



Homages from Non-GBC Sannyāsīs



Ātmanivedana Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this most blessed day I pay my most humble obeisances to your lotus feet.

Every year we get the opportunity to thank you for what you have done for the whole world. Personally, I am most indebted to you for saving me from the most fallen state in this material world. Of course, we all say this to show our gratitude, but I want to say that these words of my offering are not just words but come from my heart. I can only show my gratitude by staying honest and truthful to your mission to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. On this day it is our duty to offer you glorification, but how can one glorify the sun if one is blind? So I am trying to say a few words by simply feeling the heat of the sun. I pray to you to bless me so I can understand your mission and be of some use to you.

Over the years I have tried to understand your greatness. Recently I was meditating on what you have done for the whole world, which is covered in darkness— how you brought the light of the *Bhāgavatam* to vanquish the darkness. Your revelation of the secret of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, by showing it to us by your own personal example—that is your mercy to the whole world. You showed the whole world the mercy of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda by exposing the blind people of this world to the sun and moon of Gaura-Nitāi.

I can see that by your greatness and understanding you brought the teachings of all four *sampradāyas* in one. We are very thankful to you for giving us these transcendental teachings in a form that is easy to understand. You are truly a great *ācārya*, the founder-*ācārya* of The International Society for Krishna Consciousness, ISKCON.

Your servant,

Ātmanivedana Swami

Bhakti Mādhurya Govinda Goswami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet, eternally begging your mercy.

On this, your all-auspicious appearance day, I must offer an admission to all the devotees. Once when you were offering your *daṇḍavat praṇāmas* to Rukmiṇī-Dvārakādhīśa in Los Angeles, I purposely crowded in too close behind your lotus feet in such a way that my head actually touched your lotus feet. This was an offense, but I took that risk because I figured that otherwise I would never, ever get the opportunity to put your lotus feet on my head. Of course, you were fully aware of what I was doing, but out of your causeless mercy you accepted—you did not chastise me, though it may have been suitable.

“Your mercy is all that I am made of.” I have no independent qualifications to teach Kṛṣṇa consciousness whatsoever, for I am simply a product of your loving mercy. Thus you are allowing me to preach around



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the world with some success. Actually I can understand clearly that I am merely your instrument, your puppet. Normally, to refer to someone as a “puppet” of another person is a very disparaging statement, but in your case it is glorious. What greater glory can there be than being the puppet in the hands of a *nitya-siddha* devotee? There is none, for that is the supreme perfection of human life. All glories, all glories to your empowerment of preachers all over the world! It doesn’t matter whether they are directly your initiated disciples or simply your dedicated followers, admirers, or *śikṣā* disciples, as fully acknowledged by the GBC. By your mercy the result of their preaching is the same: Kṛṣṇa consciousness is spreading all over the world.

At this all-important juncture in the history of your movement, we pray that you will help all the sincere devotees around the world continue to upgrade this movement to your full satisfaction. At the strategic planning seminar last year in Māyāpur, I was very surprised when the chairperson Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Prabhu suddenly asked the group of more than four hundred leaders from around the world whether any of them thought you were 100% satisfied with ISKCON as it is today. I was shocked when only one person raised his hand, and that was probably do to a language problem (he may have misunderstood the question). From this we can understand that the devotees are very intelligent, sincerely wishing to support the GBC’s resolution that all the instructions you gave us that have not yet been implemented must be uncovered, thoroughly researched, and carried out. Please empower us to accomplish this mammoth task, for only by your mercy can it actually take place. You live forever in your instructions. May we fully surrender to that *vāṇī* so that our movement can truly become the shelter for the whole world, as you so fervently desire.

Begging to remain your eternal servant,

Bhakti Mādhurya Govinda Goswami

Bhakti Narasimha Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace! All glories your International Society for Krishna Consciousness!

“My” and “mine” are the possessive words we use to describe what we feel belongs to us. Actually, everything belongs to Kṛṣṇa. By your divine grace we are now beginning to understand this fact. Real gratitude, like joy, is a feeling that cannot be concealed. It has to be expressed. It is more than lip service, more than a polite, perfunctory “Thank you” said in return for favor. We can never repay you for your grace upon us. Grace is doing another being kindness he doesn’t deserve, could not ask for, and cannot repay. Grace offers a person what he cannot do for himself, that is, to pull himself out of the quicksand of material existence. Living by grace has no meaning apart from the spirit of self-sacrifice that prompts one to think more of giving than receiving. We have received your gifts of love and mercy beyond our imaginations.

With these few words of gratitude, I pray that I remain in your service life after life.

The servant of your servants,

Bhakti Narasimha Swami



Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

In 47 BC Julius Caesar made the “immortal” proclamation *veni vidi vici*—“I came, I saw, I conquered.” While he came to one place called Pontus, Your Divine Grace came to Boston, Massachusetts. You *came* (that wasn’t at all easy!) you *saw* (the motley, fishy **mélange** of passion and ignorance comprising the Boston waterfront), and you were soon to *conquer*. But being a swanlike personality, a bird of a different feather, you, unlike Mr. Caesar, did not announce such a victory. As a pure devotee of none other than the Supreme Personality of Godhead, you cried out to your Friend and Lord to substantiate your “Bhaktivedanta” title by speaking through you in such a way as to penetrate the dense coverings of our souls. Actually, all you really prayed for was to “dance” as Kṛṣṇa’s “puppet.” (You already were doing that, but now that you had arrived on the shores of the big American stage, you wanted to intensify.) After sailing across the ocean, in beautiful poetry you prayed to somehow traverse the ocean of *māyā* covering the Western lands. You prayed for sufficient empowerment to make us understand your mission, and to make us understand our *own* mission in this all-too-brief duration of human life.

Mission impossible—but not for Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and therefore not for you, His unique instrument. Only the Lord’s pure and specially selected representative would be able to persist and endure against all odds. “Who would have thought?” you were to later reflect, regarding how unlikely, how incredible, how inconceivable it was that all the pieces would come together to quickly expand—the Hare Kṛṣṇa explosion! But this special “explosion,” while generating various types of merciful shockwaves that rocked Kali’s boat, did not itself become fragmented. Its “pieces” stayed together. This was Lord Caitanya’s special mercy upon us fallen souls of Kali-yuga, specifically and meticulously dispensed by Your Divine Grace.

What are these pieces? Now we see them all over the world—temples, preaching centers, restaurants, great festivals, your books, *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*, various educational institutions, and of course ISKCON’s members, to mention a few highlights. “Who would have thought?” when you casually announced the name of your fledgling Society as an “international” one? Who (except for you) would have or even could have trusted that it would become just that, and so quickly? And even now, forty-seven years later, with Your Divine Grace as Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental instrument, the Lord’s plan is still unfolding, exploding, and manifesting in various wonderful ways.

Regarding this most insignificant disciple, only a month ago your representatives, ISKCON’s senior members, mercifully allowed me to accept the *daṇḍa*. Perhaps once again that telling phrase pertains: “Who would have thought?” But this classic “mercy case,” now at last older and wiser, sincerely wishes to please you in his new capacity. I pray to daily study your books and stimulate others to do the same. I pray to take advantage of this *āśrama*, which impels me to set a better standard. I pray that the last years of this all-too-short human sojourn may, by your divine grace, be the most useful and the most pleasing to guru, Kṛṣṇa, and the ever-increasing number of Prabhupādānugas worldwide. And finally, I pray to be instrumental in bringing into the fold as many conditioned souls as possible.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, all glories to you! All glories to this supermost auspicious occasion of your divine appearance in this hitherto unhappy world.

Begging to remain at your lotus feet for all eternity,

Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami



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Bhakti Rāghava Swami

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

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

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace as you continue to inspire more and more living entities to take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

This year I am writing my Vyāsa-pūjā offering from La Nouvelle Vraja Bhūmi (New Vraja Bhūmi), a small *varṇāśrama* community-in-the-making here in the French-speaking province of Quebec, known as La Belle Province (“The Beautiful Province”). What was once the fortress of Roman Catholicism in Canada up until the early 70s has now become the oasis for the trendsetters of the New Age movement, bringing all types of anomalies and disruptions in society.

Although I am not originally from the province of Quebec, I consider myself most fortunate to have been connected with this part of Canada. You brought great fortune to the city of Montreal near the beginning of your ISKCON movement, when in the summer of 1968 you resided near McGill University, the educational institution to which Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sent his booklet *Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu: His Life and Precepts*, in the year of your appearance, 1896.

You will surely recall Kulaśekhara Prabhu, a well-known French Canadian artist who visited you during your stay in Montreal. A few years back, when I was visiting Sharanagati Village in Western Canada, Kulaśekhara Prabhu recalled how the devotees had asked him to become initiated after he gave a generous donation from his selling of original paintings. You so kindly accepted him as your duly initiated disciple, even though he was barely two weeks in the movement. Your desire to give everyone an opportunity to serve was always very strong. Many fortunate souls were thus given such opportunities, and this same devotee, now residing at the Sharanagati Village community, continues to serve you, donating to ISKCON his personal piece of land a few years ago.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am ever grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to serve in the divine mission you so kindly established. As a young boy I yearned for the opportunity to live among like-minded souls, but somehow it took me many years to find your devotees. It could have happened way back in the year 1967, when I was a student at the College Saint-Jean Vienney in Montreal, the year of Expo 1967, where your devotees performed *harināma*, but it was not to be. My time came in 1973, when I first encountered your sincere devotees at the Ottawa temple, where I joined in January of 1974.

I remember the day you visited the Montreal temple in 1975. The previous year I had received *harināma* initiation from you in New Vrindavan, and now you were visiting Montreal to inspire your disciples. You sat graciously on that little rocking chair on the lawn beside the temple, and you asked some of your leading disciples to speak in public to the few Indian families who had come to visit. We all gathered in the small apartment where you were staying, eager to catch a glimpse of your transcendental form and to hear from your transcendental lips. You were in one room with some of the devotees traveling with you, who were asking you questions about the Fifth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. We could not see you from the entrance to the apartment but could only hear some of the conversation. In one reply to a question on the Fifth Canto you said that the particular explanation you had given in the book was based on your own realization and was not from *sāstra*. Upon hearing your words, I remember thinking how only a self-realized soul could make such a statement.

Like all your devotees, I longed to perform some personal service for Your Divine Grace, but the competition was heavy. When the news came that you wanted some fresh corn on the cob, I volunteered to purchase some at the market. Although my biological father was a professional cook and had many times cooked corn on the cob, he had never taught me the unique method of cooking corn practiced



by you, my eternal spiritual father. After selecting for you the best corn available at the supermarket, I returned to the apartment and learned that you wanted the corn wrapped in tinfoil, not peeled, and placed directly in the oven too cook in its own natural juices. It came out perfectly cooked and much, much tastier as well.

The following year I was greatly fortunate to be able to take a trip to India, a dream come true. Even more fortunate was the fact that you requested your GBC men to select devotees from different continents to remain in India to help with your fledging projects in Māyāpur, Vṛndāvana, and Bombay. Somehow I was able to stay, fulfilling yet another hidden dream. I could not get any direct association with you, but I do recall fanning you as you sat on your *vyāsāsana* at the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple courtyard sometime in 1976.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have so many wonderful devotees who are serving you so enthusiastically. In some amazing way we see the constant advance of Kali-yuga, witnessing more and more degradation in society. The social crisis you spoke of many years ago continues unabated and has worsened manyfold. Yet at the same time, more and more Kṛṣṇa conscious activities are taking place and an ever-increasing number of people are becoming devotees. When and how all this will unfold is difficult to understand.

You very clearly wanted to bring about a complete overhaul in society by introducing the *varṇāśrama* culture, but somehow we have been slow to take it up. “We are about to embark on a new phase of our movement: *varṇāśrama*” you told Jagadīśa Prabhu while he took you to the train to Allahabad in 1977. Śrīla Prabhupāda, your vision was perfect and your determination undaunted. May I and all your followers continue to take inspiration from Your Divine Grace and become instruments in helping you fulfill the unfolding mission of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. May your glories forever and ever be spread all over the three worlds. Thank you for your kind mercy unto this undeserving soul.

Your humble servant,

RP Bhakti Rāghava Swami

Bhakti Sharan Shanta Goswami

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śrimate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
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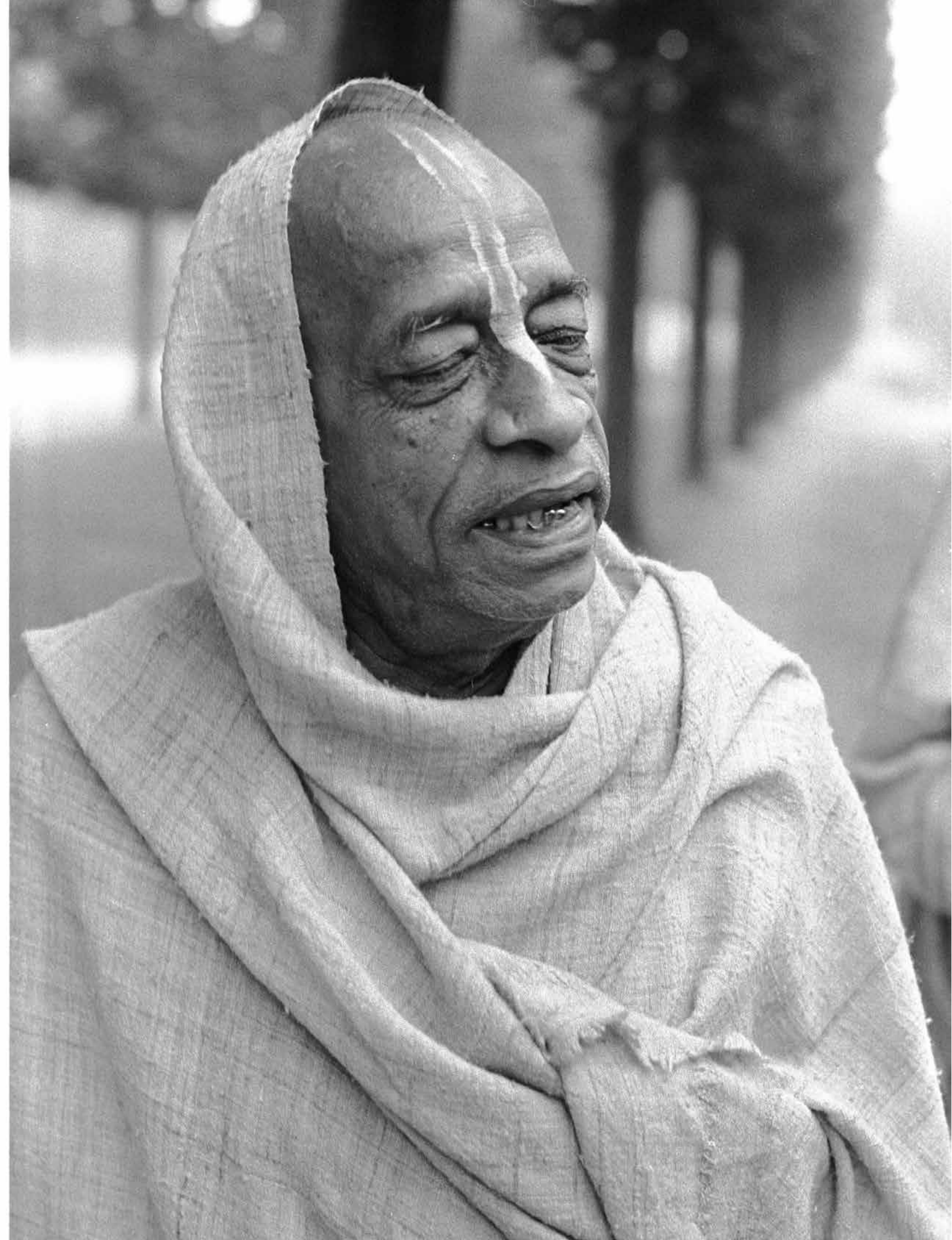
All conditioned souls in this material world, including me, are greatly fortunate because you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have saved us from conditioned material life and given us your shelter.

I felt your support and help even in the dark times of the Soviet rule. You still pour your protection on me, and I consider it your invaluable mercy. You gave me a strong faith in the necessity of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness widely to save myself and other fallen souls, because Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the greatest boon for all human beings. (You spoke about this necessity, following in the footsteps of the sages of Naimiṣāraṇya and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself.)

In 1965 you brought the following invaluable information to the USA, explaining:

Who we are.

What the purpose of our lives is.





How we can achieve that purpose.

Most important, you taught, is uninterrupted remembrance of Kṛṣṇa through the chanting of the holy names. Then temples, preaching centers, etc., will grow automatically, and the initiation system will be needed to help devotees spiritually advance, and the *varṇāśrama* system will come after that.

You traveled constantly, preaching this message in order to fulfill Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's desire. In 1949 you approached the prime minister of India and preached on how to save humanity. In 1954 you repeated the same message by putting it into the rules and regulations of the League of Devotees. In 1956 you proclaimed it again in *Back to Godhead*. In 1966 you put it into the rules and regulations of ISCKON. In 1974 you reaffirmed it as the right spiritual way in a conversation with Tamāla Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja.

You had a clear spiritual vision of Kṛṣṇa consciousness developing around the world. You saw great numbers of devotees, new temples, and this vision has been confirmed by many of your disciples.

You knew that we would face many obstacles, because this is the nature of the material world. You taught us that we should stop meditating on the obstacles, since such meditation will make us forget Kṛṣṇa (Calcutta temple, conversation with Svarūpa Dāmodara in USA, etc.) You said that everything we do we should do for Kṛṣṇa in the mood of satisfying Him. Living our lives in this way, in service to Kṛṣṇa, we will always stay in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness and overcome any obstacles.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please be merciful to this fallen soul and let me take part in the process of saving myself and other fallen souls and remain in Kṛṣṇa consciousness till the last breath of my life.

All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Your servant,

Bhakti Sharan Shanta Goswami

Bhaktisiddhānta Swami

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

What a vantage point we have to see the yearly expansion of your society and to note how auspicious forward steps are being taken by those you have introduced to the natural affair of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Apart from the glorious communication work and progress in cultivation in Māyāpur, and especially Braja, many programs are being developed in your name for Braja-sevā—*dhāma-sevā*—most recently at Giri Govardhana and Rādhā-kuṇḍa.

Recently, ISKCON offered great support to those dealing with the Yamunā crisis, sparked by a unanimous vote of the GBC. No doubt, beyond any environmental concerns, the honest treatment and respect given to the holiest of India's tributaries will lead to the next project: reversing the pollution of the Gaṅgā, another monumental opportunity for preaching.

You once said, "If you want to make this a mandir, a house of Kṛṣṇa, then you must see that within a ten-mile radius no one goes hungry. That will be your success."



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Of course, this is one form of *dhāma-sevā*, and within the wave of your many instructions, caring for the *dhāma* and its residents is one of the jewels of your mass communication efforts, plans, and programs to encourage *sevā* under the banner of “simple living, high thinking.”

At Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Giri Govardhana, areas of mass visitation that strengthen our soldiers in blessings and rejuvenation before they return to the preaching fields, plans for *dhāma* care are being implemented. Your dependents and the local residents are grooming the holy places we bring our members to, representing “an international caring society.”

In a sense, it is a contradiction to make an invitation and at the same time neglect the sacred grounds of *kṛṣṇa-līlā*, places of refined perfection. In a sense, the Lord allows His *dhāmas* to depreciate to give us an opportunity to respond.

Our ISKCON, following your framework/decoration declaration, is certainly making forward steps in honest protection and preservation in Māyāpur and Braja, the most powerful spiritual fields on the planet. Kṛṣṇa consciousness has a ten-thousand-year agenda, and our goal (if not seen as one of the duties of our society) is to develop, nourish, and care for the areas that are the foundation fields for our gurus, disciples, and future generations of pilgrims.

We pray that your mercy will infuse a future ISKCON of well-rounded environmental practices as we network, invite, and build, so that we may show the world a Society that protects and preserves these holy lands. Apart from the renovation of holy spots, our goal is to purify the heart by cleaning the surrounding *dhāmas*, whether in front of our temples or on the *parikramā mārgas*.

Your purports declare that long-term residence in the *dhāmas* is permissible through *sevā*. Please empower us to do just that, to imbibe the *dhāma* as we perform *dhāma upāsana*, an attempt to please the Supreme in a humble and loving way.

Best wishes.

Your servant,

Bhaktisiddhānta Swami

Bhakti Sundar Goswami

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Before meeting you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I used to lament, thinking, “Why wasn’t I born in the time of Jesus Christ? I could have been his disciple and learned how to come closer to God.” What I really wanted was to be guided by a bona fide spiritual master. Kṛṣṇa mercifully fulfilled my desire by putting me in contact with His pure devotee, first through your books and your movement, and later personally.

In your presence everything was Kṛṣṇa conscious. When I was close to you, I felt secure and protected from the illusion of *māyā*. You were situated in *vasudeva-sattva*, the state of pure goodness, in which the Supreme Personality of Godhead Kṛṣṇa is directly perceived in a loving relationship. When you spoke to us, it was from this transcendental position. Your nectarean words penetrated the dense darkness that covered my heart and illuminated my very being with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It’s difficult to express with words this feeling of well-being and security that I experienced in your company. When difficult times



came after your departure, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I took shelter of those eternal moments I had experienced in your company. The remembrance of your person and teachings is what has encouraged me to continue following the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

While trying to carry out your instructions to preach the message of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, I am constantly confronted with many challenges and tests. By your mercy I'm learning to welcome them as opportunities to increase my attachment for you and to surrender to your divine lotus feet, which are the guiding light in my life. Just as someone might avoid darkness by following the sun as it crosses the sky and shines on different countries, so by following your transcendental teachings I can keep the light of Kṛṣṇa consciousness always shining in my heart and thus avoid the darkness of ignorance, which is always threatening to cover my intelligence.

I want to follow your example of always fighting for Kṛṣṇa without any personal ambition. Let my only desire be your pleasure and satisfaction. Allow me to rededicate myself to your service at every moment, without deviation and free of any interest in material sense gratification.

The other day, by your causeless mercy your remembrance came to me in such a beautiful and sweet way that I felt your guiding presence overpowering the deep-rooted illusion in my heart and thus purifying my entire existence. Please keep me always sheltered at your lotus feet. You are my master, life after life.

Your unworthy servant,

Bhakti Sundar Goswami

Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasiṁha Mahārāja

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace! Thank you for giving me shelter at your lotus feet, thank you for accepting me as your disciple, and thank you for engaging me in your *saṅkīrtana* movement to preach the message of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. I cannot imagine how unfortunate my life would have been without your mercy.

I regret to say that during your manifest presence I did not have the initiative to take direct instruction from you. Following your disappearance, I had the good fortune to take shelter of your intimate disciple Tamāl Krishna Goswami, and under his direction I have been engaged in service in the Far East. Under his inspiration I have been trying to assist in the development of the ISKCON centers in this region. We all knew that this would not be an easy field for preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The people here are not like Westerners. They do not easily accept something new. However, as Tamāl Krishna Goswami used to argue, if ISKCON is not present in this part of the world, then we are not truly international.

ISKCON has been preaching here for more than thirty years now, but I cannot say that we have made a great impact on the people here. They say that our movement is not for them but only for the Indians. They prefer their own culture. Unfortunately, they fail to see that we are presenting spiritual culture, beyond the bodily designation. They fail to see that their own culture has no solution to the problem of birth and death. Their culture only increases their identification with the body and causes them to continue in the vicious cycle of birth and death. However, we have maintained our presence here, and Your Divine Grace's books are being translated, published, and distributed. We have faith that if we continue to distribute your books here, gradually there will be a better field for preaching in this part of the world.

For the last ten years I have been spending the first few months of the year in Śrīdhām Māyāpur. I was encouraged by Subhāg Swami to make time for presenting some seminars on our philosophy. Since



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the inception of the Māyāpur Institute for Higher Education, I have had the opportunity to teach parts of the Bhakti-śāstrī and Bhakti-vaibhava courses. I have found this engagement to be both demanding and rewarding. It gives me an opportunity to go deeper into our scriptures and provides me with a receptive audience of devotees who are always eager to hear and share their realizations.

Another program in which I have a small part is the annual Navadvīpa-maṇḍala Parikramā. This is part of the annual Gaura Pūrṇimā festival in Māyāpur. Devotees spend seven days visiting the nine islands of Navadvīpa and see the places of the pastimes of Lord Caitanya. This year five parties totaling more than eight thousand devotees took part. A serious problem facing this event is the loss of sites connected with holy *tīrthas* in the *dhāma*. For example, a lake recognized as Puṣkara is in danger of being taken away by an industrialist to construct a brick factory. We have already seen one unscrupulous person purchase a holy *tīrtha* and begin to raise chickens there. We need to act quickly and protect the holy places from being lost in the name of economic development. We encourage the devotees to donate so that we can purchase some of these threatened sites and preserve the *dhāma* for future generations of devotees.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have many wonderful disciples, and many more wonderful granddisciples, and we are confident that your Society will go on developing more and more. As for myself, I am truly insignificant in their midst. I have nothing to offer to you but can only beg that you not reject me. Please continue to keep me in the shade of your lotus feet.

Your insignificant servant,

Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha Mahārāja

Bhakti Vikāsa Swami

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
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Śrīla Prabhupāda, recently a Śrī Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* invited me to a *thirumañjanam* (elaborate ceremony of worship) of Śrī Rāmānujācārya. That was another occasion for me to observe how the *sampradāya* to which Śrī Rāmānujācārya gave new life, meaning, and direction is still united around him many hundreds of years after the period of his manifest activities.

About three hundred years after Śrī Rāmānuja's withdrawal from manifest activities, his *sampradāya* split doctrinally into two warring camps, each of which quite differently interpreted certain teachings of his. Even today both sects continue, their previous acrimony and doctrinal differences largely overlooked or forgotten. The very reason for the longevity of both divisions has been their sworn adherence to Śrī Rāmānuja's teachings, regarding both *siddhānta* and practice.

The long-standing coherence of the Mādhva-sampradāya must also be principally ascribed to the fact that its members are loyal to the teachings of their founding-*ācārya*.

Similarly, in your ISKCON, strength derives from adherence to the teachings of the founder-*ācārya*, namely Your Divine Grace.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, although those teachings are available to all, and although to be your follower plainly means to follow your teachings, nowadays there are multiple interpretations of several of those teachings, and devotees who claim to be your followers are divided on various issues. Some camps have

Homages from Non-GBC Sannyāsīs



already sprung up outside the ambit of the ISKCON that you incorporated, and presently some doctrinal disagreements threaten to sunder the core movement that you established.

In this predicament, it is particularly apt to recall the following statements from your teachings:

*keha ta' ācārya ājñāya, keha ta' svatantra
sva-mata kalpanā kare daiva-paratantra*

[Translation:] Some of the disciples strictly accepted the orders of the *ācārya*, and others deviated, independently concocting their own opinions under the spell of *daivī-māyā*.

[Purport:] This verse describes the beginning of a schism. When disciples do not stick to the principle of accepting the order of their spiritual master, immediately there are two opinions. Any opinion different from the opinion of the spiritual master is useless. One cannot infiltrate materially concocted ideas into spiritual advancement. That is deviation. There is no scope for adjusting spiritual advancement to material ideas. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 12.9]

*ācāryera mata yei, sei mata sāra
tānra ājñā lañghi' cale, sei ta' asāra*

[Translation:] The order of the spiritual master is the active principle in spiritual life. Anyone who disobeys the order of the spiritual master immediately becomes useless.

[Purport:] Here is the opinion of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī. Persons who strictly follow the orders of the spiritual master are useful in executing the will of the Supreme, whereas persons who deviate from the strict order of the spiritual master are useless. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 12. 10]

* * *

There are many disciples of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, but to judge who is actually his disciple, to divide the useful from the useless, one must measure the activities of such disciples in executing the will of the spiritual master. . . . [B]y accepting the criterion recommended by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, one can very easily understand who is a genuine world-preacher and who is useless. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 12.12, purport]

* * *

If the Absolute Truth is one, about which we think there is no difference of opinion, the guru also cannot be two. The Ācāryadeva for whom we have assembled tonight to offer our humble homage is not the guru of a sectarian institution or one out of many differing exponents of the truth. On the contrary, he is the *jagad-guru*, or the guru of all of us. The only difference is that some obey him wholeheartedly, while others do not obey him directly. [From your speech on the occasion of the Vyāsa-pūjā of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī, February 1936]

* * *

The main business of human society is to think of the Supreme Personality of Godhead at all times, to become His devotees, to worship the Supreme Lord, and to bow down before Him. The *ācārya*, the authorized representative of the Supreme Lord, establishes these principles, but when he disappears, things once again become disordered. The perfect disciples of the *ācārya* try to relieve the situation by sincerely following the instructions of the spiritual master. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.48, purport]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray that you may count me among those disciples of yours who are sincerely following your instructions. Please bless me with the association of those whom you have blessed with



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the unsullied vision and determination to always sincerely and wholeheartedly obey your instructions. Please protect me from the association and influence of persons who profess to be your followers yet do not obey you directly—for instance, by not rising early every day for *sādhana*.

You told us to be *sāstra-cakṣuḥ*. Accordingly, a sincere disciple will always try to understand everything through the instructions in your books. By reading your books one can clearly observe that the principle of *anyābhilāṣitā-sūnya*—which is the central pulse of your teachings—is nowadays in danger of being compromised within the society that you founded for establishing this principle within the world.

Quoting again from your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.48:

The perfect disciples of the *ācārya* try to relieve the situation by sincerely following the instructions of the spiritual master. At the present moment practically the entire world is afraid of rogues and nondevotees; therefore this Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is started to save the world from irreligious principles. Everyone should cooperate with this movement in order to bring about actual peace and happiness in the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the most important *ācārya* in this Kali-yuga, and your instructions, if perfectly understood and executed, can effect tremendous good for the entire universe—as is recognized even by leaders of other Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas*. For instance, during a public meeting several years ago Śrī Viśveśvara Tīrtha, a widely revered patriarch of the Mādhva-sampradāya, stated, “ISKCON is the only organization that can spread *viṣṇu-bhakti* throughout the world.”

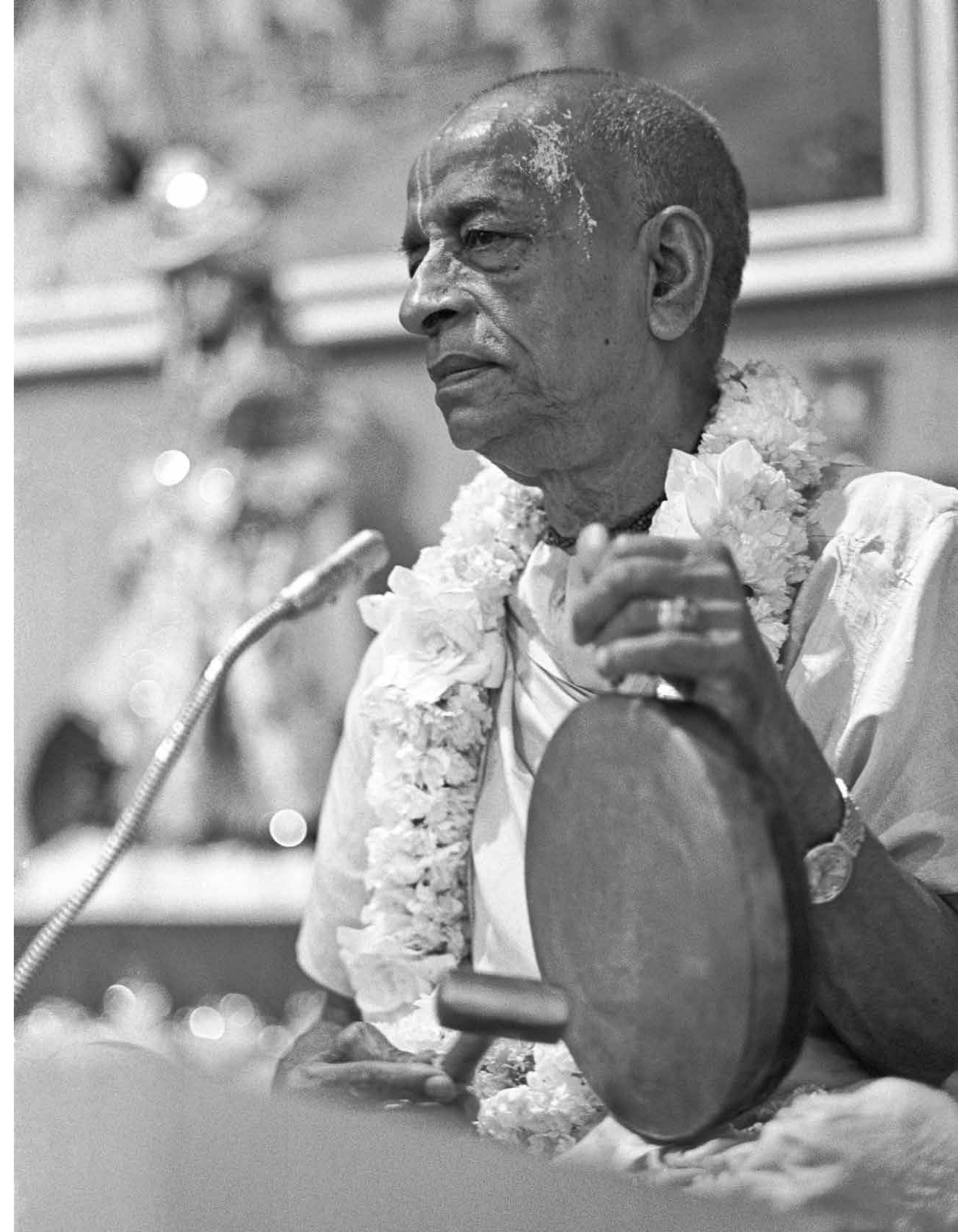
It could be said that the very cause of the longevity of the old Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* is also the cause of their present admitted inability to spread *viṣṇu-bhakti* throughout the world. *Ācāryas* Rāmānuja and Madhva are fully worshipable by us, as are their teachings and the followers of their teachings. But, as ordained by Lord Caitanya, now is the time for *gaura-vāṇī* to spread widely via the personage of Your Divine Grace. As the Śrī Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* whom I mentioned above told me, in his *sampradāya* there are many elaborate procedures, but you made *bhakti* easily available to all.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, one of the reasons that you were able to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness worldwide was your ability to present “old wine in new bottles.” You knew the art of maintaining basic principles while adjusting details according to time, place, and circumstance. Yet we who claim to be your followers must be careful to not imitate (*anukaraṇa*) your example rather than faithfully following in your footsteps (*anusaraṇa*). If, due to inexperience in distinguishing details from principles, we infiltrate materially concocted ideas into spiritual advancement (in the name of “time, place, and circumstance”), and in so doing fail to bring about the revolution of *bhakti* that you envisioned, then we shall surely be *asāra*.

What must we do to save ourselves from the same accusations that you leveled at your godbrothers? For the answer, we must look within your teachings—which you gave to us minute by minute during your manifest presence, and continue to give us through your books—and we must be sufficiently sincere to wholeheartedly accept those teachings unchanged and *in toto*. We must beseech you for the discrimination by which to distinguish details from principles, and for the empowerment to dynamically continue the *paramparā* without becoming either anachronisms or rank speculators.

Your teachings are as clear and brilliant as the sun, yet great harm can be done if persons who present themselves as teachers of your teachings instead attempt to mix or replace them with their own materially infiltrated concoctions. If you see fit, please bless me to serve your mission during this critical period by careful, prayerful study of your pristine message, and with the ability to delineate it via both the spoken and written word, and also bless me to not be just an armchair critic but to continue to be actively involved in your mission in multiple ways, giving special attention to two crucial programs that are presently nearly forgotten, namely *daiva-varṇāśrama* and *gurukula*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please give me the intelligence and wisdom to understand that, although you have given certain parameters the stepping outside of which disqualifies one as your genuine disciple, still there is no “one” way to be your follower. This is clear from your having accepted all kinds of people and encouraged them in various ways in your magnanimous, pragmatic endeavors to engage every *jīva* within the entire universe in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Considering this, I must also bear in mind your instructions regarding your disciples’ cooperating together, unity in diversity, the story of the quarreling





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sons beating their father rather than massaging him, excessive and inappropriate liberality in devotional service (*niyama-agraha*) vs. fanaticism (*niyama-āgraha*), plus your own example of repeatedly trying to work with your godbrothers, and of course Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's essential *ṭṭhād api* call for humility and tolerance.

Always seeking your mercy, without which I have no hope of any good fortune—what to speak of executing any grandiose plans—I pray to always be

Your humble servant,

Bhakti Vikāsa Swami

Bhakti Vinoda Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

As a disciple of your disciple, I regard it as a great privilege to dig deep into my consciousness and pen these words as an offering to you on the occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā. Although I did not have the good fortune of seeing you in your manifest pastimes, I am able to see you in the determination, dedication, and brilliant service of my dear *gurudeva*, His Holiness Jayapatāka Swami.

As I reflect on your scintillating golden service to the whole of mankind and to the Vaiṣṇavas, in the past, present, and future, I can peek into your fathomless mercy and the grand plan you hatched along with your dear *gurudeva* and the previous *ācāryas*. How wonderful is your ongoing *sevā*!

I feel diminished, humbled, ashamed, and puny as I stand in front of you, with my small impure efforts to help your massive mission. Nevertheless, I can sense that you are accessible to me, and I am simply happy to have the opportunity to be part of your great mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I know you will always welcome and encourage even the smallest efforts to spread love of Kṛṣṇa through your ISKCON. That's your magnanimity, Your Divine Grace !

