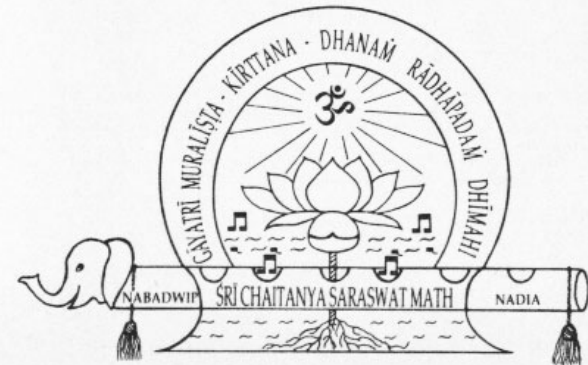




Dignity of the Divine Servitor

His Divine Grace
SRILA BHAKTI SUNDAR GOVINDA MAHARAJ
SRI CHAITANYA SARASWAT MATH
NABADWIP DHAM

**DIGNITY
OF THE
DIVINE SERVITOR**



ŚRĪ CHAITANYA SĀRASWAT MAṬH

NABADWIP, NADIA

**DIGNITY
OF THE
DIVINE SERVITOR**

Compiled from lectures and letters by

His Divine Grace
Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj

and from lectures and articles by the venerable devotees
in glorification of His Divine Grace.

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Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj.

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Offered for the glorification and satisfaction of

Śrī Ācāryyadeva
His Divine Grace
Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj

and our
Beloved Spiritual Master
who withdrew his manifest pastimes
on 12th August 1988:

His Divine Grace
Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar
Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

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Editorial

*gurvābhīṣṭa-supūrakam guru-gaṇair
āśīṣa-sambhūṣitam
cintyācintya-samasta-veda-nipuṇam
śrī-rūpa-panthānugam
govindābhidham ujjvalam vara-tanum
bhakty anvitam sundaram
vande viśva-guruṁ ca divya-bhagavat-
preṁno hi bija-pradam*

"I worship the holy lotus feet of he who perfectly fulfils the most cherished wish of his Divine Master; who is adept in all Vedic conceptions, both conceivable and inconceivable; who is the faithful follower in the line of Śrī Rūpa; who is known as Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj; whose beautiful divine figure revels in the mellows of Divine Love; who is the Guru of the entire universe and the bestower of the seed of Divine Love for the Supreme Lord."

I pay my sincere, fallen, and prayerful obeisances to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, and to his dearest servitor, the glorious Śrī Ācāryadeva of his exalted Mission of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh: His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj who has been so patient in tutoring my lowly self.

That the dignified glories of both of them can be

chanted on this occasion of Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj's 63rd Appearance Day is most befitting and all-auspicious, therefore I pray to Their Divine Graces that their glorification may be accepted in the form of this book, *Dignity of the Divine Servitor*.

The author of *Śrī Chaitanya Bhagavat*, Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dās Ṭhākur, was a disciple of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. Generally the disciple sees his Guru as the manifestation of Kṛṣṇa or Mahāprabhu. Nityānanda Prabhu is directly the manifestation of Mahāprabhu, yet Śrīla Vṛndāvan Dāsa Ṭhākur considered it even more glorious to declare Him to be supremely exalted as the *best servitor* of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. This example reinforces the ever present theme of the teachings of our esteemed *Śrī Guru-varga* exemplified in Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, that to be a servant of divinity is the most exalted and glorious position. It is in this vein that the attempt is being made in *Dignity of the Divine Servitor* to broadcast our Gurudevas' glories.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was always very joyful to chant the nature of devotion and of the devotees, and he did so in innumerable ways. One of his valuable contributions to the world is the supremely holy Scripture of pure *bhakti*, *Śrī Śrī Prapanna-jīvanāmṛtam*. On reading the glorious descriptions given there about the life of devotion, we cannot but consider the embodiment of that to be our effulgent Om Viṣṇu-

Viṣṇupāda Śrī Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj.

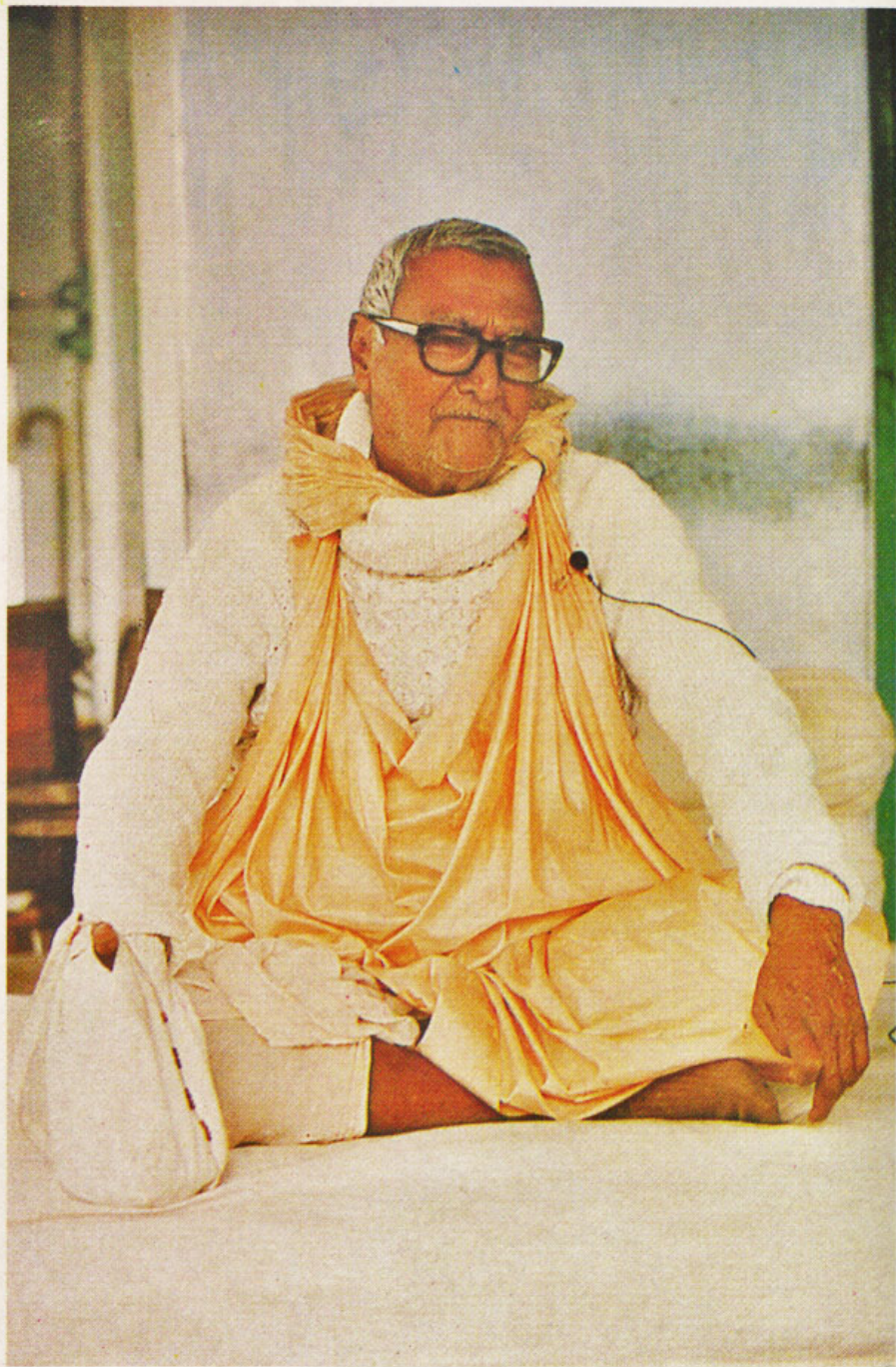
Paying my repeated obeisances to His Divine Grace, to all our Divine Masters, to all those who assisted in preparing this publication, and to the whole Vaiṣṇava community, I pray that you may accept the honest intention with which this book has been compiled and published. In addition, I appeal to your good nature that you may overlook my inevitable shortcomings which can only have detracted from the otherwise spotless deliveries contained herein.

Today, and for all time to come, let us joyfully join together in the congregational chanting of the glories of the Lord and His pure devotees headed by our immediate guides Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj and Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. We pray that by their causeless grace they may grant us even the smallest post, but within the rays of that service world. The service world is *their* domain.

Mahānanda Dāsa Bhakti Rañjan
Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh
Nabadwip
23rd December 1991



Om Viṣṇupād
Śrī Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj



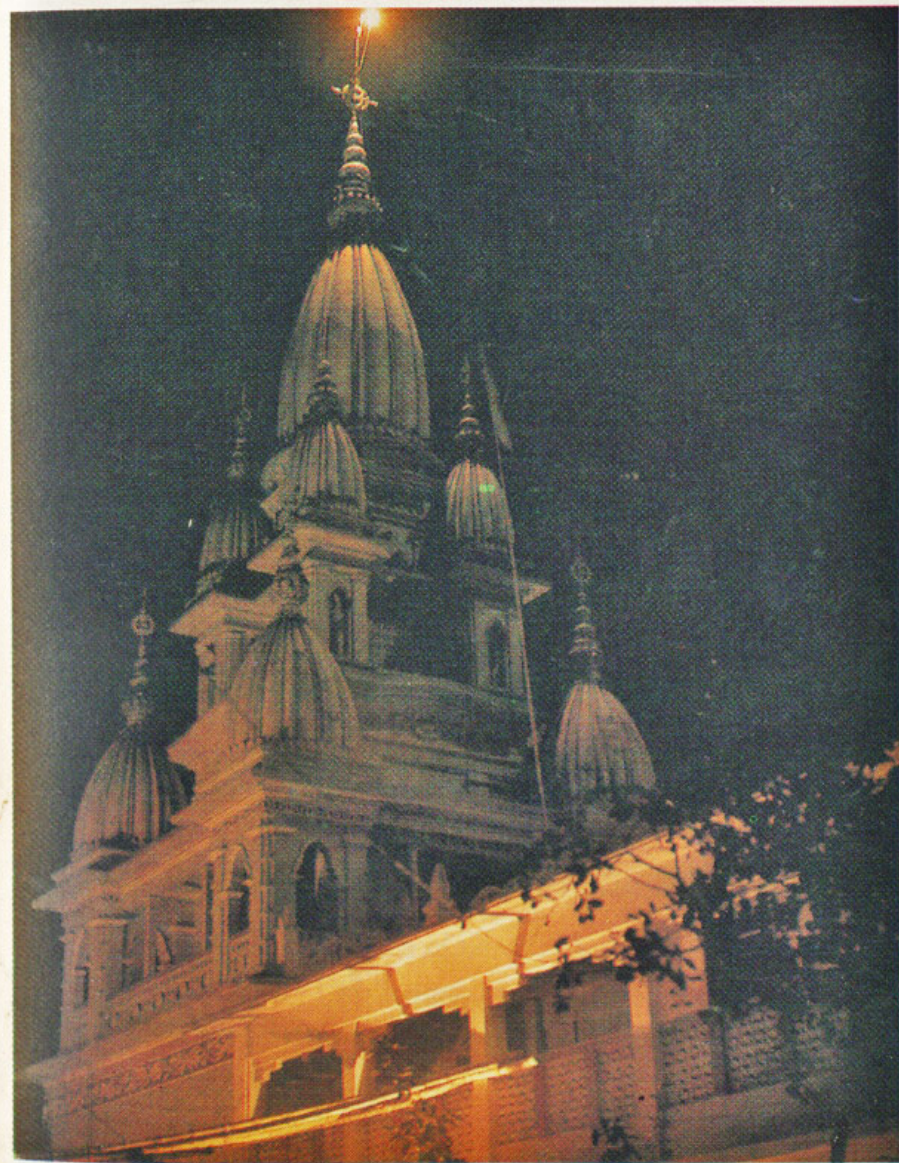
*Om Viṣṇupād Śrī Śrīla
Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj*



*Their Lordships Śrī Śrī
Guru-Gaurāṅga-Gāndharvā-Govindasundarjīu*



*Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's Śrī Viraha Milan Mandir
The Temple of Union in Separation*



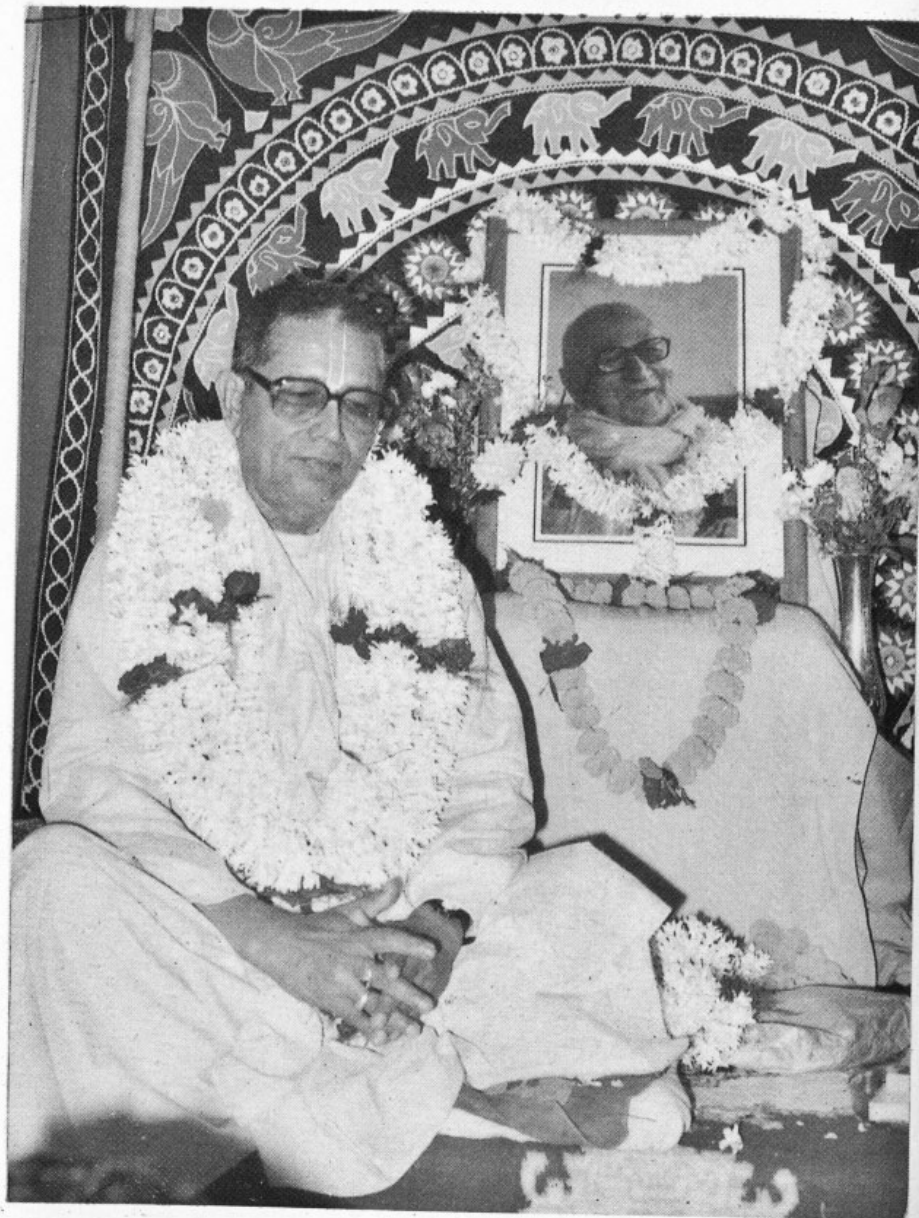
*Their Lordships' Temple:
Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, Nabadwīp*



*Śrīla Guru Mahārāj—Om Viṣṇupād
Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj*



*Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj
conversing with devotees in Nabadwip*



*Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj:
always glorifying Śrīla Guru Mahārāj*

All Glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga

Part One

Glorification of Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj

-1-

Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākur

From a lecture given by His Holiness Tridaṇḍi Swāmi
Śrīpād Bhakti Sudhir Goswāmī Mahārāj
in San Mateo, California, U.S.A.,
on the Appearance Day of
Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj, 1990

So at last after many years we have the opportunity to glorify Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. And I say that because Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj has always been seen by us to be in the background of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh; moving, and doing so many different things, and acting as an agent of representation for so many devotees to the lotus feet of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj. He did this because, as we know, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's nature was not to move with a large group of people. In fact after his time in

the Gauḍīya Maṭh and also after some attempts to work cooperatively with others, he more or less decided to enter seclusion; but he realised that Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Prabhupāda's whole mission relied upon his coming out of seclusion.

Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Prabhupāda himself was a qualified *bhajanānandī*. At one time he was chanting three lakh (300,000) Holy Names a day in the form of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*. In a month that comes close to 10 million Names. His vow was to chant a billion Names of Kṛṣṇa which would take about eight and a half years to complete; and he was in the process of doing that. But from that position he received some divine inspiration to come out and help others. Sometimes it is said that once when he was crossing the River Saraswatī at its confluence with the Gaṅgā and Yamunā in the heart of Nabadwip, a piece of paper floated up to him which contained a part of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* describing the essential items of devotional service including preaching the glories of the Holy Name. He took it that this was what he should do, and of course we know the rest: he came out and gradually converted so many to Mahāprabhu's creed.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was well aware that his Śrīla Prabhupādā did not favour devotion in seclusion, so he established the Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh and thought, "I'm not an aggressive preacher or canvasser, but if some will feel some relief from my *Hari-kathā*, I won't deny them."

Because Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was not inclined to do many of the various activities involved in preaching or to manage things so much, it made room for a very special assistant. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj came to him as a young *brahmacārī* of about 17 years old. He was given the name Gaurendu Dāsa Brahmachārī and within a week, *within a week*, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was introducing him to other Godbrothers as his successor. He asked Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāj, "I think this boy can be my successor. Examine him and tell me your opinion." So Bābājī Mahārāj examined him in a way I imagine only he could, and he concluded that he was fit for such special service!

When Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was living upstairs renting a room from Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda above his laboratory at Sitakanta Banerjee lane in Calcutta, Govinda Mahārāj was there as a young *brahmacārī*. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj related to us that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda and Śrīla Guru Mahārāj would regularly become very absorbed and spend much time discussing *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and related topics. They would become absorbed to such an extent that Śrīla Prabhupāda's neglect of his pharmaceutical business downstairs partly led to its decline.

