

Homages from  
Non-GBC Sannyāsīs



## **Bhakti Anugraha Janārdana Swami**

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

On this most auspicious day of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, I would like to rededicate myself to you and your mission. After many, many lifetimes of struggle and hardship, by some good fortune I have met Your Divine Grace, who are saving me from the onslaught of material energy.

Now that I have taken the order of *sannyāsa*, it is my great responsibility to live up to your expectations—to preach vigorously and enthusiastically to the conditioned souls, to help them in their march back home, back to Godhead. It is only by your blessings that I may be able to come up to the standard you expect from all your followers.

I have no special qualification—except full faith in you and your society. I am fully confident that you will be able to save the whole world one day, as long as we continue to follow your instructions wholeheartedly, which will empower us to convince others to follow the path chalked out by you and the other members of the *paramparā*.

Your movement is spreading widely at every moment, and no one can stop it. Many temples are being established, and we are all eagerly awaiting the completion of your grandest temple, The Temple of the Vedic Planetarium, which will be inaugurated on Gaura Pūrṇimā 2020. Your books are being distributed profusely, more and more every year. New devotees are being recruited from every section of society. Your transcendental sound vibration—your recorded classes, conversations, interviews, festival lectures, *bhajans*, etc.—are always a source of inspiration to all your followers. Many life members are being enlisted, at a tremendous rate. It seems certain that, as you predicted, Śrīla Prabhupāda, future historians will record that your movement saved the whole world in its hour of crisis.

Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to serve you, even in an insignificant way. Please bless me to increase my taste for chanting the holy name of the Lord so that I can inspire others to chant offenselessly. Please give me the taste for reading and studying your books so that I can effectively deliver their message to others with conviction, without duplicity, and in such a way as to convince them of the philosophy according to your words and those of the other members of the *paramparā*. Please give me the taste for hearing your recorded lectures and *pravacans* so that I may be able to repeat them as they are for others' spiritual benefit. And lastly, please forgive me for all my offenses, committed knowingly or unknowingly in the course of my trying to serve you and other Vaiṣṇavas.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

*Respectfully trying to be your humble servant,*

Bhakti Anugraha Janārdana Swami

## **Bhakti Bṛhat Bhāgavata Swami**

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

In your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.4.8 you write, “Śukadeva Gosvāmī is an ideal preacher established in the transcendental position.” Over thirty years ago, the very first books of yours I read were the three volumes of the First Canto. Through your elaborate purports you convinced me to join ISKCON. You are

indeed the ideal preacher of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, also established in the transcendental position.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the person *Bhāgavatam*, one whose very life is *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in action, behavior, and sound. We know well that it is your foremost desire that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* be preached in every nook and corner of the world. I am not so well-versed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*, but I have experienced that simply by presenting you and your practical Bhaktivedanta purports, people become convinced to take up the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

If you feel at all indebted to me then you should preach vigorously like me. That is the proper way to repay me. Of course, no one can repay the debt to the spiritual master, but the spiritual master is very much pleased by such an attitude by the disciple. [Letter to residents of New Dvārakā, 14 August 1976]

Were I not favored by Your Divine Grace, especially through your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* purports, it would have been impossible for me to be engaged in devotional service, especially preaching. I shudder to think how I would have still been bound up in the complicated network of miserable material life. You, through your *Bhāgavatam* purports and your able representatives, saved me. I remain eternally indebted to Your Divine Grace.

*The servant of your servants,*

Bhakti Bṛhat Bhāgavata Swami

## Bhakti Gauravāṇī Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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-pāścātrya-deśa-tāriṇe*

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

*Gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe*, preaching the message of Lord Gaurāṅga all over the world, is the focal point of your mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda. All of ISKCON's activities revolve around this pivot. By making the propagation of *gaura-vāṇī* the center of all endeavor, you followed faithfully in the footsteps of your own spiritual master, who planted in your heart the seed of the desire for global preaching at your very first encounter with him in 1922. As you explained many years later to one of your early disciples:

Our only business is to present Kṛṣṇa Consciousness to the ignorant mass of people, and if such people agree to hear in consideration of our important position in the material world, it is a great opportunity to place our submission, and thereby our mission is fulfilled. Acaryas in the disciplic succession of Lord Caitanya teach us that we shall try to place the message of Lord Caitanya very humbly to the people in general and that will make us successful in our service to the Lord. [Letter to Janārdana, 1968]

It is our great fortune that you kept this desire alive in your heart for forty-three years and then ventured to the West. Following the example of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, you first of all arranged for the publication of *gaura-vāṇī* in English, and then in all major languages of the world, now totaling almost one hundred.

My Guru Maharaja had an ambition to publish the message of Lord Caitanya in all the languages of the world, and when He was present in India, He published six magazines in five languages; one in Hindi, one in Assami, one in Bengali, one in English, and one in Oriya. [Letter to Jaya Gopāl, 1969]

Just recently, while preaching in Delhi, I was invited for an evening program at the Chippiwada Rādhā-Vallabha Temple. This historic place, where you prepared the first three volumes of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* fifty years ago, has finally come into the possession of ISKCON and is now one more vibrant preaching center in India's capital, where your followers have established almost a dozen temples, from where Lord Caitanya's message is being spread among the fortunate citizens of Delhi and the world.

After the program, the devotees showed me your quarters and some old manuscripts and documents, silent witnesses of an unprecedented undertaking—your single-handedly bringing *gaura-vāṇī* to the Western world. May I be blessed with just a fraction of a drop of your enthusiasm and determination to fulfill the order of Guru and Gaurāṅga.

So offering respect to the spiritual master means to remember some of his activities. . . . Just like you offer respect to your spiritual master: *namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe*. This is the activity of your spiritual master—that he is preaching the message of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and he's a disciple of Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. *Namas te sārāsvate*. You should pronounce it *sārāsvate*, not *sarasvatī*. *Sarasvatī* is my spiritual master. So his disciple is *sārāsvate*. *Sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe*. These are the activities. What is the activities of your spiritual master? He's simply preaching the message of Lord Caitanya. That is his business. [Lecture in London, 1971]

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this auspicious day of your appearance, may I be granted the opportunity to carry on the family business and become a useful instrument in spreading Lord Caitanya's message to even the remotest corners of this world.

Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted His followers to move all over the world to preach in every town and village. In the Caitanya-sampradāya those who strictly follow the principles of Lord Caitanya must travel all over the world to preach the message of Lord Caitanya, which is the same as preaching the words of Kṛṣṇa—*Bhagavad-gītā*—and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The more the devotees preach the principles of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*, the more people throughout the world will benefit. [*Bhāgavatam* 4.30.37, purport]

After you left Chippiwada with the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and arrived in New York, you exhibited another essential quality for achieving success: patience. Perservering against all odds and adversities, you were confident that your mission to bring *gaura-vāṇī* to the people outside India would be successful. It was just a matter of time. As you wrote prior to your arrival, onboard the *Jaladuta*:

Somehow or other, O Lord, You have brought me here to speak about You. Now, my Lord, it is up

to You to make me a success or failure, as You like. O Lord, I am just like a puppet in Your hands. So if You have brought me here to dance, then make me dance, make me dance, O Lord, make me dance as You like.

At the same time, you tried over and over again to encourage your godbrothers to join with you in pushing on Lord Caitanya's mission. In the months after you arrived in New York in 1965, you wrote over a dozen letters to this effect, and over the years you asked your own disciples repeatedly not to fight but to cooperate, because you yourself applied this principle in your own life, being well aware of the disastrous consequences of infighting and separatism, by which the synergetic opportunity for unified preaching is lost:

So far I am concerned, I am always for cooperation, and I don't criticize anybody. I am very busy with my own work. Rather I welcome everyone's cooperation. If you think there is possibility of cooperation you can open negotiation directly with Sripada Audolomi Maharaja. If we cooperate, we can do tremendous service for Lord Caitanya in the matter of propagating the mission of Lord Caitanya very nicely. I am prepared to cooperate in every way, but I wonder if the other side is prepared for this also. I shall be happy to hear from you soon. [Letter to Dr. Syam Sundar, 1969]

Unless we work cooperatively, how this movement will go on? So my request to you all is that you maintain that spirit of cooperation always and help me to deliver Lord Caitanya's message all over the globe. [Letter to Tribhuvanātha, 1971]

When the daughter of one of your godbrothers visited you in the West and informed you of her father's retirement, you immediately wrote to him soliciting his cooperation:

I am so pleased to learn that you are now retired from worldly activities and are engaged in constant chanting of Harer Nama. I think by age you may be younger than me, if not by many years. So why not come to America and join me in this preaching work? I think if your daughter and son-in-law sponsor to receive you, there will be no difficulty for your passport, etc.

There is immense potency of preaching the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness under the guidance of Lord Caitanya, and I wish that all my Godbrothers should go to different parts of the world and preach this sublime message everywhere, because that is the desire of Lord Caitanya. Of course, as far as possible I am trying to spread this movement all over the world, and at the present moment my activities are prominent from Hamburg to Tokyo, a distance of 14,000 miles. I think the circumference of the whole earth is 25,000 miles. So this should be covered by some of our Godbrothers so that Lord Caitanya's message may be properly executed. I do not know why none of our Godbrothers attempt to this important side of our propaganda. Just now I am in correspondence with the Gaudiya Mission secretary, and I have promised also to help them if they will take up this work. I have not as yet received any reply from them. I have also asked them to help us in so many ways. Immediately I am in need of some supplies from India. They are as follows: 1) regular supply of 10 first class mrdangas every month. 2) regular supply of 50 pairs of Navadvipa-made karatalas every month. 3) at least two dozen pairs of Radha-Kṛṣṇa Murtis, made of brass and 24" high. Besides these things, I require many other articles like temple paraphernalia. [Letter to Nagendra Babu, 1969]

Who can even begin to fathom your vision, Śrīla Prabhupāda? You wrote this letter during your first journey outside North America, while visiting a handful of disciples in Hamburg in 1969, and although at the time there were fewer than twenty temples in ISKCON, you knew that soon there would be thousands of devotees who would require lots of *mṛdaṅgas* and *karatālas*, as well as Deities and *arcanā* paraphernalia.

Today, forty-five years later, there are indeed hundreds of temples, preaching centers, and rural communities, plus thousands of congregational groups with hundreds of thousands of devotees all over the globe, and the numbers are steadily increasing.

Simultaneously, a great effort is underway to complete construction of the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium, from where the service of Lord Caitanya will flood the entire planet and take *gaura-vāṇī* even to the remotest towns and villages. As early as 1971 you asked your disciples to come up with a design and make concrete plans for its realization, being very keen to show the world that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is based on actual scientific knowledge and real culture, as described in the *Vedas*.

We shall show the Vedic conception of the planetary systems within this material world and above the material world. We are going to exhibit the Vedic culture throughout the whole world, and they will come here. Just like they come to see the Taj Mahal. They'll come to see the civilization and the culture—the philosophical culture, the religious culture—by practical demonstration with dolls and other things. [Morning Walk, 1976, Māyāpur]

The Temple of the Vedic Planetarium is the last large project you personally initiated and left for us to complete. Back in 1971 you laid the foundation stone, together with an Ananta Śeṣa Deity, but somehow or other design approval and construction were again and again delayed. Only recently, almost forty years later, the superstructure began to rise from the soil of Śrīdhām Māyāpur. There can be no doubt: the day the temple will open its doors to the public, a new phase of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement will begin.

I have named this temple Śrī Māyāpur Candrodāya Mandira, the Rising Moon of Māyāpur. Now make it rise, bigger and bigger, until it becomes the full moon. And this moonshine will be spread all over the world. All over India they will come to see. From all over the world they will come. [Letter from Brahmānanda to Rameśvara, recounting a talk by Śrīla Prabhupāda]

I bow down to all those who have made your *vāṇī* their life and soul and beg for their blessings. Taking the dust from their lotus feet on my head, I pray that I may be able to offer some contribution to the fulfillment of your mission: *gaura-vāṇī pracāriṇe*.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Bhakti Gauravāṇī Goswami (formerly Vedavyāsa Dāsa)

## **Bhakti Mādhurya Govinda Gosvāmī**

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated *daṇḍavat praṇāmas* at your lotus feet.

Your feet are the shelter of the whole universe, for indeed your fame spreads throughout all the three worlds, not just this planet. In fact, it would not be surprising if you are even more famous on the upper planets than on this planet, for the residents of the higher planets are better situated in knowledge. They can very clearly see and hear everything that is going on on this planet, so they know that you are *jagad-guru*, the great *śaktyāveśa avatāra* who dared to spread the movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu beyond the shores of India. It is not an exaggeration to say you are famous in the higher planets, for your advent was predicted in the spiritual world by none other than Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. He told the anxious Nārada: “Do not worry about the darkness of Kali-yuga. Very soon I will send My great general, who will spread My holy name to all the countries of the world, and thus the whole world will be inundated by the *saṅkīrtana*”



movement.” Truly you are in the same league as Nārada Muni, though he is your worshipable predecessor *ācārya*, for you are the embodiment of *parivrājakācārya*—one who spreads Kṛṣṇa consciousness anywhere and everywhere without consideration. This is so, for now even in remote Siberia hundreds of devotees are chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa by your mercy!

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have created this movement as a revolution in society—not a dirty political revolution like so many around the world, but a pure spiritual revolution for instituting *sanātana-dharma*, with the lofty goal of re-establishing *rāma-rājya*—Vaikuṅṭha on earth. Yet this is a difficult task. Some naysayers declare that this is “mission impossible,” but as Nṛsiṃha Guru you roared, “*Impossible* is a word in a fool’s dictionary!”

Yes, creating Vaikuṅṭha on earth can be done—not by our petty efforts alone but by your divine empowerment. We did not descend from the spiritual world with full divine empowerment, as you did; yet you extend your *āveśa* (empowerment) into each and every devotee who makes even the smallest endeavor to spread this great movement by selling even one magazine or book or by teaching even one person how to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. This is glorious and is the proof that you are still alive, though we cannot see your physical body moving among us. “He reasons ill who thinks that Vaiṣṇavas die”—the proverbial words of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

Nevertheless, the war against *Māyā* is often lonely, as you yourself experienced in trying to establish this movement in India before coming to the West. Now, even though we are surrounded by thousands of devotees—in *Māyāpur* at this year’s *Gaura Pūrṇimā* festival there were perhaps as many as 10,000—there is the heavy burden on the senior devotees, especially your leaders, including *sannyāsīs*, to uphold your teachings and standards, for along with great preaching success come thousands of neophytes with very creative, enthusiastic concepts of what is a good idea in the name of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Unfortunately, despite their enthusiasm, their choices for expressing Kṛṣṇa consciousness may be far away from your teachings. For example, the various forms of “creative dance” among the newcomers tend to get further and further away from what you taught your followers in 1966 in New York. This year in *Māyāpur*, in front of the *Pañca-tattva* Deities, two men picked up a third and were swinging him by the arms like a hammock—in front of the Deities! All the young people thought this was great fun. There were hardly any senior devotees present, but I was close by, and so I stepped in quickly, and at the risk of being a “wet blanket” or “joy-buster” I informed the men that this was not proper conduct for devotees, especially in the presence of Deities!

I did not enjoy this bad-guy, spoil-the-kids’-fun role (especially since the growing tendency among senior devotees seems to be “kids will be kids—let them have their fun”), but I remembered how you, as the perfect *ācārya*, never hesitated to correct us. You saw us as “boys and girls” but did not hesitate to curb our excessive “creativity” when it ushered in *māyā* wholesale. You told us, “You Americans would walk on your hands if you could do it.”

However, now this excessive “creativity” is spreading all over the world. Some readers of this offering will remember Chicago 1975, when all the *Rādhā-Dāmodara* busses were present for a grand *mela*. There were perhaps seven hundred devotees in the temple room, which was a lot for those days. The over-enthusiastic men, mostly wearing saffron, were marching back and forth from the two sides in the temple room with their hands almost clenched in fists, as if there were going to be a confrontation. Then, as they would meet, they would go backwards, the seeming “confrontation” receding, and again they would turn around and do the same. You watched for some time from your *vyāsāsana*. It was a huge “cook-it-up” enthusiastic *kīrtana*, with perhaps ten *mṛdaṅgas* and twenty *karatālas*, as well as gongs, etc. You were not amused. Suddenly you quietly gave word to a messenger, sending him across the large room to the *kīrtana* leader. The order was “Stop the *kīrtana*!” This was like suddenly stopping fifty freight trains going 150 kilometers per hour! For a moment there was silence. “Oh my God! What is Śrīla Prabhupāda going to do?” Without skipping a beat, you solemnly declared, “Not like this” (you imitated how the men were dancing as in a gang confrontation), “like this!” You raised both arms in the air in exaltation, again demonstrating how to dance the way you trained the devotees in 1966. Having been so strongly rebuked, perhaps the devotees were a little embarrassed, but then they all immediately surrendered to your instruction (at least for a few months). The *kīrtana* continued with rebounding enthusiasm, but this time Vaikuṅṭha style, as you desire (present tense).

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are begging, please help us maintain the standards you have given us. It is a formidable and sometimes lonely task, and only your leaders can do it, with back-up from sincere devotees who worship and understand your teachings. Your “final order” was “At least maintain what I have given you.” You didn’t mean only real estate, automobiles, beautiful temple buildings, or bank balances. You also meant your full and complete *vāñī* for all time.

*Your eternal aspiring servant,*

Bhakti Mādhurya Govinda Goswami (formerly Makhanlāl Dāsa)

## **Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami**

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

For this foolish disciple of yours, the pinch of old age is gradually tightening. It is a goad to relinquish my false identification with this changing apparatus known as the material body, an incredibly sophisticated machine but, alas, subject to decay and destruction just like any other configuration of the Lord’s material energy.

In your ISKCON “body” there are so many wonderful developments. These are increasing to the extent that I, for one, can hardly keep up with them. But at the same time there seems to be an increase in controversy. Such issues as female initiating gurus, “Kṛṣṇa West,” and the editing of your precious books are all agitating the minds and hearts of many of your followers. They want to sincerely push on your movement but are often at a loss as to how to distinguish between principles and details. What are principles for one group of devotees are details for another. But everyone feels that his perspective is most in line with your true teachings. Sometimes it becomes difficult to simply “agree to disagree,” since for many so much is at stake. And many, myself included, feel very strongly on this side or that side. For instance, I am firmly convinced that the so-called “changes” to your *Bhagavad-gītā* aren’t changes at all but are by and large restorations of both the letter and spirit of your actual *śikṣā*. After patiently comparing the two versions, I find this completely obvious. But others prefer the original, 1972 edition. (So many do that the BBT has now, so I’ve heard, printed many thousand of the ’72 Macmillan edition.) So these things are happening.