At the recent SGGs meeting I witnessed a discussion about your position in ISKCON and read a paper presented by His Grace Ravindra Svarūpa Prabhu. He captured the essence of your service to your guru in a poignant manner that brought tears to my eyes and a deep internal determination to serve you. I understand that we have to simply follow your instructions and spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness within the framework of the society offered by Your Divine Grace. Everything else has been done by you. By your brilliant transcendental actions you took upon yourself the task of your *gurudeva* as a veritable extrapolation of himself and proved all his instructions, visions, and plans true, practical, and successful. My mundane calculation surmises that if not for your contribution, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura's efforts would have been wasted. Surely Lord Caitanya had His plan how to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness through all the *ācāryas*, culminating in your illustrious self.

When I am frustrated with institutional dynamics in ISKCON, feeling that they stand in the way of opportunities for spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, I remember your genius and tireless positive toil, depending on the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. I seek your special mercy to be able to tolerate the obstacles in Kerala to our building a wonderful edifice of ISKCON in the temple town of Guruvayur, to distribute your books and preach aloud against the Māyāvāda concepts in the bastion of Śaṅkarācārya. We have a temple coming up in the famous capital city of Trivandrum, and other projects in different places. Śrīla Prabhupāda, whenever a volume of your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* gets published here, it's a bomb falling in laps of the Māyāvādīs, and we take great pleasure in trumpeting it through functions and ceremonies. Śrīla Prabhupāda, may your blessings on all the devotees in Kerala bring about the necessary cooperation and



effort to preach uncompromisingly against material communism, false religions, Māyāvāda, intellectual pride, and sense gratification and to establish pure devotional service.

Devotees in Coimbatore are striving to build a center for education and edification with a temple, museum, learning center, and other facilities in the academic ambience prevailing there. In several other areas where I travel, young devotees are endeavoring to satisfy you sincerely, and I pray that all their endeavors will succeed under your aegis and mercy.

All of this is aimed at pleasing you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and making a small contribution to the wonderful world of Kṛṣṇa consciousness you have given us. I hope to travel more and preach in lands outside of India, as was your desire for Indian-bodied devotees.

I am always praying at your lotus feet that I may remain useful in your mission and not fall a victim to pride and arrogance and disrespect my seniors and true well-wishers. May I always strive with tolerance and patience to bring out the latent Kṛṣṇa consciousness in devotees for the benefit of your mission, while laying this valuable life at the altar of your lotus feet.

I beg to remain,

Your menial servant in your mission of The International Society for Krishna Consciousness,

Bhakti Vinoda Swami

Bhakti Viśrambha Mādhava Swami

*vṛndāvane ramaṇa-reti prasiddha-bhūmau
tatrāpi kṛṣṇa-balarāma-supāda-mūle
jñānaṁ paraṁ parama-kṛṣṇa-sudharmīty uktam
daṇḍas tu deva prabhupāda namo namas te*

I repeatedly offer my respectful obeisances unto that divine personality Śrīla Prabhupāda, who sits at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma in Vṛndāvana's Ramaṇa Reti, giving supreme knowledge of Kṛṣṇa to one and all.

*vande śrī-gurudevam taṁ karuṇā-varuṇālayam
yat-kṛpā-lava-leśena pāmaro 'py amarāyate*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the bona fide spiritual master, an ocean of compassion. Even a fraction of his mercy is enough to liberate even the most fallen person.

The Generations to Come Should Never Forget . . .

O Prabhupada! When we can't get things done, we remember how you lovingly delegated and managed to get everything done.

O Prabhupada! When we can't accept an offering made to us due to lack of ability in creeping old age, we are in awe of your kindness and ability to kindly, mercifully accept what people offered you.

*niḥśvāse na hi viśvāsaḥ kadā ruddho bhaviṣyati
kīrtanīya mato bālyād harer nāmaiva kevalam*



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Remember that our final breath may come at any time,
No matter if we're old and sick or in our youthful prime.
So young and old alike should chant the Name incessantly.
The Holy Name of Śrī Hari is surely all that be.

Yes! *Harināma* is the only thing left to us that will still work and give full effect. But only when chanted without offenses!

In our creeping old age, when your disciples are increasingly leaving this world in front of our very eyes to run back to your lotus feet, we beg to chant more rounds, for then all else will be stripped away from us!

Bhakti Viśrambha Mādhava Swami

Candramauli Swami

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

I offer my humble obeisances unto my spiritual master, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who opened my eyes with the bright spotlight of transcendental knowledge when I was wallowing in the darkness of ignorance, the ignorance of forgetfulness of Kṛṣṇa.

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, 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 Caitanya and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with voidism and impersonalism.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to your compassion upon the fallen conditioned souls! It is Gaura Pūrṇimā and I am standing before your merciful self, your *mūrti*, and deeply reflecting on how you are nondifferent from Lord Nityānanda in so many ways, particularly the way you gave His and Lord Gaurāṅga's teachings to the world. Equipped with the full embodiment of Śrī Nityānanda's compassion, you circled the globe fourteen times to beg everyone who would lend an ear: "Please take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Please know that this is the only way to find real and lasting happiness. Chant Kṛṣṇa's holy names and experience the perfection of all your desires."

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has glorified Nitāi's mercy in his song *Dālāler Gītā*, "The Song of the Broker." In our humble attempt to honor you, I present the translation to this song in a way that illustrates how Nitāi's mercy is fully and completely manifest in you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.



(1) I am singing news of great happy tidings. Lord Nityānanda Himself has opened a marketplace of the holy name in Surabhi Kuñja, in Śrī Navadvīpa.

(1a) I am singing news of the greatest happy tidings. Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami is traveling the globe bringing the chanting of Kṛṣṇa's holy name to every town and village.

(2) The news of its great results is that Nityānanda Prabhu is selling the pure holy name in that marketplace only for the price of one's faith.

(2a) The news of its great results is that Nitāi's pure representative Śrīla Prabhupāda is freely giving the pure holy name everywhere on the request of only one's time.

(3) Lord Nityānanda, the proprietor of the market, seeing all the devotees becoming attracted, is selling them the holy name after bargaining with them.

(3a) Śrīla Prabhupāda, the *senapati bhakta*, happily seeing all the people becoming attracted, is giving them the holy name along with tasty *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*.

4) O brother, if you want to buy the holy name, then come with me. We must go into the presence of that great soul, Nityānanda Prabhu.

(4a) O people of the world, if you want to receive the priceless gift of *kṛṣṇa-prema*, then go with Śrīla Prabhupāda. He can take you to these two great souls, Nitāi and Gaura.

(5) You will buy the name of Kṛṣṇa, I will take my commission, and all our desires will be fulfilled.

(5a) You will receive the name of Kṛṣṇa, Śrīla Prabhupāda will be satisfied, and all your desires will be fulfilled.

6) Lord Nityānanda is greatly merciful. Taking only one's faith, He gives the highest ecstasy.

6a) Śrīla Prabhupāda is greatly merciful, for he carries the full mercy of Śrī Nityānanda. Not even asking for one's faith, he gives everyone a chance to receive the highest ecstasy.

(7) If Nitāi once sees tears in the eyes of someone chanting the name "Gaura," He gives all resources to that person.

(7a) If Śrīla Prabhupāda once sees tears in the eyes of someone chanting the name "Gaura," he gives that person the opportunity for pure devotional service

(8) Nityānanda Prabhu gives the pure teachings of Kṛṣṇa to everyone and does not care for one's birth, wealth, knowledge, or strength.

(8a) In the spirit of Lord Nityānanda, Śrīla Prabhupāda gives the pure teachings of Kṛṣṇa to everyone, even the most sinful of sinners.

(9) Now, giving up the illusory snare of Māyā, you may stay in household life or wander in the forest as a *sannyāsī*, for no more troubles remain.

(9a) Now, giving up the illusory snare of Māyā, you may stay in household life or travel as a *sannyāsī* preaching Gaurāṅga's message, for no more material troubles remain.

(10) There is no more fear of the Age of Kali. The merciful Nityānanda Prabhu is giving the holy name to even the *caṇḍālas*.

(10a) There is no more fear of the Age of Kali. The merciful Śrīla Prabhupāda is giving the holy name to even the hippies and bums in New York's Bowery.

(11) Bhaktivinoda calls out, "Except for the lotus feet of Lord Nityānanda, there is no other shelter!"

(11a) All those fortunate people touched by Nitāi's mercy, call out, "Except for the lotus feet



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of Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is freely giving Nitāi's shelter, there is no other shelter!"

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given us a life truly worth living. A life of pure devotional service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. We are eternally grateful.

Your fortunate servant,

Candramauli Swami

Candraśekhara Swami

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

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

In this world there are so very, very few people who know what is really happening. Out of those, fewer still know what to do about life. Of those, fewer still not only know what to do but actually do something with the knowledge that they have. Beyond these are a rare group who can convince others to change their lives as well. Sometimes we may even find those who can convince a *large* number of others to solve the mysteries of life. Harder is to convince others en masse to not only evolve spiritually but to cooperate in an organized effort to engage humanity. But by far the hardest thing is to convince many others to cooperate as an organization and to continue to cooperate even after one's own departure from this mortal plane. That is you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. And here we are, trying to work together in a united effort to transform a world that scarcely notices us. But, of course, Kṛṣṇa does notice us, which is what matters in the final issue. In time, the world will also come to notice us, not because we are special but because we are pointing the way as you pointed the way to us.

Days go by in Kṛṣṇa consciousness: some have a buoyancy, a sense of warmth of exchange between devotees who have known each other for a long time. Some have a sense of accomplishment—we may have neared the completion of a large project. Some days have a sense of victory—perhaps we've conquered our inner demons or maintained a steadiness in a particular regimen. On occasion there is a day in which some gem from scripture strikes a chord in my heart for a time. Some days witness the inspiration of seeing others gradually coming into Kṛṣṇa's circle or blossoming in their devotional practice as the years pass. But there are also days where I feel dry as a bone, with nothing to offer—vacant, dead, and as useless as a losing lottery ticket. I sense that there are a number of implications here, in this feeling of devotional emptiness. To this empty feeling I address this year's Vyāsa-pūjā offering to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

My first thought is that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not about how I feel but about maintaining steadiness in service. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is about how Kṛṣṇa feels. Emptiness comes from being self-absorbed.

Said in another way, we all encounter many external obstacles as well as internal ones, which form a part of our own conditioned character. It is not enough that we live in Kali-yuga, which gives no quarter to anything heralding the banner of devotion. Not enough that our materialistic world is a-swirl in material affairs, each demanding immediate full attention. Not enough that modern times have a general distaste for spiritual ideas, religious expression, and clean, simple, austere life habits. Not enough that common sense has gone the way of the dodo. Not enough that the most trivial, banal, and useless



verbal outpourings are plastered on every square inch of the wallpaper of our lives, while anything actually noble has to be rescued from dusty obscurity or from underneath a pile of distracting garbage. Not enough that we live in a sea of spiritual skeptics and materialistic loudspeakers, as well as religious sentimentalists who are more aligned with materialism than with the world beyond. Not enough that all these external agents of Kali amass to thwart any sliver of progress. But then we also have to face our own past behavioral tendencies, which were previously committed to the opposition team, to these very same idiotic influences with which we now do battle. My poor heart reels. Emptiness anyone? We are certainly apart from the herd.

Of the two, this internal struggle seems to be the more daunting and productive of the sense of separation. That is why I try to keep my eyes on the road and my hands upon the wheel. To think too much about the opposition you must fight is a sure prescription for failure. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has penned, “Forget the past that sleeps and ne’er the future dream at all, but act in times that are with thee and progress thee shall call.” In other words, keep your eyes on the road, not only in terms of past and future but also in terms of attending to one’s own positive spiritual progress first. And don’t look down at the crashing waves on the rocks below. That is, don’t look too often.

At my present stage of advancement, my love is shown by my effort to continue with the day-to-day duties given by my spiritual master, the devotees, and the Vedic devotional literatures. I must have a plan to go forward to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Obviously, there will also come times when there must be an effort to evaluate impediments, but these impediments should not become the meditation of my life; only Kṛṣṇa should become the meditation. Though this idea is simple, I overlook it time and time again. Usually when I feel abandoned, lost, relegated to an Ambassador instead of an SUV, I have been meditating on the visiting team and not the home team. What else?

I am not neglecting the role of my own offenses and failures to take devotional service seriously. These are certainly the greatest cause of my vacant-ness and sluggishness. However, though this is true, there is only one solution: more devotional service, better chanting, asking forgiveness for offenses. There is naught to be gained by dwelling on the failure, beyond understanding the way toward rectification. Otherwise, such dwelling causes dejection.

The years inexorably roll by, inevitably bringing me—and all of us—toward the final mile marker, to full depreciation. Each year I become more and more aware of what I have done wrong, what I have done foolishly, what I have not done, and what I have done incompletely. I suppose such realization is a good sign, but maybe it is just a booby prize. Love, in the real practical sense, is shown by the day-to-day commitment to live by the principles handed down. That knowledge is what keeps me going. I know that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, can empower those who simply try to follow your teachings—if not today, then certainly within a near lifetime—as they become pure.

So, yes, sometimes devotional progress seems like walking through a desert, or like being raised up onto the *cāṅga* platform because you owe the government 200,000 *kāhanas*, or like “no Kṛṣṇa visible from the conning tower,” or even like the dream of Don Quixote, but really it is not like any of these things. It is really the play of Kṛṣṇa’s energies that give me solace and reassurance one day but challenge me to walk on my own two legs the next. We are not to be fair-weather sailors. And I must recognize the lack of feeling I experience as due to the lack of feeling I send out toward Kṛṣṇa. But none of this really matters; what matters is that I continue to serve.

I am amazed that in this world the things which seem, at least to most, the most tangible and real are actually the most temporary and insignificant, and that those things which count for the most, as certified by the *Vedas*, seem elusive and incomprehensible. Why should it be that way? Because I am that way.

I am yours. As I stumble along, please lift me up and protect me and let me be of service to your devotees, now and forever. What else?

Your servant,

Candraśekhara Swami





Dānavīr Goswami

My dearest Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine*

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

Jaya Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-śata (108) Śrī Śrīmad A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda kī jaya!

Thank you for allowing me to try to serve Your Divine Grace and your Lords Caitanya, Nityānanda, and Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, along with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, even though I lack much.

Recently someone told me that he thought ISKCON was sectarian because it distinguished itself from other, similar Vaiṣṇava organizations. I explained to the best of my meager ability why it was not, drawing from what I have learned from my dear *gurudeva*. In brief, I said that Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the origin of all personal expansions (*svāmīśa*), the impersonal *brahma-jyoti* effulgence, and the separated living entities (*vibhinnāmīśa*). Furthermore, He is the undisputed father, maintainer, and ultimate annihilator of all species of life (*sarva-yoniṣu*). As the Supersoul, He enters every atom (*andāntara-stha-paramāṇu-cayāntara-stham*) of the temporary creation. Literally nothing is outside of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's jurisdiction—every “thing” and every “one” is connected to Him. There is no possibility of Kṛṣṇa's being sectarian.

Lord Kṛṣṇa is also the head of all four Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas* (disciplic successions), including the Brahma-Mādhva-Gauḍīya line, from which ISKCON has grown. ISKCON's founder-*ācārya*, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, exactly imbibed the understanding, vision, and mission of his spiritual preceptors, especially Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-śata (108) Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda. Since Kṛṣṇa's original teachings have perfectly been passed down through this chain of masters, and because Śrīla Prabhupāda superbly demonstrated and elucidated them as well, ISKCON has become a perfect society. Any organization that practices and teaches the pure principles of Śrī Kṛṣṇa without compromise is the same as ISKCON. Similarly, to the degree that any organization practices and teaches the profound instructions of Lord Kṛṣṇa, it can be considered allied with ISKCON. ISKCON is not sectarian; rather, it is simply dedicated to following its founder-*ācārya* and pleasing him.

But my friend had another doubt as to how ISKCON can be considered pure although sometimes its members deviate from the spiritual principles. Your Divine Grace previously answered this question when a young female disciple of yours asked Your Divine Grace why Kṛṣṇa has an external energy. She reasoned that since Kṛṣṇa is pure there shouldn't be any impure or negative things emanating from Him, such as the external energy, *māyā*, which binds the living entities to birth and death. You answered her back with a brilliant question. You said, “Suppose you are very nice girl, nice, but because you pass some urine or stool, does it mean that you are bad?” Everyone got the point.

In the same way, ISKCON remains pure even though some impure elements pass through and out of it. Śrīla Prabhupāda designed it that way, and that is why his sincere followers strive to perpetuate it. Perpetuating ISKCON's legacy of purity from within ISKCON—not from outside of the movement—is in my humble opinion a very important part of displaying one's faithfulness to His Divine Grace. We must resist the temptation to consider ourselves morally superior to ISKCON.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, although nearly useless, I request the benediction to be allowed to serve Your Divine Grace's movement in this inside manner. You are my hero in every respect, and I aspire to “do as you are doing” someday and to follow in your lotus footsteps eternally.



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Your insignificant aspiring servant,

Dānavīr Goswami

Gaṇapati dās Swami

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

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

“The devotees of the Lord, who are all confidential servitors, are sometimes perplexed in the discharge of their respective duties, but they are never discouraged. They have full faith in the Lord, and He paves the way for the smooth progress of the devotee’s duty.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.3.17, purport)

Lately, as I meet different health challenges and as I come closer to reaching the age at which Śrīla Prabhupāda embarked on his first voyage to the West, I have been overwhelmed by contemplating his superlative attributes—his faith in Guru, his compassion, his (almost paradoxical) qualities of determination and flexibility, and his willingness to endure extreme acts of sacrifice. These characteristics were highlighted by the way Prabhupāda overcame numerous obstacles in executing his Gurudeva’s order.

Navigating the Obstacle Course

“Why don’t you preach Lord Caitanya’s message throughout the whole world?” These words of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī pierced Prabhupāda’s heart and became his lifelong inspirational principle: *vyavasāyātmikā buddhiḥ*. More recently, someone has written: “Obstacles are those frightful things you see when you take your eyes off your goals.” So in a sense, because Prabhupāda never took his eyes off his goals, he never had any obstacles.

All of India was following Gandhi. Prabhupāda mustered up a half-hearted defense, but Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī told him that Kṛṣṇa consciousness could not wait. Prabhupāda felt defeated and was astounded by Bhaktisiddhānta’s teaching: “Here’s the proper person who can give a real religious idea.” Although he officially received initiation ten years later, Prabhupāda had at that first meeting accepted Śrī Sarasvatī Ṭhākura as his spiritual master. He would have immediately joined the Gauḍīya Mission but felt, as a newly married man with a young son, he could not do so.¹

Instead, Prabhupāda dedicated himself to his pharmaceutical business with the aim of utilizing his wealth to propagate the mission. In his business travels, he took every opportunity to associate with Śrī Siddhānta Sarasvatī or his followers, hearing from them and assisting the preaching work in any way he could. As an ideal *grhastha*, he also attempted to hold gatherings at home, but his wife did not share his enthusiasm.²

Absolute is sentient
Thou hast proved.
Impersonal calamity
Thou hast moved.

