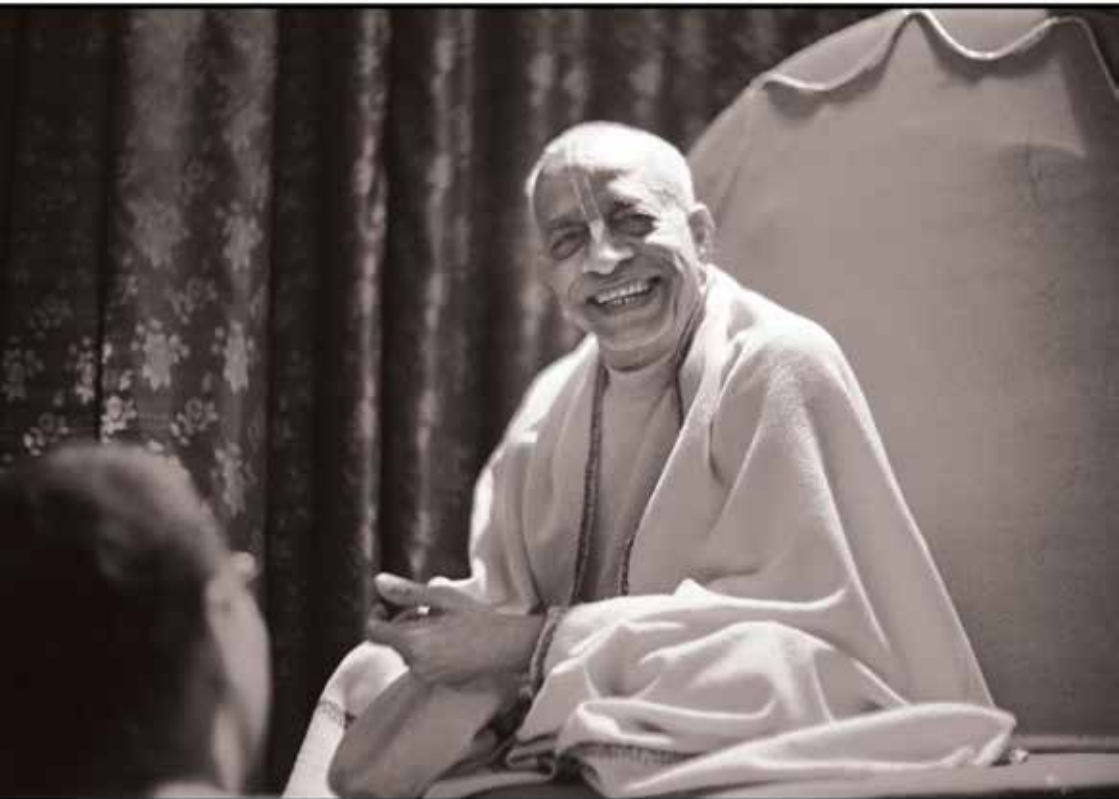




# ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA TRIBUTES

31 AUG  
2021

Celebrating the  
appearance day of our  
beloved spiritual master



OM VIṢṆUPĀDA  
PARAMAHĀMSA  
PARIVRĀJAKĀCĀRYA  
AṢṬOTTARA-ŚATA

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD  
A. C.  
BHAKTIVEDANTA  
SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA

FOUNDER-ĀCĀRYA OF  
THE INTERNATIONAL  
SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA  
CONSCIOUSNESS



ŚRĪLA  
PRABHUPĀDA  
TRIBUTES

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# INTRODUCTION

Welcome to this year's *Śrīla Prabhupāda Tributes*, a collection of Vyāsa-pūjā offerings from Śrīla Prabhupāda's direct disciples.

All of Śrīla Prabhupāda's disciples are welcome to write an offering for this yearly book, regardless of their personal history, present circumstances, personal views, or institutional affiliation.

The book provides an opportunity for all of Śrīla Prabhupāda's direct disciples to express their realizations, reflections, and gratitude – and for other devotees to read and reflect upon what these disciples have expressed.

Following traditional *Vaiṣṇava* etiquette, we have placed the offerings from sannyasis first, and then those from Śrīla Prabhupāda's other disciples, all in order of seniority by initiation. In the back of the book you'll find an index to all the contributors in alphabetical order.

When the book comes out each year, we welcome you to start reading from it as soon as you receive it – *ahead* of the day of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā. That way the book can help fill your mind with thoughts of Śrīla Prabhupāda and his devotees as the sacred day of Vyāsa-pūjā draws near. And later the book can serve as a source of memories, insights, inspiration, and history, preserving the words of those who wrote.

If you're Śrīla Prabhupāda's direct disciple but haven't been included in this year's book, we warmly invite you to send an offering for next year's. And everyone please spread the word. The place to find out more about the book and submit an offering is [www.sptributes.com](http://www.sptributes.com).

If you have any suggestions for improving the book, please write to us at [sptributes@gmail.com](mailto:sptributes@gmail.com).

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda and to all of his disciples and followers.  
Hare Kṛṣṇa.

*Your servant,*

Pradyumna Dasa  
Production Manager

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- A devotee in Africa, who wishes to remain anonymous
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## The Tributes Team

Every member of the Tributes team (listed below) has offered their time and service on a voluntary basis.

Editorial and Production Advisor Jayadvaita Swami  
Production Manager Pradyumna Dāsa  
Submission Managers Harṣarāṇī Devī Dāsi & Rosie Patel  
Senior Editor Nimāi Devī Dāsi  
Sanskrit Editor Radheya Fournier  
Proofreader Kṛṣṇa-kṛpā Dāsa  
Outreach Gaura Dāsa, Sevānanda Dāsa  
Website and Designer Jagannāth Śaraṇ Dāsa

Thank you to Draviḍa Dāsa for sharing and editing many of the sannyasi and some of the initiated disciples offerings which also appear in the BBT Vyāsa-pūjā book.





TRIBUTES  
BY  
SANNYASI  
DISCIPLES



*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale  
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāminī*

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

## THE PROOF OF THE PUDDING

I sat in front of my computer, my head in my hands as the demons in my mind attacked:

“It’s time to retire, old man.”

“It’s all too complicated. Too many problems.”

“You can’t deal with it any more. Give up.”

I looked at my computer. I had forgotten to turn it on. I went back to the demons.

“Stop!” I shouted. “Go away!”

The demons came faster.

They threw bricks and Moloto cocktails.

“You’ve had your day, you old dinosaur.”

“Go back to the Stone Age, where you came from.”

“You’re all used up, like yesterday’s pizza.”

I slapped the top of my head. “Stop!” I shouted. My voice echoed back and forth through my mind. Then my eye caught Prabhupāda’s *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*. I knew what to do.

“Kṛṣṇa!” I shouted. “Kṛṣṇa! Help!”

Suddenly the magic verse rang out:

*“O son of Bharata, as the sun alone illuminates all this universe, so does the living entity, one within the body, illuminate the entire body by consciousness.”*

The demons ran in panic, even tripped over each other. I took a deep breath and leaned back in my chair.

I call this my magic verse because it always scares away my demons. I had read the *Bhagavad-gītā* before, but it was only Prabhupāda who told me to believe it:

Similarly, there is a science of God by which you can understand how God appears, disappears, how He acts, how He works. Everything is there, but if you are not interested that does not mean that the

science of God is false or there is no such science.

Also:

“You believe that they have gone to moon planet. You have not gone. You have heard from somebody in the newspaper, that’s all. That is your authority. So if you can believe in the newspaper, then I cannot believe in the *śāstras*?”

Yes, but believe there’s only one sun? Everyone will think I’m crazy.

“The Americans will not accept some of these things you are saying,” I said to Prabhupāda in 1966.

“I am not going to change the truth for the Americans,” Prabhupāda replied.

But how could I doubt the scientists? Could I just push away their stories about the strange things they call quasars and the whirling galaxies bumping into one another and those stars billions of light years away and 500 trillion times brighter than the sun? Astounding!

Ah, but there was one question only Prabhupāda could answer:

It was 1965, and I was watching my cat give birth. As soon as each kitten was born, the mother licked the baby’s face right away. It’s because kittens, like some other mammals, are born wrapped in a membrane, the amniotic sac. The mother must immediately lick it off the newborn’s face to let it start breathing.

But how did my cat know this? She had never attended a class on birthing, never read a book on it, never asked a doctor.

Alright, Mr. Scientist, tell me how she knew. But don’t give me some story about “instinct” unless you can explain it. And you can’t. Because “instinct” is like the Loch Ness monster. Everyone’s heard of it, but no one knows if it even exists.

It wasn’t till I read Prabhupāda’s *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* that I found the answer: Supersoul, Kṛṣṇa residing in the heart of my cat, gave her the inspiration.

But wait! Maybe I thought the galaxies and quasars were astounding, but what Prabhupāda taught me leaves the quasars light-years behind. Just imagine! Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the universe with all its stars and nebulas, stood by and watched over my little cat and her kittens.

It was Prabhupāda who showed me that God is Kṛṣṇa, the supreme person, that he has feelings: *“The Absolute is sentient thou hast proved.”* And Kṛṣṇa cares about the little guy, even the little guy’s cat.

Prabhupāda himself exemplified this compassion. In 1968 I asked Prabhupāda’s servant why the grass in front of Prabhupāda’s house was growing tall when all the neighbors had neatly trimmed lawns. His answer: “Prabhupāda said ‘You have given the animals a home. Do not take it away.’”

Still don’t believe me? Here’s an example you can see every day:

“The scriptures say the sun is an eye of Kṛṣṇa,” said Prabhupāda in 1967. “So unless Kṛṣṇa sees first, we cannot see. We are proud of our so-called eyes, but without the sun our eyes are useless.”

This talk still shines in my brain after all these years. Could the sunlight really be the seeing power of the sun?

Then the sun sees whatever its light touches, even to the farthest reaches of the universe. How is it, then, that the sun, who looks at the most magnificent mountains and forests and palaces, comes and peeks through the leaves of a tree into my kitchen window and draws delicate patterns of lace on the floor?

And then I wonder, If this light is so powerful it can hit the most distant star and bounce back, how does it let itself be filtered by a few little leaves?

Whew! The world calls the sun a “minor star,” but Prabhupāda revealed it to me as the eye of Kṛṣṇa. And if the sun sees, then it’s alive. Can anyone disprove it? Then please step forward.

As Prabhupāda points out, if you can believe in the newspapers, then I can believe in the scriptures. Thank you, Prabhupāda. Goodbye, scientists.

One of the first things that impressed me about Prabhupāda, in fact, was how effortlessly he could answer any question and speak on any subject—from the biggest: *“The material world is one fourth of the Kingdom of God,”*—to the tiniest: *“If you try to catch a small bug, he will run away because he has free will.”*

Here was someone I could follow. Here stood my teacher, scripture in hand. Still today, if I want to know astounding things about the stars and quasars and whirling galaxies, I pick up Prabhupāda’s books. They leave the scientists groping in the dark matter of the universe.

And Prabhupāda's books finally answered a question that had throbbed in my brain since childhood.

The question came one day when I stood on the porch of my house in Chicago, looking over the grass in my backyard. The breeze carried the fragrance of pink and white peonies while a group of robins chirped as they sat on the electric wires. A dragonfly flew past and disappeared into the mighty tree of heaven standing guard at the back gate.

"What is it all about?" I wondered. "Why are there trees and grass and flowers and me? And why can't anybody can tell me? But someday. . . someday I'll know."

And now I know. Prabhupāda gave me the *Bhagavad-gītā* and told me to believe it:

*"The living entity in material nature thus follows the ways of life, enjoying the three modes of nature. This is due to his association with that material nature. Thus he meets with good and evil among various species."*

What's more, I even know why the peonies smell so nice:

*"Everything in the material world has a certain fragrance, as the fragrance in a flower, or in the earth, in water, in fire, in air, etc. The uncontaminated fragrance, the original fragrance, which permeates everything, is Kṛṣṇa."*

"It sounds nice," you say, "all this pretty talk about quasars and dragonflies, but where's the proof? How can I know I'll be better off?"

Well, my friend, you know the old saying, "The proof of the pudding is in the eating." But in Bengal, they go a step farther. They say the proof is in the dying:

*"There is a Bengali proverb that everything will be tested at the time of death."*

Of course, I haven't died yet, at least not this time around. But I came close one night. It was after my fifth heart attack. I was in a hospital bed with wires attached to my body and going into a machine that recorded my heartbeat and my breathing and God knows what else.

Nurses were scurrying in and out, and the place reeked of disinfectant. A bottle of goo hung by my bedside with a long plastic tube ending in a needle stuck into my vein. Yuck!

I would be operated on the next day . . . if I lived through the night.

I had just scribbled an impromptu will for my disciples, just in case.

Was I scared? Who wouldn't be? But was my heart pounding in my chest? No. Did my mouth dry up? Did my face feel hot and flushed? Did my stomach feel queasy? Was I banging my fist on the table and screaming, "Why? Why? Why?"

Nope. Prabhupāda had already told me what death was. It's in the *Bhagavad-gītā*:

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

I turned over in my bed. "Why is it," I wondered, "Why is it that you can't get comfortable in a hospital bed no matter how much you squirm and twist?"

As my eyelids closed, drawn together by invisible magnets, I remembered a verse from the second chapter:

*"Even a little advancement on this path can save one from the most terrible fear."*

"It's true," I thought. "Here is the proof in my own life . . . and maybe death."

Five days later I went home with a few refurbished arteries. Prabhupāda had called me into battle in his army once more. We have worlds to conquer.

I'm only one person, and I haven't completed the journey. But my godsisters and godbrothers have begun leaving this world, one by one. And none have left in fear. What better proof could anyone want?

Alright . . . I know. . . I'm talking too much about myself, as usual. This is supposed to be a tribute to Prabhupāda, not to me. But I wanted to show what Praphupada has done for just one little follower. And to think about what he has done for the thousands of others? I can hardly imagine the bigness of it all.

Yeah, but still, I haven't said all I want to. There's one more thing:

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda: Thank you for letting me share with others what you have done for me. Will you let me keep on, life after life? Please?

I love you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*Your eternal disciple,*

Umāpati Swami

### How Bold You Were!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

How bold you were to lead Hare Kṛṣṇa *kīrtanas* to audiences who had never heard the word “Kṛṣṇa,” and you induced them to sing in response. How bold you were to immediately lecture on Kṛṣṇa the Supreme Personality of Godhead to people who had never heard of Him. You broke through the barrier of their ignorance and told them that Kṛṣṇa was God. You quoted many verses from the *Bhagavad-gītā* as evidence, although they couldn’t understand a word of the Sanskrit. You trusted that the transcendental sound vibration would purify them. And so you freely gave it out, although they didn’t know the language. You had a thick Bengali accent; the theological/philosophical concepts were entirely new to Lower East Side NYC/San Francisco youth.

Yet you were charismatic and charming. As the *Village Voice* reporter who interviewed you in the Bowery loft said, “I just plain liked the guy.” But you didn’t water down the teachings, you didn’t “dumb down” the philosophy. So today, when I listen to your early classes at 26 Second Avenue or your talks to outside groups and one-time lectures to students at colleges, I am simply amazed at how bold you were, diving at once into the heart of Kṛṣṇa consciousness without any fear or hesitation. I love you for being so straightforward. Every time I hear you speak, it builds my faith more and more.

*Your eternal servant,*

Satsvarupa dasa Goswami



*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhūtale  
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

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

Thoughts:

- Śrīla Prabhupāda has brought the pure holy name.
- We can understand Śrīla Prabhupāda by the grace of Śrīla Prabhupāda.
- He kept it pure.
- He kept it simple.
- When we remember him he is with us.
- Just start to remember and serve him, and inspiration and realizations will come.
- On my own, what could I do with my life? Let me offer my life to him, and he will engage me in Kṛṣṇa's service.
- I am weak, but he is strong. Let me depend on him.

May I always be engaged in the service of Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
and the service of his servants.

Jayadvaita Swami

I offer my respectful obeisances to my spiritual father, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale  
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-śvāmīnīti nāmīne*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracārīṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūnya-vādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

On this sacred day of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I am offering you my respectful homage.

Recently, some months ago, I heard your lecture from 1975 April, in Māyāpur, where you said:

“So one who is spreading *kṛṣṇa-upadeśa*, simply repeat what is said by Kṛṣṇa, then you become *ācārya*. (...) Suppose you have got now ten thousand. We shall expand to hundred thousand. That is required. Then hundred thousand to million, and million to ten million. So, there will be no scarcity of *ācārya*, and people will understand Kṛṣṇa consciousness very easily.”

(Lecture on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādilīlā* 1.13 – April 6, 1975, Mayapur)

Also, it was revealed to me that, on multiple occasions you had mentioned “thousands of gurus”. I was thinking that your idea is the way to achieve Lord Caitanya’s prediction, that in every town and village, His holy name will be sung.

I was seeing that many of my disciples only read a minimum to get their second initiation, and that if we say, if we advocate that they read all your books and get their degrees – Bhaktivaibhava, Bhaktivedānta, Bhakti Sārvabhauma and then read your *Līlāmṛta*, understand your life and teachings, although all this may be difficult compared to the present system where becoming a *dīkṣā-guru*, but by motivating, encouraging, advocating that each devotee should become mature practitioners, exponents of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, we could actually fulfill your mission, the mission of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

His Divine Grace Śrīla Gaura Kīśora dāsa Bābājī had only two

disciples – one was a *bhajana-ānandī* and one was a *ghoṣṭi-ānandī* – Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. Through his *ghoṣṭi-ānandī* disciple, you gave to us and Kṛṣṇa consciousness has been spread all over the world. So, if each disciple becomes a mature devotee, qualifies to be *dīkṣā-guru*, even if they only initiate one or a few disciples, it is not important. But if that disciple is able to take up your mission and spread it like anything to the conditioned souls, that can be a great contribution. Although the present system is very easy, practically to be a *dīkṣā-guru*, but still today we have less than a 100 *dīkṣā-gurus*, after more than 50 years of ISKCON. Your vision that we should have tens of thousands and ultimately millions of *ācāryas*, initiating gurus, is nowhere near sight. To have a specific goal of reading your books, and how to achieve this, is by promoting, advocating, and motivating all the devotees to see that your vision of having tens of thousands and ultimately millions of gurus will be achieved. This may take a long time, but it is not so actually.

I heard today from our Principal of the Śrī Māyāpur International School that 14 students had got the *Bhaktiśāstrī* degree this year! Like that if our students study your books from their childhood, they can achieve complete knowledge of your teachings. Please bless us that we can fulfill your vision for empowered preachers of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

I am very fallen, somehow, I am trying to fulfill your instructions to me, but there is so much more that needs to be done. I pray for your mercy that I will be able to fulfill your vision.

*Your servant,*

Jayapatākā Swami

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

The Supreme Lord directs His creation with perfect organization and intelligence. For example, to benefit the inhabitants of the universe, Lord Kṛṣṇa placed planets in precise orbits with fixed time cycles, and He created the sun to provide the universe with heat and light. Also, Lord Kṛṣṇa arranged for each person's digestive system, which, when healthy, digests and assimilates food after eating and which eliminates any unnecessary remains. With similar perfection the Supreme Lord gives His sincere devotees the necessary intelligence to efficiently and effectively execute and organize His mission so that His children can come back to the spiritual world.

Just as a material body has many organs and systems, so too ISKCON, which is a body of Lord Kṛṣṇa, has many activities and programs to fulfill Lord Kṛṣṇa's purposes. These purposes are explained throughout the Vaiṣṇava scriptures and are summarized in *Bhagavad-gītā* 18.65-69:

[65] Always think of Me, become My devotee, worship Me and offer your homage unto Me. Thus you will come to Me without fail. I promise you this because you are My very dear friend. [66] Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear. [67] This confidential knowledge may never be explained to those who are not austere, or devoted, or engaged in devotional service, nor to one who is envious of Me. [68] For one who explains this supreme secret to the devotees, pure devotional service is guaranteed, and at the end he will come back to Me. [69] There is no servant in this world more dear to Me than he, nor will there ever be one more dear.

Accomplishing these purposes begins by making arrangements for people to hear about Lord Kṛṣṇa from mature and expert devotees. Such hearing should inspire people to take up the process of *sādhana-bhakti*.

Those engaged in this process of regulated devotional service can also be trained how to worship the Supreme Lord in the temple and in their homes. Such worship gradually qualifies them for steady devotional service in which they can easily and without deviation fix their mind and intelligence on Lord Kṛṣṇa's names, forms, qualities, associates, and pastimes.

ISKCON's purpose is to help devotees become absorbed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. All its programs and activities should advance pure devotional service so that devotees can be constantly absorbed in deep loving remembrance of the Supreme Lord. ISKCON's actual wealth and treasure is its members' selfless and loving commitment to Lord Caitanya's mission. Intelligently organizing ISKCON around the Supreme Lord's transcendental purposes will bring about such valuable treasure within the movement and in devotees' lives.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the whole world has had to adjust its lifestyle. Many in the world have fallen victim to distress and mental illness due to the fear and the changes that have occurred. . But by your mercy, and the mercy of Lord Caitanya, and of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, we have been able to rise to the challenge. We have come to realize that this process of *bhakti-yoga*, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, is always available in any circumstance simply by our sincere desire to access it. We know from the many statements given in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, and in your classes, that this world is a certified place of suffering. Therefore we are not surprised to see the upheaval that is being wrought by this disease. Our next challenge will come from old age and death, but we are confident that by your mercy we will be able to tolerate these sufferings also and not have to see another birth in this world.

This confidence is not due to pride, but on the contrary, it is due to our firm conviction that we are but tiny souls and have no ability to overcome the onslaught of material nature. But by your grace we have come to firmly believe in the words of Lord Kṛṣṇa where He says in *Bg. 7.14* that by surrendering unto Him we can easily cross beyond this insurmountable material nature.

We had the great good fortune of being with you in your last days in Vṛndāvana and seeing first-hand how you were not attached to staying in this world or in leaving it. Once we heard you say that you were not attached to staying in this world or leaving it because in either case you would be doing the same thing...serving Kṛṣṇa. Thank you for showing us this example and giving us the instructions and faith that will enables us to also come to this same realization as death approaches.

Eternally indebted to your person, I remain your insignificant servant.

*With affection,*

Trivikrama Swami

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared on the planet over 500 years ago and he had predicted that the holy names would be chanted in every town and village of the world.

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

In *Caitanya-maṅgala*, Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura states that a powerful *senāpati-bhakta* will appear to propagate the holy names in every corner of the globe. Śrīla Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda had also predicted that a powerful personality will appear who would take the teachings of the Lord to every corner of the globe. You are that *senāpati-bhakta* who endeavored to fulfill the Lord's prediction. Your spiritual master recognized your abilities in the very first meeting. He instructed you to take the message of the Lord to the English-speaking world. In 1936 before Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī left the planet, he again repeated the same instruction. You took your spiritual master's instruction seriously. And in spite of facing challenges in India and in America, you were determined to execute his order. In dedicating the first canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* you stated, 'He lives forever by his divine instructions and the follower lives with him.' This year we are celebrating the 125th anniversary of your divine appearance. This occasion will only come once in a lifetime. Devotees all over the world are enthusiastic to increase their service. In India the leaders are having regular meetings to encourage every devotee to increase their service. Devotees are making plans to celebrate more festivals, increase book distribution, increase congregational preaching, open more temples, have more *ḥarināma* parties, etc. Devotees have realized that in order to please you, they should expand their service. Our communication team in Delhi is working with the government to release a silver coin in your honor. And there is a good possibility that the government will sponsor cultural programs all over India to glorify your divine self. In Delhi we are planning on having a big auditorium program in which either the Prime Minister or the President would be the Chief Guest. We are also planning a big auditorium program in every state capital of India in which we will have the Governor or the Chief Minister as the Chief Guest.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 crisis which had come under control by November last year has now resurfaced. The new variant has started spreading quickly and it is considered dangerous. Thousands have died or reported ill. As a result, State Governments of India has imposed lockdown and have prohibited gatherings of more than 50 people. This pandemic is probably the result of expanding sinful activities. Many companies are now making vaccinations to help control the epidemic. *Bhagavad-gītā* states that no one can escape birth, disease, old age and death. Most people think that the vaccination is the cure of the pandemic. You stated that ‘if we are vaccinated of Kṛṣṇa consciousness then māyā has no power to touch you’. Necessity is the mother of invention. During the period when the temples were closed, devotees discovered online preaching as a positive alternative. This online preaching has given devotees more opportunities to preach. Today there are so many online programs going on in almost all the temples and from devotees’ homes. Practically the preaching is constantly expanding all over the world. Your books continue to guide humanity. You had stated that your books will one day be the law books. You had also stated that everything we need to know is in your books. We should have complete faith in the above instruction. To understand your books, we need to read them again and again. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the real motivating force in the preaching effort of ISKCON. History will recognize you as the savior of humanity. For preaching, construction of temples is also necessary. The Gosvāmīs not only engaged in writing books, but also constructed temples because both are needed for preaching work. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu wanted the cult of His *saṅkīrtana* movement to spread all over the world. Now that the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness has taken up this task of preaching the cult of Lord Caitanya, its members should not only construct temples in every town and village of the globe but also distribute the books that have already been written and further increase the number of books. Both distribution of books and construction of temples must continue side by side in parallel lines. (purport Cc. Adi 7.164) The above very clearly states that book distribution and temple construction are both important. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you very kindly engaged me in your BBT work and temple construction. At present due to your causeless mercy, in North India alone we have seven temples in different stages of construction. We are trying hard to complete three temples as an offering to yourself for your 125th



Appearance Day. You went to Kurukshetra in 1975. You liked the location of Jyotisar where the *Gītā* was spoken. You had a special desire to have a Kṛṣṇa-Arjuna temple constructed in Jyotisar. Due to the help of dedicated disciples, the Kurukshetra temple is coming up nicely. I want to thank you for giving me the facility to serve you. I pray for your causeless mercy so that I may be able to continue to serve you in your glorious ISKCON movement.

*Your fallen servant,*

Gopal Krishna Goswami

## How Shall I Take Shelter of One More Merciful Than You?

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Canto Three, Chapter Two, verse 23 is very significant. Not only is the verse beautiful, but it also has historical significance, because when after sixteen years Śukadeva Gosvāmī came out of the womb, he left home immediately, and his father, Śrīla Vyāsadeva, followed him into the forest. And when Vyāsadeva came close enough to his son for Śukadeva to hear, he recited two verses from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, one describing Kṛṣṇa's beauty, from the Tenth Canto, and one—this verse—describing Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

When Śukadeva Gosvāmī heard these two verses—the one describing Kṛṣṇa's mercy and the one describing Kṛṣṇa's beauty—he became attracted. Although liberated, he became attracted by Kṛṣṇa's transcendental qualities, and he came back to hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from his father.

I quote this verse today because it reminds me of you—how shall I take shelter of one more merciful than you?

*aho bakī yaṁ stana-kāla-kūṭaṁ  
jighāṁsayāpāyayad apy asādhvī  
lebhe gatim dhātry-ucitāṁ tato 'nyam  
kaṁ vā dayāluṁ śaraṇaṁ vrajema*

### TRANSLATION

Alas, how shall I take shelter of one more merciful than Him [Lord Kṛṣṇa], who granted the position of mother to the she-demon Pūtanā although she was faithless and had prepared deadly poison to be sucked from her breast?

### PURPORT

Here is an example of the extreme mercy of the Lord, even to His enemy. It is said that a noble man accepts the good qualities of a person of doubtful character, just as one accepts nectar from a stock of poison. In His babyhood, the

Lord was administered deadly poison by Pūtanā, a she-demon who tried to kill the wonderful baby. And because she was a demon, it was impossible for her to know that the Supreme Lord, even though playing the part of a baby, was no one less than the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His value as the Supreme Lord did not diminish upon His becoming a baby to please His devotee Yaśodā. The Lord may assume the form of a baby or a shape other than that of a human being, but it doesn't make the slightest difference: He is always the same Supreme. A living creature, however powerful he may become by dint of severe penance, can never become equal to the Supreme Lord.

Lord Kṛṣṇa accepted the motherhood of Pūtanā because she pretended to be an affectionate mother, allowing Kṛṣṇa to suck her breast. The Lord accepts the least qualification of the living entity and awards him the highest reward. That is the standard of His character. Therefore, who but the Lord can be the ultimate shelter?

The Lord is absolute. He is all good for everyone, and He is neutral toward everyone. He is always thinking of how to do good for others. So even if one approaches Him as an enemy, He will try to do good for the person, as in the case of Pūtanā. Although she came to kill Kṛṣṇa by administering poison from her breast, He elevated her to the position of a nurse, like a mother, in the spiritual world. And as merciful as He is, you are even more merciful.

You said that it is a mark of a good man that he sees the good side, not the bad side, of others. You gave the example of your Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta had a disciple named Kuṣjabihārī dāsa—people used to call him Kuṣja Bābū—who, you said, came to do business with your Guru Mahārāja, to profit personally from his relationship with him and from his service in the Gauḍīya Maṭh. But you said that your Guru Mahārāja didn't focus on Kuṣja's dark side, that he was coming to make business, but on his bright side, that he was coming to offer service.

In your conversation with Bob Cohen on February 28, 1972, in Māyāpur, you said,

Pūtanā Rākṣasī—she offered Kṛṣṇa poison. But Kṛṣṇa

is so nice that He thought, ‘She took Me as My mother,’ so He took the poison and delivered her. Kṛṣṇa does not take the bad side. A good man does not take the bad side—he takes only the good side. Just like one of my big godbrothers—he wanted to make business with my Guru Mahārāja, but my Guru Mahārāja did not take the bad side. He took the good side. He thought, “He has come forward to give me some service.”

So, this verse reminds me of you: How shall I take shelter of one more merciful than Your Divine Grace? There was no one more merciful than you. Lord Nityānanda is most merciful, and you manifested the same quality of mercy as Nityānanda Prabhu.

In Bombay you received a phone call from the temple president in Calcutta, who reported that one of your earliest disciples from America had come to Calcutta and was smoking *gaṣjā*, marijuana, and asked what to do. You instructed your secretary to relay your response: “Tell him that if he doesn’t stop smoking *gaṣjā* I will reject him.” Afterwards, Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami asked, “Is it true that if he doesn’t stop smoking *gaṣjā* you will reject him?” And you said, “No—I cannot reject anyone. The mercy of Lord Nityānanda has no limit.”

Then, maybe two years later, we were in Juhu, and you had a disciple who fell into bad company and was living on Juhu Beach with a bogus, so-called yogi and doing tricks. He was putting a coin in one ear and then making it come out the other—different strange things to collect money—and he was known as your disciple and as a member of ISKCON. So, Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami approached you and said, “This is happening, and he is giving you a bad name and giving ISKCON a bad name. You should reject him.”

And again you replied, “I cannot reject anyone.”

Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami asked, “But don’t you have to draw the line somewhere?”

And again you said, “The mercy of Lord Nityānanda has no limits.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the manifest representative of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu, and your forgiveness is like His. How shall I take shelter of one more merciful than you?

Another, similar quality of yours is that you were always willing to give someone a chance to take up Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Around 1976 a strange man with a PhD came to the Juhu temple and said he wanted to join, and you invited him to stay upstairs with your

personal staff, in the flat adjoining yours. And you spent quite a bit of time with him. Hamsadūta Prabhu was visiting at the time, and he told you, “Prabhupāda, you are just wasting your time with this man. He is never going to amount to anything.” But you kept spending time with him. And in the end, the man left; he never did amount to anything. But when Hamsadūta mentioned that to you—“I could see that he never was going to amount to anything”—you replied, “I wanted to give him a chance.”

Another person whom you encouraged was Dr. C. P. Patel, who would almost always accompany you on your morning walks on Juhu Beach. You had a friendly relationship with him, but Dr. Patel would sometimes speak like a Māyāvādī. You would accuse him, “You are a Māyāvādī!” and Dr. Patel would reply, “No sir, I am a Vaiṣṇava, a pure Vaiṣṇava.”

One morning Dr. Patel and you had a huge argument. Dr. Patel would bring up different so-called holy men of India, and if they were not up to standard you would criticize them. So, one morning you were criticizing one of Dr. Patel’s favorite revered so-called saints of India, and Dr. Patel and you had a huge argument. He raised his voice to you, and you raised your voice to him—the two of you were literally shouting at each other. And Dr. Patel’s friends, his cronies, were trying to pull him away, saying, “Don’t upset Swamiji; he has a heart condition.” And eventually they pulled him away.

Back at Hare Kṛṣṇa Land, Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Goswami approached you in your room and asked, “What is Dr. Patel’s position? Is he a Vaiṣṇava or a Māyāvādī, an impersonalist?”

In response, you told a story about a man who could speak many languages. In whatever language people addressed him, he would respond fluently. No one could figure out where the man was actually from.

After much discussion, a neighbor said, “I will find out.” So, one day, when the man was preoccupied, the neighbor came up behind him and gave him a big whack. And when the man started to curse in his native tongue, his origin was disclosed.

“Dr. Patel is like that,” Prabhupāda said. “He can speak very expertly. He can sound like a devotee, sound like a Vaiṣṇava, sound like a Māyāvādī, sound like anything. But when I gave a slap where it really hurt—this so-called saintly person that he revered—his real language came out.”

“So, why do you put up with him?” Tamāl Kṛṣṇa asked. “He

is so offensive.”

“It is our duty to engage everyone,” you said. You wanted to give Dr. Patel a chance. And as the years passed, Dr. Patel developed great affection for you, and after you left this world he wrote a beautiful article for *Back to Godhead* about his relationship with you. The article was titled “My Life’s Most Precious Moments,” with the subtitle “A Bombay doctor wins the title ‘big fool’ and loves it”—because you would always call Dr. Patel a *mūḍha*. You would say, “I am not saying—Kṛṣṇa is saying: *na mām duṣkṛtino mūḍhāḥ*. [Anyone who doesn’t surrender to Kṛṣṇa is a *mūḍha*, fool.]”

So, how shall I take shelter of one more merciful than you? Your Divine Grace had so many wonderful qualities, but your most significant quality, for us especially, was your extreme mercifulness.

You had a good friend in Bombay named Bhogilal Patel, who was extremely pious. The first devotee to meet him was Gargamuni, and when Gargamuni was explaining your work, Bhogilal wept profuse tears of appreciation.

One day some years later, Bhogilal Patel came to meet you in your flat at the back of Hare Kṛṣṇa Land. I had a close relationship with Bhogilal, so I brought him up to meet you. The two of you were talking and, as is natural in a conversation, when you were speaking I would look at you, and when Bhogilal was speaking I would look at him. But at one point, while Bhogilal was speaking I looked at you, which you were not expecting, and I saw that you were looking at me with such love and affection, like a father or a grandfather (by age, you were more like my grandfather). I was surprised that you were looking at me with so much love. But as soon as you saw me looking at you, you changed your expression and became very grave and serious. I think it was some special mercy that I got a glimpse of how much love you had for us, which you didn’t usually show very openly. Your love for us was manifest in your care for us and your giving us the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and engaging us in Kṛṣṇa’s service.

You were very reserved about touching people, including even disciples. In 1971 in Gorakhpur, as guests of Hanuman Prasad Poddar of Gita Press, we were staying in his large estate, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Niketan, which had previously been his personal residence.

You were traveling with your small Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deities, and you wanted to establish an altar for Them in Śrī Kṛṣṇa Niketan. You wanted some foliage for the altar, so you sent me and a few other

devotees to collect some. I went out to a thicket and was collecting branches with leaves. I wasn't tearing them live—I was looking for branches and leaves that had fallen. I just kept going deeper into the woods and collecting more and more foliage, and eventually I had a huge bundle, as much as I could possibly carry.

So, I lugged the bundle back to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Niketan and up the stairs, and when I reached the temple room you were there and the altar was being set up. I just dropped the bundle on the floor and offered my obeisances. And while I was on the floor you patted me on the back. It was one of the only times—maybe the only time—that you physically touched me. I looked up and saw you smiling broadly. I didn't know if you even needed any more foliage, but you were pleased by my effort.

Again I ask: Śrīla Prabhupāda, how shall I take shelter of one more merciful than you?

Thank you for your ongoing causeless mercy, which, like Nityānanda Prabhu's, has no limit.

I pray to serve your merciful lotus feet eternally, and in doing so, to share your sublime mercy with others.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

*Your eternal servant,*

Girirāj Swami

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

Dear Prabhupāda,

I offer my sincere obeisances at your feet. Your mission, your vision, to firmly establish the *yuga-dharma*, *Hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana*, throughout the world, is the ultimate inspiration and goal of our lives.

You taught us:

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

[Cc. Antya-līlā 7.11]

“*Saṅkīrtana* of Kṛṣṇa’s names is the *dharma* of the Kali Age. Without Kṛṣṇa’s power, there is no spreading of that *dharma*.”