This being said, I again state that, yes, in your ISKCON there are, in fact, so many wonderful developments. Let me take heart in this. And let me derive extra-special inspiration today, the glorious anniversary of your merciful appearance. I pray to become a tolerant and merciful instrument in your miraculous mission.

In this old age I am increasing my chanting of the holy name. In this practice I have discovered a nice, *incontrovertible* oasis!

*Begging to remain forevermore in the shade of your lotus feet,*

Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami

(formerly Prabhupāda dasa)

## Bhakti Puruṣottama Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*kali-kālera dharma—kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana  
kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*

“The fundamental religious system in the Age of Kali is the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Unless empowered by Kṛṣṇa, one cannot propagate the *saṅkīrtana* movement.” Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have introduced *nāma-saṅkīrtana* around the whole world. This proves you are empowered by Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*gaurāṅgera bhakta-gaṇe  
brahmāṅḍa tārīte śakti dhare jane jane*

“Each one of Lord Gaurāṅga’s devotees, being empowered by the Lord, can deliver the whole universe.” You are certainly one of those who has been empowered to deliver the whole world.

Five thousand years ago, at the end of the Dvāpara-yuga, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa was preparing to return to Goloka Vṛndāvana, all the personified holy rivers—the Gaṅgā, Sarasvatī, Yamunā, Kāverī, Godāvarī, etc.—approached the Lord and requested Him to allow them to go back to the spiritual world with Him. “O, Lord!” they said, “when You leave this world, Kali-yuga will enter. People will commit so many sins and then bathe in our waters to give the sinful reactions to us. We cannot tolerate so much sin. We want to go back with You.”

Kṛṣṇa replied, “All you rivers wait for the next five thousand years. My holy name will spread all over the world. The whole world will become filled with Vaiṣṇavas. These Vaiṣṇavas will come from different parts of the world and take bath in your waters. At that time all of you will happily spend time with them.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have fulfilled this prediction of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa by spreading His holy name all over the world and bringing devotees from all over the world to Bhārata-varṣa.

Five hundred years ago Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu predicted: *ṛthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma/ sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma*. “In every town and village on this earth, the chanting of My name will be heard.” Śrīla prabhupāda, you have fulfilled this prediction of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Śrīman Mahāprabhu also predicted, “My *senāpati-bhakta* [devotee general] will come and preach the glories of the holy name all over the world.” Who else could this *senāpati-bhakta* be except Your Divine Grace?

One hundred fifty years ago, Śrīla Bhaktinoda Ṭhākura foresaw a day when devotees would come to Māyāpur from Western countries like America, Germany, Russia, and France and join together with devotees of Bhārata-varṣa to chant “*Jaya Śācīnandana! Jaya Śācīnandana!*” Your Divine Grace has made that possible.

Your Guru Mahārāja had a great desire that the teachings of Lord Caitanya would be spread in Western countries. Your divine grace has made this possible.

You are the personification of fulfilling the desires of the Lord and the previous *ācāryas*. Your appearance in this material world is not accidental. It was well planned long ago.

Your Divine Grace is the deliverer of not only the Western world. You are in fact the deliverer of the whole world, West and East.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for taking the trouble to come to this material world to deliver us.

I bow down at your lotus feet millions of times in gratitude for your compassion upon fallen souls like us. Thank you very much.

*Your humble servant,*

Bhakti Puruṣottama Swami

## Bhakti Rāghava Swami

*om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā  
cakṣur unmilitaṁ 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 divine lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on this, the 118<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your sacred appearance day.

I am writing this offering from the Kingdom of Cambodia, a country that would have benefited immensely from your physical presence, but somehow that was not to be. A small group of devotees from Indonesia is endeavoring to introduce Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this remote part of the Far East. Without your special mercy, however, it will not be possible to make any tangible headway here.

Lately I have been hearing testimonies and memories from disciples of yours who personally met and served you in those early formative years of your fledging ISKCON, when most devotees were very young and immature. Like a caring and loving father, you sparked and nurtured their flame of devotion, and you served as the main inspirational force for them to totally abandon themselves to serving your wonderful mission. Although I did not get such intimate association with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I remain ever grateful and obliged that you gave me the opportunity to become your disciple.

Amazingly, it's been forty years since this happened, and recently I found myself celebrating my fortieth anniversary as your duly initiated disciple. I don't know how many more years you will allow me to serve you in this body, but I pray that in whatever time may be left I will be able to continue wholeheartedly and with full enthusiasm pursuing the spiritual and material legacy you have left all of us.

You continue to always inspire me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, as you continue to inspire countless other sincere souls. This is your special “magic,” as some of your early disciples would say. May you continue to attract more and more genuine souls to surrender to your most important mission of spreading the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I am always amazed at how you, a “city boy” from Calcutta, developed such deep, profound realizations and convictions about the need to preserve and in places reintroduce the agrarian lifestyle that forms the basis of the Vedic culture, the *varṇāśrama* mission, where cows and land are meant to play an integral part in our lives, and how this is also very much part of the preaching movement.

You made very heavy and profound statements over the years, some of them referring to the impending downfall of the modern-day so-called civilization. You said that the cities of America and Europe would soon be destroyed due to the most heinous sinful activity of cow-killing. In this and many other ways you gave clear indications and instructions about how to correct our present-day misdirected society—“overhaul and revert” were your very words. Such was your insightfulness, your profound visionary assessment of so-called advanced modern society. We have yet to pay heed to some of those statements, and time is running short. Please be merciful and help us understand and implement.

Please forgive me for all my offenses and help me become your surrendered devotee.

*Your servant,*

RP Bhakti Rāghava Swami

## Bhaktisiddhānta Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Today I am writing this offering from your “hometown base,” the Rādhā- Govinda Mandira in Kolkata. In this area your earthly pastimes began with wonderful devotional feats in service to the Lord. As a result, wonderful worship is being done here, what to speak of in the greater fields, in your various headquarters in the *dhāmas*, your international temples, farm communities, projects, and widespread distribution centers. Your greatness is perceived by the success of your *paramparā* delegation, empowering a variety of personnel to perform great victories in *sevā*.

What a true spiritual genius you are, working as a humble servant in the hands of the Lord, as the *senāpati* (general) of your army of Vaiṣṇavas uniting a world and changing a future. Your services have not only given ISKCON direction and life within, but are a hidden support to many spiritualists without. As the sun rises on the horizon, all parts of a landscape benefit.

Apart from your unlimited accomplishments, most importantly in the wake of chanting the holy names, you have given us an opportunity to give up this identification with *aham* and what follows, “I and mine,” in favor of service to the Lord that is *ahaitukī* and *apratihatā*. Of course, due to our *samskāras*, we cling to material concerns and offend either individually or collectively, thus disempowering ourselves by disconnecting ourselves from Your Divine Grace, the person who has taught us how to engage all affairs in remembrance of the Lord.

You are a great accommodator, empowered to inspire all. What have you taught us in this process of *saṅkīrtana*? You have shown us that by chanting the holy name we are simply inviting Kṛṣṇa into our heart. You have trained us to hear about Kṛṣṇa and engage in His glorification, which purifies and broadens the mind. In this way the Supreme’s presence is felt and His glories make an imprint on the heart.

Please allow us to move forward and, with broadmindedness, attract and inspire the future generations with the above activity, not only to live within a mission but also to distribute it without any material amelioration. Then we can truly say that we are Prabhupādānugas. Please offer us a sanction to repay you, though impossible, and become an insignificant drop within your ocean of “heart transformation through distribution.”

*Your aspiring servant,*

Bhaktisiddhānta Swami

## Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha Mahārāja

My dear spiritual master and eternal father Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Every year it is our great fortune to have the opportunity to directly glorify you. This day is the most special day of the year, and it is on this day, more than any other, that we feel total commitment and surrender to Your Divine Grace.

One engagement I have taken up in recent years is presenting a course on how to be a better disciple. I myself am not a good example of a disciple, but I hope that by teaching this course I can become a better one. Part of the course focuses on how to strengthen our relationship with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, not only for your direct disciples but for all devotees. We remind all the devotees that it is their duty to make a personal offering to Your Divine Grace annually, on your Vyāsa-pūjā day. I am sure that every devotee would be greatly benefited by composing an offering to you on this day. I requested one devotee lecturer in a local university to write an offering for you last year, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and I would like to share part of her offering with you. She wrote:

When I was young I used to envy my Muslim, Christian, and Sikh friends for having scriptures to refer to and receive guidance in their life. I also used to envy them that they could go to their place of worship and receive direction. I also used to marvel at their unity of thought, and how they were guided by a single philosophy that all of them are trained in, whereas to me, being a Hindu, everything appeared disunited. There appeared to be so much diversity in religious thinking and ways of practicing religion. Thank you for giving me the understanding that diversity in religion is not because there are many Gods but because there are many approaches to the worship of God and because each method of worship is determined according to time, place, and circumstances. Thank you very much for institutionalizing principles of spirituality that we can live according to the Vedic culture. Now I need not envy anyone but need only be a disciple and devotee of Śrīla Prabhupāda for the worship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

This week I have been traveling in Malaysia, and on my visit to Ipoh an engagement was arranged at the local Kṛṣṇa temple. During your visit to Ipoh in 1971 you lectured at this temple. I was feeling proud, thinking “I am following in the footsteps of my spiritual master,” but then I remembered that Your Divine Grace had two programs that day and the places were 70km apart. You had no car and had to take a taxi to reach Ipoh, coming from the town of Teluk Anson. The next day you were off to Penang for more preaching. I had been thinking I was doing well having one program a day in different towns, but when I remembered Your Divine Grace having two programs in different towns on the same day, I was humbled.

You told us to do as you did, but I find it impossible. I am not capable of coming to your level in terms of stamina, what to speak of intellectual acumen. My only hope is that I can somehow grab hold of your *dhoti* and be pulled back to Godhead by the mercy of Your Divine Grace. Please always keep me in the shade of your lotus feet.

*Your unworthy servant,*

Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasimha Mahārāja

## **Bhakti Vinoda Swami**

My dear loving grand-spiritual-father Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace for giving us your presence on this planet, along with your wonderful pastimes and association through your books and your sincere devotees.

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, your senior followers are leaving the planet after a lifetime of valuable service to your institution, and we will be bereft of their association and guidance soon. It's our special prerogative to



be able to follow in your footsteps under their guidance and shelter.

As days go by I am able to better appreciate my connection with you, as if emerging out of a foggy past. Your glory as founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON is truly dawning on me. My nearness to you is felt more and more as I meet various devotees and hear how they have expressed their gratefulness to you through their services. You are the warp and weft of the life of many, many souls—past, present, and future. How amazing is your Vaiṣṇava *sevā*!

As a true servant, you have demonstrated to all theorists, academicians, *jñānīs*, and such that servant leadership is practical and can be done with Kṛṣṇa, God, in the center. You have walked your talk and writings and demonstrated genuine service to humankind in its most relevant and relatable form, filled with sincerity, love, and purity. You have galvanized human beings into challenging themselves through their God-given intelligence to understand the reality and rise above illusion. While it's a difficult journey from the comforts of a so-called cozy life, subtle mental traps, land mines of false ego, and elusive love of Kṛṣṇa, it still creates an eternal hope swelling in the human breast—a yearning for perfection of life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness! Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for awakening the yearning for the Absolute Truth, Kṛṣṇa!

It's my conviction that simply by knowing you and your life and teachings a person can reform himself 100%. Your glory should be spread far and wide, challenging the arid explanations of spiritual life given by Māyāvādīs and pseudospiritualists. This is our duty and mission.

The year 2015 marks the fiftieth anniversary of your visit to Cochin (Kochi), in Kerala, where you got your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* sets loaded aboard the *Jaladuta*. The day was August 21st, your 70th birthday. It's our great desire in Kerala to commemorate this event with a festival. The BBT would like to join us by releasing all eighteen volumes of your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in Malayalam, and we seek your blessings to offer this festival for your pleasure on the eve of the 50th anniversary of ISKCON.

As I hear more about you and your sacrifice, I am consumed by a desire to be perfect and as fit as a fiddle to serve you to the utmost, being filled with gratitude for the great service you have done. In the process I am overwhelmed by the prospect of failure, considering the puny shadow of devotion I have and the limited abilities I possess. I am simply depending on your mercy and that of your followers so I may be effective and efficient while remaining fully dependent on Kṛṣṇa in using every iota of time and energy to further and perpetuate the great transcendental legacy you have so generously gifted to us. May no petty personal consideration or thought divert me from the greater thought of achieving Kṛṣṇa consciousness and being instrumental in giving it to others copiously, as per your desire and that of your sincere followers.

Thus meditating, I seek your blessings and mercy to carry out my duties as a *sannyāsī* in representing Your Divine Grace and ISKCON while being instrumental in saving the conditioned souls from the mire of material existence.

*Your insignificant servant ,*

Bhakti Vinoda Swami

## Candramauli Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I was born in the darkest ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge.

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, and my eternal guide.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, all glories to your lotus feet! Those who have taken shelter of you as their life's mission are the most the most fortunate persons in the universe. The transcendental gifts you bestowed on us are manifold. Foremost, outstanding, and illustrious by itself is the all-merciful holy name of Kṛṣṇa, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. It is protecting, sustaining, spiritually inspiring, and purifying in all facets of life. It is my life, my soul, my love, my everything, the greatest gift that has ever been bestowed on the created living beings. Without Śrī Nāma's mercy, I am always defeated in rendering devotional service. Because you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have personally demonstrated the power and glories of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa with your life and words, we are receiving it with great eagerness and increasing happiness.

When we study what you said and wrote about the glories and practice of chanting, we find that you repeatedly emphasized that the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* should be practiced twenty-four hours daily:

Similarly, when we hear any sound we can remember Kṛṣṇa because sound is Kṛṣṇa, and the most perfect sound, transcendental, is Hare Kṛṣṇa, which we have to chant 24 hours. So there is no scope of forgetting Kṛṣṇa at any moment of our life provided we practice in that way. [Letter to Hayagrīva, January 1968]

The conclusion is that one should learn the art of chanting the Holy name of Kṛṣṇa 24 hours a day and that alone is the remedy for all problems of material existence. How is it possible to chant 24 hours a day? Lord Chaitanya gave the hint, "One can chant the holy name of God in a humble state of mind, thinking himself lower than the straw in the street, more tolerant than a tree, devoid of all kinds of sense of false prestige, and always ready to offer all respects to others. In such a humble state of mind one can chant the Holy name of God constantly." [Letter to Susan Beckman, August 1973]

Yes, you are right, women are generally after sense gratification. That is the disease. Chant 24 hours a day and don't dress nicely to attract men. [Letter to Dīnatāriṇī, January 1976]

So Lord Kṛṣṇa's instructions to Arjuna to "remember Me" and Lord Caitanya's injunction to "always chant the names of Lord Kṛṣṇa" are the same instruction. [*Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, Introduction]

The most confidential part of the instruction is that one should always chant and remember the glories of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, along with His different plenary portions expanded as Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna and Aniruddha. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.5.37 purport]

Considering all these points, therefore, intelligent men decide to solve all problems by adopting the devotional service of chanting the holy name of the Lord, who is situated in everyone's heart and who is a mine of all auspicious qualities. Such persons are not within my jurisdiction for punishment. Generally they never commit sinful activities, but even if by mistake or because of bewilderment or illusion they sometimes commit sinful acts, they are protected from sinful reactions because they always chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.3.26, translation]

*etan nirvidyamānānām icchatām akuto-bhayam*  
*yoginām nr̥pa nirnitam harer nāmānukirtanam*

○ King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the

doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.1.11]

Our only duty is to remember the supreme director of this illusory energy—Kṛṣṇa. For us to do this, the *śāstra* advises us, *harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam*: one should constantly chant the holy name of the Lord—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.16.53–54, purport]

A devotee accepts the distress of this material world as happiness only due to the causeless mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. By His personal behavior, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu showed that He was never distressed but always happy in chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. One should follow in the footsteps of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and engage constantly in chanting the *mahā-mantra*—Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. Then he will never feel the distresses of the world of duality. In any condition of life one will be happy if he chants the holy name of the Lord. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.17.30, purport]

By regulative practice one can control the mind, and this is the purpose of the yoga system (*abhyāsa-yoga-yuktena*). But there is a chance of failure with the yoga system, especially in this Age of Kali, because the yoga system uses artificial means. If the mind is engaged in *bhakti-yoga*, however, by the grace of Kṛṣṇa one can very easily control it. Therefore Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has recommended, *harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam*. One should chant the holy name of the Lord constantly, for the holy name of the Lord is nondifferent from Hari, the Supreme Person.

By chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra constantly, one can fix the mind on the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa (*sa vai manaḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravindayoḥ*) and in this way achieve the perfection of yoga. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.1.42, purport]

The program for the conditioned soul is fully described in *Bhagavad-gītā*, and one simply has to follow these instructions to become happy. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has therefore prescribed:

*harer nāma harer nāma harer nāmaiva kevalam*  
*kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva nāsty eva gatir anyathā*

Let people chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra constantly. Then their demoniac tendencies will be killed, and they will become first-class devotees, happy in this life and in the next. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.1.64, purport]

Rṣabhadeva remembers: One day we were waiting for Viṣṇujana. We had just taken lunch *prasādam* and were in the van waiting for him to come down from Prabhupāda’s quarters. He was having a personal *darśana*.

He came down and said, “Wow, Prabhupāda just blew my mind. I asked him, ‘You have written that a devotee should chant 24 hours a day. How is that possible? What do you mean by that? Are we supposed to stay awake? Does the pure devotee stay awake and chant? Do we chant and preach at the same time? What do you mean by chanting 24 hours a day?’ Then Prabhupāda told me that either you chant *kīrtana*, you chant *japa*, or you chant with your tongue—forming the name with your tongue—or in your mind. But always the *mahā-mantra*.”

You could see the whole time he was speaking, he was absorbed in what Prabhupāda had just said. Rather than being eager to tell it to others, he was fixing himself up in this instruction. It was still echoing in his mind and he was reflecting. It really affected him heavily. [*Rādhā-Dāmodara Vilāsa* I, by Vaiyāsaki Dāsa, Eighth Wave]

Continually chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābājī began wandering all over India, especially in Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana. He was fond of repeating the last instruction of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: “Always chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and offer obeisances to the Lord.” Before singing, which he liked, he would always glorify the previous *ācāryas*.

While he was performing *kīrtana* at Śrīla Prabhupāda’s *sannyāsa* initiation in Mathurā, Śrīla Prabhupāda told him to chant more. At that time, Kṛṣṇa Dāsa realized that Śrīla Prabhupāda would lead a worldwide Hare Kṛṣṇa movement. When remembering Śrīla Prabhupada, Kṛṣṇa Dasa would often tell us: “Your spiritual master is the greatest spiritual master who has ever existed, more than any other spiritual master. More miracles, more work than anyone before. Why? Because no other spiritual master was such a great servant of the holy name. And because he took the holy name all over the world.” [*Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Samādhis in Vṛndāvana*, by Mahānidhi Swami]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we take full shelter of the mercy of Kṛṣṇa’s holy name and beg for your merciful blessing to be able to always chant Kṛṣṇa’s holy name. I pray to always keep it close to my heart and in my mind.

