

Homages



GBC

Anuttama Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet.

Today we pray to remember and appreciate you with heightened awareness. As your humble servant, I would like to share my gratitude for one of your contributions that is only beginning to bear fruit.

One of the greatest sources of suffering and strife in our modern world is the increasing tension and conflict between different religious systems and communities. While people of all traditions call out for “peace on earth,” we are shocked at the atrocities committed by one religious community upon another—often in the so-called “name of God.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave the world a different vision of the interplay of religions. In the 1950s you wrote,

Hindus, Muslims, Christians, and the members of the other sects that have convincing faith in the authority of God must not sit idly now and silently watch the rapid growth of a Godless civilization. There is the supreme will of God, and no nation or society can live in peace and prosperity without acceptance of this vital truth. [*Light of the Bhāgavata*]

In this mood, your followers across the world are working to develop relationships with other religious and spiritual traditions. Inspired by you, this year, in Washington, D.C, a Vaiṣṇava-Muslim dialogue was inaugurated.

The co-coordinator of the dialogue is a Muslim professor (and vegetarian) who came to study in the United States from India some forty years ago. As a student at Harvard, he attended a lecture you gave at the university. He came away, as he describes it, “convinced that God and spiritual truth are contained in all the great religions of the world.” To this day he is an advocate of interfaith understanding, and an admirer of your contributions in spreading Vaiṣṇavism and God consciousness all over the world.

During this year’s dialogue, about ten Vaiṣṇavas and ten Muslims spent the day discussing “The Name of God.” Our mood was one of respect and inquiry: “Please tell me what you know of God and His names.” We were not there to debate or to dominate. We sat in friendship, as devotees of the Supreme Lord, as we best understand Him, to learn from each other, and about each other.

As you stated in a lecture in 1969:

Everyone should follow the particular traditions or *sampradāya*, the regulative principles, of your own religion. This is required, as much as there are many different political parties, although everyone is meant to serve one country.

Our meeting was also empowered by the instructions of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, who wrote:

It is not proper to constantly propagate the controversial superiority of the teachers of one’s own country over those of another country although one may, nay one should, cherish such a belief in order to acquire steadiness in a faith of your own. But no good can be affected to the world by such quarrels.’ [*Śrī Caitanya-sikṣāmṛta*]

There are voices in the world today that advocate the idea that religion is the problem. Other, more enlightened voices advocate that we should learn to tolerate and respect each other. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, taught us to be faithful enough to learn from one another, and to love and encourage one another.

It is not a fact that the Lord appears only on Indian soil. He can manifest Himself anywhere and everywhere, and whenever He desires to appear. In each and every incarnation, He speaks as much about religion as can be understood by the particular people under their particular circumstances. But the mission is the same—to lead people to God consciousness and



obedience to the principles of religion. Sometimes He descends personally, and sometimes He sends His bona fide representative in the form of His son, or servant, or Himself in some disguised form. . . . In all incarnations of the Lord, therefore, the same principles are taught, but they appear to be higher and lower in varied circumstances. [*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.7, purport]

Another important point mentioned in this connection is *anindayā* [avoiding blasphemy]—we should not criticize others’ methods of religion. . . . A devotee, instead of criticizing such systems, will encourage the followers to stick to their principles. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.22.24, purport]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as time goes by, and the Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava tradition of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is better understood, more and more people will appreciate your nonsectarian vision and your contributions to creating peace and cooperation between spiritually-minded people. For now, as in many of your great accomplishments, your gifts are just beginning to be understood.

Your aspiring servant,

Anuttama Dāsa



Badrinārāyaṇ Dāsa

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn̄ iti nāmīne*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

When asked about your own Guru Mahārāja, you replied, “What can I say? He was a Vaiṣṇava man.”

So are you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Your vision spreads from the infinite to the infinitesimal, from a view of the cosmos to concern for the smallest of living entities.

One Indian gentleman commented, “Swāmījī, I saw you in London, now I am seeing you in India. Isn’t it a small world?” With a gesture that seemed to sweep away the stars, you replied, “It is insignificant.”

A young devotee, newly appointed as the temple commander of your Los Angeles temple, asked you how he could avoid becoming proud about his new position. You told him that he should remember that with each exhalation and inhalation of Mahā-Viṣṇu’s breath, unlimited universes are manifested and withdrawn. In each universe, there are so many planets. On each planet, there are so many continents. On each continent, there are so many nations. In each nation, there are so many states, in each state so many cities, in each city so many streets, and on every street, there are so many houses. Yet in one of those houses, you are sitting and thinking, “I am very important.”

As you narrated the story-line for the play “Kali and His Consort Sin,” it became clear that you were one of the greatest generals sent by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to do battle with Kali. You had your grand strategy: You saw that everyone was chasing America. If you could turn America, you would turn the world. Others said it could not be done. You said “*Impossible* is a word in a fool’s dictionary.”

Because of your complete confidence in Kṛṣṇa’s ever-presence and His unlimited potency, you were fearless. On a morning walk you shared how as a young boy you had climbed up the scaffolding to the

top of the Victoria Memorial in Kolkata, a mammoth building over eighteen stories tall. An American devotee commented, “You must have been very brave.” You replied immediately, “And I am still brave. Otherwise, how have I come to your country all alone?”

Yet your concern spread to even the most insignificant. One of your servants related how he was called into your room early in the morning to find you staring at a spot on the floor. You said, “Do you see that bug? He has been struggling all night. He must be very hungry and tired. Please help him get outside.”

On a morning walk through the city zoo, one of your disciples was taunting a caged lion, trying to get him to roar. You said, “Please stop. He was once king of the forest. Just see his condition now. He is already suffering enough.”

In Los Angeles, you gestured with your cane to a blade of grass growing up from a crack in the sidewalk. In a voice weighted with gravity you said that this had once been a great demigod who, at the expiration of his stock of pious deeds, was now obliged to come down in the rain to take birth as a blade of grass.

The *Bhāgavatam* states, “When *ācāryas* completely take shelter under Your lotus feet in order to cross the fierce ocean of nescience, they leave behind on earth the method by which they cross.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.2.31)

For me, that method for crossing over the fierce ocean of nescience is your personal example. Of course, practicing *sādhana* and studying *śāstra* are essential. Serving the Vaiṣṇavas and depending on the mercy of Kṛṣṇa are key. But what pulls me forward every day, what spurs me to push to improve myself, is the remembrance of your absolute conviction in the words of your own spiritual master (*guru-niṣṭhā*) and your burning desire to deliver Kṛṣṇa to the suffering living entities (*jīva-daya*). Quoting your Guru Mahārāja, you gave the true measure of what being merciful means: “There is only one shortage in this world [both individually and collectively] and that is a shortage of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

Of course, words are cheap. Asked about the spiritual master’s forgiveness, you said, “I will forgive you once. I will forgive you twice. But the third time, I will take off my shoe.” A devotee cried out to you, saying, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, please save me.” You said, “Yes, I can save you. But you must do the work.”

They say, “Like father, like son.” Please give me the strength to do whatever it takes so that someday soon I will become a worthy son of such a noble father.



Your most insignificant servant,

Badrinārāyaṇ Dāsa

Bhakti Caitanya Swami

My dear lord and master Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to you, the savior of the whole world!

Your sincere followers know nobody but you. I wish to be counted as one of them in due course. I’m convinced there is no higher aspiration than this, and it is foremost in my mind, despite many lifetimes of material activity in this sick material world.

Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Thākura sings:

*śrī-guru-caraṇa-padma, kevala-bhakati-sadma,
bando mui sāvadhāna mate*

“The lotus feet of the spiritual master are the only way to attain pure devotional service. I bow down to his lotus feet with great awe and reverence.”

The word *sāvadhāna* is something like a word of warning. When one travels by car in north India, if one comes across some roadwork, the standard sign in Hindi to alert drivers of the need for special care says “*Sāvadhāna*.” One has to watch out, or else there can easily be a calamity.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in one lecture you said:

So our business is . . . Because we are preparing ourselves to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we must be qualified to get the power of attorney. Sometimes we speak that “I’ll preach.” What you will preach? First of all get the power of attorney; then preach. Preaching is not so easy that anyone and everyone can preach without . . . *kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe nāma pracāraṇa*. So to get that power of attorney one has to qualify himself; not that the power of attorney is hanging in the tree and you can take it. No. So how this power of attorney can be achieved? That is stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam*. . . . Now, today is *guru-pūrṇimā*. Especially we should understand what is the power of attorney. Anyone can recite this verse, *śrī-guru-caraṇa?*

Dhṛṣṭadyumna: *Śrī-guru-caraṇa-padma, kevala-bhakti-sadma, vando mui sāvadhāna mate.*

Prabhupāda: So this is the beginning, that if you want to be devotee, then you must approach the spiritual master who has got the power. *Śrī-guru-caraṇa-padma, kevala-bhakti-sadma, vando mui sāvadhāna mate. Sāvadhāna* means very carefully, not whimsically.

It is self-evident that you had that power of attorney, Śrīla Prabhupāda, received from your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. You single-handedly spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world despite seemingly insurmountable odds. You didn’t wait for anyone to make comfortable arrangements for you, but boldly stepped forward alone. As you said, when you stepped off the ship in New York “I did not know whether to turn left or right.”

Anyone who wants to achieve that power of attorney to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this age must be very careful to receive it from you. It is not really available elsewhere. Certainly not to the same degree.

We are struggling to continue your mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda. It is not easy. Kali-yuga is an extremely difficult time, and we don’t have the qualifications that you have.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī quotes Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī in the *Bhakti-rasamṛta-sindhu* (1.3.35):

*na premā śravaṇādi-bhaktir api vā yogo ’tha vā vaiṣṇavo
jñānam vā śubha-karma vā kiyad aho saj-jātir apy asti vā
hīnārthādhika-sādhake tvayi tathāpy acchedya-mūlā satī
he gopī-jana-vallabha vyathayate hā hā mad-āśaiva mām*

In your *Nectar of Devotion* you translate this verse as follows: “I have no love for Kṛṣṇa, nor for the causes of developing love of Kṛṣṇa—namely, hearing and chanting. And the process of *bhakti-yoga*, by which one is always thinking of Kṛṣṇa and fixing His lotus feet in the heart, is also lacking in me. As far as philosophical knowledge or pious works are concerned, I don’t see any opportunity for me to execute such activities. But above all, I am not even born of a nice family. Therefore I must simply pray to You, Gopījana-vallabha [Kṛṣṇa, maintainer and beloved of the *gopīs*]. I simply wish and hope that some way or other I may be able to approach Your lotus feet, and this hope is giving me pain, because I think myself quite incompetent to approach that transcendental goal of life.”

You comment further there: “The purport is that under this heading of *āśā-bandha*, one should continue to hope against hope that some way or other he will be able to approach the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord.”

For us, you are that hope, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Mother Yaśodā tried to tie Kṛṣṇa, but found the rope to be always two fingers too short. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura writes in his purport to one of the verses in this narration in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: “Since Yaśodā, desiring to do good to her son and being stubborn, would not give up her attempt to bind the Lord, then between the Lord and the devotee, the devotee’s stubbornness prevails. Thus, seeing His mother becoming tired, the Lord gave up His own stubbornness and, out of His mercy, allowed Himself to be tied. His mercy is the



king of all *śaktis*, illuminating all else. It melts His heart as if it were butter. Mercy's appearance made His *satya-saṅkalpa-śakti* and *vibhūti-śakti* (His potencies to fulfill His desires and show His opulences) suddenly disappear. The rope's shortage of two fingers' length was filled by Yaśodā's effort (*pariśrama*) and Kṛṣṇa's mercy (*kṛpā*). The effort and fatigue due to service and worship (the steady faith of the devotee—*bhakta-niṣṭhā*) and the mercy of the Lord arising from seeing that effort and fatigue (the steady quality in the Lord, or His *sva-niṣṭhā*)—these two caused the Lord to be bound.”