Just as Lord Kṛṣṇa commanded Arjuna, “Just be My instrument” [Bg. 11.33], so you urged us to try to become Kṛṣṇa’s instruments. Just as Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself had already slain the warriors whom He urged Arjuna to fight, so you revealed to us that Lord Caitanya has already spread His *saṅkīrtana* movement around the world. Arjuna had only to fight a war already won by Kṛṣṇa, and we have only to spread a *saṅkīrtana* movement that Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself has already spread.

“Why don’t you take the credit?” you challenged me. “Otherwise, Lord Kṛṣṇa will give the credit to other devotees.”

I personally heard this from you on a morning walk in Rancho Park, Los Angeles. On this, your sacred Appearance Day, I pray that you may inspire and guide me to fully embrace Lord Kṛṣṇa’s most generous, loving offer — to become His instrument in spreading the *Hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana* movement.

*Your servant,*

Hridayananda dasa Goswami



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

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

According to Vedic literature, the spiritual master acts as an intermediary between the Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and the individual *jīva* souls such as ourselves. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda became the spiritual master of the world because he obeyed the order of his spiritual master, Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahaṁsa Parivrajakācārya 108 Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja Prabhupāda by translating and commenting upon the pristine Vedic texts and by distributing them everywhere.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught Sanātana Gosvāmī that there are three purposes of the Vedas; 1) to understand the relationship between Lord Kṛṣṇa and ourselves (*sambandha*), 2) how to act in that relationship (*abhidheya*) and 3) to attain the ultimate goal (*prayojana*) which is love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Śrīla Prabhupāda established temples, schools and farm communities so that persons interested in learning more about the Vedas could also participate by visiting and residing with the devotees.

His Divine Grace has taught that a person who is without a qualified spiritual master is compared to a ship without a rudder. Both fail to reach the destination. Every soul yearns to cross the wide ocean of pain, anxiety and repeated birth, so that they can enjoy life forever. The disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda and I had been wandering aimlessly for what seemed like an eternity throughout the material world's 8.4 million species. Naturally we love him like no other because he actually saved our lives from being ruined by uncontrollable desires—lust, anger, greed and madness.

*tvaṁ naḥ sandarśito dhātrā  
dustaraṁ nistitīṣatām  
kalīṁ sattva-haraṁ puṁsām  
karṇa-dhāra ivārṇavam*

*We think that we have met Your Goodness by the will of providence, just so*

*that we may accept you as captain of the ship for those who desire to cross the difficult ocean of Kali, which deteriorates all the good qualities of a human being. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.1.22)*

Similarly, Śrīla Prabhupāda keeps a special place in his heart for each of his loyal followers. Therefore, I pray that on this most auspicious 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's appearance day in this world, the Lord, His representative (Śrīla Prabhupāda) and their Vaiṣṇava devotees will continue to tolerate me and to bless me with their eternal association and service.

*Aspiring servant,*  
Danavir Goswami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*śrī-caitanya-mano-'bhīṣṭaṁ  
sthāpitaṁ yena bhū-tale  
svayaṁ rūpaḥ kadā mahyaṁ  
dadāti sva-padāntikam*

I was born in the darkest ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes with the torch of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto him. When will Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, who has established within this material world the mission to fulfill the desire of Lord Caitanya, give me shelter under his lotus feet?

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

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

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

I recite these many times daily and am waiting for realization. As Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura sang:

*Kabe habe, When will that day be mine.*

You are the full manifestation of Lord Caitanya's mission, due to being the perfect Rūpānuga.

*ācāryere ajñā dila kariyā sammāna  
'ā-caṅḍāla ādi kṛṣṇa-bhakti dio dāna'*

With great respect, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu requested Advaita Ācārya, "Give Kṛṣṇa consciousness, devotion to Kṛṣṇa, even to the lowest of men [caṅḍālas]."

## PURPORT

This is Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s order to all His devotees. *Kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, devotion to Kṛṣṇa, is open to everyone, even low-class men like *caṇḍālas*. One should follow this order in the disciplic succession stemming from Śrī Advaita and Nityānanda Prabhu and distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness without discrimination throughout the world.

— Cc. *Madhya* 15.41

That fact that you have reached out and tolerated me for so many years is proof.

My dear Guru Mahārāja, you have given us so many sublime instructions; two of which are currently dominating my mind. They are; “*Acintya bhedābheda tattva*”, which means “inconceivably simultaneously one and different”. Material scientists cannot accept that, but it perfectly explains Kṛṣṇa. He is “inconceivable”, beyond belief.

Another thing that you asked us to discuss is “unity in diversity”. As we expand globally and attract more souls from many different backgrounds, and as there are more and more varieties of spiritual seekers, we see more and more the need to understand how to apply this seemingly simple principle of “unity in diversity. I pray that I can represent you and detach this.

The influence of the Age of Kali is increasing, as is the Golden Age of Lord Caitanya. Your books and lectures are spread far and wide. Naturally demons do not like that and we are faced with the task of teaching properly.

*loka-hita lāgi’ tomāra saba vyavahāra  
āmi saba nā jāni gambhīra hṛdaya tomāra*

“All Your activities are for the benefit of people in general. We cannot understand them, for Your intentions are deep and grave.”

— Cc. *Antya* 2.136

*yānra citte kṛṣṇa-premā karaye udaya  
tānra vākya, kriyā, mudrā vijñeha nā bujhaya*

“Even the most learned man cannot understand the words, activities and symptoms of a person situated in love of Godhead.”

— Cc. *Madhya* 23.40

Of course so many are relishing your writings and taking up *bhakti* and the *saṅkīrtana* mission with great zeal.

I pray that I will be able to imbibe your mission.

*kabe jībe doyā, hoibe udoya,  
nija-sukha bhuli' sudīna-hṛdoya  
bhakativinoda, koriyā binoya,  
śrī-āññā-ṭahala koribe pracār*

When will compassion for all fallen souls awaken within this Bhaktivinoda, and when will he thus forget his own happiness and with a meek heart set out to propagate by humble entreaty the sacred order of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu?

— SVA 2: *Śuddha-bhakata*

Narottama dāsa prays to his golden complexioned Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, “Please give Your merciful glance on me and keep me as Your servant in Vṛndāvana. You are my only shelter.”

— *Prārthanā*: Song 6 – *hari hari! kṛpā kari rākha nija-pade*

When will I be able to pray like Sanātana Goswami?

*tabe tāra diśā sphure mo-nīcera hṛdaya  
īśvara tumi, – ye karāha, sei siddha haya*

“If You would please manifest Yourself within my heart and personally direct me in writing this book, then, although I am lowborn, I may hope to be able to write it. You can do this because You Yourself are the Supreme Personality of Godhead and whatever You direct is perfect.”

— *Cc. Madhya* 24.327

For me, even writing this short note is difficult. But you can kindly given us the Pañca Tattva, so:

*mūka kavīva kare yān-sabāra smarāṇe  
paṅgu giri laṅghe, andha dekhe tārā-gaṇe*

By remembering the lotus feet of the Pañca-tattva, a dumb man can become a poet, a lame man can cross mountains, and a blind man can see the stars in the sky.

— *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 8.5

*Your still aspiring servant,  
Praying to accept your causeless mercy,*

Kavicandra Swami

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please forgive me for my most fallen condition. I feel very unqualified and incapable of making an offering to you on your Vyāsa-pūjā. I have sacrificed so little in your service and you have sacrificed everything to save me.

You sacrificed your family and took *sannyāsa*.

You sacrificed your time doing *bhajana* and writing books in Vṛndāvana.

You sacrificed your health making a daring trip across the North Atlantic to America.

You sacrificed your safety and well-being walking the streets of New York alone.

You sacrificed so much to save us from this material world and we have sacrificed so little in return.

I feel ashamed to call myself your disciple. I am now the same age as you were when you came to America with nothing, sacrificing everything to lift us out of the Ocean of Māyā.

However, due to the calamitous world circumstances and my own poor health, I am unable to serve you by traveling and preaching all over the world as I had planned and you had wanted for me to do.

I am begging you to please bless me Śrīla Prabhupāda, that I may finish writing my books as you instructed us to write. That I may revive my health and that circumstances in the world will return to a state where I can again travel and preach your message and distribute your books. Please bless me that I can serve till I am on my deathbed by preaching your mission. Please bless me that wherever you are preaching now, when I die I can join you once again, serve you once again, preach with you once again and make my life successful by becoming your humble servant. These blessings I ask of you today on your appearance day. Please do not refuse me the opportunity to serve you birth after birth and make my life successful as your humble servant.

*I remain your fallen disciple birth after birth,*

Swami B.V. Bhāgavat

My dear spiritual Father,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace. All glories to the *sankīrtana* mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu whose banner you raised around the planet and by so doing gave the world the opportunity to participate in the chanting of the holy names of the Lord.

This is my 50th year in your service. You mercifully accepted me as a disciple during your visit to London in 1971. I do not have a colorful track record over these years. I had my problems from time to time but, somehow I managed to hold on to your lotus feet, and I have kept myself alive in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I am not a big devotee or leader. I am just an insignificant servant of Your Divine Grace who understood the importance of Your mission. We often heard you say that we should want to do something useful with our life. We have had many births in the material world and we were never happy or satisfied. When I heard these words from Your lotus mouth they entered my dirty heart and I was inspired to commit myself to the service of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

I know that in the future there will be many more devotees and they will all want to distribute the holy name and teach the path of *bhakti*. Lord Caitanya has predicted that the chanting of the holy names would be heard everywhere. If we do not go to the remote corners of the world then in the future others will go there and they will get the credit. We want to see that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, get the credit for bringing the *mahā-mantra* to every town and village on this planet.

Your Divine Grace was kind enough to spend 10 days in Geneva, Switzerland. The temple president was your capable disciple, American born Guru Gaurāṅga Dāsa, and he had arranged a full schedule of lectures and meetings with dignitaries. After a few years the management changed, and it was decided to relocate the temple to Zurich. Your Divine Grace was sorry to hear of this as you considered Geneva to be an important city and worthy of a Kṛṣṇa conscious center. A few years ago a young South Indian lady moved to Geneva with her family and she took up the task of reintroducing Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the people of Geneva. Every week by means of the internet I join her in the study of *Bhagavad-gītā* with a group of devotees. Having a sannyasi's presence encourages the participants.



Other outreach programs such as festivals, park programs, children's classes and cooking classes are also arranged successfully. Gradually we hope to revive the presence of ISKCON in Geneva.

Your Divine Grace visited Moscow and understood the people of Russia as being receptive to the Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy. As a small service every year I spend one month travelling around Far Eastern Russia.

Last year we opened a new center with a restaurant located in one of the most remote regions of Russia, Kamchatka. This region is accessible only by air but still has a population of over 100,000 people. Our center there is further proof that the mercy of Lord Caitanya is being distributed to every town and village.

In northern China just last night one of our elderly devotees left her body and just as she departed, a group of four devotees arrived there to perform *kīrtana* for the passing soul as well as some last rites before the cremation. Lord Caitanya's mercy is unlimited, and it has reached the most remote and isolated regions of the world. When you approached your spiritual master at the first meeting you argued that India should first get independence, but Your spiritual master pointed out that the message of Śrī Caitanya cannot wait for some political adjustment. In the same mood we are continuing to go everywhere and distribute the message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

On this auspicious day we thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for kindly bestowing your mercy on the world.

May I always be engaged in service as a particle of dust at your lotus feet.

*Forever your servant of the servant,*

Tridandi Bikshu Bhakti Vighna Vinasa Narasimha

I offer my humble obeisances at the lotus feet of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura comments on his song *Nadīyā-godrume Nityānanda Mahājana* that the *mahāśaya* (great personality) on patrol plays his *karatālas* and calls out, “O people of faith! I do not wish to beg from you any worldly thing or mundane favor. The only alms I beg is that all of you honor the order of the Lord by chanting the name of Kṛṣṇa, worshiping Kṛṣṇa, and teaching others about Kṛṣṇa.”

This statement by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura reminds me of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Following in full surrender the order of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, and his spiritual master, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, he played the *karatālas* and chanted the holy names of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Single-handedly he delivered the treasure of the holy name to everyone he met, and gradually it started spreading all over the world.

Meditating on this miracle, I offer my prostrated *daṇḍavats* to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda did not beg for any worldly things or mundane favors. He did not travel all over the world to ask for anything. He delivered the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and the only alms he asked for was that people honor the order of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu, and the previous *ācāryas* by chanting the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa—*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*.

Meditating on this miracle, I offer my prostrated *daṇḍavats* to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura comments further: “Invoke the true name of Kṛṣṇa. Specifically, by giving up *nāmābhāsa* (a hint of the holy name due to offenses), please chant the purely spiritual (*cin-maya*) holy name of the Lord.”

People never heard about offenses being committed against the holy name. They had no clue what an offense was. Śrīla Prabhupāda patiently taught those who took up the chanting of the holy name what the ten offenses against the holy name were. In his morning and evening classes, his conversations, his letters, and his Bhaktivedanta purports, he explained in the most scientific way to chant the purely spiritual (*cinmaya*) holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Meditating on this miracle, I offer my prostrated *danḍavats* to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes further that the holy name which is not yet purely chanted will naturally become the pure holy name, which bestows all divine perfections—but gradually. This is so because even though one may be situated in the darkness of ignorance, one is still not distracted by desires for *bhoga* (material sense gratification) and *mokṣa* (impersonal liberation), which are both unfavorable for executing devotional service.

Despite the struggle of his early disciples to purely chant the holy name, Śrīla Prabhupāda patiently continued to explain why *bhoga* and *mokṣa* are unfavorable for executing devotional service. By giving his association in manifold ways, by establishing the entire process of practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he provided his followers with the inspiration and spiritual strength to gradually develop a distaste for anything unfavorable for executing devotional service and thus approach the stage of chanting the purely transcendental holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Meditating on this miracle, I offer my prostrated *danḍavats* to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains further:

The supreme nectar (*paramāṁṛta*) of favorable service rendered unto Lord Kṛṣṇa will gradually become thickened until it breaks through your two bodies—the gross (*sthūla*) and the subtle (*liṅga*)—and will finally cause your eternal spiritual form (*aprākṛta-svarūpa*) to reawaken.

Śrīla Prabhupāda provided the entire world with the training and education needed to gradually perform favorable devotional service as taught by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. The chanting of the pure holy name is verily the only true welfare of the living entity. There exists no higher benefit for anyone in the entire three worlds.

Meditating on this miracle, I offer my prostrated *daṇḍavats* to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness.

*Śrīla Prabhupāda's servant,*

Bhaktivaibhava Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Because of the departure of your dear disciple and my closest friend Bhakti Chāru Swami, this year has been challenging. We had been working together in Your Divine Grace’s service for many years.

Philosophically we can understand the temporary nature of this world, but when it comes to experiencing the separation from Vaiṣṇavas, strong emotions naturally overwhelm us.

Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, in his prayer to the departed Vaiṣṇavas, states:

All at once they have gone to join Lord Gaurāṅga, the great dancer. To reach such a perfect personality as Lord Caitanya I can only break my head against the stone in the anguish of separation. They have all gone off together in their own *līlā*. Narottama Dāsa says, “Unable to obtain their association, I must simply weep.” [*Ye Anilo Prema-Dhana*]

In helping the disciples of Bhakti Chāru Swami deal with his departure, I have been reminded of the trauma I experienced when you departed this mortal world. I keep remembering the instructions you give in the Fourth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* regarding a disciple’s mood when the spiritual master enters into Kṛṣṇa’s eternal pastimes:

Similarly, a devoted disciple of the spiritual master would rather die with the spiritual master than fail to execute the spiritual master’s mission [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.50, purport]

And,

When one becomes serious to follow the mission of the spiritual master, his resolution is tantamount to seeing the

Supreme Personality of Godhead. As explained before, this means meeting the Supreme Personality of Godhead in the instruction of the spiritual master. This is technically called *vāñī-sevā*. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura states in his *Bhagavad-gītā* commentary on the verse beginning *vayavasāyātmikā buddhir ekeha kuru-nandana* (Bg. 2.41) that one should serve the words of the spiritual master. The disciple must stick to whatever the spiritual master orders. Simply by following on that line, one sees the Supreme Personality of Godhead. [*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.51, purport]

My realization of your words deepens with time. Not only do I need to be focused on serving your mission with my body, mind, and words, but I need to ensure that your mission will continue and increase with succeeding generations of devotees.

With the passage of time my own bodily mortality becomes more apparent. I pray to you that I will not fall into the illusion of seeing others pass away and thinking it will not happen to me.

*ahany ahani bhūtāni gacchantīha yamālayam  
śeṣāḥ sthāvaram icchanti kim āścaryam ataḥ param*

“Every moment, every second, every day, every night there are so many hundreds and thousands of living entities going to the temple of death, or dying. But one who is living is thinking that ‘I will not die. I will live for good.’ That is the most wonderful thing in this world.” (*Mahābhārata*, Vana Parva, 313.116)

I must endeavor to ensure that your legacy will remain prominent in this world. This is not an easy task. It requires that the understanding of your words, your example, your vision, and your intention be figuratively “carved in stone” in your ISKCON society. We must learn how to apply this understanding in changing times. In this way we can satisfy you by helping you create a spiritual revolution in the impious civilizations of this world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please give me the intelligence and strength to work together with your other followers to accomplish this.

*Your servant,*

Bīr Krishna dās Goswami

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

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

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

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim  
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande śrī gururṁ dina-tāraṇam*

My dear and most respected spiritual master and eternal father,

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

Just as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu is honored as *mahā-vadānyāya*, the most munificent of all forms of the Lord, whose magnanimity manifested even beyond Kṛṣṇa's limitless kindness and mercy, likewise your vision and your mission, expansive beyond comprehension, has irrevocably captured my heart! Expressed in your own words:

*Sarve sukhino bhavantu.* That is the Vedic mission.  
Let everyone become happy. *Sarve sukhino bhavantu.*  
Let everyone be happy. And without being happy, nobody can execute Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Due to your untiring desire to bring this vision into the lives of unknown multitudes of most unfortunate Kali-yuga-victim souls, bereft of knowledge of life's goal and how to achieve it, resulting in the Western world's "culture of no culture", your Divine Grace courageously ventured forth to give the gift of true happiness, by the means of genuine *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, to one and all.

As one such lost soul, wandering in the darkness of ignorance, in pursuit of ideals that would have led me only to a life of frustration and intractable illusion, just like an untold number of lifetimes prior to this one, I was one of the fortunate recipients of your causeless mercy.

One fine day, as a young college student, a series of events unfolded that resulted in a profound realization of “the gift of life”: access to awakening of genuine unadulterated *sukha*, which you had personally given to me. One fine day, by providential arrangement, in a few moments, I palpably perceived many lifetimes of illusion *at once* being lifted from my whole being. The experience was both vivid and startling. Profound gratitude, in waves, filled my heart again and again. I knew, then and there, that I was deeply indebted to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and I *must* reciprocate somehow with you and assist you in your mission.

Fifty-one years later, as a committed peon soldier in your army, commissioned to carry forth your *sarve sukhino bhavantu* mission, I often interact with your sincere followers who express in a refrain the following sincere contemplation, although the language and mood varies from person to person: “I feel a growing yearning to go beyond the stage of mechanical performance of the *vidhis* of *sādhana bhakti*. I know what Rūpa Goswami says on the topic, and I have faith in his words and in the *bhakti* process he has given. However, I feel I am not progressing, at least not in a palpable way. What to do?”

Along with invoking the essential teachings of *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* which disclose Rūpa Goswami’s *śikṣā* on ‘how-to’ go further, one message I feel compelled to share with such persons is to request them to somehow reconnect with their primordial deep sense of gratitude which initially lifted them from the throws of darkness into the light of devotional life. When the heart is genuinely touched by natural gratitude, impetus to move from a non-dynamic spiritually stagnant position then begins to flow again, naturally flowing along the *rūpānuga* path for those who hold dear to their hearts those who cling tightly to Rūpa Goswami’s lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, for me you are the **foremost** representative of Rūpa Goswami!



*Sarve sukhino bhavantu.* That is the Vedic mission.  
Let everyone become happy. *Sarve sukhino bhavantu.*  
Let everyone be happy. And without being happy,  
nobody can execute Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

I am at your feet, begging for your continued mercy. With a heart filled with sincere gratitude to you, please keep me forever and ever engaged in your service, as a menial soldier in your mission.

*Your humble servant,*

Romapada Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories to you.

Recently I have read several books about you written by your disciples who were with you, who spoke to you, and who were trained by you. This has helped me to think of you often, and thus to be with you.

It is said in *Caitanya Candrodāya Nāṭaka*, in the 9<sup>th</sup> act, that Śrī Caitanya showers His mercy on this world in three ways:

First, by directly appearing before His devotee, as He did for the many thousands of pilgrims who came to Jagannāth Purī yearly.

Second, by personally entering His devotees' hearts, as He did in the case of the highly advanced Nakula Dāsa Brahmācārī.

And third, by appearing in His devotees' thoughts. Thinking of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu can be done at any time by anyone – even when the Lord has moved on to another universe.

Similarly, you showered your mercy on the world when you were here, travelling the globe by plane to be with your disciples and so many other souls who could then see you directly.

You have also entered the hearts of many advanced disciples and followers who have been able to accomplish extraordinary feats of service that astound the whole world by your grace.

And you appear in the thoughts of many disciples, devotees, and people in general, who hear from you and hear about you, thus feeling your presence. By doing so, you enable them to change the course of their lives. This is most pronounced when they follow your teachings and instructions. Your pure devotion is infectious and can be felt strongly even after you have concluded your earthly pastimes.

Your continued spiritual protection is giving me increasing hope that all will be well as I serve under your shelter. I am deriving this confidence from a little exchange you had in Mumbai with Mr. Sethi, who was very devoted to you. Mr. Sethi helped you in many ways to complete the building of your temple for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Rāsabihārī.

You told Mr Sethi that you considered it your duty to provide accommodations for your disciples. Then you revealed to him the marvels of serving you:

“Just as you are building these rooms for my disciples here at Hare Kṛṣṇa Land, Lord Kṛṣṇa is making your rooms ready in Kṛṣṇaloka.”

“I am a sinful man,” Mr Sethi replied.  
“How can I go to Kṛṣṇaloka?”

“That I will see to,” you answered him. “This is not your duty. I will see that you go to Kṛṣṇaloka.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, from witnessing your glorious activities in the past and present, my confidence in you is miraculously increasing without cease. Please always give me a place in your glorious service.

*Your humble servant,*  
Sacinandana Swami

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble and grateful obeisance at your lotus feet.

On the occasion of your divine appearance in this world, I once again find myself bereft of any true sentiment or inspiration that can give a glimpse of your transcendental qualities and glories.

Observing the extraordinary service rendered by your disciples and grand disciples over these many years, I simply lament at my own inadequacies and failings. Why am I devoid of attachment to the chanting of the holy name and have no taste in chanting and serving the Vaiṣṇavas?

*If one chants the exalted holy name of the Lord again and again and yet his love for the Supreme Lord does not develop and tears do not appear in his eyes, it is evident that because of his offenses in chanting, the seed of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa does not sprout. (Cc. 1.8.29–30)*

Of all the offenses, the most dangerous is *satām nindā*, the offense to Śrī Guru and the pure Vaiṣṇava.

You have said in Montreal, July 26, 1968:

*And summarily I can explain that satām nindā. A Kṛṣṇa conscious person will never blaspheme any person, any religious leader, who is trying to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness or God consciousness. In any country, in any religion, anyone who has tried to spread God consciousness to the people, they are all respectable persons. Those who are atheist, those who do not believe in God or those who personally declare that "I am God," we have nothing to do with such persons. But anyone in any country who accepts God as the Supreme, Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme, *kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* (SB 1.3.28), such persons are respectable persons and we should offer our always respect to them. We have... Unnecessarily we do not want to criticize anyone.*

Looking back at my life, I can see so many times where, afflicted by ignorance, pride, envy or bad association, I have spoken or thought ill of exalted Vaiṣṇavas and their sincere followers. The quality of *matsarya*, envy of others, cultivated over many lifetimes, has carried over into this life. Thus, the habit of criticism and blasphemy comes

easily to my wicked mind and tongue, eroding my attempts to be a proper Vaiṣṇava.

*If an assembly of sannyāsīs indulges in blasphemy, then that assembly is more sinful than an assembly of drunkards. If the topmost community that abstains from worldly good and evil activities and that belongs to the highest āśrama of the best sampradāya engages in blasphemy of the Vaiṣṇavas, then it is to be understood that such a community is more sinful than a sinful community of drunkards.” (Caitanya Bhagavata, Madhya Khanda 13.42)*

*Any sinful person who takes the side of one Vaiṣṇava and blasphemes another Vaiṣṇava is certainly ruined. (Caitanya Bhagavata, Madhya Khanda 13.160)*

*Blasphemy does not enhance one’s religious principles, it only results in sin. That is why fortunate souls do not engage in blasphemy. (Caitanya Bhagavata, Madhya Khanda 13.312)*

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda:

The devotees of the Lord do not blaspheme anyone in this world. One who blasphemes others is known as “sinful” or “irreligious.” To attribute on someone faults that are not present is called blasphemy. Being induced by irrelevant goals, those who are unable to tolerate the glorification of others and with a desire to attack them unfairly attribute faults on them continually meet with inauspiciousness day after day. A person who out of envy attributes faults on an irreproachable Vaiṣṇava must go to the hell known as Kumbhīpāka and suffer severe miseries.

Fortunately, the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu is limitless. You have shown persons like me the path of our redemption in your commentary on Mahāprabhu’s instructions to Śrīla Rupa Gosvāmī.

“If the devotee commits an offense at the feet of a Vaiṣṇava while cultivating the creeper of devotional service in the material world, his offense is compared to a mad elephant that uproots the creeper and breaks it. In this way the leaves of the creeper are dried up.

## PURPORT

One's devotional attitude increases in the association of a Vaiṣṇava:

*tāṇḍera caraṇa sevi bhakta-sane vāsa  
janame janame haya, ei abhilāṣa*

By his personal example, Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura stresses that a devotee must always remember to please his predecessor *ācārya*. The Gosvāmīs are represented by one's spiritual master. One cannot be an *ācārya* (spiritual master) without following strictly in the disciplic succession of the *ācāryas*. One who is actually serious about advancing in devotional service should desire only to satisfy the previous *ācāryas*. *Ei chaya gosāñi yāra, mui tāra dāsa*. One should always think of oneself as a servant of the servant of the *ācāryas*, and thinking this, one should live in the society of Vaiṣṇavas [Cc. Madhya 13.80]. However, if one thinks that he has become very mature and can live separate from the association of Vaiṣṇavas and thus gives up all the regulative principles due to offending a Vaiṣṇava, one's position becomes very dangerous. (Cc. Madhya 19.156)

You stress that the only way to overcome previous offenses and to purify that inclination is to be under the guidance of pure devotees and to develop a mood of humble service to Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga and the Vaiṣṇavas. This cannot be accomplished outside of the association of those Vaiṣṇavas who encourage us with their love and affection and appropriate instruction. Your holy master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda has stated in his *Amṛta Vāṇī* (Nectarean Instructions for Immortality):

### **21. What are the special characteristics of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa and Gaura?**

“We cannot chant Kṛṣṇa's transcendental holy name when we are full of *anarthas* because while chanting it is possible to commit offenses. There is no such consideration of offenses while chanting Śrī Gaura-Nityānanda's names. If a living entity sincerely chants the names of Gaura-Nityānanda, considering these personalities Supreme, all his *anarthas* will be destroyed even if he is full of *anarthas*. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* states:

*There are offenses to be considered while chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. Therefore, simply by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, one does not become ecstatic. (Cc. Ādi 8.24)*

*But if one only chants, with some slight faith, the holy names of Lord Caitanya and Nityānanda very quickly, he is cleansed of all offenses. Thus, as soon as he chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, he feels the ecstasy of love for God. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the independent Supreme Personality of Godhead, is greatly magnanimous. Unless one worships Him, one can never be liberated. (Cc. Ādi 8.31–32)*

## **24. How will we develop a taste for chanting the holy names?**

A practitioner who desires his own fortune should surrender himself at the lotus feet of Nāma Prabhu. He should be firmly convinced that congregational chanting of Kṛṣṇa's name is the infallible path to perfection. The day we achieve perfection in chanting the *mahā-mantra*, Hari's holy name will dance constantly on the tip of our tongue. There is no use in making a show of worshiping the Lord while remaining averse to serving the Vaiṣṇavas, who live in the Maṭha simply to glorify Kṛṣṇa. Simply by serving the Maṭha's devotees with love and devotion, our taste for chanting the holy name will increase, and we will become qualified to chant the holy name....

“It is only possible to chant the Lord's name in the association of devotees. Hari's pure name does not appear in the association of non devotees. If we are indifferent to *sādhu-saṅga*, *hari-kathā*, and service to Guru, Kṛṣṇa, and the Vaiṣṇavas, we will not gain anything. Therefore whether we are householders or residing in the Maṭha, we must pay special attention to these three items. Then our success will be guaranteed and we will develop a taste for chanting, self-realization, and find ourselves reestablished in our constitutional position.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please forgive my inadequacies in making this offering to you. This is simply my poor attempt to say that although

I am full of offenses, I have faith in your words and conviction that all success in *bhakti* will come if I simply stay true to the spirit of Mahāprabhu's verse "*tṛṇād api sunīcena...*" I wish to always be situated in a humble position as the servant of the servants of you and all of our *guru-varga*. Let the mood of sectarian party spirit go far away from my heart. Let me recognize and serve all Vaiṣṇavas properly according to their *adhikāra*. Please invest me with the qualities of love and compassion that you carry in your heart. Please awaken faith and love in Śrī Nāma Prabhu. Let me offer whatever service you deem me qualified for, to help spread your mercy, that is the teachings of Mahāprabhu, to all.

Begging to be accepted as a servant of the servant of Hari Guru and Vaiṣṇavas,

*The insignificant,*

Bhaktivedanta Vaikhanas aka Janardana Dasa



I humbly offer my respectful obeisances to my Gurudeva, His Divine Grace Abhaya Caraṅāravinda Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, as well as to all of his sincere *dīkṣā* and *śikṣā* disciples.

Each year at this time we are prodded to contemplate and express our appreciation for the divine favor bestowed upon us in the form of Śrī Gurudeva. We may choose to glorify either the qualities and pastimes of his personal representation, or to ponder the principle of Guru-tattva. This year I have chosen the latter.

Guru-tattva is acutely subtle and sublime. Śrīla Prabhupāda’s dear Godbrother, O. B. J. Ādi Keśava Kapoor (Adi-Kesava Dasa) has written: “Guru-tattva is non-different from Bhāgavata-tattva.” It must be so, as Śrīla Prabhupāda confirms, “Lord Nityānanda, who is Balarāma Himself, the first direct manifestation or expansion of Kṛṣṇa, is the original spiritual master.”

On the *āvīrbhāva* celebration of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura in 1936, Śrīla Prabhupāda boldly declared, “There is only one guru, who appears in an infinity of forms to teach you, me, and all others.” More recently, he wrote in a letter, “Actually there is only one guru—Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

Indeed, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself declares to Śrī Uddhava:  
*mat-ātmakam*: “[guru] who is not different from Me. (SB 11.10.5)

*ācāryaṁ māṁ vijānīyān*:

“One should know the *ācārya* to be My self.” (SB 11.17.27)

Gaura Govinda Swami explained it in this way: “There is *samaṣṭi-guru*, the sum total of guru, Kṛṣṇa; and then there is *vyāṣṭi-guru*, the individual gurus. Although there are individual gurus in many different forms, still the *samaṣṭi-guru* is one because it is Kṛṣṇa who appears as the guru, both the *śikṣā-guru* and *dīkṣā-guru*.”

Again, from Śrīla Prabhupāda:

“The supreme spiritual master is Kṛṣṇa, who is therefore known as *caitya-guru*. This refers to the Supersoul, who is sitting in everyone’s heart. He helps from within as stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, and He sends the spiritual master, who helps from without. The spiritual

master is the external manifestation of the *caitya-guru*,  
or the spiritual master sitting in everyone's heart."

And, of course, we have repeatedly been told that the bona fide spiritual master is "the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead."

Thus, it appears that Guru-tattva is a special "subset" of *Bhagavata-tattva*. As such, both *samaṣṭi-guru* and *vyāṣṭi-guru* must be of the same *tattva*. Yet, while *samaṣṭi-guru* is the Godhead himself, *vyāṣṭi-guru* is not (this in spite of such pronounced statements as "Guru is directly the Supreme Personality of Godhead"). The *samaṣṭi-guru* appears in/through/as the many forms of *vyāṣṭi-gurus*. The bona fide guru is therefore the embodiment of God's *śakti* (*śaktyā-veśa*), or perhaps, even of *śaktimān* Himself (*bhagavad-āveśa*).

"*Bhagavad-āveśa*" is an uncommon term. Śrīla Prabhupāda has used it only once: "The *śaktyāveśa-avatāras* are categorized into (1) forms of divine absorption (*bhagavad-āveśa*), such as Kapiladeva or Rṣabhadeva, and (2) divinely empowered forms (*śaktyāveśa*), of whom seven are foremost."

In addition, Bhanu Swami has utilized the term (in his footnote) to categorize the position of Lord Brahmā as he is described in *Laṅghu-bhagavāmṛta*: "Some *ācāryas* claim that Brahmā is called an *avatāra* because he is mixed with the Lord being completely pervaded by the Lord (*samaṣṭitvena*) ... Thus it means that Brahmā is fully pervaded by the Lord who has the intelligence to carry out creation. It is like the merging of milk and water. Thus Brahmā is called an *avatāra* because of such intimate mixing with the Lord."

Elsewhere, Śrīla Prabhupāda has said/written:

"Kapiladeva is one of the form, *āveśāvatāra*."

"Lord Rṣabhadeva, being an *āveśa-avatāra* of Lord Viṣṇu."

Because Prabhupāda has listed Lord Kapila and Rṣabhadeva, as examples of *bhagavad-āveśa*, some devotees have in the past (erroneously) concluded that Bhagavān sometimes becomes a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*. However, If that were the case, Bhagavān would be "empowering" Himself, which makes no sense.

As recorded in *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 20.165, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught Śrīla Sanātana Gosvami the truth about Kṛṣṇa and His expansions:

The Supreme Personality of Godhead exists in three principal forms—*svayam-rūpa*, *tad-ekātma-rūpa* and *āveśa-rūpa*.

In his purport, Prabhupāda certifies:

A living entity who is specifically empowered by the Lord with knowledge or strength is technically called *āveśa-rūpa*.

In other words, while Bhagavān appears in full as either svayam – or *tad-ekātma-rupa*, an *āveśa-rupa*—whether *bhagavad-āveśa* or *sakti-āveśa*—is a *jīva* empowered by Him.

So how to understand the difference between *bhagavad-āveśa* and *sakti-āveśa*? Śrīla Prabhupāda described the former as a “form of divine absorption” while Bhanu Swami writes that he “is pervaded by the Lord.” In the only other reference available, Satyanārāyaṇa dāsa bābājī has described in his comment to a verse of *Bhāgavata-sandarbha*:

There are two categories of *āveśavatāras* — *bhāgavad-āveśa-avatāra*, pervasion as the Lord directly, and *bhāgavat-śakti-āveśa-avatāra*, pervasion as an upholder of one of the Lord’s potencies. The first type of pervasion induces the living being to identify himself directly as the Lord. The second type of pervasion induces the living being to identify himself as a devotee, and an upholder of the Lord’s potency. Śrī Rsabhadeva is an example of *bhāgavad-āveśa-avatāra*.

Were I to ignore the qualification that a *bhāgavad-āveśavatāra* “directly [identifies] himself as the Lord”, I would be tempted to make the case that Śrī Guru is in the category of *bhagavad-āveśa*. Who will argue that, when in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s presence, one felt as if Kṛṣṇa were personally present and that it was Kṛṣṇa’s words coming through Śrīla Prabhupāda’s lotus lips? Śrīla Prabhupāda spoke with the full authority of God, and he also chastised with the ferocity of Nrsimhadeva! It was as if Bhagavān was speaking, writing (as Prabhupāda himself said) and acting THROUGH him. Indeed, Locana dāsa Ṭhākura writes in his *Caitanya Mangala*: “Thus the Supreme Lord places His own body within the body of His devotee. There the Lord enjoys pastimes as He wishes.” The words of Jesus are also relevant here, “If you have seen me, you have seen the Father.”

Yet, unlike Kapiladeva and Rṣabhadeva, Śrīla Prabhupāda never identified himself with Bhagavān. Nonetheless, Bhagavān is present, whether He directly “pervades” Gurudeva (*bhagavad-āveśa*), or He “empowers” him with His *śakti* (*śaktyā-veśa*), as Śrīla Prabhupāda explains in this conversation:

**Madhusūdana:** In other words, sometimes it says Kṛṣṇa comes Himself, and actually the meaning is that He comes as His incarnation, like Lord Buddha, but the verse seems to say that it's the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, and without your purport it's not possible..., it's almost left so that you can be fooled, as if it's a covering, a special covering so that non devotees cannot understand it.