By the grace of my senior godbrother His Holiness Girirāja Swami, I have received the blessed opportunity to serve the *mūrti* of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura. This has greatly increased my attachment for chanting and my appreciation of the *nāmācārya*. His transcendental presence sends the message to always chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am very fallen and overloaded with false prestige, but I do have full faith in the chanting of Kṛṣṇa’s name and your mercy. Please make me a worthy recipient of that mercy.

*A beggar at your feet and the feet of Kṛṣṇa’s holy name,*

Candramauli Swami

## Candraśekhara Swami

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

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe  
nirviṣeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātrya-deśa-tāriṇe*

When I write my Vyāsa-pūjā offering, I feel that in a certain way the process is like a time capsule. Right now it is the beginning of April, but by the time I read this offering to the assembled devotees on your Vyāsa-pūjā day, it will be mid-August. I am making plans for 2014, and by the time I read this offering a good piece of 2014 will have passed and it will be apparent whether my plans worked out or not. Specifically, I will know if my plans for Internet outreach panned out. I am mentioning this Internet expansion in this Vyāsa-pūjā partly to challenge myself to actualize it or risk the humiliation of reading this offering later and admitting that, once again, I failed to make it happen.

I have been thinking about expanding my preaching into the Internet for some time, but the plans keep fizzling out. I do not expect any type of galactic response, but it seems really plausible that the Internet can be useful to reach at least some people. I am simply adding this outreach to my other projects. There is so much information and quasi-information out there on the Web. People are always googling through that information. The Internet is like the collective consciousness of Kali-yuga society. It is a world consciousness and, like New York City, it never sleeps. It has the good and the bad, the useful and the useless, the true and the

false, the profound and the trivial, the well-authored and the barely literate, and of course a good ol' generous portion of just downright sewage.

What are people looking for on the Internet? A few stolen moments away from a mind-numbing job? An unknown treasure? Some human interaction? A place to vent anger and frustration? A recipe? A new book? The latest pop song? A video of a kitty-cat? Wonky grunt humor? Video of someone risking his life in a stupid and needless way? The news? The weather? Sports? Fashion? The latest musings or trivia from their digitally connected compatriots? A good deal on consumer electronics? Porn? Reactions to their latest philosophical outpourings or selfie photo? DIY tips? Who bombed who? What they are really looking for is Kṛṣṇa. Imagine that.

Even if you said it outright to them, most would never believe that you were telling them the truth. The material energy works so well that it seems like Kṛṣṇa is a million miles away. Certainly, to most He is not even an also-ran in the race for attention. Kitty-cat videos, any day. It is interesting to note that Kṛṣṇa, like everything else, does have a presence on the Internet, along with the kitchen sink, the Olympics, and searches for missing airliners. How many people ever accidentally stumble across a page with Kṛṣṇa on it at some point in their lifetime of Web-wanderings? I wonder.

*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva  
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja  
(Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 19.151)*

The living entity wanders throughout the digital universe, sometimes visiting Caribbean Cruises, Star-Trek re-runs, and Superbowl Championships and at other times being cast down into political campaign messages, broken links, and reality-show rehashes. And after viewing millions of pages, the fortunate soul gets the opportunity to associate with a bona fide spiritual URL. Then he gets the *bhakti-latā-bīja*. I am paraphrasing a little bit; please bear with me.

Even if someone was searching music sites and accidentally came across devotees singing a music *bhajan* or the holy name, most would just click right by, as I do when yet another African prince explains his predicament and his need for my bank account number. We could surmise that many people are just not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness because they already have some other type of spiritual life. Other people couldn't care less about religion in any way, shape, or form.

But the real reason people pass up Kṛṣṇa conscious content is that most have a strong *conviction* about material happiness. "It *is* out there." "It can happen to me." "I can smell it." "It's just around the corner." "Any day now, any way now." "Fairy tales can come true, it can happen to you, if you're big and dumb." "Hey, you never know."

*Bhāgavatam* 1.8.19 explains that due to the deluding energy Kṛṣṇa remains unrecognized, and in your purport to that verse, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you explain that due to their past sinful misdeeds many people are reluctant to accept the Supreme Lord as the Absolute Truth. Such people could not recognize Kṛṣṇa even when He was physically present, what to speak of their modern counterparts' recognizing Him in His Internet representation. But there is hope: the devotee's desire to spread Kṛṣṇa's glories is able to surmount these obstacles and, actually, any others because Kṛṣṇa desires the same thing! Imagine that!

Even if it were not so, our duty would be to approach the general population and try to get them to hear something about Kṛṣṇa. We were just like them a few years ago, and look what happened to us. It is the least I can do, and I am happy to do it. We can be successful to the degree we ourselves are Kṛṣṇa conscious.

There are always those who are looking for something to give their lives meaning but who just don't know what it is they seek. It is Kṛṣṇa. We can meet them, or provide an avenue for them, be it PHP-mediated or other. Unless devotees spread what they know in some form, how will the conditioned souls be reclaimed? Much work is to be done, and I see many devotees doing that work by many different methods. Like the squirrel helping Rāmacandra, I am trying to add my mite to the pile.

No, I have not given up on 3-D, face-to-face preaching; as a matter of fact, that is why the Web-outreach has been so long in manifesting, because of my attempts at preparing and giving classes. I am trying to be edu-



cational in my presentations of Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy and trying to make use of learning aids. Recently I branched out into PowerPoint presentations. Please, all you Media Mogul-Mashers out there, try to stifle your sniggers and giggles and again bear with me, overlooking my pigeon-toed attempts and off-brand humor.

What I am praying for today is that I might become at least as convinced about spreading Kṛṣṇa's glories as most folks are about material happiness. Everybody is convinced about something. "Hey, you never know."

*Your servant,*

Candraśekhara Swami

## Dānavīr Goswami

My dearest Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

Modern astrophysics, based as it is on atheistic speculation, acts as the epicenter of demoniac principles. By its propagation, the people of the world plunge further into insatiable lust (*kāmaṁ duṣpūram*), pride (*dambha*), false prestige (*māna*), conceit (*mada-anvitāḥ*), unclean work (*aśuci-vratāḥ*), and illusion (*moha*).

Astrophysicists say that the universe came out of the void and then accidentally exploded. Although the void cannot exist, if it did exist it would be nothingness by definition. How is it scientific to say that something, such as a huge universe filled with diversity, comes from nothing? It contradicts the scientists' Law of Conservation of Energy, which states that energy can be neither created nor destroyed. The void creation theory is analyzed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (16.8):

*asatyam apratiṣṭhaṁ te jagad āhur anīśvaram  
aparāspara-sambhūtaṁ kim anyat kāma-haitukam*

"They say that this world is unreal, that there is no foundation, and that there is no God in control. It is produced of sex desire, and has no cause other than lust."

One may ask whether modern void creation theory is really so bad. Lord Kṛṣṇa says that such a harmful theory is demoniac and leads to the destruction of the world:

*etāṁ dṛṣṭim avaṣṭabhya naṣṭātmāno 'lpa-buddhayaḥ  
prabhavanty ugra-karmāṇaḥ kṣayāya jagato 'hitāḥ*

"Following such conclusions, the demoniac, who are lost to themselves and who have no intelligence, engage in unbeneficial, horrible works meant to destroy the world." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 16.9)

Since you are a pure devotee, your heart was pained to see the fallen souls cheated and tortured by māyā.

You knew that by exposing atheism at its astrophysical origin, the accomplice theories of Darwinian evolution and chemical evolution would also be proven guilty. To defeat *māyā*, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you decided to create the world's largest planetarium in Māyāpur.

Using Vedic cosmological principles to demonstrate and prove the phenomena of eclipses, day and night, seasons, and moon phases will, in my humble opinion, require hundreds of devotee-scientists to become trained and learned in the cosmological *śāstras*. Formerly we did not have access to so many devotee scientists, but fortunately our movement today has a vast resource to draw from. Such work, however, will need to begin immediately so that when the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium is actually ready to open, the purpose for which it was built will be explainable.

If we establish a permanent Institute of Vedic Cosmology at Māyāpur right away, we will insure that the planetarium will not be criticized for espousing merely “religious beliefs.” We will also be saved from excluding important Vedic cosmological features from the planetarium in the hope of sidestepping controversies. If we do our homework thoroughly—i.e., reconciling the *Purāṇas* and the *jyotiṣa-śāstras*—we'll have an army of well-trained, mighty-armed devotee scientists equipped to launch and defend the great dharmic planetarium. Moreover, we'll have devotee preachers traveling the globe displaying and illuminating Vedic cosmology, using dozens of high-tech animation videos projected inside portable planetarium domes.

Although we are tiny, crippled, blind, and dumb, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura is a giant in both *jyotiṣa* and Purāṇic scriptures. We pray for your mercy and for your Guru Mahārāja's mercy, and we also pray that Lord Kṛṣṇa, who helped Your Divine Grace present the Fifth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, will guide your faithful followers to fulfill this transcendental project.

Trying to take shelter at your lotus feet,

*Your insignificant servant,*

Dānavīr Goswami

## **Dhanvantari Swami**

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

I am among your last initiated disciples and never had the opportunity to meet Your Divine Grace in your *vapuḥ* form. Nevertheless, your instructions have guided my life each day for the past forty-one years. I shouldn't lie, however, and claim that this seems to me sufficient to meet what days I have left. Truth be told, every day I miss you more and feel more the lack of your association. Despite this, by your mercy I haven't let myself get entirely knocked down, and I maintain myself by enthusiastically serving your mission.

In our practice of *sādhana-bhakti*, we daily offer our humble obeisances to Your Divine Grace and meditate on your transcendental qualities, but it is on the day that we commemorate your divine appearance that we reflect deeply on the unique importance of your coming to this material world.

Your contribution to the illumination of the world is wholly present in the structure of the society you conceived. Time passes and your society grows and becomes more intricate, to the degree that it realizes your ambitions. ISKCON was established to serve as a vessel capable of crossing the dangerous ocean of the Age of Kali, and your instructions are the perfect map to navigate that ocean. The Bhaktivedanta purports in your books are your most important instructions.

I have a special admiration for the purport Your Divine Grace wrote for the tenth verse of chapter four of the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. In this verse Kṛṣṇa mentions the importance of cultivating internal reform,

through which the candidate, to develop pure love for Him, must become free from attachment, fear, and anger (*rāga*, *bhaya*, and *krodha*). Among the three obstacles to be defeated, fear intrigues me the most. Fear of what? To what type of fear does Kṛṣṇa allude?

One who reads this verse carelessly, while being influenced by the natural flow of the atmosphere that tends toward the fruitive activities with which he is involved in, may come to believe that Kṛṣṇa is referring to the fear that threatens the conquest of happiness in the material world. But your purport reveals a fear both subtle and terrifying for those who wish to escape the shallows of Vedic literature to reach its goal of *bhakti*: fear of remaining an individual, of returning after death to being an individual, and of recognizing one's personal identity.

Furthermore, your purport informs us of how to become free from those stages of conditioning in the material world: “[O]ne has to take complete shelter of the Lord, guided by the bona fide spiritual master, and follow the disciplines and regulative principles of devotional life.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are such a bona fide spiritual master who can guide us back home, back to Godhead. You are giving us perfect knowledge in respect to Kṛṣṇa, with which we can purify our conditioned existence and reach transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa.

In the aforementioned verse Kṛṣṇa says that many, many people in the past became purified with the knowledge concerning His divine appearance and activities, thus reaching transcendental love for Him. Hopefully many, many people in the future—short term, medium term, and long term—can benefit from the knowledge Your Divine Grace has revealed through your purports and, by becoming purified, become strong candidates for *kṛṣṇa-prema-bhakti*.

Praying to Kṛṣṇa that your fame may spread evermore throughout the whole world,

*Your eternal servant,*

Dhanvantari Swami

## Gaṇapati dās Swami

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

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

We often hear that Śrīla Prabhupāda has built a house expansive enough for the whole world to take shelter in. Prabhupāda said that, like him, we should think big: “Shoot for the rhinoceros.” Yet, the dynamic by which he pursued his lofty goals can be described by the common aphorism “Think globally, act locally.” He taught, and showed, that in preaching it is all about the individual. Early on, he pointed to an ant on the table in his room and said, “We should go to this ant and we should lean down, ‘You should chant Hare Kṛṣṇa.’ We should give a little *prasādam*. If we do that, our whole movement will be a success.”

Preaching is not really about big numbers and scores, not about properties and buildings, and not about anniversaries. It's about rescuing individual souls. Just like his Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda said that if he could make just one person Kṛṣṇa conscious, he would consider his mission a success: *ekaś candras tamo hanti na ca tārāḥ sahasraśaḥ*. And for each “moon,” he was prepared to shed hundreds of gallons of blood.

But this is not the ordinary blood of the physical body. It oozes from the bleeding heart of a Vaiṣṇava. The Vaiṣṇava guru cannot bear to see the suffering of the conditioned *jīvas*. He is *para-duḥkha-duḥkhī*—unhappy because of the unhappiness of others. He is the very embodiment of Kṛṣṇa’s mercy:

*kṛṣṇa kṛpā kī ānanda mūrti,*  
*dīnana karuṇā-nidhāna*  
*jñāna-bhakti-prema tīno prakāśata,*  
*śrī-guru patita-pāvana*

“O mind, just worship the lotus feet of the bona fide spiritual master. Śrī Guru is the personification of the bliss inherent in Kṛṣṇa’s causeless mercy, and he is therefore the abode of mercy for souls who are suffering in the material world. He is the revealer of transcendental knowledge, pure devotion, and divine love. Śrī Guru is the savior of the fallen conditioned souls.”

And in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 3.52), Prabhupāda glorified the qualities of the *śuddha-bhakta*—exemplified in this case by Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura:

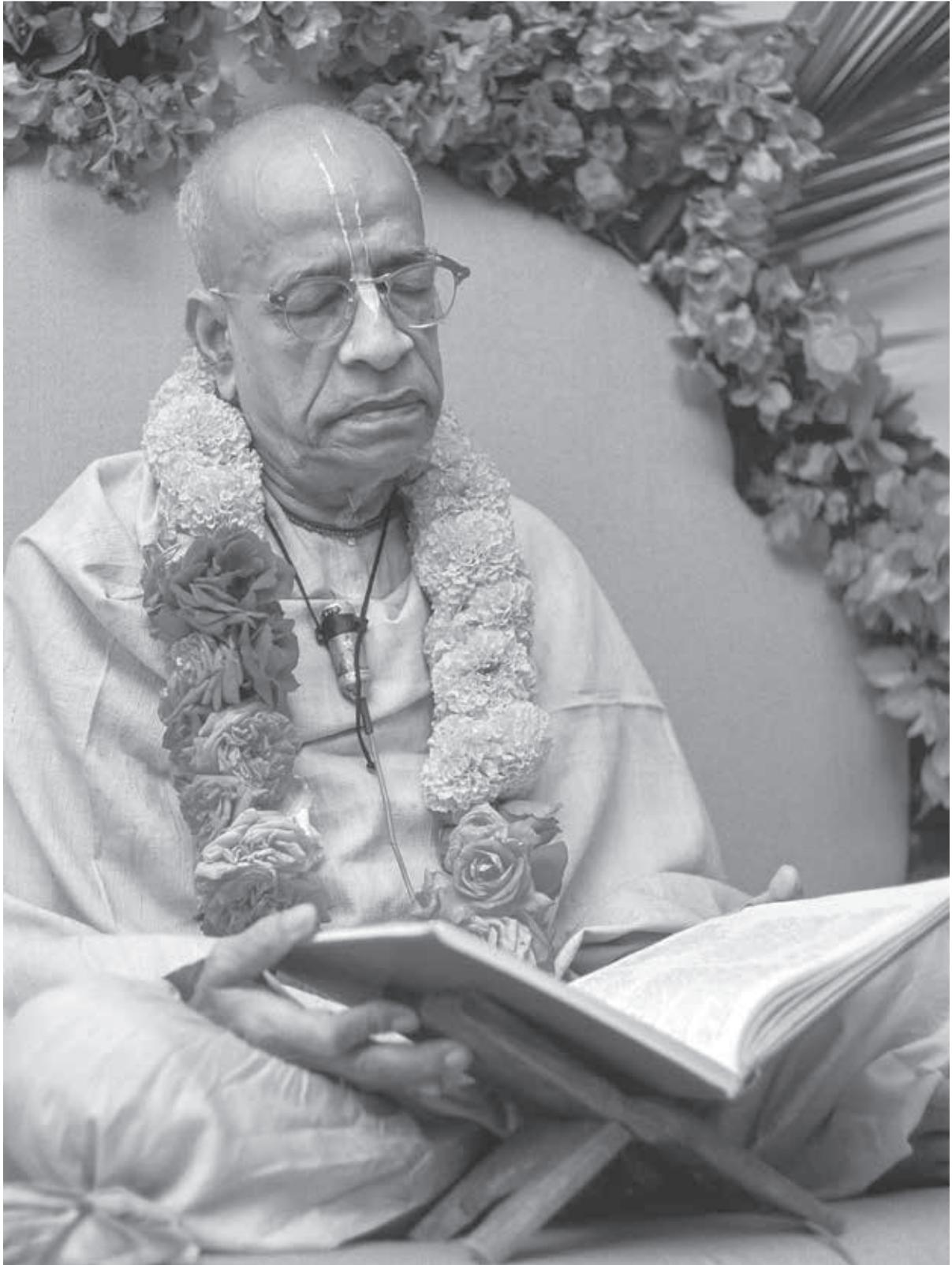
When the Lord is unhappy because of the condition of the fallen souls, the devotee consoles Him, saying, “My dear Lord, do not be in anxiety.” This is service. Everyone should adopt the cause of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to try to relieve Him from the anxiety He feels. This is actually service to the Lord.

As Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Kṛṣṇa’s anxiety to bestow His mercy coincided with His desire to taste *rādhā-bhāva*, and that anxiety pulsed through the *paramparā*, building up until it exploded from the heart of Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda like a colossal tsunami upon the shores of America. (Could it be that the heart attacks he endured aboard the *Jaladuta* were really symptoms of a heart no longer capable of encasing such a degree of *kṛṣṇa-kṛpā*?) His first hostess reminisced, “He came with so little, and yet he brought so much within himself.” Then, the transcendental anxiety which propelled him across the ocean became tempered with the patience of one who had “all the time in the world,” as he freely gave his association to whoever wandered (or sometimes, stumbled) into his dimly-lit Bowery “headquarters.”