This simple couplet from a poem offered to his guru on his Vyāsa-pūjā in 1935 caught the attention of



Siddhānta Sarasvatī, who then instructed the *Harmonist* editor, “Whatever he writes, publish it.” Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta soon after fine-tuned his original instruction to Prabhupāda while on a walk at Rādhākuṇḍa: “I had a desire to print some books. If you ever get money, print books.”

About a year later, just one month before Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta departed, Prabhupāda wrote him, inquiring about his specific duty. His reply:

I am fully confident that you can explain in English our thoughts and arguments to the people who are not conversant with the language. . . . This will do much good to yourself as well as your audience. I have every hope that you can turn yourself into a very good English preacher.

Almost immediately after Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura’s departure, the once-united and dynamic Gauḍīya Maṭha fell prey to internal strife, thus losing its status as a powerful force for fulfilling Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s desire. Prabhupāda could no longer depend upon his spiritual master’s institution as the medium for his devotional service.³

When the “denial policy” of the British produced a famine in Bengal during the Second World War, Prabhupāda managed to purchase just enough supplies for his own family. Convinced that he had an urgent message for the war-weary citizens of the world, Prabhupāda conceived, wrote, edited, and typed the manuscript for his *Back to Godhead* magazine. But now, besides his perennial shortage of funds, paper was also a highly guarded commodity.⁴ Still, Prabhupāda, convinced of the importance of his message, was able to convince the government officials, and the first issue was released in the midst of war.

While Prabhupāda wrote for his new magazine, he simultaneously began a commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā* and preached to influential men through letters. One such personality was Mohandas Gandhi, who unfortunately was not able to accept poignant advice from his “unknown friend.”

As Prabhupāda’s business and family affairs dwindled, he accepted an invitation to lecture at the Gita Mandir in Jhansi. Encouraged by the reception, he registered his revolutionary movement as the League of Devotees. During this time he received news that his Allahabad business had been burglarized—he had lost everything.⁵ After one final attempt to fulfill his family responsibilities, he returned to Jhansi, only to find that the League of Devotees had lost its building to a ladies’ club.⁶

Although he had no permanent place to stay or even enough funds to buy a jacket for the chilly Delhi winters, Prabhupāda pushed on with his writing and personal preaching: “I am crying alone in the wilderness at the present moment.” Even in the extreme summer heat, he would continue to go out to sell his magazine, one time suffering a heat stroke, and another being seriously gored by a cow.⁷

When Prabhupāda took up residence in Vṛndāvana, he felt at home. Yet he simultaneously felt driven by the desire to broadcast the glories of the eternal Vṛndāvana to the world. His spiritual master appeared to him in a dream, calling him to follow. Shortly afterwards, his godbrother confirmed that he should immediately take the order of *sannyāsa*.

Not much changed except that Prabhupāda, now known as A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, accepted the advice of some associates to refocus his literary endeavors on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. His acceptance of *sannyāsa*, his decision to write and publish *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in English, and his desire to preach in the West were all interrelated. Traveling between Vṛndāvana and Delhi, within the next few years Prabhupāda was able to complete the first canto of *Bhāgavatam* in three volumes. Now he took seriously to the task of making arrangements to fulfill his long-cherished desire to travel west to fulfill the desire of his Guru Mahārāja. Several regulatory impediments still blocked his way.⁸ But after all family and official restrictions were overcome, Prabhupāda nimbly passed over the last hurdle—transportation. Unrelentingly, he convinced the pious Sumati Morarji to issue him a complimentary passage onboard the *Jaladuta* (“Messenger of the Sea”) cargo ship.

“With great difficulty I got out of the country! Some way or other by Kṛṣṇa’s grace, I got out so that I could spread the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world.”

Although Prabhupāda had meditated and prayed and worked so hard to get out of the country, he did not realize that his most severe challenges lay just ahead. After several days of “rain, seasickness, dizziness, headache, no appetite, vomiting,” he suffered two heart attacks in two days.⁹ Then Lord Kṛṣṇa came to him in a dream, rowing a boat in His many forms. He told Prabhupāda not to fear, and the attacks



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did not recur. As he gradually renewed his physical strength, Prabhupāda revealed his natural feelings of separation and helplessness:

I have left Bharatabhumi just to execute the order of Sri Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati in pursuance of Lord Caitanya's order. I have no qualification, but I have taken up the risk just to carry out the order of His Divine Grace. I depend fully on Their mercy, so far away from Vrndavana.

A few days later, Prabhupāda noted in his diary, "Today I have disclosed my mind to my companion, Lord Sri Krishna." He expressed his unworthiness to execute the mission assigned to him, begged Kṛṣṇa for his mercy to do so, and revealed his secret longing:

In the early morning I will wander about the cowherd pastures and fields. Running and frolicking in the many forests of Vraja, I will roll on the ground in spiritual ecstasy. Oh, when will that day be mine?

After the thirty-five day journey, the representative of pure *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* finally set foot in America at Boston's Commonwealth Pier. Prabhupāda took the opportunity to compose yet another poem in his time of great need. He ended with

I have no devotion, nor do I have any knowledge, but I have strong faith in the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. I have been designated as Bhaktivedanta, and now, if You like, You can fulfill the real purport of Bhaktivedanta.

In expressing his dependence upon the chanting of the holy names, Prabhupāda was no doubt aware of his Guru's admonition in his famous poem *Vaiṣṇava Ke?: kīrtana-prabhāve, smaraṇa-svabhāve*. He was certain that everything would unfold from the chanting.

Although New York was his targeted *prabhu-datta deśa*, Prabhupāda spent only a few hours there before being ushered to Port Authority to catch his bus to Butler, Pennsylvania. Upon his return a month later, he reluctantly accepted the shelter of a remote contact, Dr. Ramamurti Misra. Although Dr. Misra treated Prabhupāda with respect, and Prabhupāda in turn "saved" Misra's life with his *prasāda*, Prabhupāda felt greatly inconvenienced by his host's Māyāvāda disposition.¹⁰

Meanwhile, Prabhupāda appealed through letters to his leading godbrothers, as well as pious, wealthy Indian industrialists, to help finance a Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa temple in New York. His sincere efforts were ultimately met with expedient excuses.¹¹

It should also be kept in mind that New York was experiencing one of its most severe winters on record. Later, Prabhupāda told of his innocent reaction to the blizzard: "How is that. One white-washed?"¹²

Desiring a place of his own so that he could speak freely and boldly, and so that people could come and hear him regularly, Prabhupāda chose to move into a narrow "railroad-car temple," although this meant he would now have to cover his own expenses.¹³ In this way, selling his translated books became his primary source of income. However, just as a new, younger, and sincere crowd began to frequent his "temple," it was burglarized.¹⁴ With his typewriter and tape recorder gone, and with no certainty that it would not happen again, Prabhupāda accepted an invitation to share an artist's loft in the Bowery—"no fit place for a gentleman."¹⁵ In spite of that, Prabhupāda had recently said, "Everywhere is my home." So he started to construct his "house in which the whole world can live" in that loft, the street-entrance of which already served as "home" to as many as half a dozen derelicts nightly. Word quickly spread, and the original recruits of Prabhupāda's preaching army began to assemble. But another disaster soon struck when David, whom Prabhupāda had hoped would be America's first Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava, lost his mind on LSD and attacked his teacher. Again Prabhupāda was back "out on the street," with no fixed place of residence.¹⁶

Kṛṣṇa consciousness, however, had taken root in the hearts of some of his young students. They banded together and found Prabhupāda his first genuine base of operations—the former "Matchless Gifts" antique shop, along with an adjoining apartment. This set off the "Hare Kṛṣṇa explosion." A few



months later, a shoot of the original New York *bhakti* creeper was transplanted on the West Coast via one of Prabhupāda's new initiates—Mukunda Dāsa. The future appeared glorious, but Prabhupāda was about to meet what his followers at the time feared might be his most formidable obstacle yet—a life-threatening stroke.¹⁷ Lord Kṛṣṇa, however, made good on his promise to “row Prabhupāda's boat.” Prabhupāda was able to recoup his health in India and at the same time sow the seeds for the imminent expansion of his movement there. He soon returned in full health and spiritual force to the USA, an event he later described as the real beginning of his “vigorous propaganda work.”

No account of Prabhupāda's trials and triumphs would be complete without mentioning the Bombay battle against the Nairs.¹⁸ It was the perfect example of Kṛṣṇa turning a vicious attack into a glorious victory. Once Prabhupāda had promised Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī a new home in Juhu, no force on earth could check him. Although the battle thrust the devotees into a whirlpool of anxiety, and although it absorbed Prabhupāda's attention for years, he seemed to ultimately relish the whole affair, concluding, “It was a good fight!”

Although various challenges continued to present themselves in the remaining years of Prabhupāda's ministry, two in particular stand out in my mind—the anti-cult media and legal attacks of 1976–77¹⁹ and, naturally, the final test of relinquishing the physical body.²⁰

As Prabhupāda's movement continues to spread its influence around the world, the material energy continues to try to impede its progress. But the greatest stumbling block of all is “the enemy within.” Prabhupāda himself warned, “This fighting spirit will destroy everything.”

Besides resisting the ingrained tendency to quarrel and fight, we have to remain vigilant against laziness—expecting that spiritual advancement comes cheaply (*sahaja*). Śrīla Prabhupāda exemplified the behavior of a genuine lover of God, as so vividly described by Śrīmān Acyutānanda Dāsa in his recent book of memoirs:

Prema-bhakti, rāga-bhakti, bhāva-bhakti must have the comprehensive knowledge of the science of Kṛṣṇa's unlimited potencies, qualities, and pastimes of all His incarnations. It is not just idly talking only about His love-*līlā* with the *gopīs*. It is the love that inspires a penniless seventy-year-old holy man to take a thirty-five-day freighter-voyage to an unknown country and start a worldwide mission from nothing.

Śrīla Prabhupāda *kī jaya!*

Ever depending on his mercy,

Gaṇapati dās Swami

Comments on the “Obstacles”

¹Although Prabhupāda later quipped, “Of course I should have immediately joined!” his sacrifice to carry out his family duties in a responsible manner sets an important example for all those who claim to follow him.

²Prabhupāda was never dependent upon other people, nor a specific time and circumstance, to execute his preaching duty: *ahaituky apratihātā*.

³Prabhupāda recognized that the spiritual master's instruction is more important than his institution.

⁴Prabhupāda's strong sense of urgency was able to sway even those who didn't agree with his philosophy. Indeed, he even convinced printers to print when they knew he had no money to pay!

⁵As a great *mahā-bhāgavata*, Prabhupāda saw the Lord's hand behind all events and was reminded of Kṛṣṇa's instruction to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira: *yasyāham anugrṇāmi hariṣye tad-dhanam śanaiḥ*.

⁶Again, Prabhupāda accepted this as a sign from Kṛṣṇa. Rather than becoming despondent, he redirected his energies toward the literary—magazines and books, which would eventually become the basis of his mission.



⁷I recently viewed the movie *The Passion of Christ*—two hours of mind-numbing blood and gore. Although Prabhupāda was protected from having to endure the type of physical torture Jesus surrendered to, I evaluated that at least Jesus began his ministry while yet a young man, taught in his own land, and endured torture for a few days only. Prabhupāda was in his later years, and when he came to America at seventy, the culture was not only foreign but steeped in degraded materialism.

⁸International travel in those days was not like today, and Prabhupāda had no backing of any kind.

⁹“When it’s dark enough, men start to see the stars.”—R.W. Emerson. Of course, Prabhupāda never forgot Kṛṣṇa at any time, but Kṛṣṇa’s *darśana* is His personal prerogative.

¹⁰Perhaps the greatest austerity Prabhupāda endured was having to compromise his facility to preach “as it is.”

¹¹“All along my Godbrothers gave me only depression, repression, compression—but I continued strong in my duty.”

¹²Prabhupāda had grown up in Bengal and, right until his journey to America, had spent considerable time in Vṛndāvana, one of the hottest places on earth.

¹³Prabhupāda had firm faith in Kṛṣṇa’s proclamation: *yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*.

¹⁴Like his guru, Prabhupāda had a keen sense of *yukta-vairāgya*. Yet he was not dependent on material objects and displayed no attachment to them.

¹⁵Actually, according to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, this whole material world is not fit for any gentleman, but the pure devotee sees every place as favorable if he can serve his Lord: *svargāpavarga-narakeṣv api tulyārtha-darśinah*.

“Preaching in the snows of Russia is more sweet than any mango.”

¹⁶“One is continually faced with great opportunities brilliantly disguised as insoluble problems.” This was simply Lord Kṛṣṇa’s way of eliminating one of Prabhupāda’s problems and opening up a wonderful opportunity for him. Although Prabhupāda sometimes couldn’t fathom Kṛṣṇa’s plan, he never lost faith.

“At that time I couldn’t understand. But now I realize that all those difficulties were assets. It was all Kṛṣṇa’s mercy.”

Yet, the transition to an improved facility stretched Prabhupāda’s tolerance to the extreme: “I had to keep my food next to their meat in the refrigerator. They were not clean. I slept in the bed next to theirs. And sometimes they were not sleeping.”

¹⁷Again, Prabhupāda turned this setback into a rejuvenation. He even took the Jewish doctor’s advice that he exercise and began his daily walking regimen, later confirming that it was one of the three items that kept him alive.

¹⁸“Out of the twenty-six qualifications, one qualification is *dakṣa*, expert. If there is need of fighting, they can fight like very expert. That is also needed.”

¹⁹This formidable challenge, for which Prabhupāda was prepared to wage a lengthy court battle, was instead surmounted swiftly and resoundingly. When read the newspaper account of the verdict, he stated, “So my mission is now successful.”

²⁰More than anything, Prabhupāda’s exemplary departure was a test for his followers. Prabhupāda showed us how to “fight till the last breath.” Otherwise, for him, it was: *sādhur jīvo vā maro vā*. The joyful reality was that Kṛṣṇa could no longer tolerate separation from his dear devotee.

Guṇagrāhi dās Goswami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet, our only shelter in this dark Age of Kali.

Although I am daily chanting your glories in my classes, my letters, and my preaching—something impossible for any of us not to do—an offering on this day of your divine appearance is a different level of



glorification. It is our most single-pointed and concentrated effort to search out and express our deepest feelings of gratitude for the love and dedication you have ignited within us—feelings that have grown throughout the years to become the most integral part of our beings.

Before I met you my heart had been broken by the only world I ever knew and could ever find—a world of false conceptions, illusory pursuits, and shattered dreams. The first time I came to the temple, saw your picture on the *vyāsāsana*, and watched the devotees bow down to you, I said to them, “When I feel something, I’ll bow down, but for now, I prefer to keep standing.” Soon after, though, your tidal wave of mercy hit me and literally knocked me off my feet. I found myself diving and surfacing in that wave with a relish I never felt before. The association, the *prasādam*, the chanting, *your* chanting, your words, the sound of your voice, devotional service! If I could have burrowed a hole in the floor to bow lower I would have done so.

What a contrast to the house filled with dogs, hippies, and nonsense that I was still calling my home as I foolishly clung to my last hopes for worldly pleasure. Then one day I got up with resolve, tossed everything out of my room, cleaned it from top to bottom, painted it, and made a small altar on a box. The altar was now my only piece of furniture, and that altar, my beads, and my *Bhagavad-gītā* became my most valued—and only—possessions.

My friends respected my spiritual direction but were disappointed when I started turning down invitations to join them in sinful activities. And when I began feeling more at home in the temple than my home, I moved in, and all my superficial relationships ended.

I was now living in *your* world, my crumpled one rapidly becoming a distant memory. Long hair gone to the wind, bad habits tossed out the window, useless endeavors not given a passing thought, uncontrolled senses tamed, everything offered in your service. And even my heart, my most cherished and guarded possession, was now yours. I finally found someone I could entrust it to, who, unlike myself, would know exactly what to do with it.

I remember how difficult it was to fall asleep in the *āśrama*—not because of the thin mats on the floor we lied upon or all the devotees I was cramped in the same little room with—but because Rūpānuga Prabhu, our temple president, would hang up the phone every night and ignite us with all the stories he had just heard of how your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement was spreading like wildfire across the globe. What an inspiration! It gave us the unshakable faith we needed to go out daily and push on no matter what hardships befell us.

You had worked your magic on us all. And your desire for the happiness of every last soul in this world would continue empowering you as Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental magician for the next ten thousand years.

At times I will by chance hear an old Bob Dylan song or the like, and it is true that my heart goes back to my days of sensual pursuits. My meditation, however, is not how much fun those days were. On the contrary, I recoil remembering all the loneliness, the boredom, the dissatisfaction, and most of all the intense despair that by your unparalleled mercy I have not felt a tinge of since you took over my life. The love and happiness you have injected me with is unimaginable to those who have not tasted it. Yet by your compassion it is so easily available to even an undeserving soul like myself.

In return for your gift of life, all I can do is continue offering you my heart, although I am quite ashamed to, soiled as it still is even after all these years of your mercy. But I pray that you accept it as you have always so magnanimously done, for your divine grace is all that keeps it beating. I also pray for the power to guide others to you, so that just like me, they can be swept off their feet and burrow their heads deep in surrender to this world’s greatest friend and savior.

Begging to remain forever under your shelter,

Your insignificant disciple,

Guṇagrāhi dās Goswami



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Hanumatpresaka Swami

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we offer our humble obeisances to your lotus feet from our rather egoistic position. You have so kindly come to these Western countries and delivered the message and the training that can relieve us from suffering and death. As we grow older and surely approach our next death, as we see our bodies and minds dwindling, we must apply more and more practically this *yoga* you have given us to remain enlivened and active. Thank you. We are trying to preach, and there is a little result. We strive for more and more purification so that we can become more and more useful tools for Your Divine Grace. Thank you very much.

Let us also especially beg to thank you for the book *Kṛṣṇa: The Supreme Personality of Godhead*. It was our first contact with Your Divine Grace and remains the steadfast center of our devotional life. It is never old. Whenever we give it a sincere reading, it always takes us to a different world. Thank you so much, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We aim to become more purified so that we can render effective service in your *saṅkīrtana* movement life after life.

Our *japa*, as you have given it to us, is our life and soul.

The four regulative principles, as you inspire us to follow them, keep us above the ocean of pain.

Harer nāma eva kevalam.

Your humble yet very attached servant,

Hanumatpresaka Swami

Hridayānanda dās Goswami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my sincere obeisances at your feet. You magnanimously bestowed on us Kṛṣṇa consciousness with a “lifetime warranty.” Just as during your manifest presence on earth, so now after your external disappearance, you continue to make Kṛṣṇa consciousness work for a burgeoning global community of Vaiṣṇavas.

You are the perpetual reference point of purity, determination, fearlessness, and devotion to Kṛṣṇa. History will inevitably throw up varieties of lesser persons claiming to know and embody “the way.” It is you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who save the innocent from such lesser leaders. As Kṛṣṇa says in the *Gītā* (3.21), people in general follow *śreṣṭha*, the best, most excellent, most distinguished person among them. Had Kṛṣṇa not sent and revealed you as truly the best person, many one-eyed gurus would have ruled the blind valley of the modern world.