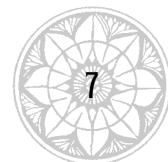
Certainly we are not at all on the level of Mother Yaśodā, but you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are more merciful than Lord Kṛṣṇa. This is our hope. You came to New York, the capital of Kali-yuga, and preached to the young people there. You traveled the world and established the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement everywhere. Your mercy is unlimited, and even though our efforts are full of shortcomings, our hope is that you will continue to accept them, as you have done in the past. For so many years we have been trying, and you have been giving your mercy. Why should we assume you will not continue to do so? In this way your power of attorney can be received, and we can be successful in our attempts to spread your movement.

If we think we can be successful in any other way, then, *sāvadhāna*, beware! It is not so easy. There are many pitfalls along the way. There are many people who may look good, but actually something is wrong with them. It is easy to become sidetracked from the road back to Godhead by becoming attached to people other than Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I am simply an atom at your lotus feet, and I am begging you for your mercy. Please be kind, Śrīla Prabhupāda. May your glories be spread throughout the three worlds.

Your humble servant,

Bhakti Caitanya Swami



Bhakti Chāru Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet—my eternal shelter.

There was a time when I used to write to you almost every day, reporting my activities and seeking your guidance. Things have changed considerably since then. Due to an extremely busy schedule, for a long time I did not do that, and I felt extremely guilty about it. No matter how busy I may be, my activities should always revolve around you, and my attachment to your lotus feet should increase with the passing of time, not decrease.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you taught us that the best way to serve you is by serving your ISKCON. Now we can understand why you said that. This wonderful institution is your divine arrangement for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world, and it is through this institution that Kṛṣṇa consciousness will continue to spread in every town and village, all over the world, fulfilling the prediction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Therefore, it is becoming clear with the passing of time that our most important responsibility is to serve and protect ISKCON with all our ability and means.

Since your departure from this planet, a lot has happened in our ISKCON family. In many areas our movement has suffered considerably, while in others it has developed most remarkably. You used to say that all forward movement takes place in waves. We can see how true that is in relation to our movement: places that were booming in the past are facing some kind of depression today, and places where Kṛṣṇa consciousness was practically absent are flourishing most wonderfully. Undoubtedly both these phenomena are signs of progress.

You mentioned that after an *ācārya* leaves the planet there is bound to be a crisis. With an *ācārya*

like you having left this planet, how can we expect there not to be any crises! Therefore, I do not want to speak about the difficulties and crises our movement is facing today. Rather, I want to inform you about how your loyal followers have successfully averted those crises and pushed this movement forward, establishing your glories in different parts of the world.

Your movement is spreading most wonderfully in India today. Thousands of students from various prestigious universities are accepting your teachings and dedicating themselves completely to your mission. Many educated, intelligent, and successful individuals are wholeheartedly accepting the path of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* and pushing your movement forward, and as a result of that we are experiencing a grand success all over the subcontinent.

Russia and East European countries that used to be behind the Iron Curtain at one time have become the most fertile fields for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Thousands of people are becoming devotees of Kṛṣṇa and fulfilling the actual purpose of the human form of life. A real Hare Kṛṣṇa explosion is taking place in those countries.

Recently I was in Bangladesh. It is very enlivening to see how your teachings are being accepted by the people there. Not only the Hindus but even the Muslims are responding to your teachings so favorably. Important people like vice chancellors of universities and high-court judges, although Muslims, are participating in our programs, asking pertinent questions, and inviting us to their respective places to enlighten their students and colleagues.

Your movement is seeing glorious progress in predominantly Muslim middle-eastern and southeast Asian countries also. Although we are not able to preach to the Muslims there, many of the Indians who have emigrated there are accepting the path of pure devotional service. Your movement is undoubtedly in the safe hands of your loyal successors. Many of your granddisciples are now coming forward, taking responsible positions, and steering your movement very efficiently. Some of them have become GBCs, some have accepted the renounced order of life, and some are also assuming the role of spiritual master. It is very reassuring to see how sincerely and effectively they are carrying forward your legacy. They are our future hope and give us the confidence that your mission will continue to fulfill the prediction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is spreading all over the world very effectively. Your books are being distributed by your sincere preachers in huge numbers, and your glory is being spread in every town and village.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless me that I can become an effective instrument in this wonderful mission you have established, and please allow me to be engaged in your service life after life.

Your most insignificant servant,

Bhakti Chāru Swami



Bhaktimārga Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn̄ iti nāmīne*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

My understanding of Vyāsa-pūjā is that it is an expression of gratitude.



“Thanks!”

thanks for Kṛṣṇa’s name
and for my name,
for a new goal
for this lost soul.

thanks for the real life
and *Life Comes from Life*,
a new way of thinking,
a nectar I’ve been drinking.

thanks for the chance to sing,
for spices, especially hing,
the food, the *rotis*,
kurtās and *dhotīs*.

thanks for all the books
and “hooks or by crooks,”
the travel, the adventures,
toothpaste for the dentures,
your powerful discourses,
and fighting Māyā’s forces,
for your life story—
its unfathomable glory.

thanks for nonviolence
unless it’s in defense,
your liberalism,
your conservatism,
and the accommodation
for apparent contradiction.

thanks for such characters as Hiraṇya,
and what to speak of Caitanya?

thanks for George and Jagannātha,
for Kṛṣṇa and Gopīnātha,
for cymbals, drums, *tilak*,
kīrtanas that make us rock,

the mantra, Sanskrit, *om*,
the ways to go back home,
for shaven heads, being clean,
and insisting on hygiene,
for the love of bull and cow—
we must tend to them right now—
for your talks and your walks
and blessings for my walks,
for the place 243,
devotees, your GBC.

thanks for teaching us dance,
chants, and trance,
giving us humor
and no room for rumors,
for farms, restaurants, schools,
four regs and rules,
for blessing me with dramas,
holy places, and *dhāmas*,
for the Deity, the icon,
the home we call ISKCON
backing the family,
youth, and elderly,
for *prasādam* and its distribution
done in great profusion,
for being father, being mother,
showing kindness to one another.

thanks for your coming,
what to say of your going?
thanks for your smile, your sauce,
for you are always the boss
eternally
for me
and for us.

Bhaktimārga Swami

Bhakti Puruṣottama Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisance at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

I am your granddisciple Bhakti Puruṣottama Swami, trying to serve your society, ISKCON, under the guidance of my spiritual master, your dear disciple His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami. Jayapatāka Mahārāja, who has dedicated his life fully unto the service of your lotus feet, has been going through a great health crisis. He has brought thousands of devotees into your ISKCON movement by his great endeavor and dedication to your instructions.



Homages from the GBC

We, the disciples and followers of Jayapatāka Mahārāja, feel great distress to see His Holiness in his present condition, which has left him unable to travel much and preach as before. Please give your blessing for the quick recovery of Jayapatāka Mahārāja and bless me so that I can serve your lotus feet steadily, just as my Guru Mahārāja is serving your holy instructions.

Thank you very much.

Your humble servant,

Bhakti Puruṣottama Swami

Bhaktivaibhava Swami

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn iti nāmīne*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

We keep hearing that people who read the biography of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda are deeply moved by his example of determination, austerity, surrender and loyalty to his Guru Mahārāja, enormous accomplishments, and love and devotion for Lord Kṛṣṇa. Those who read his biography feel so much appreciation for his Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement that they naturally feel inclined to read his books, listen to his recorded talks, and watch videos and films about him.

Śrīla Prabhupāda has given the world Lord Kṛṣṇa, and Lord Kṛṣṇa has given the world Śrīla Prabhupāda. The more the glories of Śrīla Prabhupāda are spread, the more Lord Kṛṣṇa will be pleased, and the more we spread Lord Kṛṣṇa's glories by distributing Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and presenting Kṛṣṇa consciousness in various other ways, the more Śrīla Prabhupāda will be pleased.

Throughout his life Śrīla Prabhupāda successfully spread the practice and principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in numerous ways. Now the Lord is urging His devotees to successfully spread the glories of His dearest servant, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to the multitudes. This has been partially accomplished through video and film, books, etc. However, to make Śrīla Prabhupāda's glories known to the outside world so that people from all walks of life experience the same above-mentioned deep appreciation for Śrīla Prabhupāda, we require a unified endeavor and an intelligent approach.

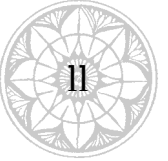
Ebe yaśa ghuṣuk tribhuvana. Let Śrīla Prabhupāda's glories be spread all over the three worlds!

Śrīla Prabhupāda's insignificant servant,

A.C. Bhaktivaibhava Swami

Bīr Krishna dās Goswami

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn iti nāmīne*



*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Recently, while giving a *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class on the Fourth Canto, twelfth chapter, text fifty-one, I was inspired by your description of the compassionate nature of pure devotees of the Lord. You state:

Pure devotees, out of compassion for the fallen souls, are *kṛpālu*, very kind to people in general; they distribute this Bhāgavata knowledge all over the world. A kindhearted devotee is called *dīna-nātha*, protector of the poor, ignorant mass of people. Lord Kṛṣṇa is also known as *dīna-nātha* or *dīna-bandhu*, the master or actual friend of the poor living entities, and His pure devotee also takes the same position of *dīna-nātha*. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.12.51]

Immediately upon reading this section of the purport, I thought of you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and how you exhibit overwhelming compassion for us. “Overwhelming compassion” means that the person who experiences this emotion (*bhāva*) of compassion has so much love for the objects of his compassion (the poor conditioned souls) that his actions are controlled by that love.

We often chant this verse:

*vāñchā-kalpatarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānām pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ*

The general translation we use for *kṛpā-sindhubhya* is “full of compassion.” However, the word *sindhu* means much more than just “full.” It means “ocean.” The reason the ocean is referred to here is that the ocean has an unlimited quantity of water.

It was that compassion that convinced me to become a member of ISKCON. When I first read your *Kṛṣṇa* book in 1969, I could not really understand the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Yet, I was irresistibly drawn by the spiritual energy emanating from your words. Once reading about that little blue boy stealing butter and feeding it to the monkeys (even though I did not know at that time who that little blue boy was), I could not forget your words.

The first time I physically met you, in 1971, I was convinced just by your compassionate glance to devote my life to your service.

It is your compassion that daily inspires me to serve your movement. It is your compassion that enthuses me to help others come closer to Kṛṣṇa.

I pray that I may always be an object of your compassion, that you empower me to deliver your compassion to others, and that I develop deeper compassion for others.

Your eternal servant,

Bīr Krishna dās Goswami

Devāmrita Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

The *cintāmaṇi* of your presence radiates in myriad facets. In this offering I wish to single out your *vāṇī* manifesting as *The Nectar of Devotion*. May we never underestimate the capacity of that *sāstra* to



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trigger the inner life of mature devotees, who selflessly push ahead in your service with steadiness and determination.

Obviously, the entirety of *The Nectar of Devotion* requires a mature and ravenous fire of sacrificial *sevā*—even just to sample a few drops. Nevertheless, the truth must be told: as the dynamic decades of Prabhupāda-sevā go by, somehow, someway, “*Nectar of Devotion* starts to happen”—of its own accord. Unforced, uncontrived, unimagined, the genuine internal realities begin to beckon.

During the ISKCON years of your physical presence, you, who indeed gave us everything, taught how to stand on the shores of *The Nectar of Devotion* and wade toward the depths. For example:

So every one of you should read this *Nectar of Devotion* repeatedly. [23 June 1970]

Every one of you should very carefully read and make progress. [7 September 1976]

So each chapter you should read very carefully. And if you cannot understand, read it repeatedly. Don’t all of a sudden, reading one or two page, immediately question, “Prabhupāda, what is this? What is this? What is this?” Go on reading, and the answers will automatically come. [23 June 1970]

As by drinking nectarine one can become immortal, similarly, by drinking the nectarine of devotion one becomes immortal. Therefore we have named the book *Nectar of Devotion*. You drink it and become immortal. That’s all. *Amṛtam aśnute*. [14 February 1971]

Nectar of Devotion is very important book. It is the science of devotional service. If you want to be engaged in devotional service, then you must read the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. And then we shall be able to see God. [18 October 1972]

The Six Gosvāmīns, and if we associate with them . . . this book, *Nectar of Devotion*, *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, if you read regularly, try to understand, this means you are associating with Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī directly. And if you act accordingly, then you are serving their lotus feet. [20 October 1972]

As a tiny *sādhaka* utterly undeserving, whose parched head and heart long for your leading him out of the desert to the eternal oasis of selfless *bhakti*, I salute thee, my eternal master, for supplying all the spiritual necessities the journey requires for completion. You have done your part. I beg you for the strength and integrity to do mine.