Gaura-Nityānanda’s compassion is still flowing through the branches of the Caitanya tree, even to this day. Yet we must be careful not to be enamored by external, possibly misleading, signs of success. The world is tottering precariously on the verge of collapse, and we possess the only panacea. There is now more than ever a need for massive wide-scale promulgation of Kṛṣṇa conscious dharma. But we must also be willing to sincerely give our personalized attention to each individual who shows interest in this emancipating process. I feel fortunate to at times experience this current flowing through me, and I pray that Śrīla Prabhupāda and the predecessor *ācāryas* may continue to utilize me for their inspired goal of transforming the degraded society of Kali-yuga—one person, by one person, by one person at a time.

*An insignificant foot soldier in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s army,*

Gaṇapati dās Swami



## Girirāja Swami

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

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

My dear devotees,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to our beloved eternal spiritual master, His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda.

After Śrīla Prabhupāda left us on November 14, 1977, I came across a section in *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam*—Canto 4, Chapter 28—in which he explicitly discusses the disappearance of the spiritual master and how the disciple is to serve him—even in separation. The following paragraph summarizes the essence of his instructions:

[T]he disciple and spiritual master are never separated, because the spiritual master always keeps company with the disciple as long as the disciple follows strictly the instructions of the spiritual master. This is called the association of *vāṇī* (words). Physical presence is called *vapuḥ*. As long as the spiritual master is physically present, the disciple should serve the physical body of the spiritual master, and when the spiritual master is no longer physically existing, the disciple should serve the instructions of the spiritual master. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.47, purport]

This instruction—“As long as the spiritual master is physically present, the disciple should serve the physical body of the spiritual master, and when the spiritual master is no longer physically existing, the disciple should serve the instructions of the spiritual master”—seems simple enough, but like almost all of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instructions, to follow it properly requires deep faith, surrender, and realization.

For example, we may want to render personal service to the spiritual master, but we may also be afraid—that we might disappoint him, that we might fail, that he might chastise us, even that he might reject us or banish us. Thus disciples may shy away from direct, personal service. We must have faith that whatever the spiritual master does will be beneficial for us, purifying and edifying for us, whether or not it is pleasing to our mind and senses.

I sometimes experienced chastisement by Śrīla Prabhupāda, and sometimes my mind and senses revolted, but he would pacify me with his clear explanations, such as in this letter to me:

... [I]t is the duty of the spiritual master to find fault with his students so that they may make progress, not that he should always be praising them. So if you find some criticism, kindly accept it in that spirit. I am only interested in that you, along with all my other students, should become Kṛṣṇa conscious. [Letter dated 24 May 1972]

One person who exhibited an extraordinarily high standard of service to Śrīla Prabhupāda, to both his *vapuḥ* and *vāṇī* forms, was our godsister Yamunā-devī Dāsī.

Two of Yamunā-devī’s main direct, personal services to Śrīla Prabhupāda were cooking and cleaning. She was extremely expert in both, and yet when she received correction from Śrīla Prabhupāda she accepted and followed it wholeheartedly.

### Vapuḥ: Cleaning

Around the time of the first Bombay pandal, when we were staying in Akash Ganga, a high-rise apartment building in an affluent part of central Bombay, Yamunā-devī would stay back and clean. She would clean the whole place, for hours. And while cleaning, she would sing in a very ecstatic mood. She put her whole heart into it.

Later, in April 2007, when she visited me in my ashram in Carpinteria, California, I asked her about this, and she said that Śrīla Prabhupāda had put greater emphasis on *bhāgavata-mārga* because he wanted his books produced, so they would be there for all time, and because he wanted his books distributed, so the income from the sales would support the expansion of the mission. Thus he didn't have much time to personally train disciples in *pāñcarātrikī-vidhi*. But he did train her. She explained that Śrīla Prabhupāda would teach each servant about the importance and standards of cleanliness according to the servant's capacity to understand. And he had trained her very strictly. For example, she often needed to clean his four-tiered cooker, and if he found a black spot on the bottom of any of the sections, he would really chastise her, or whoever had done the cleaning: "This is not Vaiṣṇava. This is Muslim. No Vaiṣṇava will ever leave a black spot on any of the pots in the kitchen." Prabhupāda's cooker was always to shine like gold.

Based on Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions, Yamunā developed a system for cleaning his quarters in Vṛndāvana—an elaborate five-step procedure in which she would go from bottom to top and top to bottom. First she would get the big dirt off the floor, then she would work her way up the walls as far as she could reach, dusting, and then she would go back to the bottom, cleaning everything as perfectly as she could. If there was anything wrong, Prabhupāda would notice and tell her about it. And keeping the rooms in Vṛndāvana clean was very hard: What with the drifting sands of Ramaṇa-reti and the whole place being a construction zone, there was always dirt and corrosion everywhere.

One morning when Śrīla Prabhupāda came back from his walk after Yamunā had gone through her five-step procedure and everything looked as clean as could be, he told her, "Please clean my room, Yamunā. Haven't I taught you to clean?"

"No, Śrīla Prabhupāda," she replied, meaning that she hadn't yet learned. "How may I improve my cleaning?"

He didn't say anything. On his desk were a picture of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, his eyeglass case, his *tilaka*, pens, a flower vase, and a stapler. Śrīla Prabhupāda took the stapler, which was about two and a half inches long, removed it from its plastic case, lifted up the metal staple holder, and ran his pinkie across the thin metal strip between the staple holder and the hinge, and . . . dust. "When will you learn how to clean?" he asked.

If Śrīla Prabhupāda had had the time, Yamunā told me, he would have trained all his disciples in both *pāñcarātrikī-vidhi* and *bhāgavata-vidhi*, but because he was focused more on *bhāgavata-vidhi* he mainly trained only his close managers and personal servants, be they men or women, in both. Śrīla Prabhupāda knew the consciousness of his disciples—their capacity to absorb his instruction—and he would train them accordingly.

Yamunā-devī absorbed his training enthusiastically. More than thirty years later she told me, "I can honestly say that I engage in cleaning joyously. In our ashram [in Saranagati, Canada] we sometimes sing and clean for hours and hours. Our place is very primitive—we have a dirt floor and walls—but we like to clean a lot. We enjoy cleaning for Śrīla Prabhupāda and the Deities."

### Vapuḥ: Cooking

Cooking, like cleanliness, is also part of Deity worship, and Yamunā-devī was most expert. Once when Śrīla Prabhupāda was coming to Vṛndāvana she went to some Vraja-vāsīs and asked, "What is the best way to make Vraja-vāsī *rotis*?" They told her, "You have to get red Punjabi wheat berries. You have to grind them in the morning, and then you have to cook the *rotis* with neem wood."

When Prabhupāda came she didn't say a word to him, but she got red Punjabi wheat berries, had them

ground in the morning, and then cooked the *roṭis* with neem wood. When she went in to serve Śrīla Prabhupāda and put a hot *roṭi* on his plate, he took one bite and said, “This is from red Punjabi wheat berries. You ground them this morning and cooked the *roṭis* with neem wood.” She hadn’t said a word to him—he just knew. And even then, he had a suggestion for improvement. “Just one thing,” he said. “If you cook them one or two seconds more, they will be perfect.”

That was at the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple in 1972. Yamuna also recounted a sequel, from Ramaṇa-reti in 1973:

One time when Śrīla Prabhupāda came—I think it was the first time I met Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami; he was Prabhupāda’s servant—I was on a bucket stove again, on the floor—no kitchen. I was making Prabhupāda’s *prasāda*, and as you may or may not know, when you cook with a bucket stove and you have a little bit of hard coal and then a little bit of soft coal and then a little bit of cow dung, it is a little hard to regulate. There is a certain temperature, and you cannot turn a switch to make it higher or lower. And then, depending on the thickness of the pot, you know what intensity you want. And then there is what you call a *thawa*, which is an iron griddle, concave, and to make a chapati you keep that on the stove and then you lift it off and you put the chapati on top of the flame. So, I made chapatis for Prabhupāda’s lunch.

Satsvarūpa Mahārāja wanted to bring in the lunch, thinking that I probably shouldn’t do it. He brought in the plate, came back into the kitchen, and said, “Prabhupāda wants me to teach you how to make chapatis.” And I said, “Oh, Mahārāja, I would be so grateful if you could do that. I’d love to learn to make chapatis. Please.”

Then I got up, and he began to wash his hands. By the time he sat down and rolled out a chapati, the *thawa* was really hot. He rolled out an octopuslike chapati. Now, when you roll out a chapati, the ball bearing for rolling it out is the dusting of flour, and if you roll the chapati in too much flour you actually roll flour into the surface of the flatbread, and then even if you try to flap it off you will still have a crust of flour. So you should use a minimal amount for the ball bearing and then flap off the little extra.

Mahārāja’s octopus was covered with flour on a hot *thawa*. When he put it on, I said, “Mahārāja, what should I be looking for?”

He said, “You wait until there are pimples on the top.”

As soon as the chapati hit the griddle—very hot—the pimples came very fast. He turned the chapati over, and there were little burnt holes. So there was no question of it puffing up.

So, he put it on, and the little bubbles appeared at different places, and he took it in to Prabhupāda. Then he came back and told me, “Prabhupāda said, ‘This is excellent.’”

So that’s how Prabhupāda taught me. It was never with a whip, but they were beatings nonetheless. They were beatings over my head.

### Vapuḥ: Service Without Expectation or Demand

Personal service should be offered without expectation of or demand for external reciprocation—for attention or expressions of approval or affection. When Yamunā-devī was undergoing treatment at Bhaktivedanta Hospital toward the end of her life, I encouraged some of my disciples to take the opportunity to serve her, and I asked her to guide and instruct them as she saw fit. Here is a written exchange she had with one disciple, a copy of which she sent me. The disciple wrote:

I want to reconfirm with you my tomorrow’s visit, whether it would be convenient if I come around noon. I don’t want to disturb you, so let me know exactly what time I could drop in. One of my dear godsisters is craving to see you. Can she come along, if it’s not inconvenient?

Yamunā-devī replied:

Unfortunately, being in the hospital means being inconvenienced with medicines to help my condition. Three days ago I was put on new diuretics and am not up for any visits or visitors at all. . . . So many want to visit, but it is not possible.

When you come you will have to be like the cook I was for Śrīla Prabhupāda: bring the *prasāda* for respecting and leave unspoken to. That was the norm, unless he gave some instruction how to make adjustment in the cooking or unless he made the occasional comment.

Girirāj Swami asked me to instruct you, so I am passing this on to you. It is a small aspect of the classical teacher-apprentice mood—serve in silence unless spoken to. While I never took a teacher mood with you, this is a rich *rasa* to explore on different levels.

If you continue to bring baked goods once or twice again, at least you will have access into experiencing the tip of the richness of this kind of service. It is similar to what we do when we offer *bhoga* on the altar: pray, cook in a meditative mood, deliver, offer, and depart—*bās*.

I believe you are sincere and mature enough to do this. It was expected of Śrīla Prabhupāda's cooks. In fact, it was a prerequisite for cooking for him at all. Hopefully it will bring you to a new level of service, something you can use in your service to your own Guru Mahārāja.

So please bring the baked *prasāda* any time convenient to you and deliver it to Gaurāṅgī. . . .

### Vāṇī

When Śrīla Prabhupāda was in Allahabad for the Ardha-kumbha-mela in December 1970 and January 1971, Yamunā-devī and I were there with him. Śrīla Prabhupāda spoke on the story of Ajāmila and the holy name from the Sixth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhagavatam*. Only the first two cantos had been translated and published then, so Prabhupāda read from his Sanskrit *Bhāgavatam* with commentaries, sometimes translating from Śrīdhara Svāmī's comments and occasionally from Jiva Gosvami's. While there, I heard that Śrīla Prabhupāda had said he was speaking for Yamunā.

In April 2007, when Yamuna visited me in Carpinteria, I asked her about it. And she told me something that etched an indelible impression on my heart. As she explained, she had always thought she had as much right as anyone to walk or sit close to Śrīla Prabhupāda. And generally when he spoke, she would sit in front of the *vyāsāsana* at his feet. She had never really considered that men should walk or sit closer to Prabhupāda, and women further away. The movement had been like that in the early days—like a family.

In Allahabad, however, one of the *sannyāsīs* explained to Yamunā that in India the women sat apart and that she should too. So during the next morning's lecture she sat at some distance from Śrīla Prabhupāda. Later that morning, Prabhupāda noticed her passing by his tent, and he called, "Yamunā, come in here." She entered and offered her obeisances, and before she got up he said, "So, you don't want to hear anymore?" Yamuna burst into tears; Prabhupāda—hearing from him—was her life. "Where were you this morning?" he asked. Yamuna told him exactly what had happened. Prabhupāda was silent.

That, as she told me, was a turning point in her life; it changed her whole orientation in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. She suddenly had the realization that she would not always have Prabhupāda's company. Since 1967, when Śrīla Prabhupāda recovered from his stroke, she had never been able to conceive of ever being separated from him. The devotees were so dependent on him for everything, it was inconceivable to them that he would not always be with them. But, she told me, every disciple must come to a personal realization that there will come a time when the spiritual master will not be present. And for her that moment came in Allahabad, after her talks with the *sannyāsī* and then Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Sitting in Prabhupāda's tent, she asked him, "How much time did you actually spend with your Guru Mahārāja?"

"Very few occasions," he said, "maybe five or six. But they were very intimate. We used to walk and talk so many things." Then he said, "Those who think that association with the spiritual master is physical, they

are no better than a mosquito sitting on the lap of a king. And what is the business of a mosquito? Simply to suck blood. So many of my godbrothers, they were big, big *sannyāsīs*, and they thought like that, and they simply sucked blood.”

Yamunā took Prabhupāda’s words as confirmation. She now understood that she needed to go to another place to explore her relationship with him and her service to him in separation. She began to consider the question of *vāñī* (words, instructions) and *vapuḥ* (body, form), and she got more and more insight into it. As she told me, it is “unlimitedly deep and profound. You can hear the terms on the surface, but *vāñī* means to again be in Prabhupāda’s presence”—to be in his presence in separation as much as when you were in his physical association. “So that was a turning point for me,” she said, “to realize that Prabhupāda was going to leave this planet: ‘He is an old man, and he is going to leave, and I have to prepare.’” She understood that from that moment she must start mentally preparing—find a way of continuing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness that was not based on Śrīla Prabhupāda’s personal association.

“So, that is that story of hearing,” she continued. “Prabhupāda said, ‘I am speaking so much because you want to hear so much.’ So he knew that hunger. I never expressed that to him, but he knew.” As Yamunā often said, Śrīla Prabhupāda was completely aware of every disciple in every way—both their internal consciousness and the external manifestations of their service.

*Vāñī* and *vapuḥ* became a major theme in Yamunā-devī’s life—how to maintain one’s connection with Śrīla Prabhupāda through *vāñī* to the same degree and with the same intensity as in his physical, even close personal, presence. She was convinced that it was possible, and she arranged her life in such a way as to always receive his guidance and mercy—to always be in his association.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, I quote from a letter Yamunā wrote me some years ago, which has given me some solace and guidance in separation:

I remember when Dīṇa and I visited you in your house in Vṛndāvana. We asked you one question, and you took three hours to answer it: “How has your relationship with Śrīla Prabhupāda changed since his departure?” [Again, *vāñī* and *vapuḥ*.] The departure of loved ones helps us to change, to go deeper. Surely this will happen.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Your servant,

Girirāja Swami

## Guṇagrāhi dās Goswami

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe  
nirviṣeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

For six months last year, to attend to my ailing body I was obliged to give up my normal service of traveling on behalf of Your Divine Grace. I was provided with an ideal arrangement for health care and ideal living facilities in an ideal climate, just one block from an ideal beach, where I could chant, exercise, and breathe the freshest and most invigorating air. I was so happy to be having this long-needed opportunity for rejuvenation that I daily thanked Kṛṣṇa for His kindness upon me. As my health gradually improved, the accompanying satisfaction I enjoyed became tempered, however, by an increasing lamentation that soon I would have to leave my haven of healthy and comfortable living.

Then I remembered a letter Your Divine Grace had written to my godbrother Madhusūdana Prabhu in 1968. You had been recuperating from a stroke, you were weak, and you tired easily. He had heard that lecturing would increase your fatigue, and so to speed up your recuperation he wrote you asking that you please not give class. Your reply, which follows, was strong and pointed regarding your perspective on your health and its bearing on your preaching activities and your mission:

My dear boy, lecturing for Krishna has nothing to do with this body. If I would not have lectured, how you would have come? So as far as possible I am taking care of my health, but Krishna's service must be executed, even at the risk of life. A living entity gets millions of opportunities to get a type of body, but hardly he gets opportunity to serve Krishna. The service of Krishna must be executed at all risks, but do not worry; I am taking care of my health by the help of Gaurasundara. Hope you are well.

That letter struck a deep chord within me, as I am sure it would with many other devotees whose lives are focused on traveling and spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As those of us in that position get older and the bodily difficulties increase, we are often faced with the decision of whether or not to travel, and if so, how much, and how far. It is a delicate balance for us to make, for on one hand you generally stress that we must give great importance to our health, as you did yours, and on the other you speak as you did here, giving great importance to an additional priority.

Looking at the time you graced us with your presence, it is obvious that you often sacrificed your physical well-being to give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to your followers and the world, for not doing so would not have served your single-pointed mission on this earth and the goal, as you say above, of this unique human form of life. You knew that the ride on the *Jaladuta* would endanger you, but you went anyway. You suffered two heart attacks on your voyage, but still you pushed on once getting off the boat. Your heart was failing you again in 1967, but as soon as you could you began traveling again to continue your mission. The pattern went on as your failing health increasingly threatened to impede your mission. And you kept pushing on and serving until the final moments of your life. You could have sought early on to prolong your days by stopping your travels and settling in a place conducive for healing and first-class care. You could have lived even longer if you had never left Vṛndāvana in the first place. But what would have become of us and the mandate given you by your Guru Mahārāja? Thus, when you were quite ill in 1967, but relentless in your desire to serve Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī's mission, you told your disciples, "You should pray to Kṛṣṇa that 'My spiritual master has not yet completed his work, so please let him finish.'"

You told us that an easy-going life and Kṛṣṇa consciousness go ill together. As I am almost the age of Your Divine Grace when you left Vṛndāvana for the West, I am seeing the inevitable truth that even if I want to have an easy-going life this body will not permit it. Nor will my mind or heart, because you have taken up residence there and have made opting for some paltry comfort in exchange for the shelter of your lotus feet something impossible to consider, even if maintaining that shelter means dragging this failing material body all over the world—just as you did.