We continue our lifelong task of finding the most appropriate balance between the twin historical imperatives of preservation and adaptation. We must preserve intact all that is essential in our supreme





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tradition. Yet a movement may lose itself not only through deviation but also through fatal attrition, caused by a failure to include relevance among the items to be preserved.

Only you, Prabhupāda, can bless us with the keen intelligence to properly balance preservation and adaptation. Only you can perfectly teach us to correctly discern the basic, the fundamental, the unchangeable, from the variable, protean, adaptable detail. We must earn your blessings by our genuine, earnest dedication to our own emancipation, and to that of the world. We must also balance attention to self with attention to other souls. As Kṛṣṇa teaches us in the *Gītā*, and the *Bhāgavatam*, in a world full of tensions, paradoxes, and competing just claims, we must find reasonable balance in all things.

On the holy day of your divine appearance, along with our expressions of gratitude, we congratulate you on your sublime descent to this world, your inimitable glorious deeds, and your immaculate departure. Kindly empower us more than ever to do your work in this baffled world.

Your eternal servant,

Hridayānanda dās Goswami

Janānanda Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

I offer my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet.

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

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.

*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 so kindly teaching the message of Lord Caitanya and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with voidism and impersonalism.

Obeisances to you are not complete without offering obeisances to all your followers—to brothers and sisters, young and old, and especially to those I have offended, mistreated, ignored, misdirected, or simply never met. I offer my obeisances to one and all, as in essence I can have hope of your mercy and know you only through them. My existence in this movement is possible only due to your unending tolerance and kindness. Please forgive my envious nature and bless me that a miracle of reformation may take place.

While compiling the small book *Prabhupāda in Malaysia*, I received from Amogha Prabhu an account of an incident in Penang in 1971 when you were riding in a car, Amogha Prabhu offered you his obeisances with all the devotion he could muster. You turned and said to him, “Just by offering obeisances, all good activity is performed.”

Unfortunately, despite knowing this, as I bow down before you there is hardly an iota of devotion in my consciousness. At best, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am mechanically vibrating some sounds—lip service



only—and even that is often not the case, as I mumble something.

I am sorry to say this is an indication of my actual condition—outwardly busy doing this and that but inwardly a distinct lack of devotion or favorable consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, this past year has seen your mercy acting on me in perhaps a different way. It has been a year of inner reflection, of appraising my situation and service, of realizing my innumerable shortcomings and the need to address them. You have mercifully allowed me to see within myself duplicitous and proud attitudes. The risky razor's edge of compromising your instructions in regard to *sādhana* and the like is staring me in the face. I feel like an ass carrying the load of past *anarthas*, still insisting they deserve a place on the journey.

Fortunately you have also shown me the utter need to enter deeper into a genuine relationship with you. You again and again remind me of various manifestations of this need: the need to be very serious about the instructions you have given us by studying, in a submissive way, your words as they appear in your books and lectures and as they come through your genuine followers; the need to carefully hear the holy names; the need to always see oneself as a servant and act accordingly; in short, the need to surrender to the fact that all depends on your mercy. Perhaps for me the greatest of your unlimited qualities is your untiring bestowal of mercy on even an ailing disciple like myself.

The following words of your Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, speak for themselves:

There is nothing more auspicious than serving the spiritual master. Among all kinds of worship, worship of the Supreme Lord is the greatest, but service to the spiritual master is even greater. Unless we are fully convinced about this, we cannot properly take shelter of our guru and understand that he is our shelter, protector, and maintainer. The *Vedas* say, *sarvasvaṁ gurave dadyāt*: “Everything should be offered to the spiritual master.” If we do not serve the guru by offering our lives, wealth, intelligence, speech, mind, knowledge, and body at his lotus feet, we will not become free of our absorption in matter. We will not give up our material desires, our material disease will not be cured, and our illusion, fear, and distress will not be vanquished. By surrendering completely at the guru's feet we become free from illusion, fear, and lamentation. If we aspire for the spiritual master's causeless mercy, then the spiritual master will bless us without duplicity.

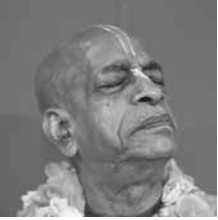
The spiritual master is not a mortal being: he is immortal, or eternal. The spiritual master is eternal, his service is eternal, and his servants are eternal. Therefore we have nothing to worry about if we serve him; we will be freed from death.

Since our material attachment or sense of being the doer is strong at present, we are anxious and miserable. Only the spiritual master can protect us from such formidable pride. Do we want his protection? It seems we prefer to remain trapped in material existence. If we wanted to become free we would engage in his service. Do we have such a mentality? What to speak of giving the guru one hundred percent of our energy, we are not even prepared to give him one percent.

Unless we accept the essence of everything, Lord Kṛṣṇa, as the goal of life, how can we achieve Him? Our present pathetic condition is due to our not accepting the spiritual master as if he were as good as the Supreme Lord. This is the root cause of our continued attachment to matter. That is why I say one should not consider the spiritual master an ordinary being. He is the one who can give you unlimited life; he is the doctor of your soul, your protector, maintainer, benefactor, and selfless well-wisher.

If we are not prepared to take complete shelter at his lotus feet, then we should expect to be cheated according to the degree of our negligence or duplicity. Think carefully about this. If we are not introspective, we will not be successful.

If we do not surrender ourselves one hundred percent at the feet of that personality to whom most auspicious Kṛṣṇa has entrusted our well-being, how can he bless us? If we make a pretense of devotional service or become hypocrites while maintaining material desire, then the omniscient spiritual master will be compelled to deceive us. The *śāstra* states, *yādṛśī bhāvanā yasya siddhir bhavati tādṛśī*: “According to one's state of mind, one attains perfection.” When you cheat your spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa by serving Māyā and your relatives, without taking



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full shelter of guru, then the *caitya-guru* will mercifully remind you that you have not yet become a true disciple: “You are not yet following your spiritual master’s instructions, and your heart still contains sinful desire. Since you are accustomed to listening to your duplicitous mind and adopting the ideals and conceptions of ordinary people, that’s proof that you have not yet developed ears to hear My instructions. Therefore you have been cheated.” Again, it is the duty of a disciple to accept his spiritual master’s arrangements for his life without reservation. If you do not, degradation is inevitable.

Another manifestation of your mercy that has prompted me to write this offering (if it can be so called) comprises these words spoken by His Holiness Gaura Govinda Mahārāja, which have helped to solidify my train of thought and commitment:

You should develop simplicity. Give up crookedness, politics, and duplicity. The *sāstras*, as well as all Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, have said, “Simplicity is Vaiṣṇavism.” One who is simple by nature is a natural Vaiṣṇava. I want all of you to become natural Vaiṣṇavas, Vaiṣṇavas in the true sense. Don’t be hypocrites—outward Vaiṣṇava, but inward demon, inward politician. If you do that you will become a *kali-celā*, a follower of Kali. A *sādhū-vaiṣṇava* has many followers. They are known as *celās*. If you are just outwardly posing as a Vaiṣṇava, with Vaiṣṇava dress, *śikhā*, *tilaka*, *japa-mālā*, chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, but inside you are crooked, duplicitous, pretentious—you have no simplicity—then you are a *kali-celā*. You cannot become a follower of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. This is a most important thing. Develop simplicity—no crookedness, no duplicity, and no politics. This is the only thing required. Then you can become very dear to guru and Kṛṣṇa. Then you can very easily develop all the qualities of a Vaiṣṇava. Then you can completely surrender; otherwise you cannot. Your surrender will never be complete; it will only be partial or conditional surrender. There must be nothing conditional and nothing partial. We want to be cent percent Vaiṣṇavas, cent percent surrendered, not forty percent or fifty percent.

One who develops *kṛṣṇa-prema* can surrender. Otherwise one cannot completely surrender. Unless you become simple you cannot develop *kṛṣṇa-prema*. I want that you become nice devotees, true Vaiṣṇavas. A Vaiṣṇava devotee does everything for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa and nothing for his own pleasure. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has said, *tava sukha sāra nija sukha lāgi/ kichu nāhi kari āra*: “I won’t do anything for my own pleasure; I’ll do everything for Your pleasure.” This is true Vaiṣṇava.

I do not at all feel simple. I am realizing I am a great offender (although in truth an insignificant fool), a duplicitous cheat trying to mask his sickness with a **facade** of mechanical actions considered to be devotional service. I pray for your mercy that I may truly realize this and follow the necessary course to change. My false ego stubbornly objects to the need for change. Yet still you persist.

I uselessly fall back on conditioning—“After all, it is Kali-yuga!”—accrediting my faults to anything but my own envy of you, the devotees, and ultimately Kṛṣṇa.

I plow on, not knowing the outcome, busy this way and that in the name of *saṅkīrtana* but not embracing actual *saṅkīrtana* consciousness. I plow on—perhaps there is some distant hope—but largely as a show. I plow on, not actually in the association of devotees but in the association of my own wicked mind. I plow on, with the false ego and selfish motivations driving me forward. I feel envy and lust burning within.

At this point I find myself no longer able to hide behind an apparent good show of *sādhana* or performance. Time is eroding the external frame, exposing the dirt within. The feeling of absolute necessity for genuine devotion is apparent. Unfortunately, the genuine desire on my part is not present.

The worst thing is that I do not feel any shame or remorse as I write these truths. I seem to hope that others will even praise me for my pathetic words. All this is not a sign of humility or of compassion for others. It is not a sign of advancement but a tiny indication of the extent of my diseased condition.

Yet I struggle on in devotional service, and this is a testimony to your mercy. Though I am an inveterate fool, you still persistently distinguish the demon from the devotee within. As Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma smashed



the demons in Vṛndāvana, you are also smashing them within me, if I allow you.
In 1972 you wrote this in a letter to Kṛṣṇa Dāsa:

So eternally I want to remain your guide provided you want to accept me. You mentioned that your pathway has become filled with stumbling blocks, but there are no stumbling blocks, I can kick out all those stumbling blocks immediately, provided you accept my guidance. With one stroke of my kick I can kick out all stumbling blocks.

Despite this assurance from you, like a thief I stay at a distance from advanced devotees and pretentiously avoid situations of exposure, trying to avoid your merciful boot. In this way I attempt to cheat. But you are a greater cheat.

“Is a devotee simple or crooked?” you asked, smiling.

“He is simple, Śrīla Prabhupāda,” one disciple answered.

“Are you sure? Is he simple or crooked?” you again asked with a mischievous gleam in your eye.

“Yes, a devotee is simple!” the disciple enthusiastically responded, not realizing he had fallen for a trick question.

You then sprang the unexpected punch line. “Actually, a devotee is crooked!”

Everyone stood there with their mouths gaping. “Take me, for example,” you explained. “I came to your country and everyone was eating meat, taking intoxication, and doing so much nonsense. I tricked everyone. I’ve tricked all of you into becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious. So, in that sense the devotee must be crooked, because he must be able to trick. Just like I have tricked everyone. No one wanted Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but I have tricked you.” [From a morning walk in Perth, as retold by Śrutakīrti Prabhu]

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for tricking me. Thank you for giving such a fallen soul the opportunity to participate in the *saṅkīrtana* of the holy name. Thank you for the opportunity to serve in unending ways. Thank you for showing me that the problem is not the situation around, within, or without, but just the way I perceive it. Thank you for helping me to realize no one else is to blame for my own dilemma. Thank you for reminding me to put you and Kṛṣṇa in the center.

Somehow your mercy is still there even though I deserve to be annihilated for all the offenses I have committed. There is still hope, and on this day I pray that you please consider my request to give me another chance to become your servant and not try to be the master. I hope one day that I can genuinely please you and be of use in your mercy mission to deliver the world. When will I ever become your sold-out servant, the servant of your servants?

I can see no hope save and except your causeless mercy.

Your errant servant,

Janānanda Goswami

Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa Goswami

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in your lotus-foot dust, which still powders the globe with your



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mercy as you continue to traverse it through the medium of your books and your recorded material.

Yesterday I heard you give a public lecture at Balboa Park in San Diego, California. About three minutes into your lecture a heckler in the audience began to shout something, creating a disturbance. You asked a devotee close to you what the man was saying. He told you, amidst chuckles from the devotees, that the man wanted to have sex more than once a month.

Your response? You turned the lecture on a dime to address the heckler directly with your signature poise, maturity, charm, and vast knowledge, free from compromise but irresistibly clear, simple, and persuasive.

“So, as this man is talking about sex, this world, this material world, is enchanted by sex.” You went on to deliver a classic discourse about the results of sex—licit or illicit, individually and collectively—on every species of life, especially the human society. You didn’t back down at an awkward moment. You fearlessly pointed out the Vedic conclusion: that attachment to the material body becomes complete after sex, and that sex is thus the basic principle of material existence.

You explained the Vedic concession for regulated sex in marriage and its purpose: to produce good progeny with the goal of becoming purified by the austerity of taking full responsibility for one’s offspring and eventually becoming free from sex life altogether and going back to Godhead. You analyzed the subject from every angle, providing convincing arguments to the audience that although sex according to religious principles is sanctioned by Kṛṣṇa, it is inevitably a cause of unsought complications and deep attachment for material existence, attachment that binds the conditioned souls to suffering in repeated births and deaths.

All this you spoke openly to an antagonist in a public park of a southern Californian city in the summer of 1972, in the thick of America’s sexual revolution!

And how did the audience respond? They gave you a rousing ovation! You subdued the heckler and captivated the audience with profound realization of Vedic wisdom. In this way you showed us how to preach according to time and circumstance without compromising the truth. It was obvious that the public was willing to acknowledge someone with enough courage to speak the plain truth in such a situation.

You define realization in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.4.1:

Personal realization does not mean that one should, out of vanity, attempt to show one’s own learning by trying to surpass the previous *ācārya*. He must have full confidence in the previous *ācārya*, and at the same time he must realize the subject matter so nicely that he can present the matter for the particular circumstances in a suitable manner. *The original purpose of the text must be maintained*. No obscure meaning should be screwed out of it, yet it should be presented in an interesting manner for the understanding of the audience. This is called realization.

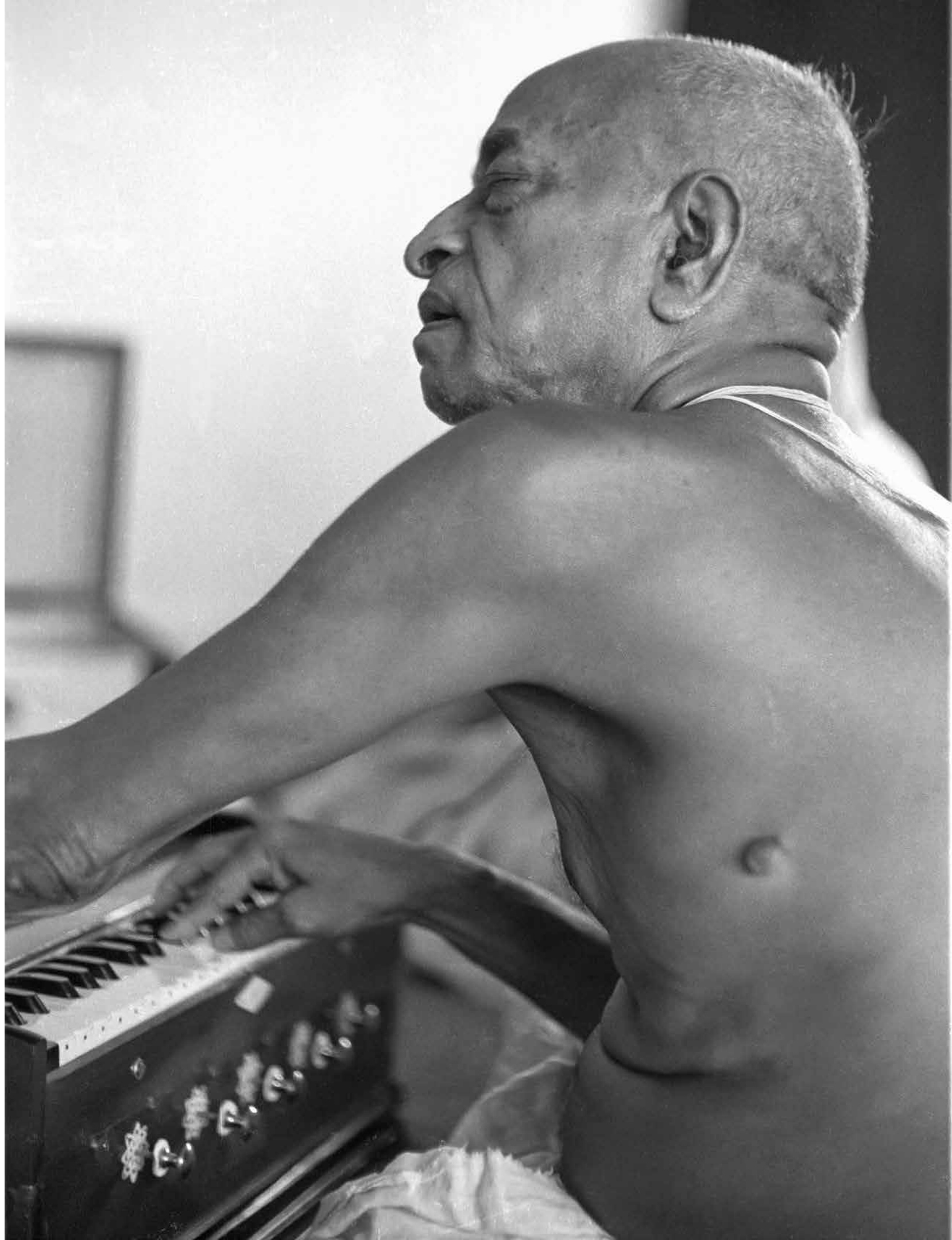
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you never pandered to the public in order to gain popularity or more followers for the movement. In fact, in another conversation you said:

So everyone may try his best, that’s all. The public may take or not take, it doesn’t matter. And if you are, want to please the public, public says that “You dance naked, I will be very happy with you, I’ll give you [support].” So I’ll have to do that. Then what is the use of making a spiritual master? Public, they have got their whims, how to become pleased. So we are to follow all these things? We have to follow our instruction of the spiritual master.

On this auspicious anniversary of your appearance in this world, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I beg for the spiritual strength to follow in your footsteps, without trying to imitate you—to be as loyal to your example and precepts as you were to those of your Guru Mahārāja.

Your eternal son,

Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa Goswami





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Krishna Dās Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories unto Your Divine Grace, by whose mercy and blessings a foolish man can become wise and a blind man can see.

I can never forget the historic 1973 Ratha-yātrā in London, when you danced all the way along the route to Trafalgar Square, or my subsequent first meeting with you shortly afterwards, when you changed my whole life. With your strong preaching you convinced me to join your glorious movement, and I accepted you as my *śikṣā-guru*. Furthermore, you started strongly preaching to me about taking *sannyāsa*. I accepted your advice and accepted you as my *sannyāsa-guru*. On 7th April 1974 I joined ISKCON full time and gave up my householder life. Before that I used to come on every occasion I could and every weekend.