Sometimes Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj would have breakfast with Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda and he mentioned, "Even for breakfast Swāmī Mahārāj would always have some *purīs* fried in ghee, as well

as a little *sabji* (cooked vegetable), and different things like that." But Govinda Mahārāj and Guru Mahārāj were always keen to have *muḍi* (puffed rice) on practically every occasion. Govinda Mahārāj said that Swāmī Mahārāj would always invite him to take *puris* and *sabji* but he would decline saying, "No, no. *Muḍi* is fine for me," but Swāmī Mahārāj would object, "*Muḍi*? That is simply cheating the stomach." Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj was very happy during their stay there. He said, "Swāmī Mahārāj used to give me classes and he would teach me, amongst other things, *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*."

The point I'm making is that he was there from the very beginning, and in a very special capacity. When the different factions of the Gauḍīya Maṭh would meet, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj was there and he witnessed many of their negotiations with Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. He knows the discussions and all the personalities involved. In the Gauḍīya Maṭh he is therefore very well known and respected by everyone and they have known him since a long time ago.

He was so familiar with the luminaries of the Gauḍīya Maṭh and he knew their individual personalities so well that once he was going to a programme with some other Godbrothers of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj when the following incident happened. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was not there, so Govinda Mahārāj was accompanying a Gauḍīya Maṭh *Ācāryya*, Śrīpād Bhakti Śaraṅga Goswāmī

Mahārāj, along with some of his disciples to a preaching engagement. As they were approaching the venue Govinda Mahārāj noticed indications in the sky that rain was likely. He then turned to one of Śrīpād Goswāmī Mahārāj's principle disciples and said, "Do you know which verse your Guru Mahārāj is going to speak on at the lecture?"

The disciple replied, "Of course not. I don't know what he's going to say, or what he is going to talk about."

"Well, I do."

"How is that possible?"

To which Govinda Mahārāj simply replied, "I know what verse he is going to speak on!" He then proceeded to recite the following verse:

*jadacyuta kathā lāpaḥ
karna pīyūṣa varjjitaḥ
taddinaṁ dūrddinaṁ manye
meghācchannaṁ na dūrddinaṁ*

This verse means: "Normally we judge a good day by the weather. If it is sunny outside we think it is a nice day, and if the weather is bad we think it is a bad day. But the criterion for a *Vaiṣṇava* is that he considers a day to be good if he has either engaged in, or has heard, some *Hari-kathā* on that day."

They arrived there and, as predicted by Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, that *Ācāryya*, a Godbrother of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, began his lecture by reciting and discussing this very verse. It is remarkable that by

Govinda Mahārāj noticing it was going to rain, he linked this with the fact that it would probably make everyone depressed, and knowing the nature of Śrīpād Goswāmī Mahārāj, he concluded that he would choose this verse in order to change the atmosphere of the meeting.

Not only did Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj compete with his contemporaries in this way but even at a very early age he could hold his own with the Godbrothers of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. On one such occasion he challenged in a slightly mischievous way one *sannyāsī* who had a reputation for being a big *paṇḍit*. Govinda Mahārāj said, "Can I ask you a question?"

"Yes, what is it?"

"Can God commit suicide?" The Godbrother was incensed, "Why are you asking a question like this? It is not a good question!"

Govinda Mahārāj said, "Well, maybe it is not a good question, but can you answer it?"

"You shouldn't ask such questions."

"I know, but can you answer it?"

"Why are you pressing me in this way?"

Then Govinda Mahārāj said, "Well, I know the answer. I just want to know whether you can answer it also."

Guru Mahārāj's Godbrother then said, "You are just a boy, what do you know?"

To which Govinda Mahārāj quoted this verse:

*vālohaham jagattām nātha name vālā sarasvatī
vālabhyālasya garalam kim na hannta kalevaram*

Which, in summary, says: "A baby cobra can still kill you!" He then proceeded to answer his own question by saying, "Yes, God can commit suicide. He commits suicide in Brahman, His impersonal aspect: the *brahmajyoti* where the infinitesimal parts of Bhagavān, the *jīvas*, lose their individuality. In that way the Absolute commits suicide." Śrīla Guru Mahārāj used to tell that story often but I never heard him attribute it to Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. Only later I learnt who that boy was! Śrīla Guru Mahārāj would sometimes comment, "One should not ask, 'Can God commit suicide?!'"

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj many times revealed his brilliance before Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's Godbrothers. One occasion was at the Imlitalā Temple, a Temple established in Vṛndāvana by Śrīpād Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj. When Mahāprabhu first entered Vṛndāvana He sat beneath the tree known as Imlitalā which is now in the courtyard of that Temple. There on the wall are some verses composed by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj inscribed in marble describing the exact date of Mahāprabhu's arrival in Vṛndāvana, and the time of His *līlā* beneath the Imlitalā.

In Sanskrit verse there are ways to describe numbers by implication. For example, if you say *Veda* it can mean the number three or four. This is because sometimes it is considered that there are three sections of the *Vedas*, and sometimes four. There are

also other words that numbers are associated with. Thus in a sort of mystical, poetic way Śrīla Guru Mahārāj mentioned the date, though that date generally is not known; it is only hinted at and described in a general way in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and other places.

When first reading the *ślokas* inscribed there, the Godbrothers of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj could not fully understand what he had written. From their understanding some were convinced that Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur might even have been of a different opinion concerning that date. So again the young Gaurendu Brahmachārī, our Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, came and said, "Oh, I know what it means," and they were all surprised. He then explained the date mentioned there. They reacted, "But that differs from the date given by Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur."

Govinda Mahārāj replied, "That may be, but what my Guru says is right. What Śrīla Guru Mahārāj says is true; it does not matter if anyone else differs with it, whoever they are. It is true and I can prove it." He then proceeded to expand on various passages and thereby he explained how Śrīla Guru Mahārāj came to those conclusions by inference from *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. He astounded everyone.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj is always very competent, especially at representing Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and his conception, and he has a wonderful *Vaiṣṇava* heart. It was shown one time in the following way:

Even the *Gopīs* have groups and party spirit, this sometimes causes them not to get along with each other; and this is so also with their followers. In this way there were some differences between the different camps of Godbrothers of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and their disciples. One day many of them along with their disciples were going to Vṛndāvana to honour a holy festival. It so happened that Śrīpād Tirtha Mahārāj and his disciples were at the same train station at the same time as Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and his entourage. Śrīpād Tirtha Mahārāj was sometimes described by Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur as being most dear to him, *Prabhupāda-preṣṭha*, and he even had verses in Tirtha Mahārāj's glorification chiselled into marble in the Bagh Bazaar Maṭh in Calcutta. But Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīpād Tirtha Mahārāj at that time were not on speaking terms.

Govinda Mahārāj noticed Tirtha Mahārāj and seeing such an august personality he felt some disturbance at not being able to properly honour him due to the differences between the two parties. He then went and asked Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, "Tirtha Mahārāj is over there. I feel compelled to offer my obeisances to him. May I have your permission to do so."

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj replied, "Yes, of course you may." The faces of Tirtha Mahārāj and his group of devotees up to this point were a little stern, but Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj went over and offered his *dandavats*

to Tirtha Mahārāj and talked a little with him as well as with his group, and soon they were all smiling: he had a way of charming all of them.

Govinda Mahārāj always liked to glorify the devotees and he wrote many stanzas in their praise. With his charm he liked to utilise words in a way that allowed sometimes three or four meanings to be drawn out from each verse. Occasionally, though, others would interpret his verses in other ways than he intended, as was shown when he once wrote a poem glorifying Śrīpād Keśava Mahārāj. Keśava Mahārāj took *sannyāsa* from Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and he was an important figure in the Gauḍīya Maṭh. He was so pleased with the poem composed by Govinda Mahārāj that he published it in his *Maṭh's* journal.

Later when Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāj came and read it he saw that there was a double-entente throughout. Although apparently on the surface it was a glorification, there was another way of reading it in which it appeared he was making fun of Keśava Mahārāj. Up until this time all the devotees there had been saying, "Look what he has written! What Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj's disciple has written is really wonderful. Isn't it great!" But Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāj went and told Keśava Mahārāj, "Don't you see what he has done?"

Keśava Mahārāj replied, "His composition is very good. What have you found?"

Then Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāj said, "Very good! But this could also mean something else..."

Keśava Mahārāj started, "You're right...!" And they called for Govinda Mahārāj and asked, "Is that what you meant?"

"Oh no! No, Mahārāj!"

Through everything he was always Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's eternal associate and constant companion. When Śrīla Guru Mahārāj would go to Māyāpur to visit Śrīla Śwāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj would always be there. We have a picture in which Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj and Śrīla Śrīdhar Mahārāj are sharing the same *vyāsāsana* and at the microphone is Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. He spoke on that day by the request of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj who was feeling unwell and therefore reluctant to speak.

In his address Govinda Mahārāj quoted a verse spoken by Raghupati Upādhyāya.

*kaṁ prati kathayitum iṣe,
samprati ko vā pratītim āyātu
go-pati-tanayā-kuñje,
gopa-vadhūṭi-viṭam brahma*

(C.c. Madhya 19.98)

"Who will possibly believe me if I tell them that the Supreme Absolute Truth is playing in the bushes with the *Gopīs*? Who could possibly believe this?" The way he used this verse was to say, "So who could believe me that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj who we knew before as 'Abhay Babu', a regular attender at the programmes in Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭh—a householder with various family commitments,

business concerns, etc.—that *he* is now a World *Ācāryya* and is known all over the planet. *He* has spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness the length and breadth of the earth, *he* has done this impossible of all impossible things.”

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda really appreciated this sort of appropriate glorification which Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj always is capable of providing.

It may not be common knowledge, but in the realm of composition Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj has given much. In the words of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj: “Govinda Mahārāj’s contribution is very great.” The *Paṇḍit-sabhā* presided over by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj gave Govinda Mahārāj various titles: one was *Bhakti Śāstrī*, later to be followed by *Upadeśaka Paṇḍit*, *Mahopadeśaka Paṇḍit*, and then *Jyotirbhūṣaṇ Vidyā Rañjan*. One of his ornaments is Sanskrit *alankāra*—the knowledge of how to properly use the Sanskrit language. As Guru Mahārāj would contemplate different verses he was composing, Govinda Mahārāj would be with him suggesting various alternatives. Some of these verses were never published and some are no longer written down anywhere: at present they are only to be found within Govinda Mahārāj. It is very fortunate for us all that he not only remembers them but he can represent them very nicely.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj has said also that the relationship between the Guru and disciple is not

limited to *dāsya-rasa*, or the master and the servant, but there is also friendship, and in some cases even a sort of paternal feeling by the disciple towards the Guru in providing care and so forth. The reality is that Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj were intimate friends. After all these years, distance was removed by their intimacy. I remember sometimes when we would speak to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj confidentially about making some particular decision, Guru Mahārāj would express his opinions in a particular way, and we would listen to those. Then he would, as it were, perk up, put his hands respectfully to his forehead, and say, “But Govinda Mahārāj says we should do this, and I think that what he suggests could actually be better.”!

I remember one of the last things Śrīla Guru Mahārāj told me: as he was turning over his *Ācāryyaship* to Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj he said, “Actually in many ways he is more qualified than I am,” and also, “If you get to know him more intimately, more personally, you will come to understand what sort of transcendental character he has.”

Furthermore, there is something that is hard and indeed impossible to erase from my memory, and I don’t try to: I was soon to be going to America and it was towards the very end of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj’s manifest pastimes. He called me into his room and, knowing that I was leaving for the West and maybe would not see him again, he called me over to his

bed. I was very close to him: eye to eye, face to face. He grasped both of my shoulders very firmly and then started shaking my body with my head jostling about, and he said, "Goswāmī Mahārāj, this may be my last instruction to you..." The whole time he just kept on shaking me and he continued, "It is my sincere and earnest desire that you assist Govinda Mahārāj. Do you understand?" I replied with my voice in a tremolo, "Yes, Mahārāj."

That is the way of the *Vaiṣṇavas*, and it is further illustrated by the statement of Lord Śiva:

ārādhānānām sarveṣāṁ, viṣṇor ārādhānam param

"Of all the varieties of worship, the worship of Viṣṇu is said to be the best."

tasmāt parataram devi, tadīyānām samarcanam

"But the highest and complete concept of worship is to serve the one who is most dear to Viṣṇu." Just worshipping Viṣṇu is not complete without the potency of the one who is most dear to Him. So if we look at this in another way, the highest possible *sevā* is the service of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. It is higher than service to Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa.

Tadīya—what is dear to Him? The cows are dear to Him, Vṛndāvana is dear to Him, His friends are dear to Him, His mother...; there are so many things, but the one who is most dear to Him is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. He is making it clear that service to Her is the highest service possible to be performed. In the highest concept Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is the Guru. So if we extend that same concept further, then there are

those who are most dear to the Guru. If we search we shall see that there may be someone who's service outshines all the rest. In their connection the prospect of our own service may increase greatly.

Guru Mahārāj was fond of telling the example that a small capitalist stands to gain much by connecting his lesser wealth with the resources of the big capitalist. With our small reserves anyone of us can buy some shares in a huge multinational corporation and thereby reap the benefits. Similarly, the devotees can connect with those who are rich in devotion and, although we may only have a small amount of serving capacity, any service rendered to them connects to something higher, and we receive a greater remuneration from that. So there is no doubt in my mind that Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj is the most dear disciple and assistant of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, and that our position becomes enhanced by serving him, by glorifying him, and by participating in some way in his *sevā* which has been given to him by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj.

It is not by accident that everything in Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's possession was entrusted to Govinda Mahārāj. If you look in the various Wills of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj you will find repeatedly emphasised that every last property has been entrusted to him. If there is a rice field that they own somewhere in Navadwip, he is in full charge of it. Furthermore, in his Last Will and Testament Śrīla Guru Mahārāj clearly appoints Swāmī Bhakti Sundar Govinda

Mahārāj as the *Acāryya* of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, of the Hāpāniyā Maṭh, of Kṛṣṇānuśilana Saṅgha, and of all other Maṭhs under his Maṭh.

The great *Vaiṣṇavas* never think in a possessive mood, instead they see that some *sevā* has been entrusted to them by their Guru and they are compelled to try to perform that service.

I heard from Govinda Mahārāj that, "*Vaiṣṇavas* recognise other *Vaiṣṇavas*." This is the opposite of *Vaiṣṇava-aparādha* (offence to the devotees). They avoid finding fault in other *Vaiṣṇavas* because they know it is so detrimental to spiritual development—in fact it is the one thing that is said can uproot the *bhakti-latā*, the creeper of devotion. But our goal is not just to try to avoid offending other devotees, although for us it may be a goal worth aspiring for! Beyond that we are to make progress and become enriched by giving recognition and appreciation to *Vaiṣṇavas* and their service; and really we *must* do that. We must do that to the extent seen in the example of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj who was so appreciative of the devotees of ISKCON.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was very exalted and he was very much respected by all the members of the Gauḍīya Maṭh. Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur even said that Guru Mahārāj was carrying the conception of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur, but, despite such exalted qualification and honour, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj never had an attitude that he was a big Guru and *Acāryya* and that the members of ISKCON are

just young upstarts. He never took the attitude, "These young upstarts, what do they know?" But he saw, "Oh, they have some connection with Mahāprabhu—they must be respected." His attitude was like the verse in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

*śrīpāda, dhara mora gosāñira sambandha,
tāhā vinā anyatra nāhi ei premāra gandha.*

(C.c. Madhya 9.289)

When the *sanodīyā brāhmaṇa* saw the kind of ecstatic love of Mahāprabhu, he thought, "Oh, look at this, it is the most amazing thing. I know only Mādhavendra Purī to be in possession of such high feelings, therefore I can understand that Mahāprabhu must have some connection with him." Similarly Śrīla Guru Mahārāj always saw that, by the grace of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda, so many people have some connection with Mahāprabhu. He really appreciated that and gave them recognition for their service.

Once I told Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj the experience we all have when we go to the Maṭh: "Yourself and others here, you express so much appreciation for everyone—sometimes to the point of embarrassment." Furthermore I mentioned, "I don't know, Mahārāj, but sometimes I think it's a little too much!" To which he said, "No, we *must* do this. It's not some arbitrary sort of thing but we actually must do this if we expect the grace of Mahāprabhu. If we hope to be blessed by Him then we must recognise and appreciate those who already have some grace or blessings from Him."

and appreciate those who already have some grace or blessings from Him."

Even when Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is with Kṛṣṇa She sometimes reflects about His flute: "That flute *always* receives nectar from Kṛṣṇa's lips but I get that only sometimes." This is an example of the highest devotee exalting someone in a lower position.

After publishing *The Search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa* I received a letter from Govinda Mahārāj. There was such an impact in this one little letter that when I read it I almost fainted. His appreciation for this principle of glorifying others even though they are of a lower standing was so strongly evident. He wrote to the effect, "Although I have been trying to serve the lotus feet of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj for 35 years, you have surpassed me." He made it seem through this letter as though he had been unable to do anything, but that I had achieved something, and within such a short time. The only place that I have found such a mood expressed of deprecating one's own position while glorifying others is in the writings and lives of the great *Vaiṣṇavas*. Govinda Mahārāj is a *Vaiṣṇava Thākura*.

So by one means or another the *Vaiṣṇavas* sometimes forcibly make us feel their love—whether by the way they distribute *Prasādam*, by the way they appreciate other devotees, or by their many, varied, affectionate dealings—they inevitably capture our hearts.

On one occasion I received some news from the

Maṭh via one of my friends who was there, but the news felt a little disturbing to me. It concerned something I wanted to be done but it was not being done, and it was somehow implied to me that I was an outsider and unfamiliar with the inner workings of the *Maṭh*. I guess everyone wants to know that their Guru loves them, so I felt hurt because that was really what I wanted to know inside—and Śrīla Guru Mahārāj knew it. He would make me feel that I was a very intimate friend, and that gave me great encouragement; but then some news came to the contrary through someone else. I was a little disturbed, so I wrote a letter to the *Maṭh* expressing this.

I received a reply from Śrīla Guru Mahārāj in which he was very disturbed to hear what had reached my ears. He reassured me to the contrary and then said, "This is so preposterous that when Govinda Mahārāj heard this, blood oozed from his heart!"