**Prabhupāda:** The Supreme Person, He cannot come? It is said there?

**Madhusūdana:** No, it says that He comes in the form of Lord Buddha, but I remember it was a great misunderstanding that Buddha was...

**Prabhupāda:** He can come in any form He likes, not particularly as Lord Buddha. He's coming as fish, He's coming as tortoise, He's coming as boar. So why as Lord Buddha?

**Madhusūdana:** But you explain that Lord Buddha is not viṣṇu-tattva, but that He is *śakty-āveśa-avatāra*.

**Prabhupāda:** Yes.

**Madhusūdana:** But the verse says the Supreme Lord will come Himself, so one tends to think, well, Lord Buddha is the Supreme Lord Himself. But actually without your purport we wouldn't understand that He's *śakty-āveśa*.

**Prabhupāda:** So the *śakti* is Kṛṣṇa. *Śakti-śaktimator abhedah*. The *śakti*, energy, and the energetic, they're identical.

In conclusion, I am not proposing—like the four errant sannyasis of the 70s—that Śrīla Prabhupāda/Śrī Guru is God, but that he is so much surrendered and empowered such that God acts through him. It may be remembered how Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāja described Śrīla Prabhupāda as a *śaktyāveśa-avatāra*. When asked for further clarification, Mahārāja simply said, “Nityānandāveśa.” At the very least, we can take it for granted that Śrīla Prabhupāda is a *siddha-Vaiṣṇava* who was extraordinarily empowered by Śrī Nityānanda Rāma to reach down to the lowest with the opportunity of achieving the highest prospect—*Vraja-prema*.

Śrī Nityānanda Rāma ki jaya!  
Śrīla Prabhupāda ki jaya!

*Daso 'smi,*  
Ganapati Swami

## Swami B.A. Paramadvaiti

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Today again I want to express my love and gratefulness for all you have given to me.

I have compiled a list of all the gifts you gave to us, and I am still editing the list.

The guru expects so much from his students, even to become a guru himself. Being lost and fallen I have only attempted to fill that gap of a missing teacher. Forgive my incapacity Prabhupāda. What can I offer besides yourself. You are forever valid, and that is our real hope.

At your feet I try to catch dust in order to survive as long as the separation from you will last.

Please bless all those who have crossed my path. They are your children, and I only try to learn how to serve them.

All Glories to you and your Gauḍīya Family.

From Yamunā Kuñja, Vṛndāvana.

*Your crying son,*

Swami B.A. Paramadvaiti

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.

2021 marks the 125<sup>th</sup> most blessed event of your appearance, an event that changed the course of the world forever. And 2021 marks also the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of my first meeting you in your vāñī form, another most blessed event that changed my life for good.

### **Counting Blessings**

**1**

Blessed the day when you appeared in Calcutta,  
sent by the Lord to spread His glory  
and rescue the fallen, lost in the gutter,  
forsaken slaves under the whip of Kali.

**2**

Blessed the day when you took up your pen  
to translate the *Bhāgavata's* eternal message  
for the planet's fortunate women and men  
in desperate need of hope and courage.

**3**

Blessed the day when you came to the city  
of New York, known as the rotten big apple,  
where drunkards and hippies evoked your pity,  
while you endured their madness and babble.

**4**

Blessed the day when you transformed a gift shop  
into a matchless Hare Kṛṣṇa temple,  
a shelter for seekers to rise to the top,  
a place of pilgrimage for the faithful.

5

Blessed the day when you took the chanting  
of Kṛṣṇa's name to Tompkins Square Park,  
where your bongo playing and fervent singing  
changed it into a spiritual landmark.

6

Blessed the day when you sent your disciples  
to Europe, to Hamburg's Botanical Garden,  
where I saw them chanting like Vaikuṅṭha minstrels,  
voices from heaven on a sacred mission.

7

Blessed the summer of '71, when I met you  
in printed form, your *vāṇī* incarnation,  
and blessed the summer of '72,  
when I met you in person to receive initiation.

8

Blessed the day when you gave the order  
to take Kṛṣṇa's words across every border  
O Prabhupāda, may I heed your call  
and distribute your mercy to one and all.

Aspiring to follow in your blessed footsteps.

*Your ever-grateful servant,*

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Another year has passed since my last offering of praise to you on your appearance anniversary. Should I say, “but this past year was different?” Of course, you would reply, saying, “maybe different for you, but Kṛṣṇa is observing the same old story – name, fame, glory, exploitation, and the list goes on and on.” You might then ask me what then has been the difference for you during the past year?

It has been one of the most extraordinary periods of my life as a devotee due to the pandemic. One year without the usual temple *darśana*, *kīrtanas*, festivals, and services familiar to us. My typical lifestyle has changed. I have not traveled to another county for one whole year, and even traveling from town to town was not possible since everywhere was restricted.

It reminded me of when you left this world, having given so much of your personal association to us. For at least one year, many of us became numb, not knowing how life as a devotee and even your International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness could continue without you. Similarly, we wondered, how could Lord Caitanya’s preaching mission go on under so many restrictions?

But as it was the case, when we finally understood, we can still associate with you by following your instructions and receiving your guidance through sincere devotion and contemplation. In this present situation, we have perceived that the eternal connection with you and Kṛṣṇa remains alive no matter how complex and challenging the external environment.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the virus that has brought everyone to their knees is nothing new. It is just another tool Kṛṣṇa sometimes uses to slow things down when foolish people of the world think they are in control.

Yes, some of your *sannyāsīs* were traveling so much, so Kṛṣṇa has shown you that just as much, if not more preaching can go on using modern-day internet facilities. It will help if you become accustomed to change, as this may be the beginning of a significant shift in how the world will be in the future. It is now Lord Caitanya’s age, and for the floodgates of love of God to make a significant impact, some adjustments are necessary. We will need to do the needful for the preaching to go on. However, any external environmental

change cannot check our preaching.

But Śrīla Prabhupāda, I was also isolated, having no association with devotees for an extended period. Is this healthy for my spiritual life?

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** “For a sannyāsī to spend some time in isolation has its spiritual rewards. It will help you become more independent, not from Kṛṣṇa, but from the ongoing acceptance of others rendering service to you. When we feel that spiritual life is suddenly stressful, exhausting, or difficult but continue the process anyway, that also gives one spiritual intelligence.

This routine work, such as rising early, chanting, cleaning, cooking, and offering *prasādam*, *ārati*, reading books, speaking—these activities are the backbone of our society. If we practice them nicely in a regulative manner, then our whole program will be successful. If we become slack or neglect these things, then everything else we may try will fail. You must keep your standards very high in these activities, and then your preaching will be strong. Preaching is our real business; it will help you become more dependent on Guru and Kṛṣṇa. The Goswamis also did everything themselves, and you can follow in their footsteps. When I came to the Western world, I too spent one year alone without friends or money.”

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I did realize how before, when things were as they were earlier, I took for granted the availability to associate with the devotees, having *darśana* in the temple, and many of the other practices. But when experiencing separation, I developed a longing and could not wait a moment longer to dive deeper and with much more eagerness and devotion with all those things I took for granted. When finally, things got back to normal, it was indeed a new life experience.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** “As the saying goes, ‘separation makes the heart grow fonder.’ During that time in New York, when there was some inconvenience for me, I remembered Vṛndāvana. Should I return or not? The only thing that kept me from leaving was the order of my spiritual master; otherwise, I had no business being in such a dangerous place. Besides that, how else would I have understood His desire to please Kṛṣṇa?”

How else could Kṛṣṇa understand the kind of separation Rādhārāṇī was experiencing from Himself? It is with this understanding that Caitanya Mahāprabhu dived into the ocean of lamentation. Kṛṣṇa admitted to the *gopīs* the one debt He could not repay was their love for Him. He, therefore, said, ‘You have cast away your life, your reputation, your everything for me. How can I repay you unless I personally experience the love you have gone through? How can I repay you unless I can understand one moment of separation is like twelve years or more? If I understood it, I would not have been able to maintain my life.’”

But Śrīla Prabhupāda, what should I do to repay the debt I owe to You? You risked your life to plant the seed of *bhakti*, where *bhakti* had never spread before, and accepted me as your disciple.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** “With the guru’s instructions in mind, have complete faith in the words of the scriptures and explain the process of *bhakti*. In utter humility, pray that Kṛṣṇa makes your words suitable for others to hear. In the mood of utter surrender, see that Kṛṣṇa is doing everything: Kṛṣṇa will inspire you to speak.

“We are the only hope for human society to receive real knowledge. And our books are the only real thing. So, it may take some time, but one day this rubbish literature, rubbish philosophy, rubbish culture will be replaced. This is my only ambition that so many people can become enlightened. But they are being deprived of the chance. One day the whole world will appreciate how we have changed the face of the world from darkness to light.

We are introducing a new style of life and civilization. Everything should be ideal. Others have never dreamt of such civilization-free life, happy life, no anxiety, and hope, great hope that we are going back home, back to Godhead. By increasing the selling of books, the world will become Kṛṣṇa conscious. All the world is in darkness: the scientists, Darwin, Freud, all in darkness. This is the only institute that is giving some light. You must be convinced of that to preach effectively.

“We have no other business than to make people happy. No

cheating, no politics, no personal ambition, not a tinge of personal sense gratification - this is our mission. A spiritual pandemic that will liberate the people of the world.”

Thank you! Śrīla Prabhupāda. My thank you is not a casual remark but heartfelt gratitude for everything you have given to me. My love and life belong to you.

*Your unworthy servant,*

Dhirasanta dasa Goswami

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

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūṅyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I fall prostrate at your lotus feet, insincere though I am. On this day you so mercifully give us the chance to focus wholly and solely upon your association—our only hope to awaken Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

O King Rahūgaṇa, the perfectional stage of devotional service, or the *paramahansa* stage of life, cannot be attained unless one is blessed by the dust of the feet of great devotees. It is never attained by *tapasya* [austerity], the Vedic worshiping process, acceptance of the renounced order of life, the discharge of the duties of household life, the chanting of the Vedic hymns, or the performance of penances in the hot sun, within cold water, or before the blazing fire. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.12.12]

In other words, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the property of His pure, unconditional devotees, and as such only the devotees can deliver Kṛṣṇa to another devotee; Kṛṣṇa is never obtainable directly. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 2.3.23, purport]

I am not a devotee, but somehow I have the great fortune to associate with those who are, so there is still hope.

It is stated in the *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya*, and quoted in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.2.229): “A man will take on the qualities of a person with whom he associates, just as a crystal takes on the color of an object next to it.”

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda—I will try to absorb my mind in the dust of your lotus feet, hoping that some of your divine qualities will appear in my dark heart. When will I smear that dust all over my body and fully embrace your instructions? When will I make your mission my life and soul? Eternally indebted, we glorify you:

To godforsaken lands you brought the holy *bhakti* tree.  
You crossed the ocean great to set the whole world free.

Alone you spread the holy name, the only *yuga-dharma*;  
In the park you chanted, capturing all by your loving charm.

You gave the world the chance to know that God is personal;  
With Deities, temples, *prasādam* you made Him accessible.

You opened up the treasure chest, allowing all to enter in,  
No matter what their background, even full of sin.

You taught the world the secret of where to find true love  
And happiness, peace of mind, descending from above.

A lifestyle you gave and showed, to bring us to *sattva-guṇa*.  
Farms, schools, temples, books were coming very soon.

A simple life, but thinking high, a motto you did hold,  
Compelling us to follow—your preaching was so bold.

You traveled on your conquest, no obstacle could stop,  
Showing how to preach the message till this frame does drop.

Relentless, you wavered not, your message ever fixed:  
*Bhakti* never fructifies unless it is unmixed.

Fearlessness, compassion, love, and deep humility,  
Tolerance, determination, true equality—

These qualities you showed, which are inert within each soul  
Covered by illusion, ignorant of life's true goal.

You challenged every doctrine that opposed the Absolute;

Speculative science and philosophy you really gave the boot.

No scientific jargon was an obstacle to your scheme;  
You impregnated truth within the mundane academe.

A revolutionary never known, to bring us all back home  
With *sankīrtana*, every town and village, previously unknown

Has spread to every continent, to almost every town,  
And all conditioned souls in its waves will surely drown.

The sweetest process, freely given: chanting the holy names.  
You empowered *dvi-pada-paśus* to carry out your aims.

The seeds you scattered everywhere, most yet to fructify,  
That in the future they would sprout and ever multiply.

Incarnations are innumerable, your qualities the same.  
Into this world from Goloka *dhāma* so mercifully you came.

Like the four Kumāras, you spoke the highest truth.  
Like them, you did appear to be a fountainhead of youth.

Like Varāhadeva you challenged the greatest ass on earth;  
Like no one else you shattered the illusion of our birth.

Like Nārada you traveled to everywhere you could;  
You preached the purest *bhakti* path for everybody's good.

Nara-Nārāyaṇa's austerities to yours do not compare;  
*Patita-pāvana* manifest gave everyone their share.

Like Kapila, you expounded the truth, defeated the atheist,  
The Māyāvādīs, Śūnyavādīs, and all the craziest.

Like Rṣabhadeva, you showed the world the sheer futility  
Of mundane social intercourse, so clear and vividly.

You milked the earth like Pṛthu-rāja, relieving all distress  
Of numerous fools and rascals struggling in their mess.

Like Matsya you did rescue the scriptures as they are  
From deviant interpreters, leading us afar.

Like Kūrma you supported each and everyone,  
Allowing us to churn the nectar of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

Like Lord Nṛsimha you destroyed all demonic traits,  
Protected the devotees, relieved them of their weights.

Like Vāmana you tricked us by the beauty of your heart,  
Took everything for Kṛṣṇa, and that was just the start.

Like Paraśurāma you slew all the so-called heads;  
With the sharpened axe of *śāstra*, you put them in their beds.

Like Rāma, you rescued Sītā and returned her to Her Lord,  
And showed us bunch of monkeys how our life was so absurd.

You engaged us in the mission to build bridges 'cross the sea  
And release the captive *jīvas*, setting everybody free.

Like Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, your presence is sublime,  
Transporting us to a realm beyond the mundane time.

“Kṛṣṇa is the *summum bonum*, origin of all.”  
Loudly you proclaimed this with your clarion call.

Like Buddha, you were self-composed, compassion to its hilt.  
Nourishing true *bhakti*, lest our creepers they might wilt.

Fearlessly, like Kalkideva, you severed sinful thought.  
With “the sword of knowledge” you slash our pride, practically to naught.

Like Viśvakarmā you gave the world the gem TOVP,  
Like Dhanvantari, the medicine to really set us free.

To counter all pandemics, you taught us what to do:  
*Amala-harināma* the only safe way through.



You are Śrī Vyāsa personified, it's clear as a bell—  
The only hope to save mankind from falling down to hell.

Your literary contribution—unexcelled does it stand.  
Each word that you deliver, so expertly you planned.

Ten thousand years these books you gave will stand as etched in stone,  
The lawbooks for mankind—a guide to the unknown.

O Prabhupāda, you embody all *ācāryas* of the past,  
The empowered representative of all the *avatāras*.

The mood of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi you surely epitomize,  
And all subsequent practitioners you do harmonize.

You gave association like never seen before,  
The only hope for one and all, you opened up the door.

O Prabhupāda, I've drifted far from the spirit that you gave,  
To a proud and lusty hypocrite, an egotistic slave.

You are the only hope for a cretin like myself,  
Full of envy, pride, duplicity—nothing but a helf.

Lord Nityānanda taught us in this fallen Kali Age  
That everyone's like a Mādhāi, no one is a sage.

Fifty years have passed since the day that somehow there you were  
Before me in my degradation—you appeared in my blur.

You floated in as BTG, into that lowly place,  
This fallen soul you did call "this message to embrace."

Have mercy, Lord, on one and all, so all may have a chance  
To hear and chant the holy names, even here in France.

The *senāpati-bhakta*, the savior of the earth,  
Delivers each and everyone from the cycle of rebirth.

And in such simple human ways you welcomed all who came.  
Everyone is eligible, simply “Come and chant the name.”

Actually you are with us now, as if you never left.  
Forgetting you are here, we will certainly be bereft

Of the jewel of *śuddha-bhakti*, the most valuable of them all,  
As Dhruva realized at last; at your lotus feet we fall.

In all the worlds there’s never been, nor will there ever be,  
One like you, O Prabhupāda, the topmost devotee.

The Supersoul has manifest as Śrīla Prabhupāda.  
At his lotus feet we fall prostrate, remain forever bound.

There is no shelter anywhere else in all the three worlds.

*Your fallen servant,*  
Janānanda Gosvāmī

Offering reverential obeisance to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, my eternal guide, preceptor and master, I offer also these heartfelt words on the occasion of your appearance celebration as Śrī Vyāsadeva's very dear spiritual descendent and representative.

In my Vyāsa-pūjā offering to you last year, I attempted to express appreciation for your great confidence in the success of your mission, a confidence based on your deep faith in the order of your spiritual master and in all-powerful Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Now I wish to reflect further on this special quality you have exhibited, to better appreciate your greatness and thereby to grow in my own confidence in your service.

I recall a pithy statement by you in your purport to the introductory verse of the *Śrī Iśopaniṣad*: “All forms of incompleteness are experienced due to incomplete knowledge of the Complete Whole.” This sentence reverberates so deeply with your devotional conviction. I can understand from it that the inverse of this statement applies to yourself: You have complete knowledge of the Complete Whole, such that you do not experience any form of incompleteness. And because of such freedom from incompleteness, you are able to so powerfully bring us in the vicinity of the Complete Whole.

I say “in the vicinity” because one way I can appreciate the Complete Whole in terms of greatness and integrity of being is as a great mountain which one may approach and thereby feel its vibrant grandeur. I am reminded of Mount Govardhana, whom Lord Kṛṣṇa urged the Vraja-vāsīs to worship because it generously provided all needs for them and for their cows. Govardhana thus represented the “complete whole” for the Vraja-vāsīs, such that they could confidently embrace Lord Kṛṣṇa's proposal to worship Govardhana rather than the demigod Indra. Indeed, as you have narrated in your book *Kṛṣṇa—The Supreme Personality of Godhead*, at one point Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Divine Cowherd Complete Whole, happily revealed Himself as Mount Govardhana.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, had a great longing to be in the vicinity of Mount Govardhana, as indicated by your wish to perform Govardhana *parikramā* just days prior to your *tirobhāva-līlā*. Thus I meditate on you being ever situated at the foot of Govardhana, inviting us to join you there in His service.

Thinking of mountains in general as symbols of wholeness and

completeness, I am also reminded that in China, where by your mercy I am sometimes able to visit and associate with your Chinese devotees, an ancient tradition identifies Five Sacred Mountains (in five different regions of China). These mountains are said to have been formed in prehistoric times by the body of a certain creator being known in Mandarin as 'Pan Gu' (suggesting a notion of a *virāṭ-rūpa* form of divinity). To me, what is significant about this is that the Chinese (Taoist) tradition says that each of us have within us Five Sacred Mountains.

You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your knowledge of the Lord's completeness, have so kindly and confidently brought us to the proximity of these Five Sacred Mountains, who are none other than the five members of Śrī Pañca-tattva. You have awakened us to discover that Lord Caitanya and His associates, like grand mountains of noble completeness—each of them individually complete and collectively most complete—are situated in our hearts, inviting us to be in Their complete shelter. In Their proximity, we can very quickly and easily understand what is the Complete Whole—its grand and exalted nature, and especially its sweetness and joyfulness.

In this way, by your mercy, I may have a glimpse of what it means to experience completeness, as your eternal servant, and thus confidently be able to help others to discover the Complete Whole in the Five Great Mountains of Śrī Pañca-tattva.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Krishna Kshetra Swami

My Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this 125th Birth Anniversary year of Your Divine Grace, I offer my most prostrated, humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace.

As I write this year's Vyāsa-pūjā offering, year-long celebrations are ongoing of Your Divine Grace's 125th birth. Your anniversary festival coincides with the 50th anniversary of the 1971 Hare Kṛṣṇa Festival at Cross Maidan, Bombay. For me, year 2021 represents the golden anniversary of my first-ever meeting with Your Divine Grace and Their Lordships, Śrī Śrī Rādhā Rāsabihārī. I still vividly recall every minute of 1971 Hare Kṛṣṇa festival when you addressed the thousands of people who attended this eleven-day event. Your *darśana* and instructions flowed with abundant benevolence and struck a chord in me. I had finally found the answers to how I could serve society and humanity at large. You quoted a verse from the *Bhāgavatam* that stated that by pouring water on the root of a tree, it nourishes the trunk, branches, leaves and everything else. Similarly, one can serve humanity by serving Kṛṣṇa, Who is the seed giving Father of all living entities. I personally etched your spoken words into my heart and mind. They not only made my life meaningful, but clarified my life's mission.

One could say that I was conceived during this Hare Kṛṣṇa Festival at Cross Maidan. In the time between the end of this festival and the next one, a year later, I had resolved to join Your Divine Grace's movement, but did not know the whereabouts of the Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees in Bombay. Then at the beginning of 1972 there was another Hare Kṛṣṇa festival at Hare Kṛṣṇa Land, Juhu. This time I wasted no time in submitting my application to the temple president, Girirāja Dāsa Brahmācārī, to join ISKCON and immediately became a full time devotee. With this, my nurturing and development continued.

I was finally delivered in Kārtika, 1972 in Vṛndāvana, when during initiation Your Divine Grace handed me my beads and said, "Your name is Lokanath." Then, just a few months later, in January 1973, I was recommended for second initiation. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you transformed a cowherd farmer's son and elevated me to a status of a *brahmāna* by giving me the Gāyatrī mantra and engaging me in the personal services of Their Lordships, Śrī Śrī Rādhā Rāsabihārī,

Whom I had *darśana* of for the very first time, along with you, at the 1971 Pandal Festival.

In early 1975 our new and Indian Governing Body Commission (GBC) representative for Bombay, Gopāla Kṛṣṇa Dāsa, in consultation with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, informed me that I had been assigned the post of co-president of Bombay temple. ISKCON was being branded as an American-European movement, therefore I understood that my appointment was also a means of minimizing claims that only foreign disciples were in charge. Although I took up this newly added management responsibility as per Your Divine Grace's wishes, I still had the desire to travel and preach. I approached you for *sannyāsa* initiation which you kindly awarded me in Vṛndāvana on 6 December 1975. Śrīla Prabhupāda, the instructions you gave me on that day, I always carry close to my heart: "So you should always keep yourself fixed up in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. It is not very difficult. Strictly follow the rules and regulation and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra as many times ... for a *sannyāsī*, you should increase. Then you will be fixed up. And go on preaching.

*bhārata-bhūmite manuṣya janma haila yāra  
janma sārthaka kari kara para-upakāra*

(Cc. Madhya 7.128)

This is Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission, that every Indian should learn what is this Kṛṣṇa consciousness and preach it all over the world. That is His order. So from that platform you go on preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness. By executing the order of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu you'll be glorified, the country will be glorified, the whole world will benefit."

After the Mayapur-Vṛndāvana Festival in 1976, you freed me from my services at ISKCON Bombay by approving my traveling and preaching with the new Nitāi-Gaura World Traveling Saṅkīrtana Party. You fulfilled my inner desire to travel and preach and in so doing I accomplished the role of a *sannyāsī*. After about six months or so, while vigorously preaching and traveling through the North Indian states – holding festivals, distributing your books and performing *kīrtana* everywhere, you were pleased with our preaching results and reports. Upon meeting with us in Delhi we informed you that the carnet (permits) of the Mercedes buses from Germany had expired. Your response was, "... You don't need to travel with the

bus in India. You can go by bullock cart.” It was then on 1 September 1976, on the auspicious day of Rādhāṣṭamī, that you instructed me to start the Bullock Cart Saṅkīrtana Party from Vṛndāvana to Mayapur. While expressing your great pleasure with how the Bullock Cart Saṅkīrtana Party was successfully preaching from village to village, Your Divine Grace wrote a prophetic statement, “We can introduce many millions of such carts all over the world.”

The Bullock Cart Saṅkīrtana Party was victoriously carrying on its mission on the road. Śrīla Prabhupāda, on Gopal Kṛṣṇa Prabhu’s request you instructed me to start the BBT Traveling Saṅkīrtana Book Distribution Party and manage both parties simultaneously. I was on the road with this Book Distribution Party when you wrote a letter to me, dated, 30 July 1977:

Our Lokanath Swami is just like Saint Tukārāma. The whole of India and specifically your Maharashtra are enthused with Kṛṣṇa. Now you have to revive their Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This is Tukārāma’s country ... so revive them by the process of the *saṅkīrtana* movement. I am very glad that you are preaching village to village and will cover all of Maharashtra.

You further instructed me in the same communication:

Organise very solidly and thus increase the number of books distributed, the number of devotees made, and develop centres of Kṛṣṇa consciousness everywhere.

And then, finally in Kārtika 1977 you asked me to arrange for a bullock cart because you wanted to start your travels, making Govardhana your first stop. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had expressed a desire to go on bullock cart traveling. You had personally trained me in bullock cart travelling and now I had the experience as well, and so you felt I was the right person to make all the arrangements. Although I had organised the bullock cart and made all the necessary arrangements of traveling to Govardhana, considering your delicate health condition, this plan had to be dropped.

But by suggesting this idea, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had ingeniously set the scene to undertake the pilgrimage with more vigour and dedication, this time with a bus party. You wanted to go on pilgrimage with a bus party and visit all the holy places in India. As the new travel plans were being discussed, you gave me one more, final

instruction, “You will be the leader (of the bus party).” Amidst all these preparations, on the unfortunate day, 14 November 1977, you suddenly left us. As you had desired to go on pilgrimage in a bullock cart as one of your last wishes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, executing your will and for your pleasure ISKCON *padayātrā* devotees have walked over 300,000 kilometres to date in India and worldwide.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your physical presence, you were there for me at every step of the journey, purifying and empowering me during the seven-year spiritual journey which commenced at Cross Maidan on 25 March 1971 in Bombay concluded on 14 November 1977 in Vṛndāvana.

You have been with me for the past fifty years, to this very day, this very moment. All your *vāñī*, all your personal instructions have kept me focused on my service to Your Divine Grace. I have no purpose in my life, other than what your will is for me. I am made up of your mercy.

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

“If you examine me, you will find no qualities. Your mercy is all that I am made of. If you are not merciful unto me, I can only weep, and I will not be able to maintain my life.”

*Your humble servant,*

Lokanath Swami



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your divine lotus feet. All glories to your unparalleled service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, on behalf of the previous *ācāryas*, and for the benefit of all of us suffering conditioned souls who have foolishly allowed ourselves to be overcome and overwhelmed by Mahāmāyā. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

In his commentary to the first verse of Mahāprabhu's *Śikṣāṣṭaka*, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura advises us as follows:

Pure devotional love of Godhead is unattainable without great faith and intense eagerness to relish the nectarean pastimes of the Supreme Lord, and without a deep understanding of the esoteric truths of the scriptures.

The Ṭhākura goes on to add that association with saintly persons is yet a further requirement.

Although this statement may hit most of us as a daunting, or even intimidating statement, I have full faith that you knew exactly what you were doing in establishing ISKCON during your manifest presence and continuing to protect this life-saving mission, even in your physical absence. As exacting is the science of God, as rigorous are the practices leading up to the ultimate goal of prema, you had full faith that the *saṅkīrtana-yajña* would carry the day for anyone and everyone who chants with faith.

Yes, you are still protecting your ISKCON mission, but from what? Well, first of all, from ourselves, from our lower selves, that is, which tend to become allured by the subtle, and sometimes even by the gross proposals of the devilish personality of Kali. In my own (mercy) case, you have been helping me tone down my ongoing offenses, at least enough to permit the Vaiṣṇavas to tolerate my frequently caustic remarks and criticisms.

Now bearing the mantle of *sannyāsa*, I yet helplessly glide toward impending death. Despite its rapidly increasing proximity, (this body is now 74), I become distracted by external services, even keeping track of accounts for our ISKCON Miami Outreach initiative. (*Will I end up as a debit or a credit?!*)

An additional distraction, probably one shared by most readers, is this fantastic phenomenon called "Covid19." Will it continue until

Satya-yuga? Has it almost morphed into a religion? I wonder if your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* purport is applicable to the present situation?:

*Brāhmaṇas, the topmost section of human society, are mostly devotees. They are generally unaware of the happenings within the material world because they are always busy in their activities for spiritual advancement. Nonetheless, when there is a calamity in human society, they cannot remain impartial. If they do not do something to relieve the distressed condition of human society, it is said that due to such neglect their spiritual knowledge diminishes. (SB 4.14.41, purport)*

Perhaps my preoccupation in this regard is merely a symptom of my quixotic tendency. But there it is, another distraction thrown our way.

In conclusion, let me testify that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have so kindly saved me, are continuing to protect me, and are allowing me the gradual purification leading to pure love of God, that incomparable treasure normally awarded only by fulfilling Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's above mentioned prerequisites.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, may I someday, some lifetime, finally become worthy of your magnificently merciful association!

I pray to be of some use for assisting you in your most glorious mission.

*Your aspiring servant,*

BPV Dāmodara Swami

PS: You will remember me as Lon "There's something wrong with that boy, but we can fix him up!" (1966), then as Prabhupāda Dāsa (1976) and more recently as Bhakti Prabhupāda-vrata Dāmodara Swami (2013).

## Letting Śrīla Prabhupāda Speak for Himself

### Part Three

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept millions of my wholehearted obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to your unprecedented service to your Guru *Mahārāja* and to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *saṅkīrtana* movement. Indeed, you single-handedly founded and nourished a branch of the tree of pure devotional service planted by Lord Caitanya Himself, a branch that is still growing despite the efforts of some to choke it with the poison of dissension.

On this 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your appearance in this world, I offer your own translation and purport to you, as a worshiper of mother Gaṅgā offers a palmful of her own waters to satisfy her. I omit only some Sanskrit to fulfil the word limit.

### TRANSLATION

A devotee's behavior establishes the true purpose of religious principles. The behavior of Mādhavendra Purī Gosvāmī is the essence of such religious principles.

### PURPORT

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura gives the following commentary on this passage. A *sādhu*, or honest man, is called a *mahājana* or a *mahātmā*. The *mahātmā* is described thus by Lord Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.13):

O son of Pṛthā, those who are not deluded, the great souls, are under the protection of the divine nature. They are fully engaged in devotional service because they know Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, original and inexhaustible.

In the material world, the word *mahātmā* is understood in different ways by different religionists. Mundaners also come up with their different angles of vision. For the conditioned soul busy in sense gratification, a *mahājana* is recognized according to the proportion of sense gratification he offers. For instance, a businessman

may consider a certain banker to be a *mahājana*, and *karmīs* desiring material enjoyment may consider philosophers like Jaimini to be *mahājanas*. There are many *yogīs* who want to control the senses, and for them Patañjali Ṛṣi is a *mahājana*. For the *jñānīs*, the atheist Kapila, Vasiṣṭha, Durvāsā, Dattātreyā and other impersonalist philosophers are *mahājanas*. For the demons, Hiranyākṣa, Hiranyakaśipu, Rāvaṇa, Rāvaṇa's son Meghanāda, Jarāsandha and others are accepted as *mahājanas*. For materialistic anthropologists speculating on the evolution of the body, a person like Darwin is a *mahājana*. The scientists who are bewildered by Kṛṣṇa's external energy have no relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, yet they are accepted by some as *mahājanas*. Similarly, philosophers, historians, literary men, public speakers and social and political leaders are sometimes accepted as *mahājanas*. Such *mahājanas* are respected by certain men who have been described in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.3.19):

Men who are like dogs, hogs, camels and asses praise those men who never listen to the transcendental pastimes of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the deliverer from evils." Thus on the material platform animalistic leaders are worshiped by animals.

Sometimes physicians, psychiatrists and social workers try to mitigate bodily pain, distress and fear, but they have no knowledge of spiritual identity and are bereft of a relationship with God. Yet they are considered *mahājanas* by the illusioned. Self-deceived persons sometimes accept leaders or spiritual masters from a priestly order that has been officially appointed by the codes of material life. In this way, they are deceived by official priests. Sometimes people accept as *mahājanas* those who have been designated by Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura as *ḍhaṅga-vipras* (imposter *brāhmaṇas*). Such imposters imitate the characteristics of Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura, and they envy Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who was certainly a *mahājana*. They make great artificial endeavors, advertising themselves as great devotees of the Lord or as mystic hypnotists knowledgeable in witchcraft, hypnotism and miracles. Sometimes people accept as *mahājanas* demons like Pūtanā, Tṛṇāvarta, Vatsa, Baka, Aghāsura, Dhenuka, Kāliya and Pralamba. Some people accept imitators and adversaries of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, such as Pauṇḍraka, Śṛgāla Vāsudeva, the spiritual master of the demons (Śukrācārya), or atheists like Cārvāka, King Vena, Sugata and Arhat. People who accept such imitators as *mahājanas* have no faith in Śrī Caitanya

Mahāprabhu as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Rather, they accept godless cheaters who present themselves as incarnations of God and cheat foolish people within the material world by word jugglery. Thus many rascals are accepted as *mahājanas*.

It is those who are devoid of devotional service who sometimes mistakenly accept persons with mundane motives as *mahājanas*. The only motive must be *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, devotional service to the Lord. Sometimes fruitive workers, dry philosophers, non devotees, mystic yogīs and persons attached to material opulence, women and money are considered *mahājanas*. But *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.3.25) gives the following statement about such unauthorized *mahājanas*:

In this material world, *karmīs* (fruitive actors) are accepted as *mahājanas* by foolish people who do not know the value of devotional service. The mundane intelligence and mental speculative methods of such foolish people are under the control of the three modes of material nature. Consequently they cannot understand unalloyed devotional service. They are attracted by material activities, and they become worshipers of material nature. Thus they are known as fruitive actors. They even become entangled in material activities disguised as spiritual activities. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* such people are described as *veda-vāda-ratāḥ*, supposed followers of the *Vedas*. They do not understand the real purport of the *Vedas*, yet they think of themselves as Vedic authorities. People versed in Vedic knowledge must know Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. *Vedaiś ca sarvair aham eva vedyah*. (Bg. 15.15)

In this material world a person may be famous as a *karma-vīra*, a successful fruitive worker, or he may be very successful in performing religious duties, or he may be known as a hero in mental speculation (*jñāna-vīra*), or he may be a very famous renunciant. In any case, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.23.56) gives the following opinion in this matter:

Anyone whose work is not meant for elevating him to religious life, anyone whose religious ritualistic performances do not raise him to renunciation, and anyone situated in renunciation that does not lead him to devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead must be considered dead, although he is breathing.

The conclusion is that all pious activity, fruitive activity, religious principles and renunciation must ultimately lead to devotional service. There are different types of processes for rendering service. One may serve his country, people and society, the *varṇāśrama-dharma system*, the sick, the poor, the rich, women, demigods, and so on. All this service comes under the heading of sense gratification, or enjoyment in the material world. It is most unfortunate that people are more or less attracted by such material activity and that the leaders of these activities are accepted as *mahājanas*, great ideal leaders. Actually they are only misleaders, but an ordinary man cannot understand how he is being misled.

Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura says, *sādhū-sāstra-guru-vākya, cittete kariyā aikya*: “One should accept as one’s guide the words of the *sādhū*, the *sāstra* and the *guru*.” A *sādhū* is a great personality like Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the *sāstras* are the injunctions of revealed scriptures, and the *guru*, or spiritual master, is one who confirms the scriptural injunctions. Accepting the guidance of these three is the actual way of following the great personalities (*mahājanas*) for real advancement in life (*mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ*). A man covered by illusion cannot understand the proper way; therefore, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, *dharma-sthāpana-hetu sādhuḥ vyavahāra*: “The behavior of a devotee is the criterion for all other behavior.” Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself followed the devotional principles and taught others to follow them. *Purī-gosānīra ye ācaraṇa, sei dharma sāra*. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu personally followed the behavior of Mādhavendra Purī and advised others to follow his principles. Unfortunately, people have been attracted to the material body since time immemorial.

A human being who identifies this body made of three elements with his self, who considers the by-products of the body to be his kinsmen, who considers his land of birth worshipable, and who goes to a place of pilgrimage simply to take a bath rather than meet men of transcendental knowledge there is to be considered like an ass or a cow. (SB 10.84.13)

Those who accept the logic of *gaḍḍālikā-pravāha* [one man is doing; “Oh, I shall do it.”] and follow in the footsteps of pseudo *mahājanas* are carried away by the waves of *māyā*. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura therefore warns: “Don’t be carried away by the waves of *māyā*. Just

surrender to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, and all miseries will end.”