Seeking service as a meager bit of dust on your feet,

Devāmrita Swami



Dīna-śaraṇā Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this glorious day of your appearance, please accept my fallen obeisances!

When Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared before him, Dhruva Mahārāja was speechless and fell down like a stick at the lotus feet of the Lord. By gently touching Dhruva’s forehead with His conch shell, the Lord enabled Dhruva to glorify the beautiful transcendental appearance of the Lord.

Therefore I pray that Lord Kṛṣṇa may touch my heart with His mercy and give me the right words to praise His glorious pure devotee, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda, with

the most exalted and beautiful words that a fallen servant is able to speak.

In the ocean of material pains and pleasures, a drowning person desperately struggles, looking for a helping hand. But all he sees are innumerable other helpless drowning persons—except one: you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the incarnation of all Vaiṣṇava gurus and great sages, past, present, and future, the essence of all Vedic conclusions. The glories of your godly qualities are eternally sung by the inhabitants of the heavenly planets and the pure devotees of the Lord. The Vedic literature urges us to take shelter at the lotus feet of such a great self-realized soul, who is the personification of the Lord on earth, and to follow his instructions: *mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ*.

Thousands of searching souls are following the instructions you laid down in your books and are surrendering at your feet, under the guidance of your stalwart disciples. In time these souls will one day take the lead in your movement and carry your legacy to future generations.

Driven by material illusion, some think there is a need to create a better movement than your own. But I, eager to pass down your legacy to future generations, pray that I may be allowed to succeed or fail with your movement.

May I be an instrument in the Lord’s inconceivable plan and serve together with my godbrothers and -sisters in assisting you in your mission.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the blessings bestowed upon you by your Guru Mahārāja, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura, empowered you to succeed in your mission to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. We pray to become qualified to similarly receive your blessings and empowerment so that we can fulfill our most cherished inner desire, namely, to assist you in your service to him.

Your fallen servant,

Dīna-śaraṇā Devī Dāsī



Giridhārī Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Recently I came across an instructive exchange you had with your disciples at New Vrindaban in 1976:

Shortly after eight thirty he [Śrīla Prabhupāda] brought the meeting to an end. As he prepared to retire to the house, he looked at one of the women, Gopālāśyapriyā dāsī, who was rather under-dressed considering the chill of the evening. He was concerned and he turned to Kulādri, the temple president. “*Um hmm*. This girl? This cloth is sufficient? So you have no covering? They do not require covering?”

Kulādri was casual about it, trying to explain it away to assuage Śrīla Prabhupāda’s disquiet. “It is warm for us, Śrīla Prabhupāda.”

But Śrīla Prabhupāda wouldn’t allow it to be passed off lightly. “No, if they require, they must be supplied. You must ask them what you need, and provide them. Because they do not say, you’ll also keep silent—that’s not good. Every month they should be asked what they need. Necessities, they must be supplied. We have already discussed this point. The women, they require protection, children, women.”

This is but one of many examples of how concerned you were with the welfare of your disciples. You were never too busy to make sure your disciples were well cared for, and you taught us this by your personal example.

Caring for devotees is indeed the most important component for the success of ISKCON’s preaching

mission. We can gauge its importance by comparing those *yātrās* who put lots of effort into taking care of the devotees with those that don't. The difference is striking.

Where taking care of the devotees is lacking, we generally find they are more prone to be attracted to deviant philosophies and other spiritual organizations. Such devotees are often dissatisfied and feel the need to look for something outside of ISKCON.

However, when the devotees are well taken care of, they are satisfied and feel well situated in ISKCON. They don't feel the need to look elsewhere for happiness. They are directly experiencing it by the sincere practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which is nurtured by other devotees who love and care for them on all levels.

So the leaders of ISKCON have a heavy responsibility. We must follow in your footsteps, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to ensure that the devotees are taken care of nicely.

You taught us to love Kṛṣṇa and His devotees. If we truly love Kṛṣṇa's devotees, we will do everything within our means to set up whatever systems are necessary to ensure that all the devotees are taken care of—now and in the future.

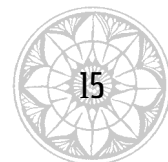
This is an important way for us to practically show our love for you and to keep your legacy alive.

Thank you for always setting the perfect example and giving us the chance to follow in your footsteps. The choice is ours.

Your humble servant,

Giridhārī Swami

Girirāj Swami



*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn̐ iti nāmīne*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Śrīla Prabhupāda—Most Munificent

We have gathered on the most auspicious occasion of Śrīla Prabhupāda's appearance day. His Divine Grace appeared in Calcutta in 1896, one hundred and fourteen years ago. Still, as he wrote of his spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, in his dedication to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: "He lives forever by his divine instructions, and the follower lives with him." So although from the physical point of view Śrīla Prabhupāda is no longer with us, from the spiritual point of view he is: "He lives forever by his divine instructions." And by following his instructions, we feel his presence—we live with him.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's inscription for the tomb of Haridāsa Ṭhākura in Jagannātha Purī states:

He reasons ill who tells that Vaiṣṇavas die
When thou art living still in sound.
The Vaiṣṇavas die to live, and living try
To spread the holy name around.

Both Śrīla Prabhupāda's dedication and Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's inscription tell us that the spiritual master, the Vaiṣṇava, never dies; he continues to live in sound, in his instructions (*vāṇī*) forever. And by following his instructions, by chanting the holy name, we can fulfill his purpose and live with him.

One verse that especially glorifies Śrīla Prabhupāda’s merciful nature and service appears as text 9 in *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam*, Canto Ten, chapter thirty-one: “The *Gopīs*’ Songs of Separation.” The same verse appears in the fourteenth chapter of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*’s *Madhya-līlā*. It is a very beautiful verse in thought and mood.

*tava kathāmṛtam tapta-jīvanam
kavibhir īditam kalmaṣāpaham
śravaṇa-maṅgalam śrīmad ātaram
bhuvī gṛṇanti ye bhūri-dā janāḥ*

The *gopīs* sang this verse after Kṛṣṇa left them during the prelude to the *rāsa* dance. They were searching the forest of Vṛndāvana for Him, and in their mood of separation they sang this song, or verse, to Him: “The nectar of Your words and the descriptions of Your activities are the life and soul of those suffering in this material world. These narrations, transmitted by learned sages, eradicate one’s sinful reactions and bestow good fortune upon whoever hears them. These narrations are broadcast all over the world and are filled with spiritual power. Certainly those who spread the message of Godhead are most munificent.”

During the Ratha-yātrā festival Lord Caitanya was in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī when She met Kṛṣṇa at Kurukṣetra and wanted to bring Him back to Vṛndāvana. And when the procession stopped to allow devotees to offer food to Lord Jagannātha, Lord Caitanya, who felt exhausted from His dancing in *saṅkīrtana*, went to a nearby garden to rest. While He was lying on a raised platform, immersed in ecstatic loving feelings, King Pratāparudra entered the garden and, after taking permission from the Lord’s other associates there, began to massage the Lord’s lotus feet and to recite the *gopīs*’ songs of separation, which were perfectly suitable for Lord Caitanya’s mood.

When Lord Caitanya heard the verse describing the glories of the messages of Godhead and of those who broadcast such messages, He rose, embraced the king, and exclaimed, “*Bhūridā! Bhūridā!* You are the most munificent! You are the most munificent—because you are giving Me the nectar of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, which is so glorious.”

And that is exactly what Śrīla Prabhupāda did for us—he gave us *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. He gave us many thousands of pages and thousands of hours of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. He is *bhūridā*, the most munificent personality.

Now, to get the full benefit of what Śrīla Prabhupāda came to give us and do for us, and consequently to experience the appreciation and gratitude and love that are naturally due him, we—I—must take advantage of his transcendental gifts, especially *kṛṣṇa-kathā*: first and foremost his books, and also his lectures, morning walks, room conversations, letters—all that he gave us; they are all *kṛṣṇa-kathā*.

Tava kathāmṛtam. The *kathā* that Prabhupāda gave us, and that King Pratāparudra gave Lord Caitanya, is *amṛta*. *Amṛta* means “nectar,” literally “that which delivers one from death.” (*Myta* means “death,” or “birth and death,” and *amṛta* means “no death.”) The demigods drink an *amṛta* that yields a long life of sense enjoyment, but the *amṛta* of *kṛṣṇa-kathā* gives one an eternal life full of bliss and knowledge in the company of Kṛṣṇa and all His associates, including Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Tapta-jīvanam. *Kṛṣṇa-kathā* gives life to those who are aggrieved in the material world. *Tāpa* means “pain,” “misery,” or, more literally, “heat,” and thus *tapta* means “pained,” “miserable,” or “burning.” We are all burning in the blazing fire of material existence, suffering the threefold miseries, and the spiritual master is like a rain cloud that pours down water to extinguish it. The spiritual master showers the nectar of *kṛṣṇa-kathā* on the parched conditioned souls and thus delivers them from all suffering. It was said of the Six Gosvāmīs, *pāpottāpa-nikṛntanau tanu-bhṛtām govinda-gānāmṛtaiḥ*: “They delivered all conditioned souls from the reactions of their sinful activities by pouring upon them transcendental songs about Govinda.” (*Ṣaḍ-gosvāmy-aṣṭaka* 3) And of *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* it is said, *tāpa-trayonmūlanam*: “It uproots the threefold miseries.” (SB 1.1.2) Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us *kṛṣṇa-kathā*—*Śrīmad-Bhagavatam* and the works of the Gosvāmīs—which can deliver us from the material miseries and give us new life.

*saiṁsāra-dāvānala-līḍha-loka-
trāṇāya kārūṇya-ghanāghanatvam
prāptasya kalyāṇa-guṇārṇavasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*



“The spiritual master is receiving benediction from the ocean of mercy. Just as a cloud pours water on a forest fire to extinguish it, so the spiritual master delivers the materially afflicted world by extinguishing the blazing fire of material existence. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master.” (*Gurv-aṣṭaka* 1)

Tāpa also has another meaning—the fire of separation. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and the other *gopīs*, were burning in the fire of separation from Kṛṣṇa. Talking about Kṛṣṇa, *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, gave them life. Similarly, anyone suffering in separation from Kṛṣṇa or Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu or Their associates, or from Śrīla Prabhupāda or his associates, can get solace from *kṛṣṇa-kathā*.

Kavibhiḥ—“great thinkers,” “sages,” “poets.” Śrīla Prabhupāda was a great thinker. Ravindra Svarūpa Prabhū tells us that as a student of philosophy and religion in the university he had encountered so many philosophical and religious conceptions, but that when he discovered Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books and teachings, everything else he had heard and read before was—in clarity, in depth, and in substance—like child’s play compared with what Śrīla Prabhupāda gave us. And Śrīla Prabhupāda was also poetic.

Īditam—“described.” These great thinkers, devotees, and poets, such as Śrīla Prabhupāda, describe Kṛṣṇa.

Kalmaṣāpaham. *Kalmaṣa* means “sinful reactions” or “material miseries,” and *apaham* means “drives away” or “eradicates.” Sinful reactions result in material miseries, and *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, chanting and hearing about Kṛṣṇa, brings immediate relief. We have all experienced it. The *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* says that from the stage of *sādhana-bhakti* one experiences *kleśa-ghnī*, the eradication of material miseries. From the very beginning we can experience it. Engaging in *kṛṣṇa-kathā* frees us from sinful reactions and thus enables us to progress in devotional service. As Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.28),

*yeṣāṁ tv anta-gataṁ pāpaṁ janānāṁ puṇya-karmaṇām
te dvandva-moha-nirmuktā bhajante mām dṛḍha-vratāḥ*

“Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life and whose sinful actions are completely eradicated are freed from the dualities of delusion, and they engage themselves in My service with determination.” Only when we are free from sinful actions and reactions can we take to devotional service with firm determination.