Govinda Mahārāj has always personally been my affectionate well-wisher, and I feel reassured and confident knowing that after the departure of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj he is there to give guidance and inspiration. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj also has a great sense of humour, and really whenever I go to India I go there with the sole purpose of having a few moments of his association, because it is very purifying and rejuvenating. As is mentioned in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarvva-*

purifying and rejuvenating. As is mentioned in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya*—all success is achieved by even a moment's association with a pure devotee.

Therefore in many ways I am happy to have the opportunity to express my appreciation for him, however small and insignificant it may be coming from me. He is personally responsible for so many auspicious events in my own life in connection with Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and therefore I have a personal debt. I don't know to what extent the disciples of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and other devotees all over the world are aware of just how much they are also indebted to Śrīpād Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj. So this is a wonderful opportunity that we could all come together and show some appreciation on this day.

Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārājer āvirbhāva mahā-mahotsava tithi kī jaya!

-2-

The Original Current

From a lecture given by

His Holiness Tridaṇḍi Swāmī
Śrīpād Bhakti Ānanda Sāgar Mahārāj

at Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, Nabadwip,
on the eve of Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī
Mahārāj's Appearance Day Festival 1991

Service to Śrī Guru and *Vaiṣṇava* is itself the end. There is no need to consider this *līlā*, that *līlā*, this *rasa*, that *rasa*, without considering the pleasure of the higher *Vaiṣṇava*, and that *Vaiṣṇava* is Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj—Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj—chose him, therefore I always consider that on the entire planet he is the only person who can give Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Of course, we know that there is the *Rāmānuja-sampradāya*, *Mādhva-sampradāya*, etc., in which there are many respectable and venerable *Vaiṣṇavas*, and we are not aiming to dishonour them by saying such a thing. But once we have had a glimpse of the highest *siddhānta* and dispensation through the introduction of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda, we are left surprised to see that some are doubting and uncertain, some are still philosophising, others are searching the Scriptures—still searching, searching, searching—but when the qualified topmost *Vaiṣṇava* is standing there in front of us, what is to be done?

are doubting and uncertain, some are still philosophising, others are searching the Scriptures—still searching, searching, searching—but when the qualified topmost *Vaiṣṇava* is standing there in front of us, what is to be done?

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj himself has chanted Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj's glories so wonderfully, and in this way we are to hear from above. There is a particular current that comes from the cloud down to the ground, not from the ground up to the cloud. We are most fortunate, therefore, to have the association of Om Viṣṇupāda Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj. That title, "Dev-Goswāmī" is also his title. It is a *brāhmaṇa* title and it is fully applicable for Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj and Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj.

This is my personal understanding, finding, and experience: if we simply try to speak about the glories of Om Viṣṇupāda Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, we will find that suddenly the Mission of Mahāprabhu has come upon our heads, and this is what I want to say. If I say it in the presence of Śrīla Mahārāj, he may not be pleased with me due to his humility, but his heart's pleasure is another thing.

Yesterday Śrīla Mahārāj chanted the *bhajan*, "Gopīnāth." and having heard that, I feel there is nothing more I can say. When he sings "Gopīnāth," there is Gopīnāth; when Śrīla Mahārāj sings "Jaya

Guru Mahārāj yati-rājeśwara", there is Guru Mahārāj *yati-rājeśwara* (the Emperor of *sannyāsī* kings). What I want to say is: when *he* is doing *kīrttana*, there is *ṭṛṇād api sunīcena*, *taror api sahiṣṇunā*, *amāninā mānadena*, *kīrttanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ**. We find there the *vigraha* of *ṭṛṇād api sunīcena*—the embodiment and personification of *ṭṛṇād api sunīcena*.

From the very beginning of our coming to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj he taught us the glories of Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. On his own *Vyāsa-pūjā* day, the day after the *sannyāsa* of Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said, "Furthermore I want to say one thing, *tadīyānām samarcanam*, if you serve who is beloved of me, that is more than service to me."

Pārvatī devī asked Śambhu, "What is the highest worship?"

To which he replied, "*Ārādhanānām sarveṣām*, *viṣṇor ārādhanām param*—the highest is the worship of Viṣṇu." Pārvatī became a little sad because she worships Śambhu, yet Śambhu himself is saying there is someone higher than him. Then he said, "*Tasmāt parataram devī*, *tadīyānām samarcanam*—but higher than the worship of Viṣṇu is the worship of His devotees: that is even greater than devotion to the Lord Himself." In our *Vaiṣṇavism* we have

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

supreme, more supreme, and most supreme! In this way Śrīla Guru Mahārāj wanted to say, "If you serve Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, I will be more happy." He expressed this to so many.

Advaita Prabhu, weeping and crying day after day, prayed to Mahāprabhu, "Please come down here." Was his prayer only for giving *mukti* to the conditioned souls—for freeing them from the cycle of 8,400,000 species of life? Was it only for that? Was it only so they would go to the Brahman whereupon they would have to come down here again? No, it was because he was unable to tolerate the anti-atmosphere. He prayed: "Unless You come and do it Yourself it is impossible." And that prayer came from Advaita Ācāryya who is not an *Avatāra* of Mahā-Viṣṇu, but he is the *origin* of Mahā-Viṣṇu.

In this line I say with firm faith that Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh is the original current, and this current will go everywhere from shore to shore. It is our wish and prayer that all energy of every type will be engaged for this Mission of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and for the service of Śrīla Ācāryya-deva—and that is the only auspiciousness, the only good.

You will find genuine spiritual life in the genuine *śrauta-panthā* (sanctioned path). It is very necessary to tell the truth that only Śrīla Ācāryyadeva, who is selected by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, he can give Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is my exclusive prayer and

supplication on this day, the day Śrīla Mahārāj took *sannyāsa*.

Śrīla Mahārāj previously showed his *gṛhastha veśa* (his dress of a householder) and he was humble to everybody, but we came as foreigners as *sannyāsīs* and we could not understand his true identity. However, when he showed us his *Ācāryya* form, then we had to understand. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj selected Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, and he will now go to the whole world just like Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda did, but this will be the next instalment.

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda gave the introduction—only the introduction—but he was a *Śaktyāveśa-avatāra*. Nobody else could give the introduction; but it was only the beginning. In the introduction you can find the first chapter mentioned, the second chapter..., the eighteenth chapter—everything is mentioned—but now begin! That introduction was given life by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, from beginning to end, and now the next step is necessary and that is being given by our *Ācāryyadeva*, Śrīla Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj. If we have read the introduction we must not think we have everything. It is a disease to think, "I have everything."

The day after Śrīla Guru Mahārāj gave Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj *sannyāsa* was Guru Mahārāj's own Appearance Day and he was very happy on that day. Early that morning I went to see him and said, "Śrīla

Guru Mahārāj, yesterday you gave Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj *sannyāsa*; but I think he took *sannyāsa* many, many lifetimes ago."

He replied, "Oh, you want to say that this is only being done to show the people who he is, but actually he is much more than that?" Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was smiling and laughing, and on that morning, his own Appearance Day, he sat on his chair and for maybe two or three hours he talked about Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. This was the Appearance Day of the Guru but the Guru was doing *kīrttana* of the disciple!

I wrote in an article that the *praṇām-mantram* for Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, *gurvābhīṣṭa-supūrakam guru-gaṇair āśīṣa-sambhūṣitam...*, was directed and composed by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj instructed Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj in Bengali: "Put this, this, and this as the contents of the *mantram* and you make the wording in such and such a manner." But some objected, "That was not composed by Guru Mahārāj, it was composed by Govinda Mahārāj." Wrong! The composer is the man who tells the idea—the language is another thing. The *mantram* was composed by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, but how can we tell to the general masses that Gurudeva is telling the *praṇām-mantram* to his disciple? The world cannot understand such a thing, but here in Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh we can tell it! Therefore, with the brilliantly clear line of the original current before us,

we make our full obeisances with prayer for service at the lotus feet of he who is uniquely selected by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj: His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj.

*Jaya Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahaṁsa-parivrājaka-
ācāryya-varyya Aṣṭottara-śata-śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Sundar
Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj kī jaya!*



Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar
Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj

-3-

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's Divine Desire and Directives

[2nd Dec 1985]

The said Śrīman Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj (of whom I, Śrī Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, am the Godfather, and who is by caste *Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava* Brahmin, and who is by occupation a Religious Preacher and Worshipper of the Deities at the address Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, P.O. and Police Station Nabadwip)—the said Śrīman Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj, who, despite temporarily changing his formal position, was named and recognised by me as Śrī Govinda Sundar Vidyārañjan and engaged by me in all the various services of the *Maṭh*; and upon whom on the 6th November 1985 I conferred the order of *sannyāsa* whence I again named and recognised him as Śrī Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj; and, since he has tirelessly and whole-heartedly assisted in the duties of organising and developing this *Maṭh* and also in the duties of establishing and developing Calcutta and Hāpāniyā Centres, etc., and since he has arranged many donors and has provided much encouragement to even myself in the duties of managing the *Maṭh*, etc., and all the above-mentioned tasks he is still performing

up to this day; and since he is still naturally disposed to serve the *Maṭh* and its residents, and at all times he is endeavouring for the progressive development of *Śrī Maṭh*, and above all, he is well-known and unanimously acclaimed as being firmly established in the philosophy of the Perfect Axiomatic Truth of Bhakti as propounded by both myself as well as by my Divine Master—thus, I hereby appoint him as my Successor *Sevāite* (Successor Guardian-servitor), *Ācāryya*, and President. In compliance with the Rules and Regulations of the aforesaid Deed, all my lawful claims, directorship, and rights will automatically be inherited by him. In all of my *Maṭhs*, etc., he alone shall as the *Ācāryya*, confer initiation, etc., and shall as the *Sevāite* (Guardian-servitor) and President, manage all the duties of my established Temples, ashrams, etc. Hereby, I do reveal my final desire and directives unto all my Eastern and Western lady and gentlemen disciples, as well as to the faithful souls devoted to the Divinity, that: they must respect him as the exclusive *Ācāryya* and President, and remain faithful to him and cooperate with him in the service duties of the *Maṭh*.

If anyone cannot honour these directives and this final desire of mine, then they shall be bound to disassociate themselves from my established *Maṭhs*, etc...

* * * * *

All Glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga

Part Two

Compiled from Discourses

by His Divine Grace

Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj

First Discourse

Descent of Knowledge

Many births we have had in this world and many are awaiting us, but we have not yet found a solution to birth and death.

Because we have energy we must do something, whether good or bad. Energy is our soul's potency: willing, feeling, and thinking are present there, so we must do something; but if we do wrong then the result will be bad, and if we do right then the result will be good. Therefore it is necessary to realise what is wrong and what is right; and this human body is the main body, the main birth in which we can realise a solution. We have had many births but there was actually no chance for such realisation, however now we do have some opportunity. If we have good association then we can realise what is good for us in

this life as well as for our future living, also we will understand something of what we have done before—all these things we can realise in this birth. To get a human body is very rare but it is almost essential for the substantial advancement of the *jīva* (soul), and that chance is now in our own hand.

*labdhvā su-durlabham idam bahu-sambhavānte
mānuṣyam artha-dam anityam apīha dhīraḥ
(Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.9.29)*

All religions stress the importance of the human birth. Each have some mention that in this birth we can finalise our future. We also express this, but there are some differences between our goal and theirs. Most say that if you do good, goodness will wait to reward you in the future. But *Vaiṣṇavism* is eternal: a non-stop flow up to Goloka Vṛndāvana.

Svalpam apy asya dharmasya, trāyate mahato bhayāt—if you try to do something truly good, that will bring an eternal result. Now we have achieved this human body, therefore we are to try as hard as possible for our goal, and in doing so we can neglect our material duties.

*āhara-nidrā-bhaya-maithunam ca
sāmānyam etat paśubhir narāṇām
(Hitopadeśa)*

There is some difference between beast and man, and we are to realise this within our understanding. But only realisation cannot give us everything—there must also be some power: some strength of mind,

strength of the eternal soul, etc., and that comes through the Guru and the *Vaiṣṇavas*. We are to associate with those who are practising in proper consciousness. With their association our devotional strength will grow more and more. That is called *sādhu-saṅga*, the association of a good person, a *sādhu*.

*sādhu saṅga kṛṣṇa nāma ei mātra cai
saṁsāra jinite āra kona vastta nāi*

Wherever we shall go and whatever we shall practise, it is always necessary to take the help of an expert, otherwise we can make mistakes and do wrong. There are many things before us, but we are to be able to utilise everything properly. There are many electrical components but only an expert can use them properly in order to make a machine to record and reproduce sound, a cassette player. Similarly, everywhere and in all circumstances we need the help of experts in that field—and this is the main principle for our proper advancement. But we are to discern who is actually an expert and who is not. Actually we cannot understand what is the nature of someone's knowledge, feeling, transcendental property, etc., but only we can pray to Nityānanda Prabhu and Mahāprabhu that by Their mercy we may gain good association. According to the purity of our prayer, They may grant us that.

Sometimes we may feel hopeless and sometimes we may be very enthusiastic. When we see the chanting of the *Mahāmantra* and the dancing of the devotees all over the world we feel very enthusiastic.

But if we notice that there is some improper realisation behind that chanting and dancing—that they have received much, but cannot utilise it properly—we must feel hopeless. Sometimes a devotee may ask question after question about something we consider to be a simple point, and we wonder why he cannot understand. But he is questioning because for *him* it is not very simple, and when we see he still cannot understand despite repeated questions and answers, we may sometimes feel very hopeless. Everywhere in Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's books and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj's books there are advices and descriptions for our benefit, and if you can capture the essence and understand that properly, you will receive everything. The only cause of not capturing that essence is a deficiency of transcendental knowledge. Our deficiency lies there, and our necessity is to take the help of an expert.

*yāha, bhāgavata paḍa vaiṣṇavera sthāne
ekānta āśraya kara caitanya-carāṇe (C.c. Antya 5.131)*

This verse says that in order to understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* properly we are to hear it from someone who is fully established in devotional service and we are to fully surrender to Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Why is this advice given in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*? The point is that everything is recorded in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* but we are unable to receive it, therefore it is always necessary for us to take good association.

We do not want money (*kanak*), we do not want women (*kāminī*), and we do not want fame (*pratiṣṭhā*). All over the world the living entities are running to try to achieve these things. Even a very unqualified person who perhaps is only a collector of fodder for the cows, also strives for these. When he goes home to his house, he is "father"—he has a wife and receives some respect from her. He may not receive respect from others but he receives respect from his family. He also has money. He may not have as much as others but even with his 10 rupees per day wages he tries to enjoy. Similarly, everywhere and in every life, *kanak*, *kāminī*, and *pratiṣṭhā* are available to some degree. But that is not actually our goal of life. Life's goal should be to achieve transcendental knowledge. Through transcendental knowledge we can proceed to our destination.

Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's Gurudeva—was happy to see many of his disciples organising their own *maṭhs*, institutions, and temples, and doing much construction work to make the various buildings. But he also gave some warning, "We did not come into this world in order to be storemen, builders, carpenters, etc. Actually, our duty is to serve Śrī Guru, the *Vaiṣṇavas*, and Bhagavān: *this* is our main duty, and we are expanding with institutions, buildings, etc. because we want to attract other *jīvas*—other souls."

If devotees will not stay in the *Maṭh* then what is

the use of so many bricks? If devotees will not be happy with their service duties then what shall we do with all these jobs? Therefore it is very essential for the conditioned souls to have the association of one who can guide their mind in a transcendental way. We are to search that special association.

It is not always clear in our *sampradāya* who is the Guru of many of even the great *Ācāryyas*. Who was the Guru of Rūpa Goswāmī? Who was the Guru of Raghunāth Dāsa Goswāmī, of Gopāl Bhaṭṭa Goswāmī, of Prabodhānanda Saraswatī, etc.? It is known but it is not always readily evident in the Scriptures; this is because our *Guru-paramparā* comes through the line of *Śikṣā-gurus*. The *Mantra-guru* is therefore sometimes little known and even the name of the *Mantra-guru* of a great *Ācāryya* may not be mentioned anywhere in the Scriptures. Who is the *Mantra-guru* of Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa? It is not generally known, but perhaps it may be discovered if we carefully scrutinise the Scriptures. However, we can readily see that Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa follows Viśvanāth Chakravartī and therefore it is accepted that Viśvanāth Chakravartī is his Guru—this is the *Śikṣā-guru* line.

We may not know who is the Guru of Gaura Kiśor Dāsa Bābāji Mahārāj or who is the Guru of Jagannāth Dāsa Bābāji Mahārāj, but from the line of *Śikṣā-gurus* we can see that after Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa comes Jagannāth Dāsa Bābāji Mahārāj

When we see street lights lit up along a bridge

we can understand that the electric current is flowing along a particular path. Similarly it is necessary to see the living link.

We are not servants of one thing or another, but we are servants of our master. If he will say, "This is very good," we shall also say, "Yes, this is very good." And if the master will say, "Those items are not good," then we shall hate those things!

In other words, we are servants of our master. What he considers to be good, we shall similarly consider as good. Śrīnivās Ācāryya showed his nature in this way, and also we can see this in all the other great devotees.

Yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas. In the *Upaniṣads* it says that the meaning of transcendental knowledge is that it comes down from the upper level. That knowledge is not *my* servant. I shall worship that, I need that, and I shall go wherever it is possible to receive that. Only it is available from one who is a master of that line, and if such a master is satisfied by my service he may give that transcendental knowledge to me. I have no other way to receive it.

In *Jaiva Dharmma* by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura there is a description of how one *māyāvādī sannyāsī* developed servitorship to the devotees. He came to Premdāsa Bābāji Mahārāj and asked many questions, and by hearing the replies he could understand the *Bābāji's* property really to be transcendental. He was very learned and thought, "I am educated and have great knowledge in many fields, but of *that* type of

knowledge I have nothing." He then surrendered to Premdāsa Bābāji Mahārāj who invited him to stay in his ashram. The *sannyāsī* followed his instructions and gradually transcendental knowledge also came to him.

Bilvamaṅgal Ṭhākur was a great expert in the *māyāvāda* section—the teachings of Śaṅkarāchāryya. But he came into the service-line of *Vaiṣṇavism* and received the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Bilvamaṅgal Ṭhākur directly could feel that everything changed not only externally, but also internally. Everything—his willing, feeling, thinking—fully changed. The following *śloka* is composed by him:

*advaita-vīthī-pathikair upāsyāḥ
svānanda-simhāsana-labdha-dīkṣāḥ
haṭhena kenāpi vyaṁ śaṭhena
dāsi-kṛtā gopa-vadhū-viṭena*

"I was master of *advaita-mārga*: always with my full knowledge I remained on my seat of honour, but one cowherd boy came and took me from that *simhāsana* and made me His servant—a servant in the mood of a woman: *dāsi kṛtā gopa vadhū viṭena*."