Those who follow social customs and behavior forget to follow the path chalked out by the *mahājanas*; thus they are offenders at the feet of the *mahājanas*. Sometimes they consider such *mahājanas* very conservative, or they create their own *mahājanas*. In this way they ignore the principles of the *paramparā* system. This is a great misfortune for everyone. If one does not follow in the footsteps of the real *mahājanas*, one’s plans for happiness will be frustrated. This is elaborately explained later in the *Madhya-līlā* (Chapter Twenty-five, verses 55, 56 and 58). It is there stated:

People are so unfortunate that they do not accept the instructions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Instead, they want to be supported by so-called *mahājanas*, or authorities. *Tāte chaya darśana haite 'tattva' nāhi jāni*: we cannot ascertain the real truth simply by following speculators. We have to follow the footsteps of the *mahājanas* in the disciplic succession. Then our attempt will be successful. *Śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-vāṅī—amṛtera dhāra*: “Whatever is spoken by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is an incessant flow of nectar.” Whoever accepts His words as reality can understand the essence of the Absolute Truth.

No one can ascertain the Absolute Truth by following the philosophy of Sāṅkhya or the *yoga* system of Patañjali, for neither the followers of Sāṅkhya nor the *yogīs* who follow Patañjali accept Lord Viṣṇu as the Supreme Personality of Godhead (*na te viduḥ svārtha-gatiṁ hi viṣṇum*). The ambition of such people is never fulfilled; therefore, they are attracted by the external energy. Although mental speculators may be renowned all over the world as great authorities, actually they are not. Such leaders are themselves conservative and not at all liberal. However, if we preach this philosophy, people will consider Vaiṣṇavas very sectarian. Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī was a real *mahājana*, but misguided people cannot distinguish the real from the unreal. But a person who is awakened to Kṛṣṇa consciousness can understand the real religious path chalked out by the Lord and His pure devotees. Śrī Mādhavendra Purī was a real *mahājana* because he understood the Absolute Truth properly and throughout his life behaved like a pure

devotee. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu approved the method of Śrī Mādhavendra Purī. Therefore, although from the material viewpoint the Sanoḍiyā *brāhmaṇa* was on a lower platform, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu considered him situated on the highest platform of spiritual realization.

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (6.3.20) states that there are twelve *mahājanas*:

Brahmā, Nārada, Śambhu, the four Kumāras, Kapila, Manu, Prahlāda, Janaka, Bhīṣma, Bali, Śukadeva and Yamarāja. To select our *mahājanas* in the Gauḍīya-sampradāya, we have to follow in the footsteps of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His representatives. His next representative is Śrī Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, and the next representatives are the Six Gosvāmīs—Śrī Rūpa, Śrī Sanātana, Bhaṭṭa Raghunātha, Śrī Jīva, Gopāla Bhaṭṭa and Dāsa Raghunātha. A follower of Viṣṇu Svāmī's was Śrīdhara Svāmī, the most well-known commentator on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He was also a *mahājana*. Similarly, Caṇḍīdāsa, Vidyāpati and Jayadeva were all *mahājanas*. One who tries to imitate the *mahājanas* just to become an imitative spiritual master is certainly far away from following in the footsteps of the *mahājanas*. Sometimes people cannot actually understand how a *mahājana* follows other *mahājanas*. In this way people commit offenses and fall from devotional service. (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* 17.185, purport)

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are our *mahājana*, our Founder-*Ācārya*. As your disciples and followers, our duty is to follow not imitate you.

I must be friendly. Friendly. Poet. And expert. And silent. Silent worker, not advertising [myself]. Silent. These are the qualifications of Vaiṣṇava. So we must try to follow; not imitate, but follow. Follow, that is nice." (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.3.13-14 - L.A., May 30, 1972)

*Your eternal servant,*

Keśava Bhāratī Dāsa Goswami



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace. All glories to your wonderful disciples, granddisciples and sincere followers.

Recently I have been reading *A Transcendental Diary, Volume One* by my senior godbrother His Grace Hari Sauri Prabhu. I found the following excerpt regarding *kṛpā-siddhi* stimulating and enlivening (you are in New Delhi, March 25, 1976 – page 491):

“So even a person merged in the mode of ignorance can by some good fortune surrender to Kṛṣṇa?”

“Not good fortune,” Prabhupāda told us. “God, Kṛṣṇa, says, ‘You do it. Here! Immediately you become fortunate.’ There is no question of waiting for becoming fortunate. You become fortunate immediately. Suppose if I say, ‘Take this bag, \$100,000.’ You can take it. Immediately you become rich man. Why don’t you take it?”

Understanding Prabhupāda’s point that even good fortune is dependent on the mercy of the Lord, Gurudāsa Mahārāja asked how *kṛpā-siddhi* works.

Prabhupāda’s reaction took us all by surprise. “*Kṛpā-siddhi* means that you are not willing to take this bag of money. I say, ‘Take it! Take it! Take it!’” He suddenly turned and very vigorously pushed Gurudāsa in the stomach, as if he were trying to give him the imaginary bag.

Everyone broke out laughing, and Gurudāsa Mahārāja was simultaneously astonished and delighted at the sudden abrogation of the formal guru-disciple relationship. Śrīla Prabhupāda continued the mimicry and the pushing. He feigned resistance—“No!”—and then began pushing again. “That is *kṛpā-siddhi*. Even you are unwilling, I give you in your pocket, push it. That is *kṛpā-siddhi*.”

Forty-eight years ago I was walking, scuffling and sculling along on the High Street in Oxford, UK on a dismal, cloudy, rainy, windy and cold winter’s day. Typical weather for England. I was minding my own business wearing my favorite brown leather World War II flying jacket. I was returning from the Employment Bureau where they had diligently given me money for doing nothing. It was called

the dole. I recall the piecing clashing sound from across the road outside Woolworths. It was the sound of a full-on *kīrtana* with *karatālas* and drums. I hardly looked because I wanted to avoid any type of commotion. So I put my head down and carried on and walked straight into Prabhaviṣṇu Prabhu who was wearing bright saffron and had an amazing smile on his Irish face. He thrust an invitation into my stomach to a program the devotees were holding at Oxford Town Hall that very night. He said, “Take it, take it, take it!” Being literally accosted in the street by this representative of Vaiṣṇava I was startled and disarmed.

Insisting that I take the invitation and give a donation, I found myself instantly bankrupt. I didn’t have much money but whatever I did have disappeared into Prabhaviṣṇu Prabhu’s hand. Thoughts raced through my mind—yes, let me go, I can see what it is like. I thought of inviting my brother who was two years younger than I. Then I reconsidered he is not so interested in spiritual life, higher thoughts, meditation, yoga, etc. After all, spiritual life is an individual, personal and quiet affair, not to be shared by anyone. At least that is what I thought at the time. I took the invitation and walked to my house, which was twenty minutes away from Oxford’s City Centre.

Putting on my best pair of dirty Levi jeans, smelly socks, motorcycle racing boots and my favorite leather jacket I took my mother’s bicycle and rode to the Town Hall. Carefully locking the bicycle outside the Town Hall, I walked in and met Janānanda Prabhu. His smile was amazing and effulgent stretched from one side of his face to the other. He seated me in a room with about twenty other various assortments of the variegated human species of life. His Holiness Revatīnandana Swami spoke in a very deliberate and extremely powerful and dynamic way about something to do with birth, death and different species of life. I did not understand anything except I was convinced that he knew what he was talking about, although I had no idea what he was talking about, if you know what I mean.

Thus far nothing had really clicked. Then the audience stood up with the devotees and they had a *kīrtana*. I remember Mahavisnu Prabhu, Prabhavisnu Prabhu, Janananda Prabhu and Revatīnandana Swami leading the *kīrtana*. As soon as I heard the holy name tears started falling from my eyes. I really didn’t know what was happening. I felt my hairs standing on end and profuse tears flowing from my eyes—then the penny dropped!

This is *kṛpā-siddhi*. Now forty-eight years later I am still surviving

and being nourished by this *kṛpā-siddhi* which is coming from our guru *paramparā*—Your Divine Grace, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, Śrīla Gaura Kiśora Dāsa Bābājī, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Raghunatha Dāsa Gosvāmī.

Thank you for directing this *kṛpā-siddhi* on me. I pray that I can assist my godbrothers, godsisters and your granddisciples to give this *kṛpā-siddhi* to the conditioned souls in the Kali-yuga.

Somehow I have been situated in South Africa for the last forty-seven years and trying my best to preach to the various communities.

You are the embodiment of *kṛpā-siddhi* and by your *kṛpā-siddhi* I can eventually understand Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma and awaken my eternal relationship or *sthāyi-bhāva* with Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Bowing down at the lotus feet of my godbrothers, godsisters and all of their disciples, I pray that I can eternally remain in their association and realize my good fortune of having your *kṛpā-siddhi*.

*Your servant,*

Partha Sarathi Das Goswami

*om ajnāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-salākayā  
cakśur unmlītaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ*

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Our most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

All glories unto you.

Of the many principles you taught on how to live in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the one that seems the most relevant at present is that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is not dependent on anything material or impeded by the same.

With the worldwide presence of Coronavirus, preaching opportunities are more readily available than ever before – at least this has been our experience. Without the burden, someone may say the luxury of travel, we are reaching daily many persons with the message of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

When the need is great the message has greater efficacy to those who hear. It appears that the general populace is experiencing uncertainty due to the present pandemic mainly because of their dependence on what's happening in the social and political environment. Therefore there is confusion and fearfulness. Because a devotee is fully dependent on the infallible protection of Lord Kṛṣṇa, he is fearless.

Fear arises because of lack of Kṛṣṇa consciousness; otherwise there cannot be any fear. For one who has taken shelter of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, this material world of fear becomes hardly dangerous at all. (SB 10.13.13)

Continued in the same purport...

This material world, in which there is fear and danger at every step (*padam padam yad vipadām*), is not meant for those who have taken shelter at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet. Such persons are delivered from this fearful world. Everyone, therefore, should take shelter of the Supreme Person, who is the source of fearlessness, and thus be secure.

This is the message that is always needed especially at the present time.

Demons are increasing. Demons are increasing. But

don't be afraid. Kṛṣṇa is there. Just like Kṛṣṇa's mother and father were so much, I mean to say, harassed by Kāmsa. But at the end, Kāmsa was killed by Kṛṣṇa.

So we may be harassed for the time being, but Kṛṣṇa will save. This is *śaraṇāgati*. *Avaśya rakhibe kṛṣṇa viśvāsa pālana*. The *śaraṇāgati* means, surrender means that "Kṛṣṇa will save me. I, I'll not do anything against the devotional service. Even there is torture..." Just like Prahāda Mahārāja. He was tortured by his father. He had... Kṛṣṇa's mother was tortured by his brother. Not outsider. So the demons are so rascal, they don't care for son, sister, mother. No. "As soon as it is against my personal sense gratification, I must finish this." But be sure that Kṛṣṇa will save. We have got so many instances. As Prahāda Mahārāja was saved by Hiranyaka..., by Narasimhadeva from the hands of his father, Hiranyakaśipu; Devakī was saved, Vasudeva was saved from the hands of Kāmsa; so you will be also saved. Because there is promise in the *Bhagavad-gītā*: *kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati* [Bg. 9.31]. Kṛṣṇa says, "Make it a declaration throughout the whole world that anyone who is My devotee, he'll never be annihilated. He'll be protected. I'll give him protection." (SB Lecture 1.3.28, Los Angeles, 1972)

Our general message is: Chant more, chant always the Lord's holy names.

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we are eternally indebted and fully grateful for your mercy which comes in many different ways but mostly for the opportunity to act on your behalf although we are unable.

*A fallen disciple,*  
Candramauli Swami

My dear Lord and Master Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the savior of the whole world. And my savior.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.17.27 Lord Kṛṣṇa says:

*ācāryam mām vijāntīyān  
navamanyeta karhicit  
na martya-buddhyāsūyeta  
sarva-deva-mayo guruḥ*

“One should know the *ācārya* as Myself and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the representative of all the demigods.”

I first encountered this verse when reading *Caitanya-Caritamrita* many years ago. It appears there as *Ādi-līlā* 1.46, and you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, give a very profound and pointed purport to it there. First you emphasize how the bona fide spiritual master is like a parent, without whose attentive service a child cannot grow up to become a proper adult – in a similar way a disciple cannot come to the level of proper Kṛṣṇa consciousness without the dedicated help of the guru.

It never ceases to amaze me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, how you are helping us, directly by your presence in our lives in your service, and indirectly through our godbrothers and sisters, to develop in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. This Kali-yuga is such a hopeless time, as the *Bhāgavatam* says, “(in this age) men almost always have but short lives. They are quarrelsome, lazy, misguided, unlucky and, above all, always disturbed.” If that were not bad enough, along comes the COVID pandemic which compounds the craziness and even drives a number of devotees into extreme states of mind.

But Śrīla Prabhupāda, with the anchor of your instructions your sincere followers are able not only to remain steady in this storm, but to find innovative ways to spread the mission of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in times which seemingly paralyze many of the well-intentioned, and drive others into frenzies of foolishness that complicate an already bewildering situation.

You go on in that purport to explain how the spiritual master is an *ācārya*, or a “transcendental professor” who teaches the disciples the Vedic understanding in detail and gives them second births on

the spiritual platform. Coming close to the bona fide *ācārya* such as yourself opens the doors to transcendence in ways no other person is able to do, and this is an act of such incomprehensible compassion that you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are none other than the Supreme Personality of Servitor Godhead, the *āśraya-vigraha*, or the form of the Lord one must take shelter of.

We have seen how being connected with you has revolutionized our lives. In happy times and sad, and even in these strange days of COVID, those who do as you have instructed continue making progress and experience the nectar of immortality in their lives. In the beginning of our devotee lives we didn't really know what to expect, but whatever we had in mind, practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness under your protection has exceeded any ideas we had in terms of practicality and real experience.

Therefore our *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* verse tells us to never envy you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We must never think that our future in Kṛṣṇa consciousness can ever be improved by concocting our own ideas and somehow avoiding what you have given us. As you say in the purport, "a bona fide *ācārya* is non different from the Personality of Godhead, and therefore to envy such an *ācārya* is to envy the Personality of Godhead Himself. This will produce an effect subversive of transcendental realization."

You are one of the confidential associates of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, or a manifested representation of Lord Nityānanda. Or quite likely, in your own transcendental way, both. My life is dependent on you, and other than your shelter there is nothing auspicious in my existence.

I humbly pray at your lotus feet to continue being merciful to this undeserving person, and please keep accepting my small attempts at serving you. May your glories be spread throughout the three worlds!

*Your servant,*

Bhakti Caitanya Swami



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

On your appearance day, allow me to offer some words of homage to your ISKCON, which you said was not different from you and your body. Please permit me to praise you in this way.

Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda describes the genesis of one of his books to be a desire tree from the spiritual forest of goodness, a *kalpaṅṛkṣa* that he brought to the world of men in the form of songs. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I believe that you have also traveled through that same forest and transplanted another desire tree in the form of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, ISKCON.

Like the residents of Vaikuṅṭha, desire trees have limitless attributes, such as beauty, opulence, and wonder, and these attributes are abundantly present in ISKCON. Of them, the one that now takes front and center in my mind is the attribute of mercy, ISKCON's benediction of spontaneous loving devotion.

For practicing devotees, love of Kṛṣṇa means ecstatic love, or *bhāva-bhakti*. In *The Nectar of Devotion* you explain that such perfection generally takes place by effort, *sādhana*, and in the exceptional case by mercy, *kṛpā*. To be more precise, the last stage in which devotees rise from *sādhana* to *bhāva* also requires special mercy, as implied by the verse beginning *śuddha-sattva-viśeṣātmā*. But this mercy depends on effort.

How does mercy come? By the speaking, glancing, and good wishes of an advanced devotee. The rule of thumb given by *ācāryas* is that devotees can give what they themselves have. Thus a *prema-bhakta* can give any form of devotion, a *bhāva-bhakta* can give *bhāva* and faith, and a practitioner can give faith in *sādhana*.

My conviction and realization—one shared by your other followers—is that you are a *paramahansa prema-bhakta*. Thus without a doubt your blessings can award the rarely-attained perfection of *bhāva-bhakti*.

Will you give that mercy?

In the twelve years of your preaching pastimes you repeatedly assured your followers that by offenseless *nāma-saṅkīrtana* they would attain perfection. The *sādhana* for that attainment was chanting sixteen rounds and following the regulative principles. By such

a forthcoming effort we were guaranteed a corresponding mercy disbursed from the storehouse of your ever-well-wishes and transcendental teachings.

Thus, by your words, presence, and blessings you guaranteed a mercy by which your direct disciples could rise to the stage of *bhāva*. That was Lord Caitanya's mission, and is ISKCON's "main business."

Now you are no longer physically present, but your ISKCON remains, as does its empowerment to give love. And so the same combination of *sādhana* and *kṛpā* assures all serious devotees that they too can attain *bhāva-bhakti* in this life. Then with the blessing of *bhāva* they can take birth on the planet in the material world where Kṛṣṇa is enacting his pastimes and there gain qualification to return to the spiritual world, Goloka Vṛndāvana.

What if, for some reason, worthy devotees in ISKCON cannot find the association of living *gurus* and Vaiṣṇavas to bless them with love?

Then your mercy and instructions are there for all succeeding generations of followers not initiated by you. They too can attain the same result. That was your promise: chant sixteen rounds and follow the regulative principles.

Thus, ISKCON assures that devotees will be able to attain ecstatic love from a qualified spiritual master, or alternately through your blessings, books, and eternal presence.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda! Thank you for blessing us with the desire tree of ISKCON, a *kalpavṛkṣa* that yields fruits too numerous to name, and from which the juicy fruit of loving devotion, falling from its branches of mercy, reigns supreme.

*Your servant,*

Śivarāma Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

As a teenager in the 1960s, I was an ‘emancipated minor’ living in a dormitory style residence near the Wayne State University Campus in Downtown Detroit Michigan. Initially I was actually going to Cass Tech High School, in their program for gifted students.

I was admittably a ‘very troubled teenager’, but my personal problems were not with ‘sex, drugs or rock-n-roll’. My psychiatrist said that I was “over responsible” and “religiously obsessed”, because I wanted to “save the world”, and could not stay out of all kinds of civil rights, anti-war and ‘social justice’ activism and confrontation.

I was also an as-yet un-diagnosed “late virilizing hermaphrodite” (intersex person). Looking like a normal female at birth, I was of-course raised as a girl, but I never had a female ‘gender identity’ and had started at the age of nine to secretly call myself David, after the brave boy who defeated Goliath in the Bible. By the time that I was a teenager living on my own in Detroit, I was masculinizing and living a double life, as a girl to-and-from and at school in Detroit, and at my parents’ home in the suburbs, and as David everywhere else that I could get away with it.

After school, I used to walk to an old Catholic church, which was always open. (I was not raised as a Catholic.) The only people there were usually a few veiled old ladies saying their rosaries or praying before the blessed sacrament (Lord Jesus Christ’s *mahā prasādam*). I learned how to go up into the choir loft where no one could see me. There, I would contemplate Jesus and silently weep over the suffering world, sometimes for hours.

One day after school, while starting out for the church, as I proceeded through the cavernous tall buildings of Downtown, intermittently I could hear a rhythmic, sweetly bell-like ringing sound. It was so attractive to me that I had to try to follow it! As I turned through the downtown city street corridors, getting closer to the source of the ringing sound, I could finally hear a low natural drum, drumming in syncopation with the ringing of the ‘bells’. At that point my hair stood on end and I began to RUN towards the exuberant sound!

Fearing that I would miss the source of the music, I was running, and finally rounding a corner, I beheld the colorful Indian dress-clad Hare Kṛṣṇa-*saṅkīrtana* party, chanting the *mahā-mantra* and dancing, right there in the heart of Motown, Michigan, the world

famous motor city!

Immediately, approaching the devotees, one of them handed me a packet of incense that had a picture of Kṛṣṇa on it. As soon as I saw him, I said, "Ah, yes, Kṛṣṇa!" and I joined in the transcendently joyous *saṅkīrtana*. Thus my perpetual sorrow was immediately relieved.

Because I was so 'religiously obsessed' I had been trying to study about Kṛṣṇa in the stacks at the Wayne State U. library. There, I had read *māyāvādī* versions of the *Bhāgavad-gītā*, a one volume version of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and the *Rāmāyaṇa*, and some *Upaniṣads*, but I had never seen any of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books, or a single picture of Kṛṣṇa. However, as soon as I saw Kṛṣṇa, all of my questions were answered and my sadness dissipated like fog in the bright sunlight!

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for bringing the complete unadulterated primal revelation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Lord Baladeva, and Paramātmā to the Western countries to stop the insidious soul-destroying spread of māyāvādī impersonalism and *an-atta* voidism.

Eternal thanks to you, our dearmost Śrīla Prabhupāda, for bringing the devotional cultus of the Mystical Rose / Rhoda / Rādhā Rāṇī, the Queen (Rajani / Rāṇī / Regina) of God's own heart, to the middle of the Motor City, reviving the loving BUCOLIC pastimes of GOKULA and GOLOKA (GALAXIA) Vṛndāvana, even there in the midst of that roaring, sooty, metropolitan mechanical hell-on-Earth!

From that time onward, for more than 50 years now, with the greatest reverence and profound gratitude, every day I have recited my prescribed mantras, beginning with...

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

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*From your still-aspiring servant,*

Bhakti Ananda Goswami  
(Deva Deva Dasa / David Sherman)

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

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

### Something New

It was our morning-time focus,  
When we offered you a lotus  
At *guru-pūjā*; all was so cheerful—  
No trace of anything at all tearful.

It was the start of the year in Guyana,  
Where in abundance grow the lotus and banana.  
We didn't know what was coming—  
Temple operations were smoothly running.

Then reports arrived in the month of January:  
An attack came from a strange adversary,  
An invisible creature who takes human lives,  
A threat to children, men, and precious wives.

Theories of conspiracies began to surface  
As to the origin of a virus to hurt us  
Going by the name COVID-19—  
A virus so ominous, dark, and mean.

The public demanded answers to the questions they asked  
And were told, "To be safe, you must be masked,  
And social distancing at six feet is standard,  
While coming together is now abandoned."

This pandemic spreads at the pace of a cheetah,  
And disease *is* mentioned in *Bhagavad-gītā*.  
Locked in arms are Kali and COVID—  
You direct us to Kṛṣṇa, or Govind.

It is not surprising that bad omens come:  
*śāstra* states *duḥkhālyam aśāśvatam*.  
Life's leisurely ways are cut short;  
We know it to be a reality distort.

The vision you share makes it all clear;  
You offer hope when trouble is near.  
Your question: "Are you able and ready?"  
The answer: "When *sādhana* and love are steady."

Prabhupāda, you are helping us through this;  
Your teachings burn a hole through this crisis.  
Vaikuṅṭha comes when the cycle is over,  
Only when our hearts have that solid makeover.

Bless us to be tolerant like a tree.  
Lessons on life are not always free:  
They come at a price, we have to adjust.  
It is as essential as the Earth's crust.

*Your servant,*  
Bhaktimārga Swami

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

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda in one purport from *Bhagavad-gītā*, you wrote:

There are two classes of men. Some of them are full of polluted material things within their hearts, and some of them are materially free. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is equally beneficial for both of these persons. Those who are full of dirty things can take to the line of Kṛṣṇa consciousness for a gradual cleansing process, following the regulative principles of devotional service. Those who are already cleansed of the impurities may continue to act in the same Kṛṣṇa consciousness so that others may follow their exemplary activities and thereby be benefited.

I am very fortunate that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is beneficial for both types of people because I am definitely in the category of many polluted things in the heart. By your mercy, I have been engaged in the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and someday I may come to the level of being free from impurities.

In fact, at my initiation you said that all the new disciples should become pure as quickly as possible. Kṛṣṇa is *pavitram*, pure, and to associate with Him nicely we should be of the same spiritual nature. I am still endeavouring, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but sometimes I stumble. Please help me to become 100% completely fixed in devotional service to the Lord. Help me stay on the path without my mind wandering to other places. As Lord Caitanya says, let me taste the real nectar, which we are always hankering for.

Here at New Govardhana, every *ekādaśī*, the devotees see and listen to your lectures on a screen in the temple room. How wonderful and powerful they are! Your words cut through *māyā* like a hot knife going through butter. How learned you are! You quote continuously from many different *śāstras* to emphasise your points in an authorised manner. How compassionate you are! Patiently, you explain everything clearly in a constructive way to uplift people to the transcendental position.

If I could be one ten-thousandth like you, I am sure I would advance rapidly in my Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but I know I am not even that. For me, advancement is slow. However, I have faith that if I hold onto your lotus feet and associate nicely with devotees in ISKCON, ultimately, I will go back home, back to Godhead. Or, being purified, I will get an opportunity to serve you and the Lord again in this material world. Both ways will be perfection for me.

A life of virtuous thought and deed  
The lives of others he did exceed  
From whom, my brother, shall I hear  
Those words which ever charmed my ear

No one like Śrīla Prabhupāda shall be  
A wonderful guiding light for me  
He of high and noble mind  
Gentle, modest, meek and kind

Ignorant we were and foolish youth  
We clung to him for constant truth  
Yearning to stay by his holy side  
To hear instructions that were bona fide

Sacred texts presented clear and pure  
An offering that shall always endure  
Continuously spoke and ready to give  
Knowledge of where we eternally live

Devotional service with its every limb  
Brilliantly taught and explained by him  
Like a king with a wondrous bow  
He drove away *māyā* and made us glow



Filled my soul with nectar so high  
Began to feel bliss, even a fool as I  
The more he gave the more I drank  
For this kind mercy I forever thank

Śrīla Prabhupāda is my only hope  
Without whom I could never cope  
With suppliant hands and reverent head  
I must always remember what he said

He is dearer to me than light and life  
My existence before was only strife  
Please, Prabhupāda, always show the way  
To someone like me who goes astray

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

The perfect lives and teachings of saintly devotees confer a precious eternal inheritance upon the souls of this world. Infused with love of Kṛṣṇa, they personify His compassion, grace, and blessings. They teach us how to see Kṛṣṇa's glories, feel His love, and hear His message in and through every aspect of His natural world.

As such, the sun can represent Śrī Kṛṣṇa – the active principle of illumination. The moon then becomes the more passive and intuitive nature whose wisdom is received through reflection. Expanding further, the stars of heaven, assembling as constellations to dance across the vast tapestry of the nighttime sky, symbolize the *ācāryas*. With celestial powers beyond the scope of mortal vision, they expand the luster of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Even in the absence of the sun and moon, the influence of these saintly devotees serves as our guiding light, especially during the dark night of the soul.

Their pastimes and precepts reveal profound spiritual realities, shedding light on the inevitable challenges, obstacles, victories, and realizations of all who have gone before. For those who follow in their footsteps, they brighten the horizon, showing the way while teaching us how to perceive and reach our ultimate aspiration. They extend an invitation to join with their associates, to be included amongst those most fortunate souls who dance the journey on an enlightened pilgrimage of transcendental song. Through their ability to touch, inspire, connect, and empower us, their stories become our story.

They come to this world only for the benefit of others. Their selfless service, the hardships they endure while here, the thankless tasks they undertake on our behalf, and the affectionate personal care displayed in all their dealings instill in us a desire to emulate them.

Mine was a generation lost in its quest for truth. We pursued sets of ideals, abstract philosophies, impersonal concepts, and future circumstances to fill the inner void, as if the key to peace and love awaited somewhere and sometime outside of us. With your appearance, our hearts awakened to the truth already living both amidst and within us. How rare in life is the golden opportunity to meet a pure devotee of Vṛndāvana bearing messages from home!

In the barren soil of the Western world, you discerned some

potential that had not yet manifest. Your humility softened our hearts, transforming them into fertile ground made receptive to the seeds of devotion. Having initially planted the seed of faith, you continued to serve as gardener, cultivating our tender creepers with compassion, encouragement, and love.

Our first meeting seems so long ago and yet so near at hand. Those of us in New Vrindaban were exceptionally blessed with your physical presence here in 1972. We had the extraordinary experience of celebrating both Śrī Kṛṣṇa Janmāṣṭamī and Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā with you, allowing us to witness how you worshiped Kṛṣṇa on the day of His appearance and, in reciprocation, He glorified you on Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā.

We followed your footsteps physically and spiritually as they led us into a vast new frontier concealed behind the veil of all we had once accepted as reality. In the light of this dawning truth, the most precious concepts of love, devotion, compassion, forgiveness, and sacrifice took on a life beyond mere words. We saw them personified in you as sacraments, touching and revitalizing the very essence of our existence, the deepest core of our hearts.

Never had we met anyone who loved so unconditionally. It was self-evident that you carried Śrī Kṛṣṇa in your heart. Gradually, you bestowed insight into the wonderful nature of Kṛṣṇa's mysterious heart. You are the one to grant that realization, for as Kṛṣṇa dwells in the heart of His pure devotees, they reside in His heart as well.

Rising in the east to spread light and life as foretold, the dawning rays of your influence reached Western shores in due course of time. The blessings of Kṛṣṇa followed in your footsteps as you circumambulated the globe transforming lives, like a touchstone, everywhere you journeyed. The poetic prophecy Kavirāj Goswami offered in praise of Lord Caitanya was fulfilled in you, he strung a garland of the holy name and *prema* to embrace all of the Earth.

You came to prepare, train, and accompany us on our journey back to Home. You restored life to our comatose souls with the immortal nectar of the holy name. You revealed the purport of die to live, granting us entrance into the munificent current of Vraja *rasa*, as it flows in and through the *paramparā*.

We so yearned for you to stay with us physically so that your vision for New Vrindaban would properly manifest through your continuous guidance. Instead, an unprecedented darkness befell when you withdrew your mortal pastimes from the vision of this world.

It all seemed so dissonant. In your disappearance pastime, we felt that we had not only lost you, we had lost ourselves as well. The darkness we endured before meeting you seemed to have returned with a vengeance. The light of your association vanished beneath the horizon; our lives were plunged into the dark night of the soul.

All of nature reflected and confirmed the depth of our loss. Flowers which had blossomed in your footsteps now wilted, joining in our mourning. The sun and moon seemed to fade. The breezes stirred leaves in the trees, whispering your message. Autumn showers felt as though *devas* were crying. Trees shed their foliage, covering the paths on which your footprints had lingered.

Upon your departure from this world, our hope seemed utterly crushed, leaving no other recourse than to turn, in renewed earnest, to your instructions, books, and memories. You told us numerous times that everything is contained within your books, that you live forever in your instructions. You assured us that since you were always chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, if we did the same, there would be no disconnect between us. While we had accepted this with faith, our realization had remained theoretical. It was now clear that your *vāṇī* was our only remaining shelter.

Although we had been studying your books all along, it was always with the benefit of your personal presence. Deprived of that advantage, we were led to go deeper, seeking the essence of all that you had taught and exemplified. Yearning like *cataka* birds, we kept our sights turned upward awaiting rains of mercy, never looking back to the ground below where you initially found us.

With the introduction to love-in-separation came memories of my childhood pastor echoing meaningful statements from Jesus: Seek and ye shall find...I have so much more to teach you, but you cannot bear to hear it now...It is better that I leave so that the Holy Spirit can lead you into deeper intimacy...[so] that the spirit of truth can come upon you, as your ongoing counsellor and comforter. He will lead you into deeper communion with me.

Seeking further insight and confirmation, we turned to our favorite – *Kṛṣṇa Book*, where your voice and mood are quite tangible. You describe how the Brijābasīs found solace and shelter while enduring separation from Kṛṣṇa by remembering His loving words, absorbing their hearts in His pastimes, and living life to the fullest, all in eager anticipation of His imminent return. For He had promised he would, indeed, return. From the pages of *Kṛṣṇa Book*

a parallel experience emerged as we found the dynamic of ever-increasing love of the Brijābaśis for their beloved Kṛṣṇa being reflected in our relationship with you, Kṛṣṇa's dearest representative.

While we had formerly sustained our enthusiasm with the eager anticipation and preparation for each of your next visits, your physical presence in our lives remained all too close for deeper reflection.

Following in the footsteps of the Brijābaśis in the absence of their Kṛṣṇa, our hearts were naturally drawn to go more deeply into your *vāṇī*. At long last, all that we had seen and heard before began to fall into proper place as the larger story opened in new chapters, inviting our eager participation. It was as if further volumes of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* were unfolding before our eyes.

These subsequent chapters awakened an inner wisdom to discern subtle light within the darkness and a deeper love within the pain. Thereafter, a new dawn approached on an internal dimension.

Within the darkest times, the self-effulgent jewels of blessings, pulsating like the stars above, appear more prominent. Indeed, even Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared in this world at the hour of midnight, and Lord Caitanya appeared in the shadow cast by a lunar eclipse.

The ecstasy of separation in and of itself cannot remain the final goal. Rather, it serves as a catalyst to encourage the heart to grow fonder, to nourish certain reunion. And when reunion takes place at last, it is witnessed and reflected in eyes that have been anointed with the salve of enhanced devotion. Thus the object of love appears even more attractive and radiant than before.

Truly, after those joyous times of walking and talking with you, followed by the painful anguish of separation, we are now invited to enter the deepest mystery of communion as it unfolds in your physical absence. The fundamental lessons you initially imparted were the seeds which blossomed in time. Therein a new realm unfolded where you personally extend the sweetest assurance.

The way you continue to deal with us makes it increasingly clear how intensely Kṛṣṇa yearns to develop a deep relationship with His parts and parcels; one that is so intimate, so close, so enduring and steadfast, that nothing and no one can disrupt it. In this light, joy reawakens refreshed in the hope that within one ending, a new beginning awaits. One that awards a relationship with you even more profound than what we had known before. Now you are calling us to look within, to confront the subtler shadows lingering in the valleys of our internal landscapes.

The deep darkness gradually gave way to new light, revealing that solitude of heart need not be lonely or isolating. A true encounter with you transcends past remembrances and future hopes, integrating time and space within the present moment. Here and now is the opportunity to gaze into the mirror as you hold it before our eyes. Therein awaits the liberating power of your presence, which frees us from past regrets and future fears. Your loving example grants us courage to face the shadows within and around us, which are not to be feared as much as the initial temptation to repress and deny them. Turning towards our shadows, accepting them as teachers, reveals within our greatest despair the first indications of everlasting light, directing us to the areas in our lives still in need of love, compassion, understanding, and grace.

Truly, separation from you has compelled us to descend to the furthest and darkest recesses of our own hearts, to invite the holy name to illumine us from deep inside. Communion in the solitude of heart progresses to sharing within a community of the faithful, and from there, by Lord Caitanya's grace, to the mission of preaching and distributing the love of Vṛndāvana, thereby expanding the rays of the benediction moon.

Although you, the external manifestation of Supersoul, are no longer physically walking beside us, the realization that you are now living within us dawns as we attempt to delve more deeply into the Brijābasī spirit; to share your gifts with others, to touch their hearts as you did ours, to find how you are dictating our thoughts, words, and actions. May our transformed lives testify to your ongoing presence. Following in the footsteps of the Brijābasīs who sustained their lives by *Kṛṣṇa-katha*, we will nourish our hearts by the process increasingly known and loved as *Śrīla Prabhupāda Memories*. This keeps your legacy ever fresh, alive, and growing.

The final pastimes of your mortal presence shook our lives to the very core, serving as a challenge to test our faith. As the representative of Lord Nityānanda, you remain forever the firm foundation on which to build our spiritual lives. You serve as the perfect mediator between God and man, fully understanding and representing both parties and endearing yourself to the hearts of all.

In gratitude for the fond memories you have impressed upon our hearts, we worship Nandotsava, the most perfect day for your Vyāsa-pūjā. Kṛṣṇa's mysterious appearance occurred while darkness covered Mathura, it was only on the following day, Nandotsava,

when the truth dawned in the hearts of the Brajabāsis that the long-anticipated son of Yaśoda had appeared to fulfill all their desires. How appropriate and significant for your appearance to take place on the joyful festival day of Nandotsava.

Amongst countless souls wandering aimlessly through dark labyrinths of material nature, amidst the clouds of worldliness, shadows of empiric theology, and mists of illusion, you have appeared as our Morning Star, a luminary bearing special significance. You rise daily to brighten the pre-dawn sky, heralding the sun's rebirth at daybreak, thereby representing the process of initiation. Foretelling eventual homecoming, you continue to shine in the world, guiding souls who have lost their way back to the path from creation to Creator. May the light of your pastimes and precepts dawn within our hearts and continue spreading to all the world, lifting our consciousness high above the dark and fearful shadows. Bless us that we may internalize the truth in all you have taught and exemplified.

By watching over us in *japa*, during the precious Brahmā Muhūrta, the Morning Star reflects the revelation of the holy name from His initial dim glimmer in *nāma-ābhāsa* to the full luster rising in *śuddha-nāma*, highlighting Kṛṣṇa *prema* as the ultimate goal. May you continue to grant us access to the substantial nature personified in that transcendental sound who is more radiant than the sun.

May this spirit of Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā awaken daily remembrance of your ongoing appearance as you continue to light up this world and shine within our hearts until the darkness is completely dispelled. Guide us, we pray, onward across the ocean of birth and death to the self-effulgent landscape on the distant shore, to the embrace of our eternal homeland. With this blessed assurance, we celebrate Śrī Vyāsa-pūjā with ever increasing joy and appreciation each year, acknowledging the reality of your enduring presence in our lives moment after moment, here, now, and forevermore.