Śrīmat—“filled with spiritual power and opulence.” The nectar of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, according to Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, bestows all wealth, up to *prema* (*prema-dhana*), and so even if we give everything we possess to one who broadcasts (*ātataṁ*) the messages of Godhead, we will never be able to repay him.

Bhuvī grṇanti—“chanted and spread all over the world.” This phrase particularly applies to Śrīla Prabhupāda, who left India, journeyed to America, and traveled all over the world to broadcast the message of Kṛṣṇa. No one had ever done that. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had desired and predicted it, yet even learned scholars in the line of Mahāprabhu and Sarasvatī Ṭhākura could not imagine that it would come to pass. They took Mahāprabhu’s statement as a poetic devotional outpouring, not as a literal prediction.

*prthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma
sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma*

“In as many towns and villages as there are on the surface of the earth, My holy name will be preached.” (*Caitanya-bhāgavata*, *Antya* 4.126)

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura made a beginning. He sent copies of his book *Caitanya Mahāprabhu: His Life and Precepts* to some libraries in different parts of the world. And Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura sent some *sannyāsīs* to preach in Europe (though without much effect). But it was Śrīla Prabhupāda who actually traveled and spread the holy name of Kṛṣṇa—*kṛṣṇa-kathā*—all over the world. He personally translated *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and other Vedic scriptures into English, and he inspired his followers to translate his books into other languages and distribute them everywhere. He also said that if he could live longer he would render more Vedic texts into English, and his followers are continuing his work.

Where would we be now if he hadn’t done what he did? We would probably be where we were, or even



worse, burning in the blazing fire of material existence, burning in the fire of hellish sinful reactions.

Thus Śrīla Prabhupāda is *bhūri-dā*, the most munificent. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī glorified Lord Caitanya as the most munificent incarnation of Godhead:

*namo mahā-vadānyāya kṛṣṇa-prema-pradāya te
kṛṣṇāya kṛṣṇa-caitanya- nāmne gaura-tviṣe namaḥ*

“Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya is more magnanimous than any other *avatāra*, even more than Kṛṣṇa Himself, because He is bestowing freely what no one else has ever given—pure love of Kṛṣṇa.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya* 19.53) Personally, Lord Caitanya preached only in India. It was Śrīla Prabhupāda who preached throughout the world, freely distributing *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, *kṛṣṇa-nāma*, and *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*, which bring one to *kṛṣṇa-prema*.

And Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted his followers, the devotees in ISKCON—he specifically mentioned the temple presidents and zonal secretaries—to be munificent, because they are representing Lord Caitanya. We should all be munificent, benevolent. How? By spreading the message of Godhead—distributing transcendental literature and personally speaking about Kṛṣṇa.

Considering the value of what Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us, we can never repay him. Still, we should want to repay him, and act to repay him, by following in his footsteps. As Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote, “If you feel at all indebted to me, then you should preach vigorously like me. That is the proper way to repay me. Of course, no one can repay the debt to the spiritual master, but the spiritual master is very much pleased by such an attitude by the disciple.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda is the spiritual master—at least *śikṣā-guru*—of all of us, so we must work to repay our debt to him by following in his footsteps and preaching. And to preach, one must also practice; one must have spiritual strength. So we—I—must do both: practice and preach.

At last year’s Ratha-yātrā in Los Angeles, soon after the chariots arrived at Venice Beach, I met my dear godbrother Bhārgava Prabhu, and he poured some of the nectar of *kṛṣṇa-kathā* into my ears. The atmosphere at the Ratha-yātrā was surcharged with spiritual potency and emotion and bliss, and he told a story that was most appropriate for the occasion, about the residents of Vṛndāvana going to Kurukṣetra to meet Kṛṣṇa.

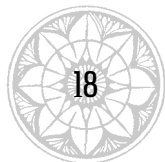
Kṛṣṇa Himself was always feeling separation from the residents of Vṛndāvana. In His sleep He would call out the names of the cowherd boys, the cows, and the *gopīs*, and sometimes His pillow would be wet from the tears He had shed.

So, Kṛṣṇa thought that if He went to Kurukṣetra He might be able to meet the residents of Vṛndāvana, because Kurukṣetra, unlike Dvārakā, is not so far from Vṛndāvana. The residents of Vṛndāvana, too, were eager to meet Kṛṣṇa. And so the Vraja-vāsīs journeyed to Kurukṣetra. From the time of His youth, Kṛṣṇa had an understanding with Nanda Mahārāja that no one should ever know about their intimate relationship, because if the demons knew that He had been raised as the son of Nanda in Vraja, they would attack Vraja and do harm to the Vraja-vāsīs—to get at Kṛṣṇa.

When Nanda Mahārāja and the cowherd community reached Kurukṣetra, there were so many people and horses and chariots and elephants and tents everywhere, Nanda couldn’t see Kṛṣṇa. But he could smell Him, the divine fragrance of His transcendental body. So he followed the scent to the place from where it was emanating, and then . . . he saw Kṛṣṇa. But was it Kṛṣṇa? He knew Kṛṣṇa as his little cowherd boy. But here was a king, attired in royal garb, with so many princes and warriors, all well dressed and ornamented, offering Him praise and respect and bowing their heads at His feet. Still, Nanda wanted to approach Kṛṣṇa, but remembering their agreement, he restrained himself and retired to the camp allotted to him and the other Vraja-vāsīs.

Later, Kṛṣṇa Himself came, secretly, to meet them all. And He reciprocated their ecstatic loving feelings. It is described that Mother Yaśodā took Kṛṣṇa on her lap, and with the tears from her eyes and the milk from her breast, she bathed Him. She performed an *abhiṣeka* of Kṛṣṇa with her love. Yaśodā’s body is completely spiritual, composed of *prema*. Her tears are liquid *prema*. Her milk is liquid *prema*. And so she performed a loving *abhiṣeka* for Kṛṣṇa.

Then Kṛṣṇa went out to see the bulls and oxen. They were now all grown up. He went to each of them, one by one. He recalled each one’s name and lovingly patted each and every one of them, saying, “Oh, So-and-so, I remember you. I remember when you were just a small bullock, and now you are all



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grown up, so big and strong.” And He affectionately embraced each one.

And I was thinking how merciful Kṛṣṇa is, how kind He is, even to the bulls, to the animals. I remembered Śrīla Prabhupāda’s words: “You have seen Kṛṣṇa’s picture. He’s embracing the calf also, and He’s embracing Rādhārāṇī. Not that He’s simply attached to Rādhārāṇī and the *gopīs*. He’s attached to everyone, every living entity. Kṛṣṇa is the best friend of everyone. So if you want friendship, make friendship with Kṛṣṇa. He’ll protect you, and He’ll satisfy you in all respects.” There is a beautiful picture in which Kṛṣṇa has His arm around a calf. Even if you are an animal (which basically I am), Kṛṣṇa has affection for you, especially if you try to serve Him. “To become an animal of Kṛṣṇa is a great fortune. It is not an ordinary thing. Any associate of Kṛṣṇa—His cowherd boyfriends or calves or cows, or the Vṛndāvana trees, plants, flowers, or water—they are all devotees of Kṛṣṇa. They serve Kṛṣṇa in different capacities. Somebody is serving Kṛṣṇa as an animal. Somebody is serving Kṛṣṇa as a tree, with fruits and flowers, as Yamunā water, or as the beautiful cowherd men and damsels, or as Kṛṣṇa’s father and mother. Kṛṣṇa has so many who love Him, and He also loves them.” Kṛṣṇa consciousness is so beautiful, and deep.

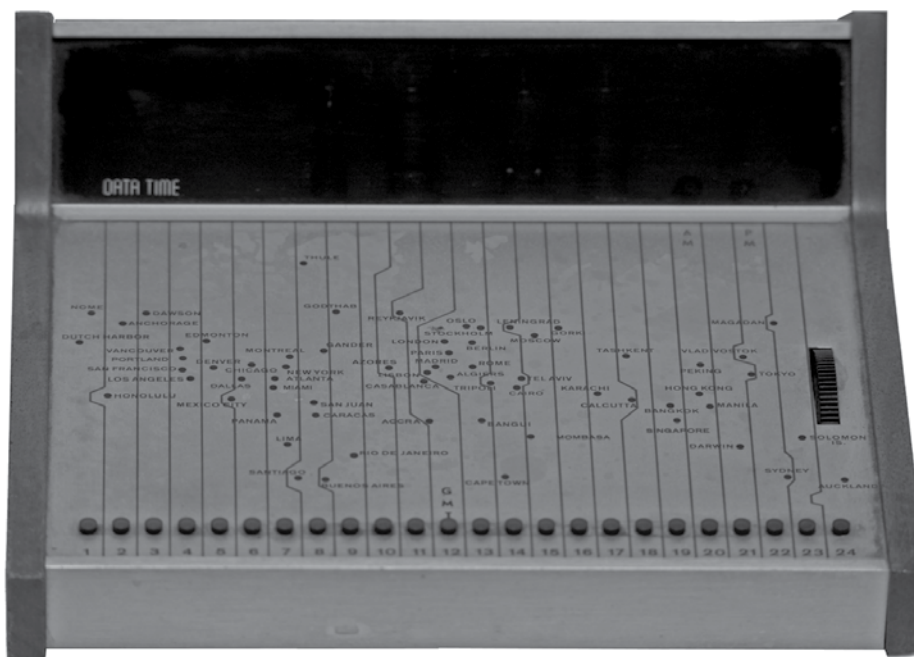
And then I was thinking about Bhārgava Prabhu—it was not an intellectual idea but a feeling that arose spontaneously in my heart: “You have given me the greatest gift, *kṛṣṇa-kathā*.” And that is what Prabhupāda did for us. And that is what we, as his servants and followers, are meant to do for others, and for each other.

It is called *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, topics about Kṛṣṇa. The topics, or instructions, given by Kṛṣṇa is the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and the topics about Kṛṣṇa, the activities of Kṛṣṇa, is *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. So, some way or other, let us always discuss about Kṛṣṇa. That should be the life of Kṛṣṇa conscious people—to worship Kṛṣṇa in the temple; to sell Kṛṣṇa’s books—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā*; to think of Kṛṣṇa—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa; to eat *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*; to take all risk for Kṛṣṇa; to do work for Kṛṣṇa; or, as Arjuna, to fight for Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna did not want to fight, but for Kṛṣṇa’s sake he fought. So fight for Kṛṣṇa, work for Kṛṣṇa, think of Kṛṣṇa, eat *kṛṣṇa-prasāda*, talk of Kṛṣṇa, read of Kṛṣṇa. So, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa. This is life. This is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is a very glorified life. [Lecture, 26 June 1974]

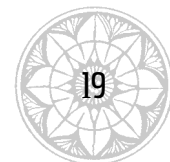
For *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, for the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, for the beautiful life of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and for his boundless, causeless mercy, I owe my life to Śrīla Prabhupāda, eternally.

Śrīla Prabhupāda-*kī jaya!*

Girirāj Swami



This is one of the first electronic time-zone clocks. It helped Śrīla Prabhupāda keep track of his international society when he was in Los Angeles. (Item courtesy of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Quarters, New Dvārakā Temple)



Gopāl Krishna Goswami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn̄ iti nāmīne*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Please accept my most fallen obeisances at your divine lotus feet. Each year when I sit to write my Vyāsa-pūjā offering, I realize how unqualified I am in trying to present your transcendental glories. I also realize how incapable I am compared to the other devotees who do an excellent job in praising your transcendental qualities and achievements. Your whole life was dedicated to serving your spiritual master's order in an unmotivated manner. You had unflinching faith in the words of your spiritual master. You came to illuminate this dark world with Lord Caitanya's mercy.