Actually, all *jīvas* have the female form. They are *śakti*, potency—*jīva-śakti*. The form of potency is service, and the best form for service is the female form. It will not simply appear by meditation, but it will come to us only when that knowledge itself will descend into our hearts. At that time everything will change.

There is an example I like to recite: One day, while Gaura Kiśor Dāsa Bābāji was walking along the road, some small boys threw stones at him thinking him to be a madman. However, Bābāji Mahārāj reacted by telling Kṛṣṇa, "Oh, Kṛṣṇa, what are You doing? You are disturbing me very much, therefore I shall go to Mother Yaśodā and tell her of this incident. She will chastise You, and You will take notice of *her* chastisement!" Gaura Kiśor Dāsa Bābāji did not think the boys to be throwing the stones, but his mood was fully different: he thought, "Kṛṣṇa Himself is doing this, not those boys." In this way, when we become Kṛṣṇa conscious a wholesale change will come from within, but at the present time we cannot chant *Harināma* properly. Why? Because we have *abhimāna*, *ahaṅkāra*: ego. When that screen of ego is withdrawn we shall find our real form and we shall be able to see everything properly. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur said, *kṛṣṇa nāma dhare kata bala, hṛdaya haite bale jihvāra agrete cale śabda rūpe nace anukṣaṇ*.*

Similarly in *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhuḥ* we find:

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

(B.r.s. 1.2.234)

*—"The Name of Kṛṣṇa possesses so much power. It speaks from within my heart, moves on the tip of my tongue, and constantly dances there in the form of transcendental sound."

"He will dance in my heart and He will dance on my tongue—that is real *Kṛṣṇa-nāma*."

A higher stage is also possible, some essence of which has been given by Sanātan Goswāmī. Generally we want to mix with the residents of that spiritual world, but Sanātan Goswāmī does not want such things; his is quite another plane of conception.

In his earlier days Sanatan Goswāmī many times asked questions to Mahāprabhu for his satisfaction. But in a laughing mood Mahāprabhu would avoid his questions. Sanātan Goswāmī would directly ask, "In *kali-yuga* is there any incarnation of Kṛṣṇa?" And Mahāprabhu would reply to him in a playful way, "Oh, Sanātan, you are very naughty...", and would avoid the answer.

Later, when in Vṛndāvana, Rūpa Goswāmī wanted to offer his Guru, Sanātan Goswāmī, some sweet-rice. He thought, "My Gurudeva likes sweet-rice. If I can secure some milk, sugar, raisins, nuts, etc., I shall be able to make some sweet-rice, offer it to Kṛṣṇa, and then to my Gurudeva." A little later, a young girl, perhaps twelve or fourteen years of age, came to Rūpa Goswāmī's *bhajan-kuṭīr* in Kadam Kaṇḍī, near to Nandagrām. She told him she had come under instruction from her parents and the villagers. She mentioned they had given her some ingredients and asked her to take them to Rūpa Goswāmī in order for him to make sweet-rice to offer to Kṛṣṇa.

Rūpa Goswāmī was surprised. He reflected, "Just this morning I wished for these things and now they have come automatically." He happily accepted the items and immediately went the kilometre or so to Sanātan Goswāmī's *bhajan-kuṭīr* in Nandagrām and invited him, "Prabhu, today please come to my *bhajan-kuṭīr* and take some *Prasādam*."

Sanātan Goswāmī happily accepted the invitation and so Rūpa Goswāmī made very nicely the various preparations including the sweet-rice.

Sanātan Goswāmī came there around noon and he saw the many fragrant and nice preparations. While taking that *Prasādam* Sanātan Goswāmī thought, "I have passed maybe sixty years but I have never tasted such fine types of *Prasādam*, I wonder in what way this has been made." He was very brilliant like our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, so he then asked Rūpa Goswāmī, "Rūpa, in which way did you make these preparations? The ingredients are also very expensive and difficult to obtain. How were you able to secure such things?"

Rūpa Goswāmī said, "Today in the early morning I was thinking that I would like to offer you especially this type of sweet-rice. Presently one girl came saying she was from the nearby village of Jāvaṭ. She gave me the ingredients and asked that I prepare and offer them to Kṛṣṇa."

Sanātan Goswāmī was a little puzzled as he knew practically every house and all the members of

each family in Vraja Dhām.

Everyone considered Sanātan Goswāmī as their family judge. If any quarrel would come within a family they would consult with him and abide by his decisions. In this way he was very well-known especially in Nandagrām, Jāvaṭ, Varṣānā, etc. His assessment of a situation was always very accurate, and everyone respected him as the lord and judge of their family. In this way Sanātan Goswāmī knew all the people of Jāvaṭ, but Rūpa Goswāmī did not.

Sanātan enquired further to Rūpa regarding that girl and asked from which family she had come. Rūpa Goswāmī could only say, "She told me she came from Jāvaṭ, but she did not mention any particular family."

Sanātan Goswāmī then went to Jāvaṭ and enquired as to whose family had supplied such fine ingredients. Finding that the ingredients had not come from anyone's house in that village he lastly decided that it was Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī Herself who had served Rūpa Goswāmī by supplying the ingredients. He was very sad and approached Rūpa Goswāmī, "What have you done? It is not good to want to fulfil your wish. I searched the whole of Jāvaṭ village but what was brought this morning did not come from anyone's house there. I am one hundred per-cent sure that Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī Herself came to you and brought these things, otherwise it is impossible to make this very special

kind of *Prasādam*. I have often accepted your cooking in the past and I have tasted many kinds of *Prasādam* prepared by you, but on this occasion what have you done? Your wish is not good. Whom we want to worship, and whom we always search for in order to worship, *She* came and served us." Sanātan Goswāmī was very unhappy and he left that *bhajan-kuṭīr*.

Rūpa Goswāmī was also very sad, "Oh, my Gurudeva was not satisfied." A servant was seated in front of Rūpa Goswāmī and he witnessed the great separation and sadness that came to Rūpa Goswāmī. His sadness in the feeling of separation was so high that his body became very hot, his breathing stopped, and his hairs all stood on end. That is a very exalted level of consciousness, and for now we are to worship that, but only from afar. We want to go there and we want to serve. There are many different levels of service, and if we make ourselves qualified to accept that, then the exalted service mood will itself appear inside our very form.

In front of us are many things that draw us away from service, but we have received a very good Guru. Now the ball is in our own court. We have everything in that we have the seed of *Kṛṣṇa-prema* through Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj and Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. Just to receive the seed is a very fortunate thing, and really we have that: there is no haziness there—it is brighter than sunlight. Therefore, with

full consciousness we shall try to gain transcendental knowledge. That seed is in our hand and we shall try to nurture it properly.

Second Discourse

Lessons in Giving

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj many times explained that wealth is for Nārāyaṇa, women are for Kṛṣṇa, and fame is for Gurudeva. There is a very nice saying in Bengali: *guru gaṇa śire punaḥ śobhā pāya śata guṇa* —whatever fame may come to me, if I immediately transfer that to the lotus feet of my Guru, then in an exalted and glorious way it will shine and I shall also be within its rays. So always we must try to offer ourselves to our Guru; and the Guru's nature is that he always sends everything immediately to the lotus feet of his Guru, and in this way through the preceptorial line everything very quickly reaches Kṛṣṇa.

In Sanskrit logic it is said: "*śatapatra vedhaḥ —nyāya*," if a needle is passed through a pile of a hundred leaves, it must go through the leaves one at a time no doubt, but it is apparently instantaneous. The time difference between the needle penetrating each leaf is practically uncountable, but still there is a difference. Similarly when we receive some fame or anything else, if we offer that in the proper place then it will go practically instantaneously through the line of succession to Kṛṣṇa. The proper place is that women are for Kṛṣṇa, wealth is for Nārāyaṇa,

wealth is for Nārāyaṇa, and fame is for Gurudeva. In the ultimate sense Guru is Rādhārāṇī and by giving fame to Guru it quickly goes by the process of *śatapatra vedhaḥ—nyāya* directly to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. The light coming from that world will in turn make us also exalted.

Taccātmane prati mukhasya yathā mukhaśrīḥ—if you put *tilak* on your forehead, you will immediately see in the mirror the presence of the *tilak*. In that way if you put everything through your beloved Lord, that will immediately come back to you and you will be exalted with that. This is a very nice example given to us in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

So we shall try to satisfy our Gurudeva—it is the only way. But the Guru must be genuine, and he must be always offering obeisances to his Guru. There is only this one main qualification: who is a hundred per-cent surrendered to his Guru, he can become Guru. The other qualifications are minor, such as the sixty-four kinds of activities of practising life, etc.

Prahlāda Mahārāj said:

*śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ viṣṇoḥ smaraṇaṁ pāda-sevanam
arccanaṁ vandanaṁ dāsyam sakhyam ātma-nivedanam*

*iti puṁsārpitā viṣṇau bhaktiś cen nava-lakṣaṇā
kriyeta bhagavaty addhā tan manye 'dhītam uttamam*
(Bhā: 7.5.23-24)

The meaning of this is that there are nine

principle processes of devotional service* but the super-qualification is dedication. With dedication, whatever one does will come out in the form of transcendence. For example, there may be so many flowers in a garden but they do not have any special value for us. However, if one flower is put to the hand or to the lotus feet of the Deity, we shall take that flower respectfully upon our head. Why? A flower is a mundane thing, but when we offer it to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa it assumes a worshipful position.

If we offer ourselves to our Guru he will not keep us for his convenience but he will send us to Kṛṣṇa. He does not keep any of the energy we surrender to him, but all of it he sends on through his Guru and therefore by the process of "*śatapatra vedhaḥ—nyāya*" it reaches Kṛṣṇa. From there mercy comes back in another form to the giver and duly glorifies him also. In this way mercy comes down from above, and that mercy is transcendental knowledge.

Actually we cannot worship Kṛṣṇa with anything mundane, therefore when we go to worship the Deity we say mantrams. Before offering a flower we put some Ganges water on it and recite the mantram:

*—Hearing about Kṛṣṇa; chanting about Him; remembering Him; serving His lotus feet; worshipping Him; offering Him prayers; serving Him as a servant; becoming His friend and; fully surrendering to Him.

*puṣpe puṣpe mahā-puṣpe supuṣpe puṣpa sambhave
puṣpa ca vakīrṇe ca yā 'hum phat svāhā*

Also when we take water in a pot for the Lord's worship we recite another mantram in order to make that water transcendental:

*gange ca yamune caiva godāvāri saraswati
narmmade sindho kāverī jale 'smin sannidhim kuru*

By this same means we also transform ourselves with appropriate meditation accompanied by the mantram:

*divya śrī hari-mandirādya tilakam
kaṅṭham sumālānvitam,
vakṣaḥ śrī harināma varṇa subhagam
śrī khaṇḍa liptam punaḥ,
pūtam sūkṣamana vāmvaram vimalatām,
dhyāyeccha śrī-guru pāda-padma
nikāṭe sevot sukāñcātmanah*

This has the meaning: "I am a servant of the servants of the servants of my Guru Mahārāj, may he give his mercy so I can worship his lotus feet, and may he offer me, along with all my energy, to Kṛṣṇa." This is the way of real *arccan*, real worship.

Actually, with our own energy we cannot fulfil Kṛṣṇa. Reality is by itself and for itself—He is satisfied with Himself and His own paraphernalia. He feels only a little deficiency in that He needs servitors to serve His servitors. He is eager to fulfil only this one need.

*ratnā karastava gṛham gṛhīni ca padmā
kim deya masti bhavato jagadīśvarāya
ābhira vāmanayanā hr̥ta mānasāya
dattam mano yadupate tadidam gṛhān*

The devotee wants to offer something to Kṛṣṇa, but what will he offer? Kṛṣṇa is also Viṣṇu, and Viṣṇu lives in the ocean of jewels—*ratnā karastava gṛham*.

The devotee thinks, "What shall I give to Kṛṣṇa? I have some jewels which I can offer to Him, but it is not sufficient for Him. It cannot satisfy Him because He is living in the ocean where there are so many jewels. Indeed He is the master of jewels!

"*Ratnā karastava gṛham gṛhīni ca padmā*—so then I may want to give some other kind of wealth such as gold or cloth or any other thing from this mundane world which, being necessary here for the maintenance of the family and so on, is considered to be wealth. But the proprietor of all wealth is Lakṣmīdevī and She is living with Him, Lord Viṣṇu, therefore He also has all wealth."

He has much jewellery, He has all wealth, He even has a whole ocean of condensed milk! So the devotee cannot understand how he can satisfy the Lord.

*ratnā karastava gṛham gṛhīni ca padmā
kim deya masti bhavato jagadīśvarāya*

"What shall I give to You? You have everything." Then it comes to the devotee's mind, "Oh, maybe there is one thing not within my Lord's control, and

that is His mind! My Lord's mind has been taken by the *Gopīs*." Kṛṣṇa's mind always searches for the service of the *Gopīs*, in this way He has actually lost His mind: the *Gopīs* took it. Therefore the devotee prays to Kṛṣṇa, "You have no mind, actually, so please You take my mind unto Your lotus feet, and relish with that."

It is necessary to give Kṛṣṇa our mind, and by offering it unto His lotus feet we will be glorified. Only this is necessary, but in which way shall we make our offering? Even though Kṛṣṇa lives within our heart we cannot see Him and we cannot connect with Him directly. Only through the "telescopic system" can we see Him. In the sky there are millions of stars but we cannot see them because we have no such capacity. So it is necessary to gain that ability to see, and this is achieved by means of the "telescopic system" When with proper adjustment we put lenses in a line one after the other, through that lens system we can see something far away. In a similar way the *Guru-paramparā* is our means of seeing Kṛṣṇa. It is also through that line of Gurus that our service reaches Kṛṣṇa, and it is accepted by Him immediately. This logic is mentioned in the Sanskrit books and is called "*śatapatra vedhaḥ—nyāya*". We think that service reaches Kṛṣṇa directly but actually it goes via each successive Guru one by one to Him just as the needle passes through a pile of leaves. It is necessary to offer ourselves to Kṛṣṇa, but the only way to do so is through Guru. And we must take

care to accept a genuine Guru otherwise the needle will be broken. In the Scriptures we can find the symptoms of a real Guru:

*kṛpā-sindhuḥ su-sampūrṇaḥ, sarvva-sattvopakarakah
nisprahaḥ sarvataḥ siddhaḥ, sarvva-vidyā-viśāradaḥ
sarvva-saṁśaya-saṁchettā, 'nalaso gurur āhṛtaḥ**
(*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 1.45-46)

This is the qualification of Guru, and we will receive our connection with Kṛṣṇa by connecting with, and staying connected with, one in whom we find these symptoms.

Whatever we do we must do with sincerity, and that in itself will help to safeguard us. We must be sincere. Sincerity, humility, and tolerance are the necessary qualifications to receive transcendental knowledge. First is sincerity. With sincerity we can get everything, but we really must be sincere otherwise the results will not come. An analogy has been mentioned that as good steel is necessary to make a good weapon, similarly real sincerity is necessary to make a real devotee. Sincerity is the steel of the devotee. We must offer ourselves with our full sincerity. We shall also try to adopt the qualities of humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others.

We must always be humble. *Māyā* will give many tests but we must try to tolerate everything and realise why such things are happening.

*—For translation see Appendix A.

Furthermore, if we want to remain peacefully we must give honour to others. If we do not disturb others but give honour to them, they will not disturb us. They will think, "This person is very innocent. He is not against me, furthermore he nourishes me by giving me respect, so I must not disturb him."

Mahāprabhu always wants that His devotees have peace in order to practise spiritual life. Such peace is only possible if the devotees are humble and tolerant, and if they give honour to others. The devotee will think, "I do not want to see whether someone is an honourable person or not, but I know my own position is that of an insignificant soul who is aspiring to be a servant of the servants of the servants of Kṛṣṇa. So if someone wants any honour from me I must immediately give it to him and not give him any chance to think me to be an enemy."

We can see an example in the Pastimes of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī who was approached by a *digvijaya paṇḍit*, a big world-renowned scholar. Hearing of Rūpa Goswāmī's name and fame he went to him and challenged: "If you cannot defeat me then give me your certificate by signing a statement that you have been defeated by me."

Rūpa Goswāmī thought, "I have no time to talk with that man." He therefore asked, "Where is your paper? I shall sign it." He then wrote to the effect that, "This man is a great *paṇḍit* and I have been defeated by him," and he signed it. This is the nature of the pure devotees, they do not want to cause

disturbance or trouble to others. They are well aware that everything here is a passing show. People think that what they have is their wealth, but we neither know when we shall die nor where we shall go after death. Our duty is to prepare ourselves for the service of Kṛṣṇa, and *that* is the real wealth of our lives. Our only shelter is to serve Kṛṣṇa, therefore we do not want to waste our time with worldly affairs.

This is one mood of the devotees, and another is shown by Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu. He wanted to rectify that *digvijaya paṇḍit*, and therefore chastised him: "You went to see Rūpa Goswāmī but you do not know who he is. You think yourself to be a great *paṇḍit*, but now I consider you to be very foolish. You went to the ocean of ecstasy but you did not receive even one drop of that ecstasy. You went there but came back empty handed, therefore I consider you to be very foolish. You do not know who Rūpa Goswāmī and Sanātan Goswāmī really are, therefore you went to defeat them. You have made a great offence to them. I am their disciple and if you want to examine me then go ahead, by which you may understand something of their greatness." Anyhow, that *digvijaya paṇḍit* received the mercy of Jīva Goswāmī and was defeated by him within a few minutes. He could understand he had made much offence to Rūpa and Sanātan, and, by Jīva Goswāmī's mercy, he left his ego. The *paṇḍit* immediately returned to Rūpa Goswāmī and Sanātan Goswāmī and, apologising, took shelter of them. Jīva Goswāmī

was happy that he was able to do some service to his Guru by rescuing this *digvijaya paṇḍit* from illusion.

