Once, his job required him to be on night duty, but he became so immersed in performing *bhajana* he forgot to go to work. He remembered this the very moment his duty was meant to come to an end. The next day, however, he noticed that in the service book, 'promotion' was written next to his name. "But I did not come for the duty yesterday," he told some other officers, "how did I get promoted?" "O Tivārīji," they said. "Yesterday everyone noticed how diligently you perform your duty, and for this reason, the higher officer decided to promote you."

Residence In the Maṭha And Dikṣā

Śrīla Gurudeva resigned from police duty in 1946 and in December, some months before India attained independence, he came to Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma to become a resident of the *maṭha*. On the occasion of Gaura Pūrṇimā, 1947, *parama-gurudeva* Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja bestowed both *barināma* and *dikṣā* upon him and named him Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa dāsa. He began to perform all types of service and gradually became the recipient of the mercy and affection of his *gurudeva* and all Vaiṣṇavas.

Preaching with Guru-mahārāja

Parama-gurudeva always used to take Śrī Sajjana-sevaka Brahmacārī (my supremely worshipful *gurupāda-padma-nitya-lilā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja) with him when he went travelling and preaching. Later, he also took both Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Gurudeva as well. Śrīla Gurudeva was his chief *kīrtanīyā*.

Śrīla Gurudeva used to tell us how *parama-gurudeva* would take faithful people to all the pilgrimage places of India, so Śrīla Gurudeva got the opportunity to visit all places two times. The first time was with an advance party to make arrangements and the second time was with all the pilgrims.

Ideal Vaiṣṇava-sevā

Everyone naturally performs service to their *gurudeva* with affection (*mamatā*), but sometimes, not that much interest is shown to serve the *sevaka* of the *guru* and the other Vaiṣṇavas. Parama-gurudeva's first personal servant was Śrī Anaṅga Mohana Brahmacārī. Even when Anaṅga Mohana Prabhu became diseased with tuberculosis he would still personally render all service to Parama-gurudeva.

Once it was time to preach in the villages of Bengal to prepare for Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa *parikramā*. Śrīla Gurudeva was new at that time, and it was essential that he go preaching along with the others. Who, then, would be responsible for taking care of Śrī Anaṅga Mohana Brahmacārī? Śrīla Gurudeva said to Parama-gurudeva, "Gurudeva, please take everyone and go out preaching without any worry. I will take complete responsibility for Śrī Anaṅga Mohana Prabhu's service." Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja used to tell us, "By serving Anaṅga Mohana Brahmacārī, Śrīpad Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja completely won the heart of Śrīla Gurudeva."

Parama-gurudeva had established Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha in Mathurā and had given the responsibility for its service to Śrīla Gurudeva. All of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas present at that time would occasionally visit Mathurā and Śrīla Gurudeva received the opportunity to serve them.

Accepting Sannyāsa

During Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa *parikramā* in 1952, on the day of Śrī Gaura Pūrṇimā, Śrī Sajjana-sevaka Brahmacārī (my supremely worshipful *gurupāda-padma*), Śrī Rādhānātha Vrajavāsi (my *siksā-gurudeva*) and Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa Vrajavāsi (my *gurudeva*) were given *sannyāsa* by Parama-gurudeva. At the time of *sannyāsa*, our *guru-vargas* were named Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, respectively. Śrīla Gurudeva used to say, "There was such affection (*priti*) among the three of us that was not seen among three children of the same parents. Even though

we had three bodies, we had one soul. It is not possible to find an example of such affection in this world."

Attached to Transcendental Knowledge

As stated in the scriptures, *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* is the pinnacle all knowledge – *vidyā bhāgavatāvadhi*. Śrīla Gurudeva used to call the Vaiṣṇava scholars of Vraja-maṇḍala to Mathurā, Vṛndāvana or Govardhana. He would give them a topic to speak on and listen to their views. Finally, he himself used to speak Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava conceptions. Even now, on Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī disappearance festival, Jhūlana-yātrā and Śrī Baladeva Pūrṇimā, there is a three day conference.

Practising Preacher

In the present world, some practise and do not preach while some preach but do not practise. But those *jagad-gurus* who both practise as well as preach are superior to all. Although Śrīla Gurudeva preached in the Western countries for fifteen years, he remained unwavering in his practice. At the time of *cāturmāsyā* or *puruṣottama-vrata*, he would follow all the rules very strictly, ranging from not cutting his hair and beard to restricting his intake of certain food items. He used to tell us, "You should follow *cāturmāsyā* and *puruṣottama-vrata* properly. Do not get lost in Western air."

Very Far from Prestige

Most people are greedy for prestige, but Śrīla Gurudeva kept it miles away. My Parama-gurudeva, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, during his physical presence in this world, expressed his desire to instate Śrīla Gurudeva in the post of *ācārya*, but Śrīla Gurudeva politely said, "I will surrender everything at the feet of pūjyapāda Vāmana Mahārāja." Even after being given the title 'Goodwill Ambassador', the title 'Yugācārya' by two prominent institutions in India; and preaching with great success in Western and Eastern countries, he never, at any moment, exhibited a trace of pride or the desire for prestige.

Service to the Sampradāya

If there were ever an attack on the *sampradāya* in any way, he would, at any time, immediately subdue the assailant with his weapon like hand. On the occasion of Śrī Mahāprabhu's five-hundredth appearance anniversary, Śyāmalāla Hakīma of the Harināma Press, Vṛndāvana, criticized the saffron cloth and *sannyāsa* of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*. Śrīla Gurudeva wrote an essay named "The Gauḍīya Sampradāya and Sannyāsa" in which he gave the irrefutable scriptural evidence that the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*'s saffron cloth and *sannyāsa* in accordance with the rules of scripture. He published it in various papers and

magazines and also sent it to Śyāmalāla Hakīma, thereby silencing him forever. When the Mahāvana branch of Śrī Caitanya Gauḍīya Maṭha and its branch at Kāliyadaha Vṛndāvana were attacked by antisocial elements, thereby breaking *śrī vigraba* and not allowing the boundary walls to be constructed, Śrīla Gurudeva immediately suspended all his weighty responsibilities and extended his help to those *maṭhas* by re-establishing *śrī vigraba* and building the boundary walls so as to make the *maṭha* safe.

Becoming the Servant of the Daughter of Vṛṣabhānu Mahārāja is the Sole Hope and Aspiration

In his lectures and *hari-kathā*, Śrīla Gurudeva would always establish the glories of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and prove that the highest objective of *bhajana* is to attain the *dāsy* of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. There is so much power in the *dāsy* of Śrīmatī Rādhājī that it controls even Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has therefore said, “*rādhikāra dāsī yadi haya abbimāna, śigbra milaya tava gokula kāna* – if you develop pride in being Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s exclusive maid-servant, then very quickly you will meet Gokula Kāna.” Wherever Rādhājī goes, Śrī Kṛṣṇa somehow turns up at that same spot. If Rādhājī is happy then Kṛṣṇa is happy; if Rādhājī is sad then Kṛṣṇa is sad. Kṛṣṇa cannot leave Rādhājī and be independent of Her. There is so much power in the dust of the feet of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī that on the strength of that dust, Her maid-servants do not even have the need to pray to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

By consideration of *tattva*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is Himself Bhagavān. By consideration of *rasa*, due to the superiority of *āśraya-jātiya prema*, that Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa begs forgiveness at the feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and becomes indebted to Her.

Absorption in Vipralambha-bhajana and Disappearance Pastime

Because it was so cold in Vraja-maṇḍala and Hastināpura (Delhi), Śrīla Gurudeva left there on the advice of his *vaidya* (ayurvedic doctor) and came to the highest place of *vipralambha-bhajana*, Śrī Dhāma Jagannātha Puri. He said, “One of my *śiksā-gurus*, *parama-pūjyapāda* Śrīla Bhakti Pramoda Puri Gosvāmī Mahārāja went to Puri to leave his body. I am also going there.” Upon arriving in Puri-dhāma, he became deeply absorbed in *vipralambha-bhajana*. At that time, he would talk very little, and only if we asked him something did he answer.

Samādhi

In Śrī Dhāma Puri, at 3.00 a.m on Dec 29, 2010 – *kṛṣṇa-navamī* in the month of Pauṣa – while deeply absorbed in *vipralambha-bhajana*, Śrīla Gurudeva entered Śrī Śrī Rādhā-

Govindadeva’s *niśānta-līlā*. That day was the appearance day of my *gurupāda-padma*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja. As per his desire, his transcendental body was given *saṁādhi* in Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa, according to the procedures of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. His *saṁādhi* ceremony took place in front of his *bhajana-kutīra*, in the presence of all the Vaiṣṇavas who had assembled there. The first preference for his *saṁādhi* was that it be at Girirāja Govardhana and his second preference was Śrī Dhāma Navadvīpa.

By his taking *saṁādhi* in Navadvīpa, he fulfilled his desire to be at Govardhana, for Koladvīpa is non-different from Govardhana. On that island, there are also the *saṁādhis* of his dear Godbrothers, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja. In regard to them, Śrīla Gurudeva used to say, “Even though we are three bodies, we are one soul.” Most importantly, the *saṁādhi* of his supremely worshipful *gurupāda-padma* Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, is also on this island.

I think that there are many confidential reasons behind his disappearance being on the appearance day of my *gurupāda-padma*. First, Śrīla Gurudeva used to say, “When I joined the *maṭha*, *pūjyapāda* Vāmana Mahārāja took full care of me, just like a mother, and only under his guidance did I learn to serve my *gurudeva*.” For this reason, to establish that he is under his guidance, it appears that he had already decided this date. Second, he chose this day so that in the future, his disciples would not disrespect his dear Godbrother by not celebrating his appearance day. Third, there was so much affection among these three Godbrothers that to reveal this affection to the world, one disappeared on another’s disappearance day and one disappeared on another’s appearance day. Fourth, he wanted to teach all his disciples, devotees and those who had taken shelter of him to move along in a unified fashion, as the three of them have done. One more notable point is that Śrīla Gurudeva’s name in his previous *āśrama* was Śrīman Nārāyaṇa. Then, after *dīkṣā*, his name became Śrī Gaura Nārāyaṇa, and after *sannyāsa*, Śrī Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa. The name ‘Nārāyaṇa’ was consistent throughout. Although he was born in the month of Mādhava (*māgha*), he disappeared in month of Nārāyaṇa (*pauṣa*).

A Loss That Cannot Be Compensated

The disappearance of Śrīla Gurudeva is a loss that cannot be filled. His personality was so powerful, he was *sevakavatsala*, *rasika*, *bhāvuka*, an unparalleled knower of *siddhānta* and a fearless preacher of the Truth. Most importantly, the root *mantra* of *bhajana* – *guru-niṣṭhā* – was visible in him with his every step. All of his qualities are reflected in his name. Just as all of Ajāmila’s calamities were taken away

by his chanting the name of Nārāyaṇa, similarly, for one who takes shelter of Śrīla Gurudeva, all his misfortune and calamities will be removed.

My Condition

Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī said, “śūnyāyate mahāgoṣṭha... jīnātū rabitasya me.” Now I am realizing the profound meaning of his words. Nanda Bāba had told Uddhavajī, “Uddhava, wherever I go to forget my lālā (his son, Kṛṣṇa), be it the bank of Yamunā or the forest of Govardhana, memories of my lālā only increase.” On the advice of

my elder Godbrothers and other Vaiṣṇavas, I left India after the disappearance of Śrīla Gurudeva, but wherever I go, remembrance of my lālā (Gurudeva) is increasing manifold everyday. On the other hand, doctors are warning me about my health. At this time, I am completely an orphan and in delusion about my proper duty – what I am supposed to do. My only prayer at the feet of Vaiṣṇavas, who are like desire-trees, is that wherever my lālā is, please also send me there. That would really be their causeless mercy upon me and I would be eternally indebted to them.

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Mādhava

Glorification of Śrīla Gurudeva ON THE OCCASION OF VYĀSA-PŪJĀ



*M*y dear, most beloved Gurudeva, please accept my humble obeisances to your lotus feet:

*mūkam karoti vācālam paingum lainghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam aham vande śrī-guruṁ dīna-tāraṇam*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto śrī guru, the deliverer of all fallen souls, whose mercy turns the dumb into eloquent speakers, and enables the lame to cross mountains.

Your lotus feet are the goal of all my devotional service. They are like rare and precious *cintāmani* gems, and their service bestows love for Śrīmatī Rādhikā. I take shelter of your lotus feet. O Gurudeva, no other personality can compare to you. You have taught the most confidential knowledge of Vedic literature, by showing us how to absorb our minds in thoughts of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu:

*caitanya-candra mama hṛt-kumudam vikāśya
bṛḍayāṁ vidhebi nija-cintana-bhṛṅga-raṅgaiḥ
kiñcāparādha-timiraṁ niviḍaṁ vidibuya
pādāmṛtaṁ sadaya pāyaya durgataṁ me*

Śrī Stavāvalī, Abhīṣṭa-sūcanam (11)
(Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī)

O Caitanya-candra, please make the charming lotus flower of my heart bloom by delightful bee-like thoughts of you, thus clearing away the dense darkness of my offenses. Mercifully make this unfortunate person drink the nectar emanating from Your lotus feet.

To this very day you are spreading the waves of the ocean of love of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Everyone is taking the

nectar of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's sweet names and diving deeply into that ocean. In England, America, Russia, Brazil, Australia, China, Africa and even Muslim countries – throughout the entire world – people are relishing your sweet nectarean *rādhā-kṛṣṇa-lilā-kathā*. O Gurudeva, you are the true ācārya. You always taught us how to serve śrī guru:

*guru-suśrūṣayā bhaktyā sarva-labdhārpanena ca
saṅgena sādhbu-bhaktānām iṣvarārādhanena ca*

In this regard, you glorify your own *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja – how he completely surrendered to the lotus feet of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. Also you gave the example of Kūreśa, the disciple of Rāmānujācārya.

I remember once in Delhi, one devotee was singing the *kīrtana*, “*gurudeva, krpa karke... mere man meni samāe ho, mujhe prāṇon se pyāre ho*.” You stopped him and asked, “Do you know the meaning of *mujhe prāṇon se pyāre ho* (one who is more dear to me than my life)?”

Then you explained the meaning, how your *gurudeva* was willing to sacrifice his life for the service of his *gurudeva*. During the Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*, *sahajiyā bābājīs* and *smārta brāhmaṇas* attacked Śrīla Prabhupāda in an attempt to kill him. At that time, Vinoda-bihārī Brahmacārī (Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja) took Śrīla Prabhupāda's *sannyāsa* dress and gave his own *brahmacārī* cloth to him. In this way he protected his *gurudeva*.

He Gurudeva, I really want to know how to appropriately address such a great soul as you, in order to glorify you. No doubt, you are the very nearest and dearest of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, *rādhikāya-priyatmane*. In this regard, you

always glorify Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Her *sakhīs'* and *mañjarīs'* sweet pastimes:

*sakhīra svabhāva eka akathya-kathana
krṣṇa-saha nija-līlāya nāhi sakhīra mana
krṣṇa saha rādbikāra līlā ye karāya
nija-sukha haite tāte koṭi sukha pāya*

There is an inexplicable fact about the natural inclinations of the *gopīs*. The *gopīs* never want to enjoy themselves with Kṛṣṇa personally. The happiness of the *gopīs* increases ten million times when they serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Their transcendental pastimes.* [BBT]

In this way, when you would give class about Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda Saṁvāda, *rūpa-śikṣā*, *sanātana-śikṣā* and Śrimad-Bhāgavatam's various pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, such as *Gopi-gīta*, *Venu-gīta*, *Bhramara-gīta* and *Yugala-gīta*, everyone would be completely absorbed in an ecstatic mood. In this regard, all the learned scholars of Mathurā and Vṛndāvana gave you the title *rasika-yuga-ācārya*.

He Gurudeva, you truly fulfilled all the desires of your *guru-gaurāṅga*. Therefore, we again and again pay obeisances unto your lotus feet:

*śri keśava mano 'bhīṣṭham
sthapitam yena bhū-tale
svayam nārāyaṇa kada māyām
dadāti sva padāntikam*

In your lifetime you wrote innumerable *granthas*, which have been translated into various languages of the world. Especially you have established our *sampradāya*'s *rasa-vicāra* and *tattva-siddhānta*, as our previous *ācāryas* have done. In this regard, one prominent Vaiṣṇava commented that you are Vaiṣṇava *sārvabhauma* in Navadvīpa-dhāma, Vṛndāvana-dhāma and Jagannātha Purī, just as in Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmīpada's time, he was Vaiṣṇava *sārvabhauma* in these three *dhāmas*.

He Gurudeva, you are always *adoṣa-daraśi* – you never see others' faults' and you give mercy to everyone. A baby stools on his mother's lap, but the mother just cleans him and takes him back on her lap.

I beg for one blessing only, that I can always remain the servant of the servant of the servant of your lotus feet. Jaya Śrīla Gurudeva!

Aspiring for the foot dust of Guru and Vaiṣṇavas,

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Vana

The Extraordinary OF ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTIVEDĀNTA

*O*ffer unlimited *danḍavat-praṇāmas* at the lotus feet of my beloved *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrimad Bhakti Śrī-rūpa Siddhāntī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and the same at the lotus feet of my beloved *śikṣā-guru*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrimad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

For the living entity who glorifies the Vaiṣṇavas, all obstacles are removed and he will be able cross over this material existence. This is what we have heard from *guru*, *śāstra* and *sādhu*. It is a very special limb of *bhajana* to meditate on the divine qualities and glories of these exalted personalities.

His *Guru-niṣṭhā*

We see that *guru-niṣṭhā* was highly prominent in Śrī Gurupāda-padma – Śrīla Bhaktidānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He repeated again and again that *guru-niṣṭhā* is the backbone of *bhakti*. He used to say, "I have no quality in me, no intelligence, no scholarship, nothing, so why is the world honouring me? Because without duplicity I have served my *gurudeva*. I have remained with my *gurudeva* like a shadow and have always tried to follow his orders." *Śāstra* states that he who has firm faith in *gurupāda-padma* can liberate the entire universe. By *guru-sevā* a living entity can attain all perfection in life.

There was a very dear servant of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja named Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī. This disciple would call him "father" and he also had a very deep affection for his *gurudeva*. Somehow, he contracted tuberculosis, which is highly contagious, and in those days had no cure. No one wanted to be near him, so who could be appointed with the *sevā* of caring for him? Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja gave this responsibility to Śrīla Gurudeva, who risked his own life to do it. Although he devotedly served him, after some time, Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī left his body. As he was leaving this world, with his head resting on Śrīla Gurudeva's lap, he cried out, "Oh! Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are calling me to Goloka Vṛndāvana!" In his humility, Śrīla Gurudeva requested him, "When you reach that realm, kindly arrange a place for me there."

Śrīla Gurudeva became a special recipient of his *gurudeva*'s mercy by serving Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī in this way. Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī was so dear to his *gurudeva* that at the end of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava



NARĀYAÑA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA

Gosvāmī Mahārāja's manifest pastimes, he would cry upon uttering his name.

Generally, a person has reverence for his *guru*'s Godbrothers, but may not hold that same reverence for his own Godbrothers. But by dint of the glories of Śrī Gurupāda-padma's *bhajana* and *guru-niṣṭhā*, his own Godbrothers have so much honour for him.

His Special Contribution to the Rūpānuga Line

Mahāprabhu's unique contribution is *sva-bhakti śriyam*, and that *bhāva-ullāsa-rati*, *tat-tad-bhāva-icchātmikā*, or *mañjari-bhāva*, was established in this world by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, who came in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī composed the song *Śrī Rūpa Mañjari-pāda*, expressing his longing for *mañjari-sevā* at the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Mañjari. In this same *paramaparā*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura also established the excellence of *mañjari-bhāva* and *parikiyā-bhāva*; Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura established the same thing, and Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura stated that the very aim and object of our life is to become dust particle at the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Coming in that line, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja also established a very special branch of *śrī rūpānugatva*, the Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, in which he gave the title "Bhaktivedānta" to those whom he awarded *sannyāsa*. By this, he has shown a novel principle: Vedānta does not refer to the commentary of the Māyāvādīs, but to the essence of the Vedas. And what is that? Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam describes it as *nigama-kalpa-taror galitam phalam* – the ripened fruit of the Vedas is itself Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

And what is the essence of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam? The Tenth Canto. And the essence of the Tenth Canto is *rāsa-pañcādhya*, the five chapters describing *rāsa-lilā*, also known as 'the five life airs'. It is this *rāsa-lilā* that is the essence of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which is the essence of the Vedas. This means that the title "Bhaktivedānta" indicates a worshipper of *śringāra-rasa*, or *madhura-rasa*, and the pinnacle of this *madhura-prema* attainable for the *jīva-anarpita-carīm cīrat* – was the sublime gift bestowed upon this world by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Taking shelter of that same *rūpānugatva*, our most worshipful Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja installed Sevā-kuñja in Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Matha.

In this Sevā-kuñja is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Ete cāṁśa-kalāḥ puruṣaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam*. And what is He doing? According to the poet Rasakhāna, "That Supreme Personality of Godhead is massaging the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī."

When Śrī Gurupāda-padma spoke *hari-kathā*, he would start with any topic, but he always concluded with *vraja-prema*, and within *vraja-prema*, he concluded by glorifying the *vraja-gopīs*, and within the *vraja-gopīs*, with the glories of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. By this, his *rūpānugatva* was most apparent.

Every scripture that he has published reveals his *rūpānugatva*: *Rāya Rāmanānda Samvād*, *Prema-saṁpuṭa*, *Camatkāra-candrikā*, *Rāga-vartma-candrikā*, *Venu-gīta*, *Rāsa-pañcādhya*, *Ujjvala-nilamani*, *Śrī Bhajana-rahasya* and other books. And every action he performed also highlighted his exclusive *rūpānugatva*. That which he came to give to the world was visible in every single act and aspect of his life.

Every year, he organized a three day festival in Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha for Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda's disappearance, during which various scholarly people of Vraja spoke on the glories of following in the footsteps of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. At the end of this conference, Śrīla Mahārājāji would give an astounding analysis to fully elucidate the significance and speciality of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's line.

He always emphasized that first of all, we should establish our goal, and then perform *sādhana*, for if our goal is not clear, then our *sādhana* will not be potent. Thus, in his invocation *ślokas*, he always chanted:

tavaivāsmi tavaivāsmi na jīvāmi tvayā vinā
iti vijñāya rādhe tvām naya mām caraṇāntikam
Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali (96)

I am Yours! I am Yours! I cannot live without You!
O Rādhe, please understand this and bring me to the service of Your lotus feet.

The Significance of His Name

And then there is his name. When the *guru* gives a name to someone, it has significance. His name, *nārāyaṇa*, has many meanings. *Nāra* means 'people' and *ayanam* means 'shelter', or 'refuge'. In other words, *nārāyaṇa* means 'he who provides shelter to all living entities'. In the assembly of *bhaktas*, therefore, his name has deep relevance. Another meaning of *nārāyaṇa* is "*nārasya jñānasya śrī rūpānugabharti vijñānasya ayanam aśrayam* – he who is the shelter of realized knowledge of *rūpānugā-bhakti*".

Throughout Śrīla Mahārājāji's life, he gave shelter to anyone who came to his lotus feet, in such a way that each person felt that he or she had the most affectionate connection

with him. This was his very special characteristic. When the disciples of other *ācāryas* took shelter of Śrīla Mahārājā, he would always maintain them and instruct them according to their capacity. Such was his magnanimity. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī instructed Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and Śrī Śyāmanānda Prabhu, even though they were not his direct, initiated disciples, and through them, he disseminated *unnatojjvala-rasāṁ sva-bhakti-śriyam* throughout all of India. Similarly, Śrīla Mahārājā has expertly trained the *dīskā* disciples of other *ācāryas* who came to him, and through them preached and continues

to preach the instructions of Śrīman Mahāprabhu all over the world.

In conclusion, we see that just as in his time, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī was the emperor of the realm of *bhakti*; in the same way, in the modern era, throughout Kṣetra-maṇḍala, Gaura-maṇḍala and Vraja-maṇḍala, Śrīla Mahārājā is supremely glorious.

*vāñchā-kalpatarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhyo eva ca
patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namah*

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Śrīdhāra

Teaching the Śivas BY HIS OWN EXAMPLE

On the occasion of the celebration of the 90th appearance day of *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, this lowly person offers his *śraddhāñjali*.

Fulfilling the orders of Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas is the sole duty of conditioned souls such as me. Today, on the eve of the celebration of the 90th appearance day of our *śikṣa-gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, the non-different form of my *śrī gurupāda-padma*, by the inspiration of the Vaiṣṇavas and by remembering the statement of the scriptures *vaiṣṇavera gūṇa-gāna, karile jīvera trāṇa, ja'te haya vāñchita pūraṇa* – performing glorification of the Vaiṣṇavas leads to the deliverance of the living entities and the fulfilment of their desires,” I am endeavouring to give a humble treatise as my offering. If he accepts the offering of a fallen and lowly person such as me, I shall consider myself to be most fortunate and blessed.

This year, the devotee servants under his shelter were commencing preparations for Śrī Śrīla Mahārāja’s 90th auspicious appearance day. Everyone’s heartfelt desire was that this year we would celebrate Śrīla Gurupāda-padma’s *vyāsa-pūjā* here in India, in his direct presence. However, before this desire of unfortunate souls like us could actually take form, on the day of the auspicious appearance of our *śrī gurupāda-padma*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, he fully entered his most aspired-for direct service to Śrī Śrī Viṣabhānu-nandinī, thus drowning us in an ocean of sorrow. By this, he has revealed his unwavering transcendental relationship with his foremost bosom friend who is his non-different form, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Furthermore, he has given us

the chance to observe the *vyāsa-pūjā* festival of one and the separation festival of the other on the same *kṛṣṇa-navaṁśī* day. In this way, he has given their servants the opportunity to express their hearts’ humble affliction for both of them, simultaneously.

*prathamamtu gurum pūjya tataś caiva mamārcanam
kurvān siddhīma-vāpnoti hyanyathā niṣphalam bhavet*

Hari-bhakti-vilāsa (4.344)

[Śrī Kṛṣṇa said:] A devotee who worships the spiritual master first and then worships Me attains perfection. It is fruitless to worship Me alone.