*Your grateful and most unworthy servant,*

Guṇagrāhi dās Goswami



## Hanumat Presaka Swami

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

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

*prthur uvāca  
aho ācaritaṁ kiṁ me maṅgalaṁ maṅgalāyanāḥ  
yasya vo darśanaṁ hy āsīd durdarśanāṁ ca yogibhiḥ  
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.22.7)*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we offer our prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

Trying to illuminate your characteristics and pastimes is certainly a job requiring the effort of many people. Therefore we hope this humble offering is blessed to be well coordinated with the efforts of many other superior Vaiṣṇavas because by ourselves we are sure to commit more offenses than glorification.

Your unlimited compassion is the quality that most presents itself before our dull consciousness. You continue to distribute the rays of the illuminating sun and moon, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Lord Nityānanda, even to those who are not appreciating those rays or even abusing your mercy. By that mercy, sacrifice, and compassion they are able to advance in liberation from material attachment, become jolly in spiritual life, and even begin to find their way back home, back to Godhead.

We are especially appreciating your mercy in terms of the simple, practical, repeated instructions you give for daily practices: minimum 16 enthusiastic rounds, 4 principles strictly, rising early for *jaḥa*, *kīrtana*, *ārati*, *pūjā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *prasādam*, *saṅkīrtana*, full morning and evening programs. By feebly struggling to do this, we then experience some clear consciousness for the effort to organize our *saṅkīrtana*, further purifying rituals, and being useful in your service to Lord Caitanya.

In terms of executing these daily regulative principles, we also have your mercy in the opportunity to look for like-minded people within your ISKCON society. ISKCON certainly houses a great variety of souls and is now so broad that we can only try to get a general view of it and then work seriously to develop health in our own branch and subculture.

Taking your comment that among all the Western philosophers Carl G. Jung seemed to have the most sense, we are finding through him a class of people who have some ready intelligence to understand this *bhāgavata-dharma*. Taking your comments on *Bhakti-śāstri* and *Bhakti-vaibhava*, we are experiencing substantial success in developing a systematic study of your books that can be ample enough to include many people with reformation of character, improvement of temple functioning, and esoteric progress toward the prime goal of education:

In any form of life, we are related with Viṣṇu, who is the most beloved, the Supersoul, son, friend and guru. Our eternal relationship with God can be revived in the human form of life, and that should be the goal of education. Indeed, that is the perfection of life and the perfection of education.  
[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.6.2, purport]

This is all wonderful and enough for us. We just need to continue to apply these principles, keep good association, and follow your indications for *saṅkīrtana*, and we feel that we can aspire to participate at some point, even if not in this lifetime, in your service to Lord Gaurāṅga, the son of Mother Śacī.

Śrīla Prabhupāda we offer our repeated obeisances at your lotus feet, apologize for our offensive behavior, and beg to continue playing our little part within your great orchestra.

Hanumat Presaka Swami



## Hridayānanda dās Goswami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
I bow at your feet.

One morning in December 1973, as a disciple drove you to Venice Beach to walk, I sat with you in the back seat. All the way down Venice Boulevard you instructed me on the importance of our American mission. On many occasions, public and private, you declared the sovereign importance of your Western mission. If America and Europe accepted Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the world would follow.

Before leaving this world, you stated that you had completed the first half of your Western mission: Kṛṣṇa consciousness was spreading dramatically throughout the Western world. ISKCON had made its voice heard in the national conversations of many Western countries. Transforming the Western world was a living, present possibility, not a prophecy to be fulfilled “someday” after we are gone.

As I write this, I am three and a half years younger than you were when you boarded the *Jaladuta* and journeyed to America. Only Kṛṣṇa knows how many more years He will give me in this world. Considering the entire situation, I have dedicated myself to this:

I want to again see your Western mission growing dramatically. I want to again hear an influential ISKCON voice in the national conversations of Western nations. I want to again dream a rational dream that Kṛṣṇa will transform the world in my lifetime.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are an eternally liberated soul with nothing to gain or lose in this mad world. Still, for your selfless pleasure, I pray that more than ever you empower all those eager to dedicate their lives to the second Hare Kṛṣṇa explosion in the Western world.

With eternal gratitude,

*Your servant,*

Hridayānanda dās Goswami

## Janānanda Goswami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

The first time I spoke on your appearance day was back in 1972. Dhanañjaya Prabhu called on me and I was lost for words. That’s not exactly the case now, but I am not sure what words to offer you this year, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I, like many of your followers, have just visited Māyāpur and witnessed your greatness manifesting in the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium, another virtuoso way you are revolutionizing the world. It would seem natural to stress this momentous unfolding phenomenon in my offering to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, since so many eyes and efforts are directed there.

However, my eyes are directed elsewhere. On this day, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I turn to you for guidance. I am looking at silent fields and gardens, decaying structures and vacant rooms. Perhaps this is nothing but a reflection of my own vacant and decayed heart? I am looking at Deities who were personally installed by you that, due to a lack of devotees, are being offered only one garland a week and receiving other reduced services across the board. Tears glide down from my eyes when I reflect on how you must feel, and on the devotees’ struggles here. I am seeing a previously large community of devotees shrunken to a handful of the faithful, who are struggling to cooperate and maintain. I am now in a country you described as “a very important country”<sup>1</sup> and “considered to have the most cultured people in Europe”<sup>2</sup> and staying at a project you negotiated the purchase of and you yourself named. In your own words, it was “A first-class place. You can develop it into a Vaikuṅṭha. It is already Vaikuṅṭha—Kṛṣṇa is there. . . . Such a nice place.”<sup>3</sup>

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am in France, in what you wrote was “our real place at New Māyāpur.”<sup>4</sup> The Chateau is still here, as are the land, the trees, and the Deities. I must admit, however, that I am feeling somewhat lonesome and melancholy as I walk through your “palace, with its fifty-five rooms. Each room is big size with a marble fireplace and the floors are marble and there’s a marble winding staircase and several big rooms. And it’s got its own chapel, very beautiful. And then the land is very beautiful, 250 acres, as far as you can see.”<sup>5</sup>

It certainly feels a long way from Māyāpur and the thousands of enthusiastic devotees gathered there for the Gaura Pūrṇimā festival.

I would like to offer you glorification, wonderful preaching reports, something that will bring you happiness and inspire others on this glorious anniversary of your appearance. I enter your rooms for inspiration and look at you sitting apparently alone—although you are not. I feel your words vibrating in my heart: “Is the New Māyāpur palace maintained nicely? I like to live there. Especially my wonderful room. I like to live there. I like that New Māyāpur facility.”<sup>6</sup>

This is the only remaining ISKCON property in continental Europe that you personally graced with your lotus feet. Surely this is a very special place. Is it not the European bastion, the “embassy for Māyāpur”? Almost forty years have passed since you last came here. I was never present during your visits, nor have I spent much time here over the years. However, for some reason I feel a part of New Māyāpur. Is this your wish? Is it the mercy of Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma and Gaura-Nitāi and Rādhā-Govinda-Mādhava? I reflect on the past and recollect some of the many directions you gave while walking around the grounds, in front of the Deities, or in conversations.

“Here in this New Māyāpur, if you simply carry on this *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto*, then all your necessities will come automatically; don’t bother.”<sup>7</sup>

“The situation is very good, good prospect. I want that self-independent here, as far as possible. . . . Prospective place, this. Very future prospect.”<sup>8</sup>

“Nice vegetables, flowers, grains. This is very encouraging to have such a farm, where all problems are solved. You say that there is so much rain. That is very good. There is enough rain and people will be happy due to the *saṅkīrtana-yajña*.”<sup>9</sup>

“We should be fully self-sufficient. I like New Māyāpur very much.”<sup>10</sup>

“Whatever little food we have got, we shall share. So try to understand the importance of this movement. Kṛṣṇa is giving us. But develop it very nicely, peacefully live. Hundreds of miles away from the hellish cities. For little conveyance we can have bullock carts, when we have to get, transport. Very peaceful life. Introduce it and live peacefully. Am I right or wrong?”<sup>11</sup>

It seems like that “future prospect” is yet to be realized. “Is it possible? Is it realistic? Perhaps we should

abandon ship.” Such comments are sometimes heard. The mood of your godbrothers was similarly pessimistic concerning how the holy name could be spread to every town and village. You had faith in your guru and in Lord Caitanya’s order and showed that it could be done. Surely if we have faith in your words, even though the situation looks bleak, those words can come true. “The plans of the devotee never go in vain.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.6.34, purport) You yourself carried the orders of your guru for thirty years before they finally fructified.

We should never give up our duty. My Godbrothers always discouraged me but I did not give up, I am doing my duty and always keeping my spiritual master in front. Even there is some difficulty or hardship or even my Godbrothers may not cooperate or there may be fighting, still, I must perform my duty to my spiritual master and not become discouraged and go away, that is weakness.<sup>12</sup>

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.<sup>13</sup>

So do not feel discouraged at all. By Kṛṣṇa’s Plan everything will come out for the best. We have only to work very sincerely, depending fully on the Mercy of the Lord, and in this consciousness we can make very quick advancement in Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.<sup>14</sup>

As we have sometimes the proverb, that “Failure is the pillar of success,” so especially in the spiritual life, this failure is not discouraging. This failure is not discouraging.<sup>15</sup>

Despite the seeming obstacles, I feel encouraged. Looking at the irresistible and incomparably beautiful forms of Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, whom you invited here, gives me great strength and inspiration. These were the only Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma Deities you installed, other than in Vṛndāvana.

Real strength will remain from Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma’s strength. Balarāma. *Balarāma* means strength. *Nāyam ātmā bala-hīnena labhyaḥ*. If you are not supported by Balarāma, then it is not possible. So we have got our Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple. Now in Europe we have got Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma.<sup>16</sup>

I wonder what you would say now here in France. Would it be any different? If only I could hear you. But the truth is my heart is dirty and I cannot see your instructions clearly.

One thing is clear, Śrīla Prabhupāda. France is a great potential preaching field. It is almost like starting from scratch with a few wounds and handicaps. Sixty-five million people, most of whom have never heard of Hare Kṛṣṇa or seen a devotee. It’s a new generation, unaffected by past ill feelings. Young people and old are waiting for your mercy. On *harināma* people like us. People take the books like anywhere else, if we offer them. They love the *prasādam*. The field is fertile; we just need some good gardeners to till the land and harvest.

And your New Māyāpur stands as a memory of your greatness, of how you empowered the powerless to do the inconceivable. France—once the leading light in the world of your book distribution. The Chateau—ISKCON’s prize property.

New Māyāpur, with Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma, arms open, welcoming sincere devotees to live with Them, to live on the land, to live simply and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa. We pray that we will once again see happy, enthusiastic devotees thronging the temple and grounds, the school running full swing, the guesthouse full. It is such a beautiful facility you have given us, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I pray that we will again see its beauty manifest in every way for your pleasure, again see your books widely distributed to the new generation, who have never seen them or heard of Kṛṣṇa.

I sit again, reflecting, as I gaze out of the large, grandiose windows across the once-beautiful rose gardens to the quietude beyond. I ponder at the gaunt, leafless trees under which you gave your sermons, trees that have stood as silent witnesses through the decades. I wonder at your words and your plan. I hang on to your

lotus feet in whatever storm comes my way and pray for your mercy so that I can in some small way be a part of revealing the true New Māyāpur. I pray that by your mercy and Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma's, New Māyāpur will again manifest in its full glory. I hope that we will again be proud to see your smiling face as you ascend the winding marble staircase into your rooms. That we will again see you lecturing under the great oak trees and walking through the fields with your loving devotees.

Is the New Māyāpur palace maintained nicely? I like to live there. Especially my wonderful room. I like to live there. I like this New Māyāpur facility."<sup>17</sup>

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving me this opportunity to serve you in some small way, here in France. I hope this pleases you. That is all that counts.

*Your eternal servant,*

Janānanda Goswami

1. Room Conversation, Māyāpur, 1 March 1977
2. Letter to Janārdana, 19 December 1968
3. Room conversation, New Māyāpur, 31 July 1976
4. Letter from Tamāl Krishna Goswami to Bhagavān, quoting Śrīla Prabhupāda, 4 August 1977
5. Morning Walk, Los Angeles, 22 June 1975
6. Letter from Tamāl Krishna Goswami to Bhagavān, quoting Śrīla Prabhupāda, 4 August 1977
7. Conversation, New Māyāpur, 3 August 1976
8. Room conversation, New Māyāpur, 2 August 1976
9. Letter from Tamāl Krishna to Bhagavān, quoting Śrīla Prabhupāda, 4 August 1977
10. Letter to Bhagavān, 7 November 1976
11. Room conversation, New Mayapur, 31 July 1976
12. Letter to Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, 9 September 1972
13. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.13.17, purport
14. Letter to Śyāmasundara, 31 July 1969
15. Lecture on Bhagavad-gītā 6.40–43, New York, 18 September 1966
16. Room Conversation, Hyderabad, 20 August 1976
17. Letter to Bhagavān, 4 August 1977

## Kadamba Kānana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*śriyaḥ kāntāḥ kāntaḥ parama-puruṣaḥ kalpa-taravo  
 drumā bhūmiś cintāmaṇi-gaṇa-mayī toyam amṛtam  
 kathā gānaṁ nāṭyam gamanam api vaṁśī priya-sakhī  
 cid-ānandaṁ jyotiḥ param api tad āsvādyam api ca*

The blissful spiritual world, where Kṛṣṇa resides with His eternal associates—the *gopīs*, who are all goddesses of fortune, and the other residents of Vṛndāvana—where the trees are wish-fulfilling trees, where the land is made of touchstone, where even the water is nectar, where every word is a song and every step a dance, an expression of love—there you had your residence. Then, out of unlimited compassion you came down to the material world, and by your amazing purity we, the dull, wooden dolls of this abode of ignorance, started to dance for Kṛṣṇa in your hands.

We didn't really know Kṛṣṇa, but you convinced us that He is God, first of all by your own incredible

dedication to Him, by basing everything you said on scripture, and by using logical arguments. And simultaneously you melted our hearts with *prasādam* and *kīrtana*. Then you engaged us in service, and now we pray to remain puppets in your hands eternally.

There is one more thing I would like add. Recently I read a quote that impressed me: “When a man is old, he has to do more than when he was young.” I can see the logic: in old age we are running out of time, and there is still so much to be done.

Anyway, you did exactly that: in your maturity you brought to the West the fruits of a lifetime dedicated to Kṛṣṇa, of being a disciple of a great spiritual master. You were the great lover of Kṛṣṇa, the wise grandfatherly person with the perfect human touch. You were the expert manager. You sang with a strong and melodious voice and were an expert *mṛdaṅga* player and an excellent cook. You were the perfect leader, with all the necessary experience, and in the process you just transcended old age.

Now it is our turn, as we begin to feel the weight of years. “When a man is old, he has to do more than when he was young.” Now I pray for strength, especially strength of mind. May I overcome weakness of purpose and just dance and dance, like an instrument in your hands.

*Your servant,*

Kadamba Kānana Swami

## Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa Goswami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Decades of offerings . . . what more can I say to glorify you who have given me real life?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you picked me up more than forty years ago, degraded as I was, and immediately gave me the faint dawn of attachment for hearing and explaining the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s direct teachings elucidated by your divine purports. And despite my total lack of qualification, you also gave me a glimmer of attachment for hearing and chanting the holy names and activities of the Supreme Lord and His pure devotees in the forms of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. In short, you performed the miracle of giving me a hint of attachment for you and your transcendental books even before I had a chance to do much of anything to please you. Therefore you cannot be an ordinary spiritual master.

In performing this miracle, and thousands more like it, you showed the true meaning of humility. You refused to take an ounce of credit for single-handedly and unprecedentedly carrying pure love for Kṛṣṇa out of India to every continent on earth, a gift you delivered in three packages: the devotee *Bhāgavata*, your divine self; the book *Bhāgavata*, your transcendental literatures; and the society of your disciples and followers you called IKSCON, which you define as a branch of the Caitanya tree<sup>1</sup> and as an incarnation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.<sup>2</sup> And you gave the credit for all these miracles to your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura.

The one credit you did accept was that you did not add anything to or subtract anything from Kṛṣṇa’s message. Rather, you delivered the pure teachings of Lord Caitanya just as your spiritual master had delivered them to you. What’s more, you repeatedly told us that you did all this to please your spiritual master because his order was your life and soul. And unlike others, you were happy that your Society became known—not by your name but by Kṛṣṇa’s—as the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement.

Even more miraculous was that you adjusted things, according to time and circumstance, to transplant the Vedic culture’s core values into foreign lands without compromising those values. And yet even more miraculous was that you also gave credit to your Western disciples. You said, “I have to thank you. It is all due to you. It



is not my credit, but it is your credit that you are helping me in executing the order of my Guru Mahārāja.”<sup>3</sup> In all these ways you showed us the symptoms of true humility, selfless service, and unconditional love. Such humility born of pure love is not of this world. Nārada Muni describes this kind of humility:

Wise men define *dainya* [utter humility] as the state in which one always thinks oneself exceptionally incapable and low, even when endowed with all excellences.<sup>4</sup>

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī elaborates on this verse in his commentary:

Nārada’s own definition of *dainya* distinguishes his use of the word from other possible meanings, such as “poverty,” “becoming selfless by not accepting charity,” and “being free from egotism.” Someone might say that the quality of thinking oneself very fallen may also be seen in persons who are simply lazy or those who abandon auspicious work or indulge in sinful acts. Therefore Nārada specifies that one who actually has *dainya* is endowed with all good qualities; for instance, such a person observes positive and negative regulations, he is free of false ego, and he has a healthy fear of material life.

Nārada then goes on to say:

An intelligent person should carefully cultivate speech, behavior, and thinking that fix him in utter humility, and anything that stands in the way of it he should avoid.<sup>5</sup>

Sanātana Gosvāmī comments:

Ordinary *dainya* can be developed by human effort, but there is also a type of *dainya*, beyond the mundane, that comes from receiving the Supreme Lord’s favor. The word *tu* in this verse contrasts these distinct kinds of *dainya*. Almost everyone in the material world is separated from Kṛṣṇa, but most people never experience *dainya* because they have no *prema*. Therefore they can never become free from suffering and attain true happiness. To achieve transcendental *dainya*, one must learn to love Kṛṣṇa in the mood felt by the *gopīs*, led by Śrī Rādhā, when Kṛṣṇa left them to go to Mathurā. We can understand from the example of the *gopīs’ viraha-bhāva*, their feelings of love in separation, that this special *dainya* arises only when, by Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s exceptional mercy, a devotee who has realized Kṛṣṇa’s sweetness develops extraordinary *prema* in his heart in the mood of separation. As *prema* appears in degrees of excellence, so does *dainya*.

In the heat of distributing Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West, you once confirmed that our effort to assist you in spreading the *saṅkīrtana* movement—in the forms of congregational chanting of the *mahā-mantra* and the distribution of your transcendental literature—is in fact Lord Caitanya’s *līlā*. And because Lord Caitanya is Kṛṣṇa in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, spreading the *saṅkīrtana* movement can also be compared to the *gopīs* helping Kṛṣṇa.