*Your eternal servant,*

Varsana Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my deeply considered and most respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

We glorify you for delivering the Western world from impersonalism and voidism.

Yet, you set in motion another extraordinary mission impossible: you dared present, to the ignoble West, what is a real civilization.

Exposing the primitiveness, you boldly taught the essential precepts and norms of real human life. Otherwise, how would “the developed world” ever know the actual human standard?

This inheritance you passed on to us still remains intact—despite the usual erosive effect of time. Constantly we ponder and deliberate the underlying themes you propounded. How to execute your desires is our life and soul.

You sought to redefine what is genuine social progress and advancement.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** So they have mentioned “American Hindus.” [*chuckles*] [*pause*] It is a dead blow to the material civilization: “No drinking and no intoxication, no meat-eating, no gambling, no illicit sex.” Their whole civilization is finished. Because they stand on these things, four pillars.

**Devotee:** Therefore we must present a better civilization.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Eh?

**Devotee:** We must present a better civilization.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Yes. Not better or best. *The* civilization.

Five decades ago in the Wild West—despite pandemic hippiness—makeshift notions of a crude moral culture and social cohesion prevailed. But today’s version of a society posing as civilized is, on a mass scale, in many ways more barbarous and dangerous.

Your aging disciples can observe that even the primitive social mores and quasi-cultural attributes prevailing during our youth are in shreds—to the extent that, comparatively, the sixties and seventies can seem like Dvāpara-yuga.



During your days with us, thousands of refugees from the Neanderthal West flocked to your mission. But in India, the land of dharma and Kṛṣṇa, scant *jīvas* back then took shelter of your mission. Today the situation has dramatically reversed.

We can observe that aspects of the social terrain—the context, the milieu—do change over time. But the quintessential process you gave us—for watering the *bhakti* sprouts, creepers, and trees—remains as inconceivably effective as ever.

Early in 1977 you stated that the time would come when people would applaud your mission for having saved humanity in its most dire hour.

Darkening the sky, the dreadful storm-clouds of new viruses, environmental havoc, and nuclear warfare threaten the entire planet. Nevertheless, the life-sustaining *bhakti* seeds you planted and nurtured continue to grow.

By your fulfilling the desire of Mahāprabhu, what you granted the critically tormented world successfully persists as humanity's genuine hope and rescue.

*Your lowly servant,*

Devāmrita Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

This year has been a challenge. Involuntarily I've been confined in one place for over five months. Although I've been saying for many years that physically, I need to slow down and travel a lot less, I neither planned nor expected it to happen this way.

By your mercy, however, my situation has been a wake-up call for me. Since the first day I arrived here, not one day has passed when I've not listened to one of your recorded lectures or conversations. Yes. I've also been reading and chanting. But it's from your lectures, that I'm being constantly reminded that although I'm confined to one place physically, internally I really need to consciously keep moving and in one direction.

I've heard you say many times that, "Modern civilization is a condemned civilization." Of course, that theme registered in me practically right from the beginning and it motivated me in my service, book distribution and preaching. But somehow, at some point, I lapsed into a different state of mind. Until recently my mindset was more like, "Sure, it's condemned, but I probably won't witness the collective punishment it's destined to reap in this lifetime." But now, taking another good look at the world and with a consistent message almost daily I'm hearing from you, I've felt a need to reconsider.

Here's just one of so many examples of what I've been hearing from you on this topic:

**Prabhupāda:** So people are so degraded, and there is no education, and there are so-called leaders, they are themselves degraded, they are themselves blind. So what is the position of the present society? It is very precarious condition. Therefore, at the end of Kali-yuga, people will be more and more, more and more degraded. There will be no more preaching. Kṛṣṇa will come as Kalki avatar, simply killing, simply killing. That's all. Finished.

**Prof. Regamay:** But they have still 4,000 years of Kali-yuga.

**Prabhupāda:** Not 4,000; 400,000. So yes the time is coming. And now the partial killing is going on. You drop

this... The atom bomb is ready. You have got; I have got. I drop on you, and you drop on me. Both of us, we finished. This is going to be happening. People are so degraded. So unless one takes to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, there is no possibility of being saved. There is example, that grinding mill... You know, grinding mill?

**Prof. Regamay:** Yes.

**Prabhupāda:** Yes, and the grains are put within it, and they are all smashed. But one grain who takes shelter of the center, the pivot, it is not smashed. Similarly, the modern civilization is such that everyone will be smashed. And one takes the central point shelter, Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he will not be. *Kaunteya pratijānīhi na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati.*

So best thing is to take shelter of Kṛṣṇa and save yourself.

(Room conversation, June 4, 1974, Geneva)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I'm not saying you were a doomsayer when you were physically present with us. You left the world and especially your followers, with abundantly more than a doomsayer's message. You delivered pure, unadulterated Kṛṣṇa consciousness and always with the ferocity of a lion. But quoting your spiritual master, you also did say that "this world is not a fit place for gentlemen."

At this point in time, I still can't travel and lecture. I can preach online (and I do). But now more than any time before this I'm remembering your words:

Now we have got so many students and so many temples but I am fearful that if we expand too much in this way that we shall become weakened and gradually the whole thing will become lost. Just like milk. We may thin it more and more with water for cheating the customer, but in the end it will cease to be any longer milk. Better to boil the milk now very vigorously and make it thick and sweet, that is the best process. (Letter to Hansadutta, 22 June 1972, Los Angeles)

There is still not a shred of doubt in my mind that the mission and example you left for your followers was to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness until one's last breath. As you have said, "a soldier should die

fighting on the battlefield." I'm also convinced that the world is in the process of becoming more and more of "a fit place" for such vigorous propaganda.

Meanwhile, however, in your service, I've decided that right now, more than any time before this, is the best time, as you said to Prof. Regamay, to "take shelter of Kṛṣṇa and save yourself."

Be strong so that you may not be rascal, and then you can do; others you can check. Otherwise, it will be impossible. How is it possible? A man is drowning. If you are strong enough, you can save him. But if you also become drowned, then how you'll save him? So the everything is there. Save yourself, save others. This is our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. First of all save yourself; then try to save others. Or both things can go on simultaneously. The same example: if you want to save somebody who's drowning, you must know that "I may not be washed away. I have to remain strong; then I can save him. (Conversation on roof, February 14, 1977 – Mayapur)

Thank you for anything I have of any value in this life Śrīla Prabhupāda. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

*Your eternal debtor in the dust of your lotus feet,*

Niranjana Swami

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

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

*namo brahmaṇya-devāya  
go-brāhmaṇa-hitāya ca  
jagad-dhitāya kṛṣṇāya  
govindāya namo namaḥ*

“My Lord, You are the well-wisher of the cows and the brahmanas, and You are the well-wisher of the entire human society and world.”  
(Viṣṇu Purāṇa 1.19.65)

*om surabhyai namaḥ  
om śrī Gurave namaḥ*

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet. This year we are fortunate to celebrate your 125th Appearance Anniversary.

You remain our well-wisher and a source of ever increasing inspiration. By your exemplary personality and undaunted preaching efforts you continue even today to attract so many conditioned souls. You are the only beacon of hope for all of humanity. We cannot fathom our great fortune.

The world has changed tremendously in the last 12 months with the traveling and preaching activities of your devotees severely curtailed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In many, many ways, however, this has underlined to all of us the ever increasing and urgent need to spread the message of Lord Caitanya as quickly and as widely as possible. And by your continued inspiration devotees have discovered innovative ways to continue spreading your mission.

Although you stressed the distribution of your transcendental literatures, you also underlined the absolute necessity of living and

demonstrating the practical application of our philosophy.

And for that to happen you gave very specific instructions: 1) establish *gurukulas*, 2) establish Varnāśrama colleges and 3) establish Vaiṣṇava Vedic Villages.

As you rightly pointed out in the introduction to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, "There is a need for the science of Kṛṣṇa in human society for the good of all suffering humanity of the world, and we simply request the leaders of all nations to pick up this science of Kṛṣṇa for their own good, for the good of society and for the good of all the world's people."

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please allow me to be an instrument however insignificant in spreading your glories and your mission, the only remedy for a misguided humanity.

Please keep me forever at the dust of your lotus feet,

*Your humble servant,*

Bhakti Raghava Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

In many of the places I visited when I preached in South India during the summer of 1978, the people recognized us and proclaimed, “Yes, we have heard your Acyutānanda Swami!” I was impressed, not so much by how prominent Acyutānanda had become by speaking their local language and singing their traditional songs, but by what that indicated about Your Divine Grace. It showed me the depth of your humility and devotion, for although you had every right to brand the movement with your own name and personality, you never did. Instead, you made it about Kṛṣṇa and were thus more than happy to empower your disciples, who also brought Kṛṣṇa to the forefront. As far as I know, no leader of any other Eastern religious or spiritual implant in the West could make the claim that their movement was about God more than about himself.

Today, in my homage to you, I would like to do something different. Although usually the plethora of your observable qualities are highlighted—as they should be—I would like to glorify you for what was not visible, which in a way says as much about your purity and devotion as anything else.

Let me start by further elucidating what my experience in South India revealed. You never promoted yourself, and thus we never saw in you even a whiff of the desire for *pratiṣṭhā* (distinction) or *pūjā* (worship).

Your life was an open book, and although so many young ladies took shelter at your feet, no one ever saw you deal inappropriately, even subtly, with the opposite sex. In contrast, so many other Eastern gurus that came to the West—even those with high yogic accomplishments—fell prey to sex desire. That no one ever saw in you what seemed to plague everyone else, to one degree or another, showed us the glory of your clean heart.

By your mercy, the worship of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa was spread all over the world. In such an endeavor, it can be tempting to focus on the intimate side of the topic in a display of devotion meant to attract followers, even though most people today would likely misunderstand. Your preaching, however, though certainly deep, devotional, and comprehensive, was always careful, appropriately measured in

terms of your audience. That you kept reserved the deeper internal side of your specific relationship with Kṛṣṇa was also your glory.

There is no doubt that you had every talent needed to spread the teachings of *bhakti* around the world, or that your selflessness and devotion were self-effulgent. What is just as spectacular to me, however, is that you were always surrendered to the will of Kṛṣṇa, down to both the simplest things you did and the unwanted things you avoided. It may not always have been flashy, but by your chastity to Kṛṣṇa's will, we were spared from seeing any ambition, lust, or pretension. I am honored that, in this world of cheats and showmen, I have a spiritual master who, imbued with pure devotion, always remained beyond suspicion. I can only pray for your mercy that I can also always remain unseen in the same way.

*Humbly in your service,*

Dhanurdhara Swami



Esteemed Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our obeisances at your lotus feet.

You and your ambience are Vṛndāvana Dhāma, but we intrude our conditioned nature into your presence. It is only by your austerity of continually giving us your inspiration and guidance that we have, and are continuing to advance.

Thank you.

Our only business is to surrender more and more to the chanting the holy names: ... *vidyā vadhū jīvanam*... from Their *saṅkīrtana* comes all the knowledge we need in our hearts and intelligence to be useful servants in your *saṅkīrtana* party.

When we are connected by chanting good rounds early, then so many, many, wonderful things are possible.

The most wonderful thing is to be connected with the other individual actors in your big *mṛdaṅga*.

Thank you.

All glories to you and all the assembled devotees.

*Your very tiny servants,*

Hanumatpresaka Swami

Anjana Suta Academy

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

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

I was lost in the material world. I knew I needed to search for a perfect spiritual master so I could know how to harmonize my actions with his teachings. I wanted to achieve perfection, and I knew I needed the proper guidance to achieve that goal.

In my quest for perfection, I found Śrīla Prabhupāda, my eternal master and guide, and I accepted him with my heart and soul. I could understand that Kṛṣṇa directed me to Śrīla Prabhupāda out of His causeless mercy and because He saw my desperate need for His pure devotee.

By serving the spiritual master with devotion, one attracts his attention. The disciple's devotion to his guru resembles the crying of a baby demanding his mother's milk. When a hungry baby cries, his mother's milk flows involuntarily from her breast to feed her child. Similarly, when a disciple attracts the attention of his spiritual master with his devotional service, the spiritual master offers the disciple his treasure chest filled with knowledge and spiritual realizations, and in this way the guru satisfies the spiritual hunger the disciple suffers in his search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the divine reality. If the hungry child doesn't cry, how will the mother's milk flow? If the thirsty *cātaka* bird does not fervently pray, why should the cloud pour down its nectarean rain?

Śrīla Prabhupāda, the perfect representative of Kṛṣṇa, inspired in our heart real devotion, thus diverting us from our own selfishness and false egoism, which are the greatest obstacles to understanding the Absolute Truth. Śrīla Prabhupāda is the transparent medium through whom we serve Kṛṣṇa and thus achieve our eternal, blissful life full of knowledge. Of course, the spiritual master must be perfect to turn the selfishness of his disciple into love of God, Kṛṣṇa.

The divine holy name that Śrīla Prabhupāda instilled in my heart produced specific spiritual effects. By remembering Kṛṣṇa, I gradually moved away from my own self-centeredness and self-awareness and placed Kṛṣṇa and Śrīla Prabhupāda at the center of

all my love and attention.

Praying for the blessings of the Vaiṣṇavas on this very auspicious 125th anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's appearance, I remain

*His very lowly servant,*  
Bhakti Sundar Goswami

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

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

My most dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my life. Your orders and your mission are the only meaning to my life. Despite my chronic dismay and trepidation at the condition of your movement, I also feel increasing enthusiasm in service to your mission.

My apologies for the extended delay in completing my current most important service to your mission—writing a book about it. I am working steadily and by your grace it will manifest before very long, for your pleasure, so that I can focus on expanding my service to you on several fronts. I do not want to inordinately postpone turning those plans into reality, or at least making a good start in doing so. Please bless me.

I can expect your blessings to the extent that I recognize myself to be entirely dependent upon them. Your Divine Grace can take a crow-like excuse for a Vaiṣṇava and make him dance like a peacock. All these years I have been living on your mercy, feeling it strongly guiding my life, and now, by your mercy, I feel growing enthusiasm to go forward and up, both in developing my own spiritual aspirations and by increasing my service to your mission.

The prospects are bright and the possibilities unlimited, but the lures of *māyā* are as dangerous as ever. Many greater men than I succumbed to *māyā* even after performing phenomenal service which I can hardly imagine emulating. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my only protector. Save me from the dangers I am constantly harassed by, and make me an instrument in your mission of saving others. I fall at your lotus feet.

Taking inspiration from the author of *Hari-bhakti-kalpa-latikā*, I submit that despite being an unqualified fool, struggling under the illusion of false-ego and a false sense of ownership, I am trying to engage in your service. Even in writing this offering, surely I have committed offenses to you. O Śrīla Prabhupāda, O ocean of mercy, certainly I am very wretched and worthy to be punished. I beg pardon for my offenses.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, O unlimited ocean of mercy, I have committed many sinful activities, disrespected many great souls, and whimsically neglected your instructions. Despite making a show of being your disciple, factually I have not even a small drop of devotion for you. O Śrīla Prabhupāda, only by your mercy may I be purified of these offenses.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have no taste for hearing your glories, worshiping your lotus feet, or meditating on your eternal form and pastimes. I am envious of your glories and of your servants. I am most shameless. Please forgive me when I say, “O master, please be merciful.”

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, while pretending to serve your lotus feet with my body, mind, and words, I simply engage in the unceasing service of my senses. At heart I am only interested in my own mis-conceived self-interest. In this way I cheat everyone. I am an ignorant rascal who thinks himself very learned. O Śrīla Prabhupāda, O ocean of mercy, please rescue me from this madness.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, due to my past misdeeds, I am incessantly tortured by the distresses of material existence. I am a big loud-mouthed idiot. My mind oscillates between bewilderment, agitation, and disappointment. But you are a great ocean of transcendental bliss, you remove the sufferings of the distressed, and you are the protector, father, and maintainer of your disciples. Although you are mercifully delivering me, I am unable to properly serve you at any time or in any way.

I have nothing better to say than, “Another year gone, I am still here.” Your merciful message of sanity continues to reverberate in my heart, subduing the egoism and foolishness therein, sustaining the conviction that I must remain at your lotus feet or I am doomed.

*āmi tomāra nitya-dāsa tāi kori eta āśa  
tumi binā anya gati nāi*

*Desiring to at last become your worthy servant, the miscreant,*

*Bhakti Vikasa Swami*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to your unlimited mercy that provides the shelter of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet to this fallen world.

This is my last offering related to the 26 qualities of a devotee, the last two being *dakṣa* and *maunī*; expert and silent. You made the following observation regarding one of the predictions for Kali-yuga, *dākṣyaṁ kuṭumba bharaṇam*: In this age if one can maintain his wife and few children, ah, he is very expert. He is to be considered as *dakṣa*, very expert. Some few individuals may be more expert; maintaining enterprises, communities or nations. But who can compare to you, who brought the whole spiritual dimension to this world, which is beyond matter, time and space? Even within the material domain, you excel in every area of endeavor. *Bhajana*, *kīrtana*, preaching, cooking, hearing, compassion, logic argument and so many more are all found to their maximum manifestation in you. Through Kṛṣṇa's empowerment you are even capable of detecting the motives and mentalities of your disciples and devotees.

You expect no less from the devotees of ISKCON. You said repeatedly that one should be superlative in every effort because all service to Kṛṣṇa, the most perfect Person, should be first-class. Not that one becomes a devotee, and therefore careless, or falsely detached; rather increasingly competent in pleasing Kṛṣṇa. You give the perfect example, and we only have to follow!

Regarding *maunī*, or silent, you say that silence means not speaking nonsense. *guru-mukha-padma-vākya*, *cittete koriyā aikya*, every word that emanates from your lotus mouth descends from and is embedded in the *yogamāyā* potency. No material sound is ever coming from you. All your words and expressions are steeped in pure *bhakti*, and meant only to please Kṛṣṇa. Therefore your quality of *maunī*, or silence is in perfect accord with true silence, or not speaking anything unrelated to Kṛṣṇa

Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja said in his prayer:

*prāyeṇa deva munayaḥ sva-vimukti-kāmā  
maunaṁ caranti vijane na parārtha-niṣṭhāḥ  
naitān vihāya kṛpaṇān vimumukṣa eko  
nānyam tvad asya śaraṇaṁ bhramato 'nupaśye*

Those who try to achieve silence by mechanical means, who live alone to avoid the troublesome atmosphere of material wrangling, are self-interested. You perfectly follow the essence of his teaching, not being able to set aside those *kṛpaṇās*, or foolish and greedy persons, in favor of trying to silence the bombardment of the external world, seeing that the only solution for humanity is the Lord's shelter.

Please bless me in such a way that I can achieve that shelter which you have perfectly constructed for all, by hearing your words, which silence the constant vibration of material interference, allowing me hearing the nectar of your sublime teachings.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Guru Prasad Swami

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, my heart is heavy with grief. Yesterday, your dear and dedicated disciple Paṅkajāṅghri Prabhu left this world. He was such a pure-hearted and unassuming soul, loved by one and all. He and his twin brother Jananivāsa have been so dedicated to the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava in Māyāpur from the very beginning of Their Lordships' installation that you said: "The two brothers Paṅkajāṅghri and Jananivāsa—there is no comparison. . . . These two are the best [*pūjārīs*] in the Society." We will all miss the saintly association of your devoted servant Paṅkajāṅghri Prabhu. May he bless us with the same love and devotion he had for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Bhakti Chāru Mahārāja's departure last year ushered in what my dear godbrother Bhūrijana Prabhu calls "the decade of tears." Inevitably many, if not most, of your disciples will depart over the next ten years. This will be a painful experience for those left behind, as Rāmānanda Rāya expressed in his conversation with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu:

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked, "Of all kinds of distress, what is the most painful?"

Śrī Rāmānanda Rāya replied, "Apart from separation from the devotee of Kṛṣṇa, I know of no unbearable unhappiness." [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 8.248*]

Our attachment to devotees grows exponentially through the medium of service. As we serve them, our hearts open, and we then become the recipients of their mercy. "Kṛṣṇa is yours; you have the power to give Him to me. I am simply running behind you shouting 'Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!'" (Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura)

When one who has infused our hearts with Kṛṣṇa consciousness leaves this world and we are devoid of their personal association, naturally it is devastating.

You have taught us that *vipralambha-bhāva* is the foundation of



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's philosophy:

Those who are in the disciplic succession of the Madhva-Gauḍīya-*sampradāya* should always feel separation from Kṛṣṇa, worship His transcendental form, and discuss His transcendental teachings, His pastimes, His qualities, His entourage, and His association. That will enrich the devotees to the highest devotional perfection. Feeling constant separation while engaged in the service of the Lord is the perfection of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. [Kṛṣṇa book, chapter 35, "The *Gopīs'* Feelings of Separation"]

Few of us feel genuine and constant separation from Kṛṣṇa. But all of us do feel deep separation from your devotees as they depart from this world one after another. The pain and intensity of separation heightens our remembrance of those devotees' qualities, service, instructions, and example as your committed and surrendered servants. As we feel separation from your servants, we simultaneously feel separation from you and from the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

You taught us from the beginning that service to your followers is service to you:

Regarding serving your godbrothers, this is a very good practice. The Spiritual Master is never without his followers, so to serve the Spiritual Master also means to be the servant of his disciples. When you want to serve the king, you must also serve his minister, secretary, and everyone who serves him. And to serve his servants may please him more than to serve the king personally. So the Spiritual Master is not alone. He is always with his entourage. We are not impersonalists. We take care of every part of the whole, as much as one should take care of his hat as well as his shoes. Both are equally important for the upkeep of the body. I hope that you will understand this rightly. [Letter to Śivānanda, 23 January 1969]

Fortunately for us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you attracted many moons to your movement for us to associate with and serve:

One moon is complete to drive away the darkness of night. Not millions of stars required. What these millions of stars can do? One moon is sufficient. So

our propaganda is to create one moon. You see?

But fortunately, by Kṛṣṇa's grace, many moonlike boys and girls have come to me. You see? Many moons. [chuckles] I was thinking of having only one moon, but Kṛṣṇa . . . I am hopeful that there are many moons, and in future they'll be doing very nice. [Lecture, 12 April 1969, New York]

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to ravage the world and people are desperately looking for relief from their intense suffering, your many moons must unite and illuminate this dark and dying world with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Śrīla Prabhupāda, we hear your call:

In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Kṛṣṇa is described to be like the sun. The supreme powerful is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, or Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and His devotees are also bright and illuminating because they reflect the supreme sun. *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 22.31) states:

*kṛṣṇa-sūrya-sama, māyā haya andhakāra  
yāhān kṛṣṇa, tāhān nāhi māyāra adhikāra*

“Kṛṣṇa is bright like the sun. As soon as the sun appears, there is no question of darkness or nescience.” Similarly, the present verse also describes that by the illumination of all the moons, brightened by the reflection of the Kṛṣṇa sun, or by the grace of all the devotees of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the entire world will be illuminated, despite the darkness of Kali-yuga. Only the devotees of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu can dissipate the darkness of Kali-yuga, the ignorance of the population of this age. No one else can do so. We therefore wish that all the devotees of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement may reflect the supreme sun and thus dissipate the darkness of the entire world. [*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 13.5, purport]

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on this most auspicious day of your appearance, I fervently pray that you allow me to serve your servants and unite with them to vigorously spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

*jaya śrī-caitanyacandrera bhakta candra-gaṇa  
sabāra prema jyotsnāya ujjoala tri-bhuvāna*

“All glories to the moons who are devotees of the principal moon, Lord Caitanyacandra! Their bright moonshine illuminates the entire universe.” (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi 13.5*).

*Your servant,*  
Giridhārī Swami

## Amala-bhakta Swami

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I offer my humble obeisances unto my spiritual master, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, having taken shelter of His lotus feet. My respectful obeisances unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Sarasvatī Goswami. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanya Deva through your books and recordings, and spiritually liberating the imprisoned souls of all countries, which are filled with impersonalism, voidism, materialism, and atheism.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, I can never thank you enough for the incredible amount of transcendental mercy you have so lovingly bestowed upon my life, for you have transformed it from death-filled to deathless, from fear-filled to fearless, from anxiety-filled to anxietyless, and from having temporary happiness to having everlasting happiness.

Thus, my debt to you is eternal, unforgettable, unrepayable, and inconceivable.

Thank you so very much!

*Your eternal servant,*

Amala-bhakta Swami

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

What were we to do  
Before we all met you

It isn't hard to see  
And yet it's hard to be

I wish I had been quick  
But I liked being sick

Even now, even now, I feel like out-  
side looking in, did I even begin

Life waits for no one  
But seems to just drag on

Philosophers just ramble  
Everything gets scrambled

I wanted easy terms  
For I was not concerned

Nor did I even know  
The winds were all that blow

Even now, even now, I feel like out-  
side looking in, will I just begin

You think there is a way  
You think there'll come a day

You think someone must know  
You think someday you'll go

It all must make some sense  
But sitting on the fence

When the truth does come  
It's easier to run

Days go by, days go by, I feel like out-  
side looking in, did I even begin

Someone mentions God  
And everyone applauds

But things go on the same  
As in some crazy game

High words flap in the breeze  
But there is no relief

A light is there to view  
And that light is you

Even now, even now, I wonder when you  
speak, I wonder what you mean

Many years have passed  
And memories elapsed

Trials of such fire  
We thought we might expire

Days we knew it all  
Days we dropped the call

Nights we wished would end  
While searching for a friend

Years go by, years go by, I try to try, and to keep the light

Have I done enough  
Have I done enough

The answer must be no

Apologies in tow

Every question deeper  
Every hill gets steeper

Controversies brewing  
Antagonisms stewing

For death we must prepare  
Our help, that, we must share

Even now, even now, how can this be so  
easy and so hard at the same time?

But we are locked to the future, each and every one  
And success will come, each and every one

You, our guide and comfort, each and every one  
One day, we will laugh, we will laugh

*Your servant,*

Candrasekhara Swami

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my eternal spiritual master,

Please accept my prostrated obeisance at your lotus feet.

The more I tried to remain indifferent to the miseries of Coronavirus in India which started last year, the more I pursued vigorous efforts to preach on Zoom without a break. My disciples arranged for me to stay safe from its exposure, and brought me to a remote place in Kerala. I am still stuck here.

By the will of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Coronavirus returned with multifold disaster this year, and I have started feeling separation from Vṛndāvana. Fearing, will I be able to make it to Vṛndāvana again? I feel like crying out to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and I did so a couple of times already. But you have always been with me to encourage me to remain engaged in preaching that is multifold. I never experienced tiredness giving two daily classes in the morning and attending other assisting duties in GBC services. I realise that only in trying circumstances can we perform purely. What would it be without you being my spiritual guide and inspiration for performing devotional services in such precarious circumstances that seem never ending!

You are my protector and master. I must sacrifice my eternal life in your divine service.

*Your servant,*

Vedavyasapriya Swami



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

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

It's a real pleasure for me to send you a Vyāsa-pūjā message every year.

What else can I do to please you? I don't really know, since I know very well that I lack the capacity to do much more.

But at least I must show a sign of gratitude to you for revealing yourself to me.

One way or another, I think you have heard my prayer to allow me to be attached to you through the association of your pure and sincere disciples. As Lord Kapiladeva says in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.25.20):

*prasaṅgam ajaram pāśam ātmanaḥ kavayo viduḥ  
sa eva sādhuṣu kṛto mokṣa-dvāram apāvṛtam*

“Every learned man knows very well that attachment for the material is the greatest entanglement of the spirit soul. But that same attachment, when applied to the self-realized devotees, opens the door of liberation.”

This is surely the reason I still have some little attraction to your holy movement, the Hare Kṛṣṇa mission.

Nowadays we are attending seminars and spiritual courses to learn how to develop qualities like compassion, tolerance, and determination in devotional service, to advance in our Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Because you already had those qualities in full before leaving India for America in 1965, Kṛṣṇa could not have chosen someone better than you to spread the mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu all over the world.

To ordinary vision you appeared to be just an old man without any money or support. But you had Kṛṣṇa and strong faith in your guru, and so you conquered Māyā in the world and then success and victory came to you.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.78) Sañjaya says:

*yatra yogeśvaraḥ kṛṣṇo yatra pārtho dhanur-dharaḥ  
tatra śrīr vijayo bhūtir dhruvā nītir matir mama*

“Wherever there is Kṛṣṇa, the master of all mystics, and wherever

there is Arjuna, the supreme archer, there will also certainly be opulence, victory, extraordinary power, and morality. That is my opinion.”

Although you are no longer physically present with us, it is because of you that Lord Caitanya’s prediction is being fulfilled and the chanting of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s holy name is spreading to every town and village in the world.

You empowered your sincere followers, and they are acting nicely for the pleasure of the Vaiṣṇava communities.

All glories to you again and again!

*The servant of your servants,*

Bhakti Cārudeṣṇa Swami

TRIBUTES  
BY  
DISCIPLES



### Śrīla Prabhupāda, our Prophet and Visionary

“The sages were known as *tri-kāla-jñā*. *Tri-kāla-jñā*. *Tri* means three, and *kāla* means time. Time is experienced by three ways: past, present and future. Time limitation, past, present and ... Whenever you speak of time, it is past, present or future. So the sages in those days were *tri-kāla-jñā*. *Tri-kāla-jñā* means they could understand, they could know what was in the past, what there shall be in the future, and what is at present.” (Śrīla Prabhupāda Lecture, San Francisco, March 18, 1968)

“So we accept knowledge from such person who knows past, present, and future. Persons who do not know even present, what is going on, how we can accept knowledge from him? This is not our process. Our process is to receive knowledge from a person who knows past, present and future.

Just like Kṛṣṇa and the *ācāryas*. They know. So our knowledge is perfect because we are receiving knowledge from the perfect as it is.” (Śrīla Prabhupāda Lecture, Los Angeles, September 29, 1972)

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

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

The Year: 1967-1968

“I do not very much like this Western civilization. Do YOU like this Western civilization?”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you often greeted me like this when I entered your room, steno pad in hand, to take dictation of your letters. You would grimace while contemplating the plight of modern man, and the vacant synthetic civilization that has grown up around

us. A civilization with no focus on the soul.

How could I reply? I was only a 20-year-old American girl, a former college student. This Western world is all I ever knew. I could only listen, and take notes, and memory files that remain for future reference.

*“The time is coming when there will  
be no food in your cities.*

*The pet dogs will run in packs and at-  
tack and eat the people.*

*Your cities will be bloodbaths. There will be rioting and  
looting. The people will have to flee to the hills...”*

*“This Varṇa-saṅkara (unwanted population)  
will make the whole world into a hell!”*

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when I would hear you make these dire predic-  
tions, I never objected nor disbelieved you. I believed you. Every  
word you said. I simply listened. As a pure devotee of the Lord, you  
can not only see into MY soul, but you can also see into the soul of  
the world—the future of life on this planet. Of course, you told us  
fortunes can change—with pious and spiritual activities. Thus you  
created your “World Sankirtan Party” in 1968. You taught us well.

*“This oil civilization is in its final phases. You will  
see everything collapse within your lifetime.”*

*“The rakshasas are ruling the world; this is their time,  
Kali-yuga, when demons emerge unchecked. Piety  
is crippled like the legs of the bull, Dharma.”*

Now, it is 2021: The world today is hurtling toward chaos in this  
predestined time of Kali-yuga. And we are helpless witnesses. If we  
take the temperature of today’s world, we see it is well into the dan-  
ger zone.

What did I think of all these dire predictions? Did I become  
negative or derogatory? Never. I simply listened with open ears  
and an open heart. And of course, I believed in you so I never  
contradicted you.

In 1968, when the “moon landing” occurred, all of America’s  
eyes were glued to television sets throughout the nation. You

succinctly dismissed the whole thing as a hoax, mere media propaganda, much to the dismay of your disciples with scientific beliefs. For youth raised in a society trained to worship NASA from an early age, your discounting this “great achievement” created alarm. And sometimes a loss of faith.

You simply said, *“It is not possible to go to other planets by spaceship. There ARE heavenly planets, like the moon planet, but they can only be entered by means of sukriti, pious activities, not by crude machinery.”* Unable to accept that the “moon landing” was a fraud, some disciples even left you in 1969. So you became quiet. You no longer spoke much about the future. You understood that Americans were unable to digest your predictions of times to come. Instead, you began to encourage us to become “self-sufficient.”

Now, in 2021, as we see cities and countries erupting in violence, protests, and mass confusion, we remember your words of warning. We remember your predictions of radical change within our lifetime. You predicted World War 3, and even said, *“the preaching will be very good after the war.”* Because the people will have had their shadow realities smashed by the cruel hands of Time.

“Time I am,” says Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, “Destroyer of worlds.” (Original edition) and now we are seeing many of your predictions take place before our eyes.

What is the solution? What advice did you give?

*“Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, read my books, hear my lectures, and spread the holy names all over the world, to every town and village. And become self-sufficient.”*

You often said,

*“You must become self-sufficient. Grow your own food, leave the cities, every householder should have 5 acres, a cottage and a cow. That is human life.”*

You sent a letter to all your temples in 1976: *“All householder couples should move to our farms immediately.”* Many devotees saw this letter. But it somehow vanished and is nowhere to be found on the Vedabase. Things get lost. Teachings get changed. Or even buried with ulterior motives. (There’s money in cities; no money in the country.) Yet the orders were given. You gave them.

Why? So that we would have viable farm communities when the inevitable time came. No. We can’t say it’s now, 2021, it may be

later, or even sooner. But we can rely on your perspective because you are a great *ācārya*, a pure devotee of the Lord in touch with Kṛṣṇa at all times.

Truly, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in today's world you would be labeled a "conspiracy theorist!" But that term, meant to discourage truth seekers, had not yet been coined. In 1969, America was a rich and powerful country, and the people were somewhat innocent, even naive. Most people blindly believed whatever the news media cranked out on their newly purchased black and white televisions.

You also labeled "banking" as "fanking, and warned that paper money would lose value. "*Your this paper money will become worthless, just like your toilet paper. Only gold and silver hold value, not some printed paper.*"

Impressively, you told me this in 1968, *before* the dollar was removed from the gold standard—which happened in 1971.

You often said there will be a 10,000 year sliver in the long hard Kali-yuga, called the "Golden Age." This is predicted by Lord Śiva, by Nārada, and by Lord Caitanya Himself. During this 10,000 years, people will awaken to the reality of spiritual life, no longer lulled by the opiates of material enjoyment that have been totally destroyed by universal time.

You told us Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement will expand all over the world, into every town and village. We have already seen that part of your amazing predictions take place. You also told us that your original books and teachings will be the "*law books for the next 10,000 years.*"

We have been fortunate to see much of this in our lifetimes. Even now, with many temples closed, the ongoing chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa is ringing through the airwaves via the internet. Devotees are having *kīrtanas* all over the world, even if only in virtual reality.

Meanwhile, the *asuras* march on with their insidious plans. Plans like spaceships to Mars, transgenderism, transhumanism, mass abortions, questionable medicines, spraying chemicals for "dimming the sun," poisonous pesticides, killing the bees, thus leading to crop failures and food shortages. Now also there is suppression of public activities, such as *kīrtanas*, as well as free speech and free movement. Rampant suffering is being invoked by abortions, drone wars, mass murders, and worst of all, the daily killing of millions of innocent animals.

Sadly, most Americans are focused on political party



entertainment inspired by the media, and trapped between their TVs and cell phones, that are continuously spewing poisonous garbage. Well-censored media is convincing naive people to trust drug companies that have already in the past been legally convicted of peddling products that delivered death and disease. Meanwhile horrendous sinful activities are taking place behind the fabricated headlines. Like magicians' wielding spells, the mass media controls the peoples' attention so much so that they cannot any longer see past the illusory maze. So how can they hear you?

Who knows how it will end? Some speculate that this is already WW3. Some say it's coming soon. We are but small blind creatures, as tiny as ants, scurrying about on one tiny planet in this vast universe. What can we possibly see of the future? Even our learned astrologers are stymied. We can only cling to your lotus feet, your words of wisdom, your advice and instructions, and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa as much as possible.

You foresaw everything. This Kali-yuga, you explained, is very very dangerous. More dangerous than other Kali-yugas. Because the Lord Himself, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, appeared in this particular Kali age.

It's easy to lose one's balance in a world gone mad. So much confusing propaganda coming from every direction! So we have to come back to the center. What did **you**, Śrīla Prabhupāda, say? What did **you** predict? What did **you** tell us to do?

You taught us to pray daily to Lord Nṛsimhadeva, the "*Raksho Bhuvana*," the Universal Protector. Lord Nṛsimhadeva, He who delights in seeking out and destroying the "sons of Diti," the demons, and protecting the devotees of the Lord. Now, we need His help more than ever!