Remembering this declaration of Śrī Bhagavān, the devotees should at every moment, on every day, in every week, in every month, in every year, that is to say, unceasingly, remain engaged in the worship of *śrī guru*, that is, they should always perform *śrī guru-pūjā*. Despite this, it is observed everywhere, that on Srla Gurudeva’s own appearance day, grand arrangements are made to worship him.

The spiritual preceptor of the whole world, Śrīla Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda has stated, “Of all varieties of worship of worshipful objects that exist in the world, the worship of Bhagavān is topmost, and the worship of the worshipper of that topmost worshipful object is far greater. Even Bhagavān worships that worshipper. The topmost worshipful object is Bhagavān, and the reservoir of the worship, or love, for Bhagavān is the loving devotee of the Lord (*premika-bhakta*). Among these devotees of the Lord, *śrī gurupāda-padma* is best. Worshipping one whom Bhagavān Himself worships is certainly the most exalted type of worship.”

By the devotees offering their homages to *śrī gurupāda-padma*, they make the appearance day of *śrī gurudeva*, who grants deliverance from the fear of material existence, their focus. They do so with the intention of destroying the multitude of sins within the innermost recesses of their hearts and to attain the fifth goal of human life, *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Śrī Gaudiya Vaiṣṇavas observe the festival of *śrī vyāsa-pūjā* in a most distinguished manner. By definition, *śrī vyāsa-pūjā* indicates the worship of Śrī Vyāsadeva. According to geometry, the meaning of *vyāsa* refers to a straight line located within the circumference of a circle and which passes through the centre [i.e., the diameter of a circle]. There may be innumerable varieties of straight lines, but all have the same characteristic of touching the circumference and passing through the centre. Similarly, even though there may be many forms of Vyāsa, all forms are established in the same fundamental nature.

[Continuing the analogy of the circle,] Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the centre, situated in the midst of the sphere of Goloka. And *śakti*, which is within Him, as represented by the straight line within the circle, is the very same Śrī Vyāsa. Sometimes Śrī Vyāsa is regarded as a plenary portion (*anīsa*) of Bhagavān, and sometimes as the embodiment of His energy (*śakti*). Śrī Vyāsa's function is to make the conditioned souls remember Śrī Kṛṣṇa by dividing and expanding the Vedas and other scriptures. In this way he serves to help the conditioned souls engage in Kṛṣṇa's service. We can see this, also, to be the primary engagement of *śrī gurudeva*, who is non-different from Śrī Vyāsa. For this reason, *śrī gurudeva* is Śrī Vyāsadeva and Śrī Vyāsadeva is *śrī gurudeva*. Similarly, because the foremost activity of *śrī gurudeva* is to fulfill the inner heart's desire of Śrī Bhagavān's *śaktyāveśavatāra*, Śrī Vyāsadeva, *śrī guru-pūjā* is also known as *śrī vyāsa-pūjā*.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu introduced the practice of *śrī vyāsa-pūjā* by worshipping Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu in the house of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍita, thereby instructing the *jīvas* that *śrī nityānanda-tattva* is non-different from *śrī guru-tattva*. After accepting worship from Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu then worshipped Śrīman Mahāprabhu. In this way, They introduced to the world the rules of worship for both *sevya-tattva* (the worshipful) and *sevaka-tattva* (the worshipper).

Similarly, our *śrī gurupāda-padma*, the supremely worshipful *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, by personally performing the *vyāsa-pūjā* of his own Godbrother, *tridāṇḍi-svāmī* Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, has conferred instructions upon all devotees. Once, on the day before Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's appearance day (which at that time was unknown to us), my *gurupāda-*

padma gave the commander of Śrī Vinoda-Bihārī Gaudiya Maṭha in Kolkātā some money and asked him to make purchases from the market for a festival. He personally described what preparations to make. He also asked us to invite all the devotees who stayed near the *maṭha*. On the morning of the day of the *vyāsa-pūjā*, he instructed us to bring flower garlands and so forth. He inquired whether any of the *maṭha* residents had a good quality, decent sized portrait of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, but since no one possessed a good picture, he said, "Satyānanda¹ must have Mahārāja's portrait. Please call him."

"You must have a good photograph of Śrīla Mahārāja," he said. "Yes, I do." I answered. "Bring the portrait now and place it on the table in my room." It was only at that point that all the residents of the *maṭha* understood "today is the appearance day of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja." None of us knew this because previously, Śrīla Mahārāja's appearance day was not printed in the *Śrī Caitanya Pañjikā*. By performing this worship himself, Śrīla Guru Mahārāja instructed us how to properly respect the *ācārya* and the Vaiṣṇavas.

He instructed the *pūjārī* to bring incense, ghee lamp, *aguru*, sandalwood paste, perfume, flowers, *tulasī*, and all other articles of worship (*arcana*). After personally decorating the portrait of Śrīla Mahārāja, his own Godbrother, with sandalwood paste, flower garlands, and so forth, he asked the *pūjārī* to commence the *arcana*. Śrīla Guru Mahārāja then made further offerings of garlands, sandalwood paste and *tulasī* to the portrait and gave his *puspāñjali*. He ordered everyone else to offer their *puspāñjali*, also. After this, he asked me to recite the *jaya-dhvani*, but just before I did so, he himself chanted the *jaya-dhvani* for Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He then received the devotees who had assembled there with great hospitality, offering them *mahā-prasāda*.

Through this example, he clearly indicated to all those under his shelter and to the other Vaiṣṇavas residing in the *maṭha*, that Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is an *ācārya* of the highest qualification and is therefore above all criticism. He must never be the object of a person's tendency to fault-find. In other words, Śrīla Guru Mahārāja will not tolerate any behaviour contrary to this. His observance of this day is verily an instruction to everyone.

When, due to illness, Śrīla Gurupāda-padma was admitted to hospital I was engaged in his service. At that time, he expressed to me the deep sadness of his heart. "I have become disabled and will be unable to do anything more. If you all continue to perform *sādhana-bhajana* under the guidance of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, I will be happy."

¹ the *brahma-cāri* name of Śrīpad Bhaktivedānta Govinda Mahārāja

From this statement, no one should have any difficulty understanding his inner intention – that he internally appointed Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who is one with him in heart, to his post before leaving.

The three principle pillars of Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti, founded by the spiritual preceptor of the world, *nitya-lilā praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti-Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, were our *śrī gurupāda-padma*, *nitya-lilā praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda* Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

*ei tin mahārāja (vedānta) samitir kariyāchen ātmasāt
e tiner carana vando, tine mora nāth*

These three *mahārājas* made service to Śrī Gauḍīya Vedānta Samiti their life and soul. I worship the lotus feet of these three; they are my lords and masters.

My *śrī gurupāda-padma*, Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, would always exhibit the highest respect that could possibly be shown to both Śrī Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrī Śrīla Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Whenever we went to our Śrīla Guru Mahārāja for any reason, he would say, “Go to Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja. If you can perform your service according to his instruction, that will make me happy. I have no opinion separate from his.” Even though my *gurupāda-padma* was the president *ācārya* of the Samiti, to ensure that all *sevakas* observed proper etiquette toward his Godbrothers and never dishonor or disrespect them, he would always caution us in this way. Today, we have become deprived of the happiness of directly serving the aforementioned three *mahā-bhāgavatas*, who are highest ideals and who were the pillars of our *sādhana-bhajana*. It is an undeniable fact that today, we are most unfortunate!

On this auspicious day, following in the footsteps of my *śrī gurupāda-padma*, I pray to the lotus feet of that personality with whom my *śrī gurupāda-padma* is one in heart, and who is our *śikṣā-gurudeva*, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, that he bestow his causeless mercy upon me, so that, following the directives of Śrī Gurupāda-padma to the letter, I can, under his guidance, serve his cherished Lordships Śrī Śrī Gaura-Rādhā-Vinoda-bihāri, thus becoming fortunate, and that under his guidance I can one-pointedly dedicate my life to the service of Śrī Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas.

Desirous of the service of Śrī Guru and Vaiṣṇavas,

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Govinda

A Perfect Servant OF THE RŪPĀNUGA-ĀCĀRYAS



*namah oṁ viṣṇu-pādāya rādhikāya-priyatmane
śrī-śrīmad-bhakti-vedānta nārāyaṇa iti nāmine
śrī-kṛṣṇa-lilā-kathane sudakṣam
audārya-mādburya guṇaiś ca yuktaṁ
varaṁ vareṇyaṁ puruṣaiḥ mahāntaṁ
nārāyaṇaṁ tvāṁ śirasā namāmi*

*O*h! How fortunate we are that in this age of Kali, we have taken birth in the twentieth century, only five hundred years after the appearance of the Golden Avatāra of the Kali-yuga, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. This incarnation of Svayam Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord of all Lords, descended in His most merciful form from Goloka Vṛndāvana, the supreme spiritual planet in all of creation. He came to give the highest benediction of the topmost transcendental love of Himself, which had not previously been given anywhere in the universe in billions of years. In order to bestow upon the fortunate *jīvas* this supremely rare treasure of *unnata-ujjvala prema*, possessed only by His most intimate, eternal associates, the cowherd damsels of Vraja, He brought these very eternal personalities with Him to this world. In their association He caused a flood of transcendental *prema* to inundate all the *jīvas* in this world.

Following His descent and spanning the next five hundred years, His eternal associates continued to descend into the world to promulgate His teachings to all humanity, in an unbroken chain of effulgent *ācāryas*. In this present era of the twenty first century of the Christian calendar, one such illustrious servant of the Kali-yuga *pāvana-avatāra*, Śrī Gaurāṅgadeva, came to this world. His internal identity is that of a most intimate maidservant of the daughter of Vṛśabhānu Mahārāja, Śrīmatī Rādhā Ṭhākurāṇī, whom he serves under the guidance of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī – the very embodiment of Śrīmatī Rādhikā’s transcendental beauty. He came only to preach the supreme nectar of service to Her lotus feet and lead the most fortunate *jīvas* to Her eternal pleasure groves on the supreme spiritual planet in all of creation.

O Śrīla Gurudeva! You are that personality who came to us in the form of the topmost *paramahaṁsa sanīyāsi* immersed in the nectar of *vraja-prema*. With every atom of your existence you worshipped Her and strived to bring Her into the hearts of all whom you met. Your every breath was for Her, and every moment of your life was dedicated to leading all *jīvas* to Her lotus feet.

Śrīla Gurudeva, you are the supreme swan-like *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava! As the perfect and most elevated servant of your

gurudeva Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, your *śikṣā-guru* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, and in complete consonance with the line of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, you travelled the length and breadth of the planet, fearlessly and powerfully conveying to the world the conceptions of Śrī Rūpa-Raghunātha as no one before You had ever done in the modern era. On the tops of mountains, on small islands in the middle of the vast oceans, in all the major cities, and in every continent on the earth, as the supreme lion *ācārya*, you boldly preached the topmost conceptions of the *rūpānuga guru-paramparā*, inundating the world with the sweetness of *vraja-bhakti* and the paramount moods of *vraja-prema* of the Vrajavāsīs. In your precious books containing the supreme treasure of the *rūpānuga siddhānta* you delineated and clarified these essential truths for all Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas present and future.

Śrīla Gurudeva, you accomplished an inconceivable miracle! You came to the lands of the *mlecchas* and *yāvanas* both in the Eastern and Western countries, and implanted in the hearts of the fortunate recipients of your message the seeds of the highest spiritual aspirations possible in all time and space. In the modern era of this Kali-yuga, when information of all degraded types abound and surround the condemned and unfortunate *jīvas*, you broadcasted the most esoteric of all theistic conceptions by sprinkling the nectar of your *hari-kathā*, filled with the sweetness of Your internal transcendental moods of *vraja-prema*.

You presented the full and complete understanding of Gauḍīya theology and *siddhānta* systematically and thoroughly, with specific emphasis upon the ultimate *prayojana* leading to the pinnacle of *rādhā-dāsyam*, as proclaimed by the Gosvāmī literatures, and especially denoted by the *prayojana-tattva ācārya* of our Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *saṃpradāya*, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

In your thousands of lectures and your numerous books, you set forth succinctly and clearly the *sādhya* and the *sādhana* by which all *jīvas* in this age of Kali may attain the supremely magnanimous gift of “*unnata-ujjvala-rasa svabhakti śrīyam*” which Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had come to give and which had not been given since the previous *kalpa* of Lord Brahmā. As a great *ācārya*, to substantiate your presentation, you always presented the evidence of the *śāstras*, and thus on this point you repeatedly quoted the verse written by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī beginning with *anarpita carim carat*. To illuminate the infallible method of attaining this ultimate goal of life, you systematically presented all of the chief *upakhyānas* of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* in the conversations of Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in His teachings to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, in the Ratha-yātrā festival and in numerous other sections.

As the perfect transcendental professor, you painstakingly and progressively educated the devotees in the method of attaining this great and ultimate goal by explaining that one cannot artificially leap to this elevated level; it must be attained sequentially in increments by passing through the preliminary stages beginning with *śraddhā*. To inform all of your listeners in detail about the methodology of executing the process of pure unalloyed *bhakti*, in every one of the assemblies in attendance at your *hari-kathā* festivals, you would not fail to quote the definition of *uttamā-bhakti* presented in the verse of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī from *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, beginning with the words *anyābhilāṣitā-*
śūnyam. You would then proceed to carefully explain the meaning of every word so that there would be no confusion regarding what constitutes actual *bhakti* and what is only semblance or imitation.

You were the very embodiment of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the *bhakta-bhāgavat*, and therefore, all of your presentations in your lectures were based upon this *amala-pramāṇa*, spotless evidence. You would present and discuss all of the prominent *upākhyānas*, beginning from the sages in the forest of Naimiśāranya, to Nārada and Vyāsa, to Dhruva, and to Prahlāda. You stressed how no one can become a pure devotee without properly following the pure *bhakti* of Prahlāda Mahārāja. And progressing forward through the nine cantos step by step, you would lead your audiences to understand and appreciate the *bhakti* of Ambarīṣa Mahārāja, Bhārata Mahārāja, Citraketu Mahārāja, Śrī Hanumānji, the Pāṇḍavas and Śrī Uddhava. Then finally, and without fail, you would expertly lead everyone to the Tenth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, giving the entire audience a taste of the sublime mellows of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s eternal pastimes as they radiated with utmost sublimity from your *prema*-filled heart. This is your transcendental trademark! No one before you had preached on a world scale in this way, sprinkling the nectar of *vraja-kathā* and inundating everyone’s heart with the transcendental sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s Vṛndāvana *līlās*.

You toured the world for fifteen years, and during this time you presented all the essential teachings of the Gauḍīya *ācārya*’s literatures from *Upadeśāmṛta* to *Mādburya-kādambini*, from *Dāmodarāṣṭakam* to *Bhajana-rabasya*, from *Jaiavādharma* to *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*, from *Venu-gīta* to *Gopī-gīta*, from *Prema-vivarta* to *Camatkara-candrikā*, from *Rāya Rāmānanda Samvāda* to *Vilāpa-kusumāñjali*. Throughout all the lecture series you delivered on these invaluable literatures, you continually stressed the superiority of the *gopīs’ prema* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, finally culminating in the pinnacle of *mahābhāva prema* expressed by Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in *Śrī Bhramara-gīta*. Thus you opened up the treasure chest of *rasika* literatures and commentaries composed by the previous *ācāryas* and invited all to glimpse the contents.



Your glorious preaching mission followed the command of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda and you fulfilled his desire by composing and presenting the authorized commentaries of the essential parts of the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, as He had instructed in his article entitled, “Raising the Divine Temple of the Bhāgavat, Unfolding the Ultimate Conception of Parakīya”,

“A precise, written explanation of the Tenth Canto of the *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* grounded in profound and thorough deliberation is indispensable. Indeed, such a composition, arranged in congruence with the *rūpānuga* Gauḍīya conception (the conception of Śrī Caitanyadeva’s most distinguished apostles headed by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī), elucidating the Tenth Canto’s chapters such as *Rāsa-pañcādhāya*, *Bhramara-gīta* and *Gopī-gīta*, must be set forth without fail. The world is in want of actual beauty, or *rūpa*, the conceptions propounded by Śrī Rūpa, for currently only *ku-rūpa* abounds, misshapen conceptions that are opposed to his. In order to broadcast their cleverness and prematurely profess their own elevated status, the *sahajīyās* recklessly amuse themselves by dallying with these lofty branches of the Tenth Canto. Abolishing their misguided interpretations is requisite, as is composing the actual commentaries on *Brhamara-gīta*, *Gopī-gīta* and the rest.”¹

In pursuance of this order, you presented the authorized and actual versions of the *Venu-gīta* and *Rāsa-pañcādhāyā* in which *Gopī-gīta* and other songs of the *gopīs* are contained. You have proven that you are the supreme *rasācārya* by presenting these literatures, for without genuine and complete realization of these elevated subjects, it is not possible to present these texts.

In submission to and complete *anugatya* of our effulgent *ācārya*, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, who protected our line at the time when it was being threatened by the ignorant views of the *smārtas* who denied and opposed the conception of *parakīya-rasa*, you fearlessly and confidently followed his example and protected the Gauḍīya *sampradāya* by presenting the literatures of our Gauḍīya *ācāryas* to the modern day audience, thus preserving these conceptions for all future generations.

Your life’s example bore witness to your inestimably elevated realizations, for you not only preached these supreme truths unceasingly, but your daily personal practice of *rūpānuga-bhajana* and twenty-four hour absorption without gap for decades as witnessed by all, proved that you had entered the highest levels of *rāgānuga-bhajana* and

had attained the requisite realizations of *vraja-rasa bhāva*. Only the blindest and most ignorant of fools failed to see your elevated position. You exemplified the position of the topmost *uttama-mahā-bhāgavata* by Your elevated *bhajana*, visible for all to see.

I was fortunate to observe and experience hundreds of times while attending your lectures how you would so expertly transport the whole audience of devotees into sublime states of spiritual bliss, enabling all of us to gain a glimpse of the sweet nectar of *vraja-prema*, which you poured out from your heart. Responding to your flow of nectar, our hearts would melt and tears would spontaneously fill our eyes as you would bathe us with your transcendental moods and realizations. I always became stunned in amazement at how you could deliver such a message of sweetness with such tactfulness, such power, such personalism, such grace and ever conscious of your audience, their level, their capacity, their *adbikāra*, their response to your vibration. You always knew perfectly how to appropriately impress upon your audience the mellow of *vraja-bhakti*, and to attract all to follow the process of *sādhana* that would enable them to one day become immersed in these moods.

And to further this experience, you invited all to follow you back to the holy *dhāma* and attain the highest benefit by attending your celebrations of Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*, Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma *parikramā*, and Śrī Jagannātha Puri-dhāma *parikramā* festivals and *parikramās*. In all of these three *dhāmas* you personally led the thousands of fortunate pilgrims as you traversed the *līlā-sthalīs* of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govindadeva and Their eternal associates, unceasingly glorifying Their eternal *prema* filled *līlās*. To facilitate all the Vaiṣṇavas, you mercifully erected and established exquisitely beautiful temples in Vṛndāvana and Govardhana, in the most intimate places of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārī-jiu near Imli-tāla and Manasi-gaṅgā, giving opportunity to all aspiring *sādhakas* in the future to perform *vraja-bhajana* in the most powerful transcendental places in the universe.

Thus, through such infusion of ecstatic vibrations, you inspired all to chant and dance in the ecstasy of *gaura-kīrtana*, to enact the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the form of dramas, to manifest your internal moods in transcendental art, inspired directly by you, and to preach the world over following in your footsteps.

Therefore, in the modern era you have manifested as the Vaiṣṇava Sarvabhauma of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*, the most prominent preacher in the line of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda since the illustrious *ācārya* Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda preached and established the Kṛṣṇa-consciousness movement throughout the world.

¹ *Rays of The Harmonist*; No. 17, 2007 and No. 23, 2011

Finally in Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, the place of the supreme magnanimity, in the hidden Govardhana, you established the Śrī Keśavajī Gaudīya Maṭha, where countless devotees will find shelter in the shade of Śrī Śrī Nitāi Gaurāṅga's merciful lotus feet. There, at this place, you have now entered *samādhi*, returning to the eternal pastimes of Śrī Yugala-kiṣora in Śrī Vṛndāvana on the banks of the Yamunā.

Obe Vaiṣṇava Thākura! *Obe* Patita-pāvana Śrīla Gurudeva! O you who brought the highest sweetness of the supreme Lord of all sweetness to the whole world! You have magnificently served your Lordships and your worshipable masters! You have given the mercy of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and the *rūpānuga ācāryas* to the world! You have implanted in the hearts of millions the desire to one day attain the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Gaurāṅga, Rādhā-Govinda in the transcendental Vraja-dhāma! Now you have again gone to join the association of your Svāmīnī as She serves the beloved of Her very life, *prāṇa-priyatama*, Śrī Śyāmasundara.

I know that you have only left this physical manifestation – you have not left in reality. You are perfectly and transcendently present eternally, and your beautiful presence can be perceived and experienced through full absorption in your *vāñi* with heart and soul. I beg you to allow me to submit this prayer at Your divine lotus feet: “O beloved friend of my heart! O life and soul of this lowly beggar! O my *parama-arādhya* Śrīla Gurudeva! Although I am most wretched and unqualified, devoid of *bhakti-adhikāra*, and infested with offences, please continue to engage this worthless soul in the service of your supremely radiant lotus feet, and bless me that one day I will again attain Your association. There in the *nikuñjas* of Vraja where you eternally reside, I beg that you will engage me in assisting you as you serve the Supreme Youthful Couple of Vraja, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava.”

Vaiṣṇava kṛpā-leśa prārthī,
Śrī Bhaktivedānta Padmanābha

Dear Śrīla Gurudeva



Before beginning, I beg to offer my humble, heartfelt obeisance unto the lotus feet of my *dikṣā-guru*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupada paramahaṁsa aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda. I humbly offer the same heartfelt obeisance unto you, my *śiksā* and *sannyāsa-guru*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupada paramahaṁsa aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

On the auspicious day of your divine appearance, I wish to offer to you some words of appreciation, although I am unworthy to do so. This is especially difficult because it is the first time that we have observed this day since your departure from our vision in this world.

The appearance day of the Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* is referred to as *vyāsa-pūjā*. This is because on that day, the devotee honours his own *guru* as a representative of Śrī Vyāsadeva, the author of *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*. You have stated that real *vyāsa-pūjā* means to hear the confidential realities and conclusive truths of *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, and to broadcast them in the form of *hari-kathā* in a way that is easy to understand by ordinary people. This process was accepted by the original disciple of Vedavyāsa, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, by our *ādi-guru* Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and by all subsequent *ācāryas* in our *rūpānuga guru-varga*.

You have manifested the *hari-kathā* of *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam* in numerous ways. You travelled tirelessly in India and around the world for over sixty years to preach this message. You have also dedicated yourself to

publishing translations of, and commentaries on, the principal literatures of our Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*. Moreover, you have trained and educated so many disciples in the proper understanding and presentation of Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta*, and now these devotees – men, women, young and old – are traveling around the world, under your guidance, to teach these same truths.

However, if I think of one very special way in which you have performed *vyāsa-pūjā* to your beloved *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, it would be the revelation of the true nature of Śrī Vraja-mandala *parikramā*. Both Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu visited Śrī Vṛndavāna-dhāma and became absorbed in divine love while visiting the extraordinary pastime places of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His eternal associates. Afterwards, the followers of Mahāprabhu, headed by Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmīs, revealed to the world the transcendental nature of Śrī Vṛndāvana and the various pastimes that took place within her twelve forests.

One of their principal followers, Śrī Narottama dāsa Thākura, has prayed:

*bbramiba dvādaśa vane, rasa-keli ye ye sthāne,
premāveśe gadāgadī diyā
sudbāiba jane jane, vrajavāśī-gaṇa-sthāne,
nivediba caraṇe dhariyā*

Prārthana (Song 27)



© Śāradā dāsi

I shall wander through the twelve forests of Vṛndāvana, where Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed His pastimes full of *rasa*, and roll on the ground, overwhelmed by *prema*. I shall enquire about the pastimes that took place in each location from all the *Vrajavāsīs*, reverently offering them prayers and holding their lotus feet.

In more recent times, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, acting under the direction of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, established Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* and explained its confidential meanings. His eternal *parikara* and dear disciple, your *gurudeva* Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, continued this *sevā*. Under his tutelage and loving guidance, you have brought these special teachings to the entire world.

In service to your *guru*, you have personally led the *parikramā* for fifty years. By your unparalleled efforts, you have illuminated the inner meaning and intent of Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* and the manner and mood in which one should perform this most blessed activity. You have done this by speaking tirelessly and joyfully thousands of times at innumerable transcendental sites, relishing the pastimes

that take place there and sharing that joy with all of your fortunate listeners. You have preserved these teachings in your definitive guidebook, *Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala Parikramā*, as well as in your unique magazine known as *Rays of the Harmonist*. This magazine, your tribute to *The Harmonist* of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, presents the writings of prominent *mahā-bhāgavata* teachers in our *rūpānuga guruvarga*, including many articles that reveal the rich purpose and traditions of Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*.

Why do we perform this *parikramā* of Vṛndāvana, hearing Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes while visiting His eternal home? In the *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmrta*, it is described that after the *nava-vṛndāvana* pastime, Nārada received a special boon from Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The boon was that anyone who hears of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beautiful pastimes, while visiting those pastimes places in Vraja, will receive *prema* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

Śrīla Gurudeva; you have taken us to the holy *līlā-sthālīs* of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa to hear your enchanting *hari-kathā*. By attentively hearing of the love of the *vrajavāsīs* for Kṛṣṇa, greed is stimulated in our hearts to have this kind of love as well. Thus we pray fervently to the sacred dust of each place and to the lotus feet of the *vrajavāsīs*. What do we pray for? We pray that we may attain the most confidential and exalted service as *pālya-dāsīs* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, assisting Her under the direction of Her most dear Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī. I believe that by performing Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*, you are teaching this to the entire world.