The explanation given by Rameśvara that *saṅkīrtana* is Lord Caitanya’s *līlā*, which he compares to the *gopīs* trying to engage in Kṛṣṇa’s service, is the correct understanding.<sup>6</sup>

Śrīla Prabhupāda, now your disciples and grand-disciples and followers stand at the threshold of more unprecedented service: on your order, to preserve your mood and the activities you emphasized in your mission—as you preserved those of your spiritual master’s—by cooperating in the face of difficulties and disagreement and continuing to distribute your gifts to the world. This you told us was a difference between the spiritual and material worlds: in the spiritual world disagreement results in cooperation, in the material world disintegration.

Just before you left this world you taught us how this level of cooperation could be achieved. You said that the test of our love for you would be in how well we cooperate to keep your movement together. In other

words, you tied the success of your movement to the awakening of our love for you. You imbued us with love for you and then told us to love you by loving one another. And you wanted us to show you that love practically by taking this order as our life and soul.

And what exactly is that order? To cooperate, of course, but what is our cooperative effort meant to do? In 1977, the last year you were with us physically, you dictated your Bhaktivedanta purports to the second chapter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*'s Tenth Canto. This transcendental gem came out through your lotus lips, a gem that encapsulates the order that we, your disciples and followers, must make our life and soul in order to show our love for you:

Translation: Even while engaged in various activities, devotees whose minds are completely absorbed at Your lotus feet, and who constantly hear, chant, contemplate and cause others to remember Your transcendental names and forms, are always on the transcendental platform, and thus they can understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Purport: . . . The word *kriyāsu*, meaning “by manual labor” or “by work,” is important in this verse. One should engage in practical service to the Lord. In our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, all our activities are concentrated upon distributing Kṛṣṇa literature. This is very important. One may approach any person and induce him to read Kṛṣṇa literature so that in the future he also may become a devotee. Such activities are recommended in this verse. *Kriyāsu yas tvac-caraṇāravindayoḥ*. Such activities will always remind the devotees of the Lord's lotus feet. By fully concentrating on distributing books for Kṛṣṇa, one is fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa. This is *samādhi*.<sup>7</sup>

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you insisted that we keep you in the center as the founder-*ācārya* of ISKCON. By your will, the leaders of ISKCON are feeling of late the intense need to ensure that this awareness be acknowledged, more deeply understood, and embraced so that your mood and style may pervade ISKCON for as long as it exists. When you were physically present (*vapuḥ*) you were the absolute authority of ISKCON, superior even to the ultimate managing authority you created, the GBC. Now you remain the absolute authority, but in the form of your instructions (*vāṇī*). The need, therefore, to take shelter of your *vāṇī* before making any decisions, individual or collective, should be felt intensely, now more than ever, by anyone connected to ISKCON, especially its leaders.

My prayer to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this holy day of your appearance, is that you continue to shower your mercy on us all so that we may keep you in the center by following your lead, especially in terms of your mood and emphasis in our practical preaching as expressed by you in the above purport. There may be things that must change with time, for that is the nature of time; but your mood and emphasis on making sure that you and your books remain at the center of our lives—and especially that your books are visible at all our preaching events— must not change.

Your spiritual vision and attitudes are based on axiomatic spiritual principles given to human society by the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself. In fact, you passed down to us the highest axiomatic truth, through which all seemingly contradictory concepts can be reconciled. This truth, *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*—that the Absolute Truth is inconceivably one with and different from everything else—is the ultimate philosophical conclusion. It was taught originally by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself, the most munificent form of the Lord, and pervades His *saṅkīrtana* movement. You asked your leaders—GBC members along with senior devotees—to meet each year in Māyāpur and discuss unity in diversity, an English phrase that succinctly expresses this highest axiomatic principle. The assimilation of this truth will make our cooperation possible, even in this age of quarrel.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī applies this truth in relation to humility and love:

Translation: When *dainya* fully matures, *prema* unfolds without limit. And so we see *dainya* and *prema* acting in a relationship in which each is both cause and effect.

Commentary: If *prema* is supposed to be the final result of all devotional endeavors, how can *dainya* be a consequence of *prema*? In answer: Yes, *prema* is the final goal, but *dainya* is not altogether

different from *prema*. *Dainya* is an integral component of *prema*, and both foster one another.<sup>8</sup>

Thus, inconceivably, humility and love are qualitatively one. In short, you can't have one without the other. And you yourself apply the same truth in relation to obedience and love:

We are persons and Kṛṣṇa is a person, and our relationship with Kṛṣṇa is always open as a voluntary agreement. That voluntary attitude—"Yes, Kṛṣṇa, I shall gladly cooperate. Whatever you say"—that ready willingness to obey is only possible if there is love. Forcing will not make me agree. But if there is love, oh, I shall gladly do it. That is *bhakti*. That is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.<sup>9</sup>

Thus, inconceivably, obedience and love are also qualitatively one. And one can't be sustained without the other.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we can assimilate this axiomatic principle only by following your example, by doing what you asked us to do, by making your order our life and soul. You fully assimilated into your character these truths, showing us how to make even your spiritual master's subtlest orders your life and soul. What follows is but a small sample of aphorisms spoken by your Guru Mahārāja. These aphorisms embody fundamentals you perfectly applied, principles that provide guiding light to help us practically apply this axiomatic truth: unity in diversity.

Let me not desire anything but the highest good for my worst enemies.

Be indifferent to bazaar gossips, stick firmly to your cherished goals, no lack or impediments of the world will ever stand in your way.

In this world of Māyā, averse to the Lord, full of trials and tribulations, only patience, humility, and respect for others are our friends for *hari-bhajana*.

The Lord, Gaurasundara, puts His devotees in various difficulties and associations to test their patience and strength of mind. Success depends on their good fortune.

When faults in others misguide and delude you—have patience, introspect, find faults in yourself. Know that others cannot harm you unless you harm yourself.

I wish that every selfless, tender-hearted person of Gauḍīya Maṭh will be prepared to shed two hundred gallons of blood for the nourishment of the spiritual corpus of every individual of this world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you picked me up and bound me with the ropes of your humility, obedience, and love. Please keep me bound forever.

*Aspiring to be your eternal servant,*

Keśava Bhārati Dāsa Goswami

1. *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi-līlā 9.18, purport  
2. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.3.21, purport  
3. Lecture, London, 22 August 1973  
4. *Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* 2.5.222  
5. *Ibid.*, 2.5.223  
6. Letter to Nandulāl Dāsī, 9 June 1974  
7. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.2.37, purport  
8. *Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* 2.5.225, plus commentary  
9. Letter to Rupa-vilāsa, 18 November 1972

## Kṛṣṇa Dās Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace, who conquered death by dedicating your whole life in the service of the Lord.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as you have taught, there is one thing that is sure in life, and that is death. If one has taken birth, then death will follow. The conclusion is: If one does not surrender to Kṛṣṇa during one's lifetime, then one will surely meet the Lord in His form as death when one's life span is over. In other words, everyone must surrender to God, either in His form as Lord Kṛṣṇa or His form as death. An intelligent person will think, "If I have to surrender, then let me surrender to the sweetest and most attractive form of the Lord rather than His horrifying form as death."

What is the meaning of death? Lord Kṛṣṇa explains in *Bhagavad-gītā* 2.13:

*dehino 'smin yathā dehe kaumāraṁ yauvanaṁ jarā  
tathā dehāntara-prāptir dhīras tatra na muhyati*

"As the embodied soul continuously passes, in this body, from boyhood to youth to old age, the soul similarly passes into another body at death. A sober person is not bewildered by such a change."

Death means the change of body. In fact, our bodies are changing at every moment, and thus we are dying repeatedly. And just as our bodies are changing throughout our lives, they also change at the time of death. At death the soul leaves his present body and receives a new body according to previous karma.

People are inattentive to the moment of death. That moment is the most unwanted moment of life. However, in reality it is the most valuable moment of our lives because it determines our future destination. As Lord Kṛṣṇa states in *Bhagavad-gītā* 8.6:

*yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaran bhāvaṁ tyajaty ante kalevaram  
taṁ tam evaiti kaunteya sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ*

"Whatever state of being one remembers when he quits his body, O son of Kuntī, that state he will attain without fail."

[Purport]: . . . [O]ne's thoughts during the course of one's life accumulate to influence one's thoughts at the moment of death, so this life creates one's next life. If in one's present life one lives in the mode of goodness and always thinks of Kṛṣṇa, it is possible for one to remember Kṛṣṇa at the end of one's life. That will help one be transferred to the transcendental nature of Kṛṣṇa. If one is transcendently absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's service, then his next body will be transcendental (spiritual), not material.

However, if one leaves his body while desiring to enjoy meat, he may attain the body of a lion or tiger, which is more suitable for eating meat. If one leaves his body while thinking about how to protect his wealth, he may take birth as a dog or a serpent to guard his wealth in the same house. If one is fond of sleeping, he may take birth as a pig so that he can sleep as much as he desires. But if one thinks of Kṛṣṇa at the time of death, he will attain a higher destination. As Lord Kṛṣṇa states in *Bhagavad-gītā* 8.5:

*anta-kāle ca mām eva smaran muktvā kalevaram  
yaḥ prayāti sa mad-bhāvaṁ yāti nāsty atra saṁśayaḥ*

"And whoever, at the end of his life, quits his body remembering Me alone at once attains My nature. Of this there is no doubt."

So if by our remembering Kṛṣṇa at the time of death our lives become perfect, then one may think, "Why

should we go through so much trouble practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness—so many rules and regulations—and sacrifice our sense gratification? We can do whatever we want throughout our life and just remember Kṛṣṇa at the time of death.” Unfortunately, that will not happen because Kṛṣṇa is not subordinate to our mind. Kṛṣṇa is beyond our mind and intelligence. Nobody can remember Kṛṣṇa unless Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself in the mind of that person by His sweet will. And Kṛṣṇa will manifest only to His dear devotee who has been engaged in His loving service throughout his life. As *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.18.4 states

*nottamaśloka-vārtānām juṣatām tat-kathāmṛtam*  
*syāt sambhramo 'nta-kāle 'pi smaratām tat-pādāmbujam*

“This was so because those who have dedicated their lives to the transcendental topics of the Personality of Godhead, of whom the Vedic hymns sing, and who are constantly engaged in remembering the lotus feet of the Lord, do not run the risk of having misconceptions even at the last moment of their lives.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am coming to the twilight of my life. So many diseases are afflicting my old body, so much pain and suffering I am having to endure, my working senses are becoming weaker and weaker, and I am remembering the prayer that you used to frequently quote or sing from the *Mukunda-māla-stotra* (34):

*kṛṣṇa tvadīya-pada-paṅkaja-pañjarāntam*  
*adyaiva me viśatu mānasa-rāja-haṁsaḥ*  
*prāṇa-prayāṇa-samaye kapha-vāta-pittaiḥ*  
*kaṅṭhāvarodhana-vidhau smaraṇam kutas te*

“O Lord Kṛṣṇa, at this moment let the royal swan of my mind enter the tangled stems of the lotus of Your feet. How will it be possible for me to remember You at the time of death, when my throat will be choked up with mucus, bile, and air?”

I am similarly praying, “While I can still remember You, my Lord, please take me.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have created this amazing International Society for Krishna Consciousness, which is giving so many souls the opportunity to serve Lord Kṛṣṇa all over the world. So many temples, *gośālās*, farm communities, and *gurukulas* have manifested, where daily gorgeous Deity services are performed, where your transcendental books are studied and widely distributed, where *prasādam* is served, where *harināmas* are performed, and where so many other spiritual activities are performed. In this way these wonderful souls are remembering the Lord more and more and gradually making progress toward the supreme destination.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I beg you to also give this humble soul shelter at your lotus feet and allow the mercy of the Lord to manifest itself so that I will also be able to achieve the supreme destination.

*Your servant,*

Krishna Dās Swami

## Lokanāth Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at the dust of your divine lotus feet on this most auspicious occasion of Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, the 118<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your appearance.

Several of my Vyāsa-pūjā offerings to you over the years have been filled with the thoughts of my inter-

actions with you. The memories of those fond exchanges inspired me to commit them to writing. Recently I wrote and published these as a book dedicated unto you, which is titled *In Conversation with Śrīla Prabhupāda: Contexts and Contemplations*. As my offering this year I have selected an affectionate memory from this book—a conversation in Vṛndāvana a few days before your departure.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is as follows:

**“You Manage—Let Me Travel to All the Tīrtha-sthānas” (Vṛndāvana, 1977)**

After finalizing the bullock cart arrangements, the three of us returned from Mathurā. In the evening I immediately went to the Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple, where I led *kīrtana* and then went to see Śrīla Prabhupāda. I had not seen him since midmorning. When I arrived in his quarters, there were a few other senior disciples with him, keeping vigil. I entered and offered obeisances.

Upon seeing me, Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja announced, “Lokanāth is here. Would you like some more *kīrtana*, Śrīla Prabhupāda? Lokanāth can lead. Lokanāth, you lead.”

However, Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “He must be tired.”

I said, “Not to chant for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda softly said, “Hm.”

I continued, “We just had a nice *kīrtana*, but I could chant more. I have come a long way to see you and chant for you. So if you allow, I will chant.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda replied, “Yes.” He then asked me about the climate during my traveling.

“How is the climate outside?”

“There’s not much cold so far. Luckily I came today. The climate is good,” was my response.

Śrīla Prabhupāda then went on to inquire about other parts of India. I explained, “As we go toward the Himalayas it gets cold; otherwise, up to Delhi and Chandigarh same climate as it is here now. As soon as we go out into the mountains, it’s very cold. We were shivering there. As we came to the places, wherever we went the climate was the same. Same as Vṛndāvana. It’s a good climate.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda addressed his senior disciples, “I wish that you GBC manage very nicely, and consider that I am dead, and let me travel to all the *tīrtha-sthānas*. Bring little medicine or no medicine, little milk and travel from one place to another, and if there is death, what is the lamentation? My age is ripe. In the open air and bullock cart or during the daytime, eh? . . . Nowadays there is in India ample sunshine. So during the daytime I shall travel, and nighttime you make a camp under a tree. In this way, let me travel to all the *tīrthas*. I am thinking this way. What is your opinion?”

Both Bhavānanda Mahārāja and Jayapatāka Mahārāja focused on assuring him, “There’s no need to be concerned. You have trained us well to manage things in the GBC.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, with focused intellect, restated his original wish, “No, no you are managing, I know, but you are all important men and unnecessarily you are bound up. You cannot go. So Lokanāth’s party has got some experience, and let me go. In India the climate is now good. If I recover, it is very good. You know. So what is the wrong? If I die, then the body will be brought either in Vṛndavana or Māyāpur, that’s all. And if I live, it will be a great end of a life. You are all experienced.”

Jayapatāka Mahārāja continued to assure Śrīla Prabhupāda that he would not be burdened by material management, to which Śrīla Prabhupāda responded, “No, not from that point of view. What is the use of lying down here?”

Jayapatāka Mahārāja carefully explained that the *kavirāja* had given clear instructions, to which Śrīla Prabhupāda laughingly responded, “Don’t keep me locked up. You do your duty as I have trained you and let me be free.”

There were many devotees in the room during this exchange, and almost immediately thereafter the house was divided.

The request by Śrīla Prabhupāda remained unresolved at this point, as the disciples wrestled about whether to concede to his compelling, obvious desire or to be extremely wary about his weak condition and take a decision not to allow the fulfillment thereof. The debate of what to do and what not to do continued.



Many sided with executing Śrīla Prabhupāda’s instruction, while many more had just the opposite opinion, and both sides had very good reasons.

I remembered, however, Śrīla Prabhupāda saying to Tamāl Krishna Goswami on his last visit to London, “If I survive this time, I want to do *parikramā*.” Śrīla Prabhupāda also reiterated this request in Bombay, on his return from London.

\* \* \*

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, writing this book was a profound meditation, which allowed me to relive my moments with you and realize that you are always present. Again I dedicate this book to your lotus feet and pray that these memories keep me enlivened, enthused, and eternally motivated in my efforts to always serve you.

*Your humble servant,*

Lokanāth Swami

## Mukunda Goswami

### From Whence You Came

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

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

Some say you came from the spiritual world.  
What that means is yet unfurled.

Whether *nitya*, *kṛpā*, or *sādhana* perfection,  
You said all are equal and beyond inspection.

*Tirobhāvas* surmount a birthday,  
But your appearance is always a gateway

To the spiritual world of Goloka Vṛndāvan,  
Where happiness reigns and Kṛṣṇa plays on.

Whether you came from there  
Or started from here,  
Vaikuṅṭha men rarely appear.

Here on earth, a dismal planet,  
*Śāstras* say saints are a magnet.

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VYĀSA-PŪJĀ   
2014

Your disciples came from every status  
And formed bouquets—a beautiful lattice.

In this darkened place you traveled to find us;  
Wayward yet charmed, we found you a plus.

Like a minstrel you came, above worldly fame;  
You were unique and always the same.

\* \* \*

A closet Kṛṣṇa, with lots of charisma,  
No shaven head—the dhoti'd be extra.

You called him a “nice boy” when he was over thirty;  
His songs about Kṛṣṇa were a pilgrim's journey.

You urged this soul  
To bow to Kṛṣṇa  
And to remain  
In his present role.

To spread love for God,  
A divining rod,  
He sang for Kṛṣṇa and millions heard  
The Holy Name, that magical word,  
Which washed the sins of a godless planet  
And turned many hearts to gold from granite.

\* \* \*

From whence you came, that didn't matter;  
The gift you brought is what would matter.

You and your teachings changed many hearts,  
From hurt to learning Kṛṣṇa's arts.

You are potent, of this there's no doubt;  
You watered hearts and relieved the drought.

Time will tell how you changed people here,  
And Kṛṣṇa will reign; that's crystal clear.

END

*Your servant,*

Mukunda Goswami



# Mahāvishnu Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda! You are my real father because you tell me who I am.  
No one else can do that. Now I'm a tiny, tiny part of Lord Caitanya's festival plan.

You are my real father because you give my life its meaning.  
No one else can do that. Now I believe the miracles I am daily seeing.

You are my real father because you show me the direction.  
No one else can do that. Now, stumbling, I follow you always, needing your correction.

You are my real father because you teach me how to sing and dance.  
No one else can do that. Now I'm happy to always try to give others Kṛṣṇa's chance.

Śrīla Prabhupāda! You are my real father, leading me back home. No one else can do that. Now I just need to fully surrender ("Little thing, strictly follower . . .") at your transcendental lotus feet.

*Your eternal servant,*

Mahāvishnu Swami



## Nava Yogendra Swami

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

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

My dear Gurudeva Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus like feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace, who are very merciful unto fallen souls like myself.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, today is your divine appearance day. Yesterday Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared on this planet, and today you appeared to spread the glories of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. You explained that only Kṛṣṇa is God and all others are His servants.