In a brief span of twelve years you wrote over seventy-five books and opened nearly 150 centers. No saint in recent history has performed anything comparable to this. Prior to the appearance of your books, very few people knew the real purpose of the *Vedas*. The purpose of the Vedic knowledge is to inspire humanity to serve the Lord by performing devotional service. By presenting word-by-word meanings, bona fide translations, and purports based on the commentaries of the previous *ācāryas*, you have made it possible for the conditioned souls of Kali-yuga to understand the importance of devotional service. Today your books are available in most languages of the world and are inspiring more and more people to execute devotional service. The evidence of this is that the congregation of serious devotees has increased all over the world.

You wanted ISKCON to go down in history as a movement that has saved the world. Since this was your desire, it is the responsibility of your followers to strictly follow your instructions. You showed by your personal example that a devotee should not be afraid of struggling for Kṛṣṇa. Your life was full of struggles. In India you struggled alone to preach and to print and distribute your books. You struggled to get passage to the West. On your journey to America you had two heart attacks. After your arrival in America you struggled for more than a year to open the first temple. You struggled to secure Hare Krishna Land in Bombay. Once, in New York, your disciples advised you to take a break for rest and recuperation. You responded by saying "Don't take away my privilege to struggle for Kṛṣṇa." Your example is very important for all present and future devotees of this movement.

You often said that our love for you would be shown by how we cooperate to push on this movement. On this auspicious day I am praying for your causeless mercy so that I may continue to have the opportunity to serve in your movement. Due to your mercy, book distribution in the major temples in my zone, in India, has continued to increase. This is possible because of the dedication of the devotees to your instructions. The preaching in the major temples is expanding, and new projects are constantly getting started. May I always live by following your instructions and never deviate from your path even for a moment.

One hundred and eight glories to the wandering mendicant and topmost swanlike devotee, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your insignificant servant,

Gopāl Krishna Goswami



Guru Prasād Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my most humble and sincere obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet, which have brought real peace to the hearts of untold numbers of persons.

As I continue to review the twenty-six qualities of pure Vaiṣṇavas as they are found in you, the next is *śānta*, peaceful. Your example of peacefulness and your idea of peace and nonviolence are unique in the world.

You taught the world that peace cannot be achieved while so much violence through animal slaughter is going on. Following in the footsteps of Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja, you demonstrated that a devotee's peace is gained through service, not a tranquil environment. Prahlāda said that the practice of most yogīs—taking a vow of silence and wandering in search of solitary placidity and freedom from external disturbance—was unacceptable to him. In the same way, you left the peaceful atmosphere of Vṛndāvana and entered into the most hectic and agitated city in the world and created peace.

Criticizing Gandhi's nonviolent approach as a solution for the world's situation, you presented the *Bhagavad-gītā* as the fountainhead of perfect peace. By the grace of Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna became composed while killing the enemy. Therefore, at *Bhagavad-gītā* 6.27 you translated *praśānta* as “[with] mind fixed on the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.” Controlling the mind and senses, as you perfectly did, brings a constant state of equanimity.

You traveled relentlessly, sometimes for up to twenty-four hours, to arrive at a temple and preach. Then, after a little rest, you would begin translating the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as if you had been in the same place for months. Who could be a better example of peacefulness?

You scorned the impersonalists for seeking *śānta-rasa* with no relationship to Kṛṣṇa. For a devotee, such so-called peace is *kaivalyam narakāyate*, a hellish condition. The devotees you are sending onto the battlefield of modern city streets feel internal composure and bring peace to the unsettled people of the world, all by your grace.

Seeing your serene figure and hearing your soothing words of infinite transcendental wisdom calm my mind temporarily. Falling at your lotus feet, I beg you to bless me with a constant state of equilibrium so that I can serve your mission without being agitated by the waves of material desire that, like a tsunami, flood the world, creating havoc. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your aspiring servant,

Guru Prasād Swami



Hṛdaya Caitanya Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your auspicious appearance day! Here in Radhadesh, every day during the *guru-pūjā* I am reminded of your great qualities.

Our spiritual master is the ocean of mercy, the friend of the poor, and the lord and master of the devotees. O master! Be merciful unto us and give us the shade of your lotus feet. Your fame is spread all over the three worlds. [*Śrī Guru-vandanā* 4]

It is the time just after taking *darśana* of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnātha (whose names were given by you), and Śrī Śrī Jagannātha, Baladeva, and Subhadrā, who were personally installed by you.

The morning program, as established by you, with thirty to sixty devotees present, creates a sacred time that gives both spiritual nourishment and spiritual satisfaction.

During the *Bhāgavatam* class we hear your translations and realizations, which are beneficial for our heart.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.18–19 states:

*naṣṭa-prāyeṣu abhadreṣu nityam bhāgavata-sevayā
bhagavaty uttama-śloke bhaktir bhavati naiṣṭhikī*

*tadā rajas-tamo-bhāvāḥ kāma-lobhādayaś ca ye
ceta etair anāviddham sthītam sattve prasīdati*

In your commentary on these verses at *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 8.20, you state:

Considering the chaotic condition of human society, if one actually wants peace and tranquillity, one must take to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and engage always in *bhāgavata-dharma*. Engagement in *bhāgavata-dharma* dissipates all ignorance and passion, and when ignorance and passion are dissipated one is freed from greed and lust. When freed from greed and lust, one becomes brahminically qualified, and when a brahminically qualified person makes further advancement, he becomes situated on the Vaiṣṇava platform. It is only on this Vaiṣṇava platform that it is possible to awaken one's dormant love of Godhead, and as soon as one does so, his life is successful.

On 16 June 1969 you wrote to Viśāla Prabhu and answered his question “How can I become a pure devotee?” In such a natural way, you said that

... the answer to this is given in Bhagavad-gita. Krishna instructs Arjuna that the mahatma, the pure devotee, is he who has fully surrendered himself unto the spiritual nature. And how can we tell if one is completely surrendered unto the spiritual nature? He is always fully engaged in devotional service to Krishna. So this is the process of becoming a pure devotee. We have to engage all of our words, thoughts, and activities in Krishna Consciousness under the direction of the Spiritual Master. Therefore, at every moment you should be busy in some way in serving Krishna and His pure devotees, and automatically you will become purified in Krishna Consciousness. Krishna is always willing to shower His mercy upon His devotees, so we have simply to become receptive to this mercy by devotional service, and then the path is very easy. I hope this will sufficiently answer your question.

My heart is still full of false sentiments and bodily designations, but your example is so powerful and your supporting statements are so inspiring, encouraging, and intellectually fulfilling that I am impelled to try to follow the path of Kṛṣṇa consciousness as laid out by you.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who are a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Your servant,

Hṛdaya Caitanya Dāsa



Jayapatāka Swami

My dear spiritual father Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

When I offered to serve you life after life, you replied, “Why do you want me to come back again and again?”

So then I said, “Well, if you do not want to take me back to Godhead, then I want to serve you here, life after life.” You smiled.

On another occasion I said, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the most merciful and I am the most fallen—”

You interrupted and said, “You are not the most anything.”

In this way you are always giving your mercy in so many ways. I am very grateful that I had many personal exchanges like these with Your Divine Grace.

Now I am trying to follow the GBC, as your representative. They have asked me to stay here in Los Angeles to undergo treatment for my stroke. By the time of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration I will have been here over six months. Gradually I am recovering.

I am very happy—and I’m sure Your Divine Grace is also pleased—that the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium is underway thanks to the efforts of Ambarīṣa Prabhu and his team.

This is the first time I have been absent for so long from Māyāpur, and it is the first time I missed the *parikramā*. I am doing all this as a sacrifice for your pleasure. I am feeling great separation from the holy *dhāma*.

I was very pleased to hear that forty years ago here in Los Angeles the small Deities, Śrī Śrī Rukmiṇī-Dvārakānātha, ordered you to establish Kṛṣṇa consciousness in India, which you subsequently did. This was told by Brahmānanda Prabhu. So somehow I am here in your Western headquarters, and although I am away from the world headquarters in Māyāpur, I’m feeling connected to Your Divine Grace and I visit your temple every day.

I hope that all the devotees take this opportunity of your Vyāsa-pūjā to unite. As you famously said: The way to show our gratitude for all you have done for us is to cooperate in pushing on this movement. So, we are trying to cooperate, and we hope all the devotees will cooperate for Your Divine Grace’s pleasure.

Many of my godbrothers have been phoning me. Somehow they have kept the tradition going in Māyāpur in my absence. So I am very happy for that. I hope the Māyāpur devotees will also be examples of how you have taught us to work together. I also trust that they will receive everyone nicely in Māyāpur, the spiritual home for the worldwide preachers.

Since I have not been able to travel, I cannot visit my zone or the devotees and disciples in Asia, Latin America, and around the world. However, they tell me that they are dedicated to serving Your Divine Grace. Please have mercy on them.

Your Divine Grace has given us wonderful teachings. Now, staying here in the West for so long, I am seeing that it is very difficult to preach to the Westerners; they are very much immersed in their own *tamas* and *rajas* point of view, trying to be happy. So I am very appreciative of all the miracles you have performed in bringing the Western people to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and I am trying to encourage the devotees everywhere to engage in the preaching activities Your Divine Grace has inaugurated so that Lord Caitanya will be seen as the savior of the entire world for His gifts of spiritual vision and true love for Godhead.

Again and again I bow down to your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

Your servant eternally,

Jayapatāka Swami



Kavicandra Swami

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā
cakṣur unmīlitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

I was born in the darkest ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto him.

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa on this earth, having taken shelter at His lotus feet. Our respectful obeisances are unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you so much for allowing me to be in the association of your devotees. That is the only hope for those of us who are suffering in this material world.

Generally, yoga and meditation are considered quite difficult. As a sublime deliverer of Lord Nityānanda's causeless mercy, you have shown us the path back to Godhead and given a simple program for traversing that path. It is so simple that sometimes we don't believe in it.

You introduced *kṛṣṇa-kīrtana*, playing the *karatālas* with a sublime one-two-three beat. For many things you gave us the one-two-three or one-two-three-four formula:

For chanting the holy name:

*tṛṇād api sunīcena taror iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*

“One should chant the holy name of the Lord in a humble state of mind, thinking oneself lower than the straw in the street. One should be more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all sense of false prestige, and ready to offer all respect to others. In such a state of mind one can chant the holy name of the Lord constantly.”

For *sādhana*: Chant sixteen rounds daily, follow the four regulative principles, read your books, worship the Deities.

For preaching outreach: Distribute your books, distribute the holy name, distribute *prasādam*.

There is also *utsāhān niścayād dhairyāt*—being enthusiastic, endeavoring with confidence, being patient. Teaching us, you showed inconceivable patience. That is a most difficult quality to practice, and most important. Without patience we cannot train devotees, and we may lose our enthusiasm, expecting too much too fast.

There is also The Peace Formula: One who knows Kṛṣṇa to be the ultimate beneficiary of all sacrifices and austerities, the Supreme Lord of all planets and demigods, and the benefactor and well-wisher of all living entities attains peace from the pangs of material miseries.

And for festivals: chant, dance, distribute *prasādam*.

And Lord Vāmanadeva (Hari) took everything away from Bali Mahārāja with 1, 2, 3 steps.

Very simple—1, 2, 3—but not easy for our restless minds. Even sticking to the one-two-three with the *karatālas* sometimes gets away from us. We think we need to do something fancy . . .



Homages from the GBC

You gave us a lot of freedom as to how to do these things. That is a great challenge—innovation without deviation, individuality without independence.

You, perfectly following the example and instructions of your Guru Mahārāja, showed us a perfect example. It is a very high standard. I pray that I can open my heart and receive the mercy of Lord Nityānanda and somehow act in some way for your pleasure.

Recently, while offering the *cāmara* for your *guru-pūjā*, I was thinking there were no flies to chase. Then I realized that there are many flylike fault-finders buzzing around your society. As senior members, we have to constantly endeavor to protect ourselves and all members from their influence. By deeply studying and teaching your Bhaktivedānta purports, we can accomplish this.

Thank you again and again. I know I can never repay you for what you have given me, but please allow me to continue trying by giving as much Kṛṣṇa consciousness as I can to others.