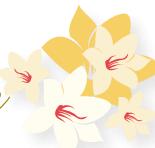
Our performance of Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā* will henceforward take on an especially poignant quality. Now that you have entered *nitya-līlā*, every place that we visit will be marked by remembrance of your endearing presence, the deep realizations that you shared with us, and the special inspiration that was awakened in our hearts by your elegant descriptions of the eternal pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Their eternal associates. You are one of those beloved associates. By immersing ourselves in thoughts of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Yugala, we will always think of you, an intimate in the circle of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and her friends. And by remembering you in separation, we will one day come to understand the true meaning of divine love and will be allowed to join you in everlasting loving service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

My dearest Śrīla Gurudeva, I cannot repay you for this gift. I can only promise that as I have heard and understood something of this glorious offering, which you have made to your divine master, that I will also dedicate myself to continuing this same service to you during my lifetime.

Your insignificant servant,
Śrī Bhaktivedānta Vaikhanas

Vyāsa-pūjā Homage

TO ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYĀNA
GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA



First of all let me offer my most humble obeisances at the lotus feet of my *dīkṣā-guru*, *nitya-līlā-pravīṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* *aṣṭottara-sāta* Śrī Śrīmad A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda.

Then let me offer my most humble obeisances at the lotus feet of my *śikṣā* and *sannyāsa-guru*, *nitya-līlā-pravīṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* *aṣṭottara-sāta* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura once gave a description of the establishment of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism through a most wonderful analogy. He explained that the *prema-bhakti* given by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has been established in the form of a *mandira*. The foundation of the *mandira* was constructed by Ādi Śaṅkarācārya by demolishing Buddhism and re-establishing Vedic *dharma*. The construction of the *mandira* itself was done by Rāmānujācārya and Madhvācārya by establishing the superiority of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* over monism. He then explained that it was Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu himself who came and installed the deity of *prema* in the *mandira* for all to take *darśana*.

I have extended this analogy by adding the following developments: it was Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda who brought all the people of the whole world to take *darśana* of that deity through the global establishment of Mahāprabhu's mission and through the copious distribution of his books; and it was Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja who explained to the people who came to take *darśana* in the *mandira*, the many deep hidden truths in those books and the *prayojana-tattva* of that deity of *prema*.

Travelling extensively throughout the world, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has single handedly revealed the ultimate conceptions of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta* for the benefit of all fallen conditioned souls, especially those already practising Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism but who were unable to access these truths due to lack of genuine *sādhu-saṅga*. He came at a time when such people were lost and meandering in a mire of misconceptions and false ideologies such as *r̥tvik* and *prabhupāda-anugas*, as well as institutional dogmatism, fallen *gurus* and so on. He also saved us from the many misconceptions we had about our Śrīla Prabhupāda's teachings on the actual practice and goal of *bhakti*.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's unparalleled exposition of the depth and meaning of Śrīla Prabhupāda's *pranāma-mantra*, and his producing an entire book on the

subject, demonstrates both his unmatched realization of the subject matter and his deep devotion to Śrīla Prabhupāda and his mission. This, in and of itself, has been the most significant contribution to understanding the mission of Śrīla Prabhupāda that has ever been given by any of his disciples or followers.

In his clear and unambiguous explanation of the verse *anyābilāṣitā-śūnyam*, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has established the 'gold standard' definition of pure *bhakti* for the benefit of the entire world. He has clearly delineated that the actual process for attaining the path of *rāgānuga-bhakti* is *sādhu-saṅga*, and he has given the proper conceptions of *bhāva* and *prema* and how they are similarly attained only through *sādhu-saṅga*. He has revealed the depth of what it actually means to be a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava, and the difference between the *bhakti* of other Vaiṣṇava *śampradāyas* and the *bhakti-rasa* of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. By so doing, he has cleared the path of all misconceptions so that we can attain the highest goal. His relentless and clear explanations of the paramount importance of *sādhu-saṅga* as the only method to obtain the lofty peaks of pure unalloyed devotional service and the moods of the inhabitants of Vraja are unmatched in modern times.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has given the most compassionate and insightful descriptions of the principles described in the verse *trnād api sunīcena*. He has elaborately delineated the proper development of the Vaiṣṇava moods of humility, tolerance, empathy and compassion for others, and he has shown in word and deed how these spiritual emotions are the ornaments of a surrendered disciple and are a prerequisite for actually receiving the gifts of the *sādhu*. Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's extraordinary ability to perform spiritual surgery on the hearts of his disciples and followers, to bring them to this platform, has been the key to his success and the cause of eliciting such single minded devotion from his followers.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja's biography of his *gurupāda-padma* Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, has introduced to the world one of the dear-most servants of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. Without understanding his contributions to the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *śampradāya*, our understanding of our Śrīla Prabhupāda and Śrīla Gurudeva are incomplete. In particular, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's commentary on Śrīla Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja's *Rādhā-Vinoda-Vihārī Tattvāṣṭakam*, one of the

crown jewels of Vaiṣṇava poetry, has given us a deep insight into the special place of honour that Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja holds in the annals of Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavism.

The fine, finer and finest points of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's Gaudīya Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta* in relation to *prayojana-tattva* have been brilliantly elucidated by Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja in the most succinct and sublime manner. This knowledge has been made accessible to the entire world through the translations, commentaries and lectures presented in his books. His extraordinary talent in describing the moods of the inhabitants of Vraja has been so lovingly presented in such an illuminating manner that it touches the core of everyone's heart, from the neophyte to the *paramahaṁsa*. By benevolently dispensing these moods in such a tasteful manner, he has made the essence of *vraja-bhakti-rasa* accessible, to be relished by all.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja has heroically revealed, and preserved in his writings, the most secret treasure of Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavism which is known as *rādhā-dāsyam, bhava-ullāsa-rati*. Explaining this concept in his lectures on *Rāya Rāmānanda Samvād*, he describes how the object of the *mañjarīs'* permanent ecstatic emotions (*sthayī-bhāva*) is actually Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and that Śrī Kṛṣṇa becomes the object of their transitory emotions (*sañcāri-bhāva*). These temporary emotions, in turn, serve to nourish their *subṛd-rati* for Śrīmatī Rādhikā. I think that nowhere in the

writings of the Gosvāmīs will we find this concept more lucidly and clearly explained.

This mood of the *mañjarīs*, delivered through the agency of *prema-nāma-saṅkirtana*, is the unique contribution of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and has not been given since the previous day of Brahmajī. Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has shown the world that this mood is the only aim and object for all *rūpānugas*.

The above mentioned contributions of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja have clearly established him as the *prayojana-ācārya* and the *vaiṣṇava-sārvabhauma* of the modern day worldwide Vaiṣṇava Community. Only those souls who are non-envious can recognize that these divine ornaments decorate His transcendental personality.

If I had a million mouths, speaking twenty-four hours a day, three hundred and sixty-five days a year, for hundreds of years, I could not properly glorify the unlimited qualities and contributions of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. He personally pulled me out of the dark well of material life and forced me to accept the nectar of *bhakti-rasa* laced with renunciation. I am forever grateful to him for his unlimited mercy upon this fallen conditioned soul, and I pray that I may in some way always remain sheltered by his lotus feet.

*vāñchā-kalpa-tarubyāś ca kṛpā-sindhubhyā eva ca
patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namah*

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Bhāgavata



Vyāsa-pūjā Offering

*namah om viṣṇu-pādāya rādhikāya-priyātmane
śrī-śrīmad-bhakti-vedānta nārāyaṇa iti nāmine
śrī-kṛṣṇa-līlā-kathane sudakṣanī
audārya-mādhurya gunaiś ca yuktāṁ
varaṁ varenyāṁ puruṣāṁ mahāntam
nārāyaṇāṁ tvaṁ śirasā namāmi*

I am offering my body, mind, words and aspirations at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who is very very dear to the supreme Goddess of divine ecstasy incarnate, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, as her very dear maid-servant, directing all who come to him to accept Her lotus feet as their most worshipful objects in life. He is especially dear to the disciples of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, particularly my *dikṣā-guru* *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa* *om viṣṇupāda* *aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, as witnessed by my

guru's personal request to kindly place his body in *samādhi* in the land of Vṛndāvana, Vraja, and to help his disciples in their development of *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

Śrīla Gurudeva's affection and love was apparent in the West from the day he arrived, bringing about an upsurge in faith and dedication to the principles of *bhakti*. Coincidentally, as we were all lamenting the sad departure of Śrīla Gaura Govinda Mahārāja from our ranks, Śrīla Gurudeva came to us, reiterating the very same *siddhānta* regarding *guru-tattva, jīva-tattva, rasa-tattva* and *rādhā-tattva*, to the great delight of the faithful. As our *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Gurudeva was able to reconcile all the doubts and harmonize the discrepancies that had arisen amongst the rank and file devotees. Love was enhanced and embellished with each word and deed of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's sovereign soldier, our dear Śrīla Gurudeva, who circled the globe so many times that the airline pilots could have boasted of their *sukṛti*.

In the course of his world-wide preaching there were new revelations and proclamations regarding Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta* that formed just a part of Śrīla Gurudeva's 'heartly blessings'. Lo, the manifest devotees came to his feet like thirsty *cakora* birds hankering for drops of mercy, which when showered upon them, never failed to satisfy. Sceptics and doubters who had even a faint trace of śraddhā were carried aloft on waves of *prema-bhakti* as the moods of Vṛndāvana's Vrajavāsīs penetrated the ether in Śrīla Gurudeva's *hari-kathā*. If bliss had a location on Earth it was in the camp of Śrīla Gurudeva.

It was the same old wine but in a new bottle. *Kṛṣṇa-kathā* was given new life and that elixir of love caused ripples

of bliss all around. Oh, for the mercy of one so pure and perfect! I bow my head in the dust of his lotus feet and pray for a drop of *guru-krpā* so I may become actually qualified to render even the remotest service to the lotus feet of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. I – B. V. Avadhūta – ask the controllers of time and space to keep such a kind and compassionate personality always in our midst.

tridañḍināṁ bhakta-śiromāṇī ca
śrī-kṛṣṇa-padābja-dhṛtaika-hṛdi
caitanya-lilāṁṛta-sāra sāram
nārāyaṇāṁ tvāṁ satatāṁ prapadye

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Avadhūta

His Heartly Blessings



I offer my *dañḍavat pranāmas lākhas*
and *lākhas* of times at the lotus feet of
my initiating spiritual master *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata*
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda, and the same at the lotus feet of my *śikṣā* and *sannyāsa-guru nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata*
Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Praying for their mercy I offer this meagre attempt at glorification.

Tasting moods of His beloved
With Her lustre golden coloured

Only once in Brahmā's day
Kṛṣṇa comes with Holy Name

Imbued with *prema* so rare
And given freely everywhere

Through *bhagavat-paramparā* system
Gaura revealed His *mano'bhiṣṭam*

Empowering Śrī Rūpa's line
Mission handed down through time

Then a period of darkness came
Vaiṣṇavas held in much disdain

Who would come to set things right?
Seventh Gosvāmī had the might

To carry on what he'd begun
He sent his "ray of Viṣṇu" son

Who gathered 'round him many moons
Bhakti current saved from ruins

Soon delivered far and wide
Smashing Kali's foolish pride

In every nation of the world
Gaurāṅga's banner was unfurled

Svāmī A. C. Bhaktivedānta
Fulfilled desire of Śrī Siddhānta

Being empowered with Nitāi's *śakti*
He brought untouchables to *bhakti*

(Our) Prabhupāda's work had only started
Miracle done... then he departed

But he'd called his dear-most friend
Requesting him his hand to lend

"There just was not sufficient time
To fully train them in our line

Don't let them be diverted
Kindly help them," he asserted

Mission transferred heart to heart
Soon the friend would do his part

Twenty years without our master
Gurus falling – near disaster

Many *jīvas* led astray
Time for "friend" to save the day

O Gurudeva:
Had you not appeared before us
with your "rain of mercy"
shower
Who else would have cared enough
to end our darkest hour

Just as your Svāmījī traversed the
planet Earth
You travelled far and wide and gave
our creepers renewed birth

You touched countless crying
hearts by your affectionate
loving dealings
Your every gesture steeped in
prema aroused our *bhakti*
feelings

You explained true *gaura-vāñjī* as
well as what is *rūpānuga*
Exposing deviant teachings that
arise in Kali-yuga

Just like "Nṛsiṁha *guru*", in whose
lineage you've come
Sahajiyās and bogus *bābājīs* upon
seeing you they'd run

Had you not appeared before us
responding to "hearts weeping"

* * *

Who would tell the secret truths the
Bhāgavatam was keeping
The works of the Gosvāmīs would be
lost in course of time
But you tirelessly gave your life and
soul to preserve Śrī Rūpa's line

Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava you
revealed in all his glory
How would all the world have known
had you not told his story

Our master's heart's desire for us
beyond his jungle clearing
You mercifully revealed to all who
made the choice of hearing

You clarified our *sādhyā*, in our
hearts this goal we'll keep
But you cautioned "stay in *anugyatā* –
step by step – don't leap"

Bringing countless souls so mercifully
to Gaura and Kṛṣṇa's *dhāmas*
You filled their hearts with *saṁskāras*
of Their many *līlā-sthānas*

With artists as your instrument Śrī
Sevā-kuñja revealed

Where Kṛṣṇa serves Śrī Rādhā and
where at Her feet He kneels

In trying to chant your glories I feel
foolish and pretentious
For I am just a fallen soul and your
glorious deeds are endless

One day the world will come to know
the wondrous gifts you gave
And throngs of grateful souls will weep
and chant "Jaya Gurudeva!"

* * *

At this very moment
The worst news has been imparted
In entering *nitya-līlā*,
From our vision you've departed

I had written many verses
Requesting you to stay
But you're Rādhā's *pālya-dāsī*
And She's called you back today

Our creepers still need tending
There were many books to write
And now we have to carry on
It seems like darkest night

(But) you told us to do *bhajana*
And prepared us from the start
You said you'll never leave us
Please, please, live within my heart

For though you've trained your preachers
Very wonderfully it's true
Dear Gurudeva, there's no one
Who can take the place of you

From piles of ashes – a fragrant flowers
This is surely in your power

You change rocks to sparkling jewels
Won't you please transform this fool?

Impossible to possible – you can do
Make me yours please – through and
through

Your fallen
Śrī Bhaktivedānta Niṣkiñcana

*vāñchā-kalpa tarubyaś ca
kṛpā sindhubhya eva ca
patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo
vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namah*

Offering to Śrī Guru

I first offer my most heartfelt obeisances unto the lotus feet of my beloved *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda astottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and the same to my beloved *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda astottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda. And to all the *tridandī sannyāsīs*, Vaiṣṇavas and Vaiṣṇavīs, I offer my *danḍavat-praṇāmas*.

Any attempt to glorify *śrī guru* from a conditioned place is bound to be inadequate, due to *śrī guru*'s most extraordinary, exalted position. He is in fact, totally non-different from Bhagavān and is his direct potency, *sākṣād-dharitvena*. Nevertheless, for Gurudeva's pleasure, as well as for our own purification, we will make a humble attempt.

Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, even amongst *gurus* and *ācāryas*, is considered to be

prominent. Why? Because the principle teachings needed to be injected into this world today, and the very heart of Mahāprabhu's reasons for appearing – *rāga-mārga bhakti loke karite pracāraṇa*, the propagation of *rāga-mārga*, spontaneous devotion – have been carefully and consistently presented by Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja for the pleasure of all sincere souls.

Because Śrīla Gurudeva's deep and profound personal *bhajana* is empowered by the mercy of his *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, he is qualified to openly establish, in accordance with scriptural conclusions, this most esoteric topic of *rāga-mārga* within the hearts of his listeners.

In the introduction to his commentary (*ānanda-varddhini vyākhyā*) on *Śrī Veṇu-gīta*, Śrīla Gurudeva boldly declares that those ignorant, camel like persons who imagine that

one must first become freed from the contaminating disease of lust in order to be qualified to hear the topics of *rāsa-līlā* are indeed of ‘an atheistic mentality’. This statement is supported by many verses from *śāstra*, in particular *vikṛiḍitam vraja-vadhūbbhir idam ca viṣṇoḥ* (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.33.36), wherein Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī is clearly indicating that first one hears with faith these sweetest, love laden pastimes of Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs* in Vṛndāvana, then one explains them to others, *varṇayed yah*, and that by this process of hearing (*śravaṇam*) and explaining (*kīrtanam*), the jewel of *bhaktiṁ parāṁ bhagavati*, supreme *prema*, will manifest in the heart, and after that, concomitantly the disease of lust will quickly fade away.

Only by first hearing the affectionate, sweet pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa can the jīvas desire *vraja-prema*, becoming fully attracted to the path of *rāgānugā-bhakti*, and as a consequence become purified of all their material lust. Without explicitly understanding this sequence the fallen *jīvas* are unable to progress to the path of spontaneous attraction (*rāga-mārga*) or attain *vraja-prema*.

What greater or more powerful knowledge can we receive? Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has dedicated his entire life and teachings to inject this one point in order to establish the *jīvas* on this *rāgānuga* path.

Others in our line have not so prominently endeavoured to establish this essential truth; they have, however, prepared the ground by ‘cutting the jungles of Māyāvāda’. Śrī Śrīmad Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has stepped well beyond this conformity; empowered by his own realization of these truths, and at a cost of much criticism from other communities, he has constantly bestowed upon us descriptions of this highest jewel of *śrī vraja-prema*.

The aspiring *sādhakas* feel nothing but an overwhelming mood of gratitude and affection for such an exceptional, saintly personality as this.

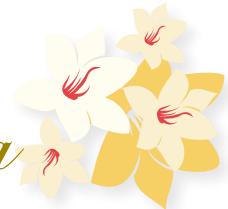
Hare Kṛṣṇa

*vāñchā-kalpa-tarubyāś ca kṛpā-sindhubhyā eva ca
patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ*

Insignificant
Śrī Bhaktivedānta Tridāṇḍī

All Glories to Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga

The Contribution of Śrīla Gurudeva



First of all I offer my *danḍavat-praṇāmas* millions of times at the lotus feet of my *dīksā guru*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa omi viṣṇupāda* 108 Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Jīvana Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

*devāṁ nārāyaṇāṁ vande vṛndāvana-nivāśinam
ananta guna bhūṣitā koti vātsalya rūpiṇam*

I offer my *prāṇāmas* to our Śrīla Gurudeva, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, whose eternal residence is Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma, who is adorned with the jewels of thousands and thousands of saintly qualities, and who, as the deity of *vātsalya* is melting with unlimited affection for everyone.

*gaura kṛpā vigrabhāya gaurāṅgasya priyatmane
tāṁ rūpāṁ satatāṁ vande matjīvanasya jīvanam*

I forever offer my *prāṇāmas* to that Śrīla Gurudeva who is the very embodiment of the mercy of Śrī Gaura (and also of Gaurī, Śrī Rādhā), who is the most dearly beloved of Śrī Gaurāṅga (and also of Gaurāṅgī, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī), the life of who’s life is Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and who is verily the life of my own life.

*virabena sadā yāce tava pada padmeṣu me
āśrayā caraṇe dehī gurudeva kṛpāmayam*

O most compassionate Gurudeva! Crying in separation from you, I am always praying to your lotus feet to please give me shelter.

The contribution of Śrīla Gurudeva is unforgettable. Even if an extremely qualified person tries to describe his glories using the entire earth as paper, the seven oceans as ink, and Mount Meru as a pen, he would still be unable to completely describe his glories. How, then, will it be possible for an unqualified person such as me? Nevertheless, to make my own life successful I am trying to recall some of his glories.

Śrīla Gurudeva is perfectly situated in the bona fide succession of our *rūpānuga guru-varga*. With such extraordinary grace and brilliance, he would keep the flag of the glories of our Gauḍīya line – Śrī Rūpa, Sanātana, Raghunātha, Śrīla Jīva, Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa and others – perpetually flying. From the very first day of

my association with Śrīla Gurudeva I have felt his glance ever upon me – always laden with love and affection and coupled with his merciful chastisement. Simply his glance alone reveals the glories of *guru-tattva*, by which medium we are blessed with the realization of *bhakti-tattva*, *prema-tattva*, *rasa-tattva* and everything else. There is another speciality of Śrīla Gurudeva's glance, which is that somehow or other, without difficulty or delay, it would bestow his own transcendental moods upon whomever it was directed. That was one of the astonishing features of his capacity to shower mercy. Another hallmark of his was that in bestowing his mercy, he never discriminated between his own disciples and the disciples of others. Upon those who gave him even a drop of affection, he would pour the ocean of his *prema*.

The method of worship of those following our *śrī rūpānuga guru-varga* is *tad-tad-bhāva-iccha-mayī-parakīya-bhāva*, whereby the desire for the happiness of their own meeting with Śrī Kṛṣṇa is abandoned. Their only goal is happiness in the happiness of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and unhappiness in Her distress. They never pray for anything other than service to the lotus feet of Viṣabhānu-nandinī.

*abbīra-pallī-pati-putra-kāntā-dāsyābhilāṣāti-balāśva-vāraḥ
śrī-rūpa-cintāmaṇi-sapti-saṁsthō mat-svānta-durdānta-
hayecchur āstām*

Śrī Stavāvalī (Abhiṣṭa-sūcanam 1)

May the rider of my strong desire for the service of the beloved of the son of the King of Vraja mount the great horse of the manifold gemlike conceptions of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and thus subdue my untamed mind.

*manamanaso 'bbilāṣaḥ śrī rūpa cintā savalitah
san śrī rādhikā dāsyā tiṣṭhatu iti bhāvaḥ*

My mind desires to be absorbed in the flow of the conceptions of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, thus remaining constantly situated in the service of the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

*prabhu lokanāth kabe saṅga laiyā jābe
śrī rūpera pāda-pada me more samarpibe
bena ki haibe mora narma sakhi-gaṇe
anugata narottame karibe sāsane*

When will my spiritual master Śrī Lokanātha Gosvāmī take me with him and offer me completely at the lotus feet of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. When will that day come when I will become a loyal *priya-narma-sakhī* (*mañjari*), and the dear *sakhīs* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā will reprimand (*sāsana*) this *anugata* Narottama?

Śrī Prārthanā

By this prayer it becomes evident that to attain the service of Śrīmatī Rādhikā under the guidance of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, the mercy of *śrī gurudeva* is imperative.

In this regard we see Śrī Kṛṣṇa explaining to Uddhava,

*marttyo yadā tyakta samastakarma
niveditātmā vicikirṣito me
tadāmr̥tattvam̄ prati-pādma-māno
mayātmā-bhūyāya ca kalpate vai*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.29.34)

It is only when one attains the mercy of My supremely independent devotee, that a person can abandon all prescribed Vedic duties (*karma*), and offer himself fully to Me. It is then that I make him superior to all – *yogis*, *karmīs* and *jñānīs* – and offer such surrendered souls a completely spiritual body. By such a body, My devotees are able to taste the nectar of immortality.

Śrīla Gurudeva always remained perfectly situated under the guidance of Śrī Rūpa and Raghunātha Gosvāmī. This can be directly realized by observing all of his activities and endeavours, and how he has made the lives of both foreign and Indian devotees successful by very easily bestowing upon them the service moods of the *śrī rūpānuga* Gaudīya line (the service of Śrīmatī under the guidance of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī). In this regard it was the cherished desire of my initiating spiritual master *nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* *aṣṭottara-śata* Śrīla Bhakti Jīvana Janārdana Gosvāmī Mahārāja that he (Śrīla Bhaktividēnta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja) should fearlessly spread the teachings of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Raghunātha Gosvāmī throughout the entire world. That he has done so can be directly seen by everyone today, and this is further evidenced by the impassioned prayers that were constantly flowing from his lotus mouth:

*tavaivāsmi tavaivāsmi na jivāmi tvayā vinā
iti vijñāya rādhe tvam̄ naya mām̄ caraṇāntikam*

Śrī Vilāpa-kusumāñjali (96)

I am Yours! I am Yours! I cannot live without You! O Rādhā, please understand this and bring me to the service of Your lotus feet.

*hā devi! kāku-bhara-gadgadaiyā vācā
yāce nipatya bhuvi danḍavad-udbhāṭārtib
asya prasādam abudhasya janasya kṛtvā
gāndharvike! nija-gaṇe gananām̄ vidhebi*

Stava-mālā (Śrī Gāndharvā-samprārthanāṣṭakam, 2)

O Devī Gāndharvikā! Today, in utter desperation, I throw myself on the ground like a stick. Filled with

great distress, I implore You with a choked voice to be merciful to this fool and count me as one of Your own.

*kadācit kālindī-taṭa-vipina-saṅgīta-taralo
mudābhīrī-nārī-vadana-kamalāsvāda-madhupāḥ*

Śrī Jagannāthaṣṭakam
(chanted by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu)

Śrī Jagannātha-deva sometimes fervently plays His flute on the banks of the Yamunā River in Śrī Vṛndāvana; He is like a bumblebee that blissfully tastes the lotus faces of the *vraja-gopīs*.

By being perfectly aligned with the moods in these prayers, Śrīla Gurudeva would bring everyone to the

doorway of service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. And although by his mercy all have attained everything desirable, because I am bereft of sufficient pious credits I remain devoid of those moods which he came to give. Thus birth after birth my fervent prayer at his lotus feet is that I may be able to capture those moods that are present within his heart. Today, on the occasion of Śrīla Gurudeva's appearance, this fallen person offers countless humble obeisances at his lotus feet, and begs forgiveness for his offences.

Praying for the tiniest particle of the mercy of Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas

The humble servant of their servants (*dāsanudāsa*)

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Madhusūdana



All Glories to Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga

First of all I offer my unlimited *daṇḍavat-pranāmas* at the lotus feet of my *dikṣā-* and *sannyāsa-guru*, *nitya-lilā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda astotṭara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

On the auspicious occasion of the 90th appearance day of our beloved spiritual master, we have the opportunity to reflect on his glories, as well as to examine ourselves. What is the contribution that *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja has made to our *sampradāya*, and how has he impacted our lives?

The service of the *vraja-gopīs* is incomprehensible even to the personified Vedas. Uddhava expressed this in his prayers, *bhejur bhejur mukunda-padavīm śrutibhir vimṛgyām*. That most confidential form of devotion was revealed to the world by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, being empowered by the Lord, showed the souls of this world how to achieve it, and Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī defended these conclusions by composing the Sandarbhas.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura rescued the teachings of Mahāprabhu from the hands of the pseudo-*samparadāyas*, while his son, Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, created the foundation of a world-wide preaching movement, fulfilling the desires of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura by practical application of his vision. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja then took this model of his spiritual master and implemented it outside the shores of India.