I am very fortunate that I got you as my spiritual master. You are my guru, birth after birth. By the divine arrangement of Kṛṣṇa, He brought me to your lotus feet.

Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu made you an instrument to spread *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* all over the world. You also kindly made me an instrument in your great preaching mission. Please give me strength to fulfill the instructions you have given me.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am your purchased animal. You can use me as you like. I am like a puppet in your hands. Make me dance as you like. But please always keep me in the cooling shade of your divine lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in the following song Śrīla Vāsudeva Ghoṣa sings his heart out in separation from Lord Gaurāṅga. I feel the same way about you, Śrīla Prabhupāda:

*yadi gaura nā hoito, tabe ki hoito,  
kemone dharitām de  
rādhār mahimā, prema-rasa-sīmā,  
jagate jānāto ke*

If Lord Gaurāṅga had not appeared in this Age of Kali, then what would have become of us? How could we have tolerated living? Who in this universe would have ever learned about the topmost limits of loving mellows that comprise the glory of Śrī Rādhā?

*madhura vṛndā, vipina-mādhurī,  
praveśa cāturī sār  
baraja-yuvati, bhāver bhakati,  
śakati hoito kār*

Who would have had the power to render ecstatic devotional service that follows in the footsteps of the damsels of Vraja? Indeed, the clever expertise of the *vraja-gopīs* is a prerequisite for entering the supremely sweet forest of Vṛndā Devī.

*gāo gāo punaḥ, gaurāṅger guṇa,  
sarala koriyā mana  
e bhava-sāgare, emona doyāl,  
nā dekhiye eka-jana*

Oh, please sing again and again of the glorious qualities of Lord Gaurāṅga! Just try to keep your heart simple.



Not even one person within this ocean of nescience has ever seen such a magnanimous personality as He.

(āmi) gaurāṅga boliyā, nā genu galiyā,  
kemone dhorinu de  
vāsura hiyā, pāśāṅga diyā,  
kemone gaḍiyāche

Even though I chant the holy name of Lord Gaurāṅga, somehow I still have not melted in ecstasy. How then have I maintained the burden of this body? How has the Creator fashioned this body with a stone in place of Vāsudeva Ghoṣa's heart?

*Your fallen servant,*

Nava Yogendra Swami

## **Pārtha Sārathi Dāsa Goswami**

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I am writing this offering at Govardhana Hill, Vṛndāvana. The time is midnight, and the season is spring. Earlier I took *darśana* of the sun setting on Govardhana Hill and was blessed by smelling the dung of Vṛndāvana's cows. This was all made possible by your mercy.

Please allow me to continue serving you in your ISKCON mission, and give me the good fortune of associating with your sincere followers. In this material world and in Goloka Vṛndāvana, my only desire is to be engaged in your divine service and in the service of your followers.

You have written in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Antya 1.24, purport):

Fortunately we had the opportunity to be born of a Vaiṣṇava father who took care of us very nicely. He prayed to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī that in the future we would become a servant of the eternal consort of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Thus somehow or other we are now engaged in that service.

From this statement it seems clear that you are engaged in the divine service of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. I pray that one day, if I can be so fortunate, I can also serve you in Goloka Vṛndāvana while you are engaged in the service of the eternal consort of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Until that time I will patiently wait, serving your instructions, serving your personal mission—ISKCON—and serving your sincere and loyal followers.

*Your servant,*

Pārtha Sārathi Dāsa Goswami

## Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet on the occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā ceremony, the 118<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your appearance. All glories, all glories unto you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

There are two types of spiritual masters—the *śikṣā-guru* and the *dikṣā-guru*. You are my first and foremost *śikṣā-guru*. I have learned everything about spiritual topics by reading your books and magazines and hearing your lectures, conversations, morning walks, etc.

I joined ISKCON in 1984 at your home, the Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple, after reading your books. I learned your *praṇāma-mantra* before learning any other *praṇāma-mantra*. My first service was to distribute your books, a service later on encouraged by my *dikṣā-guru*. I was TSKP leader for more than twenty years before taking *sannyāsa*.

*śikṣā-guruke ta' jāni kṛṣṇera svarūpa  
antaryāmī, bhakta-śreṣṭha,—ei dui rūpa*

“One should know the instructing spiritual master to be the Personality of Kṛṣṇa. Lord Kṛṣṇa manifests Himself as the Supersoul and as the greatest devotee of the Lord.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 1.47)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are that *senāpati-bhakta* in Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* army. As we learn from the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Antya* 7.11), without the Lord's special empowerment, no one can preach all over the world:

*kali-kālera dharma—kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana  
kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*

Therefore you are the foremost dear devotee of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your *Vaiṣiṣṭyāṣṭakam* you wrote, “But simply a festival of flowers and fruits does not constitute worship. The one who serves the message of the guru really worships him.” Throughout your life you followed this principle by preaching the teachings of Lord Caitanya in the English language. Please use me as an instrument in your hands for preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

*jogyatā-vicāre, kichu nāhi pāi,  
tomāra karuṇā-sāra  
karuṇā nā hoile, kāndiyā kāndiyā,  
praṇa nā rākhibo āra*

“When I examine myself, I find nothing of value. Your mercy is therefore essential to me. If you are not merciful, I will constantly weep and I will not maintain my life any longer.”

*Your most fallen granddisciple,*

Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī Swami

## Prahādānanda Swami

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

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe  
nirviṣeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.34) Lord Kṛṣṇa gives us a formula for understanding the truth: inquire submissively from a devotee who perfectly understands the Absolute Truth and render service to him. By such sincere service to a self-realized soul, we can realize that everything we can and cannot perceive is part of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s energies and that everyone is His eternal servant.

Helping others become Kṛṣṇa conscious is the essential service that Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His representative in disciplic succession, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have given us. Whenever we meet someone—anyone—we get an opportunity to pray to Lord Kṛṣṇa in our hearts for the transcendental discrimination and expertise to help that person reawaken his or her dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Lord Kṛṣṇa is most pleased when He sees that His devotees are trying to act with steady enthusiasm as instruments in His preaching mission.

Becoming a qualified servant of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mission will help us progress from the materialistic third platform of devotional service to the liberated second. A neophyte devotee on the third platform of devotional service has to act on the second platform to become liberated. Thus he must first learn to love Kṛṣṇa. There are five powerful devotional processes that help us do this, the foremost of which is offenselessly chanting the holy names.

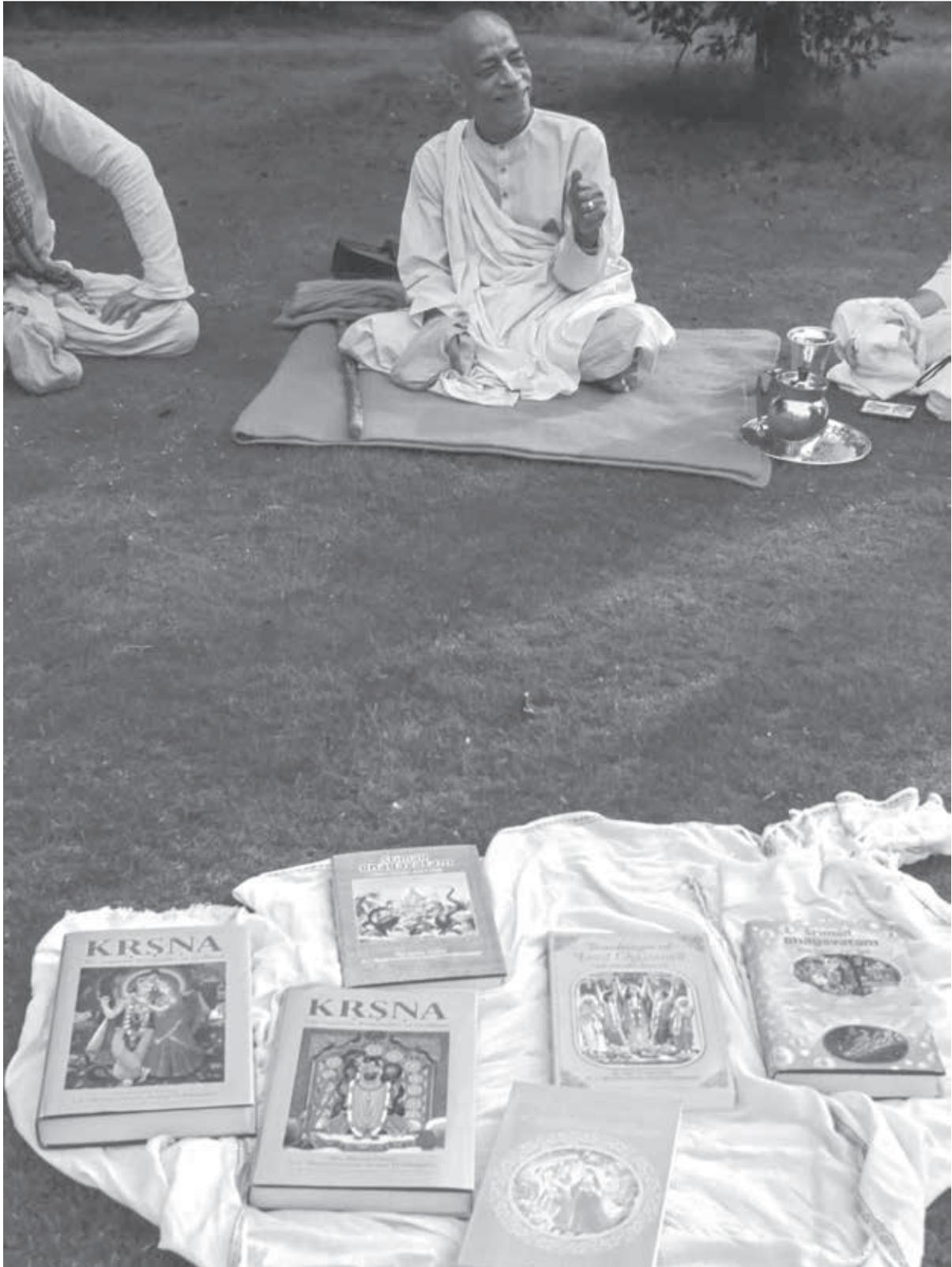
We also have to engage with devotees in the six loving exchanges mentioned by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvami in *The Nectar of Instruction*—appropriately, according to each devotee’s spiritual development. To the innocent we have to offer the spiritual gifts of Lord Caitanya, especially in the form of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books, the holy name, and *prasādam*. At the same time we should not become distracted in our service and mission by improperly associating with those who are opposed to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

With closely related devotees—friends, husbands, wives, children, or others—there is always the danger of material familiarity. To become liberated from the misconception of “I” and “mine,” we have to take guidance from a self-realized devotee in cultivating the vision that we are always a servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s servants. When Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu told us, “Whomever you meet, try to help them progress in Kṛṣṇa consciousness,” this included our friends and family members, too. Only in this way can we truly help ourselves and others. Lord Rṣabhadeva cautioned us not to take up positions of responsibility, such as husband, father, or spiritual master, unless we will sincerely try to help our dependents go back to the spiritual kingdom. Thus, in spiritual life the role of a husband is that of a servant who helps his wife and children develop their Kṛṣṇa consciousness. To advance spiritually, a wife must fulfill her responsibilities in the same way.

For a devotee who aspires to come to the second platform, the platform of the *madhyama-adhikārī*, meeting nondevotees is also an opportunity to develop a service attitude. To attract people unfamiliar with devotional principles, Lord Kṛṣṇa makes His devotee attractive in some way. Thus, to reveal the power of devotional service Lord Kṛṣṇa empowers such a devotee with good qualities, like patience, conviction, and enthusiasm. Such an empowered devotee is liberated from material influence and becomes a perfect, eternal servant of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s servants. As Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote to me in July 1969: “As Kṛṣṇa sees that you are working very seriously to bring His other children back to the Spiritual Kingdom, then He will become very pleased and will bestow all blessings upon you. Kṛṣṇa is never ungrateful for our efforts to serve Him, rest assured.”

*Śrīla Prabhupāda’s aspiring servant,*

Prahādānanda Swami



## Śacinandana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
Please accept my humble obeisances,

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

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

Upon meeting with one’s spiritual master, one receives a most valuable gift—the *matih*, or inclination, to turn to Kṛṣṇa. This is so because the spiritual master is empowered by Kṛṣṇa’s *śakti* and thus mercifully bestows divine energy. By the strength of that mercy, one can then progress back home to Kṛṣṇa.

Whenever I met you I experienced this bestowal of divine energy. Everything became crystal clear: all other, insignificant goals of life disappeared, and the blissful prospect of going back to Godhead—of coming into Kṛṣṇa’s presence—became possible. While in your presence, I felt so close to the kingdom of God that in fact I was already walking in it. The veil of *māyā* was removed as long as I was with you or closely followed your instructions.

For your pleasure I will quote something that His Holiness Lokanāth Swami wrote to you in 2012, when he reflected on how he came to Kṛṣṇa consciousness after meeting you during a pandal program. What he describes is something I and countless others also experienced when we met you: a great conviction that we could go back to Godhead, and a strong sense of renunciation of material life. While he was walking to his college examination he suddenly experienced a spiritual awakening:

I was overwhelmed with disgust as I carried a variety of books, notebooks, pens, and papers. As I continued to walk, a strong wave of emotion impelled me to start hurling each item, one by one, with all my strength as far as I could. I threw away everything—my chemistry book, my assignment papers, and my notebooks—and then I feverishly dug deep into my pockets for pens and other bits of paper, which I flung away with renewed vigor. I was finally left bare-handed and with empty pockets. I was overcome with a great sense of relief and victory. “Why haven’t I done this earlier?” I thought. I had been anticipating this poignant moment for years! All that I desired was to be free from all shackles—free like a bird to soar to new heights. I had finally found the willpower to release myself from this stranglehold. It was a long but satisfying walk, and I headed home, warmly embracing my new-found freedom. My only goal now was to find the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees.

Today, on your divine appearance day, I would like to say to you: “My only goal is to go to you and stay with you in the kingdom of God.” I know that if I follow your instructions this will happen immediately. I thank you unlimitedly for your kindness upon me and your patience. This year, in addition to my many preaching obligations, I will try to finalize my work on *The Vedic Way*, a Kṛṣṇa conscious life-school based on your unprecedented teachings. I seek your kind and powerful blessings for that.

Kindly dwell in my heart and intelligence so I can produce something that will satisfy you. With your blessings, everything is possible.

*Your humble servant,*

Śacinandana Swami

## Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

Dear devotees,

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

This year I am writing my homage as a meditation on Śrīla Prabhupāda's *praṇāma-mantras* and the guru Gāyatrī mantras.

When I received my first initiation on Rādhāṣṭamī in 1966, there was only one *praṇāma-mantra*:

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

There were only three of us, and Prabhupāda recited the mantra to each of us and had us respond word for word. When it was my turn I closed my eyes and bowed at his feet. When he said the word *bhakti* I plunged into a swoon of devotion at his lotus feet. I felt as if I were plummeting downward. It was very sweet and mystical. He taught us the meaning of the mantra: "I offer my obeisances to His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, who is very dear to Kṛṣṇa on this earth, having taken shelter at the lotus feet of the transcendental Lord." A perfect mantra! We knew that he was very dear to Kṛṣṇa, and we needed him to put the words into our mouths so we could express our hearts to our beloved spiritual master. And how poetic!—"having taken shelter at the lotus feet of the transcendental Lord." That one mantra was sufficient, and it served us well. But about a year later he gave us a second *praṇāma-mantra*, which he composed in Sanskrit with English translation and mailed to all the temples:

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātrya-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 impersonalism and voidism."

Some of us didn't at first grasp the full importance of this mantra. What was *nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi*? Who exactly were the impersonalists and voidists? And why was he giving so much emphasis to the fact that he delivered us from them, as if it were his prime mission? Were the Western countries really *filled* with these people? Was this the message of Lord Caitanya? Were we in such danger that Śrīla Prabhupāda was delivering us from their philosophy? The more we read Prabhupāda's books and heard his lectures, the more it became clear to us who the impersonalists and voidists were and how destructive their propaganda was to our devotional creepers.

The impersonalists were the Māyāvādīs, the Indian *sannyāsīs* and scholars, East and West, who tried to "kill" Kṛṣṇa and who misinterpreted the meaning of the *Bhagavad-gīta*. One prominent scholar, commenting on Kṛṣṇa's direct statement that we should worship Him, wrote, "It is not the personal Kṛṣṇa to whom we have to give ourselves up utterly but the Unborn, Beginningless, Eternal who speaks through Kṛṣṇa." This scholar enraged Prabhupāda, who never tired of kicking on his face with *śāstra* and logic. The Māyāvādi school was dominant in India and had spoiled the culture. And generations of college students are imbibing the falsity that Advaita monism is the main religion of India.

As for the voidists, they are the Buddhists. They don't believe in the soul or God. They reject Vedic authority. Lord Caitanya met with the Buddhist philosophers on His tour of southern India and defeated them by use of logic. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja states that the Buddhists have nine principles of knowledge, and in an extensive purport Prabhupāda dismantles them all with logic. But Buddhism is very popular in the West. Many people practice some form of meditation and give lip service to the principles of Buddhism. The Buddhists are atheists, but at least they make their position clear in their rejection of Vedic authorities.

The Māyāvādīs, or the neo-Śāṅkarites, are even more dangerous because they claim to accept the *Vedas* but deny the personal existence of God and in fact practice a disguised form of atheism, or “a second edition of Buddhism.” Śrīla Prabhupāda certainly and emphatically delivered us from these nefarious philosophies by teaching pure devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, and his second *praṇāma-mantra* directly acknowledges this fact. We are eternally indebted to him for this act of deliverance. The vigorous preaching, chanting, scholarship, temple worship, festivals, and *prasādam* distribution have done much to diminish the influence of Māyāvādis in scholarly circles and among the masses, both in India and the West.

As for the guru Gāyatrī mantras, they are to be uttered silently three times a day only by initiated *brāhmaṇas*. They are two mantras out of a total of seven Gāyatrī mantras. They are my favorites. They give me the opportunity to peacefully contemplate Śrīla Prabhupāda and his qualities. The first is simple and straightforward:

*aiṁ gurave namaḥ*

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master.” It is short, but we shouldn’t overlook its importance. We say it ten times counting on our fingers, and it can sink in as a powerful prayer to our Guru Mahārāja.