Your aspiring servant,

Kavicandra Swami

Madhusevita Dāsa

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn iti nāmīne*



I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa on this earth, having taken shelter at His lotus feet.

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Our respectful obeisances are unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to your divine appearance day!

When the time comes to write the offering for your Vyāsa-pūjā, one tries to find something substantial and catchy to offer you, but, at least in my case, after your appearance day is gone those words stay in the Vyāsa-pūjā book, and the tears and emotions manifested from hearing them are reabsorbed in the ordinariness of life.

Therefore I'll try to say something that will accompany me for the rest of the year, something that will have a real and practical impact on our daily lives.

The most vivid remembrance I have of you is that of the most determined preacher and commander, unconcerned with praise and fully absorbed in pushing on Lord Caitanya's mission.

Once when a devotee overdid it in throwing flowers at your lotus feet and in glorification, you told him to do something practical and effective for the mission. A few books printed and distributed were for you more valuable than millions of flowers and words offered.

You wanted us to follow your example and be sober and detached while working hard for Kṛṣṇa in

ISKCON, while keeping at a distance self-complacency, affectedness, and self-deception. You issued us a true, direct, unmistakable call to offer our lives to this movement, making us understand that this is the most immediate way to become Kṛṣṇa conscious and get out of this miserable material life.

You asked Girirāja Swami how ISKCON would go on without you, and he gave the answer that by remaining sincere, by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and following the principles, we would be successful, but you said *organization and intelligence*, meaning that we should work together in a structured way with a single-minded goal: pleasing you and the predecessor *ācāryas* by pushing on this movement.

Therefore I will keep my life very simple: stay in ISKCON and work in ISKCON and for ISKCON only.

Please protect me so that the allurements of sense gratification, both gross and subtle, may not capture me, thereby making me an impersonalist offender or a foolish sentimentalist—in other words, a burden on your movement. Let my attitude toward you remain the same as when I first met you and felt like a useless fool. The news that you were arriving in a few minutes had reached us in Māyāpur, and so we all rushed to welcome you on Bhaktisiddhānta Road, singing and dancing. I had never met you before, so I was dancing like anything, and when we reached your car I started jumping up and down in anticipation, and . . . my *dhotī* fell off. You looked at me with gravity and disappointment when it happened, and I felt terribly foolish.

My simple prayer is that I may always feel that way in front of you (with the *dhotī* on), but at the same time that you somehow accept me. If you allow me to be absorbed in the service of your movement, I am fully confident that one day I will obtain the shelter of your lotus feet.

Your shameless servant,

Madhusevita Dāsa



Mālatī Devī Dāsī

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, our most holy lord and master,

Please accept my humbly offered obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! All glories to you!

O beloved master, you showered more mercy and compassion upon us, the misguided entities, than we ourselves could ever fathom. In a recently discovered unpublished letter to Hayagrīva Prabhu, dated March 22, 1972, you wrote:

I am now translating nightly, and each day Shyamasundar types the tape and Pradyumna is editing Sanskrit, so we shall be sending more and more material because you say that you can edit any amount we can supply, *so I take that as a challenge and I shall try to see if you can keep up with me*. [Isn't this wonderful! Śrīla Prabhupāda has entered the arena and challenged his own disciples to match him! (The emphasis is mine, here and below.)] Yes, you are correct to say that "It is all nectar," everything having relation with Kṛṣṇa or Lord Chaitanya is nectarine, and our literature in our line of Vaisnava acharyas is so nice that there is no comparison anywhere in the world for it, so I want that my disciples like you and others should take this task very seriously to give the world the access to this great treasure of Vaishnava literature by producing innumerable books and small booklets, and that *the force of literary influence will change everything and save the people from their miserable condition and corrupt status of life*. [Another amazing proclamation! Beyond any doubt, we have been given the real weapons to effect change and the order to do so!]

You write in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 4.221, quoting your own Śrīla Prabhupāda, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, as follows: “The attitude of the *karmīs* is always one of giving up the conclusion of pure Vaiṣṇava understanding. Because the *karmīs* are very much attached to the world and material activities, they always try to establish atheistic principles that oppose the understanding of the Vaiṣṇavas.” Your Śrīla Prabhupāda commented in his “Sixty-four Principles of Community” that it is the duty of authentic Vaiṣṇavas to disregard such distractions while pushing on Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement. In doing so, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta writes, “*We will undoubtedly disturb the influences of Māyā, which is necessary to success.*” Not a statement for the fainthearted! This is a real example of compassionate communication! (Again the emphasis is mine.)

Following your Guru Mahārāja, you conveyed the Absolute Truth in an uncompromising manner and handed ISKCON to us with great trust and hope that we would continue the *paramparā* lineage and deliver the unadulterated message of love of God to all unfortunate souls. You taught us the Vedic principles of *sanātana-dharma* to keep us on the path of transcendence. As such, we are dutybound to act with spiritual integrity on your behalf. Citing *sāstra*, you emphasized that there is no other process as effective in this age as chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, yet we see how Māyā is so bewildering that she can distract the mind of even a sincere practitioner toward insignificant, useless things, testing our strength and determination to remain committed to our faith, our vows, our loyalty, and our practices. We now observe compromise dressed in attractive roles pretending to be *bhakti* yet intent on its very destruction. You would often comment, “These things are going on.”

To one young aspiring disciple you wrote, “To succeed, you must have enthusiasm, determination, and patience. Each one of these three things must be there. If any one is missing, you will find the process difficult.”

May we always remain prayerful in our endeavors to keep your ISKCON in the forefront of the *saṅkīrtana* movement, thus always keeping your great contribution of loving compassion and mercy alive in the memory of the world at large in this Kali-yuga. Lord Kṛṣṇa blessed us with your presence, which is without contamination. I pray for your continued guidance to remain enthusiastic, determined, and patiently fixed in your service, life after life. May we always remain blessed to celebrate your appearance on this planet by offering you some substantial service to help you “push on this mission.”

Always desiring to remain situated at your lotus feet,

Your fallen dāsī,

Mālatī Devī Dāsī



Mukunda Goswami

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn̄ iti nāmīne*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

As a latent entertainer—a storyteller and jokester—I tend to be attracted to the headlines, the titles, the dictums, and the bumper stickers of the world. Stuck in my mind are your one-liners and memorable words and phrases. I’m also attached to the pithy responses you made to challenges to the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and philosophy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were the expert, calling surfers “sufferers” and doggish humans “dogs.” You made a clear distinction between Kṛṣṇa devotees and the “family” of asses, dogs, cats, and rats.

I know it’s against BBT policy to re-cycle Vyāsa-pūjā offerings, but this year I’m going to commit a small violation by borrowing a thin leaf from a Vyāsa-pūjā offering I wrote in 2000. The passage reads, “Everyone is poet. Without being *kavi* [poet], one cannot become devotee. There are twenty-six qualifications of a devotee. One of them is to become *kavi*.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, you spoke this on March 24, 1974, during a morning walk on Juhu Beach, in Mumbai.

Also, in my 2000 offering I quoted an Englishman who once said that poetry speaks above a mortal mouth. In a sense, brief quotes and aphorisms are poetry—maybe not poetry that’s highly sophisticated or literary, but nonetheless poetry containing words that penetrate and make one think. And if they help one think of Kṛṣṇa, they’re successful.

You sometimes spoke of “cultural conquest,” an alliterative phrase you invented and which soon became part of ISKCON’s language. You established art departments because you wanted your books to contain the kind of visual stimulation that paintings can give to readers. Thus fine art, a type of poetry, became part of your cultural conquest.

Turning to slam-dunk rejoinders, I remember that during a question-and-answer session after a Conway Hall lecture in London in 1969, a man in the audience stood and loudly suggested that you approach politicians in “your own country.” Your instant and thunderous reply to him was that “You are a great politician; therefore I have approached you.” At that, the man sat down defeated. Once someone asked you what your movement thought about health. “No one is healthy,” you replied. “Everyone is dying.” And once asked why the death rate in India was so high, you said, “It is the same everywhere: 100%.”

Your apt phrases and sharp responses taught us how important it is “to think on our feet.”

And your occasional aggressive tactics showed us that holy men sometimes have to be hell-fire men.

Your insignificant servant,

Mukunda Goswami



Nirañjana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

I’ve recently found myself reflecting on verses from your “Vṛndāvana Bhajana,” written by you in 1958, the year before you formerly accepted *sannyāsa*. Needless to say, I found every verse impregnated with deep meaning, as is every word that emanates from your lotus mouth.

In this connection I am reminded about your answer to a question recorded in a passage I read just yesterday in a beautiful account of your transcendental *līlās* in Britain, authored by your beloved disciple Raṇacora Dāsa. These few words spoken by you in 1972 in response to a journalist’s query also made a deep impression on me, an impression whose full impact is still yet to be realized.

“Do you know everything?” one of them [the journalists] asked with a hint of sarcasm. Prabhupāda took his time to answer.

“Yes. Perhaps it is true, since everything I say is from Kṛṣṇa.”

Although the above conclusion is something I embraced long ago when I completed my first reading

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of your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*—which I did, as it so happened, the same year as this exchange with the journalist—and although I’ve heard you repeatedly say that you are always speaking Kṛṣṇa’s words and not your own, for some reason hearing this combination together (“knowing everything” and “everything I say is from Kṛṣṇa”) had an impact on me and I began to more deeply contemplate our eternal connection.

You know everything because everything you say is from Kṛṣṇa. And Kṛṣṇa says, “I know everything that has happened in the past, all that is happening in the present, and all things that are yet to come. I also know all living entities.” You are therefore nondifferent from the all-pervading Supersoul, or as Śrīla Vyāsadeva says to his spiritual master, Nārada Muni:

My lord! Everything that is mysterious is known to you because you worship the creator and destroyer of the material world and the maintainer of the spiritual world, the original Personality of Godhead, who is transcendental to the three modes of material nature. . . . Like the air you can penetrate the internal region of everyone. As such, you are as good as the all-pervasive Supersoul.

My realization, therefore, is that even at this moment there is nothing about me unknown to you. I beg you to please allow me to always remember this, so that from this day on I will never act, speak, or think in a way which would displease you.

Although you know everything in my heart, unfortunately I cannot claim to fully comprehend all that lies in the depths of your heart. Along with these words I offer to you today, therefore, I also offer to you, once again, the rest of my life, hoping that this will help me to more fully realize the full depths of compassion, love, and deep attachment to Kṛṣṇa’s service that lie within the core of your merciful heart. It is my desire to always act according to your desire. Please, therefore, “penetrate the internal region” of my heart and allow me to some day more fully realize the deepest meaning of every word spoken by you. Until then, I beg you to please accept what I can offer to you now.

Since a few stanzas from “Vṛndāvana Bhajana” seem to be more fixed in my memory than the whole composition, I’d like to reflect on those lines and conclude with the reason why they mean so much to me:

I am sitting alone in Vṛndāvana-dhāma.
In this mood I am getting many realizations.

There you were in Vṛndāvana, sixty-two years of your life in this world having already passed, and already four years had passed since you left all of your family connections. Every Vaiṣṇava hankers to live in the holy *dhāma* and devote the remainder of his life to serving Kṛṣṇa there. Vṛndāvana, therefore, seemed to be the most natural place for you to pass the rest of your life, a life already replete with all realizations necessary for dedicating your mind, body, and words in full service to and remembrance of Kṛṣṇa. Why would you leave?