Our *gurudeva* has taken the essence of all the previous *ācāryas'* teachings, and has thus spread the highest conclusions of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu throughout the

world on a most unprecedented scale. He has translated the books of the previous *ācāryas* into Hindi, the national language of India, and these books have been translated by his followers into all the main languages of the world. He has reinvigorated the *parikramā* of the Holy places by his steadfast performance of yearly circumambulations of Śrī Vṛndāvana, Śrī Navadvīpa and Śrī Kṣetra *dhāmas*. He has initiated tens of thousands of fortunate souls into the process of *hari-bhajana*, and has awarded *sannyāsa* to more than forty devotees, inspiring a huge wave of preaching around the planet. Temples and *sat-saṅgas* have been established from Tehran to Thailand, from Beijing to Brazil and from Fiji to France. Furthermore, he has established the pre-eminence of exclusive devotion to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa over and above any other process of *bhakti*.

Of course Śrīla Gurudeva's most essential contribution is the realizations which he transmits into the hearts of his disciples by imparting the conclusions of our Śrī Brahmā-Mādhava-Gaudīya *sampradāya*. By his unlimited affection and ideal example, he inspires all surrendered souls to dedicate themselves to the path of pure *bhakti*; in fact all of the disciple's sincere aspirations are actually inspired by Śrīla Gurudeva.

O Śrīla Gurudeva, in your separation we are realizing a little of your glories. The absorption experienced in separation is greater than the absorption felt in meeting; it is like nectar and poison combined. I am begging from you only one benediction, that your lotus feet remain ever imprinted in the core of my heart.

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Dāmodara

My Dear Śrīla Gurudeva



Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Brahmajī corrected his four sons, who were wayward impersonalists, through the intervention of Harṣa-Bhagavān (the swan incarnation of the Lord). Similarly, Śrīla Svāmī Bhaktivedānta Mahārāja is now correcting innumerable misguided lost souls through your wonderful guidance.

Yamunācārya's three fingers were closed when he returned to Vaikuṇṭha, representing his three unfulfilled desires. Śrīla Rāmānujācārya promised to fulfil those desires and the fingers opened. You promised to preach the ten principles of *daśa-mūla-tattva* all over the world and Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja was overjoyed, blessing you by placing both his hands upon your head.

On a dark night, Nimbāditya Ācārya showed the sun behind a neem tree to the Jain *sannyāsī*; you are similarly showing the effulgent lotus feet of Lord Nityānanda to innumerable blind souls.

Madhvācārya stilled the high waves in the ocean just by his stern glance and made it appear like a pond. Similarly, just by your sidelong glance you have stilled the waves of *sahajiyāism*.

Akṣobhya Tīrtha drew the picture of Lord Nṛsiṁha on the rock by using the holy charcoal from a fire sacrifice, and it became a deity overnight; you also decided to visit the west in 1996 and the whole world became Vṛndāvana overnight.

Jayatīrtha, a combined incarnation of Ananta-śeṣa and the transcendental ox that pulled Madhvācārya's book-cart, wrote commentaries on most of Śrīla Madhvācārya's great works. Similarly, you also rendered menial service to Parama-gurudeva and his Godbrothers and then started writing commentaries on the transcendental literatures of previous ācāryas.

Rāmānujācārya simultaneously answered the questions asked by one thousand Jain scholars by manifesting his form as thousand-hooded Ananta-śeṣa. Similarly, you also simultaneously answer the doubts raised by hundreds of scholars.

Brahmaṇya Tīrtha refused a canopy for his *saṁādhi*, saying that he is an incarnation of the sun-god and that the sun cannot be covered by any shadow. Similarly, like the sun, you are a self-luminous ācārya.

Vyāsatīrtha initiated the most famous king, Kṛṣṇadeva Rāya in Karnataka. Similarly, you are also initiating great personalities who are leaders of society.

Kumārila Bhaṭṭa drove Buddhism away from India and into China. But you went to China and delivered *bhakti* to the people there suffering from material existence.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura strongly established *parakīya-vāda*. You are also promoting the same conclusions by publishing his commentaries on *Ujjvala-nīlamāṇi* and the five chapters on *rāsa-lilā* (*rāsa-pañcādhbyāya*).

The *mahā-bhāgavata* knows every detail of the material and spiritual worlds, so Śrīla Gaura-kīṣora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja was perfectly qualified to correct the mistakes of even the most learned *Bhāgavata* speakers, although from a mundane perspective he was considered uneducated; You never formally studied Sanskrit and yet the depth of your knowledge is unparalleled in this world, so no one can argue with you when you also correct the *siddhāntic* mistakes of even the most educated Sanskrit scholars in Mathurā.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Prabhupāda's *bṛhat-mṛḍaṅga* is the printing press. The beats of this *bṛhat-mṛḍaṅga* became even louder with your tireless efforts.

Śrīla Parama-gurudeva and Śrīla Svāmī Mahārāja both resembled Kūreśa, who was ever willing to sacrifice his life for his *gurudeva*, Śrīla Rāmānujācārya. You have also risked your life many times for your *gurudeva*, especially when you undertook the service of Śrī Anaṅga-mohana Brahmācārī, who was suffering from acute tuberculosis.

Narottama, Śrīnivāsa and Śyāmānanda Prabhus were beloved *sikṣā*-disciples of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. They were like one soul living in three different bodies. Similarly, your divine grace, Śrīla Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja are three Godbrothers, but you are one in heart.

The affectionate dealings between you and Śrīla Trivikrama Mahārāja remind us of Śrī Jagadānanda Prabhu's sweet counter-clockwise love (*prema-vivarta*) for Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Sri Kṛṣṇa's body is blue and Śrīmatī Rādhikā's body is golden. Your eyes are blue and your heart is golden.

Your insignificant disciple

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Viṣṇu-daivata



A Prayer for Śrīla Gurudeva's Mercy



First of all offer my insignificant *daṇḍavat-praṇāma* unlimited times at the lotus feet of my *gurupāda-padma*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om̄ viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja and the same unlimited *daṇḍavat-praṇāma* at the lotus feet of my revered *śikṣā-gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om̄ viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

When the majority of devotees staying within the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community lost sight of the real glory of the Gauḍīyas, as well as the conduct that most befits their very self (*ātma-maryādā*) and the essence of bona fide philosophical conclusions (*sat-siddhānta*) of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism, then, by the influence of their impure tendencies (which followed their own mental whims) they were duly perceived as non-Gauḍīyas.

Unable to understand the true glories of the Gauḍīyas, such persons only became more and more degraded, attaining a miserable condition rather than their ultimate destination. Although from their own mouth they declared themselves to be *śrī rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇavas, they were not able to touch, even from a great distance, the conceptions of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, who truly established the heart's desire of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. They were unable to properly understand and reconcile the temporary instructions with the perpetual instructions of *jagad-guru* Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, who was the full object of mercy of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja. Śrīla Prabhupāda perfectly followed the conceptions and perfect example of these crest jewels of Gauḍīya *ācāryas*, preaching fearlessly, anywhere and everywhere with the roar of a lion, destroying all *apa-siddhānta* that opposed the *rūpānuga* conception. So-called Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas were arrogantly considering themselves disciples of a bona fide *guru* in the *paramaparā*, without properly understanding their *guru*'s conceptions and instructions. In this way, by all of the above behaviour and by dishonouring other pure *gurus* and Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, they cleared their own pathway to hell. Many, many incapable and unqualified people were competing with each other in their attempts to forcefully seize and sit upon the pure throne of *śrī guru*, and they were playing with the sentiments of the devotees whose faith was still tender, merely for the satisfaction of their senses.

In a situation like this, in approximately the year 1996, my *paramārādhya śikṣā-gurudeva*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, having obtained the signal and indication from his *paramārādhya gurudeva*, with the purpose of removing the hazy fog of many misconceptions in the Gauḍīya world and for the reasons listed above, took the full weight of the responsibility to protect the pure and bona fide *sampradāya* upon his own shoulders and thus began preaching extensively. Without being even slightly restricted by his health, nor by internal opposition from within the Gauḍīya society, nor by many other external conflicts, Śrīla Gurudeva preached the heart's desire of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as established by Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. He also propagated the glories of Vraja-maṇḍala and Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma (which is non-different from Vraja).

Moreover, he preached “*rādhādāsyarabi, chāḍobhogaahi* – become situated in *rādhā-dāsy*, service to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and give up the serpent-like material enjoyment, which will devour you”; “*vrajavāsi-jana, pracārakadbana, pratiṣṭhā-bhikṣuk tiara nahe śava, prāṇa ache tānra, se betu pracāra, pratiṣṭhāśā bīna kṛṣṇa gāthā saba* – The residents of Vraja are the only true preachers in this world, as they are adorned with the wealth of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. They are not devoid of life, and, therefore they do not hanker after worldly distinction. They are full of the vitality that comes from loving Kṛṣṇa, and they go out and speak about Him. Whatever they say is free from the desire of prestige”; and “*kirtana prabhāve, smarāṇa hoibe* – by the influence of *kirtana, smarāṇa* will take place; only then be solitary *bhajana* be possible”. Through his *hari-kathā*, his personal practice, his publication of *granthas*, his arranging *parikramās*, as well as by so many other means, he gave all the opportunity to faultlessly and without attachment repeatedly cultivate the conceptions of the entire *guru-paramparā*. Thus, within the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava society, Śrīla Gurudeva ushered in a new era. No virtuous person of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava community would hesitate to accept this fact.

Sincere persons, upon whom Śrī Bhagavān had showered his immense mercy, did not accept the mental speculations and whims of hundreds and thousands of others. Rather, with firm faith in the words of *parama-bhāgavata* Śrīla Gurudeva, who was fully realized in *siddhānta*, they took shelter of his lotus feet, and thereby attained the good fortune of hearing, seeing and understanding the actual wealth of the *śrī rūpānuga* Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas. Without any delay, they accepted the precepts and conduct of Śrīla

Gurudeva, and by his inspiration, they began distributing this to all corners of the India and the world.

It became clear to a great many people that even if millions and millions of people who had never firmly resolved to perform *guru-sevā* and *bhagavad-bhakti*, who were Gaudīyas in name only, and who never learned how to respect pure Vaiṣṇavas, come together and establish some principle on any subject, still, their *siddhānta* is not to be accepted as *sat-siddhānta*, because they do not have the ability even to ascertain *dharma*. How, then, would they be able to determine proper *siddhānta*?

Therefore, it is not the duty of any intelligent person to be like a sheep and simply follow the crowd, thus remaining far away from *sat-siddhānta*. *Śāstra-siddhānta* and *dharmasiddhānta* manifest only in the hearts of those persons who are constantly absorbed in *bhajana* to Bhagavān with love and attachment. On the other hand, the *siddhānta* of others is merely an hallucination. The *śrī rūpānuga* current of conception is protected solely by *niṣkiñcana mahā-puruṣas*. The ‘*saṃpradāyas*’ of sense-enjoyers can never access it.

It was my unlimited fortune that somehow, I took shelter of Śrīla Gurudeva’s lotus feet. I was one among the many, many people who appreciated his simplicity and his comprehensive expertise in Gaudīya conceptions, and who understood him to be the personified treasure of the *śrī*

rūpānuga guru-paramparā. My own *dikṣā-gurupāda-pādma*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Pramoda Purī Gosvāmī Mahārāja, instructed many Hindi speaking devotees, “If you have any desire to know the *siddhāntas* of *viśuddha rūpānuga* Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavism, of the methodology of Gaudīya *bhajana*, and of the spotlessly pure *vraja-rasa* in the line of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, then you must study the *granthas* translated and published by the object of my affection, Śrīpad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja.”

Endeavouring continuously to keep my *gurupāda-pādma*’s instruction within my heart, I have, by his mercy, attained the fortune to externally understand, see and hear something of his non-different embodiment, Śrīla Gurudeva, as well as to serve him. I am praying to my *paramārādhya gurupāda-pādma* and also to the lotus feet of his non-different embodiment, Śrīla Gurudeva, that they will give me such mercy that one day I will be able to understand their actual conceptions and actually serve them. Apart from this desire, may no other aspiration appear in my heart. This will only be possible by the glance of their mercy.

Thus, with this prayer I am offering my *puṣpāñjali* to them.

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Siddhāntī

My Dear Beloved Śrīla Gurudeva



My dear beloved Śrīla Gurudeva,

Please accept millions of my *danḍavat-praṇāmas* unto your lotus feet on this most blessed day of your 90th *vyāsa-pūjā*.

You have told us many times, “Now you cannot understand what I have given you; some time later you will understand.” Today I am praying to you that even in this lifetime, I will be able to grasp at least a tiny particle of what you have given me.

Your contribution to *śrī rūpānuga-gaudīya-saṃpradāya* of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is incomparable. Having churned the sweetest conceptions of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, you have delivered them so vastly to the whole world! You have given us the deep *siddhānta* of his purports to the *Bhagavad-gītā*, along with his masterpieces, *Bhakti-rasāmrta-sindhu-bindu* and *Rāga-vartma-candrikā*, as well as the incomparable *rasa* of his purports to *rāsa-pañcādhyāya*, his *Prema-sampūṭa*, *Camatkāra-candrika* and many, many other gems.

You have also given us the essence of the conception and vision of the seventh Gosvāmī, Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura by giving us your wonderful commentary on his *Bhajana-rabasya* as well as your rendering of *Jaiva-dharma*, *Śrī Sīksāṣṭaka*, *Bhakti-tattva-viveka* and many other pearls.

And at such an advanced age, you circumambulated the globe more than thirty times, tirelessly preaching these incomparable conceptions to all the fallen *jīvas* of this world, making the unfit fit, turning hippies into happies and making the impossible possible! O Śrīla Gurudeva! Your love and affection is boundless.

Dear Śrīla Gurudeva, just a little more than a month before this, your glorious *vyāsa-pūjā* celebration, you decided to return to the eternal abode of all-blissful pastimes. You have deprived us of the sweetness of your visible association and told us, “My dear darling sons and daughters, now it is time for real practice. You will have to realize what I have given you and develop your Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.”

O Śrīla Gurudeva, my intelligence does understand that I must now pass this exam – but my soul is screaming out like a wounded bird.

śūnyāyate mahā-goṣṭham girīndro 'jagarāyate
vyāgbra-tuṇḍāyate kundam jīvatu rabitasya me

Dear Śrīla Gurudeva, today I am praying to you for more strength to be able to fulfill your strict order. Not only have you brought me back from the dead but so much responsibility you have given me. I know that you have so

much faith and trust in me, but unfortunate as I am, I am only making timid pitiable endeavours to live up to your expectations.

So today, falling at the dust of your two lotus feet over and over again, I am begging you for more stamina and courage to be able to completely fulfill your order and to some time understand your greatness in full.

Your insignificant and wretched servant,
Śrī Bhaktivedānta Sādhu

Śrīla Gurudeva's Speciality



I offer my *dāṇḍavat-pranāma* to my most revered *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

My humble attempt to capture Śrīla Gurudeva's inconceivable glories is meagre due to my poor qualification. Nonetheless, having been so requested, I will endeavour to do so here.

Śrīla Gurudeva has elucidated so many secrets of pure *bhakti* that attempting to write them all on one page is like putting the ocean into a jar. Therefore let me briefly focus on the reasons for Śrīman Mahāprabhu's appearance, and on Śrīla Gurudeva's contribution to His mission.

Śrīla Gurudeva has emphasised that *śrī rādhā-dāsyam* is the speciality and glory of our *śrī rūpānuga* line. The mood of service to Śrīmatī Rādhikā in *mañjari-bhāva* is highly confidential. For this reason, She sends Her confidantes to manifest it here in this world for those who are qualified to receive it, thereby recruiting them into Her loving service. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself came to distribute this topmost form of pure transcendental love, but the key to understanding His teachings and appearance is in the hands of a *vraja-rasika*, pure devotee such as Śrīla Gurudeva.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa came in the form of Śrīman Mahāprabhu to understand Śrīmatī Rādhikā's moods of love for Him, and to distribute the mood of service to Her lotus feet. Śrīla Gurudeva has taught us that what Śrīman Mahāprabhu came to taste and what He came to distribute are two distinct things; the relish of Śrīmatī Rādhikā's *mahābhāva* is reserved for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but we can become qualified to experience a drop of Her moods and assist Her in Her pastimes.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa thought, "Śrīmatī Rādhikā's love for Me is greater than My love for Her, the sweetness She

experiences is far greater than the sweetness I experience, and Her happiness is greater than mine." Being the supreme enjoyer and topmost relisher of *rasa* (*rasika-śekhara*), He desired to taste these three things: the glory of Her love, the sweetness in Him that She relishes by Her love and the happiness She feels in Her love for Him. Śrīmatī Rādhikā is *aśraya-bhagavān*, the abode of *prema*, the repository of love; Kṛṣṇa however is *viṣaya-bhagavān*, the object of *prema*, or the receiver of love, and as such He cannot experience Rādhikā's moods. Therefore He desired to come in the form of a devotee, with the mood and golden lustre of Rādhikā.

By elucidating *tattva* such as this, Śrīla Gurudeva, who is famed for his *rādhā-niṣṭhā*, has brought Śrīmatī Rādhikā and service to Her lotus feet, *rādhā-dāsyam*, to the foreground, and in this way he has glorified his worshipful deity and revealed the hidden glory of our *rūpānuga* line. He has revealed to us, including even unqualified followers such as myself, deep *tattva-siddhānta* along with some of the most confidential moods of devotional service, and he is able to convey such highly elevated and complex spiritual truths in simple language so that we can actually apply them in our lives. Thus Śrīla Gurudeva is undoubtedly celebrated as supremely merciful.

Śrīla Gurudeva's mission was to broadcast the glories of spontaneous love, *vraja-prema*, especially the moods of the *gopis*, and he has given us the elevated aspiration to follow in his footsteps and become qualified, one day, to render service to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, his beloved *īṣṭadevī*.

I offer my insignificant *pranāma* at his lotus feet.

Śrī Bhaktivedānta Giri



Three Sweet Gifts

I offer my heartfelt and pain-filled *pranāmas* to our most kind, loving and beloved *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Gurudeva, by whose mercy a dumb man can speak, a lame man can cross mountains and someone as sinful, proud and fallen as I can begin to fathom the sweetness of Vraja.

When thinking about the glories of our Śrīla Gurudeva, a multitude of examples come easily to mind. Three particular aspects are most prominent.

First and foremost, our Śrīla Gurudeva is protecting the integrity, mission and *viśeṣatā* (unique speciality) of the Gauḍiya *saṃpradāya*. Through his books, lectures and mentorship, he is preserving the words of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (*gaura-vāṇī*) in this world, making them accessible and practically applicable for the Kali-yuga *buddha-jīvas* (bound souls of this age of Kali – i.e., each of us). If it were not for our beloved Śrīla Gurudeva, who would be able to understand these topics? Who would have the chance to experience the unique love that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to give? How many people would know what *unnata-ujjvala-rasāṁ sva-bhakti-śriya* or *prema rasa niryāsa* are?

Secondly, you can judge the value of a tree by its fruits (*phalena paricīyate*). Thus, one of the many ways in which we can see and further understand the glories of our Śrīla

Gurudeva is to observe the repute of his disciples. By his mercy, we have the association of so many elevated, mature and sapient Vaiṣṇavas. Not only does our *sāṅga* include many advanced *sannyāsīs* and senior practitioners of *bhakti*, but even the child disciples of our Śrīla Gurudeva are deeply established in *siddhānta*. I am uniquely amazed and inspired to see such one-pointed determination toward *rādhā-dāsyam* among our youth.

Furthermore, our beloved Śrīla Gurudeva has firmly established the true conception of pure, unadulterated *bhakti* within his books and in the hearts of all who listen. Without such powerful guidance, *bhakti* will gradually deteriorate. In this way, *bhakti* becomes mixed with many varieties of *karma* (mundane action) and *jñāna* (theoretical knowledge of scripture, or a dependence on one's intellectual capacity rather than doing *sevā* in order to understand *bhakti*). Mercifully, Śrīla Gurudeva leaves no ambiguity on the path of *bhakti* for the sincere soul.

Above all, I feel Śrīla Gurudeva's glory is in the endless shower of love that emanates from his very being, for which I have no words. Those who also feel it know what I am speaking about.

Jaya Śrīla Gurudeva!

Vaiṣṇava dāsānudāsa,
Śrī Bhaktivedānta Viṣṇu



The Condensed Form of Compassion

vande 'ham śri guru varam
śri rūpānuga pravaram
vraja-rasa rasikan ca
krīpā-mūrti nārāyaṇam

I offer my prayers of adoration to that exalted śri guru Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who is the very form of compassion. He is best among the followers of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and is perfectly adept in relishing *vraja-rasa*.

Why is śri guru's appearance day called *vyāsa-pūjā*? The meaning of *pūjā* is 'to please the object of worship'. *Vyāsa-pūjā* means to fulfil the *mano'bhiṣṭa*, the deepest heart's desire, of Vyāsadeva. Offering mundane paraphernalia to śri guru is not actual *vyāsa-pūjā*.

Vyāsadeva's dear associates come to this world to fulfill his mission. Bhagavān is in the hearts of all souls, yet all are against Bhagavān, absorbed in sense gratification. The pure devotees come to turn those souls toward Bhagavān and engage them in serving Him. So who has greater power, *gurudeva* or Bhagavān?

Although Bhagavān is present with everyone, He cannot change the heart of even one *jīva*. The *ācārya* binds all *jīvas* to Īśvara with love, and that tie can never be broken. Everyone selfishly wants God to serve them, but if we go to the *ācārya* and offer anything to him, he will take it and offer it in service to God. In fact, he will offer our very being in service to God.

How great is *guru*?! He has the capability and qualification to do that work which Bhagavān Himself could not even possibly perform. The *guru-varga* travel to every corner of the world, connecting everyone's heart to God and distributing such *rasa* that all lose all taste for matter. Thereafter, they offer themselves in service to God. Who is able to accomplish these things? In this way, we should realize that respecting the *sad-guru*'s appearance and disappearance day is actually respecting Vyāsadeva and Bhagavān. Worshipping the *sad-guru* on those days is the greatest welfare work for the entire world.

The Real Birth of the Soul

I remember how Śrīla Gurudeva used to explain the verse, "janmādy asya yato 'nvayād itaratas cārtheṣv abhijñāḥ svarāṭ..." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.1.1).

The *jīvas* are the *vibinnāṁśa-tattva* of Bhagavān, or the existential element known as His 'separated parts'. By what process can they be given *ātmā-cetana*, consciousness of their real self? Mahāprabhu has established the answer to this question. He has explained, "As long as a person is not showered with that most divine *vraja-rasa*, their soul has not had this *janma ādi asya*¹ – that is, the soul does not yet have any real life or knowledge. They have not achieved *svarūpa-siddhi* (perfection of one's constitutional position)."

"How will we come to know what that *vraja-rasa* is? In order to manifest that *rasa* within this world, Bhagavān personally descended and performed *rāsa-lilā*. The deepest desire of Mahāprabhu was to manifest the speciality of *rāsa-lilā*. He came to taste this *rasa*.

By which process can one attain that most elevated *rasa*? In order to eventually bestow that *rasa* upon the *jīvas*, great *ācāryas* of the Gaudīya *sampradāya* sometimes hid it, or deprived people of it, but they did not give it freely. "Wait for some lifetimes until you are properly developed."

Why? In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.33.30) it has been said, "naitat samācarej jātu... – never imitate the behaviour of the great masters. Śiva is capable of digesting poison, but if we drink poison we will die." Due to fear of such scriptural injunctions, no one stepped forward to freely distribute this *rasa*. All were afraid. But Śrīla Gurudeva said, "If there is greed, why should we check it due to fear of something?"

Apart from receiving *vraja-rasa*, no other process can ever cause the soul to blossom or attain spiritual conscience. Therefore Śrīla Gurudeva explains in the introduction to *Rasa-pañcadhyāya*, that if someone has *śraddhā* – faith and love – then go near them and hear. Hearing is our *parama-dharma* (highest obligation). By hearing and hearing, this *rasa* will enter within our hearts. It will give the soul the strength to blossom into its true consciousness. "Vikṛiditam vraja-vadhūbhira."² Hearing the *lilā* that Bhagavān performed with the damsels of Vraja and the process by which he established this *rasa* in them, satisfied them and, by giving them *sevā* to Himself, made them one with Him (in nature by accepting them His own) is the only way to achieve this – by any other method or by hearing about any other *rasa* it is impossible. This *madbura-rasa* is the topmost *rasa*.

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¹ Literally, "one's (asya) birth (janma) and so on (ādi)"

² C.f. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.33.39)



If anyone is fixed and present in this *rasa*, then go near to him and hear from him. “Śraddhānvito ’nuśāṇuyād atha varṇayed yaḥ.” If he has śraddhā and love, and he is describing this *rasa*, then go to him and hear without harbouring any doubts.

Apart from receiving this *rasa* through hearing, the spiritual welfare of the *jīvas* has never been attainable by any other means in the past, nor will it ever be in the future. Then why do the ācārya-varga not want to give it? It is because of the fear expressed by the statement of śāstra that if you are not Rudradeva, drinking poison will destroy you.

But for we who are not afraid of death, who know that the soul never becomes old and never dies and that the body is fated to death – we shall die only by drinking this poison! I heard this declaration from Śrīla Gurudeva countless times. He said, “If you have to die, then die by taking this poison! We shall hear about and perform *kirtana* of this *rāsa-līlā* only! But we shall not take any mundane poison. All are dying for this; we shall also die!”

But by taking this, we will not die. What will happen? “Bhaktim parām bhagavati pratilabhyā kāmam.” The love and *parā-bhakti* of the Vraja-devīs in *madhura-rasa* will be attained, and the heart disease of lust will automatically be destroyed.

The current of the Vraja-devīs’ conception – that is, their *vicāra-dhāra* – is *ananya* (exclusive attachment to Kṛṣṇa) and *ekāntika* (exclusive devotion to one aim or person). No one else is *ananya*! Endeavouring to bring everyone to the shelter of the Vraja-devīs’ lotus feet is our *rūpānuga vicāra-dhāra*. This is Mahāprabhu’s conception. One should see the speciality of the ācāryas. This *madhura-rasa* is the *ādi-rasa*, the origin and zenith of all *rasa*. Distributing it is fulfilling the heart’s desire of Vyāsadeva. Therefore śrī guru is called Vyāsa, for he distributes this *rasa*, thereby giving the *jīvas* the qualification to enter into Vraja. Hence, Śrīla Gurudeva is truly performing the function of Vyāsadeva.