Today's reality forces us to realize that life in this material world is very very temporary. Our situation is like the will' o' the wisp. The only lasting thing is our faith in God, our faith that you have so generously ignited, and given us in the lotus feet of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for warning us. Thank you for loving us. In our well-fed and overly comfortable western upbringing in America, you loved us enough to warn us. You gave us a lifeline, both spiritually and materially, out of your love for us. Thank you for telling us what we must do to protect our fragile devotional lives from the onslaught of the tentacles of Kali.

Your ultimate wisdom: "Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and be happy."

Thank you my dear Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for everything.  
Where would we be without you?

*Your loving daughter,*

Govinda dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humbly offered obeisances. All glories to your divine presence, through which our lives are given ever-perfect shelter and guidance through the opportunity of daily submission to your lotus feet.

In trying to comprehend this beautiful crazy house that you “built” with the materials of Absolute Truth framed by love of God (Kṛṣṇa) so that the “whole world” could live in it (my mind ponders, Where is your room? Where are you living in this mansion? Are you even living in it at all?), I observe deep love in the hearts of all your disciples and followers, which is not always reflected in our actions and interactions due to conflicting imagery or interpretations —“Prabhupāda said this!” “Prabhupāda said that!”— to the degree that quoting you can even become precarious! Sparring over details, quarreling over philosophical nuances. A signature of Kali-yuga times . . . So I am left to ask myself, “What is my role in service to you now in all this? What is my service to you in these last years or perhaps even days of my life supposed to look like? What can a perpetually conditioned soul such as myself offer to you and your movement at this time?”

His Grace Vaiśeṣika Prabhu said in a lecture that if you cannot do anything, then at least keep breathing. I think that about describes my situation: just keep breathing.

Recently I had an interesting experience where I was asked to remove a deeply embedded tick from the body of a local devotee one morning before Deity greeting and Guru-pūjā. Somehow, I was quickly successful. But before performing the operation, I observed the minute creature’s situation and compared it to my own. I offered a prayer to Śrī Nṛsimhadeva on its behalf, as I knew it would not survive the procedure, and prayed that I might also have the same tenacity to deeply embed myself in your loving devotional service, so much so that there would never ever be any possibility of my becoming extricated from you again.

The spiritual master is an ocean of mercy, the friend of the poor and the distressed. O Master, please remain merciful to me and keep me in the shelter of your lotus feet, by which no harm can befall me. Thank you for allowing me this rare opportunity to understand and perfect the human form of life.

*Your eternal dāsī,*

Mālatī Devī Dāsī

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

When I joined you in San Francisco, you told us to open temples. And I did that. When book distribution began to take off in the U.S., I inaugurated traveling *saṅkīrtana* in England.

When you asked me to go to the Middle East to preach, I did that.

Those all look good on paper, but we both know that I did not do the best quality service in any of those situations. In fact, there are cases when my services to you were of poor quality.

You have made many statements like, “The devotee must be completely freed from all desires other than devotional service. That is the standard of first quality devotional service.” (BTG, May 20, 1960) You said many times that we should offer Kṛṣṇa the best quality service. And I have fallen too far short of that.

Still, over the years, I have kept on.

In 1970, in your garden in L.A., you told me that your desire is to spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement all over the world.

And about 15 years ago, I was struck by a statement I read in the *Nectar of Instruction*. In your purport to verse five, you write about the *uttama* devotee: “When a person realizes himself to be an eternal servitor of Kṛṣṇa, he loses interest in everything but Kṛṣṇa’s service. Always thinking of Kṛṣṇa, devising means by which to spread the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, he understands that his only business is in spreading the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have decided to focus my attention on that aspect of *uttama* – that my only business is to spread the movement all over the world. The other aspects of *uttama* are, frankly, beyond me.

I may or may not be successful, but that is what I am determined to do.

This offering is supposed to be about you—your glories. However, when reading the seventh canto of *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, I see that the *devatas’* glorifications of Lord Nṛsiṁha are self-interested. Only Prahlāda Mahārāja’s offering is pure. The *devatas* speak about

their services, and they are grateful to Nṛsimhadeva for restoring their various positions. They all seem attached to the services they render to the Lord due to the fruits they enjoy.

Like the *devatas*, my *bhakti* is also mixed. However, I want to follow the example of Prahlāda Mahārāja. I am indeed attached to the service of spreading *saṅkīrtana*. I cannot reach your level of purity or Prahlāda Mahārāja's, but I will try to be detached from the fruits of my service. Whether it is successful or not, whether I lose everything or not, whether I become a beggar or not—that is your decision.

I just want to try to spread the movement, and through that, do good quality, pure service. *sarvopādhi-vinirmuktaṁ tat-paratvena nirmalam hr̥ṣīkeṇa hr̥ṣīkeśa-sevanam bhaktir ucyate*. “*Bhakti* means to serve Hṛṣīkeśa with the senses and, by doing so, one gets free from material designations and purifies the senses.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the love of my life, my teacher, and my master. Service to you is my goal. *Prāṇair arthair dhiyā vācā śreya-ācaraṇam sadā* – I offer you my life, wealth, intelligence, and words, and not just as formal praise. Please take them. If you leave them with me, I will use them to serve you. Or take them for your own use. They do not belong to me.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I relish reading your purports. And every day, I read stories of your glorious preaching. When I give lectures, I praise your vision, organizational skills, expertise in dealing with others, and *śāstric* knowledge—all qualities beyond compare and all in wonderful concert with each other.

*Āmi to' kāṅgāl, kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa boli, dhāi tava pāche pāche*. I am poor and wretched and running after you.

*Your servant,*

Dayananda Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*Koti Dandavat!!!*

On your birthday here is my poem to Your Divine Grace from 1973. I pray you bless me to live by it.

- 1) *Svaguror-upadeśa mahārgha-maṇi śirasā vidhṛto hari-nāma-dhanī*
- 2) *Viharāmi janeṣv-amṛtam vitaran bhava-pāraakarīm taranīm kathayan*
- 3) *Vṛṣabhānu sutānvita kṛṣṇamanuṁ prajapan saphalam janayennu januh*
- 4) *Madhu-gopa-vane kṛpayā hi guroḥ phala-sañcayakṛd bhajan-ākhyā taroḥ*
- 5) *Gurudeva varo mama bhaktiyutaḥ nigamannavidohi giraḥ sa sutaḥ*
- 6) *Kali-dharma iyaṁ hari-nāma-ratīm parikīrtanataḥ saphalā bhavati*
- 7) *Iti tad-bhajanād gatavān pramadam praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam*

1) *Svaguror-upadeśa mahārgha-maṇi śirasā vidhṛto hari-nāma-dhanī*

*Svaguroḥ* – own guru, *upadeśa* – preaching, *mahā+argha* – most valuable, *maṇi* – jewel, *śirasā* – by head, *vidhṛtaḥ* – carried, *hari* – Lord Hari, *nāma* – Divine Name, *dhanī* – rich with...

TRANSLATION: I am enriched by the advice of my spiritual master, which is the holy name of Hari, a most precious jewel that I carry on my head. (1)

2) *Viharāmi janeṣv-amṛtam vitaran bhava-pāraakarīm taranīm kathayan*

*viharāmi* – moving around, *janeṣu* – in people, *amṛtam* – nectar, *vitaraṇ* – distributing, *bhava* – the world, *pāraakarī* – cross over, *taranīm* – boat, *kathayan* – teaching...

TRANSLATION: Now I will move around and distribute this nectar (of *Hari nama*) to people as if a boat that crosses over the worldly ocean of materialistic life. (2)

3) *Vṛṣabhānu sutānvita kṛṣṇamanuṁ prajapan saphalam janayennu januh*

*Vṛṣabhānu* – father of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, *suta* – daughter, *anvita* – joined, *kṛṣṇam* – Lord Kṛṣṇa, *anum* – after, *prajapan* – chanting,

*saphalam* – success, *janayet* – carrying, *nu* – sure, *januḥ* – life...

TRANSLATION: Chanting the name of Rādhā, the daughter of Vṛṣabhānu, and that of Kṛṣṇa, will surely carry our lives to success.

(3)

4) *Madhu-gopa-vane kṛpayā hi guroḥ phala-sañcayakṛd bhajan-ākhyā taroḥ*

*madhu* – honey, *gopa* – cowherders, *vane* – (Vṛndāvana) forest, *kṛpayā* – by grace, *hi* – sure, *guroḥ* – from spiritual master, *phala* – fruit (result), *sañcayakṛd* – collector or gather, *bhajan* – devotional service, *ākhyā* – known by, *taroḥ* – (of the) tree...

TRANSLATION: By my Gurudeva's grace I can surely collect the fruits (of *bhakti*) from the Vṛndāvana worship tree. (4)

5) *Gurudeva varo mama bhaktiyutaḥ nigamannavidohi girāḥ sa sūtaḥ*

*gurudeva* – Spiritual Master, *varaḥ* – honorable, *mama* – my, *bhaktiyutaḥ* – ull with devotional service, *nigamat* – from the Vedas, *avidohi* – milking (like a cow), *girāḥ* – speech, *sa* – that, *sūtaḥ* – Sūta Goswami...

TRANSLATION: My most honorable spiritual master (Śrīla Prabhupāda), is filled with *bhakti*, and he has milked the cow-like Vedas of Suta by his speech. (5)

6) *Kali-dharma iyaṁ hari-nama-ratim parikīrtanataḥ saphala bhavati*

*kali-dharma* – religion of Kali Age, *iyam* – this, *hari* – Lord Hari, *nama* – name, *rati* – affection, *parikīrtanataḥ* – congregational chanting, *saphala* – success, *bhavati* – to be...

TRANSLATION: (Saying) The religion of the Kali Age consists of having affection for congregational chanting the names of Lord Hari, which will bring all success. (6)

7) *Iti tad-bhajanād gataṁ pramadam praṇamāmi sadā prabhupāda-padam*

*Iti* – in this way, *tat* – by his, *bhajanāt* – devotion, *gataṁ* – vanished, *pramadam* – (my) laziness (I become active), *praṇamāmi* – I bow, *sadā*



– always, *prabhupāda* – His Divine Grace Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, *padam* – lotus feet...

TRANSLATION: I always bow down to the lotus feet of my spiritual master, (His Divine Grace Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami) Prabhupāda, due to whose devotion my laziness has dissipated (7).

*Your eternal servant,*  
Hṛṣikeśānanda Dāsa

In gratitude for treating me most of all like a good friend, as well as a disciple. That to me is miraculous

A miracle | mirək(ə)l |

**noun**

*a surprising and welcome event that is not explicable by natural or scientific laws and is therefore considered to be the work of a divine agency:*

Prabhupāda by faith brought Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the world. Kṛṣṇa is with him.

*a highly improbable or extraordinary event, development, or accomplishment that brings very welcome consequences.*

The whole evolution of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in such a short time is extraordinary.

*an amazing achievement, or an outstanding example of something.*

*Prabhupāda as ācārya is the example.*

Here are some of the MIRACLES, he exemplified and gave to us:

High Standards

Books and book distribution

Chanting and *harināma*

Marriage and initiation

and *yajña* in Vedic fashion

*Prasādam* and respect

Gratitude

Humility

Deity worship and empowering men and women

Brahman initiations

*Bhakti Śāstrī*

Rathayātrā

*Dās anu dās*

Singing, dancing playing instruments

*Bhajanas* and many prayers

You may add your own gratitudes....

Here are some of the qualities that Prabhupāda displayed.

Courage  
Equanimity  
Attentiveness  
Frugality  
Thrift  
Practical  
Attention to details  
Flexibility  
Fun  
Adventurous

Being with Prabhupāda and letting him set the moods turned into a comfortable, rather awesomized relationship. He took me with him to so many events, people, places, adventures, and lessons. Purifying me by osmosis.

Here are some of these examples:

### **Ācārya and example**

“Whatever action a great man performs, common men follow. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.” (*Bhagavad-gītā* 3:21)

### **Inventive**

One morning we were riding in a car with Śrīla Prabhupāda on our way to visit the ancient temple of Ṭhākura Haridas. Even though the driver had to honk the horn constantly on the crowded road, the atmosphere of the Bengali countryside was restful, and we were intrigued and interested by the many surrounding scenes: cows and dogs wandering about, women drying and sifting *dahl*, rickshas going here and there, and pedestrians quickly scurrying to the side of the road when they heard the horn. Probably because it was used so much, the horn stopped working.

Consequently, we came close to hitting some pedestrians. Someone started shouting Hare Kṛṣṇa loudly out the window at anything that moved. This only seemed to scare people instead

of warning them—

Suddenly Prabhupāda turned in his seat and said, “Give me my plate.” He took his cane and banged on his metal plate out the window whenever we neared a bicycle or some pedestrians. Sure enough, they would veer automatically to the side of the road. Prabhupāda repeated the banging a few more times, then handed the plate and spoon to Akṣayānanda Prabhu. “Now you do it.” Akṣayānanda banged the plate successfully.

Prabhupāda laughed and said, “They will think it is a new American invention and want to imitate it!”

### **Jagannāth in the park**

The day some devotees took Lord Jagannāth into Golden Gate Park and started a *kīrtana*. Soon, enthusiastic people gathered and encircled the Lord, all the while chanting and dancing. When Prabhupāda heard from someone about this occurrence, he ran over to the park at a very fast pace to the place known as Hippie Hill—and when he saw Jagannāth, he offered his obeisances. Then he sat beside the Lord and led the chanting. More and more people arrived. Mukunda and Shyamasundar ran back to the temple for the bongo drum and portable microphone. Later, Prabhupāda firmly but kindly told us that “Lord Jagannāth always stays in the temple. People come to the temple to visit the Lord, but Lord Jagannāth does not go out to see the people, except once a year. This was his way of forgiving us. Truth.

### **No Hiding**

In Bombay, Prabhupāda and I were discussing the new life membership drive. Tamal Kṛṣṇa Prabhu came in with some money for Prabhupāda, and put it on the table. Then we heard that a very rich man was coming in. We had been trying to solicit a donation from this particular gentleman for some time. Before the man entered, Tamal started pushing the money underneath the desk blotter. Prabhupāda watched this with amusement. Tamal’s idea was that if the rich man saw the money, he would be less inclined to give a donation. Prabhupāda told Tamal, “Leave it,” and the money was left in plain sight. Prabhupāda went on to convince the man of his spiritual sincerity, and the man gave a nice donation. Prabhupāda was always straightforward, relying on Lord Kṛṣṇa. This was another valuable lesson His Divine Grace showed me by his example. Also, Prabhupāda said more than once, “Money makes money.” So

the man, seeing the money on the table, thought, "I shall also give money to Prabhupāda."

### **Kind**

As we were walking by Stowe Lake in San Francisco, some ducks were sleeping.

An arrogant devotee yelled, "Get out of the way the Swami is walking!!"

Prabhupāda who we called Swamiji in San Francisco in 1967, said with compassion.

"As you are thinking they are disturbing us, they are thinking we are disturbing them."

He sees into the hearts of all living entities.

### **Humorous**

A disciple gushed, "Oh Prabhupāda, you should be President."

Prabhupāda matter-of-factly replied, "No, you should be President. I will advise."

He would never let a good joke go by. Sometimes we would laugh heartily together.

### **Clever**

In Montreal 1967, a man objected to us bowing down before our spiritual master.

He yelled "I don't think they should bow down before you."

Prabhupāda replied immediately: "And you are thinking they should not bow before me, they are thinking you should, and this is a democracy. So majority rules.

After a morning walk, we were standing in front of the Bury Place temple. Prabhupāda pointed to an iron fence between the sidewalk and a service entrance to the basement. "We can put a banner sign here," he said.

I answered, "I have inquired from the Greater London Council, and they informed us that no signs or banners can be put outside, in the front.

Pointing with his cane over the top of the iron fence, Prabhupāda said, "But this is inside." He then pointed to the window and said, "Put a large sign up there." Unfortunately I had to say, "I also inquired about a sign inside, and the GLC did not give permission." "But this is outside," he answered immediately.

## Truthfulness

A devotee told Prabhupāda, “I should be president because the president such and such is not chanting his rounds.” Prabhupāda asked, “How do you know that?”

“Such and such told me,” he replied. Prabhupāda immediately said, “Then he should be president, because he is honest.”

## Compassion

Nandagaon, where Kṛṣṇa’s father lived, is a few kilometers from Vṛndāvana.

One day, Prabhupāda and I were walking around Nandagaon, looking at some beautiful *Kṛṣṇa-līlā* paintings on the walls of the main temple.

Prabhupāda said, “Art means full belly.”

He continued, “People must be well-fed before they can appreciate [the luxury of] art. Similarly, we must feed them before they can appreciate the value of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

## Sometimes

Feeling empathetic to the plights of this world, I said to Prabhupāda, “Sometimes I don’t understand why there is so much war, and sometimes there is too much injustice between people and sometimes.....”

Prabhupāda then asked, “Why sometimes?” His compassion was always present.

## More mercy

My foot was bleeding from a cut, and Prabhupāda saw it. He immediately came over with a clean cloth and very carefully, very expertly, bandaged the foot. His touch and humility sped the healing.

## Regulated

From the Kṛṣṇa Balarama Temple construction site, turn right, and head toward the *parikramā* path. Every morning at 6:03, when we reached a crossroad, a *sādhu* crossed our path. I looked at my watch when he passed, and if it didn’t say 6:03 a.m., I would reset it. Eventually, Prabhupāda and the *sādhu* greeted each other every morning. Prabhupāda had a very regulated life. He said “Regulation is preventative of disease.”

## Like a General

During the construction of the Kṛṣṇa Balaram Temple, some of our supplies were being stolen at night. We put it before Prabhupāda.

**“Should we get a gun?”**

He thought briefly, and answered, “Yes, you can get a gun, but don’t hit anyone. Just shoot over their heads; that will scare them.”

He illustrated the concept with a story: Nārada Muni had a disciple who was a snake. The snake had been so impressed with Nārada and the sound of his veena (musical instrument), that he had asked to be made a Vaiṣṇava. One time, some neighborhood children were getting revenge for the snake having frightened them in the past. They were cruel. They threw rocks at him and called him names. The snake was sad and consulted his guru, Nārada Muni. “What should I do?” he asked. “The children are throwing rocks at me and calling me unkind things.”

Nārada answered, “It is due to some of your past karma. Now you are a Vaiṣṇava, but you are also a snake—so raise your hoods, but don’t bite.”

Prabhupāda imitated the snake, cupping his hands like a cobra’s hood. He made a fierce face: “So,” he said, “shoot over their heads!”

## Strong

Prabhupāda went behind the curtains to begin the *abhishek*. He asked me to assist him. Outside in the temple room, the ceremonial fire was filling the room with smoke, and we could scarcely see. I yelled out from behind the curtains to please open the front door for ventilation and asked that more wood be put on the fire to counteract the smoke.

Suddenly, I heard a cracking sound from above us—the entire altar canopy was falling! I looked over at Prabhupāda—his eyes were blazing like a lion’s! He held up one side of the altar, with one hand and comforting Rādhārāṇī with the other.

I held the other, and between us we kept it from falling. Out front the loud chanting overpowered all other sounds, so the guests were unaware of what was going on. While holding up my side of the altar with one hand, I put my head through the curtain and, as softly as I could, asked Dhananjaya for help. He came behind the curtain and relieved Śrīla Prabhupāda, whose expression was one of resolute, determined strength. Shyamasundar

was quickly called in; he made some repairs, and after about ten minutes of hammering and sawing, we opened the curtain and went on with the ceremony.

With his fatherly demeanor and sweet voice, as if nothing had happened, Prabhupāda delivered his welcoming words, calmly inviting everyone to enjoy the peaceful, dynamic, and infinitely rewarding opening ceremony of the London temple. But what I remember most was seeing Prabhupāda behind that curtain. Prabhupāda was so strong and sturdy, his eyes were blazing brightly, his hands were like talons, his feet like pillars, and he appeared like a lion!

### ***Sādhana, Seva and Sādhu Saṅga***

Prabhupāda taught me the value of these three together. A devotee was sitting comfortably at Prabhupāda's lotus feet. He gushed, "Oh, Prabhupāda, I want to sit at your lotus feet forever." Prabhupāda smiled mercifully and said, "But my lotus feet are always moving, so you cannot sit down!" Later he explained, "The business of a *sannyāsī* is to always be moving. Rupa Goswami never stayed in a place or under a tree for more than three days so he wouldn't become attached to any one place. He taught that you should not follow rules and regulations if you have not realized the meaning first." Prabhupāda then added, "Advaita Ācārya would not read a verse in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or *Bhagavad-gītā* if he didn't realize the meaning of the verse he was reading. And sometimes the pages were wet with tears."

One day early on in 1967 Prabhupāda told me, "The first stages of Kṛṣṇa consciousness are learning and following the rules and regulations and realizing them. Then they become a part of you. You do not have to think about them. After that, the spontaneous, (the adventurous) part of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is with you."

Much later on he joked "If I told you about all the rules and regulations in the early days, you would have gone away." He charmed us, and when we were hooked he said "I have given you something tangible, the Vedic culture. Sometimes this is taken for granted today."

### ***Nava yauvana***

Every moment was present, fruitful, instructive, empowering with him.



## Wit and flexibility

David and Donna were street vendors in downtown London. One day they saw our *saṅkīrtana* party pass by on Oxford Street. Spontaneously they folded up their barrow (portable table), packed up their incense, crystals, tarot cards, and a very young baby, and followed our *saṅkīrtana* party back to Tittenhurst Park. They had decided to join our group and never left. They were living together but not married, so we asked them to get married, and they agreed. They were fortunate to join us when His Divine Grace was present. Prabhupāda presided over their combined wedding and initiation ceremony. The ceremony was held in the Gallery that was serving as a temple on John Lennon's estate. The spacious room, with a fireplace and stone floors, enabled us to surround Prabhupāda and the fire ceremony. The mood was festive and cozy—intimate, as only the small band of London devotees attended.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was expert and wonderful as always, and I learned so much simply by watching and listening to him. After the fire sacrifice, His Holiness gave the new disciples the names Draupadī and Devadhatta.

A moment later someone asked, "What is the baby's spiritual name?"

Prabhupāda replied, "Baby comes out after wedding, not before." Then, as he had done so many times before, Prabhupāda relented to the will of his spiritual children and said, "The baby's name is Dhruva Mahārāj."

## Charmed Kings and Ambassadors

I arranged for a meeting between the Abbott and Śrīla Prabhupāda at Westminster Abbey.

At the prearranged time, the three of us passed through a side entrance adjacent to the beautiful gardens of the Abbey and were met by a novice who guided us to a comfortable, wood-lined room decorated with centuries of tradition. The churches in England are graveyards as well as church halls. Popes, cardinals, bishops, and kings—even poets and statesmen—are buried inside the church buildings. Prabhupāda strode in, regally but humbly, and was offered a large, plush seat. He appeared confident, as if Westminster Abbey was any ordinary place, nothing special. Lord Sorenson, our friend and a well-known skeptic, was also present.

Prabhupāda asked for a glass of water, and the Abbott brought it himself and offered it to him with a smile. Lord Sorenson got fidgety, especially when there was silence in the room. He was embarrassed by the lack of conversation. Both Prabhupāda and the Abbott were elders and great religious leaders; they sat together quietly, as elderly men who were friends. A serene word or two was spoken now and then, but most of the time they seemed content just to be silent in each other's presence—two men of God.

When I told Prabhupāda that Yamunā and I met the United States Ambassador Kenneth Keating, Prabhupāda said, "You are a friend of the American ambassador." It was more of a statement than a question. "I would like to meet him—can you arrange it?"

I bowed at his feet and said, "I'll arrange it." With Kṛṣṇa's help it was arranged the next day. We arrived with a small entourage and were escorted into a large office and asked to wait. Within a minute, Ambassador Keating came in, went straight to Prabhupāda, and shook his hand. The eager ambassador was wearing a white, pin-striped suit, and the ambassador was genuinely respectful towards Prabhupāda.

We took seats around them, forming a small circle. Mr. Keating asked if we wanted tea, and Prabhupāda said, "We don't drink tea." So hot milk was agreed upon, and it soon came in cups and saucers with gold rims and the US Eagle insignia on the bottom.

Mr. Keating began by saying how he had met some of Prabhupāda's students, gesturing towards me. He said that he was very impressed with us and with our work. Prabhupāda glanced at me and smiled briefly. Then Prabhupāda said, "I hope you feel welcome in India. Even though you were born in a different place, we are not so different. We are both giving our ideas to many people."

While Mr. Keating pondered these words, Prabhupāda continued, "Our first teaching is that we are not this body, we are spirit soul. We can change our name, our country, our passport, but we are always still the same. The body is temporary and the soul is eternal." Mr. Keating pulled his chair closer to Prabhupāda and gave him his undivided attention.

Prabhupāda continued, "Just as you are wearing a striped suit, but you are not the suit. You can change your suit. You are still the same inside the suit. I do not call you Mr. Striped Suit, and you do not call me Mr. Orange Cloth. No, I call you Mr. Keating."

Ambassador Keating appeared like a child, listening in rapt

attention to the explanation. He seemed to understand. “If we know this principle,” Prabhupāda said, “that we are not this body, our life will be successful. Similarly, if we think we are American or Indian, black or white, rich or poor, that this is my real identity, then we are in illusion. Just as we do not drink like this”—Prabhupāda pantomimed trying to drink his milk with his elbow and laughed, and then we all laughed uproariously, particularly the ambassador.

“When we free ourselves of these temporary bodily designations,” Prabhupāda added, “then we truly know who we are and why we are here. Then we can overcome the endless entanglement, the duality of pain and pleasure, always happy-unhappy.”

Mr. Keating sat transfixed and completely forgot about his pressing duties, a photo shoot with all the ambassadors waiting.

Disappointed, Mr. Keating said, “I must bring this meeting from the sublime to the mundane and leave you.” Prabhupāda answered immediately, “I too must bring this meeting from the sublime to the mundane.” He was in a business mood. “I want to meet your president, Mr. Nixon.” Mr. Keating said he would try, but he also added that many people had requested to meet President Nixon and that the president didn’t seem to be interested in meeting people from India. He reiterated, though, that he would try. The meeting ended in friendship and cheerfulness, and they parted good friends.

## Wise

A rich but miserly man was bragging to me about how he served half-cooked *chapatis* and a very hot chili-potato dish. Then he brought the guests lots of water, and in this way the water and half-cooked *chapatis* bloated everyone’s stomachs. When everyone was full, the host brought expensive savories for guests who, by that time, were so full they had to refuse them. The man pretended to be a good host by serving everyone else first, when in fact he wanted to serve himself instead. I told Prabhupāda about what the clever man had told me. Prabhupāda replied with a Bengali proverb: “If you make a dog a king, and he is sitting on a throne, if you throw him a shoe, he will run off the throne and bite the shoe.” In other words, no matter what position or pretense a person has, eventually his essential nature will emerge.

“In Kali-yuga it is impossible to control ourselves. Lord Shiva could not do it, what to speak of ourselves. Chanting will help. That is not artificial.”

## Practical

On the way to Vṛndāvana with Prabhupāda, He cleared his throat. I was waiting for a *śloka* about *Cintāmaṇi*. He said, “Cement. We need cement to build even a water tower.”

Ringmaster

General

Servant

Truthful:

“He said to a reporter: “Do you want me to say what you want to hear or do you want the truth?”

## Restricted love

A girl remarked, “If I eat meat, it becomes a part of me.”

Swamiji replied, “Then why don’t you eat your father?”

The girl was momentarily stunned. She countered, “Because I love him.”

Swamiji said, “Your love is restricted. You eat animals but not your father, your brother, or your friend. In Kṛṣṇa consciousness we love and respect all living entities.”

She replied, “If you eat vegetables, you also kill.”  
“Yes, that is the law of nature. One entity kills another for survival. But we eat vegetables because we love Kṛṣṇa and we eat what he likes, and Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā*, ‘Offer a leaf, a flower, a fruit to Me.’ That is why we eat vegetables.”  
She said, “That is a very nice answer. Thank you.”

## Transcendental

In London I had arranged for Śrīla Prabhupāda to appear on an important BBC television interview show. In Bombay I met an Indian doctor from London who was now living in Bombay and managing a medical clinic. The doctor had seen the BBC show in London and told me how much he had appreciated Prabhupāda’s message. He invited Prabhupāda to visit his clinic. The doctor gave us a personal tour of his three-story facility, and as the doctor showed Prabhupāda around he mentioned having seen the television show in London. As we continued the tour, the doctor said, “Now we are all together in Bombay.”

He gushed, “Now you are here in my clinic. You were there in London, and now you are here. Isn’t this a small world?”

Prabhupāda answered, “Yes, it is insignificant,” and walked into the waiting elevator.

### **Pragmatic**

“How do we know Kṛṣṇa is God?” Prabhupāda asked us.

“Because Kṛṣṇa says so in the *Bhagavad-gītā*,” a devotee said.

“Anyone can say that,” Prabhupāda countered. I piped up, “You told us so, and you’re a representative of Kṛṣṇa, a spiritual master . . .”

“Someone will say I am just an old man.”

Not knowing what else to say, we were silent. After a few moments, Prabhupāda said, “You know Kṛṣṇa is God because you feel His presence when you chant, as well as when you serve. You feel the ecstasy—this is the proof.”

“The proof of the pudding is in the eating.”

### **Humble**

George Harrison was convinced that Prabhupāda was his guru when Prabhupāda said: “I’m the servant of the servant of the servant of God.

George said, “What does that make me, the servant of the servant of the servant of God.”

### **Playful**

With a twinkle in his eyes, Swamiji entered the kitchen where Harṣarāṇī and Yamunā were making *samosas*. He began eating some, and then more.

“How many of these can you eat?” Harṣarāṇī asked.

“More than you can prepare.”

Then she said “You can’t taste, eat, etc., while your preparing food for Kṛṣṇa.”

“Who has given you these rules?” Swamiji laughed, eating another. “Then I can break the rules.”

### **Good with parents**

One evening, right after the last *kīrtana*, a devotee’s father walked right up to the Swami sitting on his new *vyāsāsana* and said in a loud, Texas drawl, “Why does mah daughter have to have an ‘Injun’ (Indian) name?”

People were standing and milling about, and they crept closer to hear and see the commotion. The whole Patel clan stood right behind the devotee’s father. One elder Patel had a shiny silver tooth

that was reflecting light. The Swami looked at the outraged father and quietly said with a laugh in his eyes, “You do not like Indians?” The father saw he was surrounded. He must have felt like General Custer. He said, “Well, yeah, I like Injuns all right.” Swamiji pressed his advantage and said, “If your daughter is happy, why do you object?”

### **Adventurous**

Ready for anything. Was even willing to go to an uprising to make peace, but it subsided naturally.

### **Fun**

One day many people were standing in a long line to give Śrīla Prabhupāda gifts and receive his blessings. He turned to me and said, “Just see how they are treating saintly people.”

Many people were touching Prabhupāda’s feet. He said to me, “When someone touches your feet, you may have to take on their karma. Gurus who are strong in spiritual potency can absorb other people’s karma.”

Then he joked, “That is why a guru pats someone on the head—to give the karma back.” We laughed together, as His Divine Grace mock-demonstrated his technique on an imaginary supplicant.

### **Inventiveness**

When Prabhupāda heard that people from the village were stealing construction supplies, he hired a guard and said that the guard should ring the bell every hour. That was to prevent the guard from sleeping on the job.

### **Humble and renounced**

As we rode along on a train, Prabhupāda showed me the proper perspective in regarding other devotees as prabhu, or master. “The idea is to be humble and to serve others as if they are your prabhus. If someone calls you prabhu and you think, ‘Yes, I am master,’ that is not the idea.” He imitated a puffed-up person with a swollen chest and a mock silly look on his face. “When I call you prabhu, it is in the spirit of service—in that way, you are my master.”

### **Be independent (but be dependent on Kṛṣṇa)**

In the upper rooms of the Rādhā Dāmodar Temple I saw Prabhupāda washing his *dhotī* in a bucket of water. I said, “Prabhupāda, I would

be happy to wash your cloth for you.”

He replied: “I can wash my own cloth, and in that way I can remain independent.” He continued, “I shall teach you to roll a chapati with a bottle—just bring me one bottle.” I fetched a bottle, and Prabhupāda showed me how to roll a chapati with it. Then he said, “But I don’t even require the bottle,” and he proceeded to flatten the dough into perfectly round chapatis using only his hands.

Another time, I saw Śrīla Prabhupāda on his hands and knees scrubbing the floor. When he looked up and saw me, he said, “Be as independent as possible.”

As I was talking of Miracles, here are some actual miraculous events I witnessed.

### **Sweet water**

When we first were on the land, no buildings yet, there was no water. We had to fetch water and ice on bicycles as Raman Reti was far from town.

There were no municipal pipes at that time, so no water reached there.

The wells in areas that were dug yield saline undrinkable water. We hired some so-called experts from Delhi to find sweet water.

They had machines, but could not find sweet water.

One morning Prabhupāda pointed to a spot on the ground and said “Dig here.”

We dug, and sure enough it was sweet water!

In Mayapur, India, I realized that very early in the morning, about 3 a.m., was a nice time to be with Prabhupāda, for he was in an especially mellow mood. It was quiet, with no visitors or activities. I wanted to have more precious *darśana* (audience) with him, even though he gave me so much time with him already—I still wanted to be with him more.

I went outside his rooms. I made slight noises, chanting outside his quarters. He heard me and came out to see what the noise was. When he saw me he invited me inside.

I repeated this the next morning.

We were living in the newly constructed dormitory building—the first large residence building. The sky was overcast. I went near his rooms and made my walking and chanting sounds. Prabhupāda came out again and smiled.

He walked up and down the balcony with me, then turned towards the fields. He looked out and said, "The farmers beg Kṛṣṇa for rainwater, 'Give me water, give me water!'"

He then said, "All right, take it." He majestically swept his hand down, as if dispensing rain.

Simultaneously, as he did this, a lightning bolt crashed, the sky opened, and rain came furiously down.

"Take it," he said quietly, and walked back into his room.

## Butterfly

One morning Prabhupāda smiled and said, "I was just thinking of you, and you have come. In India that means you shall live for a long time." I sat down, and as Prabhupāda seemed to be in a meditative mood, I also sat silently, content just to be with him. A butterfly was circling the room and fluttering towards Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Prabhupāda put out his finger and motioned slightly with it.

In easy flight, the butterfly jumped onto His Divine Grace's finger.

This butterfly must be a great devotee, I thought.

I had my camera with me, and thought of taking a photo as Prabhupāda raised his hand slowly to show me the perching butterfly. I really wanted to photograph this scene, but I didn't want to disturb the moment with movement or loud camera shutters. Then the butterfly lazily flew up to a corner of the room. Prabhupāda immediately changed expressions and started talking to me about the day's activities and an upcoming program. The butterfly began to fly around the room again. Śrīla Prabhupāda noticed it and pointed towards the window, silently indicating to open the window so the butterfly could go out, otherwise he will not have anything to eat.

His face and mood had changed again, so completely and so easily. I felt like I was in a scene in Kṛṣṇa-loka.

One morning in Calcutta across from a bathing ghat, Prabhupāda was sitting on the floor "I have fooled them, he said." "Who?" I asked.

"The mosquitos, when I sit on the floor, they rise to the ceiling."

He was grinning like a child.

I asked, "Are there mosquitos in Kṛṣṇa loka?"

He answered, "They don't bite, they sing."

The expansive grounds of Tittenhurst Park were shrouded in morning mist.

There was a manicured, grass yard that sloped onto a long, open



field area where Prabhupāda liked to walk. The early morning air was wintry and cold, and our breath made smoke like patterns in the frosty air. As we walked, I saw a worm heading right for Prabhupāda's feet. No one else in our group saw the worm. It was on a direct collision course with His Divine Grace's lotus feet! I thought maybe I should say something and save the worm's life, but then again, if the worm went under Śrīla Prabhupāda's boots it would be liberated, just as those who fall under the wheels of Lord Jagannāth's cart are liberated. As I was philosophizing, and before I could make a decision, the worm was under Prabhupāda's foot. Then I saw that there was no impression in the tall, wet grass where Prabhupāda walked, whereas our sneakers made deep depressions. I looked back and saw that the worm was still going merrily on his way, as we walked on with Prabhupāda leading.

On the morning walks, Prabhupāda would often greet Tittenhurst's gardener, Frank. He and Frank had respect for each other, as they were about the same age. Frank was living in a small, cozy Tudor cottage, and he had reported to John Lennon that strange sounds kept him up in the night. He thought the cottage was occupied by ghosts.

John Lennon consulted with Śrīla Prabhupāda and asked him if he could do something to remedy this situation. Prabhupāda replied that he could.

He gathered us together, and we marched in a great procession across the low, grassy hills down to the cottage. Prabhupāda led a dynamic *kīrtana* and told us to "blow the conch shell very often and very loudly, as ghosts don't like that sound." After a while he said, "They have gone."

Frank later confirmed that the strange sounds he heard in the night were, indeed, gone.

And most of all he gave me you, my spiritual family. So these were some of the miraculous moments I shared with Prabhupāda and now I am sharing with you, He also gave us Das and das, and if we truly exemplify Prabhupāda and serve one another in cooperation, that could save the planet and each other

Thank you very much.