The following prayer offered to Lord Nṛsiṃhadeva by Prahlada Mahārāja and the other residents of Hari-varṣa, quoted in the Fifth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5.18.11), is very appropriate in describing the association of pure devotees like Your Divine Grace:

*yat-saṅga-labdham nija-vīrya-vaibhavam
tīrtham muhuḥ saṁsprśatām hi mānasam
haraty ajo 'ntaḥ śrutibhir gato 'ṅgajam
ko vai na seveta mukunda-vikramam*

“By associating with persons for whom the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mukunda, is the all in all, one can hear of His powerful activities and soon come to understand them. The activities of Mukunda are so potent that simply by hearing of them one immediately associates with the Lord. For a person who constantly and very eagerly hears narrations of the Lord’s powerful activities, the Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead in the form of sound vibrations, enters within his heart and cleanses it of all contamination. On the other hand, although bathing in the Ganges diminishes bodily contaminations and infections, this process and the process of visiting holy places can cleanse the heart only after a long time. Therefore who is the sane man who will not associate with devotees to quickly perfect his life?”

My body is now over eighty years old, and ill health prevents me from serving your movement as before. My preaching has significantly reduced. I spend most of my time at the Goshala in Punjab, and whoever comes there I preach to. When I preach it is as if I regain my life and strength and become joyously engaged in serving the Lord, forgetting any aches or pains of the body. I often meditate on the instructions Nārada Muni gave to the Pracetās in the Fourth Canto of the *Bhāgavatam* (4.31.21):

*na bhajati kumaṇṣiṇām sa iḥyām
harir adhanātma-dhana-priyo rasa-jñāḥ
śruta-dhana-kula-karmaṇām madair ye
vidadhati pāpam akiñcaneṣu satsu*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes very dear to those devotees who have no material possessions but are fully happy in possessing the devotional service of the Lord. Indeed, the Lord relishes the devotional activities of such devotees. Those who are puffed up with material education, wealth, aristocracy, and fruitive activity are very proud of possessing material things, and they often deride the devotees. Even if such people offer the Lord worship, the Lord never accepts them.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, my desire is to leave my body while preaching, and you provided the perfect example. Even though very ill, until your very last breath you preached, translated, and guided your disciples to further the wonderful movement that you founded and that grew so rapidly under your guidance.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the greatest spiritual revolutionary the world has ever seen, and your

Homages from Non-GBC Sannyāsīs



blessings are very important to the disciple. So please bless me to fulfill the purport of the last two mantras of *Śrī Īśopaniṣad* (17 and 18):

*vāyur anilam amṛtam athedaṁ bhasmāntaṁ śarīram
oṁ krato smara kṛtaṁ smara krato smara kṛtaṁ smara*

“Let this temporary body be burnt to ashes, and let the air of life be merged with the totality of air. Now, O my Lord, please remember all my sacrifices, and because You are the ultimate beneficiary, please remember all that I have done for You.”

*agne naya supathā rāye asmān
viśvāni deva vayunāni vidvān
yuyodhy asmaj juhurāṇam eno
bhūyiṣṭhān te nama-uktiṁ vidhema*

“O my Lord, as powerful as fire, O omnipotent one, now I offer You all obeisances, falling on the ground at Your feet. O my Lord, please lead me on the right path to reach You, and since You know all that I have done in the past, please free me from the reactions to my past sins so that there will be no hindrance to my progress.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless me. By remembering these two verses I am also praying to the Lord in the same way. But my prayers are meaningless without your blessings. Thus I humbly fall down at your lotus feet, always begging for your blessings, so that I may have strong determination to perform pure unflinching and uninterrupted devotional service and leave the body remembering the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I thank you for being so kind to me. With strong desire to serve you and your movement, I pray to remain

Your humble servant,

Krishna Dās Swami

Lokanāth Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most prostrated obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet on the most auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

At the commencement of a GBC meeting, the letter you wrote to His Excellency the president of India Dr. Rajendra Prasad, dated 21 November 1956, was read. It is with this letter in mind that I write this offering to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I was amazed and overwhelmed by the conviction and compassion in your statements about the crucial matter of going back to Godhead. I was equally amused by your simplicity and candor.

In India it is quite common to read or hear the slogan “*chalo* Delhi,” “*chalo* Mumbai,” “*chalo* Kolkata” (“Let’s go to Delhi,” etc.) These terms are popularly used when arranging to get to places to protest for people’s demands. For politicians, escorting masses of people to Delhi, Mumbai, or Kolkata to stage a protest is the furthest destination they would generally try to reach. They cannot think beyond this journey, although going to heaven is accepted because *karma-kāṇḍa* is a popular concept.



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When a family member dies, a beautiful frame is swiftly made bearing a caption “*swargiya* such-and-such,” which means the soul has departed to heaven. For these individuals, heaven is the supreme destination. There is a real possibility that the deceased soul might have gone to hell, but they always wish and believe that the departed soul has gone to heaven.

The *mukti-kāmis*, followers of the *jñāna-kāṇḍa*, honor their spiritual leader with the slogan “*Brahma-leen* such and such.” For this group, merging into Brahman is the highest goal. The idea of going to Vaikuṇṭha or Goloka, going back to the spiritual kingdom, going back to Godhead, is rarely heard. Although the concept of going back to Godhead is eternal, we only occasionally hear and read about some great souls going back to Godhead. People are astounded when they hear that a person has gone back to Godhead. But, my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you started a “back to Godhead” campaign, making it a common goal and not a feat that is to be achieved by a rare and privileged few. In your letter, you boldly write,

Believe me or not, I have got the clue of going “Back to Godhead” just after leaving my present material body, and in order to take along with me all my contemporary men and women of the world, I have started my paper “Back to Godhead” as one of the means to the way.

Please do not think of me as a wonderful or mad man when I say that I shall go “Back to Godhead” after leaving my present material body! It is quite possible for everyone and all of us.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I read in these lines your excitement about having a clue for going back to Godhead, and you wanted to share this precious formula with the head of the state, the president of India. I feel deeply inspired about how you transmitted this exceptional knowledge to the president of India with the hope that he would, through his authority, propagate the idea to the people of India. When an ant comes across a grain of sugar, it gathers other ants, and together they have a feast. There is no selfish intention, as the finder of the grain invites others to join him. A compassionate mood of sharing your knowledge is reflected in the following words:

I am therefore very eager to broadcast the secret of my success to all men and women of the world as a natural consequence and I am seeking your Excellency’s help and co-operation in this great attempt of transcendental service.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the great visionary who, as far back as 1956, wanted the then president of India, the administrator or *kṣatriya*, to implement your ideas of how to go back to Godhead. This significant notion of going back to Godhead is not a whimsical creation but one for which you bring sāstric evidence, your authority being the *Bhagavad-gītā*. Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His mission are captured in the words *patita pāvana hetu tava avatāra* (“Your incarnation is just to reclaim the fallen conditioned souls”). My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are His representative, Lord Caitanya’s *senapati bhakta*, the commander in chief of the *saṅkīrtana* army. Your sense of certainty about the process given by Lord Caitanya to deliver all the living entities is demonstrated in the following words you wrote:

I have simply adopted the easy method of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu just suitable to the modern people in general. As such I am feeling as sure of going “Back to Godhead” as I feel without any doubt after taking my dinner that I have eaten to my satisfaction. This feeling is a necessary concomitant factor of the great science of devotional service in the approved line of Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

In this historic letter, you are appealing for assistance from the president of India— not for yourself or as a personal favor, but for the topmost welfare of all your fellow world citizens. Your dependency on the instructions of Kṛṣṇa is unalterable, as you suggest in the letter:

In the Bhagavad-gita it is said very clearly that whosoever may adopt the specific principle of accepting Sri Krishna, the Personality of Godhead, will be able to achieve the highest transcendental



goal of life—never mind what he is, either a born untouchable, a fallen woman, a laborer, or a man dealing in rupees annas paisa. His being so, what is the difficulty for a pious “Brahmin” and devoted king for going “Back to Godhead”? Everyone should therefore adopt this principle of going “Back to Godhead” in order to get released from the world of miseries, with temporary existence.

In the above words it is evident that your confidence in this transcendental process is unyielding. Your assurance that anyone can go back to Godhead shows your complete conviction and reliance upon Lord Caitanya and His magnanimity.

I fondly recall an incident in Delhi when you were on your morning walk in the vicinity of the Gateway of India. The devotees could see the president’s house towering over the skyline, and one devotee said to you, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, you should be the president of India.”

You responded, “I would rather be spiritual master of the president of India and not be the president of India.” And indeed, in this letter take on the role of a spiritual guide for the president of India.

You started *Back to Godhead* magazine in 1944, and this periodical was the core of your preaching till 1960, and also later, after you established your ISKCON movement in the West. You once called *Back to Godhead* magazine “the backbone of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.” In ISKCON the clarion call has been to go back to Godhead. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have made “back to Godhead” a spiritual household notion in this world. It has become the mission and vision statement for this organization.

During Gandhi’s time, a leading freedom fighter aiming to motivate his countrymen to fight for their birthright would cry out, “*Swaraj hamara janam sidha adhikar hai!*” (“To live in an independent nation is my birthright. I will have it! I will fight for it!”) I cannot but help think of the shallowness and temporality of this statement, because this cannot be the goal for the soul, in comparison to your “back to Godhead” program. Unfortunately, the president of India you addressed in the letter was also a freedom fighter. The general trend for most Indian leaders at that time was that they were veterans of the struggle to release their countrymen from the shackles of British rule. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, stand apart—eminent and distinguished—from the rest of the leaders. You want to release not only your countrymen but all of humanity at large from the shackles of *māyā*. You want to offer them the ultimate freedom by ferrying them back to Godhead, dispatching them all to the spiritual world in a single sweep! You pointed out to the president that going back to Godhead is not an exclusive right of Hindus or Indians but that everyone is included in your transcendental design.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your thoughts are like Kṛṣṇa’s thoughts. Like father, like son. The Vedic aphorism *vasudhaiva kutumbakam* means that for those who live magnanimously the entire world constitutes a family. Your compassion for everyone is all-encompassing.

I beg to submit herewith that by the Grace of Sri Kṛṣṇa through His mercy personified—my spiritual master—I have realized it most thoroughly that going back to Godhead is the highest privilege of mankind and is the supreme perfection of human life.

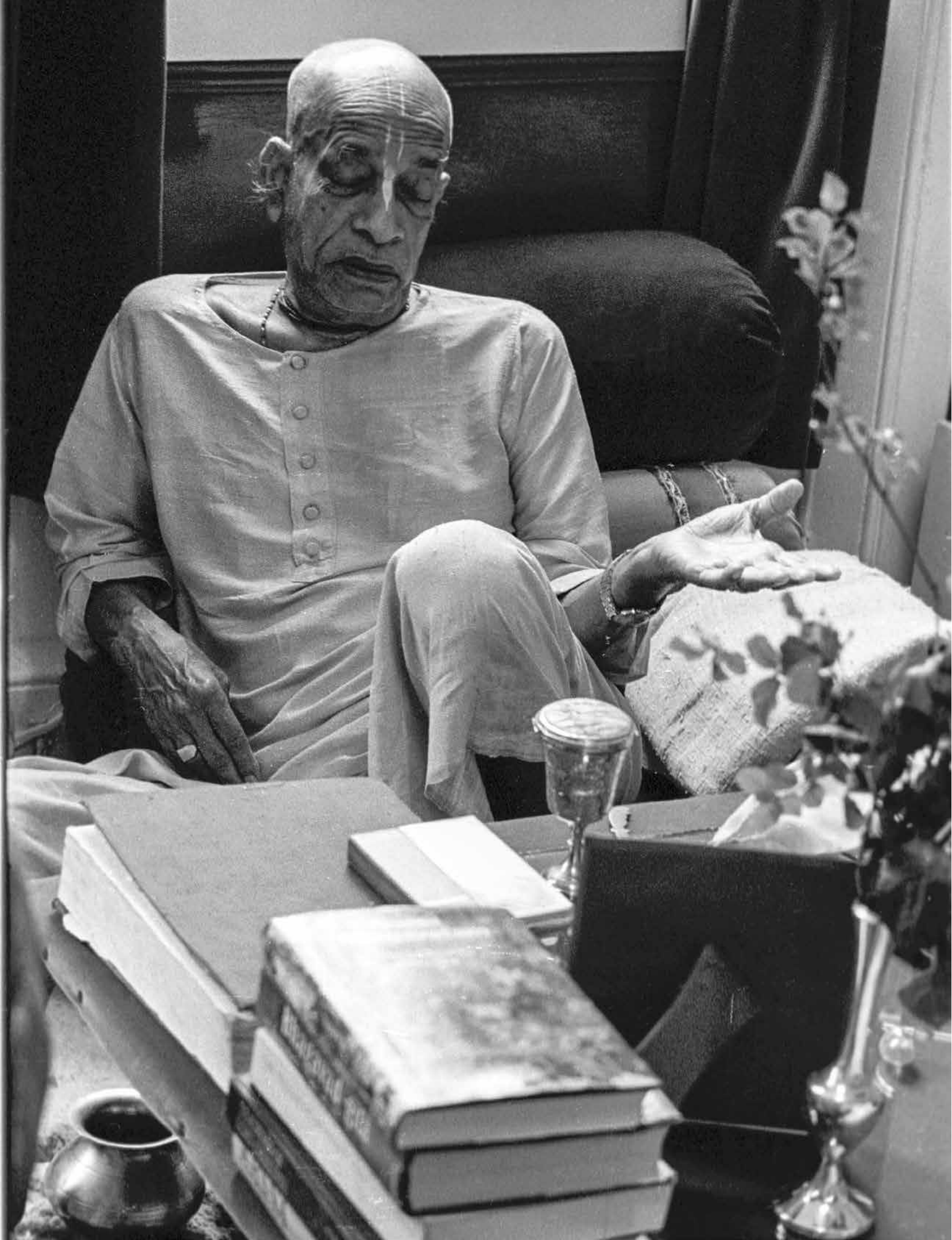
Śrīla Prabhupāda, your strategy to engage people at the highest level and invoke the president to become involved in serving his people is evidenced in your eloquent appeal to him near the end of your letter:

To make a worldwide propaganda for this most essential service to humanity, it is necessary that Your Excellency will stretch the helping hand necessary in this matter.

I pray to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to please help me in this noble cause that you have established and to keep me enthused to serve you by attracting people to go back to Godhead.

Your most insignificant servant,

Lokānath Swami





Nava Yogendra Swami

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

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus like feet. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the savior of the whole world, who are spreading *sanātana-dharma*, the *saṅkīrtana* movement, all over the whole world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, yesterday was the appearance day of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who appeared five thousand years ago to reestablish *dharma*, His laws, in this land, where *adharma*, irregularities in following His laws, had erupted, as usually happens in this material world.

As per *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, in this age of quarrel and hypocrisy, Kali-yuga, *saṅkīrtana* of the holy names of the Lord is the best way to worship the incarnation of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa who appeared 527 years ago, namely Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In recent times Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa sent you, one day after the anniversary of His appearance day, to fulfill Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's prediction that in every town and village His holy name would be preached. You worked tirelessly day and night to fulfill His prediction—traveling, translating books, and lecturing, and establishing temples, *gurukulas*, restaurants, farms, etc., all over the world.

*ohe!
vaiṣṇava tḥākura, dōyāra sāgara,
e dāse koruṇā kori'
diyā pāda-chāyā, śodho he āmāya,
tomāra caraṇa dhori*

*chaya bega domi', chaya doṣa śodhi',
chaya guṇa deho' dāse
chaya sat-saṅga, deho' he āmāre,
boshechi saṅgera āśe*

*ekākī āmāra, nāhi pāya bala,
hari-nāma-saṅkīrtane
tumi kṛpā kori', śraddhā-bindu diyā,
deho' kṛṣṇa-nāma-dhane*

*kṛṣṇa se tomāra, kṛṣṇa dite pāro,
tomāra śakati āche
āmi to' kāṅgala, 'kṛṣṇa' 'kṛṣṇa' boli',
dhāi tava pāche pāche*

O venerable Vaiṣṇava, O ocean of mercy, be merciful unto your servant. Give me the shade of your lotus feet and purify me. I hold on to your lotus feet.



Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā 2013

Teach me to control my six passions, rectify my six faults, bestow upon me the six qualities, and offer unto me the six kinds of holy association.

I do not find the strength to carry on alone the *saṅkīrtana* of the holy name of Hari. Please bless me by giving me just one drop of faith with which to obtain the great treasure of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa is yours; you have the power to give Him to me. I am simply running behind you shouting, “Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are guiding this servant of yours as I travel and preach. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have opened the gateway for everyone to attain love of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This movement is the only hope for this material world, which otherwise will rapidly continue becoming hell day by day.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray at the dust of your lotus feet to give me courage to help fulfill the divine mission for which you appeared on this day of Nandotsava, when everybody was celebrating the appearance of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. You appeared in order to deliver the most fallen people of this Kali-yuga.

Please make this servant of yours an instrument in your mission. I hope you will accept this humble offering and bless me so that I can remain your obedient servant birth after birth.

Your humble servant,

Nava Yogendra Swami

Pārtha Sārathi Dās Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories unto you!

Recently I read, with great interest, the unpublished version of a paper entitled “The Position of Śrīla Prabhupāda,” written and compiled by some of your GBC disciples. Since I am your disciple, understanding your position is essential to my existence. By properly appreciating you and what you have given us, I can begin to properly appreciate your movement, ISKCON, and then I can appreciate those who are attached to you—your sincere and dedicated disciples and granddisciples.

In a lecture you once drew a parallel between appreciation and *śraddhā*. *Śraddhā* is the first step in the process of advancing in *sādhana-bhakti*, and without it a devotee cannot progress to *niṣṭhā*, *ruci*, *āsakti*, and *bhāva-bhakti*. Therefore this quality of appreciation is absolutely essential in a devotee’s mentality. Appreciation gradually leads to astonishment, and astonishment (*adbhuta-rasa*) is one of the secondary mellows. Indeed, astonishment is the basis of all the five main *rasas* with Lord Kṛṣṇa. For example, a devotee is astonished when he thinks of the residents of Vṛndāvana having a fraternal (friendly) relationship with Kṛṣṇa. This is an example of astonishment in relation to *āśraya-tattva*. Lord Kṛṣṇa’s beauty, kindness, dancing, and singing are objects of unlimited astonishment for the devotee. This is an example of astonishment in relation to *viśaya-tattva*.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, since you are the perfect representative of your astonishing master, Lord Kṛṣṇa, you also fully exhibit astonishing qualities. As an empowered *śaktyāveśa* incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, you have astonished the whole world by your activities. In twelve years you single-handedly created a worldwide mission while simultaneously translating many volumes of *bhakti-śāstra*.