Heartly Regards and Affection from Godbrothers

After Śrī Gaura Pūrṇimā in 1996, in Kolkata, my *guru mahārāja* came to Śrīla Gurudeva accompanied by all the members of the Śrī Gaudīya Vedānta Samiti and established him as ācārya. At that time, he prayed for only one thing:

“Since the time you all appointed me in serving the *mano-bhīṣṭa* of Guru Mahārāja, thus accepting me as a servant, you have saved me. Until now you have saved me, now please save me some more. I cannot carry so much responsibility – the responsibility of being *guru* – alone. You will have to take this responsibility. The time has come. We, Śrīmad Trivikrama Mahārāja and all others are with you.

“You will preach for a long time in this world. You will be an unmatchably powerful ācārya and the profundity of your accomplishments will be inconceivable. Everywhere,

everyone will follow you. And those who act against you, neither we nor Guru Mahārāja will support them. Nor will Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda support them. And wherever you glance, we will always be there with you. Even if someone comes near you with an antagonistic mood, they will change and take shelter of you.”

We have never before seen such intimate and respectful behaviour and relationship between Godbrothers. They considered each other the extensions of their own *gurudeva*.

Many times we have seen that *parama-pūjyapāda* Śrīla Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja, who was the embodiment of *vairāgya* as well as the verse “*trñād api sunīcena...*”, would offer *sāṣṭāṅga-praṇāmas* upon seeing Śrīla Gurudeva, for he saw that within Gurudeva’s heart Parama-gurudeva and the entire *guru-varga* were present. He saw his heart as a beautiful *kuñja* where all the Vrajavāsīs were situated, and such *uddīpana* would stir his heart. Therefore, Śrīla Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja would try to expertly extract the hidden treasures of Śrīla Gurudeva’s moods – just as one pokes a honeybee nest to remove the honey – in a way that was impossible for anyone else to do.

Are we so blind that even after all this, our knowledge of who he is has not been awakened? Even then we take our complaints to him, along with our various accusations, and present them to him as though they were our gifts to him. We never pray for *paramārtha* from him!

If we view *guru* through our own eyes we will be deceived; we must see through the eyes of śāstra. Until we come to understand and enter within *rasa-tattva*, we cannot attain our true relationships or identify with any of the *rasika-jana*. We will never be able to gain entrance into Vraja or the qualification to serve there, and thus we will never be able to perform his *mano-bhīṣṭa sevā*.

We perform so much *sādhana*, but we unknowingly cover ourselves from all sides with filth, like an elephant that bathes in the water and then again covers himself with dirt. We hear about *vraja-rasa*, we go near the *mahā-bhāgavata rāgātmika* personalities, but again we cover ourselves with material filth. Śrīla Gurudeva never criticizes anyone. There are people who criticize him excessively, but he never criticizes anyone. He strongly instructs, “You have no right to say anything against anybody. Your right is only to perform *sādhana-bhajana*!”

Even until his last days he was not bereft of *bhagavad-sevā* for even a single moment.

Viraha (Separation)

If I do not come close to someone in my relations with him, if I have no meaningful relationship with him, then there will be no question of separation. If there was a very deep relationship, the separation will be very strong and continuous; in such a case, I would not be able to distance

myself from the object of my separation, not even for a moment. This type of separation does not imply only suffering, but continuous service both internally and externally. Such service will be very sweet. In order to relish this sweetness of separation, both *guru* and Bhagavān distance themselves from us. It is from a distance that they are able to taste the separation of the disciple and witness how the disciple serves and behaves in a mood of separation. The service performed while undergoing endless separation is very sweet and relishable. A true disciple has the mood of a *viyoginī*, or a beloved in separation.

Today, how many people are feeling true separation from Śrīla Gurudeva?

A newborn baby knows nothing but his mother; he has no other relation and knows nothing else. The question is, do I exclusively follow my spiritual mother, or do I follow other mundane people? I do not experience true separation from *śri guru*, because I am not one-pointed towards him. I have not taken the burden of responsibility for him; I live a life free from obligation. How will the mood of pure *bhakti* enter my heart if I have such an attitude? If I see anyone truly crying for Śrīla Gurudeva or for Bhagavān, I should think him very fortunate. However, it is very rare to find such a person in this world. We keep important things secret and hidden, but love should be kept even more hidden. If I show anyone else my love, this is called business. I should always try to hide my love and keep it safe, never showing it to others.

The Wonder of Separation

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has shown us the pain of separation when Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura left him. He was not disturbed when he left Viṣṇupriyā and his mother. He had no problem when he left Choṭā Haridāsa. But if Svarūpa Dāmodara or Rāya Rāmānanda were late, even by a minute, he became very disturbed. To have a relationship with a Vaiṣṇava like this is very sweet but at the same time very painful.

Mahāprabhu travelled to South India, and for four months he stayed at Gopāla Bhaṭṭa's home. When it was time for him to leave, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa, Tirumala Bhaṭṭa, Vyenkāta Bhaṭṭa and Prabhodānanada Sarasvatī were all suffering and became senseless. Both Śrī Prabhodānananda Sarasvatī and Gopāla Bhaṭṭa came to Vṛndāvana, choosing to not stay with their families. Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu showed Jīva Gosvāmī Navadvīpa-dhāma and all of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu's pastimes. Afterwards he sent Jīva Gosvāmī to Vṛndāvana. Jīva Gosvāmī had no desire to go to Vṛndāvana and was in so much pain at the thought of leaving Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, but he was ordered to go. It is not possible to explain the extent of his suffering in separation

from Nityānanda Prabhu. Afterwards Jīva Gosvāmī stayed under the guidance of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. One day Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhu chastised him and ordered him to leave. How much must he have suffered! Why is there such an intense feeling of separation in these cases? The attachment between souls is very deep, while attachment to this material body is only temporary. Bodily attachment is not eternal or permanent and there is no *viraha*, or separation, when two people with such attachment are parted. There can be no *viraha* when a relationship is based upon enjoyment.

When Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī disappeared, Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī was always crying and losing his external sense, being always inundated in his mood of separation. Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī lamented that Śrī Girirāja Govardhana was like a big snake, that Rādhā- and Śyāma-kundā were like a lion's opened jaws ready to devour him. He suffered in this way 24 hours a day. When may I also have such a deep mood of separation? How shall it manifest in me? Presently, I only eat and sleep. I have no tension or any problems. I'm only concerned with my bodily health and the wellness of my mind. In such a state, how can I expect my *guru-varga* to sprinkle their blessings upon me? If I have no desire to attain these spiritual sentiments, how can I expect the love of my spiritual master to manifest within me?

No one is Equal to My Gurudeva

There are many *ācāryas* and *guru-vargas* in this world, but to find a follower in the footsteps of the Vraja-devīs is very rare. Śrī Kṛṣṇa did not send Uddhava anywhere but to Vraja-bhūmi where the Vraja-devīs were residing. Similarly, my Śrīla Gurudeva is trying to give me the *vipralambha* mood of the Vraja-devīs for Kṛṣṇa.

It is very rare to find a person in this world who eagerly awaits the mood of *vipralambha* that Mahāprabhu came to give. From where can I collect this mood? Like Uddhava who went to the Vraja-devīs, if I go to someone in separation, then I can understand some of this mood. Therefore, now my Śrīla Gurudeva is mercifully giving me practical lessons on separation.

I meet so many thousands of people, but I can't find even one that is equal to my Śrīla Gurudeva, someone who is *sajātiya*, who can help me, and care for my welfare. Everyone is too busy with their own worries to help any other *jīva*. I am so unfortunate, but I pray at the lotus feet of my *guru-varga* to protect me so I may continuously remember their love and mercy. I pray that Śrīla Gurudeva will never reject me or kick me away. May he never give me any mundane position or status in this world; that would be a big curse upon my life – one I could not tolerate.

Śrī Premānanda Brahmacārī

Dear Śrīla Gurudeva,



Please accept my sincere and humble obeisances, all glories to you, all glories to your holy master, *nitya-lilā-praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-sāta* Śrī Śrimad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

I remember our first meeting. I was convinced that you had come to help the devotees, to revive and revitalise our spiritual practices, to reassure us and to reveal a deeper understanding of the Vaiṣṇava śāstras. From the beginning I thought of you as *śikṣā-guru* and thus non-different from my *diksā-guru* A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda. In my eyes, in my heart, you were a manifestation of his care and compassion for us.

I waited a long time for your appearance, and on having your *darśana* I knew that you were a Master, an *ācārya*. And so at that first meeting, before anything was said, I kneeled, touched your feet and with folded hands ‘surrendered my heart’, asking you to engage me in your service. I remember how you looked at me and how you then embraced me. Before that meeting, I predicted how you would travel the world and inspire everyone – how you would translate many more Vaiṣṇava śāstras and through your teaching and example refine our understanding of *bhakti*. You were the mercy I had hoped for. I expected you to heal us and to lead us. I placed my trust in you.

In the end, you exceeded my feeble powers of prediction. From then till now, you never stopped travelling. How you lived and what you endured to help us is incomprehensible to me. Everywhere you went, you created a festival of love, light and wisdom. Thousands gave their hearts to you. It’s all you ever asked for. Some were spontaneous, others took time, but one-by-one they were enchanted by your authenticity, by the love, care and loyalty you show to anyone who renders even the smallest service. You became

their sanctuary. They gave you their hearts and you filled them with love. And they trusted you.

In you they experienced the mystical and beyond – how in piercing their souls with your light-sapphire eyes, they felt no judgement for who they are now, but only heart-to-heart loving encouragement to be who they ultimately will be – ‘a fragrant offering to the Divine Couple’. In that ethereal exchange, that exists outside of time and is beyond the description of words, they knew in their hearts that you would take charge of making that sacred offering. You would make them qualified if they accepted the merciful teachings of the joyful Masters you serve. And so they called you Master, Śrīla Gurudeva.

In time their hearts have opened like a blue lotus unfolding in the lucent moonbeams of your divine grace. Those open hearts have realized the simple elegance of your essential teaching – good for this world, but in the language of the spiritual world – ‘love and affection’, ‘love and trust’, ‘selfless love regardless of reward’. It begins here and continues there. Of this you are the Master and the one who teaches by example, the *ācārya*.

I held your hand on our last visit, I looked into your eyes, and your eyes looked into my soul. I am reassured. Although I am a common man, and a coarse unqualified person, you have shown me the goal – to somehow be useful to you and to those who love you. Still, I lag far behind all your followers, erratically shuffling along to catch up. Even though I may be far away, incapable or useless, I know in my soul you are very near to me, always and forever. That is my shelter. That is your mercy.

Aspiring to be of service to *śrī guru* and Śrī Vaiṣṇavas,
Bhūdhara dāsa

A Humble Attempt To Glorify Him



I offer my most humble and respectful obeisances to my *diksā-guru*, Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda, and the same to my *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Śrīla Gurudeva so wonderfully and mercifully appeared in my life to deepen my appreciation of the *gaura-vāṇī* mission of my most worshipful *diksā-guru* and *guru-varga*. By his divine association, instructions and sweet, love laden *hari-kathā* he has renewed the flow of the current of *bhakti*.

By hearing many *tattvas* from him, specifically *guru-tattva*, and by receiving his mercy on many occasions and in many ways, it became increasingly clear to me that everything in spiritual life depends on the mercy of *sad-guru*; even Kṛṣṇa’s mercy is dependent upon his. He has demonstrated that it is a living, dynamic process of service and dedication to be under the care of Kṛṣṇa’s omniscient, all powerful devotee.

All the contradictions, *apa-siddhānta* and general confusion that manifested after Śrīla Prabhupāda’s departure

were reconciled by Śrīla Gurudeva, and his vast success in world preaching proves beyond a doubt that he has in every way received the blessings of our Śrīla Prabhupāda, his own *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and our whole *rūpānuga guru-varga*.

He did not shy away from reminding us of, and elucidating deeply on, the essence of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's magnanimous gift: the concept of *mañjarī-bhāva*, service to Śrīmatī Rādhikā as her confidential maidservant. Being an exalted *rasika-vaiṣṇava*, this was his privilege and speciality, and he thereby saved this gift from sliding into oblivion.

Śrīla Gurudeva has confirmed on many occasions that this *rādhā-dāsyam* is the highest possible attainment for the *jīva* and is the very meaning of the predicted Golden Age; it is not that we have to wait for great earth or cosmic changes, or for the upliftment in various ways of human society, etc. *Rādhā-dāsyam* in itself is complete and available now!

By all his service, especially the translation of the works of our previous *ācāryas* along with the publication of his own writings, Śrīla Gurudeva created a world wide renaissance of pure *bhakti* for hundreds of thousands of sincere souls. All are studying his books!

For over fifty years Śrīla Gurudeva engaged in the yearly *parikramās* of Vraja-maṇḍala and Gaura-maṇḍala as started by our previous *ācāryas*. Not only did he show great concern by restoring many of the pastime sites, but he has also revealed their great significance, by stressing that the pastimes are happening in these places eternally, and that by hearing of them from senior Vaiṣṇavas while taking the holy dust from these places on their heads, great auspiciousness is created for all pilgrims.

As a teacher, Śrīla Gurudeva's understanding of his students was full of sharp observation, unlimited patience and kindness. He would perform the deepest heart surgery with inconceivable ease and competence, therefore one can say that Śrīla Gurudeva was the epitome of an *ācārya*, always in control in a most sovereign and magnanimous way. He was not of this world and separation from him is heart wrenchingly painful, but for the dedicated follower, it is simultaneously an opportunity for special intimacy.

I therefore humbly pray to always remain close to his lotus feet.

The most insignificant,
Harernāmānanda dāsa

To Realize Śrīla Gurudeva's Glory



First of all we offer our hearts like flowers to the lotus feet of our *dīkṣā-* and *śikṣā-gurus*, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda and *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Maharaja. Anything good that we write in this offering is their glory and anything wrong is due to our own faults and defects.

Gu is darkness, illusion, the false beliefs we hold about who we are and what reality actually is. *Ru* is light, illumination, knowledge and truth. *Guru* sheds the light of knowledge upon us, piercing even the darkest depths of our false conceptions by absorbing our minds in the goal of life (*prayojana*), the beauty and love of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. He gives us the process to attain this goal by telling us the *kathā* of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, the personifications of compassion and mercy who guide our every step towards true love (*prema*). He also gives us our eternal identity and relationship with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, and shows us what real love is, by his own loving example.

Śrī *guru* is the real beauty of this world, coming here out of his extreme compassion, coupled with his *sevā-bhāva*, to distract our minds from this mundane world and instil within us one tiny drop of *prema* in the form of *śraddhā*. Like a ray of sunlight coming through the closed curtains in the room of our hearts, he descends to mercifully share the divine love within his own heart in the form of *nāma-bhajana* and sweet *hari-kathā*. By distracting us with the sweetness of *līlā-kathā*, he again and again gives us the medicine of *tattva* to transform all our false beliefs and give us realization of our true identity as eternal loving associates of the blissful divine loving couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda.

The extent of śrī *guru*'s mercy is unlimited and can be glorified for eternity. It is my hope, however, that I can obtain just one drop of his ever increasing, unlimited mercy, so that śrī *nāma* will enter my ears, go into my heart and dance on this wretched tongue.

Birth after birth we forget our eternal position as loving servants and strive only to serve our ravaging senses, which



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can never be satisfied. Seeking temporary happiness again and again in this and in so many other realms, we create only unlimited attachments and suffering. Seeing this, our sad plight, *śrī guru's* soft heart melts in loving compassion, so he comes here and gently (although sometimes with force) unties the knots of attachment within our hearts. *Śrī guru* does this even while we are unaware of it, when we may not perceive that we are in his presence. But, just as Kṛṣṇa is everywhere, *śrī guru* is with us at every moment, guiding us and arranging everything for us to achieve perfection. By surrendering to this reality, to *śrī guru*, whose love is unlimited and causeless, we have a chance to enter the eternal divine realm of love and bliss, Vraja Vṛndāvana.

Our hearts are like an overgrown forest, uninhabitable and filled with darkness. Yet, out of his causeless mercy, *śrī gurudeva* fearlessly enters them and begins to create beautiful forest groves. He cuts all the overgrown brush of our false attachments and pulls out the deep weeds of

*anartha*s. He creates a new garden bed and plants the seed of *bhakti* there to make a beautiful garden, a fit place for Kṛṣṇa to manifest. He stays in our hearts and nourishes the creeper of devotion by giving us sweet *hari-kathā* and instructions on *bhajana*. By following these instructions, hearing his *hari-kathā* and keeping in good association, we tend to that garden thereby creating a *kunja*; a meeting place for the sweet loving Divine Couple. In this way, by following the footsteps of our Gurudeva, we finally come to the place where we meet the object of all of our desires.

There is no end to the glory of Śrīla Gurudeva, there is no end. If I could only attain one drop of realization of his glory, my life would be perfected. My heartfelt prayer on the most auspicious day of my *gurudeva*'s appearance is that he will manifest in my heart, and thus I will be able to truly serve his lotus feet.

Your servants
Īśa dāsa and family

To Śrīla Gurudeva, the Supreme Best Friend

First of all let me offer my *koṭi-koṭi dāṇḍavat-pranāms* at the lotus feet of my dear-most *dīkṣā-guru* Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda, and then please accept my millions of *sāstāṅga-pranāma* at your golden lotus feet; the shelter of the world!

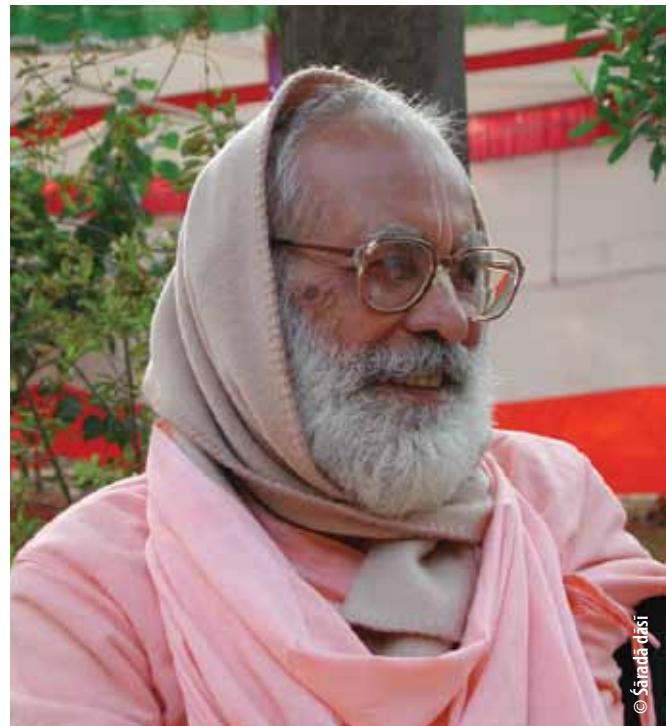
Śrīla Śrīnivāsa Ācārya says in his *Śrī Ṣaḍ-Gosvāmyastakam*, “*dhīrādhīra-jana-priyau priya-karau nirmatsarau pūjītāu* – you are dear to the saintly devotees and to the wretched persons (like me).” Everyone, including the animals, becomes attracted to you because you emanate a love that is other-worldly. This is certainly a sign of the great soul that you are: Kṛṣṇa’s pure devotee.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda often said “This Kṛṣṇa-consciousness is an open secret. I’ll be satisfied, and my mission will be complete, if even just one of you (among thousands of disciples) understands my message.”

I believe that you are the one who understood and received that sweet ripened fruit – Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *mano’bhīṣṭām*. Everyone knows there is wealth in this world, but they do not know what it is and where it can be found. You told us what it is and how to obtain it. As you always said “Try to understand why Śrīla Prabhupāda came to this world and what he came to give”. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s real glory is that he was a follower of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda. This is also your glory.

We know that Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books contain the highest wealth, but that wealth was under lock and key. Late one night in 1975, Śrīla Prabhupāda called my brother-in-law and me into his room. After initially sharing a joke with me, he became grave, and while counting on his fingers, he stated that he had only met his spiritual master about ten times, but, he stressed, his success and his connection to his spiritual master were due to strictly following his *vāñī*, his instructions. When we asked him to whom we can go for shelter and guidance after he leaves this world, he said: “Go to the Vaiṣṇava that your heart tells you to.” Once, while giving a homage to Śrīla Prabhupāda in your presence, I recounted this and you looked at me approvingly. You are that Vaiṣṇava for me, and the one who held the key to the lock.

O Śrīla Gurudeva! You have so many beautiful qualities that it is impossible to express them in this short space.



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Once on a morning walk, a devotee inquired from you why union was higher than separation. They quoted Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī as saying that the intense mood of separation dances on the head of the ecstasy of meeting, or union. “Yes,” you said, “but Kṛṣṇa likes to please His devotees and he cannot bear to see them in pain, so He quickly comes and arranges to meet them.” Then you said “Would you rather see Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa separated?” We all said an emphatic “No.” “Together?” A resounding “Yes”!

It was the causeless mercy of my spiritual master that he sent you to guide me. I now pray for that same causeless mercy so that I may always keep you in my heart and feel that separation, so that Kṛṣṇa will quickly unite us again. I am writing this humble homage next to Imlīlā in Vṛndāvana, a place of intense separation and lamentation. Now this place feels void without your physical presence. All over Vraja it feels empty. Even the rickshaw-wallas speak to us with love about your departure. Despite these feelings, at the same time, it seems that you have expanded everywhere, because there is always something to remember you by.

I pray to feel a drop of the love that so many feel for you. I beg to stay at your lotus feet forever serving *śrī guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas.

All glories to your divine grace!
All glories to your divine grace!
All glories to your divine grace!

Dāsanudāsa
Nr̥hari dāsa

An Offering to Your Lotus Feet



I offer the flower of *śraddhā* at the lotus feet of my most worshipful *gurudeva*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

The devotees of Śrī Keśavajī Gaudīya Maṭha, Mathurā, had made a plan, under the direction of our revered Premānanda Prabhu, to journey to Jagannātha Purī to celebrate the 90th appearance day of our most worshipful *gurudeva*, in his divine presence. Bhagavān Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārījī destroyed our desire at the root by unexpectedly calling our *gurudeva* back to His *dhāma*. News of this engulfed all the devotees' hearts in the deepest sorrow.

Our *gurudeva* was very bold and fearless, especially in regard to protecting the proper conceptions. If anyone acted contrary to the principles of *dharma* he did not hesitate to correct them. And if anyone spoke any *apa-siddhānta*, he refuted it immediately. He always instructed us to perform one pointed *bhakti* to the feet of Bhagavān Śrī Rādhā-Vinoda-bihārījī and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrī Gurudeva was the personification of the verse *tṛṇād api sunīcena*. Without caring for his health or his advanced age, he spread the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu throughout India and indeed, the whole world, and thus he caused *bhakti-bhāgīrathī gaṅgā* to flow.

He has written and published several scared books on the path revealed by the *ācāryas* of the Gaudīya *sampradāya*. This is Gurudeva's invaluable treasure, which will maintain us, his servants, and which like a lamp, will emit light to guide us.

My only prayer at his lotus feet is that he keeps on bestowing his mercy on us, and blessing us so that we utilize every moment of this human life for *hari-bhakti*, *kirtana* and *smāraṇa*.

A beggar of his mercy
Bowing down at his feet
Śrīnivāsa dāsa
(Mathurā)

Puṣpañjali

Dear-most Śrīla Gurudeva, *om viṣṇupāda paramahāṁsa astotṭara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja,

First of all I offer my unlimited *danḍavat-praṇāmas* unto your lotus feet. You are my most worshipful eternal master and guardian. I offer the same unlimited *danḍavat-praṇāmas* unto the lotus feet of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja. I also offer my unlimited *danḍavat-praṇāmas* unto the lotus feet of our śrī rūpānuga *guru-varga*, especially unto the lotus feet of Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. I offer my unlimited *danḍavat-praṇāmas* unto your revered *sannyāsīs*, and finally, unto all your sons, daughters, followers and associates.

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā, Chapter 8, prayer 248, the following is stated:

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked, "Of all kinds of distress, what is the most painful?"

Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya replied, "Apart from separation from the devotee of Kṛṣṇa, I know of no unbearable unhappiness."

This is our present condition, the most painful experience of our life; we are separated from your physical association, from our very life. I wish this would never have come, but destiny is very cruel; it tortures everyone and has no discrimination.

You establish our transcendental relationship with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Divine Couple; we are grieving immensely, for you have disappeared from our external vision.

You are so special and dear to Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Trivikrama Gosvāmī Mahārāja, like one soul in three bodies. We are in deep lamentation, for your sweet personality has now disappeared from our external vision.

You are the eternal associate of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja and Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī



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Mahārāja, their *priya-bandhu*; unfortunately you are no longer visible to our external eyesight.

You imbibe, display, and distribute the deep and special moods of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura and Śrīla Sanātana, Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmīs; now your immensely magnanimous form is no longer visible to our external eyesight.

You possess incomparable humility and renunciation, and you show the utmost respect to all living entities; you are overflowing with the Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta*. Now your most adorable form has disappeared from our external vision.

You are known to us as our spiritual master, our father, our bosom friend, our all and all, and you are permanently engaged as the eternal associate of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī

and as the very dear *pālyā-dāsī* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, fully absorbed in the transcendental pastimes of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Divine Couple.

I have personally witnessed how your nature is so magnanimous, so much filled with affection and kindness, always fulfilling the requests and invitations of all who meditate upon you or come near you. Therefore, I offer my unlimited *daṇḍavat-pranāmas* to you again and again, and I pray from the core of my dark heart that you display your causeless compassion upon this wretched person and accept my invitation to always stay with me; moreover, with straw between my teeth, I submit my plea that you grant me the transcendental ability to engage, under your guidance, in the eternal *sevā* of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Divine Couple.