## QUOTES

“There is enough *tapasya* (austerities) in this world, so we do not have to invite any more on ourselves unnecessarily.”

“Art means full belly.”

“Karma is like touching fire; it burns whether we recognize it or not.”

“If you make a dog a king and then throw an old shoe, he will run and fetch it.”

“We are not against bad men; we want to change them into good men.”

“Morning sun gives strength, afternoon sun takes away strength.”

“Try your best, and even if you don’t succeed there is no loss.”

“Do everything together, for if there is success, then everyone is glorified, and if there is failure then no one is to be blamed.”

“If we can help one person become Kṛṣṇa conscious, then our movement has been successful.”

“Don’t fight with God; He has more arms than you.”

“You know Kṛṣṇa through guru, and you know guru through Kṛṣṇa.”

“Something learned with difficulty is not easily forgotten; something learned easily is soon forgotten.”

“In any situation we must take place, time, and circumstance into account.”

“A child takes protection of mother, even after she slaps him; similarly we take shelter of Kṛṣṇa, even if slapped by Māyā.”

“Accounting means putting down every expenditure immediately.”

“An empty bowl makes the most sound; a full bowl is silent.”

“You can buy a sacred thread for a penny, but love of God is not so cheap.”

“*Sannyāsa* means becoming a world preacher.”

“I have come here to teach you what you have forgotten: love of God.”

“Kṛṣṇa consciousness is simply wonderful.”

“Going to India is not a matter of buying a ticket, it is a matter of being spiritually pure.”

And once again, “Do everything together, for if there is success, then everyone is glorified, and if there is failure then no one is to be blamed.”

“The cloud pours rain on both the ocean and the rocks—this is Kṛṣṇa’s mercy.”

—All by A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami.

“A clenched fist cannot shake hands.”—Indira Gandhi

“Be yourself. Everyone else is taken.”—Oscar Wilde

“The nightingale desists to sing until it has something pleasing to say.”—Canakya Pandit

*Thank you very much.*

Gurudas

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my link to the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu,

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

How else could I be here, still trying to rid myself of many years of sinful *samskāras*, if not for your compassion and for extending the unlimited compassion of Śrī Gaurāṅga in this Age of Kali? As I grow older, only now can I begin to understand your enormous sacrifice you made just to execute the order of your Guru Mahārāja, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. At the age of 69 you left the comforting shelter of Śrī Vṛndāvana *Dhām* just to fulfill the prophecy of Lord Caitanya – that the holy names will be chanted in all the towns and villages of the world, *prthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma sarvatra pracāra haibe more nāma*.

Just like a loving father tricks his immature young child in order to keep him on the right path, you tricked me into connecting to and staying on the path of *bhakti*. You said the process was easy and sublime, and although the process is sublime, it isn't easy. But, then you said, it is easy for the simple, but difficult for the crooked. You also said, for those who are materialistic it will take longer to come to the standard. Okay, that explains it.

So, you came to deliver the most fallen, and there I was; and you engaged me in your book production. You kept me busy so I could control my demon mind. You patiently answered all my questions and encouraged me by telling me that I was an intelligent boy. You taught us to call each other “prabhu.” But, my contaminated heart could not really appreciate my siblings. I still thought I was superior, and wanted to be the “prabhu.” Gradually, by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa with as much seriousness as I could muster, and hearing the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, purification began to happen and I realize that I am much happier when I feel myself “servant of the servant,” not the “prabhu.”

I can understand now, that the natural consciousness of the living entity is that of having a humble state of mind. You have revealed this to us in your translation of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. So many devotees write about exhibiting deep humility even though they may be very exalted souls. And, you yourself have displayed that as well. Your Guru *Mahārāja* would even address his disciples as prabhu. As the great Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda prays to the Lord in his

song, *Bhajana-Lālasā*:

O my Lord Hari! Enthusiasm in devotional service, faith in the process of devotional service, the treasure of patience in the attainment of love of God, performing activities favorable to pure devotion, abandoning the company of worldly people, performing approved devotional practices—I have never possessed these six devotional qualities, O Lord. How, then, shall I give up my affinity for Māyā and worship Your lotus feet?

Remaining absorbed in abominable activities, I never kept company with *sādhus*. Now I adopt the garb of a *sādhū* and act out the role of instructing others. This is Māyā's big joke. O Lord Hari, in such a helpless condition surely I will receive Your causeless mercy. O when, under the shelter of my spiritual master, will I call out to You with my humble entreaty?

These natural emotions are an encouraging example for me to follow. These feelings of helplessness and humility is the "key" to unlock the door, and enter the house of *bhakti*.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for bringing the entire disciplic chain for me to grab hold of. It's my only hope of getting out, some day, of my materialistic consciousness.

Please continue feeding me the drops of your mercy.

*Praying to remain your spiritual son,*

Madhusudan das

### Going To Town

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, thanks without end,  
my eternal master, my eternal friend.  
Your “chanting, dancing, feasting, and philosophy”  
is ever-entrancing and will set me free  
from birth, death, disease, and old age.  
The old book is closed. I’ve turned a new page  
of *Gītā*, of *Bhāgavat*, of *Caritāmṛita*  
and *Pāñcarātrikī* songs in Vedic meter.  
Lord Jagannātha smiles and gives happiness.  
At your lotus feet I’m feeling no stress.  
“Kṛṣṇa consciousness is simple for the simple”, you say.  
May I give up “inferior complexity” one day.  
May I make your Peace Formula real in my life  
as your *japa* beads lead me from darkness to light.  
Yes, you chanted on them many decades ago  
and they still radiate that Prabhupāda glow.  
At your lotus feet I humbly bow down  
and await a new meeting in Vṛndāvana town.

Jai Gurudeva!  
Jai Gaurāṅga!  
Jai Govinda!

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at the dust of your transcendental lotus feet. It is only by the grace and mercy of my beloved spiritual master and father, Śrīla Prabhupāda, can I ever feel the pervading protection of his lotus feet through loving devotional service and being immersed in thoughts and remembrances of him. The debt to our spiritual master can never be repaid. Besides the extreme arduous journey Śrīla Prabhupāda undertook to arrive here, was his deep contemplation and resolute determination beforehand.

An excerpt from “*Our Śrīla Prabhupāda, A Friend to All*” compiled by H.G. Mulaprakriti Devi Dasi:

A *pūjārī* from Śrī Advaita Ācārya’s house in W. Bengal came by to Śrīrdhām Mayapur Temple in 1980 with a copy of a BTG article about Śrīla Prabhupāda, ‘A Lifetime in Preparation.’ The *pūjārī* and *sevaita* at Advaita Ācārya’s house was there for many years, back to the 1940’s, 50’s. At that time, he noticed one *grhastha* Bengali coming quite regularly. He always came to the Mandira alone and would sit in the back without speaking, just chanting on his *mala* very quietly and deeply. After chanting many hours, he would always thank me and leave. His presence was profound and the *pūjārī* was attracted to him yet didn’t speak to disturb his devotions. Sometimes, he would notice Śrīla Prabhupāda’s eyes would be full of tears and his voice would be choked up.

Then, for a very long time he did not come. However, the *pūjārī* distinctly recalled that in August 1965 he saw a saffron-clothed *sannyāsī* sitting in the back of the Mandira and recognized him to be his old friend from before. Again, Śrīla Prabhupāda sat chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa in deep concentrated devotion. Weeping. Then he paid his *danḍavat praṇāma* for a long time and came over to the *pūjārī* thanking the *pūjārī* for his *sevā*. The *pūjārī* asked, “Who are you? I remember you from long ago.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda replied, “My name is Abhay Charaṇāravinda Bhaktivedanta Swami Mahārāja. I am

an unworthy disciple of HDG Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Śrīla Prabhupāda, my divine master. I have been coming here for such a long time because my Gurudev has given me an impossible mission to go across the ocean to the West and spread the sublime teachings of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. I have not known how this mission of his will be successful, so I've been coming here to this special house of Śrī Advaita Ācārya along with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Lord Nityānanda. Thus, I have been praying very earnestly that they will empower me and guide me. I want to satisfy my Gurudev's desire but I am feeling unqualified to do this."

As he was speaking the *pūjārī* saw tears falling down on his cheeks again. Then he continued, "Tomorrow I am leaving for Calcutta upon a ship across the ocean to America. I don't know what will befall me there, but I am praying most earnestly here for help." Then he very humbly asked the *pūjārī* for his blessings. The *pūjārī* was so moved by this sincerity and determination.

It was a few years later, that I began noticing for the first time, white Vaiṣṇavas coming to Advaita Bhavan. They were wearing *dhotīs* and *sārīs* and chanting on *tulasī mālā*. One of them gave the *pūjārī* this BTG magazine from America. As he looked at the photographs, the *pūjārī* recognized a picture of the Founder-Ācārya who had brought Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the West. It was a picture of his friend, Bhaktivedanta Swami who had come and prayed here so many times before! Then he realized that Śrīla Prabhupāda actually accomplished that impossible mission of his Gurudeva. He saw that it was indeed Prabhupāda starting alone and without pretense, who had accomplished this glorious miracle against all odds.

The *pūjārī* said, "As soon as I saw this, I came here to his temple in Mayapur to tell you this information. I know that he has gone from this world now, but thought you might want to hear this story about your (and my) beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda." Hearing this over and over is so moving, displaying Śrīla Prabhupāda's glorious character.



From being as strong as a thunderbolt, not watering down the philosophy to genuine compassion, humility, and tolerance, Śrīla Prabhupāda was distributing endlessly valuable knowledge, the exalted pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, from an authentic, powerful line of disciplic succession.

Śrīla Prabhupāda is always present. A number of months ago, after a significant time waiting, Śrīla Prabhupāda arrived at our home in his divine *mūrti* form from Locan prabhu. Our home became sanctified with his holy presence. It was and is wonderful, beyond words, to experience the same joyousness of Śrīla Prabhupāda arriving at any of the Temples we were at during his manifest presence. Being there with the assembled devotees scurrying around, making preparations for his grand arrival. And, it was the same feeling and consciousness, making sure everything was in place for His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda. It is the causeless mercy of Kṛṣṇa to have even a moment's association of His pure devotee, Śrīla Prabhupāda, which is priceless.

A while ago, I saw a photo of Śrīla Prabhupāda walking near or around 72<sup>nd</sup> St, NYC in 1965. I was just so awestruck, remembering how I, as a Junior High School student, walked on 72<sup>nd</sup> St to school daily. I hadn't seen His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda then, but seeing those familiar buildings, and then realizing that Śrīla Prabhupāda had actually been there was such an amazing feeling. It just wasn't my time yet. Two years later, hearing Śrīla Prabhupāda's *Happening* album, reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's books and hearing about him was fulfilling and ever fresh. I learned more valuable jewels of lessons he imparted to us all.

In *Bond of Love, Śrīla Prabhupāda and His Daughters* so many poignant, heartfelt realizations are shared and reveal Śrīla Prabhupāda's magnanimous self, his unique individual exchanges with such caring acknowledgment.

In one pastime, a devotee described how she was not extroverted and never a book distributor. But, as she sat with Śrīla Prabhupāda and the devotees at the airport, Śrīla Prabhupāda said that the cruelest thing is to keep people in ignorance, pushing devotees to distribute his books.

She questioned why she couldn't distribute some books for Śrīla Prabhupāda, as he has given her life. She immediately picked up a *Nectar of Devotion* and stopped a young businessman. He stopped, but she didn't know what to say. Her eyes flooded with tears and he

left. Then, Śrīla Prabhupāda's flight was announced. He walked to his gate, turned around and gravely looked directly at her, put his palms together, bowed his head, turned and left. It had such an effect on her, that Śrīla Prabhupāda appreciated her and was pleased for the effort, not the result.

It was just so profound to read this. It is what is in the heart and mind of the devotee that counts. Such is the causeless kindness, encouragement, consistent prodding of Śrīla Prabhupāda to purify our whole existence. Not just externally, but internally; cultivating humility, sincerity, faith, perseverance and devotion.

It is only by Your Divine Grace, Śrīla Prabhupāda, *Jagat-Guru*, that I can ever grasp your precious gift of Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* and pray forever to be in your loving service – not just externally, but internally too.

I beg to remain always,

*Your servant and daughter,*

Kanchanbala Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your transcendental lotus feet.

Thank you for the opportunity to express my sincere appreciation and love for you for giving me the divine process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness!

Your teachings – through your books, as well as your many personal instructions, have been the basis for my life's choices. Whatever good that has come to me has been through your causeless mercy alone. Whenever I have strayed and neglected to follow your instructions I have paid dearly and have been kicked by this material energy.

Thank you, my most beloved Spiritual Master, for being my guide, my true father, and my ever well-wisher.

I remain eternally indebted to you for leading me in my quest for understanding the true purpose of this human form of life...to know, to love, and to serve Kṛṣṇa in this life, and live happily with Him forever in the next.

*Your servant,*

Vamanadev Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

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

All glory to you, Prabhupāda, who tirelessly did so much for mankind.

A shopping visit to a local mall and a few minutes of a forced viewing of a video while waiting in a doctor's office both reminded me of your striking answer to a probing question.

I had heard that—when asked at an airport about your vision, what you actually saw when you viewed the world and its people—you had answered “So many flapping dead bodies.”

An eloquent, yet sadly accurate description of a dark tragedy: People awake yet dreaming; actors mouthing hollow lines disbelieving their own words. Blank faces masking internal emptiness and pain. The lives of youths charting “new” paths lock-stepping the false footsteps of their parents. I saw the empty and meaningless blindly stepping from the cliff of life toward the abyss.

But, Prabhupāda, far greater than your stark warnings was your guiding souls to Vraja, that jewelled land of play, joy, dance, and sweetness. You presented the ticket, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, and bade us to board by always chanting. You offered us live books that reciprocate with those who read them. You captured first our eyes then our minds with visions of divine Deities. You led us to mysterious holy mountains and rivers. You created a Society offering both friendships that could last a lifetime and a worthwhile mission, a cause, a purpose that awards hope to ourselves and others. You placed in our hungry mouths truly nourishing food.

Indeed, your Lords and masters were hidden in these items that you placed within our empty hearts. And in *your* heart was that golden land, with your presence there beckoning us to join you.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless me, and your followers, with pure-hearted desires to please you, as well as the taste, wisdom, and strength to not rejoin you alone and empty-handed. Your gifts spring from the only true well-spring of life. May we value and distribute them to others.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Bhurijana Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my eternal master, my eternal father,

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

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

On that day in 1968, in Montreal, we ran quickly down the street, barefoot, from the bowling alley temple on Park Street, to the tiny apartment a few blocks away, where you stayed on West Prince Arthur Street, near McGill University.

Sharp gravel on the driveway pricked our feet as we ran to your door, as though they were sins, *anarthas*, or obstacles in the heart needing to be destroyed before seeing you for the first time.

I can't deny that when I first saw you, I saw an effulgent shine radiating from you, lighting the room all around you. Like the saints and angels in ancient paintings, there you were, before us all in that room.

Immanent, and transcendent, deeper than an ocean, yet joyful as well.

You were delighted to see your dear ones, Mukunda and Jānakī, Gurudās and Yamunā, and Shyamasundar and Mālatī, with new baby Sarasvatī in tow.

After pleasing you in service in San Francisco, they were now on their way to London to please you more. They had come to Montreal to seek your blessings before embarking on their new adventure in your service.

Like a particle of dust blown in with a windstorm of their devotion, I'd come with them. They offered me to you. A tiny grain of sand lifted up from the suffering ocean of this world, and placed at your lotus feet.

Yamunā Devi said, "This is Wendy. She is only sixteen years old, and she wants to become your disciple."

You looked at me so tenderly, so compassionately, and said, "But where are your parents?" As though you were feeling their pain, feeling the pain of our whole culture in upheaval.

With the foolish arrogance of a teenager, I said, "My parents and I get along better when we're not together."

You immediately looked away, and I felt the sting of my pride that caused you disdain. Even today, I wince remembering how my conceit caused you to look away in that moment.

Then the mercy of your gaze fell on Mālatī and baby Sarasvatī. And you said, "I dreamt of that child last night! Yes, that very child!"

Were you seeing your future playful pastimes with her that so charmed the crowds in India, and anyone who witnessed them? Were you perhaps recognizing an old friend from a previous life?

When will I bring you joy each day in simple love like an innocent child, free from false pride? When will I grow up, and offer you mature and selfless love every day, every hour, and every minute of my life?

I have no realization of pure devotion. I only know that you saved me from a fate worse than I can imagine. Fifty-three years later, once again, I ask you to please accept me. This time, I pray for genuine humility, simplicity, and maturity as I beg you to kindly engage me in your eternal loving service.

*Your eternal daughter,*

Rukmini Devi Dasi

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. I pray to one day desire to take their shelter.

You were not and are not of this world. When you were “here,” you manifested talents unmatched by anyone else on this planet. You were (and are) far beyond compare, able to read people’s minds, to masterfully write so many magnificent volumes of transcendental knowledge, and sow the seeds of Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. Your compassion for the fallen souls knew no limits, and you worked tirelessly to free them from the shackles of material bondage.

Your mercy knows no bounds. You accepted even a wretch like me into your flock and encouraged me in my service. I was so very fortunate to have your personal association on several occasions, and despite two strokes that resulted in some loss of memory, I can vividly recall and cherish each time we were together.

How I came by such good fortune remains a complete mystery to me. I was a New York heroin addict on the methadone program when, in 1968 at the age of 24, I moved to the New Vrindaban farm community. By your mercy alone, I was able to give up my drug addiction and become your initiated disciple. You allowed me to be of service at New Vrindaban, then help start the Pittsburgh temple, and then later become a part of your New Dwarka community in Los Angeles.

In spite of my many heinous offenses, you remain my guiding light. I am still astonished by the astounding words in your books, and I cling to the hope that I may one day take birth in a body that can truly understand and appreciate those amazing words. Today I can only pray that in this body’s decline, I will forget neither you nor your beloved Kṛṣṇa.



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet!

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

*namas te sāravate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

All glories to you on this day of the 125<sup>th</sup> celebration of your birth. I give thanks and gratitude for my good fortune of you coming into my life way back in 1966 when I first glanced upon you in Tompkins Square Park.

Previous to that auspicious moment I was engrossed in darkness, knowing nothing of who I was and what my purpose in this lifetime was. You gave me that greatest gift, and I am forever grateful.

In the last year we have been having this terrible pandemic, something none of us would have imagined could happen. Millions have died including a number of devotees. Even as I write this one of your most sincere disciples in Mayapur is gravely ill with the virus.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave us Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, our dearmost Lord, that beautiful blue Boy, the killer of so many demons, the protector of His devotees. You gave us the great understanding that we are not this body, we are pure spirit soul, eternal sparks, everlasting, undying. There is no death. How amazingly fortunate your disciples were to be given this teaching. So in the midst of this terrible pandemic, where so many are fearful that they may get the dreaded virus and die an awful death, we have this higher knowledge, that in fact there is no death. Death is simply the shedding of this body, just like taking off a coat and then putting on another coat. It is simple. It is the fear of the mind and the identification with this body that causes so much misery.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am such a fallen soul that still I do not have true realization that I am not this body. I am still so identified with it, and even want to be it sometimes. Suffering is a great gift, because that is when you don't want to be your body anymore. Śrīla Prabhupāda, please forgive me for being so fallen. Still I pray to you, for your mercy is my only hope now and always. I pray for your mercy and the mercy of the whole disciplic succession. I pray I may

chant better *japa* because I know when I concentrate and chant good rounds I feel so much better and my understanding becomes greater. I trust in this process to bring me to the realization of *aham brahmāsmi* and to some day have the good fortune of being a blade of grass to be walked upon by Śrī Hari in Goloka Vṛndāvana. That seems far away for me, except for the fact of your infinite mercy making it possible.

I hope I can have more good devotee association for the rest of the time I am alive on this planet. Sincere fixed up devotees are such a gift. I remember how you wrote to me early on that I was fortunate to have the association of Jadurāṇī and Satsvarūpa, and I can see that that was truly fortunate. Yesterday I was thinking of your dear Girirāja Swami, how he also was there in Boston in the early days and through good association, became such a strong devotee and servant of your mission.

I miss your association but always feel you in your books. You are right there. I give thanks that I could serve your mission through transcribing and composing your wonderful *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Nectar of Devotion*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and all the others. I give thanks that I got the opportunity to cook for you. That was so wonderful. That I could learn to cook was a miracle you brought to me as I could barely boil water before becoming a devotee. It was your grace that gave me the ability to learn the basics of rice, *dal*, *chapatti* and *subji*, and all the wonderful variations, and then of course sweet rice, *samosas*, *kachoris*, etc. How ecstatic to become a vegetarian with you teaching us how to make such wonderful preparations for the Lord, and how to prepare with cleanliness, always thinking of pleasing you, Gaura-Nitāi, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, offering and taking the blessed remnants.

*Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*. All glories to the holy names, to Śrī Kṛṣṇa *saṅkīrtana*! All glories to your lotus feet Śrīla Prabhupāda!

*Your fallen servant, but aspiring to aspire to be better,*

Arundhati Devi Dasi

I offer this tribute to my beloved Gurudeva, Śrīla Prabhupāda, on his 125<sup>th</sup> Vyāsa-pūjā. It's a great honor, and I'm humbled by the opportunity to share some of my memories, realizations, and experiences with him.

On a personal note, I find it unfortunate that in many places in the world, and even at times in our own society, the contributions of women are minimized and their potential stifled, but my experience with Prabhupāda was quite different. He would always encourage me to be my best, and expected me to do whatever was needed, without any limitations, even if it was something I had never done before. Through his example, he taught me many life lessons which have been a wellspring of inspiration throughout my life.

Any devotee who spent time with Prabhupāda knows what a powerful and fearless presence he emanated but I would like to share stories that reflect how kind, affectionate and funny he was. As I look back, I'm amazed how often he would teach us through kindness and his wry and witty sense of humor.

We met when I was 17 and had been reading the *Bhagavad-gītā* since I was 14. The book was my constant companion. As my desire for self-realization grew, I felt that what I needed most was to live in nature and meditate. So off I went to Hawaii seeking the answers to life's greatest questions. Who am I? Where did I come from? What is the meaning of life? I set up a tent on the beach on the north shore of Oahu and was living on the fruits of the land when, through the most mystical event of my life, Prabhupāda entered my world. It was March 1969.

While meditating on the beach, a flier, carried on the warm ocean breeze, came to rest on my leg. It announced that an Indian guru, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami, would be lecturing on the *Bhagavad-gītā* at Sunset Point. I was so excited – had the universe just sent me a message? I went to hear what the Swami had to say... and it was love at first sight!

After his talk, Prabhupāda invited me to come visit him at the apartment where he was staying with Govinda Dāsī, Gaurasundar and Kārtikeya. When we sat together in his room, I knew I was in the presence of a great soul, and yet his charming, warm and loving personality made me feel immediately comfortable. It was an open and honest exchange, and I felt like I could tell him anything, so we

talked for a long time about many subjects.

He showed me his newly published *Bhagavad-gītā* and compared it to my *Bhagavad-gītā* by looking up a few verses then declaring with complete confidence, “mine is better.”

When he showed me his first record album, I told him that I had listened to it many times. I would play it while taking LSD, which I explained that I used as a sacrament for self-realization. I told him that I saw Kṛṣṇa on many of my psychedelic trips. Instead of being judgmental, Prabhupāda was concerned for my welfare and said, “It is not the LSD. You see Kṛṣṇa because He loves you and shows favor upon you. Promise me you will not take this any longer.”

During my visit, Govinda Dāsī brought in a tray of sugar cane for him. He offered to share the stalks and taught me how to chew on the canes to suck out the sweet juice and discard the tough pulp. A definite life lesson at the first meeting!

When it came time for me to leave, Prabhupāda said he wished I could stay with them but apologized that there was no facility in the small apartment. I knew shortly after that meeting that he was the spiritual teacher I had been looking for.

Although I didn’t know there was a Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, to me he was an Indian Swami I met in Hawaii. When I called my friend, Susan, who later became Pālikā, and spoke with her about him, she told me he had a temple in Los Angeles that a few of our friends had visited and she was considering moving in.

A few months later, I flew to Los Angeles to join the temple. It was only a few weeks after my arrival that we met again. This time I was wearing a sari and tilak but he immediately recognized me and said, “we met in Hawaii. I’m glad you’ve come.”

In October 1970 I was asked to join a small group of devotees going to India with Śrīla Prabhupāda. When we landed, I felt like I was home again. There are so many heavenly stories from those early days in India, and I was very blessed to be able to spend so much time with Prabhupāda! He called us The World Sankirtan Party, and at first, there were only five women, Yamunā, Mālatī, her young daughter, Sarasvatī, Himavatī, Mādrī and me so he was very protective of us.

Shortly after we arrived in Bombay, Śrīla Prabhupāda was invited to a spiritual gathering in Amritsar called The All India Vedanta Sammelan. Yamunā and I were the only women who went on that engagement along with eight men.

When we arrived, we were given two rooms next to each other. Prabhupāda stayed in one and Yamunā and I stayed in the other. The men slept in the courtyard, and it was extremely cold. Often, Prabhupāda asked Yamuna, and me to lead *kīrtana* or sing *bhajans*. I had never performed for such a large crowd, and it was intimidating, but he encouraged us and we loved singing for him.

Once, when a man criticized us for our imperfect Sanskrit pronunciation, Prabhupāda defended us saying, “These girls have more devotion than you will ever know in a million lifetimes.” The man slunk away, humiliated.

When we were invited to visit the Golden Temple, the holiest site of the Sikh religion, Prabhupāda was very respectful and impressed by the spiritual mood of the temple. Food was being cooked and served to thousands of visitors of all faiths from their community kitchen. They would make thousands of *rotis* every day. When we left, Prabhupāda was asked to write in their guest book. Under comments, he wrote, “very spiritual.” Under religion, he wrote “Krishnite,” then looked up at us and laughed and repeated the word he had made up, “Krishnite.”

When we took the Punjab Mail train back to Bombay, Guru Das was in first class with Prabhupāda and Yamuna wanted to visit them, so we made our way to their cabin. Yamuna asked if there was anything Prabhupāda wanted and he said, “Can you cook me some hot rice?” We said yes – even though we had no idea how we could do it on a moving train.

We wandered through the train until we found an employee and insisted that they let us cook. The answer from the official was a definitive, no! Fearless, Yamunā replied, “Then I may as well throw myself from the train.” At last, he capitulated, saying, “Crazy American women!” So, after cleaning the tiny filthy kitchen nook and scrubbing out a dirty pot, we made the rice. Yamunā was such an expert cook that even in the worst conditions, she was able to make sublime rice. She carried the platter to Prabhupāda’s cabin, and he was delighted. Yamunā and I often wondered about this pastime – did he really want rice or was he teaching us a lesson in determination and commitment?

When we returned to Bombay, we moved into a Sītā Rāma Temple. Every day, Prabhupāda would have visitors come to speak with him, and we would sit with him and listen, prepared to serve if there was something he wanted us to do. Although many of these

conversations were in Hindi so we couldn't understand what was being said, there is one visit I will always remember because for me it was a lesson in taking personal responsibility.

An Indian gentleman walked into his room and prostrated himself in front of Śrīla Prabhupāda. He said, "Swamiji you will save me" and Prabhupāda replied, "I cannot save you. I can teach you how to save yourself, but you must do the work."

On one of our village engagements after his lecture, Prabhupāda motioned for me to come to him. As I approached, he said, "Kauśalya, sing *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*." At first, I was very nervous... "*Om pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇam idam*..." As I sang the verses, I watched Prabhupāda and became more confident. He was beaming with pride and his smile was as effulgent as the sun. When I finished, he called me to him and as I started to pay my obeisances, he pulled me closer and patted me on the head. It was a really special moment I will never forget!

I was living in Bombay at our apartment in Akash Ganga when two sets of Deities arrived from Jaipur. Prabhupāda wanted one set sent to Calcutta ahead of the pandal program. So, I was tasked to travel with Them on the train to Calcutta. It was the first time I was in a first class cabin on the train, and it was very opulent. As I slept that night, I dreamt I was playing a white *mṛdaṅgam* which I had never seen but when I arrived in Calcutta, that's what we had. Just before the start of the Calcutta Pandal Prabhupāda said, "in India usually women shouldn't play *mṛdaṅgam*." He glanced at me and could tell how disappointed I was, then with a smile he said, "but Kausalya can play because she would become too upset." Once again, he was teaching with kindness and showing how progressive his thinking was for the time.

Prabhupāda had told me that marble plates were better than gold. So, as a surprise, I had a set with a platter and little bowls, made for him from white marble. When he arrived back to Calcutta after one of his travels, I brought him a plate of fruit – and he said, "Oh this is very nice, but these are white marble." My heart sank – I thought oh no, I got it wrong! Then he smiled and said "When I was a boy my father would use black marble. But I have so many white fathers now, so this is perfect."

There is one more memory I'd like to share. As we traveled through India, I remember that once Tamal Kṛṣṇa asked Prabhupāda where he wanted to go next. He said, "I am just like a cow – I will give milk wherever you take me."

So, my dear Śrīla Prabupada, I want to thank you for all the cream you've bestowed upon us. Your words and deeds will empower our lives and speak to our hearts forever.

Kausalya Devi Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you, our beloved spiritual master.

Ever charming, ever attractive, eternally young, Kṛṣṇa is a cowherd boy. Wearing precious jewels, cowherd Kṛṣṇa plays his flute, which stops the cows from munching the luscious grass to lift their heads in search of their greatest benefactor, little boy Kṛṣṇa. How happy the cows are! How happy is Śrī Kṛṣṇa to see the cows happy! As a cowherd boy, their joy is His joy.

Soft, doe-eyed beautiful cows are looking upon Kṛṣṇa with love. Uncountable numbers of them in love with Kṛṣṇa. All live in a lush, green flowering countryside, frolicking with the Lord of the Universe and his vivacious, loyal young friends. We can smell the fragrance of the Vṛndāvana forest, for it abounds with fruit trees, flowers, and vegetables. We can smell and feel the sweet-flavored breezes that refresh us. We can hear the cowherd boys splashing in the Yamunā river, the frogs croaking in the forest streams. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have brought us the spiritual world filled with the cows mooing to their cowherd boys and their leader, the mischievous blue boy Kṛṣṇa.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa grew up in a village of *vaiśyas*, responsible for the happiness of the cows. His friends were not princes but village boys who also were cowherds. Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His cowherd playmates knew and called each cow by their name. When each cow responded mooing, the cowherd boys thoroughly enjoyed the exchange. Herding cows took up most of their day. When they played, they played near where the cows grazed—cows everywhere in their lives, surrounded by cows.

Besides the sheer joy and transcendence Śrī Kṛṣṇa's village life gives us, there is a serious message you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are sending us. Lord Kṛṣṇa is a cowherd boy! The Lord of the Universe spent His time herding and caring for cows! Teaching us about Śrī Kṛṣṇa



as a cowherd boy tells us how important it is to protect cows and how important it is to make and keep the cows happy.

Such an everlasting transcendental gift you have given us. Hearing your stories of Kṛṣṇa's eternal pastimes in the village of Vṛndāvana, surrounded by countless cows who all cherish His association, saves our minds from fear and anxiety resulting from the ever-increasing tumultuous events of our current times. We can bring our minds to the eternal vision of beautiful, attractive young blue boy Kṛṣṇa playing with and protecting the happy doe-eyed soft to the touch cows of Vṛndāvana.

How different our world is from the village of Vṛndāvana! We live in an age where uncountable numbers of cows are tortured, slaughtered, and eaten. How different! In our hearts, minds, we can give our lives to protecting cows, keeping them happy, and by doing so, we leave this age of cruelty to the cow and enter the blissful Vṛndāvana where the cows are always happy and never suffer. We enter Vṛndāvana by your mercy! Your causeless mercy! Your gift! Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

*Your servants at ISCOWP,*

International Society for Cow Protection, Inc.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories to you.

I wasn't going to write anything this year because nothing was coming to me. I've been isolated, sick a lot, my dear parrot I've had for 28 years recently passed away, and I'm worried about the world, but last night I had a dream.

In the dream I was in a temple somewhere and there was a glorious *kīrtana*. My very favorite thing has always been dancing in a *kīrtana*, but it seems like a long time since it was like this. I don't know if I was young again or just taken over by the holy name, but I was dancing and spinning and so totally absorbed, not aware of anything else, just like when you were here. I had my life and soul back, and I'm crying right now because there is nothing in the world I would like more than to have this again.

I pray when I die I can be in a big *kīrtana* that goes on and on. My favorite thing, my heart and soul, and all because you came and gave us this divine gift. May Lord Nityānanda bless this entire world in this Age of Kali, this age of quarrel and despair, to chant and dance. Please rain down your mercy on us all.

Thank you. I am eternally grateful.

*Your most unworthy daughter,*

Chintamani Dasi

**NO QUESTION!**

There was some talk by young children of Gokula households  
They'd seen the whole thing – no question!  
And now a bubble of laughter is rising up  
With the tingle of hairs on my neck sure to follow.  
It's a pattern you've wrought in me over the years  
From immersion in "KṚṢṂA" for my bed-time ears.

So many passages: transcendent real  
Beyond comparison – no question!  
They just linger, dwelt on the source of emotion  
The ever-present trait - it's what we are made of  
All loving, devoting, deep meaning and troth  
Is found in the heart of God and us, both.

Corridors of the heart, you traced out for us  
Śrīla Prabhupāda, Sir – no question!  
Slamming our motto: "Tis folly to be wise  
When ignorance is bliss". We'd traded on that  
For years in fact – Hippytown homily  
Ill reasoned nonsense (You bore down heavily!).

The children were right after all, and saw  
Whereas elders sought logic – no question!  
"Innocence wins" is a precept of note as  
The KṚṢṂA book lends us the Lord's sweet moments  
When he roamed and wrangled with Earthly ways  
For our distant forebears in Vṛndāvana Days.

So a longed for lovetaste is available here  
Gurudev has delivered – no question!  
A hard sell you brought us: of how to enjoy  
A superlative taste. The fruit of divorce  
From the profit of action: "I'll just be enjoyed"  
And to this end I always want to be purposefully deployed.

*Gratefully yours,*

Sripati Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories, all glories, all glories to you, my most merciful and loving Spiritual Master and Spiritual Father. So many years have passed since I was blessed in this life to meet you and become your disciple – 52 years to be exact. I wish I could say that in this amount of time I have become a worthy disciple, but I cannot. It was so much easier when we were all sheltered in your temples and had so much association. One straw is weak, but many straws together are very strong.

We were so fortunate to have had this opportunity, and I still feel you are with us constantly, continuously protecting and guiding us. My husband Brajesh, and our three adult children – Vaiṣṇava, Mañjarī and Gauravāṇi are all following the path of *bhakti*, what to speak of our five grandchildren who are also very fortunate to be exposed to this sublime path by their parents. Rādhikā, our eldest, is preaching and singing all over the world at yoga studios and retreats. There is nothing in her life that she values more than service to her gurudeva and the population in general. This is what you told, that “our childrens’ children would find this path of *bhakti* so natural if raised with good association”. This was one of your first instructions to me in a letter you wrote saying, “Please see that your children develop nicely in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” I have tried to do this, but of course, they are their own souls and devotees in their own rights, so they have taken up the baton, and I am praying they will carry me with them along their journey .

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I see that you are always with me, although I plod along so slowly. I feel like my progress is more like 52 days in Kṛṣṇa consciousness instead of 52 years. And I am now in the last chapter of this life. But I am trying to do what I can to follow your instructions, chanting, reading your magnificent *Bhāgavatam* daily, associating with devotees as much as possible, *kīrtana* and sharing your books with others.

You know my heart and my *anarthas*. But I won't give up because you never give up on us. You kindly visit me in my dreams very often which I relish and have started to write these down. We can never repay you Śrīla Prabhupāda, for presenting us with this most valuable treasure, if we can only just open the treasure chest.

*Your loving disciple and daughter,*

Krishna Bhamini Dasi

Dear most glorious Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Kindly accept my feeble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet... I pray I can make a somewhat befitting offering to you on this sacred occasion of your 125<sup>th</sup> Vyāsa-pūjā.

Fifty-two years ago, on Easter Sunday, 1969, I first saw you at the Los Angeles temple, then located on La Cienega Boulevard. Your Grace was performing a fire sacrifice for the initiation of three new disciples. The vision of you sitting behind the thick plume of smoke emanating from the fire itself and incense, feeding that fire with a liquid gold substance, clearly and forever etched in my mind. There was an accompanying symphony of various chants. Even in my very contaminated state of mind, I could sense I was in the midst of something sacred, mystical, and possibly life-changing.

Your Grace was passing through on a two-day visit, en route to Hawaii. I was so blessed to have been there for both programs. Within two months, at the age of 19, I moved into this same temple and committed to a brand-new life in your ISKCON family. Today, I remain in this family, under the physical care of my immediate family for my elderly years.