Following this incident, Rūpa Goswāmī, in order to teach us, showed some unhappiness towards Jīva Goswāmī: "You have come here to Vṛndāvana but now it seems through this incident that you want to acquire mundane fame." This, however, was not the desire of Jīva Goswāmī, his intention was to glorify his Guru, correct the *digvijaya paṇḍit*, and bestow mercy upon him. This lesson is from one of the many incidents in the lives of our *Ācāryyas*.

Third Discourse

Protected Journey

Yesterday someone asked, "How do we see that Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa is in the line of Viśvanāth Chakravartī and Rūpa Goswāmī?" Actually they are protectors of our *sampradāya* from the illusory environment created by the *paṇḍit* section.

When Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa began writing the *Govinda-bhāṣya*, he first gave his obeisances to Kṛṣṇa, then to Jīva Goswāmī. He considered Jīva Goswāmī to be our Guru by giving protection from the *paṇḍits*. Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa wrote the following *praṇām mantram*:

*yaḥ sāmkyā paṅkena kutarka pāmśunā
vivartta-garttena ca luṭṭa dīdhītim
śuddham vyadhāt vāk sudhayā maheśvaram
kṛṣṇam sa jīvaḥ prabhu rastta me gatih*

This is a very difficult *śloka* and hard for me to explain in English. What I am explaining is not a literal translation but it gives the mood, the *bhāva*. He says, "I offer my full *dandavats* unto the lotus feet of Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī who is the protector of our spiritual life. He rescues us from the whole illusory environment."

He protects us from *sarikhya* philosophy which he compares to quick-sand. When the *jīvas* want to

cross over the ocean of material existence, they first come across muddy quick-sand. In the *nyāya śāstra*, the endless dry arguments are likened to ashes, soot, and smoke blowing in the wind and covering the eyes, sky, and everything around so we cannot see what is really in our front. Through the wind of bad arguments, everything is covered and we cannot see Kṛṣṇa.

Next he mentions *vivartta-garttena*. *Vivartta-vāda* is Śaṅkarācāryya's philosophy of *nirvviśeṣa-vāda* which is compared to a hole in the road.

You want to go to Kṛṣṇa but cannot. Why? Because in the road there are these kinds of disturbances. The first disturbance comes from *sāṅkhya* philosophy; compared to mud. Not only can you not cross it, but it is the kind of mud, like quick-sand, from which you cannot extract yourself. The next disturbance is *kutarka*, which means *nyāya-śāstra*, argument, which is compared to the blowing of soot and smoke. Still you try to progress on your journey, but suddenly many large blind holes appear in the road. These holes are like Śaṅkarācāryya's *vivartta-vāda*. This is, *māyāvāda: vivartta-garttena ca lupta dīdhītiṁ*. The *māyāvāda* philosophy is waiting for you in the road like a hole; if you fall into that hole you may be lost forever. In that hole you lose your body, nobody gives you any food or nourishment, nothing is there and you die there. But, Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa says, "*Śuddham vyadhāt vāk sudhayā maheśvaram*—Jīva Goswāmī is the rescuer from that

environment, and he has shown Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His exalted position—*jyotira bhyantare rūpam atulam śyāmasundaram*. I offer my everything to him." It is difficult for me to explain in English, but this is the line of thought.

So Jīva Goswāmī is our protector, and Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa is a *paṇḍit* of similar standing to him. He was initiated into the *Mādhva-sampradāya* and later, after reading the literature of Jīva Goswāmī Prabhu and Viśvanāth Chakravartī Ṭhākur he became a devotee of the *Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava-sampradāya*—Mahāprabhu's *sampradāya*.

Both Rādhā-Govinda and Nārāyaṇa are worshipped in the king's palace in Jaipur. The tradition was always that the devotees and the King of Jaipur would first worship Rādhā-Govinda and then Nārāyaṇa. But there was another *sampradāya* who objected and they created a conflict. They said, "First Nārāyaṇa should be worshipped then Rādhā-Govinda." They challenged the *Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇavas*: "This Deity is a Deity of the *Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇavas* so whoever is a qualified *Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava* within your *sampradāya*, bring him; we shall debate with him and certainly we will defeat him!" Then all the *Vaiṣṇavas* went to Viśvanāth Chakravartī who was at that time in Vṛndāvana. He was very old and he was disinclined to go there or to engage in the debate. He thought, "Those opposing in Jaipur have a very bad argument but they do not know it." But who was to go?

At that time Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa was with

Viśvanāth Chakravartī Ṭhākur. Viśvanāth Chakravartī examined him to see if he could establish our conception of the worship of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa before the worship of Nārāyaṇa. Viśvanāth Chakravartī became very satisfied and thought him to be the best person to establish this *Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava* principle. He therefore requested Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, "Please, you go to Jaipur."

Taking his blessings he went alone to the king's assembly in Jaipur. His body was very thin, and he had all the appearance of a *Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava*. He was not old but at that time his age was perhaps only thirty to forty. On first seeing his age the devotee king was not satisfied, but when seeing his bright face, he considered, "Yes, the better representatives may all be elderly and unable to come, but they have sent this bright younger devotee. Now we eagerly wait to see what he will be able to do."

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa then faced the *Rāmānuja-sampradāya's* challenge. The *Rāmānuja paṇḍits* asked their first question: "Whose *bhāṣya* are you following?" *Bhāṣya* means interpretation. At that time a *sampradāya* would be recognised only if they had a *bhāṣya* of *Vedānta*, a *bhāṣya* of *Upaniṣad*, a *bhāṣya* of *Viṣṇu-sahasra-nāma stotra*, and a *bhāṣya* of *Gītā*. In many places this criterion is mentioned that a *sampradāya* can be recognised when these are present. Such *bhāṣya* did not exist in the *Gauḍīya-sampradāya*, so the *paṇḍits* said, "We shall not talk with you because you are not following any *sampradāya*."

Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa responded, "If it is necessary to have such *bhāṣya* for me to talk with you, give me seven days. After seven days I shall talk with you, and at that time I shall inform you whose *bhāṣya* I am following."

They replied, "Yes, take seven or ten days." So he went to Govindadeva, the Deity of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī, and taking the blessings of the *Vaiṣṇavas* of our *sampradāya*, he bowed down to Govindadeva and took permission from Him to make the *bhāṣya*.

After seven days he again met with the opposing *paṇḍits* and presented to them: "I am following this *Govinda-bhāṣya* of *Vedānta-darśan*, it is in our *sampradāya*."

"Who made it?"

"I myself."

Like Śaṅkarācāryya and Rāmānujācāryya, he composed his own *bhāṣya*. Looking at his face and talking with him, the *paṇḍits* were surprised: "Within only seven days he composed it. He is a very great *paṇḍit*."

Very easily Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa then defeated them by clearly showing them that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and Nārāyaṇa is coming from Kṛṣṇa, not that Kṛṣṇa is coming from Nārāyaṇa. He established this principle in that meeting and he proved that Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are both to be worshipped by everybody, and They are the Supreme Personality. The *paṇḍits* became very happy, and until the present day this process of worshipping

Rādhā-Govinda followed by the worship of Nārāyaṇa is still being practised in Jaipur.

When writing the *bhāṣya*, he made his *praṇāms* to Kṛṣṇa and then to Jīva Goswāmī. Included there is this *śloka*:

*yaḥ sām̐kya paṅkena kutarka pām̐sunā
vivartta-garttena ca luṭṭa dīdhītiṁ
suddham̐ vyadhāt vāk sudhayā maheśvaram̐
kṛṣṇam̐ sa jīvaḥ prabhu rastta me gatiḥ*

When Guru Mahārāj would explain this *śloka*, his mood and expression would change in such a way that, seeing his face, we would think him to be just like Jīva Goswāmī. It was as if Jīva Goswāmī was actually sitting there in front of us!

So this is the history of the *Govinda bhāṣya*, and this is how Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa made his commentaries. Since that time Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, though he was a young man, has been worshipped by the *Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava-sampradāya*. His contribution is our wealth.

Fourth Discourse

Adjusting to His Account

Vaiṣṇava-aparādha is the greatest danger in the cultivation of devotional service. By seeing the activities of others we should not be quick to judge them as non-*Vaiṣṇavas*. Even we find that sometimes two devotees may fight in a very angry mood. In Mahābhārata it is related that when Yudhiṣṭhir was very angry sometimes he would insult Arjuna. On one such occasion he told Arjuna very angrily, "You have much power and so many good weapons unequalled by others, but why don't you kill Karna? Why do you even bother to take your bow, Gāṇḍīva, in your hand if you don't kill him? Throw it away!"

Arjuna had a promise that he would kill anyone who insults his Gāṇḍīva. Therefore on hearing these words Arjuna immediately took up his bow and went to sever Yudhiṣṭhir's head from his body.

Kṛṣṇa was there and said, "Arjuna, don't be so foolish. What are you doing?"

Arjuna replied, "I am not doing this enviously, but it is my promise that if anyone will insult my Gāṇḍīva I shall kill him. I have made this promise and I am a *ksatriya*, therefore whoever he may be—even my mother or father—I must kill him. This

is the reason I am going to kill Yudhiṣṭhir."

Then Kṛṣṇa asked, "And if you don't kill him then what will you do?"

"I will leave my own body."

Hearing this, Kṛṣṇa said, "Then leave your body, but don't kill your brother. If necessary then *you* die, but why are you preparing to kill your brother? You are foolish, you do not know what is religion."

Arjjuna reflected and immediately accepted, "Yes this solution is possible. I must die. If I kill my brother, too much sinful reaction will come to me, so I must die." Then he said to Kṛṣṇa, "I shall die."

Kṛṣṇa replied, "Yes, now you are being sensible. You can do that."

Then Arjjuna again took his weapon, this time to kill himself. But Kṛṣṇa took his hand and said, "Oh, how much shall I have to teach you? Will it be possible within one lifetime to teach so much?"

Arjjuna said, "What problem can there be now? We already decided the best solution is that I die, so I'm preparing to do that."

"Yes, you die. But there are eight kinds of death in this mundane plane, so you should choose sensibly." Kṛṣṇa then advised, "Amongst those eight types of death, one is self-glorification. You can die in this way. Another type of death is to insult someone, therefore if you insult Yudhiṣṭhir it will be his death. So why are you using your weapons? Instead use your tongue—it is also a weapon."

Then Arjjuna enthusiastically glorified himself by proclaiming to Yudhiṣṭhir his glorious activities of battle. Simultaneously he heavily insulted Yudhiṣṭhir. "I have done this great thing and that great thing, but what have you done? Only you have been sitting in your chair giving us orders. You don't even know what a battlefield is..."

Yudhiṣṭhir then felt great pain and said, "I am not going to live. Now I am suffering so much pain I shall die."

Seeing Yudhiṣṭhir faint, Kṛṣṇa instructed Arjjuna, "Now go and touch his feet and explain to him why you have done what you did. Apologise and everything will be settled."

This is proper harmony and adjustment. So if we see devotees quarrelling we should always try to follow this mood. We cannot immediately say that those in either party are not devotees. At first we must think why the disturbance came, and consider all the circumstances, only then can we take a proper course of action. That is our duty.

Question: Is it sure that a devotee in his next life will take birth as a devotee?

Śrīla Mahārāj: In *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa tells Arjjuna,

*yaṁ yaṁ vāpi smaran bhāvam, tyajaty ante kalevaram
tam tam evaiti kaunteya, sadā tad-bhāva-bhāvitaḥ*
(Bg. 8.6)

"At the time of death the tendencies from our

whole life, as well as from previous lives, will all come to us and we will receive another body according to whatever we remember."

If I am within Kṛṣṇa consciousness in this life but I am to take another birth, my next life must be again endowed with at least my present amount of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In a more exalted way that will come to me, and I shall receive a better chance.

Kṛṣṇa says,

śucīnām śrīmatām gehe, yoga-bhraṣṭo 'bhijāyate

(Bg. 6.41)

"One who cannot fulfil his devotional practising life in this body will receive another body after death through which he will receive a better chance to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness."

Another thing is that we may see a good, high class devotee remaining senseless in a coma for some days before leaving his body, so the question may arise as to what will be the outcome for him. But Kṛṣṇa says about His devotee:

na hi kalyāṇa-kṛt kaścid, durgatim tāta gacchati

(Bg. 6.40)

"Whether or not a devotee can remember Me at the time of death is not the criterion for him. That is the rule for the general practitioners, but for one who is devoted fully to Me, he may be senseless in a coma for seven days, or not; but I am accountable for that. Already I have taken responsibility, therefore he

has no responsibility for himself. I shall do what is good for him. If I think it will be good for him to take another birth, I shall give that, otherwise I shall arrange another situation for him."

We can see everything in a very concise way in the books of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. He wrote many books such as *Jaiva Dharmma*, *Caitanya Śikṣāmṛtam*, etc. If only we read and follow the books of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and the song books of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura we will see sufficiently. It is not necessary to read many books.

Question: In *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says that an unsuccessful yogi takes his birth in an aristocratic wealthy family or a pious *brāhmaṇa* family. I can understand that the pious *brāhmaṇa* family would be very favourable for his future advancement, but to me it seems that a wealthy aristocratic family is not so good because this person would be more and more entangled in material sense gratification. Please explain this point.

Śrīla Mahārāj: When I see the devotees who took their births in such families I can understand very quickly the answer. If their facilities can be used for the *sevā* of Kṛṣṇa then more promotion will come. If someone receives a kingdom, and if he can serve Guru, *Vaiṣṇava* and *Bhagavān* with that whole kingdom, then he must receive more benefit than a *brāhmaṇa* even though that *brāhmaṇa's* family may be materially pious. Also *pious* does not mean

devotional. Devotion is another thing, and wherever we are we must always look for the chance to gain that.

This guidance in *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* is actually for the general people, not for the devotees. There are many things mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā*: *karmma*, *bhakti-miśra-karmma*, *yoga-miśra-karmma*, *jñāna-miśra-karmma*, etc., but we shall take only that part relevant to our pure devotional line. For one who is devoted fully, his birth and death depend upon Kṛṣṇa. Every responsibility is taken by Kṛṣṇa for His fully surrendered devotees: everything bad and everything good in them is His responsibility. He knows in which way He will take His lost servant home. The Lord is engaged in a loving search for His lost servant. Love is necessary. The main thing is love. Everything is present where there is love, but that must be transcendental otherwise more disturbance will be felt through mundane "love".

In this mundane world the worst thing is paramour love, but in the transcendental world where everything is superior and is for service, the topmost position is that of paramour love. By this we can begin to understand just what a great difference there is between the mundane and spiritual worlds.

When Kṛṣṇa apparently seems to be taking things by stealing, it is more sweet than His accepting offerings. This does not apply to *us* but we

must see the sun or at least the sunlight, otherwise we may blindly stay within a cave for our whole life. Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura expressed this very nicely and I had it inscribed in marble above the front entrance of the *Nāṭya Mandir*:

*mātala harijana kīrtana-raṅge
pūjalā rāgapatha gaurava bhaṅge*

He said, "From afar we are to worship the Pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, and we are to pray that in future it may come down to us through the mercy of the *Vaiṣṇavas* and Guru." We are to understand our present position and, with care and respect, progress towards our transcendental destination.

First priority is to be given to serving Guru and the *Vaiṣṇavas*. By serving Guru and the *Vaiṣṇavas* we receive service to Kṛṣṇa. This is the main conception of Śrīman Mahāprabhu. From so many *śloka*s of different sources we can see that service to the *Vaiṣṇava* and Guru is our present life's goal, and through that we must get direct service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. But always our protector is our Guru—and my Guru's protector is his Guru; his protector is his Guru, and in this way our Guru *paramparā* is going up to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Kṛṣṇa is always present in Goloka, so the servitors are serving very happily. Kṛṣṇa can show Himself at any moment, anywhere, and they are eager to engage in His service under the guidance of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

In this mundane world, however, we are to see

only that Kṛṣṇa appears Himself in the form of my Guru. And when there is more clarity we can see, "My Guru is a servitor of Kṛṣṇa; and the supreme servitor is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, therefore my Guru is a manifestation of Her." That is not only another stage of feeling, but existence—it is another stage of transcendental realisation. But first we must become established in the plane of dedication, then we will have, gradually, the chance of service to Kṛṣṇa. It will come gradually—it may come sooner or it may take many births—but when it will come, it will come gradually. The main thing is service; but we cannot serve properly, therefore it is necessary to practise in order to prepare ourselves to engage in real service.

At the present time we cannot do pure service and we cannot chant Kṛṣṇa's Name properly. For example, we know from Guru, *Vaiṣṇava*, and *śāstra* that Kṛṣṇa and *Kṛṣṇa-nāma* are the same; why then do we not receive the result of Kṛṣṇa Himself appearing within our hearts when we chant *Kṛṣṇa-nāma*? We must consider this point. The result of chanting real *Kṛṣṇa-nāma* is that Kṛṣṇa will appear in the heart, but Kṛṣṇa is not appearing within our hearts, therefore we know we are not engaging in real *Kṛṣṇa-nāma*. Therefore, in our present position we are in the stage of practising, and this is also true for other forms of service.

By practising here, the force of our habit will put

us in good standing. If we practise chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*, then even while sleeping, that Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mantra* will appear within us. If we practise doing service, then also while sleeping we shall think of service.

But service is necessary, and chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa gives us enthusiasm to serve. When we have direct service, then there is no problem, and through my Guru it is possible. Gurudeva will take all responsibility, and only our duty will be to serve him, and that will be good for us. If he will give any responsibility, we are to fulfil that—and that is our duty. In a government, everybody does not do every type of work; but it runs by some doing some parts of the duties, and some doing other parts. Our concern is with the transcendental government and we are to make ourselves as parts of that government. Only this is the main thing. And chanting is necessary no doubt, but it is necessary to chant without offence, otherwise we shall be deprived of the main connection. Offenceless chanting and service will come gradually through the mercy of the Guru. If we don't make offence to the *Vaiṣṇavas*, it will come sooner, otherwise it will be delayed and will come later, but our only hope is that one day we must be successful.

Without practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is no other way to rise up from the mundane plane to the transcendental plane. In this mood we are to

proceed: "Only this is my duty—I shall do or die!" But everybody cannot proceed steadily in that way, for them there are many methods by which their situation can be harmonised, and the Master, their Gurudeva, is there and *he* can understand by which way the disciples can progress and which way they cannot. He knows that: he is expert, therefore the transcendental result will come to the disciple. Gurudeva means who is expert in that line.