Eternally Yours,
Brajanāth dāsa

The One Who Has Captivated My Heart



*namah orī viṣṇu-pādāya rādhikāya-priyātmane
śrī-śrīmad-bhakti-vedānta nārāyaṇa iti nāmine*

*śrī krṣṇa-līlā-kathane sudakṣam
audārya gunaiś ca yuktam
varaṁ varenyam puruṣam mahāntam
nārāyaṇam tvam śrasā namāmi*

The voice of a *maunī* (one who is silent) and the light of his *amāvasyā* (dark moon) have captivated the whole world within the *vyāsa* (sphere) of his love and affection. He has showered torrents of love and mercy on the whole world from unseen clouds produced from Mahāprabhu's ocean of mercy. He is *jagad-guru*, he is *yugācārya*, he is a *paramavaiṣṇava*, he is a *rasika-vaiṣṇava*, and he is *rasika-śiromanī*.

So many words are spoken to glorify him, but my feeling is, that he is the one who has captivated my heart. He has so much overpowered me, he has gone so deep into me that I can't imagine my life without him. People may call him *jagad-guru* but I call him MY *guru*.

During the initial days of our meeting, he taught me how to pray; he told me that the conditioned soul does not even know what to pray for. He taught me to always and everywhere pray, "I should get the association of a *śuddha-rasika-vaiṣṇava*." Since then, I started offering this prayer everywhere. By the grace of this prayer, I started coming closer to Śrīla Gurudeva and finally fell into the deep well of his blue eyes and also into the deep ocean of his *mādhuryamayī hari-kathā*. Really, his eyes, spreading the special rays of *amāvasyā*, penetrating the soul, and his lips uttering the sound of a *maunī* would change the course of a conditioned soul's life. From his charming gait and lotus feet would sprinkle the essence of all the Vedas; those who took shelter of those lotus feet were most fortunate. When he used to sit and speak smilingly, it appeared as if the whole *paramparā* would enter him. When he used to rub his nails, there came a flood of *bhāva*, and his personality would emit *śuddha-bhakti* in all directions. He was so simple that even simplicity would feel shy in front of him.

I hesitate to say too much about him because I am so highly disqualified that whenever I try to glorify him, I only minimise his glory instead.

By mercifully translating Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's most important book, *Jaiva-dharma*, he has put forth Mahāprabhu's *tattva-vicāra* and *rasa-vicāra* as they are, right in front of us. When I first started to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I could not understand the principle of *acintya-bhedābheda* (how the Lord and His potency are

inconceivably, simultaneously one and different), but after coming in contact with Śrīla Gurudeva, through the beauty and style of his explanations, I could easily understand such specialities of Mahāprabhu's teachings.

He always emphasized the importance of ascertaining our goal – the matchless gift of Mahāprabhu which had not been given to this world for such a long time. Our *gurudeva* has distributed this gift freely to everyone. Though I was already practising Kṛṣṇa-consciousness, I did not know the inner mood of Mahāprabhu and the real glories of *gopī-prema*. I was not clear why the *gopīs* are superior to the wives of Kṛṣṇa, even though they are not married to Him, or why Rādhārāṇī's love is superior to all. But as soon as I came to Śrīla Gurudeva, all these doubts were automatically cleared, and I quickly understood from him that the highest attainment and ultimate perfection for a living entity is to become the intimate maid servant of Rādhārāṇī. He boldly preached this *rasa-vicāra* because, as he used to say, if he did not tell these things to the world, then this most essential stream of Mahāprabhu's confidential teachings would disappear.

Śrīla Gurudeva created greed for this type of *gopī-prema* – that of the *pālya-dāsīs* of Rādhārāṇī in Vraja – and after clarifying the goal, by his detailed instructions and his own example he taught us how to perform our *sādbhana*. Although he was a liberated soul, he was always the living example of a perfect *sādhaka*.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura always insisted on printing books; he called the printing press the '*bṛhad-mṛdaṅga*'. Śrīla Gurudeva toiled day and night, translating many of our *ācāryas'* books into Hindi, which were later translated into many other languages. He has published such a vast collection of Gauḍīya scriptures that for generations to come human society will be eternally indebted to him.

At a time when all was going smoothly, Śrīla Gurudeva gave us all a very heavy shock. On 14 September 2010, the day before Rādhāṣṭamī, the result of a medical test revealed a fatal ailment. Oh no! Śrīla Gurudeva, you cannot do this to us! I was in a state of total collapse. The official report was to come after Rādhāṣṭamī; I cried and prayed in front of Rādhārāṇī, I could not express my pain to anyone. The next day lightning struck us as Dr. Himtani confirmed the test result by phone to Śrīpad Mādhava Mahārāja. My prayers and cries fell flat. The Supreme Personality had become cruel. The whole world plunged into prayers and tears, but to no avail. Despite all our best efforts, Śrīla

Gurudeva started going away from us. He had the best treatments from the best doctors from all over the world; many assurances were given raising our hopes, but all were in vain. Then Śrīla Gurudeva was taken to Purī and we started to have some hopes again as the medicine from the Malaysian *vaidya* appeared to be working. Śrīla Gurudeva then sent me to the USA. Suddenly on the 29th December, just three-and-a-half months after the original test results, the world came to a stand still. It was a nightmare – I could not believe it. On Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja's appearance day, it was as if he had come to take his dearest younger brother and friend to the divine abode. Throughout his ailment Śrīla Gurudeva performed this human-like pastime perfectly; he told me that the disciple should always think that his *gurudeva* is giving him more opportunity for service.

I am always lacking in my *sādbhana*; in such an incorrigible state I find myself helpless and disappointed. I cry for Gurudeva and his direct mercy; I am totally broken and I shed my tears again and again. I have fallen into the darkness of *amāvasyā* since our 'mauni' took *mauna* and became fully silent. No respite, no rescue. Where should I go? What should I do? Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī went to Govardhana to give up his life in separation from Mahāprabhu and Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara, but the association of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī gave him relief and he gave up the idea of suicide. Similarly, I am praying to all senior disciples of Śrīla Gurudeva to please shower their love and affection on all of us so that we may come out of this pain and grief.

Rāmacandra dāsa
(New Delhi)

In the Line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī



I offer my *danḍavat-pranāmas* and heartfelt *puṣpāñjali* at the lotus feet of my *dīskā-guru*, *nitya-līlā pravīṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja on the commemoration of his appearance in this world, some ninety years ago. He is in the line of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, his *gurudeva* Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Mahārāja and Śrī Śrīmad A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja. In this offering I will touch upon his contribution to this line of glorious *ācāryas*.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura spent his life actualizing the dream of his father, *saccidānanda* Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura, to spread Kṛṣṇa Consciousness far and wide. He was tremendously successful in India, establishing sixty-four *mathas* and initiating thousands into Kṛṣṇa-consciousness. He established the *bṛhad-mṛḍaṅga*, printing presses, for preaching broadly. He brilliantly groomed a legion of *sannyāsīs* and preachers to continue the mission after his departure. And when, on his order, his dear disciple, Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja travelled to America, the mission began to spread to every country of the world. These are his external accomplishments to facilitate his internal mission of spreading the rays of pure *bhakti*; the pinnacle of devotion – the moods of *rādhā-dāsyam*.

For sixty-five years, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, our 'Śrīla Gurudeva', like Śrīla

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, successfully preached throughout India, establishing *mathas* in the holy *dhāmas* and initiating thousands of disciples. From 1996 he travelled extensively all over the world, especially to the places that 'Svāmiji' went, desiring to touch the holy dust of those places, and he has saved thousands of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples and grand-disciples, helping them make further advancement in *bhakti*. Just like his *gurus*, he distributed the rarest and highest treasure, *unnatojjvala-rasāṁ sva-bhakti-śriyam* (from Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Śrī Vidagdha-mādhava*; quoted in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* 1.4), the service of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī as one of Her confidential maid-servants. He mercifully 'sprinkled' this mood on all of us, regardless of whether or not we had the *sukṛti* to appreciate it.

Śrīla Gurudeva's speciality has been to disseminate the teachings of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in such a way, that we, too, may aspire for the moods of the *gopīs*, especially *rādhā-dāsyam*, *mañjari-bhāva*. He said once, "I will not cut jungles. I have come only to give these special things." It is extremely rare to find such a personality who is so one-pointed and expert in delivering the highest truths.

Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja 'built a house in which the whole world could live'; he established 108 temples, and published many Vaiṣṇava literatures in the English language, in this way introducing Kṛṣṇa



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Consciousness at large throughout the world. This was his astounding contribution to our Gaudīya line. At the end of his manifest pastimes, he asked our *gurudeva* to help maintain that ‘house’ of devotees he built, by nourishing his disciples further in *bhakti*.

The divine ‘team work’ of these three great personalities has given birth to a worldwide *sāṅga* of devotees and a wonderful collection of *bhakti* literatures. Their writings combine to create a foundation for spreading Kṛṣṇa-consciousness for hundreds and thousands of years. This is the transcendental arrangement of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s *guru-paramparā*; it goes on generation after generation, expanding the current of *bhakti*.

In his song, *yāñ kali rūpa śarīra nā dharata*, Śrī Mādhava dāsa writes, “Who would have opened the storehouse of *vraja-prema* and distributed its contents freely? Who could have understood Kṛṣṇa’s *līlās* in Mathurā and Vṛndāvana?

How could we have known of the sweet *vraja-līlās* and the love between Rādhā-Mādhava?”

In the future, great personalities will continue to plunder this storehouse of *vraja-prema* and distribute it. We cannot receive the mercy of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī or Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī or any of the previous ācāryas independently; we can receive it only through the grace of the *paramparā* system.

Śrīla Gurudeva has trained his sincere disciples to continue spreading the mission of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. By his divine grace, may we be blessed to be a small part of that divine mission, and thus be able to please him, to bring a smile to his face and to receive his ‘heartly blessings’, always.

Vaiṣṇava-dāsānudāsa
Rādhā-kānta dāsa

Remembering Śrīla Gurudeva's Moods

I offer my most humble obeisances at the lotus feet of my beloved *gurudeva*, *nitya-lilā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda astottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, on the auspicious occasion of his 90th *vyāsa-pūjā* celebration. I also offer my humble obeisances to our *rūpānuga guru-varga*.

When I first met Śrīla Gurudeva I had been practising Kṛṣṇa-consciousness for more than ten years and I thought that I knew everything about *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. He inquired how long I had been chanting, and I replied, "Ten years." "Oh?" he said. "Since you have been calling out to Kṛṣṇa with love and affection for the past ten years, please tell me what He is doing now." With his very first question, he smashed my false ego. It struck me for the first time ever, that at any given time, Kṛṣṇa must actually be doing something. Gurudeva then explained how Kṛṣṇa's day is divided into eight parts and that He relishes every moment.

On another occasion, during a morning walk in Rishikesh, Gurudeva turned to me and asked what my favourite *śloka* was in *Bhagavad-gītā*. Before I could answer, he said that his was *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto* [*Gitā* 18.65]. He explained that *mad-bhakto* refers to devotees like Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura and Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja, that *mad-yājī* refers to Ambarīṣa Mahārāja, and that *man-manā bhava* refers to how the damsels of Vṛndāvana are eager to serve Kṛṣṇa, and how Kṛṣṇa is eager to meet them. He explained that our minds, like the minds of the *gopīs*, should also be enthusiastic to serve Kṛṣṇa. And when he asked what my favourite *Bhāgavatam-śloka* was, he interjected that his favourite is "na pāraye 'ham niravadya saṁyujām – O gopīs I cannot requite even a drop of your love, sacrifice and service" (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.32.22).

This example shows the inner mood of Śrīla Gurudeva, and that mood is revealed during his morning walks and in his lectures and writings. Our *ācāryas* relish the fact that Kṛṣṇa is controlled by the love of the damsels of Vraja and is indebted to them for it.

Regarding the cause of Śrī Kṛṣṇa appearing as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, it is stated in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, "prema-rasa-niryāsa karite āsvādana rāga-mārga bhakti loke karite pracāraṇa – He appeared to relish the essence of His love and to preach the path of *rāga-bhakti* to the people of the world." This comprises the essence

of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's teachings, and this is what Śrīla Gurudeva is doing all over the world.

If we consider the activities of our *gurudeva* and then analyze the instructions of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, we can clearly see that Śrīla Gurudeva imbibed the internal mood (*antaraṅga-bhāva*) of Caitanya Mahāprabhu and that he serves Him by satisfying His innermost desire (*mano'bhiṣṭa*) along with that of our *guru-paramparā*.

Our Gurudeva's service mood to the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and our *guru-paramparā* is revealed wherever he goes. During the month of Kārttika, when Gurudeva would accompany the *parikramā* party to Kokilavana, he would become very upset with the people there for worshipping Śanideva (the demigod of Saturn) and with the local authorities for allowing it, and he would roar like a lion, chastising them for hiding and spoiling the glories of Kokilavana, where beautiful pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa took place.

Following in the footsteps of Śrī Śrī Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs, Śrīla Gurudeva was always eager to not only maintain but to enhance the pastime places which were uncovered by the Gosvāmīs under the order of Mahāprabhu. Due to the boon given to Śrī Nārada Muni, these pastime places can grant *vraja-prema*, and if they were again lost or covered it would be a great disservice to Mahāprabhu; where would we bring those pilgrims who come to the holy *dhāma* from all over the world?

When Śrīla Gurudeva would visit Gokula-Mahāvāna, he would ask the head priest "Where did Kṛṣṇa take birth?" The *panda* would reply, "In Mathurā." Śrīla Gurudeva would rebuke him right then and there, and would explain that this place, Gokula, is the actual birthplace of Kṛṣṇa. He said that Mother Yaśodā is Kṛṣṇa's real mother, and that the cutting of the umbilical cord (*nāḍī-cchedana*) took place only in Gokula. In this way, Śrīla Gurudeva gave us a clear conception of Vrajendra-nandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa, He who is controlled by the residents of Vṛndāvana and who is full of *mādhurya-rasa*.

On the main road entering Vṛndāvana, we see massive deities of Durgā-devī and other demigods, including Hanumān and Gaṇeśa. Such demigod worship serves to deviate one from entering the real Vṛndāvana and prevents one from suitably appreciating the glories of Vraja, which,

& Teachings



due to the affect of time, are becoming more and more covered. Śrīla Gurudeva, however, has done the opposite; he yearly conducted a three day conference in honour of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, attended by ācāryas from various *mathas* and prominent Gauḍīya scholars of Vraja, who would speak *hari-kathā* under his divine guidance. In this way, the real glories of Vṛndāvana would be revealed in everyone's heart, proving to all that Śrīla Gurudeva is a true *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava.

Śrīla Gurudeva has also taught us the difference between *pāñcarātrika-vidhi* and *bhāgavat-paramparā*. Due to a lack of knowledge, many of us thought that *pāñcarātrika-vidhi*, or formal initiation and fire sacrifice, is the link by which the relationship between the spiritual master and disciple is established. However Gurudeva has explained that *bhāgavat-paramparā* refers to the real *paramparā*, through which the *guru* reveals his own mood and the mood of the previous ācāryas in the heart of the disciple. As the full embodiment of this *bhāgavat-paramparā*, Śrīla Gurudeva was unquestionably authorized by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to spread Kṛṣṇa-consciousness exactly in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

In Śrīla Gurudeva's last days, he manifested his *avastha-lilā* (sickness pastime). In *avastha-lilā*, the body of the ācārya appears to be sick, however, such pastimes are actually very confidential. In the *manthana-lilā* (churning pastimes) narrated in the Eighth Canto of *Śrimad-Bhāgavatam*, demons and demigods churned the cosmic ocean with the great Mandara Mountain using the serpent Vāsuki as a rope. Both nectar and poison emerged from the churning. Similarly, during this confidential pastime of Śrīla Gurudeva, people with no faith became bewildered, and instead of nectar they drank poison. Others took the body of the ācārya to be ordinary, and as a result, they will fall down into hell. In *Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says, "aśraddadhānāḥ puruṣā... – those who do not have faith in Me will fall down into the repeated cycle of birth and death." In the same way, such pastimes of the ācārya serve to sieve the faithful from the faithless. Those with poor faith become perplexed, and those with strong faith receive the mercy of Śrīla Gurudeva and attain perfection.

Śrīla Gurudeva was such a charismatic personality that he attracted whoever met him and made them feel

so intimate and special. He dealt with each person with a personal, golden touch.

He would deal with me like this, also. Once we were in Navadvīpa on *parikramā*, along with ten thousand other people. I went into Gurudeva's quarters to massage him, but I was stopped at the door and forbidden entrance. I sent a message to those inside and kept on waiting, for quite a long time. Finally, with a gloomy heart, I started to walk back down the stairs. Suddenly one *brāhma-cārī* came to me and said, "Gurudeva is calling you."

My sad face turned into a smiling one and I quickly walked into Gurudeva's room. As I entered, though, I saw to my dismay that the massage had finished ten minutes earlier. Gurudeva saw me and asked, "Why are you so late?" and everybody started to laugh. Out of compassion, he put one leg forward and said, "Come and do massage." Gurudeva's *prasāda* had been prepared, but still, he allowed me to massage and I did so for quite a long time, almost ten minutes. Finally, Gurudeva asked me, "Now are you satisfied?" When he came to learn that I was refused entrance, he became a little upset and ordered that I should be always allowed entrance at the time of his massage. From that day onwards, nobody stopped me from entering Gurudeva's quarters at that time.

Now for whom I will do that massage and hear the beautiful discussions that took place at that time?

With whom will I accompany on such special morning walks, full of our questions and his amazing answers?

With whom shall I go to the pastime places of Vraja and Navadvīpa? Who will speak the sweet, nourishing *hari-kathā* that he used to speak?

And who is there to give a fallen person like me that personal, golden touch that only Gurudeva could give?

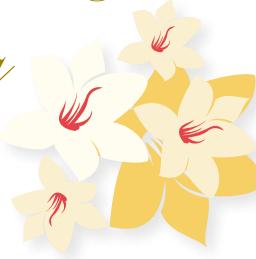
I will miss him forever.

On this *vyāsa-pūjā* day, I pray at the lotus feet of Śrīla Gurudeva, our *rūpānuga guru-varga* and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to shower their mercy on me so that I may attain, relish and subsequently preach their message of *vraja-prema*, thus making my life successful.

Aspiring for the service of śrī *guru* and śrī *guru-paramparā*,

Rohinī-nandana dāsa
(New Delhi)

A Prayer for Śrīla Gurudeva's Appearance Day



My most beloved Śrīla Gurudeva, please accept my *koti-koti sāstāṅga dandavat-pranāmas* at your divine lotus feet, which are the only hope and shelter for the most fallen *jīvas* like my wretched self.

Śrīla Gurudeva, today is a very auspicious day for entire humanity, nay the entire universe, because ninety years ago on this day you mercifully descended from Goloka-dhāma to give the immaculate understanding of *rūpānuga-bhajana* to the fallen *jīvas* of this world. The forces of time and the frailty of followers tend to dilute and diminish the essence of Vedic teachings, so the Supreme Lord either descends Himself or sends one of His associates to re-establish the truth. In recent times, the philosophy of the *Gitā* has been established. However, proper understanding of the more esoteric concepts of *rasa-tattva* and *rāgānugā-bhakti* that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu specially came to deliver, and the practice of *rūpānuga-bhajana paddhati*, the specialty of our *paramparā*, were both diminishing. Instead, the practices of *sāṅga-siddha-* and *āropa-siddha-bhakti* were becoming more prominent. This was a definite threat to the very foundation and *vaiśiṣṭya* of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava conception.

Our previous *ācāryas* had lamented that all their time had been spent in cutting the jungles of materialism and Māyāvāda, and that thus they were not able to preach the deeper aspects of Gauḍīya philosophy. Determined to fulfill their mission, you started preaching world wide to educate the bewildered devotees about the real purpose of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's advent and the teachings of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. In simple yet powerful words, you explained clearly the meaning of *suddhā-bhakti* and the essence of *rūpānuga-bhajana*.

The results started manifesting: the fledgling plants of devotion that had dried up and which were on the verge of extinction, started getting nourished, growing and blossoming. Despite formidable challenges, you firmly sheltered them so that they could become strong.

*gurudeva!
yadi tumi nahito, tabe ki hoito*

*kemone dharito de?
śrī rūpa karuṇā, braja-prema-mahimā
jagate jānāta ke*

O Gurudeva, had you not appeared, what would have become of us? How could we have tolerated living? In this world, who would ever have come to know of the mercy of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and the glories of *vraja-prema*?

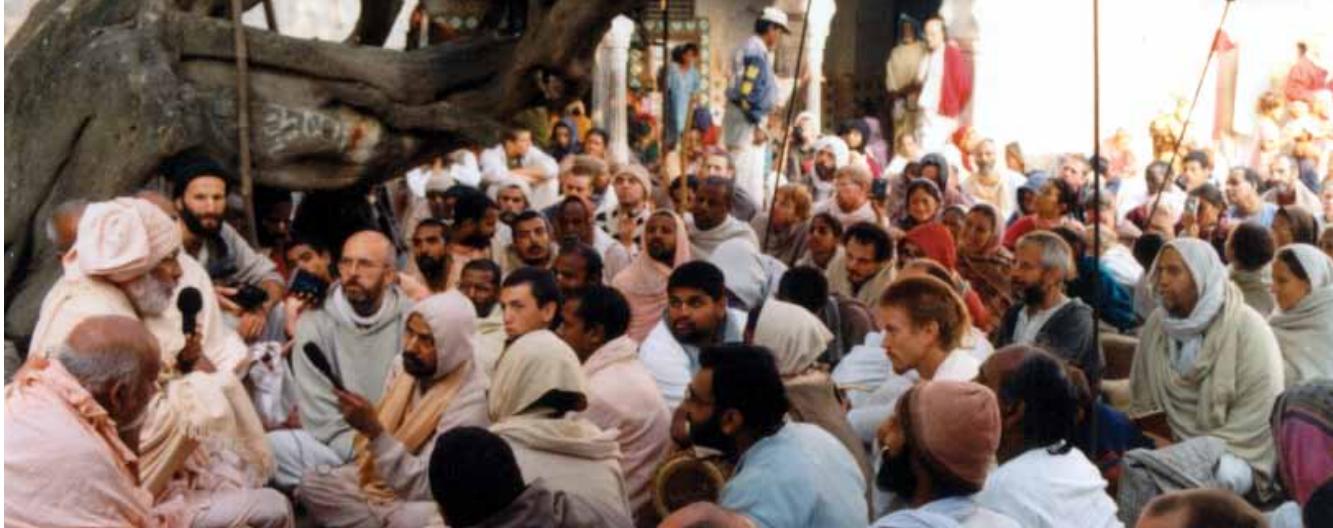
Śrīla Gurudeva, you carried Śrī Dhāma Vṛndāvana in your heart to every part of this world. During your first world tour in 1996 you came to Houston in the USA. While driving you from the airport, I asked you naively, "Gurudeva, how do you like America and these amazing highways?" You smiled and said, "I am only seeing Kuñja-galī somewhere or Prema-galī, and some place Mānagali." That captivated my heart and I realized that you are always in Vṛndāvana and have now come to spread the true conception of *vraja-bhakti* throughout the world.

Through your lectures and books you have shown the complete path – from the beginning of *vaidhī-bhakti* up to the attainment of *vastu-siddhi*. Your books have opened the flood gates of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī's mercy for the entire world and have become the leading resource for those aspiring for *rūpānuga-bhajana*. You once said. "Only after my departure will the world truly realize what I have given." Śrīla Gurudeva, your *vāṇī* will certainly guide millions of sincere seekers of the Truth, and in times to come your books will inevitably be known as the true 'Guardians of Gauḍīya philosophy'.

Dear Śrīla Gurudeva, I pray to your divine lotus feet to kindly appear (*pracodayāt*) in my heart and bless me so that I can comprehend your true glories and practice and preach your teachings purely.

Your most fallen son,

Viṣṇu dāsa
(Houston)



A Heartfelt Humble Offering



A humble offering of heartfelt feelings of eternal indebtedness to my dear-most Śrīla Gurudeva, *nityalilā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* 108 Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Śrī guru appears in this world to serve his *gurudeva*, to perform welfare acts for the whole world, to engage materialistic persons in the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and to help devotees advance in devotional service. And his disappearance from this world, when he returns to the eternal pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, has similar purposes, as he continues to guide his disciples and bestow mercy upon them. Therefore, the appearance and disappearance of the Vaiṣṇavas are non-different, but especially when separated from them, we remember all their pastimes.

Śrīla Gurudeva, you dedicated your whole life to establishing the cherished desire of Śrīman Mahāprabhu in this world. To bring to light the lost places of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, to build temples and install Śrī Kṛṣṇa's deity form, to write books on *bhakti* – particularly *rāgānugā-bhakti* – and to preach by demonstrating the highest standards of *sādhana-bhakti*, were the four tasks Śrīman Mahāprabhu gave to the six Gosvāmīs.

Gurudeva, we also see in your life how you performed these same tasks so wonderfully. You worked tirelessly to restore the glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastime places in Vraja, like Brahmā-kuṇḍa, Kāliya Daha, Uddhava-kyārī and Bhāṇḍīravaṭa. The Vrajavāsīs have acknowledged your services to this divine Vraja by honouring you with the title 'Yugācārya'. You have installed deities in the many *mathas* you have established, and you translated many of the Gosvāmīs' literatures into Hindi, most of which, until now, were only available in the Bengali language; the Hindi speaking people are eternally indebted to you for this mercy.