Your answer:

I left the peaceful life in Vṛndāvana to take on so much burden and anxiety for Kṛṣṇa. [Śrīla Prabhupāda, 1974]

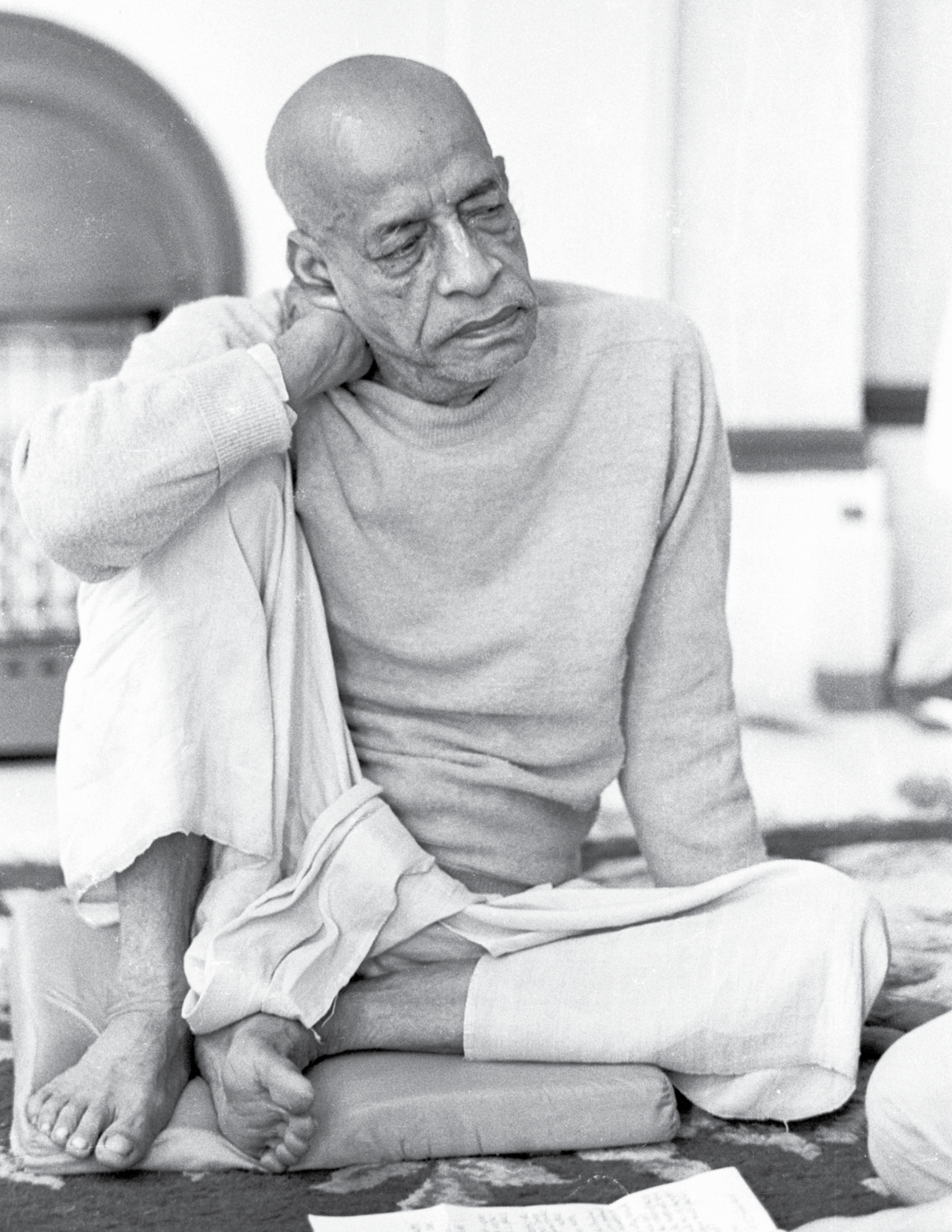
Full service to and remembrance of Kṛṣṇa, for you, meant giving Kṛṣṇa to the world and to all of us.

Always preach! From *jīva*’s door to door
Your life will be successful as a result of your preaching.

You left Vṛndāvana to preach all over the whole world because that was the order you received from your spiritual master, an order apparently still unfulfilled at the time this was written.

Śrī Dayita dāsa prabhu gave this instruction
“Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa loudly!” This is my initiation.





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You made it clear that your connection (initiation) with your own spiritual master was only through serving his order—“Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa loudly”—and “loudly,” for you, meant that Kṛṣṇa’s name must be heard all over the world.

I am reminded of an event that took place in 1959, the same day you accepted *sannyāsa*. Many years later your beloved godbrother and friend Kṛṣṇadāsa Bābājī Mahārāja related this story to a group of your disciples. He told them that during the *yajña* his chanting distracted others also taking part in the *yajña*. But Bābājī Mahārāja would always be chanting, no matter where he was. One Vaiṣṇava requested Bābājī Mahārāja to chant softer so that the mantras being chanted for the *yajña* could be heard. You then turned to your dear godbrother and appealed to him, “Chant louder! Chant louder!” Bābājī Mahārāja told your disciples that it was right at that moment that he realized that you had such complete faith in the loud chanting of the holy name that you would surely be the one empowered to spread the glories of the holy name all over the world.

Come out of your cage, stop making objection;
Everything belongs to Śrī Hari, and Śrī Hari belongs to everyone.

While others in Vṛndāvana were thinking that Kṛṣṇa was only for them, you, seeing every living being as an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa and being empowered by the full mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, were convinced that Kṛṣṇa and His devotional service were for everyone. Or, as Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī proclaimed in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 9.29), “Not considering who asked for it and who did not, nor who was fit and who unfit to receive it, Caitanya Mahāprabhu distributed the fruit of devotional service.” You embodied exactly this same mood.

Chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra loudly.
By the performance of such *saṅkīrtana* there will come remembrance automatically.
Then there will be *nirjana bhajana* manifested in the heart spontaneously.

It is this conclusion, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that inspires me with great hope. How will I ever truly enter Vṛndāvana unless I have dedicated the rest of my life serving the same mission you left Vṛndāvana to fulfill?

In your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.28.51, purport) you have written:

In conclusion, if a disciple is very serious to execute the mission of the spiritual master, he immediately associates with the Supreme Personality of Godhead by *vāṇī* or *vapuḥ*. This is the only secret of success in seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Instead of being eager to see the Lord in some bush of Vṛndāvana while at the same time engaging in sense gratification, if one instead sticks to the principle of following the words of the spiritual master, he will see the Supreme Lord without difficulty.

Similarly, Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura writes in his *Prārthanā*:

gaurāṅga-guṇete jhure, nitya-līlā tāre sphure,
se jana bhakati-adhikārī

gaura-prema-rasārṇave, śe taraṅge jebā ḍube,
se rādhā-mādhava-antaraṅga

That person who feelingly appreciates the movement of Lord Gaurāṅga gets the *adhikāra* to enter into Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa’s *nitya-līlā*. . . . Anyone who takes pleasure in sporting within the waves of the ocean of Lord Caitanya’s distribution of love of God immediately becomes a confidential devotee of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, your example, mercy, and compassion are my only hope for progress toward this goal in my life. Without them, I am a truly a very lost soul.



Although I am unqualified to address you as such, I pray that you will some day accept me as

Your eternal servant,

Nirañjana Swami

Prabhaviṣṇu Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you!

You once said that your disciples' love for you would be shown by how much they cooperated after your departure. This applies not only to your directly initiated disciples but to all the devotees in ISKCON, including present and future generations. In one sense this sounds like something that is quite doable, not so difficult. However, our assessment may change when we consider that it is Kali-yuga, the age of quarrel, and that the personality of Kali is very expert at sowing the seeds of dissension among living entities. Theoretically, at least, devotees should be able to rise above such conflict by strictly following the process of *sādhana-bhakti*. Unfortunately, however, some devotees sometimes adopt extreme positions on various issues, up to the extent of becoming completely inflexible and unwilling to tolerate or consider any viewpoint other than their own. If such devotees have influence over others, this can lead to great tension in devotee communities, so much so that it may cause some devotees to leave and newcomers to be discouraged, much to the detriment of all.

As someone who is often called upon to try to settle differences among devotees, I can attest that it is not an easy matter. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were expert in helping devotees reconcile their differences by a combination of your intense love for Kṛṣṇa and his devotees; your absorption in chanting the holy names; your dedication to the instructions of your spiritual master, the previous *ācāryas*, and the Supreme Lord; your vast erudition; and your lifetime of experience with various aspects of this world. ISKCON was your child, and as a mother is fully dedicated to the upbringing of her offspring, so you too were fully dedicated to ensuring the survival and healthy growth of your society. Above all, you stressed the importance of attentive hearing and chanting, devoted worship of the Deities, and a strong mood of preaching, especially through book distribution, as the keys to ensuring the strength of ISKCON.

However, your instruction to cooperate is also crucial. We have to act as a team because that will give strength to us all. Living and working together harmoniously are important ways to serve the Vaiṣṇavas and thus please you and Lord Kṛṣṇa. Such cooperation will also give great protection against the attacks of Kali, who is unceasing in his efforts to try to destroy ISKCON.

On this auspicious day I pray to Your Divine Grace to please bless us all with the intelligence, determination, tolerance, flexibility, and Kṛṣṇa consciousness to overcome our differences and cooperate fully, as you desired, so that ISKCON may flourish and thus provide more and more devotees and conditioned souls with the chance to take shelter in your great society.

Your insignificant servant,

Prabhaviṣṇu Swami



Rāmāi Swami

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīn̄ iti nāmīne*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

*diṣṭyā tvayānuśiṣṭo 'ham̄ kṛtaś cānugraho mahān
apāvṛtaiḥ karṇa-randhraiḥ juṣṭā diṣṭyośatīr giraiḥ*

“I have fortunately been instructed by you, and thus great favor has been bestowed upon me. I thank God that I have listened with open ears to your pure words.”

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for continuing to inspire and enthuse us in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world.

You once said:

I am especially glad to note that everyone is feeling so much enthusiasm to work very hard in this preaching mission. That enthusiasm must be maintained under all circumstance. That is our price for entering into Kṛṣṇa’s kingdom. And *māyā* is always trying to take away our enthusiasm to serve Kṛṣṇa, because without enthusiasm everything else is finished. [Letter to Dhanañjaya, 31 December 1972]

If we remember how tirelessly and enthusiastically you spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we will be able to easily follow in your footsteps. However, you also said that to maintain this spirit one must strictly follow the regulative principles of the *sāstra*. By your example you showed us how to do both:



Firm in your vow and of grateful mind,
To every creature gentle and kind,
Bounteous and holy, just and wise,
Devoid of envy to all men’s eyes,

A tranquil soul ne’er yielding to rage,
Venerable guru, transcendent sage,
The store of bliss, the living mine
Where brightest joys and virtues shine.

Good, resolute, and pure and strong,
You guard mankind from scathe and wrong.
Large are your eyes that sweetly shine
Majestic love—pure and divine.

In each enterprise you won success.
To this everyone must confess.
You came like Indra, strong and brave,
A guardian soul to help and save.

Pure and eloquent, glorious and bright,
A veritable master, a chief of might,

Unfathomed like the mighty deep,
Firm as Himālaya’s snowy steep.

“Preach,” you ordered, “and don’t be vain.
This will be difficult to maintain.
Please act nobly and choose to be
Obedient to Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s decree.”

The Māyāvādīs you smote and slew;
Far away their nonsense you threw.
The fight was strong, in the end you won.
This is because you’re Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s son.

Grant, divine Prabhupāda, the boon I ask:
To always remain within your grasp.
How will I live but for your saving grace?
Please, Prabhupāda, lift up my face.

Your unworthy disciple

Rāmāi Swami

Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa

*nama om̐ viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmin iti nāmine*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dear followers of Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda.

When it became necessary for Śrīla Prabhupāda's first disciples to learn to honor him properly with a *praṇāma* mantra, none at the time were qualified to compose such a text.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was placed in the awkward position of coming up with a mantra himself.

As a result, we were given Prabhupāda's own representation of himself, the salient features of himself in a condensed word-picture, with which we would invoke his presence as we repeated that text many times each day.

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

In this mantra, we offer obeisances to our Gurudeva, shortened in the text to *deva*, which undergoes a grammatical change into *deve* for the appropriate case ending. The immediately preceding word names that Gurudeva as *sārāsvata*, again with the final *a* changed to *e*, as with *deva*.