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Fifth Discourse

Present Position, Brightest Prospect

One day, when Yudhiṣṭhir Mahārāj was in the jungle with his brothers and wife, Yamarāj wanted to examine Yudhiṣṭhir's strength of virtue. Taking the form of a white bird, Yamarāj stayed at a *kunda*, a fresh-water pond. The Pāṇḍava brothers were thirsty so one by one they went to that pond to collect drinking water. First of all, Bhīmasen arrived there. When he arrived there the bird told him, "First you answer my questions then you may take the water, otherwise you will die." But Bhīmasen did not care for the bird, he drank the water and died. Then Arjjuna went, followed by Nakula, then Sahadeva, and each met the same fate.

Lastly Yudhiṣṭhir Mahārāj went there and Yamarāj, in the form of the white bird, told him, "If you take water without answering my questions you will die like your brothers." Seeing his brothers dead before him Yudhiṣṭhir Mahārāj considered that this was no ordinary bird and that it was telling the truth.

He therefore agreed, "Yes, I shall answer your

questions before drinking the water. But my brothers are all very strong and they are great warriors, why are they dead?"

"It is by my power this has happened," replied the bird, who then proceeded to ask many questions, four of which are particularly famous.

kāca varttā kimāścaryyam kaḥ panthaḥ kaḥ sukhi

"What is the news? What is the wonder? What is the path? and who is happy?"

Yudhiṣṭhir Mahārāj considered: "This bird is not an ordinary bird, and therefore these questions are not ordinary questions." In reply to, "What is the news?" he could have replied, "Yes, I am well..." instead he said,

*māsarttudarovi parighaṭnena
sūryyāgṇinā rātridivendhanena
asmin mahāmoha maye kaṭāhe
bhūtāni kālaḥ pacatīti vārttā*

"The months and seasons are like two ladles with which food is turned while being cooked; the sun is like the fire-wood for cooking with; *mahāmoha*, illusion, is like the cooking pot; the *jīvas*, souls, are like fish; and *kāla*, time, is frying them. The *jīvas* are being fried in the pot of illusion with the help of the sun, days, nights, months and seasons—the necessities for frying. The frying is being done by *kāla*, which here also means Yamarāj. It is he who is frying us in this way in the mundane world. This is the news!"

To the question, "What is the miracle, the wonder?" Yudhiṣṭhir Mahārāj answered,

*ahanya-hani bhutāni gacchanti yamamandiram
śeṣāsthiraiva-micchanti kimāścaryyamataḥ param*

"Always all mankind as well as all *jīvas* in this world are passing away. Everyone's father passes away, their mother also, and even their juniors sometimes pass away first—but all are thinking that they will not themselves pass away. They are making houses for themselves, accumulating money, food, etc. They feel that they shall stay for such a long time, but it is only like a passing show. Everything, whether old or young, is passing away right before their eyes. It is *gacchatīti jagat*—it is passing away day by day, but all feel they shall stay for a long time, maybe not for ever, but anyhow for 80 or 90 years. No one else has time, but *they* have time. That is the miracle. What wonder can be greater than this? I think this to be the greatest miracle."

Answering the third question, "What is the path, and how to go?" Yudhiṣṭhir Mahārāj answered,

*vedā vibhinnā munayo vibhinnā
nāsau ṛṣiryasya matam na bhinnam
dharmmasya tattvam nihitam guhāyām
mahā jano yena gataḥ saḥ panthā*

"We see there to be many kinds of *Vedas* and many kinds of *ṛṣis*, so it is difficult to understand who we should follow. Each *ṛṣi*'s opinion is different, and also different sections of the *Vedas* give different

explanations and direction. So who are we to follow?"

What is mentioned in the *Ṛg Veda* is not mentioned in the *Sāma Veda*; what is in the *Sāma Veda* is not mentioned in the same way in the *Atharvva Veda* or *Yajur Veda*; and what is given in the *Vedānta* is not mentioned in the same way as in the other Scriptures; so which are we to follow? Also amongst the *ṛṣis* there are many different opinions expressed. Atri, Vasiṣṭha, Cyavana, Śaradvān, Agastya, Vyāsadeva, and many other *ṛṣis* in this world each express different opinions. So who shall we follow? Yudhiṣṭhir Mahārāj therefore continued, "It is not necessary to follow the *Vedas*, and it is not necessary to follow the *ṛṣis*. Really, I notice that religious duty is unrecognised and remains hidden, and the only way for us to go is by following the perfect *mahājan*—the perfect servitor of the transcendental world. Whatever he does, we shall also do that, and we shall not follow the *ṛṣis* or the *Vedas*. There are many *ṛṣis* and Scriptures: some recommend *jñāna-yoga*, some *kārmma-yoga*, *bhakti-miśra karmma*, *jñāna-miśra karmma*, *yoga-miśra karmma*, etc. So it is not necessary to follow them, but we must follow whoever is the servitor of the transcendental world. This is the way to go to that transcendental world."

Then, in reply to, "Who is happy?" the last of the four principle questions, Yudhiṣṭhir Mahārāj said:

*divasasyāṣṭame bhāge śākaṁ pacati yo naraḥ
aṇī apravāsi vāricara modate*

"One who has no debt to others is happy. He may or may not have wealth, but anyhow he collects something to cook, prepares it, and offers that to the Lord. After sunset he takes those remnants and he lives with a clean conscience. *He* is happy."

Many kinds of debt are mentioned. We have debt to the demigods, debt to other people for supplying food, water, etc., and also debt to many kinds of *jīvas* from whom we receive help. In these and many ways we are in debt, but one who has no debt to others, who is satisfied with what he has without relying on others, who maintains his own living space and simply earns something which he then offers to the Lord—*he* is a happy man.

This world is a passing show. To have any intention for ourselves is also one kind of debt, but whatever intention we may have for the service of Kṛṣṇa will not incur any debt. Kṛṣṇa Himself mentioned this:

*yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi, yaj juhoṣi dadāsi yat
yat tapasyasi kaunteya, tat kuruṣva mad arpanam
(Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā 9.27)*

"Whatever you do, whatever you eat, whatever you sacrifice, and whatever austerity you may do, do every single thing for Me, *then* utilise the remnants. In this way no debt will come to you. Whatever you offer to Me will be transformed and

will become transcendental.”

When we walk along a path we may step on many blades of *durbāsā* grass, but when that same kind of grass is offered to the Lord we take that upon our head. We cannot even think to crush it beneath our feet. Why? We cannot think such a thing because we know it has been offered to Kṛṣṇa therefore it has assumed a transcendental position. So Kṛṣṇa says, “If you can do everything for My satisfaction then you will have no debt, and furthermore you will be benefited even while in this mundane plane.” This is the main principle to be followed for our living in this world. We cannot live without taking from others. *Jīvo jīvasya jīvanam*—one must kill another in order to live. Each day we kill thousands upon thousands of living entities. Even in the air there are countless souls living, so just by our breathing fresh air we kill so many others in order to purify our blood. Without taking from others we cannot live, but the kind of living advised in the Scriptures is to live for the service of Kṛṣṇa. That is our living light.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura said,

*mānasa, deho, geha, jo kichu mor
arpilū tuwā pade, nanda-kiśor!*

“I am surrendering with everything, and from this date You are the master of me and everything connected with me. Therefore whatever I shall do will go to Your account, not to mine.”

*sampade vipade, jīvane-marane
dāy mama gelā, tuwā o-pada barane
mārobi rākhobi—jo icchā tohārā
nitya-dāsa prati tuwā adhikārā**

“As You like, You do.” This type of surrender to Kṛṣṇa gives us real happiness. If we can surrender to Kṛṣṇa we shall be responsible for neither our *karma* nor anything else. This advice you will see in *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*: the whole of the *Gītā* is meant for expressing this. Indeed, the purpose of all the Scriptures is to say this.

*smarttavyaḥ satatam viṣṇum vismarttavyo na jātucit
sarve vidhi nīsedhāśca etayoreva kiṅkarāḥ*

“We must not forget Kṛṣṇa, and we must worship Kṛṣṇa.” To not forget Him is the restriction, and to always remember Him is the wealth. Sometimes we may think it is very difficult, and it is true, but there is no other way. Without this, what shall we do? Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the only way to proceed—there is no other way.

*bhūmau skhalita-pādānām, bhūmir evāvalambanam
tvayi jātāparādhānām, tvam eva śaraṇam prabho
(Skanda Purāṇa)*

When a baby tries to walk, he will fall down

*—“In good fortune or in bad, in life or in death, all my difficulties have disappeared by choosing Your lotus feet as my only shelter. Slay me or protect me as You wish, for You are the master of Your eternal servant.”

many times, but he takes the help of the earth to again stand, and this is our only hope. Whatever offence we may do, if we remain relying upon Him, He will save us from that offence. Therefore we must take shelter at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, and that is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Mahāprabhu said,

*nāhaṁ vipro na ca nara-patir nāpi vaiśyo na śūdro
nāhaṁ varṇī na ca gṛha-patir no vana-stho yatir vā
kintu prodyan-nikhila-paramānanda-pūrnāmṛtābdher
gopī-bharttuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsanudāsaḥ*

“We are not kings, *brāhmaṇas*, *vaiśyas*, or *śūdras*, and we are not *gṛhasthas*, *vānaprasthas* or *sannyāsīs*, these are not our identification. Our actual identification is that of *gopī-bharttuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsanudāsaḥ*—only we are servitors of the servitors of the servitors.” This is our only identification, and whoever will follow Kṛṣṇa consciousness can follow only in this way. If he will try to follow the *Vedic* culture, Hinduism, or any other path, he will not actually get Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We must follow the *Vaiṣṇavas*. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and who worships Him is a *Vaiṣṇava*. There is one way, one destination, one goal of life; and that is the main thing for us to understand in order to be successful. We can see this clearly especially in the conception and nature of our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj, and of Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākur. Actually they

were very revolutionary. This type of revolution earlier happened in the time of Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākur and also, to some extent, in the time of Rūpa Goswāmī and Sanātan Goswāmī.

Rūpa and Sanātan did not actually break any existing conceptions, but they were the founders of our line. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur was also a little gentle in his approach: he did not want to make much disturbance in the conception of the *Vedas*. However, Narottama Ṭhākur broke the rules of *Vedic* practice, and recently we have seen that such a revolution came with Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj and the conception of our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, and there are many clear examples. It is for our benefit that such a revolution has come and we are most fortunate to have received such a generous connection with Divinity.

* * * * *

Sixth Discourse

Fortunate Indeed

The news of a *Vaiṣṇava's* disappearance and therefore our separation from him is very painful, but everything happens by the will of Kṛṣṇa, therefore we must tolerate and continue to steadily proceed towards our transcendental destination. Many adverse things may happen on the battlefield but, with the order of a general, a good soldier must proceed. We actually have no other way than to try to proceed.

We can see an example in the time of Mahāprabhu when Śrīvāsa Paṇḍit's son died in his house while Mahāprabhu was chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra* and dancing there. Śrīvāsa's mind was calm but other relatives felt much grief though they didn't cry aloud for fear of disturbing Mahāprabhu's singing and dancing. Mahāprabhu, however, felt that something was wrong because he was not feeling full joyfulness. When He asked if anything was amiss Śrīvāsa did not own up to what had happened, instead he told Mahāprabhu that all was well and urged Him to continue. Instead, Mahāprabhu said, "No, I think something has happened here. What has happened and why are you hiding it from Me?" Śrīvāsa replied, "Yes, Prabhu,

this has happened: my son has passed away. But I did not want to disturb your mood."

Mahāprabhu then went to see that boy and asked him, "Why are you leaving us?" To which the boy, though dead, replied, "Through Your will everything happens. By Your will I took my birth here as the son of Śrīvāsa Paṇḍit due to my good *karma*, but now my time in this body has finished and by Your will I am now going to another situation. This is happening all over the world and it is one of the rules of this plane, but I am so fortunate as I have received Your mercy and association."

Hearing this from the dead boy everyone became very stunned. Then they all chanted and danced with Chaitanya Mahāprabhu and took his body from the house. This incident happened in the presence of Mahāprabhu, so what can we say about our present situation?

There is a story of another incident which is said to have happened in the time of Buddha. A lady had just one son but he died, so she went to Buddha and prayed, "You are an incarnation of the Lord, so please you bring back my son's life."

Buddha replied, "Yes I can, but something is necessary in order to bring back his life."

She prayed, "Please tell me what you need and I shall supply it."

Buddha said, "Go from house to house in the village and bring some mustard seeds from any household where there has been no death in their

family. With those seeds I shall give life to your boy."

The woman was very simple-hearted and she went from house to house asking, "Please tell me whether in your family there has been no death. From such a household I need to collect some mustard seeds so that *Mahāpuruṣa* Buddha can bring back my son's life." But in every house she would receive a similar reply, "Oh, my father has died," "My uncle has died," "My brother has died," etc.

She then very sadly went back to Lord Buddha and, in tears, she told him, "Oh Lord, I have not been able to bring such seeds to you."

"Oh, what happened? In this village could you not find any household in which no one had left their body?"

She replied, "This is so."

To which Buddha said, "But why are you crying? This is the nature of the mundane plane."

In *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says:

*jātasya hi dhruvo mṛtyur, dhruvaṁ janma mṛtasya ca
tasmād aparihārye 'rthe, na tvam 'socitum arhasi*
(Bg. 2.27)

"The nature of this mundane plane is that for one who has taken birth, death is certain." And:

*vāsāṁsi jīrṇāni yathā vihāya,
navāni gṛhṇāti naro 'parāṇi
tathā śarīrāṇi vihāya jīrṇāny,
anyāni saṁyāti navāni dehī*
(Bg. 2.22)

"Just as we leave aside old, worn out cloth and accept new clothing, similarly it is the nature of the *jīva* in this plane to leave his old body and take a new one."

A soul who is very fortunate will receive a good, auspicious body in which he can have the chance to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Kṛṣṇa in *Bhagavad-gītā* also gave some remedy to leave everything in this mundane plane:

*janma karmma ca me divyam, evaṁ yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma, naiti mām eti so 'arjjuna*
(Bg. 4.9)

"Who can understand properly who I am, what is My birth, and what is My disappearance, he will not again take another birth in the material plane." That proper understanding comes through transcendental knowledge from Śrī Guru and the *Vaiṣṇavas* and with that he achieves real liberation.

muktir hitvānyathā rūpaṁ, sva-rūpeṇa vyavastitiḥ
(Bhā: 2.10.6)

One is not liberated if on leaving this body he will take another body. Nor is it real liberation if one simply does not take another body. Real liberation is when the soul enters with service into the transcendental world—*muktir hitvānyathā rūpaṁ, sva-rūpeṇa vyavastitiḥ*. By the association and mercy of devotees it is possible to achieve this. If we follow in the footsteps of a devotee who is always running behind service to Kṛṣṇa, then we can also easily gain

entrance in that service world.

Another quote is,

muktāpi līlayā vīgrahaṁ kṛtvā bhagavantam bhajante

Amongst the ordinary "liberated" souls a few are very fortunate and they also may receive the chance to enter into the transcendental service world. They have no attachment with the mundane world and also they have little or no attachment with the transcendental world. They are living in the *taṭastha*, borderline, position but by the grace of the *Vaiṣṇavas* they also receive the chance to enter into the service world.

*ātmārāmāś ca munayo
nirgranthā apy urukrame
kurvanty ahaitukīm bhaktim
ittham-bhūta-guṇo hariḥ*
(Bhā: 1.7.10)

Explaining this verse Mahāprabhu said that one quality of Kṛṣṇa is that He attracts even the liberated souls. Those who have no attachment to this mundane plane and are self-satisfied with their transcendental position, whether liberated or still in this world, are also attracted by the devotional mood. They also aspire to serve the world of transcendental service to Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa's quality is that first He attracts and then He distributes His ecstatic mercy, thus giving ecstasy, *ānandam*, to His devotees. He does not need to acquire this quality: it is already in His nature.

*ātmārāmāś ca munayo
nirgranthā apy urukrame
kurvanty ahaitukīm bhaktim
ittham-bhūta-guṇo hariḥ*

Therefore the devotees always engage themselves in serving Kṛṣṇa. Direct service is not possible here in this mundane plane but through Śrī Guru and the *Vaiṣṇavas* we have the auspicious chance to serve. The servitors do not look anywhere except to the order of Gurudeva and to the order of Kṛṣṇa given through the Scriptures. They follow that guidance exclusively.

*bahu janma kare yadi śravaṇa-kīrttana
tabu ta' nā pāya kṛṣṇa-pade prema-dhana*
(C.c. Ādi 8.16)

The question may arise as to why we do not immediately find the manifestation of spiritual consciousness within ourselves. The reason is that we are not properly following the advice given in the Scriptures. Especially we are committing the very bad offences of *Nāma-aparādha*: we are offenders to the Holy Name. There are ten types of *Nāma-aparādha* given in the Scriptures and it is necessary to carefully avoid these.*

Before Śrīla Swami Mahārāj Prabhupāda went to the West there was no chance there to make *Vaiṣṇava-aparādha*, *Nāma-aparādha*, and *Dhāma-*

*—See Appendix B

aparādha, therefore very quickly the Westerners received connection with Mahāprabhu's Mission. Because they had not made such offences they submissively heard and followed Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj and they progressed easily. Later when the actions of some of them caused especially *Nāma-aparādha*, they fell into the troublesome ocean.

The first lesson in any subject is generally very easy—simply listening. The first reading lesson is very easy with short two or three letter words, but with each progressive lesson there is more difficulty involved as it becomes necessary to understand and remember the longer words. In the primary stage if we are faced with some very big words we become puzzled to try to understand their meaning.

In *bhakti-yoga* it is explained that the first lesson is *utsāha mayī*: the stage when the devotees enthusiastically practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Then in the stage of *ghaṇa taralā* there is some depression in the mood of service. There are various stages of devotional service and these have been explained in the writings of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

When Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj went to the West as an ambassador of Śrīman Mahāprabhu, at that time many auspicious souls there received the chance to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and many also took up that opportunity. When trying to practise, difficulties will inevitably come, and if we are not careful and conscious about our devotional activities then we

must fail in our class. Who practises without offence will receive promotion. However, after a few classes promotion may be stopped and in their front may come many bad things such as *kanak*, *kāminī*, and *pratiṣṭhā*—money and wealth; women and enjoyment; and name and fame. Name and fame is a very bad thing. We may feel that nobody can destroy our devotional life, but name and fame can do that, therefore it must consciously be avoided.