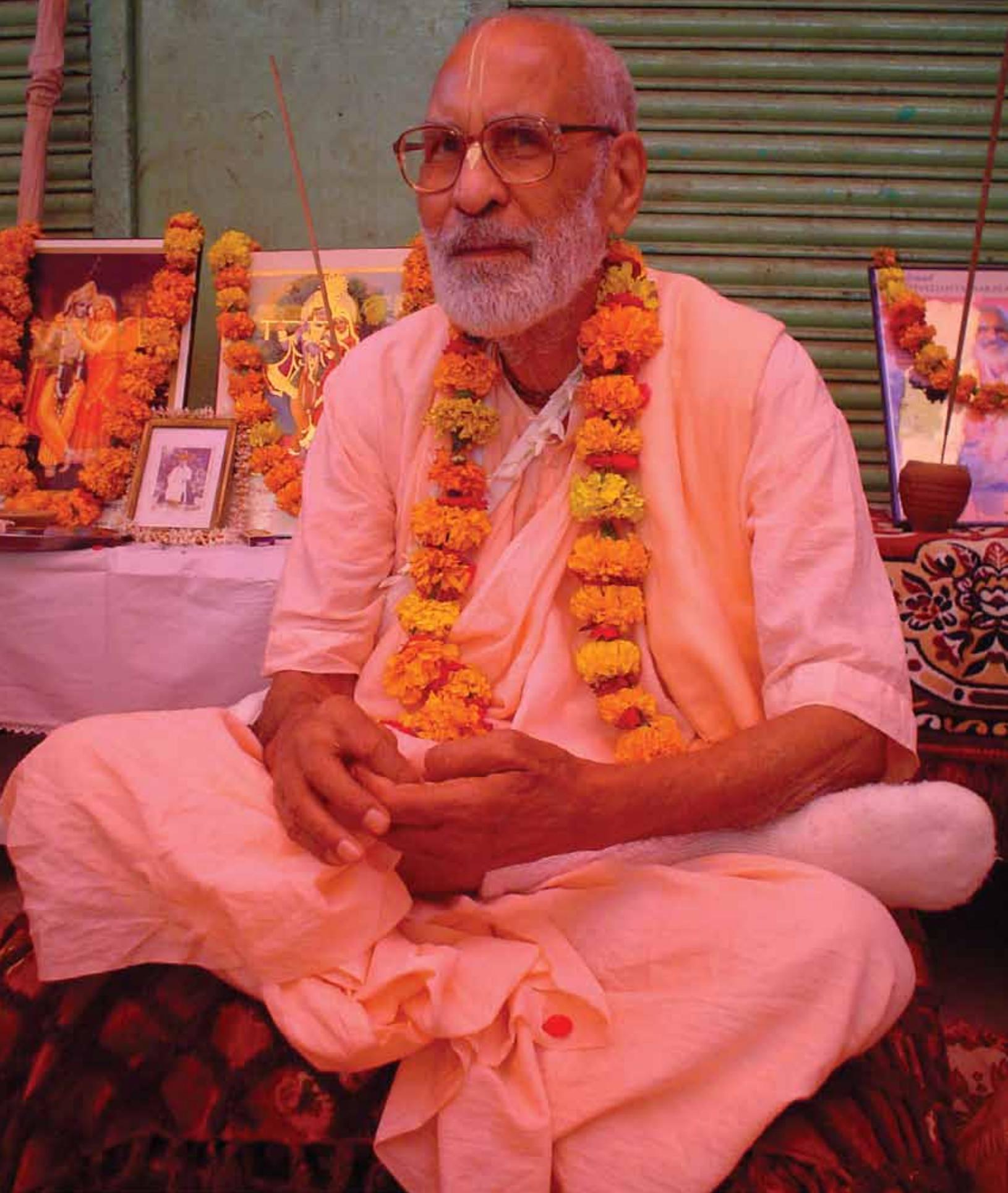
These books have been further translated into other Indian languages and indeed, into all prominent languages of the world. Just as Śrīman Mahāprabhu practiced what

He preached (*āpani ācari' bhakti karila pracāra*), so you also, by your spotless character and practice of pure *bhakti*, have inspired millions in their devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In these ways you continued to fulfil those cherished desires of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, thus giving benefit to the conditioned souls for a long time to come.

Also, by your spotless character and practice of pure *bhakti*, you have inspired millions in their devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In these ways you continued to fulfil those cherished desires of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, thus giving benefit to the conditioned souls for a long time to come.

Many people think that as long as lust remains in their heart, they do not have the right to read or hear the confidential pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. But in your introduction to *Rāsa-pañcādhyāya*, you quote the commentary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, which is exactly in accordance with the teachings of Śrīman Mahāprabhu: "Rāsa-lilā is the topmost pastime of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Hearing and singing about it with full faith in the scriptures is also the topmost activity. Continuous hearing and chanting of this pastime awakens love of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the heart of the devotee. When love of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is awakened, the heart becomes free of lust. The words 'anybody can hear or sing about this pastime' indicate that everyone has the right to do so." This is your special mercy, that you have given us these confidential books, such as *Rāsa-pañcādhyāya*, *Gīta-Govinda*, *Utkalikā-vallarī* and *Saṅkalpa-kalpa-druma*.

You would always insist that in our spiritual life, we should clearly set our goal, for aimless human life is no better than animal life, and the goal to enjoy family life brings momentary happiness, an utter waste of this human form. You stressed that the ultimate goal of human life is to become the maid servant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, as established by Śrīman Mahāprabhu in his dialogue with Śrī Rāya Rāmānanda.



Gurudeva, since you yourself are the eternal maid-servant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, your sweet *hari-kathā* awakens a greed in the heart of the listener to attain that same ultimate goal. However, to save us from thinking that we had become advanced in *bhakti*, you reminded us of our actual position, pointing out that if we have not even overcome jealousy, pride or anger towards our Godbrothers and Godsisters, how can we think we have reached the level of *ruci, asakti* or *bhāva*?

Gurudeva, you have so much love and affection for everyone, especially your disciples. I remember how once, when you were staying at a devotee's house in Delhi, we went to take your *darśana*. Upon our arrival, we were told by Śrīpad Mādhava Mahārāja that you were sick with high fever and would not be giving any *darśana* that day. Being concerned about your health and not wanting to disturb you, we planned to leave within a few minutes. We were still sitting in the drawing room when, to our astonishment,

you walked in. Offering our obeisance at your lotus feet, I asked, "Why have you come out of your room when you are so unwell?" You answered, "If you can travel thirty miles to see me, can I not walk thirty steps to see you?" I was so moved by your love that tears came to my eyes. You then sat down and talked with everyone present for ten minutes. Only when we insisted did you go back to your room.

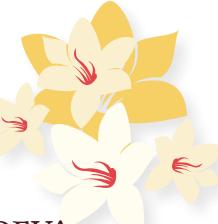
Your glories are unlimited. Everyone who has come in contact with you has such wonderful experiences. You have very kindly given me, who am totally unqualified, the service of translating books into Hindi and preaching. I pray at your lotus feet for the inspiration and strength to carry out your wishes and that I spend the rest of my life serving your lotus feet.

Praying for your causeless mercy,
Your most unqualified servant,
Gokula-candra dāsa (Vṛndāvana)

Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga Jayataḥ

A Heartfelt Offering of Flowers

FROM A LOWLY PERSON AT THE LOTUS FEET OF MY ŚIKṢĀ-GURUDEVĀ
ON THE OCCASION OF HIS AUSPICIOUS VYĀSA-PŪJĀ DAY



I offer my *pranāma* to the lotus feet of my beloved *diksā-guru*, *nitya-līlā pravīṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Vāmana Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and to the lotus feet of my *śiksā-guru* (who is non-different from the *diksā-guru*), *nitya-līlā pravīṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

In order to remove the darkness of ignorance and bestow the light of transcendental knowledge in the heart of the living entities of this world, on this day, my most worshipful śīla gurudeva, *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja made his auspicious appearance. Therefore, this date, being exceedingly pure and auspicious, has become most venerable and worshipful for us all.

It is the advice of our *guru-varga* that *śrī gurudeva* is not only to be glorified on the date of his appearance or disappearance; but rather, at every step of our life, his remembrance and glories remain ever-aware within our heart, and that we not forget him, even for a moment. This is real *śrī guru-pūjā*. Nevertheless, on the auspicious appearance days of our *guru-varga*, it is certainly appropriate to glorify them in a special manner.

By remembrance of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas, obstacles on the path of *bhakti* are destroyed. *Vaiṣṇavera guna-gaṇa karile jīvera trāna*. In other words, by glorifying the Vaiṣṇavas, the living entities are delivered from their bondage to material existence. Yet, who can glorify the Vaiṣṇavas? That qualified person (*adbikāri*) who has developed *sambandha-jñāna*, who has made some progress in the process of *bhajana*, can genuinely sing the glories of *śrī gurudeva*. For the bound living entities, however, repeating what they have heard in the *śrauta-paramparā* cleanses the heart and purifies the tongue.

He who has bestowed upon me instructions on service to *śrī guru*, the conceptions of those following the path of Śrī Rūpa, secrets of the practice of *bhajana* and instructions on service to the divine couple; he who has sown the seed of the *pāramārthika* objective of the living entity in the line of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, manifesting as the desire for greed to be a *pālyā-dāsī* of Śrīmatī Rādhikā – at the lotus feet of that instructing spiritual master *om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja do I fall unlimited times.

My repeated prayer unto his lotus feet, which grant fearlessness, is that within my heart, *niṣṭhā* be awakened in those lotus feet. May my only objective be to please *śrī guru* and the Vaiṣṇavas. In the words of Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, “Because I am deprived and fallen, because of my own weaknesses, not all of my *gurupāda-padma*’s teachings have entered my heart. But in order to speak all the teachings that, by my *gurupāda-padma*’s mercy, have somehow entered through the pathways of my ears, may I possess millions upon millions of tongues, millions upon millions of heads and millions upon millions of years to live. Then I will sing about the unparalleled compassion and benevolence (*amandodaya-dayā*) of my *gurupāda-padma* throughout the unlimited universes with millions and millions of tongues and millions and millions of heads for millions and millions of years. Only then will I have truly performed *guru-pūjā*. Only then will he be pleased with me and shower his perpetual blessings upon me so that I can sing the glory of his matchless compassion with another million tongues. On that day I will finally be liberated from singing about fleeting illusory matters. On that day I will be released from the captivity of all the mundane teachings of this world.”

According to the words of Śrīla Guru Mahārāja, “If for the glorification of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas the seven oceans were to become ink, the peaks of the Himalayas were to become pens and the earth were to become paper, still it would be impossible to properly describe their glories, for they, like the sun and moon, are situated in their own wondrous splendour.”

On this most auspicious day, at the lotus feet of my instructing spiritual master, my prayer is only this: May my only sustenance be to serve you with a sincere heart, exclusively for your pleasure, and in some birth by following

your mood (*bhāva-anumayī*), may I obtain the good fortune of attaining the service of the most desired Goddess. “*Yogyatā vicāre kichu nābī pāya’ tomāra karunā-sāra* – when I look for my own eligibility, I find that I have none; your compassion is the essence of my existence.” In the words of Śrīla Guru Mahārāja, “*ki diye pujibo tomāra carana, bhakti kichu naī, bhakti candana kothāya pāi* – with what shall I worship your feet, for I have no *bhakti*? From where shall I obtain the sandalwood of devotion for worship of these, your lotus feet?”

Today, on your auspicious appearance day my heart is tossed up, seized by the intense and unbearable agony of separation. Today I have been deprived of your always sweet, soft, smiling lotus face, your auspicious, merciful glance with your eyes full of affection bestowing your blessings upon me. “I have been deprived! I have been deprived!” Today I have become devoid of shelter – I have become shelterless.

Very cleverly and silently you ascertained the auspicious appearance day of my *śrī gurupāda-padma* as appropriate for entering into your eternal service to Śrī Śrī Yugala-kiśora. Having performed a glorious and auspicious departure (*śubha-vijaya-yātrā*) you have become invisible to the eyes of this unfortunate person, forever.

My heart is overwhelmed with the intense agony of separation. In this condition, this distressed person prays to your lotus feet, which grant fearlessness, that from the *nitya-dhāma*, please shower upon me but one drop of your compassion. Your compassion and mercy alone is my sole sustenance, it is my only support, my only hope.

Aspiring for the service of Śrī Hari, Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas,

Unqualified, fallen and wretched
(*ayoga dīna-hīna*),
Umā dāsī

Establishing the Mission OF HIS ŠIKṢĀ-GURU



I offer my unlimited obeisances in the dust of the lotus feet of my *diksā-guru*, *nitya-līlā pravīṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda, and the same unlimited obeisances in the dust of the lotus feet of my *śikṣā-guru*, Śrīla Gurudeva, *nitya-līlā pravīṣṭa om viṣṇupāda* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, whom I understand, from their own words, and from the

words of *śāstra*, to be more intimate with me than my own *ātmā*. From Śrīla Gurudeva’s lotus lips I have heard that as water and its wetness are never separated, and as fire and its heat and light are never separated, similarly the bona fide spiritual master and his disciple are also never separated.

On this most auspicious occasion of Śrīla Gurudeva’s divine appearance day, there is no end to what can be

said about his glory. My mind races to thousands of remembrances of lectures, *darśanas* and personal exchanges in the form of questions and answers. I now find myself writing practically nothing of his glory, considering the gratitude I feel towards him, which is also nothing, considering who, in truth, he really is.

Our Śrīla Prabhupāda, sent and inspired by his *guru mahārāja*, Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, travelled the world to establish Mahāprabhu's mission of *rūpānugā-bhakti*, known as Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavism, and I have been astounded at how brilliantly Śrīla Gurudeva has clarified this *rūpānugā-bhakti* for us – and even its distinction from *rāgānugā-bhakti* – thus showing what our Śrīla Prabhupāda actually came to give. Śrīla Gurudeva shone a beautiful light that revealed the deepest inner motive for everything Śrīla Prabhupāda did, everything he taught, everything he established and everything he published. Śrīla Gurudeva's elucidation of his *pranāma-mantra*, specifically on the words *gauravāñī-pracāriṇe*, has given me, and thousands of others, a beautiful and profound Prabhupāda I never knew before.

Although I became Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciple as early as 1966, and although I had read the teachings in his books, which contained the above-mentioned lofty truths, I could not access those truths until I met Śrīla Gurudeva in 1992. Among his first words to me were, "You are pursuing Kṛṣṇa, but you do not know that if you become a *pālyadāsī* (maidservant) of Śrīmatī Rādhikā, then Kṛṣṇa will pursue you." It was from Śrīla Gurudeva that I heard Śrīla Prabhupāda's own definition of ISKCON, which in essence is 'the cultivation of eagerness for the very goal of being a maid servant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā'.

While attending Śrīla Gurudeva's international *hari-kathā* festivals over the years, I also heard him clarify how Śrīla Prabhupāda, like all *ācāryas* in our line, taught that the *jīva* never fell from Goloka Vṛndāvana. This clarification was absolutely essential in order for us to progress in our *bhakti* with devout faith in the message of Mahāprabhu, which is that service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, in Their fully transcendental land of Goloka Vṛndāvana, is the ultimate goal of our life: *ārādhyo bhagavān vrajeśa-tanayas tad dhāma vṛndāvanam*.

From 1967 onward, Śrīla Prabhupāda initiated thousands of disciples into the chanting of the *gāyatrī-mantras*. Years later, Śrīla Gurudeva illuminated the profound meanings of those *mantras*, giving us further scope to develop our own relationship with each *mantra*'s worshipful deity, and he gave instructions on how to practise the five limbs of chanting the *mantras* in order for us to enter *rūpānuga-bhajana*.

Śrīla Gurudeva also described the significance of our Śrīla Prabhupāda's receiving the *sannyāsa mantra*, which specifically bestows the mood of a *gopī*, from Gurudeva's own *guru mahārāja*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja. Furthermore, he explained the import of Śrīla Prabhupāda's personally requesting him to give him *samādhi*: "Samā means 'the same' and *dbi* means 'intelligence'; when a pure devotee departs from this world, he enters the same position as the personal associates of his worshipful deity, with equal intelligence, beauty and qualities. Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja's worshipful deity is Śrīmatī Rādhikā, and he is serving Her under the guidance of Her personal associates, the *mañjarīs*, headed by Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī." By these illuminations Śrīla Gurudeva has deepened my relationship with my *diksā-guru* and the entire *guru-paramparā*.

Under the guidance of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, our Śrīla Prabhupāda opened the grand door of the Gaudīya *sampradāya* to hundreds of thousands of fallen souls all over the world. He introduced us to the concept of *rūpānuga*: "We Gaudīya Vaiṣṇavas; we are known as *rūpānuga*. *Rūpānuga* means 'the followers of Rūpa Gosvāmī'. So, why we should become followers of Rūpa Gosvāmī? Because śrī-caitanya-mano'bhiṣṭam sthāpitam yena bhū-tale. He wanted to establish the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu." More than twenty years later, Śrīla Gurudeva further clarified this in his elucidation of the verses and purports in Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Nectar of Instruction*. "This is *rūpānuga*: Kṛṣṇa should weep; Kṛṣṇa should search for Rādhikā. Why should our sweet, innocent, very simple Śrīmatī Rādhikā go here and there in mountains, across rivers and through thorny areas? Why should She go? Kṛṣṇa should go everywhere in search of Her."

Śrīla Prabhupāda spread his *guru mahārāja*'s teachings by writing books and empowering his disciples to distribute them in millions – in houses, seaports, airports, mountains and islands. Similarly, with the sole aim of fulfilling the heart's desire of the previous *ācāryas*, Śrīla Gurudeva has repeatedly expressed his desire that the distribution of his writings, which unlock the unlimited treasures in our Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, go on in the same way. In this way, he desires that the seed of his unique contribution be somehow planted in the hearts of all human beings, indeed all living entities in the world, to one day blossom into beautiful flowers, which he can offer to the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in Goloka Vṛndāvana.

I pray that I may one day, in one lifetime, also become one of those flowers.

Aspiring for the service of Hari, Guru and Vaiṣṇavas,
Śyāmārāṇī dāsī



The *Vaiśiṣṭya* of ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYAÑA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA

*oṁ ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā¹
cakṣur unmīlitam yena tasmai śrī-gurave namah*

I offer my humble obeisances unto my spiritual master, who with the torchlight of divine knowledge has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance.

*yasya deve para bhaktir yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthaḥ prakāśante mahātmanah*

Only unto those exalted souls who have implicit faith in both the Supreme Lord and the spiritual master are all the meanings of the Vedas automatically revealed.

*M*y dīksā-guru is *nitya-lilā-pravista oṁ visṇupāda* *aṣṭottara-śata* Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda. Seeing me suffering for so long, unable to control my senses and unable to clearly understand the import of his teachings – in other words, unable to completely grasp what it means to be a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava, my *gurudeva* Śrīla Prabhupāda mercifully sent his old and dear friend and śikṣā disciple, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, to teach and inspire me. Years earlier, he had written me, “Now that you have been formally initiated, you are linked up with all the great Vaiṣṇava ācāryas via the *paramparā* system and so the effect will be there fully.” At that time, it never occurred to me that this linking up would be with great Vaiṣṇava ācāryas of the future as well as the past. But Śrīla Prabhupāda, who was *tri-kāla-jñā*, knew that under Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja’s stewardship, I would be watched over carefully (as nothing ever escapes Śrīla Mahārāja’s penetrating glance), I would be taught by the *saṃpradāya*’s most expert instructor in *vraja-bhakti*, I would be unhesitatingly chastised if I deviated from the *paramārthika* goal, and I would be loved with a depth that would make me indebted forever. Above all, he knew I would be clearly directed to the most exalted conception of devotion to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, *unnatojjvala-rasāṁ svabhadri-śriyam*, which was given by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and established by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

This has been possible because Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja is the very embodiment of a *rūpānuga* Vaiṣṇava. His *vaiśiṣṭya* – his distinctive contribution –

is that, following in the footsteps of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, he privileged *artha-pravṛtti* over *anartha-nivṛtti*, thus claiming the glorious *siddhānta* of Śrī Rūpa and Raghunātha for his *guru-varga* and preventing these conceptions from becoming the property of *sahajiyā bābājīs*. In doing this, he has ensured that *parakīya-bhāva* be established as the exalted and authoritative speciality of the Gaudīya *saṃpradāya*, protecting it from those who would denigrate it as licentious behavior. And he boldly challenged those within the *saṃpradāya* who, misunderstanding the teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda and the *ācāryas*, would relegate the most elevated state of *mañjarī-bhāva* to the dustbin of neglect or even fear, rather than understanding the philosophical centrality of this state, which is our aspired serving mood.

Moreover, Śrīla Mahārāja schooled us in understanding the writings of the Gosvāmīs so that we not fall victim to ‘internally conceived’ realizations that are really only mentally concocted. To this end, for over twenty-five years, he convened an annual three-day *vaiṣṇava-sabhā*, the Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī Conference, on the occasion of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī’s disappearance day, and invited Mathurā-maṇḍala’s foremost Sanskrit scholars, *sannyāsīs* and *panditas* of all *saṃpradāyas*, academics, and great souls to speak morning and evening on the glories of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. In that assembly, he analyzed each of the lectures, emphasizing salient points, praising brilliant presentations and correcting occasional deviations. For this conference and his other endeavours to assemble Vaiṣṇava scholars in discourse that has kept *vraja-bhakti* alive and pure, the intelligentsia of Vṛndāvana have repeatedly lauded him.

The Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Conference is only one example of the labour of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja to speak the pure message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He criss-crossed the globe more than thirty times during the last fifteen years, until the advanced age of ninety-one, to personally inspire *bhakti* in the hearts of countless souls; he held *parikramās* every year in Vṛndāvana and Navadvīpa *dhāmas* for tens of thousands; he published in Hindi forty-eight major translations of the literature of the Gosvāmīs, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura and other Vaiṣṇava ācāryas, and these are being translated all over the world; he revived and

maintained places of pilgrimage throughout the *dhāmas* – even Ananta-deva cannot enumerate his glories.

When Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave His *govardhana-sīlā* to Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Raghunātha dāsa considered that it was he who was being given to Govardhana. In this way, my Śrīla Prabhupāda mercifully gave me to my *gurudeva* Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, and I am so fortunate that he accepted me and allowed me to be with him for some time. In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya-*

līlā 11.94, 97) Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu speaks upon the passing of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura: “Being merciful upon Me, Kṛṣṇa gave us his association. Being independent in His desires, the Lord has now broken that association.” Like Haridāsa Ṭhākura, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja was the crown jewel on the head of this world; and without him, the world is now bereft of its valuable jewel.

Dāsānudāsī,
Mañjarī dāsī

A Great Vraja-rasa-rasika



I offer countless obeisances and *puspāñjali* with utmost śraddhā at the lotus feet of my *gurupāda-padma om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-sāta* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Śrīla Gurudeva was the supreme *vraja-rasa rasika*, absorbed in the highest moods of Vraja, especially in the moods of *mañjarī-sevā*. If one wants to see the degree to which he was relishing *vraja-bhakti*, then one can get some glimpse by reading his books like *Bhajana-rahasya* and by listening to his lectures.

He had a wonderful gift. He could take any difficult topic and explain it in very simple and easy-to-understand language, so that his audience could understand it. And whenever he would discuss *gopī-bhāva*, he used to conclude by revealing something of his own moods and the realizations coming from his *bhajana*. His voice was so attractive – it was mixed with nectar, and his face glowed when he would speak, due to his absorption in the moods of Vraja. Through his discourses, he was able to give his audience *darśana* of the pastimes and topics he was describing, via the medium of their ears. Śrīla Gurudeva was always absorbed in his *svarūpa-siddhā-bhakti* like a *rasagullā* is absorbed in melted sugar juice.

One cannot describe the extent of *guru-niṣṭhā* in Mahārājaji. I would like to give one small example.

One of *guru mahārāja*'s Godbrothers was Anaṅga-mohana Brahmacārī, who had contracted tuberculosis. Nowadays there are many medicines for this disease, but back then there were none. In the end it was decided that treatment should be done in Madras, but who would take him there? My *gurudeva* saw that by helping this *brahmacārī* his *gurudeva* would be very pleased. Without caring for his own life, he took Anaṅga-mohana Brahmacārī to Madras, but he could not be saved. The end of his life was very beautiful. At the time of his departure, Gurudeva was nearby. He heard Anaṅga-mohana Brahmacārī calling out, “Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa have come to take me. They are calling me to Vṛndāvana. And my *gurudeva* has come.” When he was saying, “O Bābā (*gurudeva*), O Bābā,” Gurudeva placed a picture of his Gurudeva on his chest and said, “Ask Rādhājī to have mercy on me.” And then, Anaṅga-mohana Brahmacārī disappeared.

Such was Gurudeva's *guru-niṣṭhā*. All the symptoms of a Vaiṣṇava that are described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* were present in my Gurudeva.

I have a strong desire to write more, but I will stop here.
Śrī Rādhe Rādhe

Aspiring for the dust of the feet
of Guru and Vaiṣṇavas,
Savitā dāsī

Our Beloved Guardian



śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅga jayataḥ
namaste gurudevāya sarvāsiddha pradāyine
sarva-maṅgala-rūpāya sarvānanda vidhāyine

As I remember my supremely worshipful Śrī Śrīla Gurudeva on his *vyāsa-pūjā* day, pangs of separation from him are excessively awakening in my heart. *Niśānta-līlā* was indeed his most cherished time, and it was at that particular time that he chose to enter the eternal pastimes.

Due to the appearance of such a *parama-bhāgavata mahāpuruṣa*, this Mauni Amāvasyā has itself become blessed and eternally merciful. To dispel the ignorance prevailing in the hearts of millions and millions of people, Śrīmad Nārāyaṇa, like the sun, appeared on this dark moon day. Merely by remembering him, coldness, or the inertness of materialism, is dispelled. Merely by his *darśana*, transcendental pleasure is experienced in the heart and the fire of this material existence becomes cool. And merely by the rays of his mercy, the heart becomes exhilarated with *rāga* gifted by the son of Śacī and drowned in service moods to Śrī Rādhā.

A Personality that Purifies the Three Worlds

Even though it is not possible for a person like, me whose intelligence is in the mode of ignorance, to describe his transcendental glories, I feel great pleasure to say that when I first received Śrīla Gurudeva *darśana* in 1979, his form and his very nature surprised me and fulfilled my desires. His brilliant face was decorated with the beauty of transcendental effulgence, his transcendental body was eager to bestow freedom from the cycle of birth and death, and his voice, adorned with *gaura-bhāva*, was freely distributing the wealth of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. I appealed, “O deva! Please be merciful on this fallen person! Save me! Protect me! Accept my prayer.”

Nitya-siddha Ācārya

The personification of compassion, Śrīla Gurudeva, by his extraordinary talents, has distributed in this world the firm and confidential *siddhānta* of *om viṣṇupāda* Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, who came in the line of Śrīmad Rūpa Gosvāmī who is extremely dear to Śrī Caitanya. He has thus delivered the living entities who are engrossed in this world, by enlightening them with transcendental knowledge and bestowing upon them

an interest in service to Kṛṣṇa, he spread waves of *sat-cit-ānanda*.