We too often hear this sung or recited incorrectly, with *sārāsvate* rendered *sarasvatī*, and even *deve* turned into *devī*, as though we were worshiping the goddess of learning instead of Śrīla Prabhupāda. His Holiness Lokanāth Swami, in his helpful book on correct Sanskrit pronunciation (*Saṁskṛtoccāraṇam*), makes this same point and quotes Śrīla Prabhupāda in a lecture of August 10, 1971: "You should pronounce it *sārāsvate*, not *sarasvatī*. *Sarasvatī* is my spiritual master. So his disciple is *sārāsvate*."

Sārāsvata is Śrīla Prabhupāda's patronymic. There is a rule in Sanskrit grammar for the formation of a patronymic or matronymic. Most languages have such names: in English, common surnames like Johnson or Erickson were originally patronymics. In Scotland, the prefix Mac- or Mc- is the sign of a patronymic, as is Fitz- in Ireland.

In Sanskrit, such a name is formed by 1) strengthening the vowel's first syllable, and 2) putting the ending into the *a* declension. ("Strengthening" means to add the value of *ā* to the vowel, so that *r* becomes *ār*, *i* becomes *ai*, *a* becomes *ā*, and so on.) Thus Arjuna, son of Pṛthā, is simply Pārtha. By the same rule, the name Viṣṇu yields the name of Viṣṇu's servant, Vaiṣṇava. (In this case, the *i* of the first syllable is strengthened to *ai*, and the final *u* in Viṣṇu become *av*, so that the required final *a* can be added.)

Following the same rule, Śrīla Prabhupāda denoted himself with the name Sārāsvata, the son or servant of Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.

In a mantra crafted just for us, his disciples, Śrīla Prabhupāda reveals to us by this patronymic his own essential identity as a disciple. This fact—that Prabhupāda's essential identity is constituted by a relativity, a relationship with another—is of highest theological import. This, indeed, is personalism. Prabhupāda teaches it by his very name as Sārāsvata.

The name Vaiṣṇava conveys the same lesson, certainly a higher, more confidential lesson than given in *aham̐ brahmāsmi*. The Vaiṣṇava teaching is expressed succinctly by Caitanya Mahāprabhu: *jīvera 'svarūpa' haya—kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa*. The living entity is constituted, essentially and unchangeably, as the servant of Kṛṣṇa. (And, therefore, as the servant of the servant . . .)

A Sanskrit word for servant is *kimkara*, one who says *kim*, or "What?" As in, "What do you want me to do?" What did Sarasvatī Ṭhākura want his Sārāsvata to do? It is given in the next name: *gaura-vāñī-pracārin*. To be one who broadcasts the teachings of Lord Gaurāṅga to others.

Here, then, we see that Prabhupāda has imbibed the essential nature, the life force itself, of his



spiritual master, and made it his own: an irrepressible and indefatigable drive to deliver the mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu to all others. Sarasvatī Ṭhākura exemplified it, and so did his Sārasvata disciple, who made the words from his guru’s mouth become one with his own heart: *guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete koriyā aikya*.

Here Prabhupāda, as our master, gives us the ultimate lesson of discipleship. Can we learn it as he had learned it?

Finally: Our Sārasvata guru is *nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārin*. By broadcasting those teachings of Lord Gaurāṅga, he is delivering the Western land from the proponents of nihilism and impersonalism.

In doing this, Śrīla Prabhupāda has embraced the deep desire of Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—to bring Gaurāṅga’s message to the West—and made it his own, and then carried it out. Sarasvatī Ṭhākura expressed his urgent desire to many of his disciples, but among all of them, just one, virtually single-handedly, carried it out. Therefore he is most of all deserving the accolade of the name Sārasvata. And so we glorify him with it, and pray with all our hearts on this auspicious day that we may learn his lessons and become by his grace worthy inheritors of the same title in his service.

This is my prayer.

Begging to become the servant of the servants of Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Ravīndra Svarūpa Dāsa

Romapāda Swami



*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-salākayā
cakṣur unmilitarī yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī itī nāmīne*

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālarī paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī gururī dina-tāraṇam*

My dear and most respected spiritual master and eternal father,

Please accept my most humble and respectful obeisances in the dust of your most merciful lotus feet! All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā is a most blessed event. Without constraint, each of your ever-increasing thousands of ardent devoted servants and followers from around the world has the unfettered invitation to honor you to their heart’s content on this most sacred day!

You are an ocean of *all* superexcellent Vaiṣṇava qualities, so vast in variety and volume that the thousands of devotees around the world who are gathered to glorify you on this Vyāsa-pūjā day, singing your praises, are doing so without ever duplicating the same glorification!

We learn from “Śrī Guru-vandanā” that the spiritual master is an ocean of mercy, *karuṇā-sindhu*. Not just a drop, not even a shower, but an *ocean* of mercy! Your oceanic mercy is so vast that it knows no limits of time or space, without limit in transforming the lives of those of any culture or background or intellect or *any* worldly distinction. Your mercy knows no limits!

Here is but a tiny demonstration of this: Just within the past ten days I have met multiple persons—

of vastly different cultures, from the entire spectrum of age, language, education, color, nationality, previous *deep* involvement in other religious traditions, etc.—in some cases via quite mystical, curious ways coming in contact with your devotees—who are finding your sublime teachings to be completely transforming within their lives, carrying them to a place of fresh meaning, deep inner solace, exuberant inspiration, and an inner feeling of complete safety, complete shelter. These diverse individuals each expressed their feeling of being “completely at home, at last”—at home with what *I* know is a gift you personally and most mercifully brought into the Western world and widely distributed at immense personal risk and effort.

Once when Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, surrounded by His cowherd friends and accompanied by His elder brother Balarāma, went a good distance away from Vṛndāvana, herding the cows deep into the forest of Vraja, He noted the trees who were bowing down low, offering their respects and their service, laden with very fragrant flowers and abundant ripened fruits. Lord Kṛṣṇa remarked about the mood of the trees, how they were just like great elevated spiritual personalities, always in the mood to offer their services to all who came their way, without restriction. Lord Kṛṣṇa said,

*etāvaj janma-sāphalyam dehinām iha dehiṣu
prāṇair arthair dhiyā vācā śreya-ācaraṇam sadā*

“It is the duty of every living being to perform welfare activities for the benefit of others with his life, wealth, intelligence, and words.” These four standards of service unto others, as given to the world by Lord Kṛṣṇa, were perfectly exemplified by you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Not only did you serve the entire world’s population by providing your gifts of transcendental knowledge, the holy name, *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*, festivals, and the whole range of standard devotional activity, but you were both a magnificent empowered distributor of this ocean of mercy as well as an incredible empowerer of others to assist you. Yadubara Prabhu’s recent tribute to your incredible quality of empowering others is via his “Following Śrīla Prabhupāda” DVD series. Likewise, all of the wonderful biographies of your life offer this record of your capacity to empower others.

Your quality as an unparalleled empowerer of others has been my primary meditation upon you of late, Śrīla Prabhupāda. This quality is a natural leadership quality; as our founder-*ācārya*, you manifested this spiritual quality to an unlimited degree, and you will remain in that unique unequalled position for all generations to come.

I am eager, even greedy, to receive some portion of your unlimited mercy from your *karuṇā-sindhu* reservoir so that I can assist you more effectively in offering your oceanic mercy to others. This can become possible only by your most merciful empowerment.

I bow my head at your feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda, begging to become your fit messenger, your instrument, your humble servant.

Begging to eternally remain your humble servant,

Romapāda Swami



Śivarāma Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

This year, along with a Vyāsa-pūjā offering of words, I would like to offer one tangible result of our service here in Hungary. That result is but a spark of your own glory.

Last year, 2009, marked the twentieth year that ISKCON has been officially recognized as a religious organization in Hungary, where it is known as the Hungarian Society for Kṛṣṇa's Followers. In those twenty years your transcendental gifts to this country have dramatically changed the lives of thousands, including those in the highest echelons of society. Since you have done more for the Hungarian people than anyone else in terms of giving their lives both meaning and purpose, it was my desire that the Hungarian government present you with one of their official decorations: The Gold Cross of Merit. This is the second highest civic decoration awarded in Hungary.

As it turns out, these decorations are unfortunately for Hungarian citizens only, and so I submitted the application in my name. But in all circumstances, and in all ways, I am your representative, and nothing more. Fortunately, while in Māyāpur for the Gaura-pūrṇimā festival last year, I was informed by the Office of the President that by the sponsorship of the Ministry of Culture, Education, and Religion, I would be awarded the Gold Cross. That is to say, the Gold Cross would be awarded to you.

During our Diwali gala evening in October, the Hungarian State Secretary for Education was present to officially award the Gold Cross. In his presentation he listed the many benefits the Hungarian people have received from the devotees: your transcendental books, the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, spiritual culture, *varṇāśrama-dharma*, Indian culture, Kṛṣṇa Valley, Bhaktivedanta College, Govinda's Restaurants, Food for Life . . . the list went on and on. It would make this offering too long to attach in full their words of appreciation for Your Divine Grace. To make it short, we can simply report that the Hungarian government officially recognized that your gifts of Kṛṣṇa consciousness are a significant contribution to Hungarian society.

In my acceptance speech I made clear my original intention, explaining that I was accepting the Gold Cross on your behalf, for you are the one who should receive credit and gratitude, not I. In addition, I emphasized, and re-emphasized, that of the many items in the long list of our Society's contributions to the Hungarian people, the most important contribution is your books.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda! Although I have already pinned the medal on your *mūrti*, let me officially make this offering to you on the occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā. After all, disciples are meant to offer more than words and flowers. I sincerely wish I could be placing these items personally into your lotus hands. Instead I attach a photo of the Gold Cross, and the official documentation accompanying it. For the time being I will keep these gifts safely in my care. When next we meet, and you request me to deliver a preaching report, then I will happily offer them to you in person.

Śivarāma Swami



Item courtesy of Śivarāma Swami





Tamohara Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

At ISKCON Alachua, we are installing the beautiful Deities of Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma. We are doing this as an offering to you, knowing your desire to establish the worship of Kṛṣṇa in his *arcā-vigraha* form throughout the world. We also realize that our worship of the Supreme Person is accepted by Him through the medium of the spiritual master. It is actually your devotion to Kṛṣṇa that is being accepted, and by our great fortune you are allowing us to assist you in your service. So while we are praying for the Deities to appear on the altar, we realize that it is by your mercy and grace that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma will choose to come and accept our small service.

This meditation on Lord Balarāma also reminds us that Balarāma, in His form of Lord Nityānanda, is considered the original spiritual master. Indeed, the spiritual master is considered no less than the representative of Lord Balarāma and Lord Nityānanda. In the second chapter of *Kṛṣṇa* book you write,

Therefore Lord Nityānanda Prabhu, who is also the incarnation of Balarāma, is the original spiritual master. And the spiritual master is the representative of Balarāma, the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead who supplies spiritual strength. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is confirmed that the spiritual master is the manifestation of the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.

Thus we can understand that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are supplying all spiritual strength because you are the medium through which Kṛṣṇa's mercy descends to us. That same mercy, freely given to the world by Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda, is now being distributed by you to the fallen souls of this material world. As one of the most fallen of those fallen souls, I am truly dependent upon your mercy, and without it I would have no claim to the slightest spiritual qualities or understanding.

It is our good fortune that the spiritual strength bestowed by Lord Balarāma is manifested by you in fullness. We can recall your firm determination to preach the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, your absolute conviction of the spiritual truth, and your unflinching determination to push forth this ISKCON movement against all odds. Your strength gave us our strength. In your presence, there was no fear, no question, and no hesitation.

In the years since your physical departure from this world, we have sometimes wondered whether we can go on with this same strength, conviction, and determination. Sometimes the road seems more difficult and the obstacles seem higher and wider. It is at those times that we have no recourse other than to take shelter of you. By remembering your instructions to us, recalling your conviction to preach unceasingly, and opening our hearts to the mercy you still extend to us all, we will receive that same strength. In our times of difficulty or doubt, we need look no further than your lotus feet, your instructions, and service to you. We need only approach you in the mood of sincere prayer, and then there will be no doubt that all spiritual blessings will come. By our service and prayer to you we will experience the strength and mercy of Lord Balarāma manifesting through His most confidential representative—you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your eternal servant,

Tamohara Dāsa