By the mercy of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj we may feel ourselves to be protected from that by now, but it is foolishness if we think we have achieved spiritual life and therefore there is no need to guard against any further dangers. We must always be conscious to avoid any type of "infection". If we take penicillin for an extended period of time, the bacteria in the body become resistant to it and the penicillin no longer works. Another medicine therefore becomes necessary.

When we ourselves become resistant to one "infection" another will try to attack us to thwart our spiritual progress.

*yadi vaiṣṇava-aparādha uṭhe hāti mātā
upāde vā chinḍe, tāra śukhi' yāya pātā*
(C.c. Madhya 19.156)

This verse says that *Vaiṣṇava-aparādha* is like a mad elephant which rips out by the roots the creeper of devotional service. Sometimes it is very difficult to understand what is a "mad elephant offence"

Sometimes bad advice may come to us from someone who appears to be a *Vaiṣṇava*. We may believe someone to be a good *Vaiṣṇava* but if we will receive bad advice from him and follow that, it will be very injurious and we shall have to go to hell. Therefore we must always be conscious about our situation and with the knowledge we have from Guru, *Vaiṣṇava*, and the Scriptures we shall try to avoid making any offences.

prema-maitrī-kṛpopekṣā yaḥ karoti sa madhyamaḥ

(Bhā: 11.2.48)

In *madhyamādhikāra*, the middle position, one generally has clear consciousness as to what is good and what is bad. In this stage, with proper direction, one can generally continue steadily with service. But it is very difficult to avoid committing offence if in the form of a good advisor-*Vaiṣṇava* we are guided towards *Vaiṣṇava-aparādha*. Therefore whenever the need may arise we are to follow the advice of Narottama Ṭhākur and pray sincerely to the *Vaiṣṇavas*, "Please save me."

We are to pray, "Oh Guru Mahārāj, please save me," "Oh *Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākur*, please save me."

The advice of the Scriptures is that if we are not sure of someone we shall not glorify him, insult him, or abuse him, and we shall not go to him; instead we will avoid him—*nā nindiva nā vandiva nā yāva tāra pāśā*. If we can proceed in this way then we must achieve our transcendental destination.

It is necessary to remind ourselves that what we have already achieved is not so easily attainable by everyone. We have connection with Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj, with Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, with the *Rūpānuga Sampradāya*, and we have connection with Mahāprabhu. Before Swāmī Mahārāj went to the West no one there knew Mahāprabhu's Name, but now many are chanting the name of Kṛṣṇa, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*, and they are dancing. We have much and now it is necessary to keep it carefully protected within our hearts. The time has now come to give protection to our creeper of devotion, our *bhakti-latā*, otherwise it can be destroyed.

We may feel very enthusiastic if we focus on what is written in the *śāstras* or what is said by the *Vaiṣṇavas*, but it may also sometimes make us feel hopeless to hear many things such as the injunctions, dangers, and the difficulties we may have to face on our long journey ahead. Therefore we should use our energy especially to try to protect the creeper of *bhakti* otherwise we are in great danger of losing everything.

*te taṁ bhuktvā svarga-lokaṁ viśālam
kṣīṇe puṇye martya-lokaṁ viśanti*

(Bg. 9.21)

The nature of the mundane universes is that by doing good activities we go to the heavenly planets and by doing bad activities we go to the hellish planets. In the middle area are the earthly planets. In

summary we can say there are these three gradations of worlds here. But actually we are not eager to understand all these material things. Our necessity is to understand ourselves—self realisation. Who am I? What is my duty? What is my highest destination? And what is my wealth? It is necessary to answer these questions and we are fortunate that Mahāprabhu Himself has given us guidance. It is firmly established that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the highest conception and, by the grace of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswati Prabhupāda, this is undefeated anywhere. We are trying to follow and we know ourselves to be so fortunate because we have come and joined in this Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If we had not come we could have gone to the section of the *māyāvādīs* (impersonalists), or the *sahajiyās* (imitators), or to any of the many other sections of partial religious conception. Understanding the wealth we have, we shall happily and cautiously protect and keep our faith and service in this line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

When I see the service mood of the devotees who are sacrificing so much and expending so much energy for the preaching mission of Mahāprabhu I feel so **much** inspiration.

We are so fortunate that we have many things, now it is the time to use that "property" properly. I heard from Śrīla Guru Mahārāj the phrase, "religion is proper adjustment." Everything has been given but

it is necessary for us to make proper adjustment: to understand who we are; what our duty is; who is Kṛṣṇa, and who is His servitor.

Part Three

The Written Word

From correspondence
by Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj

Question: We want to go back to our real spiritual home and we are trying to do that but we find ourselves captured by seeking happiness in this world. What are we to do?

Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj (Śrīla Mahārāj) replied: It is very wonderful and essential for conditioned souls to get the mercy and blessings of the true *Vaiṣṇavas* in order to go back to Godhead. In this way I think you are both very fortunate souls because you received the mercy of both Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj. All the conditioned souls are trying to find real happiness but you know it is not possible in this mundane world to achieve that. All happiness, all ecstasy, all joy, and victory's fountain are coming from Kṛṣṇa and *Kṛṣṇa-loka*. We are really all members of that transcendental service world, but by misfortune and misunderstanding we have been captured by illusory

happiness in this mundane plane. But Kṛṣṇa is very merciful and He has given us the chance to go to our own home through our Divine Masters. It is necessary to plant and cultivate what you have received from them and that is through *sādhana* (spiritual practice). If we follow their guide-lines by chanting the Holy Names of the Lord, reading the holy books, serving the real holy *Vaiṣṇavas*, living without making offences, and maintaining our lives with their *Prasādam*, then we must return to our holy home. That is real *sādhana* and as you are trying to do this I am very happy

Question: I am very unhappy and distressed because yesterday I was robbed by a man who pulled out a gun and stole my bag in which I had, as well as other things, my chanting beads. One of my relatives is a devotee and she has a spare set of beads that were blessed by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. I am asking what I should do and whether I should chant on these other beads.

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: Although you express much misfortune I can say clearly that you display the real mood of a devotee. It is no-doubt a very bad thing that your beads have been lost but you can understand that Kṛṣṇa is testing us in many ways. In this way you can consider this to be a test for your practising position. I also consider that Kṛṣṇa protected you as you were not harmed during the robbery. For now you wait a few days and if still

your beads do not come back then you may chant on the extra set of beads held with your relative.

The main thing required for our devotional practising life is that we try to develop the three qualities: prayer, sincerity and dedication. You have the grace of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and you live with devotees. In this way I can understand you to be fortunate.

Here at the *Maṭh* and around Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's centres in India we are receiving the association of many devotees from around the world. Although the situation of the environment is not the same everywhere, still everyone can tell others about Mahāprabhu and about our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. In this way they may also receive inspiration and guidance in order to cross this ocean of suffering and go to the brightest transcendental destination.

Question: My desire is that my wife will also come to this line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and that we can progress together. Gurudeva, I am always praying to Your Divine Grace and I aspire for your mercy.

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: The negative and the positive rules of the Scriptures are:

*smarttavyaḥ satatam viṣṇum vismarttavyo na jātucit
sarve vidhi niśedhāśca etayo veva kinkarāḥ*

Which means: we must not forget our transcendental duty to serve Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga, and: we must always keep Kṛṣṇa in our consciousness.

I think that with your association your wife's mood is now changing gradually towards Kṛṣṇa consciousness. She is a good lady and she is very much affectionate to you. When she herself will be prepared from her side to offer everything to Kṛṣṇa, and by her having your association, she will then be able to understand proper Kṛṣṇa consciousness and all her disturbances of mind will go out.

After Śrīman Mahāprabhu and Nityānanda Prabhu withdrew Their manifest pastimes many of Their higher devotees came to this mundane plane to preach in order to rescue the fallen souls. Also much advice has been given to us in the many Scriptures; but that was within a system of Vedic culture. Also within that advice there is hidden-treasure that is not exposed to everybody.

By the influence of the age of Kali gradually transcendental knowledge disappeared in a shrinking way and after that the illusory activities of Māyā tried to conquer everything. But through the mercy of Śrīman Mahāprabhu's dearest eternal devotee, Śrīla Ṭhākura Bhaktivinod, we have had in this age of the late 19th and early 20th century Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura who was exalted and who again magnanimously distributed Kṛṣṇa consciousness in every direction. From that Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda we have presently been graced with two expert, exclusive servitor-generals of Kṛṣṇa: our beloved Divine Masters Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla

Swāmī Mahārāj who are my honourable *Dikṣā-Guru* and *Sikṣā-Guru* respectively. They constitute the overflowing reservoir of the fountain distributing Kṛṣṇa consciousness as well as Kṛṣṇa *prema-bhakti* to every direction all over the world. We can see we are very fortunate in that we have the chance to touch and participate in their nectarine programme. I have no doubt that as much as is possible by us we have received mercy from that upper level but now we must proceed with our tiny property and utilise our freedom in the proper channel in order to make ourselves able to receive more and more.

Sarvva-dharmān parityajya, mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja—to totally reject all kinds of religion is the primary directive of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. And: *mad bhaktānām ca ye bhaktās, te me bhaktatamāḥ matāḥ*—"I consider one who serves My devotee to be the real *bhakta*," is the final directive in the Scriptures.

Question: We have read that Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāj lived very strictly and would not eat anything prepared by others even if it was offered to the Lord. So in our case, can we only offer cooked preparations made by ourselves or can we also offer foodstuffs prepared by others? Is there any difference between making offerings to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and making offerings to the Deities? In other words can we offer things to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj that can't be offered to the Deities?

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: What you mentioned in the

name of Śrīla Gaura Kiśor Dāsa Bābāji Mahārāj is the general rule no-doubt, and it is coming from his exclusive, direct, serving mood to Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa; that is he is a *bhajanānandī bābāji*. But in another way we see that our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj and Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur used everything for the service of Kṛṣṇa in relation to time, place and circumstance in order to assist the preaching mission. In that way they distributed their mercy to all over the world's fallen souls, also they showed their unlimited feelings and serving attitude—*Vaikunṭha-vṛtti*.

In addition there are other rules in the Scriptures. In the *smṛti-śāstra*, the Scripture of *smṛti*, it is told: *dravyam mūlyena suddhati*—if we will give in exchange for something the value of that thing, what we will buy will not bring with it the *karma* of the person who made it.

We are followers of our merciful, exalted Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Prabhupāda then we are to follow their example in a humble way.

Whatever we shall offer to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj must also be offerable to the Deity. Really the main point is that whatever is offered by the fully dedicated soul is accepted by Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga.

Question: Śrīla Mahārāj, there are many differences amongst the devotees here and several devotees do not wish to follow the leader of the local programme.

Due to their Indian family traditions some are worshipping *Avatāras* and demigods in addition to Kṛṣṇa. Furthermore one key *brahmacārī* has returned to his family because they were asking more maintenance money which was not forthcoming. Because of these and other incidents our leader has the desire to step down and I am suggesting that if you give your permission I shall also withdraw from my humble position of assisting in the leadership, though I pray you may continue to give me engagement in some other way.

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: We can understand that there is an ideal, but side by side we must notice all the different qualities of the devotees' moods. It is necessary to harmonise these with our missionary programme. In the time of Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur many things happened like this that I know of and have heard of from Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. Also in the mission of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj in this Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh I have seen since my joining in 1947 many, many things but by the grace of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj we successfully faced those difficulties that came from outside and inside also. Similarly in the time of Śrīman Mahāprabhu you can remember reading the character of Murāri Gupta who was the close devotee of Śrī Rāmachandra. He worshipped Him in a temple which is still in Śrī Māyāpur. Also when Mahāprabhu went to preach in Dakṣiṇdeśa (South India), He met with many different kinds of devotees,

but they were not all worshippers of Kṛṣṇa or even worshippers of any of the many different types of Kṛṣṇa *Mūrtti*. In the time of Śrīman Mahāprabhu there were many examples and we can read about some of these in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. There also we find that many types of devotees could not be tolerated by Mahāprabhu but even they were harmonised by Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu and the other devotees. Also you can remember the attitude of the son-in-law of Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭāchāryya as well as many other similar examples.

In the time of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, as well, we find that many things happened, but he also tolerated. What he could not tolerate was, by his order, harmonised by myself, and he would tell others, "Wait and see."

When we observe the character of Śrīman Mahāprabhu sometimes we may feel ourselves to be in a hopeless position. But when we notice the merciful attitude of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu as well as that of our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj we can remember Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur and thereby feel much hope to proceed in our life of transcendental practice. Ousting or throwing out others is very easy, but engaging them for the service of Mahāprabhu is very hard. We see in the devotees' nature so many different types of mentality, different types of activity, and different types of devotion, but a good manager or a good preacher must try in a harmonious way to engage them in the service of the

Lord. This world where we live is actually the faulty plane: it is an illusory environment. Not only do we need mercy but we need the causeless mercy of Nityānanda Prabhu and the *patita-pāvana Vaiṣṇavas* otherwise how shall we gain spiritual strength for our practising life?

In this mundane world we also can learn something by looking at the family attitude. Many kinds of boys, girls, men, and women live in a family but the responsibility of the head of the family is to maintain everybody by teaching, supplying, and taking what is necessary for their benefit. The family head must do everything with full affection. He may sometimes chastise them, but behind is working the mood of affection.

Under leadership and with the full, natural, willing service-energy of the local devotees it was possible to build up the mission there and in the future we are expecting to see there miracles. But in the meantime when I hear your hard news I feel much disturbance and I am trying to realise why this circumstance has come. Your local leader has a very good mould, but he has only one mould with a single vision and therefore he can understand only *dādā* and *gadā* like Bhīmasen. *Dādā* means the order of Yudhiṣṭhir and *gadā* is the strength of his body and weapon, his mace. But it is necessary to realise other scriptural screens. When Mahāprabhu started His first Sanskrit School, He did so at the Chaṇḍī Maṇḍap, the Durgā Maṇḍap, at Mukunda Sañjaya's

house who was himself a devotee of Mahāprabhu. Then why in his house was there a Chaṇḍī Maṇḍap and why did Śrīman Mahāprabhu use that Chaṇḍī Maṇḍap? Mahāprabhu did not demolish it, instead He used it to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

A leader must have many various qualities and if he does not have all of these then he must try to acquire them in order to be successful on the battlefield.

Please, I also ask that you pay attention to my prayer that you both try to harmonise with all the devotees. The devotees there are good, also perhaps some devotees may be less intelligent and they are going the wrong way, but it is necessary to polish them with your humble affection.

It is not proper policy to accept service from a *brahmacārī* in exchange for giving money to his family. Here in this *Maṭh* all the residential persons, the *brahmacārīs*, *sannyāsīs* and *varṇaprasthas*, they are not paid-men but they are serving willingly and in a hard manner. We are only engaging a few paid men in the service of the *Maṭh* but they hold the position of outsiders. I did not make any remark before because I had no idea this was happening.

Question: I am trying, perhaps with a little difficulty, to follow the instructions of my senior Godbrothers here but sometimes I do not know what is *sevā*. Please let me know so I can adjust myself.

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: We can make service to Guru

and Gaurāṅga in all directions around us. In *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* Śrī Kṛṣṇa said; *yogaḥ karmmasu kauśalam*, which means that within our devotional activities proper adjustment is necessary.

Adjustment of spiritual life or mundane life is not the same for every soul, then what is suitable for you may not be suitable for another. Also different types of service are not suitable for everybody—it depends on capacity and taste. In the transcendental world, or maybe also in the mundane world, *super-rasa* (mood) comes within the categories of *śānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *madhura*. For one who has the taste for *madhura-rasa* within his heart, he also has playing there the four other *rasas*. In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is recorded that when Raghupati Upādhyāya was questioned by Mahāprabhu he replied, "*ādya eva paro rasaḥ*," and Mahāprabhu was very happy to hear that. Without disturbing other devotees, I can say only this to Your Grace: that for favourable development and as suitable for your practising life make yourself with that mood.

Question: For some time the situation of a leading devotee here has been precarious but now he has fallen deeply into the illusion of women, intoxication, and aggressive behaviour. What is the cause of such a fall down, and what lessons can we learn?

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: I am very unhappy and worried to see the results of *Vaiṣṇava-aparādha* and the seeds of the big tree of *sahajiyāism* (imitation).

Also now I can understand why the real *bhakti-latā-bīja* of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj cannot grow properly in the hearts of some of my so-called friends. I am reminded of a friend who had a nice garden and tried growing high quality roses but failed again and again. He eventually sought expert advice and found that a certain large tree was growing a little distance away, the roots of which were taking all the nourishment so the nice rose garden could not grow despite the best seeds and gardeners. If once *sahajiyāism* is planted in the heart, then, without cutting down and uprooting that tree, there is no chance that any good seeds can grow. Also another heavy cause that can destroy the *bhakti-latā*, and that reason you know, is *Vaiṣṇava-aparādha*—offence to the *Vaiṣṇavas*.

*yadi vaiṣṇava-aparādha uṭhe hāti mātā
upāde vā chinḍe, tāra śukhi' yāya pātā**

This verse is given in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Therefore it is my only prayer to you all who are the servitors and followers of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, "Please avoid *Vaiṣṇava-aparādha*. And if in the garden of anyone's heart the tree of *sahajiyāism* is growing, then immediately uproot that plant of *sahajiyāism*." You are very humble and qualified therefore I think you have no problem with that. We can see from the example you cited of just where bad association and bad influence can take us. Then my prayer to the

*See pages 88-89

devotees of this *Maṭh* is, "Please carefully avoid such dangers and try to proceed with humility, tolerance, and giving honour to others." This is our primary lesson of *Vaiṣṇavism* and the final lesson also.

Question: Recently a devotee stayed for some days as a guest in my friend's house. While there he removed the picture of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj from her altar, apparently because his own devotee guests would feel "more at home". We all felt this was very wrong but we need your clarification.