He has been adorned with the title of “Yuga-ācarya”, and indeed, everywhere in the world, as *jagad-guru*, he is certainly most worthy of our one-pointed *vyāsa-pūjā*. Under his shelter so many disciples have cleaned the temple of their hearts, which had been contaminated by the stones, straw and dust of fruitive activity, monistic philosophy, and the desire for material enjoyment and liberation collected over many lifetimes, thus obtaining pure *rūpānugā-bhakti* and making their lives blessed.

An Alert Guard in the Line of Śrī Caitanya

The journey that Śrīla Gurudeva started by translating into Hindi *Jaiva-dharma* by Śrīla Saccidānanda Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, continued until the last days of his manifest presence, as he translated several Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *granthas*. With great vigor, Parama-gurudeva refuted *māyāvādism* and established Vaiṣṇava *siddhānta*. Śrīla Gurudeva realized all those conceptions, and wrote *Ācārya-carita*, *The Life and Precepts of Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja* which dimmed the lustre of Māyāvāda and dumbfounded everyone. This biography has been written in a unique manner, and contains the transparent and wonderful line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s conceptions, attracting even big-big philosophers. Many literatures which are both difficult to obtain and hard to grasp were translated into Hindi by Śrīla Gurudeva and edited by him, thus he made them accessible to all. When he asked me to translate, he clearly told me, “We do not need this translation, but since I want you to understand this literature, I am asking you to translate it.”

Ātmīyatā (A Feeling of My-ness)

Śrī Gurudeva deeply loves all his disciples. Only one who sees Śrī Kṛṣṇa in all beings can truly consider everyone to be his own. Before Śrī Gurudeva, everyone felt, “He loves me the most.” He possessed both gravity and sweetness simultaneously, and an auspicious gentle smile always played upon his face. Being captivated by this, everyone would abandon the path of materialism and become eager to follow the path of Vraja. I have such faith in his lotus feet that even if I were to be amidst hundreds and thousands of

people, I know that his mercy would still be there for me without fail. Those whose lives have been nourished and beautified by his great love will never be deserted by him and left to cry. Now, close proximity to Śrī Gurudeva is no longer available and I have to be satisfied with touching those holy places where he placed his feet.

One time, Śrīla Gurudeva was admitted into the Hinduja Hospital in Mumbai. At that time, a thought came into my ignorance-covered mind that something might happen to Śrī Gurudeva. At that very moment, Śrīla Gurudeva abruptly stood up and told me, “Be careful! Guru never dies.”

A Perfect Speaker

Śrīla Gurudeva would clearly express both philosophy and narrations from *sāstra* in very simple language. When he would speak these stories in his voice as grave as a thunderclap, they would arouse *rasa-brahma* in everyone’s heart. If he were said to be the dear parrot of Śrī Rādhārāṇī, it would be no exaggeration. The manner in which he freely describes the *siddhānta* of Śrī Mahāprabhu’s *mano’bhīṣṭa*, not only exhibits his fearlessness but also proclaims victory for the conceptions of the *saṃpradāya*. He announces, “*Mañjari-bhāva* manifests from within the heart; it does not come from outside but arises naturally by properly chanting the *mantras* given by *guru*.”

In the preface to my PhD research paper, Śrī Gurudeva said, “In the same manner, keep performing service to the *granthas* in the future as well.” By personally saying this, he planted a seed and has thus engaged me in this service.

He became the most prominent proponent of Vaiṣṇavism in the whole world in present times. Only he could transform the hearts of people from countries such as China.

Renovating Pastime Places

Performing *parikramā* oneself and engaging others in *parikramā* of the pastime places of Śrī Gaura-maṇḍala, Śrī Kṣetra-maṇḍala and Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala is one of the prime limbs of *bhakti*. He gave those under his guidance the opportunity to have *darśana* of these *dhāmas*. While doing so Śrī Gurudeva would also elucidate the glories of these holy places. The manner in which Śrīla Gurudeva would describe the pastimes of these places, is not possible for anyone with material vision. He tastes these pastimes himself, and also manifests, in the hearts of the devotees, a greed to taste them. It is the desire of Śrī Gurudeva that these pastime places do not become lost or withered, but that they should remain visible for a long time to come.

He therefore, reconstructed structures such as the dais in Brahma-kuṇḍa, Uddhava-kyari and Bhāṇḍīravana.

Did the sight of devotees following Śrī Gurudeva as they chanted the *mahā-mantra*, accompanied by the sound of the *mṛdanga*, *ḍholā* and *karatālas*, not awaken in us remembrance of the time of Śrī Mahāprabhu? Śrī Gurudeva is always present. He walks in these holy places, sometimes in a manifest form and sometimes in an unmanifest form. At many places, peacocks start dancing simply by seeing him.

Śrīla Gurudeva has become the *ācārya* of all *saṃpradāyas*. He worked indefatigably, day and night, to give his benediction – the *Govinda-bhāṣya* of Vedānta.

Final Residence in Śrī Jagannātha Purī

Śrīṅgāra-rasa is not nourished without separation. While staying in Śrī Kṣetra, Śrīla Gurudeva was tasting the Gambhīrā pastimes, in the proximity of the birthplace of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda, the very dear associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is the great nourisher of *vitpralambha*. In the guise of his pastime of sickness, he immersed himself in that separation mood. Watching the formidable blue waves of the ocean, he thus spent his time serving Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the mood of separation.

He is not a vessel of deteriorating flesh and blood; rather he is completely independent of all laws of material nature. Sometimes he comes in path of our vision, and sometimes, to nourish the mood of separation, he performs his pastimes of ill health.

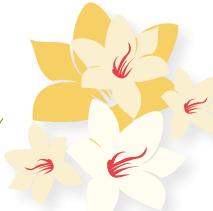
Now in the absence of his direct *darśana*, my heart is always agitated. This separation is very intolerable.

O Gurudeva! Today, on the day you made your divine appearance in this world, Yogamāyā-devī in the *nitya-dhāma* is performing your *ārati*. And here, with garlands of tears we are also performing your *ārati*.

O Gurudeva! Are you listening to my call of suffering? O spring breeze! Go and tell him that without him, my mind is not finding any satisfaction. O Sun! When your rays touch him, make him realize that without his *darśana*, every moment feels like a millennium. O sea! By your roar, tell him that I want to hear something from his lotus mouth. O sky! Bow down to the feet of his great personality and pay him my obeisances. O Majestic one! O Deva! I offer you crores and crores of obeisances. Victory unto you! Victory unto you!

Your daughter,
Madhu dāsī
(Mumbai)

Two Tears



First of all I offer my heartfelt *dañḍavat-pranāma* unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master *nitya-lilā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja and the same heartfelt *dañḍavat-pranāma* unto the lotus feet of my beloved *śikṣā-guru, nitya-lilā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

Dear Śrīla Gurudeva,
Please accept this small offering:

I don't understand my fortune
in having had your *saṅga* these past fifteen years.
"How to repay my Prabhupāda?" I had asked.
Your reply: "Simply two tears."

"Two tears?" I asked disbelieving,
as a flood rolled down my face.
"Yes," you answered patiently, "just two tears are all it takes."

"No one invited me," you said.
"Hearts crying called me here."
"I didn't know anyone was listening," I thought.
"Is that the value of a tear?"

Often we would ask if you could give us *bhakti*,
give this jewel.

"Yes, I can," you'd promptly answer,
"Oh, but first join the Crying School."

When in New York you left me,
and I did not know how I'd live,
You said, "Each day two tears you send me,
and two tears I will give.

"Send two tears to me," you'd told,
"but now you must be calm,
And I will send two tears back to you,
from Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma."

Such tireless compassion as this, the world has never known.
Now you've left our earthly vision;
Kṛṣṇa's claimed you as His own.

The festival is over, our lives will never be the same.
But I know that you're not gone at all...
You're only two tears away.

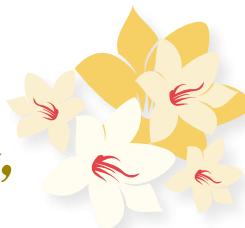
Yours,
Gopanandinī dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Gurudeva,

I offer my unlimited obeisances at the lotus feet of my beloved *dīkṣā-guru* Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Prabhupāda, and the same unlimited obeisances at the lotus feet of you, my beloved *śikṣā-guru* Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

*O Gurudeva with eyes so blue
When I see the sky I think of you
With love and affection for a heart so true
To our guru-varga and the preaching mood.*

*Before you came I had lost the grip of Gaurāṅga's message
I'd begun to slip more deeply into māyā's grip
Forgetting the message of love of God
And the lotus feet of our Prabhupāda.*



*But now with hope you fill my heart
Unlocking secrets, a brand new start
The highest message the sweetest love
Is to try to taste mañjari-bhāva.*

*So thank you for saving this humble life
And freeing me from illusion's strife
Let me serve you more each day
At your lotus feet I pray to stay.*

Your most fallen aspiring servitor,
Bhāvatarīni-devī dāsī

The Astonishing Power of the Mahat



*I*offer my pranāma to my beloved gurudeva, *nitya-līlā praviṣṭa om viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja*, whose position in our *rūpānuga guru-varga* is especially glorious.

*mahat-saṅgam māhātmyam evaitat paramādbhutam
kṛtārtha yena viprāsau sadyo 'bhūt tat-svarūpavat*

Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmrta (2.7.14)

The glory of *mahat-saṅga*, the association of great men, is astonishingly wonderful. By the effect of such *saṅga*, the *brāhmaṇa* Jana Śarmā immediately became perfect like his *gurudeva*, Śrī Sarūpa.

By some unexpected great fortune I was brought to the lotus feet of the *mahat*. Steeped in the sweet moods of Vraja, Śrīla Gurudeva is especially famous for his luxuriant descriptions of *vraja-līlā*, and no matter what was his topic of discussion, he would end almost every discourse by glorifying the love of the *gopīs*, especially the love of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Some parties objected to his speaking about Śrī Kṛṣṇa's love affairs with the *gopīs*, but Gurudeva, having complete faith in *śāstra*, never wincing. *Vikrīḍitam* *vraja-vadhbūbir idam ca viṣṇoh*. *Bhāgavatam* commands, "Indeed, the *baddha-jīva*, in all stages, must hear about the love between Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs*, especially *rāsa-līlā*, for this is the very medicine to remove the heart disease of lust."

Our Gurudeva, the bold commander-in-chief presenting *rāgānugā-bhakti* wholesale to the world, never compromised in revealing the actual message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He made it perfectly clear that Mahāprabhu came to relish the moods of Śrīmatī Rādhikā and to distribute *sva-bhakti-sriyam*, personal service to Her. And with the hope that we would quickly enter the moods of Vraja, Gurudeva encouraged us to delve into the Tenth Canto and the Gosvāmī's literatures, all the while reminding us of *vāco vegāṁ manasāḥ krodha-vegam*. He repeatedly stated that if we do not touch *vraja-līlā*, all is lost, but at the same time he always stressed not to prematurely jump to the top of the tree, lest we fall down and break our bones.

Our Gurudeva quotes the *mahat-saṅga* verse in his commentary on *Venu-gīta* to explain how the low-caste

Pulinda *kanyās* reaped such good fortune. The aboriginal forest girls had no direct contact with Śrī Kṛṣṇa, but they would collect flowers for the *gopīs*, who would use them to make flower ornaments for their beloved. And when passing a few moments with the *gopīs*, the Pulindīs would hear them discussing Him. Thus, by serving the *mahat-gopīs* and hearing their *hari-kathā*, the Pulindīs developed burning *anurāga* for Kṛṣṇa, and satisfied it by smearing on their breasts the *kunkuma* from His lotus feet, which they found on the grass.

Gurudeva comments on Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī's verse that the effect of a *mahat-puruṣa*'s *saṅga* is extremely miraculous and beyond logic, and therefore it can make anything happen. This fallen wretch can testify to our *mahat*'s power to work miracles. I was forty-seven years old when I first came to Gurudeva's door, and was secretly nurturing a desire for marriage. It didn't take Gurudeva long to sniff this out, and he immediately and unrelentingly began deriding me in public, "Oh, you want to get married?!" Four years later, Gurudeva published his *Venu-gīta* in Hindi, and it was my good fortune to work on the subsequent English version by helping with the translation and editing. After the book was finished, I realized that all thought of marriage had vanished from my heart, and Gurudeva, with great satisfaction, publicly acknowledged that I had been freed from that embarrassing desire. Thus, the *mahat* worked a great miracle in a short time; such is the benefit resulting from serving him, hearing his profuse *hari-kathā* and receiving public chidings. In this way Śrīla Gurudeva proved the efficacy of the *Bhāgavatam*'s promise. Only when the *jīva* is relieved of mundane conceptions of sex life can he become eligible to serve the transcendental love life of Śrī Śrī Yugala-Kiśora and achieve his rightful inheritance. So I am eternally grateful to our beloved Gurudeva, who showered me with kindness beyond my imagination. His glories are beyond my ability to fathom. May I eternally dwell at his lotus feet.

Yours,
Vicitri dāsī

My Dear Śrīla Gurudeva



*oṁ ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā¹
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namah*

*nama oṁ viṣṇu-pādāya rādhikāya priyātmane
śrī-śrīmad-bhaktivedānta-nārāyaṇa iti nāmine*

About seventeen years ago, in the year 1993, I was fortunate to receive my first *darśana* of Śrīla Gurudeva. I had been searching for a bona fide *guru* for three years, and finally, by the mercy of Śrī Girirājājī, I met my *gurudeva*.

Śrīla Gurudeva is such a great personality that it is not possible for us to understand him, but his smile, full of affection, and how he uttered the word ‘daughter’ when he spoke to me, attached me to him so deeply, I felt that I had met the person who had been my father for countless lives. The more I met him, the more my faith in him increased, all due to his *vātsalya*. All worldly relationships appeared insipid before his affection.

It was with so much love and kindness that Gurudeva began teaching us small, small things so that we could make spiritual advancement. We were not even aware at what moment we started comprehending such high *siddhāntas* with ease. Śrīla Gurudeva first told us, “You are not this body, you are a soul that has been separated from God, and the sole reason you are unhappy is because you have distanced yourselves from Him. You should understand this.”

I said, “Gurudeva, first we need to remove our sins, and only then will we be able to perform *bhakti* to God.”

“It is impossible to remove air from a pot,” he said. “It is not possible for you to remove your sins first, but by chanting *harināma*, you will begin to love God. Only then will your sins and your desire to commit sins automatically start to diminish.”

I asked, “Gurudeva, how will I achieve love of God?”

“To achieve love,” he responded, “a relationship needs to be established. We become attached solely to the object we devote our energy to. When we serve that object in a manner that is congenial to our relationship, our affection to that object gradually begins to increase. As a result of this, mood of ‘my-ness’, love is achieved. Even though Kṛṣṇa is God Himself, He is controlled by

the Vrajavāsīs’ affection and especially by the love of the *gopīs*. You also have to learn how the Vrajavāsīs serve Kṛṣṇa. Then only will your life be blessed.”

One day I asked, “Gurudeva, what is *prema*?”

“*Prema* is an affection that does not break,” he responded, “even though there is perfectly good reason for it to do so. Just as stream of oil flows, without interruption, similarly, when this *prema* flows unceasingly towards the feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, it will be *prema-bhakti*.”

Whenever I heard Śrīla Gurudeva express such beautiful and high topics in simple and easily understandable words, my mind would become happy, my faith in him increased, and the feeling of my own insignificance also increased.

One day I asked Gurudeva, “We are filled with *aparādhas* and *anarthas*. Don’t you feel hatred towards us?”

Gurudeva immediately said, “A child urinates and excretes in his mother’s lap. Does his mother hate him?”

When I heard such affection filled words from Gurudeva, I became overwhelmed, my heart melted, and I became anxious to surrender myself at his lotus feet with the thought, “When will we become qualified to truly follow Śrīla Gurudeva?”

Sometimes, Śrīla Gurudeva would be surrounded by so many people that it was not possible get close to him. At those times I would become disappointed and ask him, “How shall I ever be able to perform *āratī* to you from such distance?” Gurudeva would laugh and say, “Do you know how the *gopīs* performed *āratī* of Kṛṣṇa in front of everyone? They performed *āratī* by the light of their eyes, and the *cāmara* was their eyelashes.”

Thus by Śrīla Gurudeva’s each and every word, the deep moods of Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Raghunātha Gosvāmī and the *paramparā* that followed them, were expressed. Slowly, slowly, by the sweet *hari-kathā* I heard from his lotus mouth, I developed a little interest to read scripture and began to read *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Whenever I read about the form, qualities and pastimes of Mahāprabhu, they reminded me of the form, qualities, and pastimes of Gurudeva. When I fearfully put my understanding before him, he accepted it and also allowed me to present this conception before others. After he had accepted my thinking, I concluded that there surely must be a verse in the scriptures to validate this. I then found this verse by Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī:

*yadyapi āmāra guru—caitanyera dāsa
tathāpi jāniye āmi tānhāra prakāśa*

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Ādi-lilā 1.44)

Although I know that my spiritual master is a servitor of Śrī Caitanya, I know Him also as a direct manifestation of the Lord. (BBT translation)

Just as Mahāprabhu has the complexion of molten gold, a large form and long arms, Śrīla Gurudeva also had golden complexion, was tall in stature, and long arms.

Just as Mahāprabhu had an effulgent face and lotus eyes, Śrīla Gurudeva also had an effulgent face and eyes like a blue lotus.

Just as Mahāprabhu's voice rumbled like that of a new cloud, Śrīla Gurudeva's voice resounded throughout the whole world.

Just as Mahāprabhu was peaceful, mild and devoted to *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, Gurudeva's nature was the same.

Just like Mahāprabhu, Gurudeva was also *bhakta-vatsala*, possessing a generous nature and being equal to all.

Just like Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Gurudeva was magnanimous and freely gave love for Kṛṣṇa without considering one's qualification.

Just as Mahāprabhu practised *bhakti* and, being more humble than a blade of grass, more tolerant than a tree and devoid of seeking self respect, propagated the name of Kṛṣṇa, similarly Śrīla Gurudeva, even though a mine of good qualities, never heard his own glorification, gave everyone appropriate respect, was tolerant of the faults of his disciples and, being devoid of seeking self respect, preached pure love.

In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Brahmānanda Bhāratī said to Śrīman Mahāprabhu, "Upon seeing you, *kṛṣṇa-nāma* is manifesting on my tongue by itself, and the happiness in my heart is increasing." Similarly when anyone would meet Gurudeva, they felt the same. Mahāprabhu became very pleased with the person who pleased his devotees. For example, King Pratāparudra arranged for to accommodate and offer *prasāda* to all the devotees of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. Similarly, whenever Śrīla Gurudeva kindly visited our home, he would only rest when he knew that arrangements had been made for the devotees' accommodation and *prasāda*.

Those personalities to whom the whole world is indebted – Mahāprabhu and Gurudeva – would themselves feel indebted to anyone who performed even little to their devotees. Just as the heart of Mahāprabhu is soft and magnanimous, similarly Gurudeva's heart is also very soft. He could not tolerate seeing the distress of anyone. Therefore, along with bestowing transcendental auspiciousness upon them, he also helped them.

Like Śrīman Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Gurudeva performed many pastimes, especially a *sannyāsa* pastime. And again, like Mahāprabhu, Śrīla Gurudeva became absorbed in the mood of Rādhārāṇī and concluded his pastimes in Śrī Puri-dhāma. Just as Mahāprabhu never abandoned Navadvīpa, the place of His sweet (*mādburya*) pastimes, similarly Śrīla Gurudeva never abandoned Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma, taking *samādbī* there forever.

Whenever I heard Śrīla Gurudeva sing the *kīrtana*, *yañ kali rūpa śarīra...,* a thought would come in my heart that if in this Kali-yuga, my Gurudeva had not come for me, then who would have brought to light the *bhakti śrī-unnata-ujjvala-rasa*'s *parikīya-bhāva* that Mahāprabhu had come to give? Who would have given a greed for *mañjari-bhāva*, the mood of being the maid-servant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā? By the mercy of Gurudeva, we obtained that greed for which we were not qualified. Only by the strength of the mercy of Gurudeva and by the divine knowledge given by him, our human birth was given the chance to be successful; otherwise like animals we would have ended our lives absorbed in sense gratification.

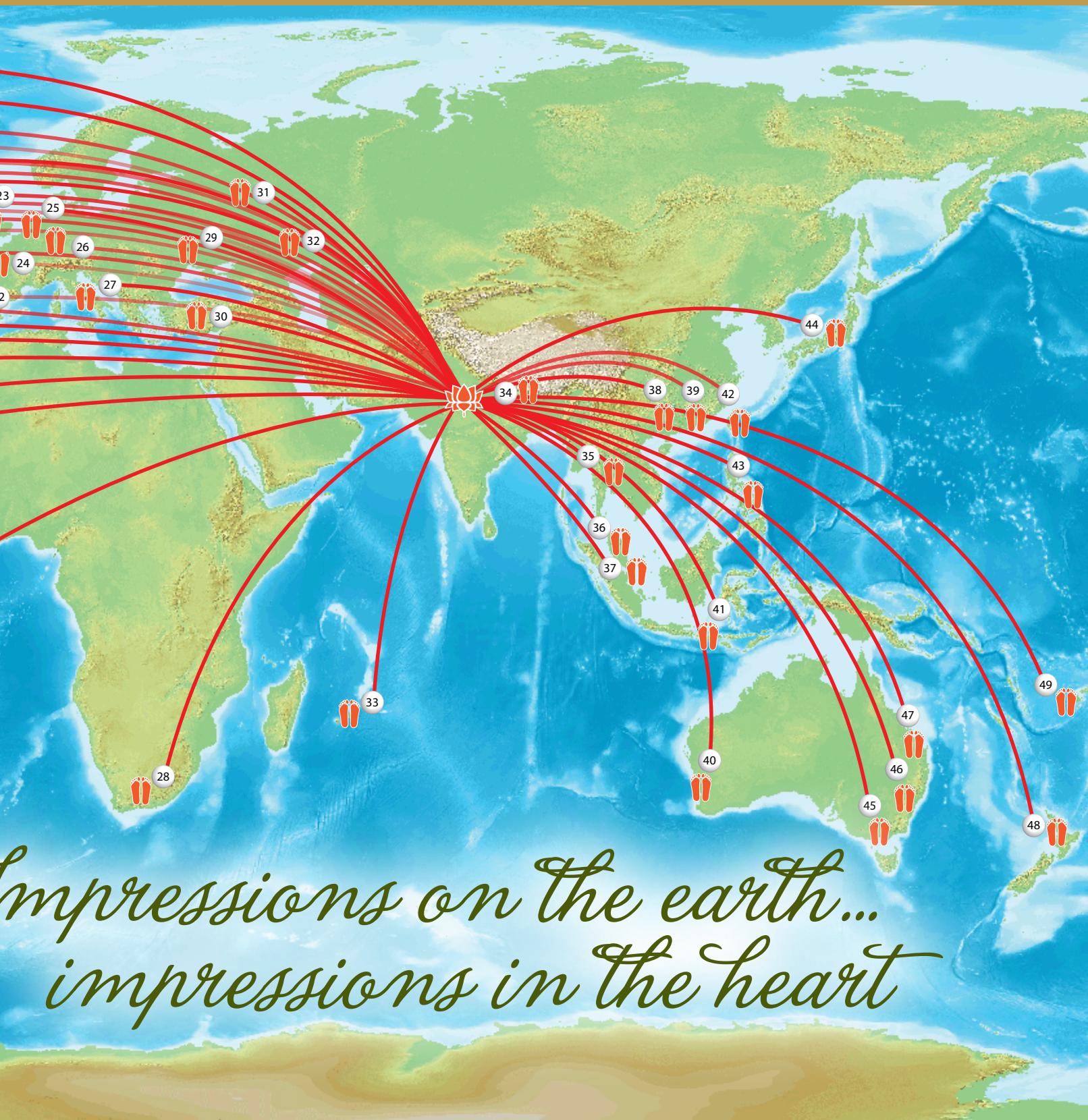
What *śraddhāñjali* can I possibly give to my *gurudeva*, whose *gurutva* is so heavy, and who, in one form is the personified mercy of Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu, and in another form is the maid-servant of Rādhājī, Her mercy personified. What *puṣpāñjali* can this fallen person offer such a great personality? But, that same Śrīla Gurudeva is the dearest friend of my heart and is my mother and father. I therefore want to give him my flower-like heart, because he has given his word that he will clean it and offer it at the feet of his Svāminijī.

Always aspiring for service of
Śrīla Gurudeva's lotus feet,
Poonam dāsī
(New Delhi) 



To bestow pure bhakti upon
Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja

*vanīra sūsampada –
earth's most valuable treasure”*
Prarthana Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura



*Impressions on the earth...
impressions in the heart*

In all jīvas, from 1996 to 2010 Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta
Swami travelled the world more than thirty times.



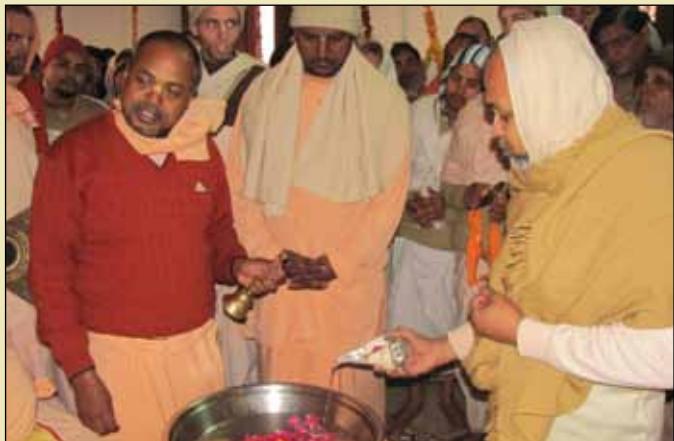
Abhiṣeka performed at Śrī Keśavajī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Mathurā

Devotees gather at Śrī Rupa Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha, Vṛndāvana

Hari-kathā at Śrī Giridhārī Gauḍīya Maṭha, Govardhana



Śrīla Gurudeva's Samādhī
Śrī Navadvīpa-dhāma.



VIRAHĀ- MOHOTSAVA

observed in Vraja-maṇḍala