The second mantra is more comprehensive:

*aiṁ gurudevāya vidmahe kṛṣṇānandāya dhīmahi tan no guroḥ pracodayāt*

After saying it ten times, I always repeat the translation in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s unique English because it is packed with esoteric meanings. It begins, “Let me try to understand my spiritual master . . .” The use of the word “try” implies we will not be able to fully understand him. For me, it even hints at his *siddha-deha*, or his eternal identity in the spiritual world. Then: “who is always in blissful Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” How wonderful to think of Prabhupāda as always blissful! Even behind that grave demeanor, he was always experiencing ecstatic emotions. “Let me meditate on him being enthused as he enthuses us.” Prabhupāda was certainly enthusiastic. He rose at 1:00 in the morning to write his books. He chanted his *japa* in private and then went on a vigorous walk with his disciples, discussing philosophy and often drawing them into debate. He returned to the temple, greeted the Deities, took part in *kīrtana*, and gave a *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* lecture. Later in the morning he answered his worldwide correspondence with his secretary, met with temple leaders and guests, took a massage, bathed, and enthusiastically honored lunch *prasādam*. After a brief nap, he was up for more meetings, *darśanas*, and always preaching. As a “jet-age *parivrājakācārya*,” he traveled constantly. Once he said he traveled “just to keep my disciples alive.” Despite advancing old age and fragile health, he kept moving. Some calculated that he circled the globe fourteen times. And everywhere he went, he kept the same schedule, starting with rising in the middle of the night to write his books, his “emotional ecstasies,” and lecturing daily. Prabhupāda was enthused.

Then: “. . . as he enthuses us.” Just by raising his arms, hundreds of devotees would jump up and down in *kīrtana*. Because it pleased him, they went out into the streets singing and dancing. Because it pleased him, they distributed incredible numbers of books to passers-by and collected hundreds of thousands of dollars—to print more books and to construct temples. Prabhupāda and his disciples constructed and opened three great temples in Vṛndāvana, Māyāpur, and Mumbai. Today, decades after his disappearance, these temples attract thousands of visitors daily. Prabhupāda installed dozens of worshipable Deities and warned his disciples that unless they maintained their enthusiasm they would come to think that “our guru has given us a burden in the neck” to maintain the standards of Deity worship. Today the multiple daily *āratis* and offerings are still going on, and new temples are being opened. Everyone concedes that ISKCON temples have the most gorgeous Deity worship. All this devotional service is going on because Prabhupāda enthused us.

So by the Prabhupāda *praṇāma-mantras* and the guru Gāyatrī mantras, we privately and publicly meditate on our glorious master and acknowledge the unpayable debt we owe him.

Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami

## Smita Krishna Swami

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

My humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. Your feet are a safe place, but is it my place?

The summer of 1974 in Germany, at Schloss Rettershof. You were visiting, and Vegavān, I, and others from the Swedish *yātrā* were there. Devotees from around Europe had come to be near you and benefit from your association. Some had come to get initiation. One of them was a Swedish *bhakta* named Arne. He received the spiritual name Ariṣṭaha Dāsa.

Since I had joined the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement in Hamburg in 1970, many of the devotees at the Schloss were my old friends. Haṁsadūta Prabhu was there, my first GBC and temple president. He had given me inspiration and guidance when I first took up Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Now it was 1974 and you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, were visiting Schloss Rettershof, the new headquarters of the German *yātrā*. At that time I had a very lowly position in the movement, but I was trying my best to contribute to the mission.

I remember one of the German devotees inviting me to come along on your morning walks. I jumped at the opportunity and went with you on the morning walks in the natural setting around the Schloss. What you said on those walks I do not remember, but the most important thing for me was just that I got to join the other devotees in walking with you.

Periodically you would stop and we would all gather around to listen to you very attentively. I recall these great moments when we directly heard from you, the words coming from your lotus mouth, purifying our hearts. Secrets revealed.

A tape recorder was running, capturing every word, and a photographer was also running to capture pictures of Your Divine Grace. Your grace was flowing from your mouth, and by your grace I was there. At those moments I knew I was at the right place at the right time.

Thank you, Kṛṣṇa, for letting me be so close to your pure devotee. Thank you for letting me remain all these years in a place related to Śrīla Prabhupāda's lotus feet.

Last autumn I saw some pictures that reminded me of that time in Germany at Schloss Rettershof. Somehow I was also in some of those pictures, and this spring those pictures again came to my notice. They made me think about my proper position in relationship to you. What is my relationship with you? What is my place? To be situated in my proper place, my constitutional position, is safe. As Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.47), to do one's own duty imperfectly is better than doing someone else's duty perfectly. Better to be in my own position of service.

Then and there at the Schloss I felt I was at the right place. I was in the safest place: in the dust of your lotus feet.

Listening to or reading your words—spoken in lectures, morning walks, etc., or recorded in your books—is the the right position for me to be. And then to repeat those words to those whom I meet. That, for me, means to be at your lotus feet.

Narottama Dāsa Thakura prays, "The lotus feet of our spiritual master are the only way by which we can attain pure devotional service." Yes, I bow to your lotus feet with great awe and reverence. By your grace I can cross the ocean of material suffering and obtain the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. To have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from your lotus mouth should be my only wish. Attachment to your lotus feet is the

perfection that fulfills all desires. By your association our desire for the spiritual world is awakened—may that be my full desire. You opened my darkened eyes, and you filled my heart with transcendental knowledge. You are my Lord, birth after birth. The Vedic scriptures sing of your character. You are the ocean of mercy, friend of the poor, and lord and master of the devotees. O Śrīla Prabhupāda, be merciful unto me. Give me the shade of your lotus feet. Your fame is spread all over the three worlds.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I took Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura’s words from *Śrī Guru-vandana* and adjusted them so that they come from me exclusively to you. May my heart one day fully reside at your lotus feet. May I always listen to your words, serve your mission, and find my position at the safe shelter of your lotus feet.

*Your disciple,*

Smita Krishna Swami

## Śukadeva Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated, humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

I have spent one more year, with growing enthusiasm, in your divine mission. This enthusiasm is natural for one engaged in devotional service. As I try to follow your instructions regarding daily *sādhana*—waking up early, before 4 a.m., chanting 16 rounds of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* before 7 a.m., taking part in the temple program, especially in the morning and evening, and attending or giving *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhāgavad-gītā* class, thus improving my spiritual vision and spiritual strength and getting over the bodily concept—it becomes clear that we simply have to fully take part in the temple *sevā* and preaching service. Temple *sevā* is to save ourselves, and preaching service is to save ourselves and others.

It is interesting to see how the Lord reciprocates our humble efforts to preach by encouraging us with success in bringing *lakṣmī* and manpower, thus nourishing our preaching mood. When people donate *lakṣmī* or when people come to join, the realization is as good as seeing Kṛṣṇa. Otherwise, how could people leave their jobs or home and come to assist us? It is simply by your blessings and potency that things happen like this in such an extraordinary way.

These days things are so bad that children often don’t serve their parents, and yet people do come to us to sincerely serve Kṛṣṇa without any expectation of return. It is really a miracle of devotional service. Paid people are also insincere these days, but some souls come to assist us energetically, without expectation of any payment. Of course, they do benefit immensely, being infused with the peace and joy of devotional service. All this helps me realize that Kṛṣṇa is always in the background and is the actual doer.

It is real and practical that simple faith in *harināma* and *kīrtana* can bring together land, capital, manpower, and organization. In a world of exploitation, we enter another realm of love and service in the cool shade of your lotus feet. It is the miracle of devotional service, which you so expertly and easily gave to everyone who came in contact with you personally or in contact with your books and your followers.

In this world of stone hearts engraved with selfishness and sense gratification, you put *bhāgavata-dharma*, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, in the center, thus miraculously changing the tide of history and creating hope for human civilization. If not for you, the world would have remained in the stone age or worse. You are the true saint of the modern age, revealing *harināma*, the panacea for the age brought by the incarnation for the age, Gaura Hari.

We have to simply try to remember you always and follow your simple instructions: “Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, dance, and take *kṛṣṇa-prasādam*, and teach others this process.” Then we will journey safely from this danger-

ous world to the divine world of Goloka.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, my words fail utterly when I try to describe your unlimited glories. Please keep me in the shade of your lotus feet despite my waywardness from my past conditioning.

*The aspiring servant of your servants,*

Śukadeva Swami

## Trivikrama Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

I have been feeling your presence more and more of late. You once wrote to me when I was in Hong Kong in 1974 about how you were apparently alone when you first came to America but you did not feel alone because you were always feeling the presence of your spiritual master. You said there that a Vaiṣṇava is never alone.

By your mercy I am seeing practically that if one is always trying to please you, then naturally you will reciprocate and extend your association. This is your power—that you can reciprocate with all who try sincerely to please you, to serve you. You have been infused with this *śakti* by the mercy of your Guru Mahārāja and the mercy of Lord Nityānanda. You are not an ordinary guru but an empowered *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*.

Of course, the first qualification is that one has to strictly follow. That is not a cheap thing. Without getting a higher taste, how will it be possible? As you said once in London, “This is Māyā’s kingdom.” But you have given us the solution: *golokera prema-dhana, hari-nāma sankīrtana*. The chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* is not a material thing; it is coming directly from the spiritual world, from Goloka Vṛndāvana. If we take it up seriously we will get a higher taste.

So everything is there in the *kīrtana* of the name of Lord Hari. We simply have to take up the process seriously. You showed us by your example and precepts that chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa is the only solution, the end and the means.

I humbly pray at your lotus feet that you give me more and more taste for chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. By your mercy even one as fallen and disqualified as I am can make his life’s mission a success by being able to remember you at the moment of death. This is my fervent desire; please don’t kick me away from your pinkish lotus feet.

*Your lowly aspiring servant,*

Trivikrama Swami



## Varṣāṇā Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to the most blessed event of your Vyāsa-pūjā. Today we worship you, who appear as the representative of Kṛṣṇa's literary incarnation. The spiritual potency of this occasion enriches our reflection on your life and your instructions. And, when we have the opportunity to glorify you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, every aspect of life is imbued with meaning and purpose.

With each passing year, I am relishing even more . . .  
how your words never fail to impart deep peace and inspiration to my soul.

I write to you today from Bahulaban in New Vṛndāvan Dhāma.  
This village of historical glory is now in ruins  
due to Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Vṛndāvana-Candra's relocating to Their new temple  
and Their devotees naturally following behind.

Yet remembrance of you makes your presence here all the more vivid,  
both within my heart and in the *dhāma* that surrounds me in a loving embrace.

Today I reflect specifically on your *Vṛndāvana-bhajana* and the image of you:  
". . . sitting alone in Vṛndāvana dhāma . . ."

I am drawn to consider your words:  
"Everyone has abandoned me, seeing me penniless . . . . .  
. . . where are all my elders? . . . . .  
All that is left of this family life is a list of names."

This sets the scene for the assurance which follows:  
"Seen in relationship to Kṛṣṇa, they are all in harmony."

I sit here alone in Bahulaban.  
Decades have passed, new faces come and gone.  
Thousands have participated in building New Vṛndāvan,  
each with a story of their own.

Where are they now? I miss them all,  
And nature speaks in a way to affirm the depth of loss.  
I am left here with little more than a list of names.

So I cling to remembrance of specific pastimes that most articulate your precepts.  
In my mind's eye, the blurry pages of history turn back, until one exquisite event crystallizes,  
as real today as it was back then.

Echoes of bygone *kīrtanas* remain impressed upon the ether . . .  
sometimes whispering audibly as the wind rustles through the trees outside. . . .

In my chronicles of hope, it is now Janmāṣṭamī, the appearance of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, 1972.



You are here, presiding over the festivities,  
demonstrating the proper mood for worshipping the Lord.

Into the late hours of the night  
you display the ideal of complete absorption  
in hearing and chanting the glories and pastimes of the Lord.

At midnight, all things adjust to a deeper harmony; a shift transpires.  
It is now Nandotsava, the time Śrī Kṛṣṇa saw in His infinite wisdom and kindness  
to be the auspicious day for your appearance.

On this day Śrī Kṛṣṇa, in the form of Rādhā-Dāmodara, preside over the occasion.  
In reciprocation with your loving emotions,  
Kṛṣṇa awakens in us the appropriate feelings to properly worship you.

Then Kṛṣṇa showers us with the precious realization:  
*He delights in seeing His representative honored.*

Gradually the divine adjustment of all components becomes tangible:  
Śrī Nām takes root in New Vṛndāvan Dhāma, offering the setting.  
Janmāṣṭamī overlaps with Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā to unite as one festival of devotional expression.

Each aspect illumines yet another face of Kṛṣṇa's benevolence,  
a love too vast to be contained exclusively in His own heart,  
too inconceivable for us to serve.

So yearning to expand, to facilitate relationship,  
Kṛṣṇa assumes various personal forms.

That day Nām and Dhāma, Guru and Kṛṣṇa, four distinct cornerstones of Truth,  
always individual yet interdependent in nurturing our understanding,  
collaborated to reveal Their divine interactions.

Many seasons have now passed, and I sit here in silent solitude, holding a list of names.  
I might be discouraged if not for your words:  
"Seen in relationship to Kṛṣṇa, they are all in harmony."

Recognizing the most lovable person, whose unseen hand guides our mysterious destinies,  
working in and through all things to draw out our ultimate welfare,  
our inner eye opens to the heart of Vyāsa-pūjā.

*Bhakti* is the only food for the soul,  
*Rasa* alone can refresh the heart,  
and the Holy Name continues to resound, reviving our very life breath.

Your *vāṇī* is the treasure of my soul, and its influence is unspeakable through mere lip service.  
Your mood, your words, your deeds exemplify the ideal disciple . . .  
who is our perfect master.

Please bless us with your *darśana*, in the realms of separation,



where we honor the essence within the form of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā.

*Aspiring to attain the service of your servants,*

Varṣāṇā Swami

## Vedavyāsapriya Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances through my obeisances to your stalwart disciples, sticking like the holy dust particles at your lotus feet. Through your disciples I am able to serve you in some capacity. Yet my connection with you is perceptibly clear, and you bestowed the same mercy on me—to be counted as one of your direct disciples.

On the day we celebrated Lord Rāmacandra's appearance day this year, I began giving a series of discourses based on your translations and commentary for the chapters of the Ninth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* dealing with *rāma-līlā*. It is so wonderful to explain seemingly trivial humanlike feelings of separation of the Lord from Sītā Devī as a manifestation of His *hlādinī-śakti*. Similarly, it is enlivening to explain, according to your purports, uncommon activities like Rāmacandra's banning of Sītā Devī while she was pregnant simply upon hearing a low-class man rebuking his unchaste wife with sarcastic character-defamation of the Lord and His consort. We can see Sītā Devī's real chastity, which is evinced by Her being agreeable to the Lord's plan and thus cooperatively serving Him without complaint. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's explanations of these events, which you quoted in your purports, were very satisfying because they deepened our understanding of the devotional service rendered by Sītā Devī, Lakṣmaṇa, Bharata, Śatrughna, and Hanumān.

Many devotees expressed their appreciation for the discourses and said they were hearing such things for the first time. But most of all, I am wonderstruck with the understanding that even thinking of engaging in material sense gratification with the opposite sex is like directly getting cursed by invoking the displeasure of Sītā Devī.

Thank you very much, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your books, which are filled with the transcendental potency that can guide all of humanity and save them from going to hell. Also, thank you for creating ISKCON and its GBC body, which you yourself gave to us to follow. Your GBC devotees stand at the helm of your society with a self-corrective consciousness and thus remain empowered for wholesale distribution of your mercy in various engagements. What is the need for anything to be added to or taken from your plan? On this auspicious occasion of your divine appearance, let me recommit myself to obeying your every command with great fidelity.

*Your servant,*

Vedavyāsapriya Swami

## Yadunandana Swami

*kali-kālera dharma—kṛṣṇa-nāma-saṅkīrtana  
kṛṣṇa-śakti vinā nahe tāra pravartana*

“The fundamental religious system in the Age of Kali is the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. Unless empowered by Kṛṣṇa, one cannot propagate the *saṅkīrtana* movement.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya* 7.11)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It is evident in many ways—śāstrically, historically, and empirically, to quote a few—that you are the emissary Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu empowered to propagate the *saṅkīrtana* movement to all corners of the world. Had you not come to the Western countries and toured the world fourteen times in a heroic, compassionate missionary spirit, who would have delivered us from our ignorant lifestyles and offensive attitudes? Who would have taught us the essential principles of pure devotional service? Who would have revealed to us the unparalleled sweetness of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s holy name and the divine service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa? Many Vaiṣṇavas are now following in your footsteps, spreading the *saṅkīrtana* movement. It is a fact, however, that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are the empowered *saṅkīrtana* hero who single-handedly started a revolution in the impious lives of the Kali-yuga people by propagating and exemplifying the teachings of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Your contribution in presenting *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to the world is so wonderful that the *Bhāgavatam* Himself has spoken about it:

*tad-vāg-visargo janatāgha-viplavo  
yasmin prati-ślokaṁ abaddhavaty api  
nāmāny anantasya yaśo ’ṅkitāni yat  
śṛṇvanti gāyanti gṛṇanti sādhaḥ*

“On the other hand, that literature which is full of descriptions of the transcendental glories of the name, fame, forms, pastimes, etc., of the unlimited Supreme Lord is a different creation, full of transcendental words directed toward bringing about a revolution in the impious lives of this world’s misdirected civilization. Such transcendental literatures, even though imperfectly composed, are heard, sung, and accepted by purified men who are thoroughly honest.” (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.5.11)

Now, by your mercy, I am also privileged to be part of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s army of divine love under your and your servants’ command. There is still much missionary work to be done. Some months ago I took some quality time to pray and to reflect on how I can serve you better, staying for a month at your Bhaktivedanta Āśrama in Govardhana. The instructions I received from the Lord in the heart and from Your Divine Grace, through your intimate servants who compassionately guide me, is that I should primarily focus on spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness in my *prabhu-datta deśa*, namely Spain.

I realize that at present Spain has almost forty-seven million inhabitants distributed in fifty-two provinces. So far, we have established ISKCON centers in only seven provinces. As an offering to your lotus feet and for the pleasure of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, I would like to see that when my mortal body ends we have regular activities in these fifty-two provinces. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu predicted that His holy name would be glorified in every town and village of the world. Therefore, we cannot be satisfied with a symbolic representation of this statement. We must reach out and contribute to make *kṛṣṇa-bhaktas* in each and every province of Spain, and within every province people should directly hear the holy name of the Lord, have access to your books, and experience the association of devotees, at least in a hundred and eight municipalities. You taught us to think big, “to try to shoot the rhinoceros.” I know that for these ideas of mine not to become just a naive dream of a wishful missionary, I require empowerment, intelligence, ingenuity, heroism, humility, and unflinching loyalty to your lotus feet—all beyond my present capacity. I don’t know how I’m going to do it,



but making such efforts is what's required for the people of Spain and those of every country of the world.

I am simply presenting this project at your lotus feet for your blessings and needed empowerment so that I may execute it in cooperation with many devotees, on your behalf.

With heartfelt gratitude and humility,

*Your servant,*

Yadunandana Swami