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: When something appears to be wrong then I have some duty to say something about that. Therefore, if it is true that the devotee's picture of her Śrī Gurudeva, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, was removed from her altar then I have to clearly say that it was wrong to do so. An altar may consist of only one picture: that of the Guru. There may be so many Deities and other pictures on the altar but if the Guru's picture is not there then all is lost. Not only that, but we are to respect the Guru of another sister-mission even if they are not of exactly the same family line. A clear example of this you will find in Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākur Prabhupāda's Mission's central *Maṭh*, Śrī Chaitanya Maṭh in Māyāpur, where Śrī Rāmānujācāryya, Śrī Mādhvācāryya, Śrī Nimbarkācāryya and Śrī Viṣṇuswāmī in Deity-form are on each side of the main temple. They are duly respected and worshipped whether we are, or are not, directly

belonging to their respective *sampradāyas*.

Question: A local *sannyāsī* representing the *Maṭh* has recently invited many of the devotees here to his wedding and in doing so has caused much disturbance in their minds. My daughter asked how he could take a wife if he is a *sannyāsī* but I could not answer her.

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: What he has done is very painful for our *sampradāya*. What your beloved daughter told is true and we cannot support his change of position in life. He took *sannyāsa* from Śrīla Guru Mahārāj but the *jīva*, the soul, is independent. Kṛṣṇa does not interfere with that independence, therefore each *jīva* has the freedom whether to go to hell or to heaven and that is the *jīva's* own responsibility. Kṛṣṇa can only search and cry for His lost servant. I am also very upset to hear the report about this *sannyāsī*, although earlier I did receive the shadow of this news.

After the disappearance of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj we see everywhere that many things have changed. Some changes may be good and some may be bad but we must tolerate everything from a neutral position and we cannot ignore our own promise and service to Śrī-Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga-Gāndharvā-Govindasundarjū. With our transcendental serving mood we must try to proceed enthusiastically towards our bright destination. You are an experienced, old devotee and you know what is what,

therefore you please try to maintain there the devotees' service and mood within this clean and proper way.

We can say clearly that the recent activities of this *sannyāsī* are his deviation, not progress, within our *sampradāya*. There is possibility everywhere for deviation therefore we must be careful for our own spiritual lives.

Question: I keep good company with serious *Vaiṣṇavas* and I engage in some lecturing and writing. I try to chant properly but always I pray for your divine advice.

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: Your hopeful preaching programme must give inspiration to other *Vaiṣṇavas* and Godbrothers. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said that when we are chanting and meditating on the *Mahāmantra* and *Gayātrī Mantram*—which are Kṛṣṇa's non-different manifestations—there is mostly some fault, whether consciously or unconsciously, and therefore we do not obtain the proper result of chanting *japa*. But when we try to glorify our beloved Lords and Divine Masters by way of preaching, there we cannot consciously preach wrongly. In addition our one hundred per-cent attention must go there, and in that way we can develop our faithful service life. Chanting is essential. Chanting *Śrī Harināma* is always beneficial for the conditioned souls but preaching to others gives us strength of devotional life and more and more opportunity to practise

Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore we can happily say your mood of devotion is beneficial for everybody. Chanting is very good but chanting with preaching is more positive and progressive.

Question: Living far away from India what service can my wife and I do?

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: When the devotees would ask Śrīla Guru Mahārāj what service they could do he would always request them to keep a service connection directly with this Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh. You are sincerely trying in this way and you are sacrificing for that very purpose. If you can maintain this service while establishing and running a preaching centre, that will be very good.

When devotees are in distant countries there are two principle ways of service. One is service to the *Vaiṣṇava* community in the local area by distributing books, preaching by lectures and other means, giving hospitality to the *Vaiṣṇavas*, etc. And the second is direct service to this central Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh which, when far away, means helping with service donations, goods, etc. for the *sevā* activities of the *Maṭh*. This is very valuable service and very carefully we are always trying to please Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga-Gāndharvā-Govindasundarjīu in so many ways. Of course, when it is possible, you can come here from time to time and can directly do service to the Deities, devotees, cows, paraphernalia, etc., of our Śrīla Guru Mahārāj at the *Maṭh* with all

your activities. Anyhow, you both can understand the will of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and therefore you are eager to please him by your actions. No doubt Śrīla Guru Mahārāj gives his blessings to you and we are all very happy for that.

For every one of us we only have a few days in our hand. This life is very short but we must look for the *sevā* of our Śrī Gurudeva. Everywhere and anywhere we may have to face so many problems but we must focus only on going forwards. Certainly we must receive backing from above and there is no other way that is even slightly thinkable than to go onwards, come what may.

Question: I am facing many difficulties and my present family circumstances sometimes cause me to feel very lonely. I do not know whether we can continue to preach here or not and I cannot understand the will of the Lord for our programme here.

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not like a mundane tree, therefore we must become confused if we are not strong enough with our transcendental knowledge. In *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* Kṛṣṇa says:

*ūrdhva-mūlam adhaḥ-sākham, aśvattham prāhur avyayam
chandāmsi yasya parṇāni, yas tam veda sa veda-vit**

Actually one who knows that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is coming down in this way can maintain his full

*—For translation and explanation see Appendix A.

faith with that and he can follow the conception of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj properly. Mahāmāyā (illusion) is always trying to hit everyone in order to massacre the life of devotion, and in this way we can understand why the devotee will feel alone sometimes. But when one can see the mercy of Kṛṣṇa and the real path of his life then he can ignore everything but he cannot leave his determination.

Question: I see others leaving devotional life and I sometimes feel unsure as to whether I should keep struggling in the attempt to do my present form of service. What to do?

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: I have no other way and no other intention than the service of Śrī Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga and Their mission. I know that there is no chance of any real servitor of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj leaving his service. If anyone has really seen and considered about the transcendental activities of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj, he can easily understand that *satyam*, *śivam* and *sundaram* is Kṛṣṇa and our only duty is to serve Him. These mundane world's difficulties always stay around us like the current of a river in which we, the souls, are being tossed about. We now have achieved this body which is like a boat and we are to carefully, without offence, cross over this troublesome river. Otherwise, if that boat will spring a leak by being hit, it will flounder and sink in the river of difficulties. There is danger but we are always to have hope and

confidence in our spiritual guides because Guru and Kṛṣṇa are our saviours and protectors.

Actually, about the Western World I have no real idea of living affairs but in a general way I can only say:

*paśu pakṣī haye thāki swarge vā niraye
tava bhakti rahu bhaktivinoda-hṛdaye*

We can stay anywhere, in any position, and in any circumstance but we must make there Their Lordships' own devotional living space.

Question: I feel that I have been exploited time and time again in this world and my desire is to withdraw. What advice can you give me?

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: Certainly this world is a place of exploitation. Everybody is trying for his own benefit by exploiting others. Both through the Scripture and by our own experience we can understand this reality. *Jīvo jīvasya jīvanam*. Unless we exploit others we cannot live for even one second: we cannot breath, we cannot eat, we cannot walk or run, and we cannot talk even. But we are to understand that there is another plane that is also reactionary: it is the world which opposes this mundane environment. It is called the world of renunciation, but through that ideal we cannot actually satisfy ourselves. It is the line between two planes and there birth and death are extremely absent, however if there is no transcendental service connection then it

is not possible to go to the plane above that abscissa.

Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī explained that we are to follow the middle path—*yukta-vairāgya*—in which there is neither renunciation nor material attachment. With neither great attraction nor great repulsion we are to proceed without disturbance, and develop attachment to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. What will come easily by way of wealth and necessities we can accept, but it is not good for us to expend too much effort for anything of this material plane. Certainly Kṛṣṇa will provide according to our necessities and our allotted amount. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj always emphasised that we are not to quarrel with the environment.

Question: Before engaging myself fully in devotional service I feel the need to fulfil some material duties, but I always hope in my heart that one day I will be able to render some service to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj.

Śrīla Mahārāj replied: I know in the line of transcendental service, illusion is always making obstructions. But nobody can consider that only after removing all disturbances can they then do *Hari-sevā*. Our lifetime is very short in comparison to universal time, therefore with whatever we have in our hand at this moment we must try with that to make progress in our transcendental practising life. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote in one song:

*saṁsāra nīrvvāha kari jabo āmi vṛndāvana,
khānatraya śodhivāre karitechī suyātana,
e āśāra nāhi prayojan*

It is impossible that only after finishing all mundane works can we only then serve Guru and the *Vaiṣṇavas*. It is impossible, therefore we must follow the directives of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and in that way cut off the knot of material attachment by the weapon of knowledge, and without delay try to proceed. We will not achieve an easy position in this mundane plane: we must always face a hard time here, but when, in that hard time, we receive the help of real friends and the mercy of Śrī Gurudeva, we cross over all the obstructions easily. I have no way to live without service to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj said, "*Je saṅkīrttanāgni prajvālita kariyāchena.*" All over the world Śrīla Guru Mahārāj arranged the fire sacrifice of *saṅkīrttana* and we are the ingredients to fuel the flames of that fire, but if we hide ourselves from there then that is not real saving, but that is suiciding. That is, everything is transcendently arranged there and therefore we cannot feel the burning sensation. Only we can feel the transcendental joyful nourishment of the mood of sacrifice.

-
- **Jewels** -
-

More gems from correspondence by
Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj

When all over the world the devotees are chanting and dancing with the Holy Name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and receiving transcendental inspiration with their service-mood, then, by participating in that congregational chanting, we can feel real joyfulness and happiness. Once we have seen the goal of our life we must reach there through serving without stopping and without offence.

Kṛṣṇa is the game-maker and our real position is that we are the eternal transcendental players in His game—His *līlā*—and that life is fully joyful. If once we can have a glimpse of that reality then we will become most determined to become a good player. The good player automatically will always be given opportunities to play. From all directions service comes to him and he is always aiming to the goal.

This is the Age of Kali and the influence of demons is very strong. They are trying to enjoy with Kṛṣṇa's property and that is an absolutely wrong and hellish mood. But within any environment the devotee always will try to serve his Divine Master as

well as the Supreme Lord. That is the nature of the devotee.

In this age of Kali it is Mahāprabhu's mercy that everybody has a chance to practise *bhakti-yoga* simply by chanting the Holy Names of Lord Kṛṣṇa. If we can chant without offence then we must have hope of reaching our happy destination of an eternal service position to the Lord. We are fallen souls but if we can be good students, then our Divine Master can cleverly take us over the ocean of Māyā. After so many births we have received this very auspicious and fortunate human form and we must try to utilise this sincerely and properly which means we must try to serve Guru with our full surrender.

Our beloved Divine Master, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, only knew service to Kṛṣṇa. He had no other duty. Now with the help of his affectionate servitors from all over the world I am trying heart and soul to continue his Mission here nicely.

Then you can try to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahā-mantra* without offence, read the *śāstras*, particularly Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's books, and try to do some service for this the Mother Maṭh. I know Kṛṣṇa will see, and you will be benefitted.

Kṛṣṇa is our all-powerful, fully independent Lord and in this way we cannot say in what ways he will choose to purify His beloved servitors. It is rare for a conditioned soul from this mundane world to want to come out and serve his beloved Lord. But

Kṛṣṇa Himself is also very eager to meet with such conditioned souls. Sometimes circumstances can be difficult but what else can we do? We had the great fortune of receiving the mercy of our dearest Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and by his grace we have hope of progressing to our happy spiritual destination. Some stalwarts may fall away but we must courageously continue to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness whatever the circumstances.

By sending me problems in my service, Kṛṣṇa is taking my blood! And if I do not give my blood, how shall I get that service? We shall proceed happily with problems. If problems will not come, then we should think that it is not possible to receive mercy in a relaxed mood. With a relaxed mood, it is not possible.

Throughout my whole life there have been problems; but I am very satisfied that I did not give any problems to Guru Mahārāj. All the problems that happened downstairs, whether *brahmacārīs* fighting with one another, or women fighting with each other, or whatever, I always solved the problem downstairs. I did not throw them upstairs to cause Śrīla Guru Mahārāj disturbance.

Transcendental knowledge is not so easy to attain or receive. It is only possible by the grace of Śrī Gurudeva and full surrender to his lotus feet, otherwise the illusory environment of Māyā, one of Kṛṣṇa's potencies, will take the *jīvas* to the world of

imitation, making them *sahajiyā* and thus causing them to completely lose their fortune.

We are servitors of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj who manifested himself as a superior *paramahansa** and who gave his directives in a practical way. Therefore we shall try to separate the milk from the water for his service. The world situation now everywhere is in a very difficult position and the mentality of the general mass is going in the way of atheism but we cannot interrupt our own transcendental service to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga.

By the mercy of our Gurudeva, practically we are reading and practising within the same class as Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, Lord Nārada, Lord Śukadeva, etc. But when any disturbance of destruction will come like chaos in our practising life then we must steadily try to get a good, merciful, *Vaiṣṇava's* association, and try to follow the guidelines of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj.

Saṅkīrtan means that all together we are chanting the Holy Names and offering service wholeheartedly to our Divine Master and our Lord. Kṛṣṇa only looks at this qualification and no other. Here our beloved Śrīla Guru Mahārāj began the great *Saṅkīrtan* fire sacrifice and up to date I am seeing

*—The nature of a *paramahansa* is to be able to separate service from the unwanted things of the mundane world as a swan takes only the milk from a mixture of milk and water.

that *Saṅkīrtan* fire, day by day, spreading all over the world through his devotees. All the devotees are trying wholeheartedly to fuel that fire. Each one is like an auspicious stick of wood fully dedicating himself for the exaltation of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj by entering into the *Saṅkīrtan* fire sacrifice. These sticks are burning happily because they do not receive pain, only purification. I feel myself to be fully satisfied that I have offered myself for my Divine Master's desire and that you are all also always trying to fulfil the desire of his Divine Grace.

It is my only prayer to you all that you must look to this central *Math* where there is continuous service to the Deities and Śrīla Guru Mahārāj as well as the living *Saṅkīrtan* fire-sacrifice which is always continuing here.

Appendix A

The translation of the verse quoted on page 51, *kṛpā-sindhuḥ su-saṁpūrṇaḥ...* (*Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 1.45-46) is:

“One who is an ocean of mercy, who is fulfilled in all respects, who is possessed of all good qualities, who always works for the benefit of all souls, who is free from lust, who is perfect in all respects, who is well-versed in the Scriptures and who knows the science of Kṛṣṇa is to be known as a Guru.”

The translation with explanation given for the verse quoted on page 109, *ūrdhva-mūlam adhaḥ-śākham...* (*Bg.* 15.1) is:

The Supreme Lord said: (Created for the purpose of satisfying the fruitive desires of the fallen souls, who are averse to the Lord, this material world is described by the Scriptures in this way:) “Its root is uppermost, that is, its root is situated in aversion to, and comes away from the supreme uppermost fundamental truth, the Lord. Its branches face downwards, that is, the demigods headed by Lord Brahmā are its branches, and it is endless for those persons who misuse the soul’s independence to adopt the life of *karma* or fruitive action—in this respect it is *avyayam*, or indestructible; and yet, as far

as devotionally orientated persons are concerned, it cannot remain even until the next day. In this respect it is ‘Aśvattha,’ which means, ‘perishable and transient.’ All the aphorisms of the *Vedas* that promote fruitive action are represented as the protective leaves of that Aśvattha tree in the form of this material world.” One who knows in this way that tree representing the mundane world, such a person is a knower of the purport of the *Vedas*.

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Abbreviations

Bg. — *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*
Bhā: — *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*
C.c. — *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*

Appendix B

Daśa-vidha Nāmāparādha The Ten Offences to the Holy Name (to be carefully avoided by the devotee)

By His Divine Grace
Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj
(Rendered into English by Swāmī Bhakti Ananda Sāgar)

*harināma mahāmantra sarva-mantra-sāra
yāñdera karunābale jagate pracāra
sei nāma-parāyaṇa sādhu, mahājana
tāñhādera nindā nā kariha kadācana [1]*

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

*vrajendranandana kṛṣṇa sarveśvareśvara
maheśvara ādi tāñra sevana-tatpara
nāma cintāmaṇi kṛṣṇa-caitanya-svarūpa
bheda-jñāna nā karibe lilā-guṇa-rūpa [2]*

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

The Ten Offences to the Holy Name

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*“guru kṛṣṇa-rūpa han sāstrera pramāṇe
guru-rūpe kṛṣṇa kṛpā kare bhāgyavāne”
se gurute marttya-buddhi avajñādi tyaji
iṣṭa-lābha kara, nirantara nāma bhaji [3]*

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

*śruti, śruti-mātā saha sāvata purāṇa
śrī-nāma-caraṇa-padma kare nīrājana
sei śruti-śāstra yebā karaye nindana
se aparādhīra saṅga karibe varjjana [4]*

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

*nāmera mahimā sarva-sāstrete vākhāne
ati-stuti, hena kabhu nā bhāvīha mane
agastya, ananta, brahmā, śivādi satata
ye nāma-mahimā-sindhu ke pāibe pāra?
ati-stuti bole yei—sei durācāra [5]*

The glories of the Name—
all Scriptures’ exaltation;
Dare not think their praise
to be exaggeration.

Agastya, Ananta, Brahmā,
Śiva, etc., ever
Sing the glories of that Name
with full-hearted fervour.
Who can cross the ocean
of the glories of that Name?
Whoever says 'exaggeration'
have their sin to blame.

*kṛṣṇa-nāmāvalī nitya golokera dhana
kalpita, prakṛta, bhāve—aparādhijana [6]*

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

*nāme sarva-pāpa-kṣaya sarva-sāstre kaya
sārā-dina pāpa kari sei bharasāya—
emata durbbuddhi yāra sei aparādhī
māyā-pravañcita, duḥkha bhūñje niravadhi [7]*

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

*atulya śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāma pūrṇa-rasa-nidhi
tānra sama nā bhāvīha śubha-karma ādi [8]*

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

*nāme śraddhā-hīna-jana—vidhātā-vañcita
tāre nāma dāne aparādha suniścita [9]*

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

*suniyāo kṛṣṇa-nāma mātmya apāra
ye prīti-rahita, sei narādhama chāra-
ahantā mamatā yāra antare bāhire
śuddha kṛṣṇa-nāma tāra kabhu nāhi sphure [10]*

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

*ei daśa-aparādha kariyā varjjana
ye sujana kare hari-nāma sankīrtana
apūrvva śrī-kṛṣṇa-prema labhya tāra haya
nāma-prabhu tāra hṛde nitya vilasaya [11]*

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

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There is one way,
one destination, one goal of life;
and that is the main thing for us to
understand in order to be
successful....

Once we have seen the goal
of our life we must reach there
through serving without stopping
and without offence.