Your beloved followers also exhibit these astonishing qualities. As they mature in their practice of *bhakti*, their numerous qualities are attracting thousands of conditioned souls. This aspect of spiritual astonishment among your followers is central to their attachment to pleasing you. Your ultimate pleasure is our guiding force and the very essence of our existence. Every *vastu*, or object, has an essence or



essential ingredient, and for the members of ISKCON it is to render favorable service to you, with the sole object of trying to please Your Divine Grace. We dance to attract your attention, we preach to please you, we sit in meetings and try to manage for your satisfaction, we attempt to chant and do *bhajana* only for your approval. We accept disciples because without doing this there will be no propagation¹ of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and you want ISKCON to spread. We take *prasādam* for your pleasure, and, finally, the most difficult activity, we try work cooperatively for your satisfaction.²

You continue to astonish your followers because you are still present in your beloved mission, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. If it were not for your guidance and inspiration, how could we continue working cooperatively? Your presence is the very *prāṇa* of the ISKCON mission. ISKCON is your body, and you are the life force of ISKCON. The essence of ISKCON is Your Divine Grace, and trying to please you remains your followers' greatest responsibility.

On this anniversary of your divine appearance in this morbid material world, I pray that I can appreciate your astonishing contribution to our Gauḍīya-sampradāya. I especially pray that I can in all humility appreciate each and every one of your disciples and granddisciples. Even those disciples who only managed to serve you briefly are worthy of my repeated obeisances. On the battlefield it is to be expected that some soldiers will be wounded or killed. Even during your divine presence disciples left your mission, but they are still glorious and worthy of respect. Even if they only served your mission for a few days, their auspicious future is assured.

Bowing down in any direction that I may find one of your sincere followers, I remain the aspiring servant of the servant of your servants,

Pārtha Sārathi Dās Goswami

¹“The one point is that without increasing the number of disciples, there is no propagation of the cult of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” (*The Nectar of Devotion*, chapter 7).

²“Please work conjointly, without any personal ambition.” (Letter dated 31 July 1970). “Your love for me” said Śrīla Prabhupāda, “will be shown by how much you cooperate to keep this institution together after I have gone.” (*Śrīla Prabhupāda Līlāmṛta*, Chapter 52).

Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories, all glories, all glories unto you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

How appropriate it is that the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa arranged for your divine appearance in immediate proximity to His own appearance celebration, Janmāṣṭamī.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, without your preaching, people the world over would not know the glories of Kṛṣṇa.

Five hundred years ago Lord Caitanya declared, *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.”

The great *ācāryas* Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, Nimbārka Svāmī, and Viṣṇu Svāmī preached only within certain parts of India. And your Guru Mahārāja, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, preached all over India, establishing sixty-four Gauḍīya Maṭhas. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, of course, wanted to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world, but during his time most Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas thought that by *prthivīte* Lord Caitanya meant His name would be spread throughout only India.



Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā 2013

But for the first time in the history of Vaiṣṇavism you opened everyone's eyes to the fact that *pr̥thivīte* means not only India but the entire earth planet.

So it is clear that Lord Caitanya selected you to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 8.246), we find this exchange between Lord Caitanya and Rāmānanda Rāya:

'kīrti-gaṇa-madhye jīvera kon baḍa kīrti?'
'kṛṣṇa-bhakta baliyā yānhāra haya khyāti'

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu then asked Rāmānanda Rāya, “Out of all glorious activities, which is the most glorious?”

Rāmānanda Rāya replied, “That person who is reputed to be a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa enjoys the utmost fame and glory.”

Kṛṣṇa fulfills the desires of His pure devotee. It is only because of your strong desire that this Kṛṣṇa consciousness be spread everywhere that all over the world, even in Muslim and Communist countries, your movement is expanding.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the foremost *śikṣā-guru* for all ISKCON devotees, and your books are the law books for next ten thousand years. Your lotus feet are my only shelter, birth after birth.

Your most fallen granddisciple,

Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī Swami

Prahlādānanda Swami

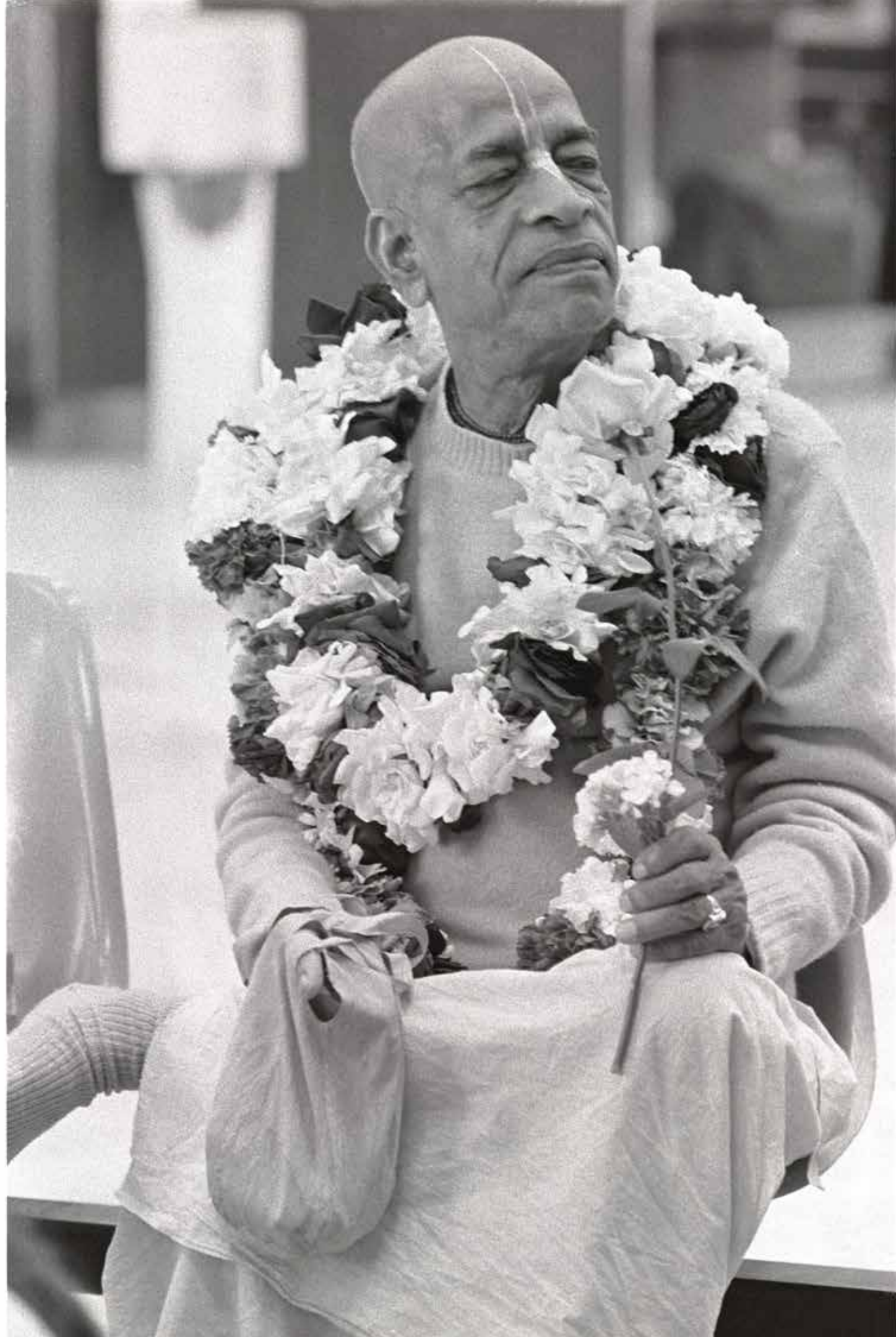
nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine

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

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa glorifies transcendental knowledge as the boat that can help us cross over the ocean of material miseries. Lord Kṛṣṇa also says that transcendental knowledge is one of the fruits of pure devotional service. This knowledge is received from Lord Kṛṣṇa or from his bona fide representatives and is of two kinds: understanding our real self, and understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

To help us achieve this knowledge, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has advised us to use all our resources in the service of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana* movement. The aim is to become an instrument to convince people that they are all Lord Kṛṣṇa's eternal servants and that it is in their interest to use whatever they have—body, wealth, intelligence, words, life—in glorifying and serving Lord Kṛṣṇa. When we use all our energies to work cooperatively to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the *saṅkīrtana* movement will spread and our lives and others' lives will become perfect. How to use our various energies in the *saṅkīrtana* movement can be seen in different ways. One way is through properly understanding and using the five gross elements of the material energy.

The Vedic literature tells us that the external material world consists of five gross material elements: ether, air, fire, water, and earth. Furthermore, there are five planets, or *grahas*, that rule over these five elements: Jupiter, Saturn, Mars, Venus, and Mercury. In turn, these *grahas* are ruled by five *avatāras*:





Vāmanadeva, Kūrmadeva, Nṛsiṃhadeva, Paraśurāma, and Buddha, respectively. For our purposes, we need to first understand how these *grahas* influence our behavior. Then we can learn how to best integrate the various energies of the *grahas* in our lives and in organizing the *saṅkīrtana* movement.

Ether (ruled by Jupiter) is the element that provides space to hold the other elements. Similarly, Jupiter gives us the “Why?” in our lives and rules optimism, purpose, and the higher goals of life. Among the demigods, Jupiter is Bṛhaspati, the guru of the *devas*, who gives us the knowledge that comes in disciplic succession and that is meant for our development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and pure devotional service. Jupiter gives us the bigger picture or the space for our other energies and provides a meaningful direction in which to use them. The highest objective of life and knowledge that Jupiter can give is pure devotional service in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

To realize this knowledge, we have to recognize and do our duty in a detached manner. This aspect is represented by air and Saturn. As air is neutral to the other elements and unaffected by their association, so we have to be detached and unaffected by the material energy as we perform our Kṛṣṇa conscious duties. Saturn, which represents the limitation that the time factor imposes on everyone in the universe, also teaches the tolerance necessary to transcend the dualities of the material energy, such as happiness and distress, honor and dishonor. Without Saturn’s detachment, caused by a realistic perspective on life, the purposes delineated and inspired by Jupiter will not be fulfilled.

To sustain our detachment and further our advancement towards our goal, we require the fiery energy of Mars. As fire illuminates and gives heat, so Mars provides the illumination on our path and the enthusiasm and determination to go forward to achieve our goal despite obstacles. Without sufficient and balanced Martian fire, we’ll either be too timid to commit our energies in productive actions or too easily frustrated and angered, thus dissipating our energies in unproductive ways.

To make spiritual advancement, we need patience, conviction, and enthusiasm. When Jupiter’s energy makes the goal of Kṛṣṇa consciousness clear, Saturn’s patience and Mars’s conviction and enthusiasm make our progress along the path of spiritual advancement steady.

A strong and balanced influence of Venus can enhance a devotee’s cooperative spirit in the *saṅkīrtana* movement. This spirit helps create a pleasing, attractive atmosphere that will allow a sense of appreciation for other devotees to develop and will increase the desire to worship the Supreme Lord with devotion.

When devotion increases the loving exchanges among devotees, Lord Kṛṣṇa and the goddess of fortune are pleased, and they award their devotees success in spiritual advancement and all the necessities of life. In this way we can easily remember Lord Kṛṣṇa by understanding how He is the controller and enjoyer of His material and spiritual energies. When properly used in devotional service, Mercury’s energy gives this clear perception and intelligence.

Once our perception is clear and our mind present, our consciousness fills up with the happiness of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, Kṛṣṇa conscious activities become ever more encouraging, and the means to achieve our goal—*kṛṣṇa-prema*—become ever clearer.

Because Lord Kṛṣṇa can create within His sincere and surrendered devotees the higher qualities necessary for advancement in spiritual life, such devotees do not need to know about the *grahas* and astrology. In his books Śrīla Prabhupāda clearly explains all the knowledge necessary for spiritual advancement.

Lord Kṛṣṇa has created the material energy so that the conditioned souls can use His energy in devotional service to gradually come to the position of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If we have a clear goal, the intelligence how to achieve it, patience, determination, and enthusiasm, we can gradually perceive Lord Kṛṣṇa within all things, and our life will gradually become absorbed in the happiness of spiritual existence.

Śrīla Prabhupāda’s servant,

Prahlādānanda Swami



Śacīnandana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you!

You are the empowered servant of the Lord who brought into our direct experience that which is normally unobtainable for conditioned souls. Like a telescope that brings far distant stars and objects close to our vision, you gave us the ability to see for ourselves what the saints of old meditated upon, worshiped, constantly talked about, cried for in ecstasy, and danced for, forgetting all social norms.

Had you not come, how would we ever have known about the highest goal of human life and the means to obtain it?

Who would have informed us about the Lord of love, who roams about in Vraja forests and whose only business is to enjoy loving relationships with His devotees, even to the extent that he forgets that He is God?

Who would have talked about His dearest Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Her love?

Who would have told us about the most merciful incarnation of love of God, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is the combined form of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa—inside Kṛṣṇa, outside Rādhā?

Who would have shown and instructed us how to perform the sacrifice of chanting the holy names in such a way that the Lord feels attracted to appear in our hearts?

In my visits to India I have met many saintly persons who are worshiped by thousands. From my brief encounters with them I can safely say that they would not have understood us Westerners as you did, and most probably they would not have believed in us the way you did. An invisible ditch of nonacceptance would not have been successfully crossed.

But you believed in us despite many disappointments. You did not give up on us. For more than forty years I have been waking up every morning and chanting prayers to you. Every day I am trying to serve you. Still my heart is like a piece of coal: the more I wash, the more black dust keeps on coming.

Today, on your appearance day, I beg you to kindly never give up on me. Where else but in your mercy does all my hope lie?

Your servant,

Śacīnandana Swami

Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. On this occasion of your appearance day I wish to thank you for the many gifts you have showered on me and all your followers.

Thank you for the many occasions of your personal association. Memories of being in your personal presence are like precious gems. You were always kind and spiritual and loving. Being with you was like living inside a transcendental bubble. Serving you in separation and receiving your directions in many letters was also personal and wonderful. And kept me on the right track. You sent me your dictation tapes in the mail, and I heard your voice and typed up your books—*Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, *Kṛṣṇa* book, and four cantos of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This was a most intimate service, and I was sorry when I had to give it up to do management.



Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā 2013

Thank you for giving me the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra and chanting on my beads. I receive great solace by chanting *japa* of the holy names. I still haven't attained *śuddha-nāma*, but I greatly cherish and relish the time I spend uttering the mantra on your order, following my vow. I also love singing in congregational *saṅkīrtana* with likeminded devotees and benefiting those who are not initiated.

Thank you for creating the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. When you legally incorporated the movement in 1966, we could not comprehend your vast vision. We thought it was only for 26 Second Avenue. But now ISKCON has expanded so greatly it is fulfilling Lord Caitanya's prediction that His name would be known in every town and village of the world.

Thank you for the association of devotees, with whom I can share the six loving exchanges among Vaiṣṇavas.

Thank you for the literary contribution of your books. Starting with the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, which you brought with you to America, I have loved reading your translations and purports, which you worked on so tirelessly, waking at 1:00 in the morning to carefully compose your opus. *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *The Nectar of Devotion*, and your other books will remain the law books for humanity for ten thousand years.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for the gift of *prasādam*, food offered to Kṛṣṇa. From those first hearty lunches you prepared for us at 26 Second Avenue, ordering us to "eat more," I began eating healthy vegetarian food that filled my belly and purified my consciousness. And you ordered us not just to eat *prasādam* ourselves but to distribute it to others, which you showed us how to do by starting the Sunday Love Feast.

Thank you for setting up the Governing Body Commission for spiritually managing your growing Society. The GBC prevents chaos from entering ISKCON and provides laws and guidelines to insure that your legacy is preserved.

Thank you for having the foresight to record your lectures. In the beginning you did it yourself, operating the reel-to-reel tape recorder on the dais at 26 Second Avenue. Gradually your disciples took over this service until they formed the Bhaktivedanta Tape Ministry and distributed your tapes to all of your disciples. Now all of your lectures are available on MP3 discs. Recently I have again taken up the habit of listening to your lectures, and it is an intimate and important way to keep in touch with you by transcendental sound vibration.

Thank you for emphasizing book distribution and public *harināma saṅkīrtana* as compassionate means of spreading the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and helping suffering humanity in the dark Age of Kali.

Thank you for going through so much effort, along with your disciples, to create three magnificent temples in India: in your home, Vṛndāvana, in your place of worship, Māyāpur, and in your place of business, Mumbai. Since your disappearance, each of these *mandiras* has been extensively expanded, and thousands of pilgrims gather there from India and all over the world to benefit from staying in the holy *dhāmas*.

Thank you for encouraging your scholarly devotees to earn PhDs and represent you by teaching in the universities of the world. By discrediting the atheistic scientists and proving that life comes from life, your scientific devotees have dealt hammer blows against the theory that life comes from matter. You wanted your disciples to systematically study your books and earn degrees—*Bhakti-śāstrī*, *Bhakti-vaibhava*, and *Bhakti-vedānta*. This study is being carried out on a large scale, and devotees are attending institutes for higher learning such as Bhaktivedanta College in Radhadesh, and also pursuing such education in Vṛndāvana, Māyāpur, and elsewhere.

Your gifts of *japa* and *kīrtana* have been expanded and developed in *japa* retreats and extended *kīrtana* gatherings. Thank you for giving us the Ratha-yātrā festival of Lord Jagannātha, which is now being organized in many cities and countries throughout the world. It is wonderful how your followers have embraced your gifts and expanded them.

You taught us loyalty and chastity to you as our spiritual master. You are the pre-eminent *śikṣā-guru* for all members of ISKCON, and we want to be sure that you are always in the center of our lives and that we are preaching your particular brand of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

You gave us the gift of aspiring to go back to Godhead. You have said that a devotee does not desire liberation, quoting Lord Caitanya's prayer: "O Lord, all I want is Your causeless devotional service, life after life." Nonetheless, you urged us to think of Kṛṣṇa at the time of death and return to the spiritual



world. You taught us from the *Bhagavad-gita* that one who knows the appearance and activities of Kṛṣṇa does not at death return to the material body but attains Kṛṣṇa's eternal abode. And you told us that your spiritual master, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, used to tell his disciples, "Why should you wait for many lives? You should finish up your business in this lifetime and go back to Godhead." Considering these things, I aspire to join you in the spiritual world as soon as possible.

Thank you for coming to the Lower East Side of New York City and saving me from my sinful life and fixing me up as a responsible son in your movement. I cannot repay the debt I owe for all the gifts you have given me, but I can preach to others and try to give them Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I am seventy-three years old now and cannot walk properly, and I get headaches, but that does not mean I cannot serve you wholeheartedly. I am your surrendered soul, and I beg you to keep me in a corner of your heart.

Your eternal servant,

Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami

Siddhārtha Swami

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

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

In 1975 I first met Śrīla Prabhupāda at the Juhu temple. Gopāla Krishna Mahārāja (then Dāsa) called for me and said that Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted to see me. I went in to see him and offered my obeisances. Prabhupāda asked me, "Did you prepare this nice *prasādam*?" I told him I had, and he asked me what I had been doing before I joined. I told to him I had been making jewelry. Prabhupāda said to me, "One of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsbihārījī's crowns is broken. Can you repair it?"

"Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda." I replied.

"OK, so since you can make quality jewelry and cook, I want to make you a priest here."

Later in 1975, around Rādhāṣṭamī, I received my first initiation at the New Delhi temple. After receiving initiation I begged the visitors for *dakṣiṇā*, and some of the devotees told Prabhupāda and he called me. "What are you doing?" he asked me.

"I am asking the guests for *dakṣiṇā*."

Prabhupāda said, "I have no need of donation, but if you want to please me double the number of books distributed. Then I will be pleased."

After he said this I went out and distributed many books. When I returned to the temple and told Prabhupāda how many books I'd distributed, he was delighted and said, "Very good!"

In 1976, in Vṛndāvana *dhāma*, after Rādhāṣṭamī, Śrīla Prabhupāda said to me, "I have some services for you. First I want you to be a priest in Hyderabad, then a priest in Bombay, and then do book distribution with Lokanāth Swami. Go with Lokanāth Swami on his bullock cart, and we will meet at the Kumbha-melā."

In 1977, after the Kumbha-melā, Prabhupāda again visited the Juhu temple. He stayed there for three months because of illness, during which time I got the opportunity for a lot of personal service. One day he asked me, "You will do the priest work your whole life?"

I replied, "As you wish," Śrīla Prabhupāda.

He said, "That's OK, but when you get the opportunity in the future, serve your motherland by spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness widely."



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This is why I started the project in Raipur Chhattishgarh, and by the mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda the project is going on very well. It is a mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Siddhārtha Swami

Smita Kṛṣṇa Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

To Enter Your Samādhi

This spring in Māyāpur, at your Samādhi, I was sitting and chanting my *japa*. Your Samādhi, a comparatively peaceful place in the ever-growing ISKCON Māyāpur complex. Your Samādhi, your place of eternal meditation.

Inlaid in the ceiling are tiles forming depictions of the various activities you started and inspired, with the demigods from above showering flowers on you and on what you started.

Your international society of devotees started in your *samādhi*, in your meditation. In your meditation you started it, you envisioned it. For you it was clear what was going to be, how it should be. Much of it has come true.

In a text you wrote some time in the 1950s, you mentioned how young people around the world were dissatisfied and unruly. Among the youngsters you had heard of were the *raggare* of Sweden, my home country. That was not my generation—I came a little bit later—but I did see them as a kid. You heard and reflected on the state of the world and how things could be done to improve the situation. You envisioned young people around the world taking to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I become one of them. A creation of your meditation.

As you meditated then in *samādhi*, you remain in your Samādhi in meditation, holding us up, like a tortoise who cares for her offspring by meditation, from a distance.

So even though in one way you are far away from me, or rather I am far away from you, still you are nearby in your meditation. As you first created this movement in your meditation, you now hold it up in your meditation. And our future also is in your meditation. There is a place for us in the eternal pastimes of your meditation, and your meditation is reality. We will be there with you in the eternal pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, with cows, calves, *gopas*, and *gopīs*. We will enter your *samādhi* meditation and never return to the dream of this material existence but stay in the eternal reality of your meditation, the spiritual world.

Your servant,

Smita Krishna Swami



Śukadeva Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my prostrated *daṇḍavats* at your divine lotus feet. I pray for shelter at your lotus feet birth after birth.

I am happy and proud to be part of your International society for Krishna Consciousness. You have given us the platform for worldwide brotherhood. You have given us the platform for the eternal and fulfilling service of spreading spiritual life and the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa through the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. You have given us the way in which we can lead a disciplined and healthy life without confusion of any sort. Our lives have found a meaning and purpose.

You have convinced us by faithfully presenting the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, a philosophy that is ancient, authentic, and practical, and this philosophy allows us to hold our heads high and think clearly. You have given us a way of life in which we live for the good and happiness of people in this world. The *mahā-mantra* chanting you have added to our lives has driven away hopelessness and depravity and fulfilled all our legitimate longings. You have also bestowed on us the transcendental platform, which was unknown and unknowable; nevertheless, you have made it real for us and made us live for it. You have given us such a sublime yet simple process, a process anyone can follow without any preconditions. You have walked into our lives, and though many of us have not seen you, we find that your *vāṇī* is as good as your personal presence. Thus we hold on to your lotus feet, and this is the perfection of our lives.

When we think of what we were before we heard about you and your teachings and what we are now, we see the wonderful transformation. You have made us, a worldly lot, into souls who are not of this world though we live and work in this world. You have given us an eternal, blissful life of service to and love for Kṛṣṇa, and there is no way we can repay you for this gift. You have given the world the path of devotional service; people need simply get onboard the boat of your ISKCON institution and you will personally captain the ship to a safe and happy harbor in the spiritual world.

You have given us freedom from bondage, freedom from *māyā*, freedom from suffering, and freedom from material existence altogether. How many Noble Prizes, how many Olympic medals, how many bravery awards, how many governmental commendations would it take to properly honor your achievements? No one can say. All that I have mentioned pertain to attainments of this world, but your attainments are all beyond this world. Your Hare Kṛṣṇa chant is your greatest gift, and offenseless and progressive chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa is the best remuneration those who are indebted to you can give you. Perhaps such chanting is the only way you desire us to reciprocate with you. The means, the end, the reciprocation, and the reward are all the same.

We are beginning to understand why Vaiṣṇavas do not pray for redemption from this world. When we truly become Vaiṣṇavas, we will regard it as good to come back to this material world. We will repeatedly come and stay here without fear and make people fearless every time we come. Then the “hard struggle for existence” becomes so much fun—filled as it will be with chanting, dancing, and feasting.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I only have one fear, which haunts me: what will happen to us if we forget you? Please let us always remember you and the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa. Only if your followers stay together will we be able to do this perpetually.

Your aspiring servant,

Śukadeva Swami



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Trivikrama Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,
Please accept my humble obeisances at your holy lotus feet.

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine*

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.

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe
nirviśeṣa-sūnyavādi-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.

By your mercy I am seeing more and more how this material world is a place of suffering. I remember sitting with you in New Vrindavan in the summer of 1969. We were looking out over a valley verdant with summer foliage, and I expressed a doubt to you. “They say that things are getting better, Śrīla Prabhupāda.”

You looked at me incredulously and said, “You really believe that?!” Then pointing to the valley below us, you said, “They can destroy this—turn it into fire—but they can’t make something like this.”

My optimism regarding material advancement was shaken to the core by that exchange, but still some lingering doubts remained. In the forty-four years since then, by following the process you gave us, I can say from my realization with conviction that you are 100% right, Śrīla Prabhupāda: the material world is not a place of happiness.

Of course, the fact remains that I, along with everyone else here in the material world, want happiness. That is a fact. But without experiencing happiness from the spiritual side, we will simply go on “hoping against hope.”

For me that was your greatest gift—showing by your personal example how one could be happy here in the material world, a certified place of misery, by being fully engaged in Lord Kṛṣṇa’s service. Thank you for being the *ācārya* in this respect, and also for showing us that the practical way for anyone to achieve this happiness in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is simply to agree to follow in your footsteps.

We know it is easier said than done—“to follow in your footsteps”—but with practice each of us can make measurable progress.

It is clear to me that you have given us the perfect process to bring us to the highest goal—*kṛṣṇa-prema*.

I remain eternally indebted.

Your insignificant servant,

Trivikrama Swami



Varṣāṇā Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your lotus feet!

As the lost soul wanders aimlessly within the forest of illusion, trapped in the endless labyrinths of material nature, at some point he discovers that he is imprisoned in a foreign land in which he is unable to free himself. Searching for the path to freedom, he is at first hopeful, then increasingly disappointed, as each new road only leads him further into the maze. By the grace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the wanderer finally realizes that the guidance he needs must come from someone firmly situated outside the maze. Truth and good fortune dawn, and he begins his search for a spiritual master.

In New Vrindavan today, I was drawn to the path ascending a hill. In 1972, a pavilion was erected at the top of this hill, where you held your “Bhāgavata-dharma Discourses.” The Deities of Rādhā-Dāmodara and Lord Jagannātha presided, and we later celebrated Janmāṣṭamī and your Vyāsa-pūjā at this hilltop pavilion. The vision of Your Divine Grace surrounded by loving disciples, the presence of Their Lordships, and the transcendental *prasādam*, along with the cows grazing on the nearby tree-covered hills, all combined together to create a most remarkable theophany. I realized that I was actually *in* the spiritual realm of Vṛndāvana. I was struck with wonder and saw that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, had simply expanded the holy *dhāma*, revealing her within the hills of Appalachia. You had instructed us to create New Vrindavan, but you were the one who invested the land with potency to become the *dhāma*.

My spiritual ecstasy only increased as you inundated us with new nectar—the entire *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, which was then coming to light for the first time in the English language. For the next two months I literally hid in the corn crib, nestled in among golden corn kernels, reading each new volume fresh off the printing press and imbibing the message of Lord Gaurāṅga, the golden *avatāra*. As a farm boy, I was so charmed by your translations and purports describing Lord Caitanya as a gardener, delivering His fruits and flowers of devotional service to this world.

The Lord also desired to become a tree in order to further benefit others and make them happy. He is the eternal tree of love of Godhead, bearing fruits of devotional service. The descendants of the tree wish to perpetuate the distribution of those fruits. Thus, branches are spread in all directions to grant the world shelter, sustenance, and spiritual guidance. While remaining ever-connected to this metaphorical tree, the *sādhū* who descends to this world for the purpose of uplifting others simultaneously keeps his roots deep in the soil of Goloka Vṛndāvana. He is our only hope of serving Lord Caitanya, our only means of approaching Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

As a representative of Śrīla Vyāsadeva, Śrī Guru bestows living communion with the literary incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Vyāsa, through the guru, presents the *sāstra* so that the truth enshrined within the sacred sound becomes accessible to mankind.

It has long been known even to Western theologians that the pen of spiritual authors is an expansion of the original sacramental plow. In this light, creating lines on the page parallels the plowing of furrows in a field, which opens and softens terrestrial regions for cultivation prior to planting seed. The spiritual author softens and prepares the heart and then plants the seed, the Word of God. By the grace of the guru, using his pen as a plow, we are able to experience Śrī Baladeva displaying the function of His favorite instrument, His plow, which softens our hard hearts. True theistic persons are aware of this reality, and thus they submit their hearts, like an open field, to be impregnated by the seed of truth. The rare person who knows Kṛṣṇa in truth loves his Lord unconditionally and, wishing to share that love, in turn draws others into the wake of the furrow. And as they are drawn in, they follow in the footsteps of Śrī Guru, who guides the plow.

Being a plow boy from a farming background, I was drawn to your deep grasp of the sacramental nature of agriculture. In this context, cultivating the field means preparing the heart. Planting the seed means impregnating the fertile heart with the *bhakti-latā-bīja*. Humility means humus, the fertile soil in which the seed can take root. The necessary rains are the spiritual sacrifices we perform. And the



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wind, whispering through the growing vine, is the breath of life, the holy name. The harvest festival is the coming together to share the fruits of the spirit in *nāma-saṅkīrtana*. I found it intriguing that such a grasp of the sacramental dynamics of agriculture could be found in a *sādhu* from Calcutta.

It was clear that the culture you represent is not of this world. The culture of Vraja overflows with the flavor of *bhakti* and instills *prema* in those whom it touches. The essence of *vraja-prema* is the life force flowing through the branch of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī. Śrī Rūpa alone could detect the essence of love contained in the infinite depths of Lord Caitanya's heart, and you are the perfect *rūpānuga*. You are presenting the crystallized form of the *bhāva* flowing through that line, compiled in a scientific manner that even logical, rational minds can appreciate and follow. It was in your spirit of humility, surrender, and sacrifice that the seed of Lord Caitanya's love found the fertile soil it needed to establish roots for a worldwide movement.

The seed you planted here then continues to grow, blossoming like a lotus flower, revealing the beauty, sweetness, and charm of Goloka Vṛndāvana within the hills of West Virginia. As the *dhāma* develops from the seed of your instruction, countless souls, including those from Western backgrounds, are finding shade and shelter in *vraja-bhakti* and are thereby being delivered from the conflagration of worldly misery. Here, too, you planted a seed by way of the initiations you granted to many disciples. I am compelled to contemplate the nature and significance of that seed.

A seed is emblematic of a dormant life form, which develops over time into its full potential and eventually multiplies. Our latent spiritual life mirrors the development of the seed. Planted by the spiritual master at the time of initiation, our devotional seed sprouts as a *bhakti-latā*, a creeper of devotion reaching for the sky, ascending beyond Vaikuṇṭha to take root again in Goloka. The mature plant then bears the fruit of love of Godhead, along with more seed to create a new generation. This new seed awards hope for generations to follow and inspires our preaching to prepare the soil. This being fulfilled, we embrace the final lesson of the seed, "die to live."

As a representative of Lord Nityānanda Balarāma, you have implored us, your inmates, to create a replica of Vṛndāvana for the benefit of the Western world. And yet, simply excavating *kuṇḍas*, building temples, and replicating *tīrthas* does not consecrate them and bring them to an equal level with their originals in Vraja. The guidance of the pure *ācārya*, who carries Kṛṣṇa within his heart and installs Him wherever he chooses, is the foremost necessity. The temples and *tīrthas* must be blessed by the pure devotee who is "verily a holy place personified." From the seed of Your Divine Grace, the blessing unfolds and the *dhāma* expands into the surrounding landscape, permeates the earth, resonates in the ether, and infuses pilgrims with a spirit of devotion.

In New Vrindavan, as the holy *tīrthas* and the first of the seven temples have appeared and decorate the landscape, we are surrounded by the fruits and flowers emerging from the seeds of *bhakti* you have sown. Putting down roots of faith in the soil of the *dhāma*, where your footsteps abound and your words still linger, we pray that your spirit take up residence in our hearts. From seed to sustenance, you are our guide, shelter, father, and friend. We treasure you as our life and soul. In so doing, we find hope to grasp the essence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's wonderful and mysterious love and become worthy agents of mercy, as you desired your followers to be. And though we remain inmates of the holy *dhāma*, you have set us free to follow your footsteps back to Home. My only hope is that I, too, may tread in the footsteps of Lord Nityānanda as he motioned to Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī and all who would come after: "Go to Vṛndāvana, for there you will attain all desirable things."

Even the attempt to properly glorify you makes my unworthiness clearly conspicuous, and I humbly beseech you in a prayerful mood to forgive my obvious shortcomings. In consideration of my spiritual poverty, please bestow your blessings accordingly.

Your servant,

Varṣāṇā Swami



Vedavyāsapriya Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances and prayers at your lotus feet on this anniversary of your all-auspicious appearance.

You are my well-wisher and savior in this miserable material world. As I strive to progress in devotional service by becoming more and more humble, I also face newer and newer challenges that give me opportunities to tolerate inconveniences of greater dimensions. These humbling experiences lead to the definite progressive path of introspection and a lightening of the burden of the material world. I am sure that this is how your mercy works. Previously, I thought that your mercy works in one stroke. But you are such a kind father that even in my trying times you remain my constant companion and wait for me till I catch hold of your lotus hand again so you can drag me toward you. In each successive trial you show me your same consistent mercy.

I am fully obliged to you, and therefore I am continuing to travel and preach for your pleasure and satisfaction despite some of my godbrothers' advice that I slow down because of advancing age. Recently one godbrother, after seeing my astrological chart, recommended that I spend eleven months in the *dhāma* during next year and not leave during that dangerous period. I smiled at him and said, "I will see what Śrīla Prabhupāda wants me to do during that time. I do not have to worry till next year at least."

He said yes, "Śrīla Prabhupāda arranged exceptional situations for his followers so they could travel and preach and also remain out of the clutches of the modes of material nature. But Prabhupāda also said, 'If you have an umbrella, then use it.'"

I was impressed. Your Kṛṣṇa consciousness made me resourceful in preaching as well as in the practical application of the philosophy because you always outsmarted those who rely only on their material intelligence. So I feel strong and committed to giving you pleasure by humbly executing my services, without considering any personal inconveniences. I am ever thankful for your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and the mercy of my godbrothers. Please take care of me forever, and I will also remain faithful and humble forever.

Your servant,

Vedavyāsapriya Swami

Yadunandana Swami

*pratyādiṣṭaṁ mayā tatra tvayi karma-vimohite
tapo me hṛdayaṁ sākṣād ātmāhaṁ tapaso 'nagha*

"O sinless Brahmā, you may know from Me that it was I who first ordered you to undergo penance when you were perplexed in your duty. Such penance is My heart and soul, and therefore penance and I are nondifferent." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.9.23)

Beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace! As ISKCON's founder-*ācārya* and the primary *śikṣā-guru* for all ISKCON members, you have taught us



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how to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, with love and sacrifice. You have written about it in your purport to the opening verse of this homage:

The penance by which one can see the Personality of Godhead face to face is to be understood as devotional service to the Lord and nothing else because only by discharging devotional service in transcendental love can one approach the Lord. . . . [O]nly love and penance combined can please the Lord, and thus one is able to attain His complete mercy. He directs the sinless, and the sinless devotee attains the highest perfection of life.

Your life is an unimpeachable example of this principle. As a child, under the guidance of your dear father, you worshiped the Deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and organized Ratha-yātrā festivals, as if foreshadowing the divine mission you would accomplish throughout your life.

As a *grhastha* you expertly fulfilled all your family duties while wholeheartedly serving your beloved spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. You carefully imbibed his instructions, contributed both money and service to open temples, and started publishing and distributing Kṛṣṇa's message. Then you gradually retired from family life with the aim of establishing a wonderful society of devotees.

After your first attempt, in which you founded the League of Devotees in Jhansi, the Lord called you to Śrī Vṛndāvana *dhāma* to further empower you with divine love and an increased spirit of sacrifice. For several years you lived under the shelter of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī at Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Dāmodara *mandira*. After you had imbibed their full mercy, the Lord arranged your *Jaladuta* odyssey, a bold and essential step in your fulfilling Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī's instruction to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness around the world.

Your devotion and spirit of sacrifice for Kṛṣṇa were so grand that nothing could deter you from your determination to accomplish your divine mission. As a result of your wonderful love for guru and Kṛṣṇa, your strong determination, and your continual sacrifice, an unbelievably fabulous worldwide community of devotees emerged.

Fully pleased by your loving service, the Lord called you back to Him in 1977. After your physical departure from this world, your directly initiated disciples and the next generations of devotees have continued, according to their respective capacities, to represent Your Divine Grace and spread your mission. Now the responsibility of preserving and passing on the spirit of loving devotion and dedicated sacrifice that you established and exemplified rests on us, your servants. To properly fulfill this grave responsibility, we need your daily guidance. I pray that I may be able to always remember your divine example and instructions in order to offer a pleasing service to the Lord and His beloved servants.

Aspiring to be a useful instrument in your mission, I remain

Your servant,

Yadunandana Swami