I can say that on your first visit, soon after I had moved into the temple, I experienced a few extraordinary moments that set a solid, unshakable, and sublime relationship as your eternal daughter. I was very eagerly waiting at the bottom of the stairs situated in the front of the temple on La Cienega. Your Divine Grace noticed my extreme exuberance and approached me from the top of a few stairs; and with your expansive smile and genuine and unconditional love, you inquired, "Are you happy now?" My new life had rescued me from feeling lost, forlorn, and beaten up and beaten down, and my face reflected that. Your golden, effulgent head was elevated a few feet above mine as you looked downwards. The backdrop was a perfectly Southern California blue. The world melted away and the loud, blissful singing became muffled. I was transported to a very different and wondrous reality that I shall never forget. As best as I could, I answered, "Ohhhh yesssss!" That was the foundation for my life in Kṛṣṇa consciousness as your despairing disciple. I had never felt so safe, so loved, and so sheltered. At last, I was blessed with total contentment and unconditional love that, I believe, every soul vehemently seeks but rarely finds.

My dear most beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, my ever well-wisher, in the ensuing eight or so years of your *vapu* in our midst, you constantly gave me complete shelter. Your shelter came both personally as well as philosophically, through your lectures, your example, and your glorious and belabored extensive library of translated Vedic gems with copious purports. You have declared these books to be the “law books for the next 10,000 years.” For me, this entire Kṛṣṇa consciousness is mostly, beyond my grasp, but you have comforted us in that this is a descending process, i.e., it is by your mercy, the mercy of Lord Caitanya and Lord Kṛṣṇa, that the imports and mysteries of this vast body of Vedic literature are imparted to us, transcendently through our hearts in proportion to our sincerity and purity.

I lay my heart at your lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I pray I can someday begin to repay my debt to you, even if it takes lifetimes. One day, I will be one of your stalwart preachers, become learned in your books, and assist in bringing suffering souls, as I was, to your shelter.

*Lovingly and respectfully,  
Your daughter,*

Sachidevi Dasi

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your divine lotus feet. All glories to your glorious mission to save all the fallen souls on this Earth planet, including me. I was born in the darkest of ignorance and you opened my eyes by the torchlight of knowledge. I offer my humble obeisances to you time and time again, O Jagat-guru of the universe!

By your unlimited mercy, I was thinking my life has taken a wonderful turn for the better in the last year. After over 50 years of chanting the holy name, one of my godbrothers, Rāmanātha Sukha Prabhu finally impressed upon me the need for chanting my rounds strictly, without fail and attentively. So in March 2020 I decided to do just that, starting first with 16 rounds a day, then a couple of months later, 18 rounds a day, then a couple of months after that, 20 rounds a day, and then a couple of months after that, 21 rounds a day, by the end of the year I started chanting 22 rounds a day. Then in January 2021 I chanted 23 and 24 rounds a day, and in February 2021 I began chanting 25 rounds a day, and now in March 2021 I am chanting 26 rounds a day.

By your unlimited mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I really feel the ecstasy of chanting my rounds now. After starting to chant 16 rounds a day I realised I would dearly love to read all your books again. So the first thing I did was to list the titles of all your books. They came to 91. I had 70 original copies. So I started by reading the four *bhakti-śāstrī* books: *The Nectar of Instruction*, *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, *The Nectar of Devotion* and the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* 1972 Edition. And then I realised I would like to make a summary study of all four of these books, so I completed that for *The Nectar of Instruction* and *Śrī Īsopaniṣad* and then partly for *The Nectar of Devotion*, before I had a strong desire to study *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* very scrutinizingly.

So now I am up to chapter nine, and I keep feeling I would like to start from the beginning again and memorise all the key points in every verse, whilst listening to your lectures on each verse. I was hoping to produce a summary study of *Bhagavad-gītā* by December 2020, but now we are in March and from reading 10 pages a day I would like to read 20 pages a day and complete sometime by the end of March 2021.

In the meantime, I decided to start on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also



at three pages a day, but for now I have settled on six pages a day.

The greatest joy came to me when I realised a small part of my service to you. Rāmanātha Sukha Prabhu sent me two links on how to do book distribution. Both interviews were done by Nāmarasa Prabhu interviewing first, Jaya Caitanya Prabhu and secondly, Vaiṣeṣika Prabhu. I found them completely astonishing and astounding as I had been doing book distribution for many years without much success. After listening to these two devotees and listening to Vaiṣeṣika Prabhu's lectures on book distribution and reading his book, "*Our Family Business – The Great Art of Distributing Śrīla Prabhupāda's Books*", I realised my dream to create a Vaikuṅṭha planet out of this Earth planet could really come true by distributing 10 billion *Bhagavad-gītās* in the next 12 years by Gaura Pūrṇimā 2032. So just by chanting the holy name and reading and distributing your books, I realised I could really fulfil all my spiritual desires. This is nothing but your unlimited mercy upon me, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I thank you for this immense treasure.

*Yours faithfully,*

Karanodakasayi Viṣṇu Dasa Adhikari

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

“I was born in the darkness of ignorance, and my spiritual master opened my eyes by the torchlight of knowledge. I offer him my most humble obeisances.”

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

This year, on your 125<sup>th</sup> Appearance Day, also coinciding with the 55<sup>th</sup> Appearance year of your movement in America, I think it is especially poignant to recall some of the precious gifts that you have given to us all, through which to conduct in devotional service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa.

I recall in previous 2015 Vyāsa-pūjā Tributes offerings my co-devotees and disciples have spoken of your truly amazing educational programmes for helping humanity at large. This being a vehicle for communicating to the future leaders of society.

To further Kṛṣṇa’s desire and just to save the fallen souls, you took great trouble and went through great toll to sail on the Jaladuta, departing from the land of India to come to the West in 1965.

Since then, through your inspiration, devotees all over the world have been doing their bit to sail with you and serve in your epic journey to capture Lord Caitanya’s mercy.

This year, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I can report to you wonderful services in London, and elsewhere under the leadership of Jai Nitāi Prabhu and others. It is with his grace along with other devotees that we have an oasis in the middle of London. The London Temple performs such beautiful festivals – Gaura Pūrṇimā, Janmāṣṭamī, Rathayātrā, just to name a few. There are food distribution programmes and *Bhagavad-gītā* classes. Thousands are taking shelter because of the festivals and spiritual welfare programmes enacted through your mercy and grace.

This very modest offering is an opportunity to reinvigorate oneself and catch up. May we all be inspired in your service.

It is estimated that there are now between six to seven million people practising Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the Western world in one form or another.

It seems to us that we should all strive to inculcate principles which are actually directed at making ourselves purer and purer

and thus, forwarding the movement in a way that is compatible with your personal instructions to us.

Within centres of excellence and in buildings and temples where science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is practiced, visitors should always be reminded of your valuable contribution and message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I feel there should be a grand hall called “Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Hall”. Such a hall shall become magnet for attracting devotees rather than narrow sectarian interests.

To be true to you and to Kṛṣṇa we must re-commit ourselves in our service to you. In one of your early booklets entitled *Easy Journey to other Planets* you state:

“People dream of travelling to the stars, but such travel is still far away. Ancient yoga traditions, however, describe subtle pathways by which master yogis transfer themselves to planets beyond the earth.”

This book – and many others – take the reader to the most wonderful places in the anti material sky which is eternal and full of bliss and beyond the reach of birth, death, old age, and disease.

In this Vyāsa-pūjā offering, I would humbly like to make the following request to your most dedicated Vyāsa-pūjā *Tributes* team who take the trouble, and love to reach out to so many disciples.

I would like to propose that each participant should be invited to give his location, address, email contact details, and possibly a number. This makes the offering very authentic, and allows others to express their appreciation when they have been moved and enlightened by the offerings and realisation of more senior devotees. In years to come, the contact details will prove valuable for researchers and writers who wish to use the Vyāsa-pūjā *Tribute* books to advance your mission.

So I finally return to my point which is love of Godhead. By example and by your books you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have provided us a method and a tremendous insight into developing our role and attitude in devotional service. By highly practical advice and guidance you have steered devotees along the path of loving Kṛṣṇa, and imbibing the science of Kṛṣṇa without adulation.

Today, of all days we seek your causeless mercy.

*Your humble servant,*  
Cathurbhuj Dasa, London

## Svarupa Dasa

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Like a transcendental physician  
You wrote us our prescription  
And you pointed us in the direction  
Toward spiritual perfection

You embraced us all without exception  
Asked only submissive aural reception  
You continue to live with us in sound  
To your lotus feet we are forever bound

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

One morning in Mayapur, I saw that you were alone in your rooms. I entered and paid my obeisances, and sat with you for a few minutes.

“Śrīla Prabhupāda, may I ask you a question? No, not a question, a request?” I asked.

“What is that?” you replied.

“Prabhupāda, would you please bless me that I may be your personal servant eternally?”

You were silent for a moment, then you said, “Yes. Is that all right?”

“Yes Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you very much!” I paid my obeisances again and left in a joyful mood. That one promise alone has sustained me through all the highs and lows that every person, regardless of their station, must endure or tolerate in this world.

During your presence, and for quite a few years afterwards, you kept the afflictions of the Kali-yuga at bay. A powerful ship leaves a mighty wake, and the world at large unknowingly was able to flourish. But everything comes to an end, and now the Kali-yuga is bringing to bear some of the tools in its arsenal.

You have always preached to us about the four miseries of material existence: *janma* - birth, *mṛtyu* - death, *jarā* - old age, *vyādhi* - disease. You told us, and told us, and told us that these are the weapons of the material energy. Now, we are being made all-too-aware of this.

In 1973, you were having your massage on the veranda outside your room in Mayapur. A few of us were sitting with you.

You looked at us and said, “When I was young, I was very strong, and I ate *halavā* every day.” You then lifted your right arm, and with your left hand, patted the bottom of your bicep and said, “Now, flat tyre!”

We all laughed. But then you gave us a very serious look, and said, in a tone of very mild chastisement, “Don’t think this won’t

happen to you.”

This particular *līlā*-pastime, as with everything that you told us and have written in the mighty Bhaktivedanta Purports, had significance. Now, in my 82nd year, I also can say, “flat tyre!” and laugh. However, it is no joke.

Your life was dedicated to awakening us all to the perils of material existence. If I did not have your purports, I honestly am convinced I would lose my mind. An 82-year-old man has no future, but an 82-year-old aspiring Vaiṣṇava has the entire spiritual panorama before him. You are so wonderful, kind and merciful for having given us this future.

Thank you so much for the Bhaktivedanta Purports, but especially, thank you for promising me that I may have your personal service forever. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am depending on it.

*With full faith and love for you,  
I beg to remain your eternal personal servant,*

Bhavananda Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I must thank you for your causeless mercy upon this fallen conditioned soul. You endured great pains and tolerated countless offenses from me over the years. I cannot thank you enough for your not giving up and possibly even having high hopes that I may return back to Godhead in this very lifetime.

I am following the four regulative principles and chanting my minimum sixteen rounds as promised. But I know you expect more from your students that can offer more. I understand Kṛṣṇa accepts what we offer but also understands how much we are holding back. I am begging Kṛṣṇa to allow me to serve you through preaching at the college universities through *prasādam* distribution, your transcendental book distribution and hopefully even some *harināma*. I would never have imagined that we could win a lawsuit against a giant internationally famous school such as UCLA. But if Kṛṣṇa wills then even a weakling can be victorious against a strong, powerful and influential giant. Against all odds we now have court permission to do this. Of course, it is not totally final, but I know you will be very pleased if we can distribute *prasāda*, books and the holy name to the university students. You said the university students would be our next leaders. And this court case allows temples across the nation to legally perform these programs at the universities. I pray this will change preaching in America!

I helped with Kṛṣṇa Lunch in northern Florida back in 1974 and today it is beyond our imagination how much preaching and influence this has had on many thousands of people to date. I regularly meet people who remember in heartfelt tears that we helped them in this way.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please give me the intelligence to make my final offering to you a grand success so that I may spread your glories to countless conditioned souls desperately needing your help and guidance. I am blind, my physical body is rapidly deteriorating and my mental and spiritual capacities are practically nil. But with your inspiration we can move mountains, conquer nations and even change the atheistic tendencies of the conditioned souls and redirect them to Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Please inspire me to remain enthusiastic and unswaying in my determination to accomplish this

for you just as you never felt discouraged despite so many obstacles and setbacks even from your own godbrothers as well as from the materialists. Please let me fight and preach to my last breath for your glorification so that when I am able to see you again I can hold my head high in great humility that I accomplished this momentous task for your and Kṛṣṇa's glorification.

Thank you.

*Your fallen and unqualified servant,*

Govinda Datta Dasa



Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Days of glory, I was there when Your Divine Grace walked among us, and mercy poured forth in the shape of a nod, a smile, a chastisement; when a perfect example and direct instruction were always present to guide us. Our fledgling army was young, weak, cynical and full of bad qualities, but because of your purity and your love for us, we persevered. We recognized that this was the real deal, a way of life well worth this meager lifetime to pursue, and you made it possible. Pleasing you was all that mattered.

Life was simple then, and the planet seemed auspicious. To watch you, try and impress you, live for your glances and nods and laughter. By serving you we were serving the entire discipline succession beginning with the Supreme Lord! Each day we would realize the amazing grace and mercy that was ours, and so we began, collectively, to water our spiritual creepers in earnest.

You are the brightest jewel, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and the Earth was lit up by your effulgence. You gave us an open secret that could only be revealed to us by a pure lover of God. You held the key and patiently opened our hearts. The goal, you explained, was simply to become madly in love with our Creator, the most attractive, richest, strongest, famous, wisest and most renounced, a Supreme Personality who chose to be an enchanting bluish cowherd boy named Kṛṣṇa.

You worked tirelessly to write over 60 books carefully explaining all facets of the Absolute Truth for us fallen conditioned souls. Though often lofty and beyond our mundane comprehension, you made the process easy and sublime...just chant, dance and eat *prasādam*. Our goal became clear and our lives became full with meaning and direction. And full of precious memories.

About ten years went by much too quickly with countless nectarine pastimes, our Śrīla Prabhupāda Caritāmṛta. Such memories leave us humbled with amazement and gratitude at the causeless mercy that was and will always be, all of ours. Though you are gone

in form, we can come together and share remembered pieces and insure that the knowledge passed down to us remains preserved and undiluted. It is our duty to see to this, our life's mission until it is our turn to leave. Until then, we can and will go on remembering you, our beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda. And the days of glory will continue.

*Your eternally grateful daughter,*

Manmohini Dasi

My dear spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I offer you my humble obeisances again and again. All glories to you.

On this most holy, auspicious day of your appearance, I wish to offer you some words of glorification, but I hardly know where to start. How do I appropriately glorify you, who are so unlimitedly glorious? I find that the more I contemplate your glories, the more I hear of your pastimes, and the more I delve into your books, the more your glories expand. I feel wholly incapable of even understanding your exalted position, what to speak of describing it properly. What I've realized, however, is that just as a sweet ball will taste sweet anywhere one bites into it, it doesn't really matter where one begins in describing your glories—it's all going to be wonderful!

One of the wonderful things you've given us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is the beautiful prayers of the saints and sages in the Vaiṣṇava tradition. I especially love the *Śrī Śrī Gurvaṣṭaka* prayers by Śrīla Vishvanatha Chakravarti Ṭhākura, which you taught us to sing every morning at *maṅgala-ārati*. The moment I hear those first notes of "*samsāra-dāvānala-līḍha-loka*," my heart feels a thrill.

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

'The spiritual master is receiving benediction from the ocean of mercy. Just as a cloud pours water on a forest fire to extinguish it, so the spiritual master delivers the materially afflicted world by extinguishing the blazing fire of material existence. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.'

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you picked me up from the depths of ignorance and saved me from that burning fire. From the waves of ecstasy generated during your *kīrtanas* to the beauty of your oceanic smile, you inundated us with the bliss of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, cleansed our hearts, and turned us from dirty hippies into joyous "happies." Thank you for leaving your transcendental abode in Vṛndāvana and crossing the turbulent Atlantic Ocean to alleviate the suffering of the world due to Kali-yuga's influences. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*mahāprabhoḥ kīrtana-nṛtya-gīta-  
vāditra-māḍyan-manaso rasena  
romāñca-kampāśru-taraṅga-bhājo  
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

‘Chanting the holy name, dancing in ecstasy, singing, and playing musical instruments, the spiritual master is always gladdened by the *sañkīrtana* movement of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Because he is relishing the mellows of pure devotion within his mind, sometimes his hair stands on end, he feels quivering in his body, and tears flow from his eyes like waves. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master.’

Śrīla Prabhupāda, just as Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda broke open the storehouse of love of Godhead and distributed it to all, qualified or unqualified, similarly you extended that mercy to the rest of the world, engaging us in the *sañkīrtana* movement. Thank you for giving us the holy names, the great chant for deliverance, and thus blessing us with the chance to purify our hearts and taste that nectar for which we are always anxious. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*śrī-vigrahārādhana-nitya-nānā-  
śṛṅgāra-tan-mandira-mārjanādau  
yuktasya bhaktāñś ca niyuñjato ‘pi  
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

The spiritual master is always engaged in the temple worship of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. He also engages his disciples in such worship. They dress the Deities in beautiful clothes and ornaments, clean Their temple, and perform other similar worship of the Lord. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, from the moment Lord Jagannātha appeared before you in San Francisco, you engaged your disciples in worshipping the Deity forms of the Lord. You trained us to serve the Lord personally in this way, bathing, dressing, and decorating the deities, cleaning Their altar and temple, cooking and sewing for Them—thus helping us to realize that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Person and God is not some abstract concept. From the meditative process of bathing Their Lordships to the process of dressing and decorating Them (praying that They will be pleased with our efforts) to the moment the conch shell blows and frankincense billows out as the curtains

are opened, and there They are, in all Their glory, our hearts and minds were captivated. Thank you for engaging us in this all-auspicious service. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*catur-vidha-śrī-bhagavat-prasāda-  
svādo-anna-trptān hari-bhakta-saṅghān  
kṛtvāiva trptim bhajataḥ sadaiva  
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

‘The spiritual master is always offering Kṛṣṇa four kinds of delicious food (analyzed as that which is licked, chewed, drunk, and sucked). When the spiritual master sees that the devotees are satisfied by eating *bhagavat-prasāda*, he is satisfied. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master.’

Oh, the *prasādam*! The *halavāh*! *Pakorās*! Sweet rice and *gulabs*! With your “kitchen religion,” Śrīla Prabhupāda, you captured our hearts via our tongues. Once you said the new devotees (and we were all new!) should take *prasādam* “until they waddle”, and that “we’ll realize God simply by eating.” In the beginning you personally cooked for the devotees, encouraging them to “take more, take more,” and as your recipes were shared far and wide around the world, many fortunate souls joined the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement because *prasādam* was irresistible. Thank you for giving us the “secret weapon” of *prasādam*, Śrīla Prabhupāda. All glories to you.

*śrī-rādhikā-mādhavayor apāra-  
mādhurya-līlā-guṇa-rūpa-nāmnām  
prati-kṣaṇāsvādana-lolupasya  
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

‘The spiritual master is always eager to hear and chant about the unlimited conjugal pastimes of Rādhikā and Mādhava, and Their qualities, names, and forms. The spiritual master aspires to relish these at every moment. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master.’

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave us *Kṛṣṇa Book* even before finishing the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, so that we would have the sweet stories of Kṛṣṇa’s childhood as well as His nectarean pastimes with the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana to meditate on as we practiced the process of devotional service. You thus allowed us to have a glimpse of the ultimate perfection of life, the highest form of love of God. Before each class, you sang “*Jaya Rādhā-Mādhava*,” saying this song was “a picture

of Vṛndāvana.” Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us that glimpse, thus encouraging us to keep trying for that ultimate goal. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The eighth verse of the *Gurvaṣṭakam* prayers states:

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo  
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi  
dhyāyan stuvaṁs tasya yaśas tri-sandhyam  
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

‘By the mercy of the spiritual master one receives the benediction of Kṛṣṇa. Without the grace of the spiritual master, one cannot make any advancement. Therefore, I should always remember and praise the spiritual master. At least three times a day I should offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master.’

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are such an exalted personality; you are an overflowing storehouse of transcendental wisdom and the epitome of dedication to the instruction of your own spiritual master. Your accomplishments within the short time you were physically present with us are nothing short of amazing, from your austere Atlantic crossing to your traversing the globe numerous times for preaching, from your humble beginnings in the Bowery to your opening of 108 gorgeous temples all over the world, from your door-to-door distribution of flyers in India to your translation and commentary of over 80 volumes of transcendental literature.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am not at all qualified to be your disciple, but you have so kindly accepted me. Now my humble request is that you please empower me to carry out the duties of a disciple successfully. I am completely dependent upon your mercy. You have so kindly set me upon this path back to home, back to Godhead; it is my humble but fervent prayer that you bless me to always remain on that path and never wander from the shelter of your lotus feet.

May your glories be proclaimed throughout the three worlds.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Sujan Devi Dasi

Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preñthāya bhū-tale  
śrīmate Bhaktivedānta-śvāmīn iti nāmine*

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

*mūkuṁ karoti vācālam  
paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim  
yat-kṛpā tam aham vande  
śrī-guruṁ dīna-taraṇam*

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

—His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Gurukṛpa Prabhu once asked you what the most important verse  
in all the *śāstra* is. You quoted this *śloka* from the *Śvetasvatara  
Upanishad*.

*yasya deve parā bhaktir  
yathā deve tathā gurau  
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ  
prakāśante mahātmanāḥ*

“Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the  
Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge  
automatically revealed.” (ŚU 6.23)

Although Gurukṛpā told me at least 30 years ago, it has never left  
my heart. It is now nearly 52 years since I met one of your disciples,  
and he showed me your photo and I “woke up” and knew that I was  
here for you. At that moment so many years ago, everything sud-  
denly made perfect sense.

I had no idea who Kṛṣṇa was. I had heard Kṛṣṇa was one of the many “Gods” worshipped by the crazy people of India who worship cows instead of eating them. That is what I had been brought up to believe. Yet somehow, I understood that I MUST have a teacher to whom I can submit myself with full faith. I thought I would have to go to India and search. But you had come to the USA a few years before. I guess that I could feel you with me from the time you landed. I always felt someone was with me always, watching over me. And when I saw your photograph, I knew you were the one who I was waiting for. Since that moment I never have doubted you. And gradually by following the practices you gave me, by studying your books with the other devotees, I started to have faith that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Truth, the Person who is the source of everything animate and inanimate. I tell people today, that even if all 7.5 billion people on this planet tell me I am wrong, they will not convince me.

Prabhupāda, you know I am not a “good devotee”; I have not ever been able to perfectly control my senses and mind; I have done a zillion stupid, silly, ridiculous things. I have chased my enemies of lust, greed, anger all too often. I weep and lament of course. Yet I have the greatest hope too because you have taught me that every deposit in my Kṛṣṇa bank account is eternal and can never be lost. I have no doubt about this.

This morning I was telling my wife that everything I know I learned from you. She tried to disagree with me a little bit, but I insisted that how we eat, how we sleep, how we think, how we speak, who our friends are, what we hear, is all due only to you.

Surely, had you not come my life would have probably ended long ago, or I would be in some prison or mental institution. I saw no purpose in life before you came.

Prabhupāda, you are my Lord and master, birth after birth. I am not praying for liberation. I want to become a cent per cent pure Vaiṣṇava in one of these births so I can see your beaming smile. I know that is what you want. And Prabhupāda, that is what I want. I want to be a pure Vaiṣṇava. I am so far away from this, I can only weep. Tears roll down my cheeks because I am helpless, and I just depend on your causeless mercy.

Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for obeying the order of His Divine Grace Ṭhākura Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda. Thank you for showing us how to face death without fear. Thank you for exposing the rascal cheating bogus “scientists”, “doctors”, “philosophers”,



“authors”, “spiritualists”, and all the “isms” that plague this world.

My request is you bless me that I can follow in your footprints forever, and one day I will again see your smile and feel your embrace.

*I am your eternal servant without any doubts,*

Bhakta Dasa

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

You sit in Mayapur crying as you chant on your beads. You are in the temple at the home of Nandanācārya, begging for blessings before your maiden voyage to America. The *pūjārī*, who had seen you before as a *gr̥hastha*, at first doesn't recognize you in saffron. He comes closer and sees your tears. Now realizing it is you, asks, "Why are you crying?"

"My spiritual master has given me an order that I have no qualification to fulfill. I am simply begging for his mercy to fulfill that order."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am also burdened with a similar feeling. You have given me – and all of us – the impossible order to make the world Kṛṣṇa conscious. And I haven't the slightest qualification to do this.

I wish I had special powers to turn people into pure devotees of Kṛṣṇa in the same way you did. I long for deep intelligence like yours so that I can understand how to bring the masses to Kṛṣṇa's feet. If I were only empowered to do something significant for your Guru Mahārāja. The world is suffering and you have huge plans for saving it. Yet unfortunately, when you look at me you can see that I have huge disqualifications to help you realize those plans.

How much I want to understand your heart, your mood, your deepest desires. How much I want to know your vision for the future, your insights for establishing *varṇāśrama*. How much I long for the intelligence to reconcile the many controversies and paradoxes we face. But despite my disqualification, you still ask me to be a leader. This lack of qualification is painful to bear because you deserve better and so does the world.

I sometimes think that if I have to come back, let me be blessed with one hundred times more purity, one hundred times more sense

control, one hundred times more compassion and one hundred times more intelligence. But such wishful thinking is useless. So I ask you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, can you bless me now with a hundred times more purity, sense control, compassion and intelligence? I really want to be an instrument in taking your movement to the next level, yet without your blessings I can't do much. Would you consider making me a puppet? I am willing.

I am at your feet, a beggar crying to help execute the impossible task you have given me.

*With tears in my eyes, I remain,  
Your worthless servant,*

Mahatma Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In 1965 when the Jaladutta docked in Boston harbor you had completed your ocean crossing, but your journey was still beginning.

Great social change had started in the USA and the world. It was a time of seeking new purpose, direction, meaning, and inspiration. Some of the youth were already absorbed in an inner dialogue regarding personal values and actions. We were looking for heroes, someone, or something to believe in. We sought a more meaningful path to satisfaction through mind and heart, though popular musicians had already declared through song that they couldn't find the satisfaction we longed for.

Many of us were attending high schools and universities while others were in Vietnam fighting an unpopular war. Some had jobs working within society, others gathered on the edges of that society peering with distrust and disinterest.

It was easy to see what we didn't want. What we did want was less clear.

To come in contact with one so intimately connected with Kṛṣṇa, to hear from and serve you was a rare gift.

It is said that a moment's association with a pure devotee opens the path to liberation.

Yours is a different world, yet you came to deliver an important message to those you knew so little of. In such a foreign environment you taught expertly though your students were from a different background and culture. You were personal and present and touched us deeply.

Delivered from the heart, your message of transcendence was shared with elegance, simplicity and uncommon sense. You spoke to the inner spirit that we had long forgotten. Like Kṛṣṇa speaking to Arjuna your words cut through layers of confusion and misdirection to remind us of our true being.

The kirtan of your heart, your voice of truth, the beat of your tom tom drum rising from Tompkins Square Park became the catapult of a love force which gradually changed hippies into happies. From under that tree you birthed hope, optimism, and purpose for many.

You created your own path in America as you lovingly carried Kṛṣṇa within as He guided you without.

You were not an uptown Swami selling mantras and liberation.

Your path was very different.

You were a devotee and cultured Bengali businessman dedicated to social reform and political ideals in hopes to free India from foreign rule. After meeting your Guru Mahārāja everything changed. You dedicated your talents and utilized whatever you had to deliver Caitanya Mahāprabhu's message of spiritual equality, *kirtan*, and loving devotional service.

You set your sights high, boldly living the example 'to shoot for the rhinoceros'. You explained that if you don't succeed people will say it was impossible, and if you do succeed they will be amazed and stunned. Your traveling to the most important city in the world, New York City, was an example of this. You arrived *dhotī* clad in the center of western commerce and materialism with 5 US dollars and a few boxes of your *Śrīmad Bhāgavatams* full of charming, endearing, but otherwise unsophisticated English as your traveling companion and spiritual ammunition. What was the probability of your success? Who will listen?

You had no base, manpower, or finance, yet within a few short years you created an international organization distributing millions of volumes of sacred literature with followers visible everywhere.

Truth be told though, we were surprisingly few, but we were transcendently inspired to accomplish anything you asked.

You are confident without being arrogant, strong, yet humble. You are Kṛṣṇa's man delivering His message. There is no grey area. The only grey in your world is the color of a dark monsoon rain cloud and all of Vṛndāvana is in love with Him.

Your artistry was evident in everything you did. You introduced Kṛṣṇa's ancient spiritual culture to the leading, most materially advanced country of the world while in the middle of it breaking barriers, social and cultural revolution. Whether you were addressing university students, Allen Ginsberg, George Harrison, journalists, ministers, educators, or politicians, you spoke to the soul.

You are everyone's well wisher.

To curious westerners you presented a powerful message putting material life in perspective with personal anecdotes and examples, quotes from *śāstra* and even humor.

After hearing from you our quest for freedom and sense of self took a turn that earlier no one could have imagined.

You restructured our way of doing things – what we ate, how we spoke, what our interests were and our perspective on life itself.

Ultimately you gave us a framework in which to live and practice while gradually developing the qualities of Bhakti.

Yogi Berra, who was not a yogi, nor part of any *sampradāya*, but a baseball player, manager, and coach of a popular New York team is a well known cultural figure in America. He is also generally appreciated for a number of clever statements.

One of his popular sayings is:

“When you come to a fork in the road take it”

Each of us in our lives, in our individual and personal way, in our own time, will arrive at that fork in the road.

Yogi Berra didn’t specify which fork to take, because he didn’t know. This is part of the interest or universality in his statement as he encourages, but doesn’t provide a clear answer.

As *ācārya*, one who teaches though example, your answer to this question both through personal actions and words would be much more direct:

Take the path of *bhakti*, the clearest path to Kṛṣṇa.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

*Humbly,*

Narottamananda Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*Daṇḍavat praṇāms,*

What was it like to be given an impossible challenge? You had inherited the most valuable ideal in existence and you had been tasked the mother of all Mission Impossible: give this wonderful, joyous gem to the most unfortunate, unqualified prospects in the world.

This was your dilemma. In a span of twelve short years you transplanted the ancient wisdom and practice of loving devotion to the Supreme from India to America and beyond, thereby igniting a revolution in consciousness that is liberating countless seekers from the suffering of bodily misidentification and bestowing on them the highest spiritual attainment...Love of Goddess and God, the Supreme Divine Persons, Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your conclusion to your 1936 Vyāsa pūjā offering to your Guru Mahārāja, is the acme of a sincere disciples expression of his or her humble and determined mentality of dependence on the grace of Guru and eternal commitment to the service of said Guru:

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

*Your aspiring servant,*

Madhukanta Dasa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances to your lotus feet. All glories to you and to all of the sincere disciples and grand disciples of His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura who have (and continue to ) spread the glories and message of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu throughout the world....giving light in this dark Age of Kali.

I look at my altar Śrīla Prabhupāda, and I see the picture of you in New Mayapur, France and just behind you is my husband Jayakula Dāsa, eagerly hearing every word coming from your lotus mouth. There were others in the picture, but I enlarged that part of the picture of the two of you. In my few years with Jayakula Prabhu he did not speak much, so over the years I have pieced together his story of how he met you. I knew that he had joined in Australia, and then had come back to France and joined us in the Paris temple sometime in early 1973. My first sight of Jayakula was that he was kneeling in front of the Treasurer's office, pushing his collection into the little slot in the door. Yamunā had asked me to see if I could bring some Brittany lace to Vṛndāvana for the Deities, and I was told to ask him as he was from Brittany. Nothing came of our discussion, except that I was impressed by his sincerity. And then I went and served in Vṛndāvana till late August 1974, then went with the devotees to Chandigarh when you fell ill Prabhupāda, and was then asked by our new GBC Bhagavān Dās to be *pūjārī* in the Delhi temple as Madira was pregnant and not able to do the service. So I was in Delhi temple until July of 1975, and then went back to Paris as I was missing the preaching spirit. It was right before your arrival that summer, Prabhupāda, and I helped Kauśalya cook for you, and we rode in a car behind yours on the way to New Mayapur.

Then many years later, (many years after your departure and that of Jayakula also) when the "*Following Śrīla Prabhupāda*" series of videos were distributed, (early 2000?). I was so happy to watch the video about you in Jakarta, Indonesia. Lo and behold I see Jayakula is there in the audience, not yet shaved up or in a *dhotī*, and I also see that Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa Prabhu (who I had met when he and Bhakta Das passed through London on their way to India in 1971) is also in the audience, though Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa is shaved up and in a *dhotī*. So Tuṣṭa Kṛṣṇa must have talked Jayakula (then he was Jean-Claude)



into flying to Jakarta to meet you, Prabhupāda. And now I realize that the blue condensed *Bhagavad-gītā* that you signed for Jayakula must have been from that visit ... we still have that *Bhagavad-gītā* with your signature. So I pieced together that after that encounter Jayakula flew back to Paris, joined the temple, and gave the temple all the money he had saved to buy a farm in New Caledonia. With that money *saṅkīrtana* trucks were purchased, and many devotees went on traveling *saṅkīrtana* for weeks at a time. And Jayakula was one of them. And because of that video my daughter was able to see her father. It was so wonderful.

I returned to France in the summer of 1975 a week or two before your yearly visit, Prabhupāda. I was inspired to join the women's team on traveling *saṅkīrtana* under the direction of Prabhava Prabhu. At that time I had the wonderful association of the glorious French *saṅkīrtana* girls: Jagat Kīrtī, Daṇḍakeśī, and Jīva Dāsī...and later on the association of the saintly Mṛdā Devī Dāsī Prabhu from Italy. These devotees were so inspiring, and lived so austerely. We slept in tents in the forest, and took baths with a bucket of cold water....and then all day going door to door and shop to shop to distribute your books in French.

Bhagavān Prabhu encouraged me to marry Jayakula Prabhu, and so in March of 76 we married. He came to Paris for a few hours while he and I, and Pārijāta and Mandākinī as witnesses, went to the Mairie for our legal marriage. We were asked to go to Brittany and start the cow protection program, as well as distribute books and start a temple there. Six days a week we were out, and Saturday night we returned to the farm, and on Sunday had a love feast. If there was farm work to be done: planting or harvesting, or bringing in the hay we would stay back. Some very nice devotees joined from that time. Most of the time we would sleep in the van, and in the morning Jayakula would give class while I cooked our main meal of the day....our breakfast of vegetables. While I cooked in the van, Jayakula would give class, and they were such good classes. One day on *saṅkīrtana* I purchased a tape recorder (@ \$10) so I could record his classes and share with other devotees. He was upset that I had taken *saṅkīrtana* money for personal use!

How potent was your preaching Śrīla Prabhupāda, that a young man like Jayakula could surrender and serve you so faithfully. He left his body in 1980 the day after Ekādaśī right before Gaura Pūrṇimā. Years later, I realized that this is the day of the disappearance of

Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī. In the seventh month of my pregnancy, I had decided to stay back at the farm and Jayakula went out a week or two without me. After his departure I saw in his van the flowers he had offered to your picture when he had been out alone on *saṅkīrtana*. Always devotional, and he was always grateful to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

The last time you came to France, Prabhupāda, was in the summer of 1976. Bhagavān asked me to come to Paris and prepare your room. You stayed only one night in Paris, and the next day you went to New Mayapur where all the devotees had congregated. I joined the girls' party and we would go out during the day and get back in time for the late afternoon *darśana* under a tree at the farm. Jayakula had stayed in Brittany because it was time to harvest the barley. But Prabhupāda, you were so kind, you wanted Jayakula to come. So you asked for "barley chapattis", and Jayakula was told to come and bring barley for you, Prabhupāda. So he did come and got to be with you for some days. Then we went to Paris to see you off, before we went back up to Brittany. That was the first time I had ever been to an airport arrival or departure, as I was usually preparing your rooms whether in London, Vṛndāvana, Delhi, or Paris. I remember Kirtiraj and his wife were there also.

Your greatness, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is attested to by the devotion of so many devotees like Jayakula Prabhu, who spoke little, and did so much service, always with love, devotion and gratitude, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I bow down to such godbrothers and godsisters, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and ultimately to you, Prabhupāda, our lord and master, and to your kindness upon us.

*Your fallen, yet aspiring servant of your servants,*

Aditi Devi Dasi

## Ujjala Devi Dasi

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

Little drops of nectar  
Little prayers of faith  
We built these temples a beautiful place  
As a love offering to His Divine Grace

Humble were our beginnings  
Sacrifice was our delight  
So simple was our life  
From early morning until late at night

My experience was fresh like morning dew  
The moment I met my Guru  
You placed your hand upon my head  
With tears I said, I love you  
You responded, "Yes I love you too, you are my daughter."  
Quietly I sit to hear you say  
"Chant 16 rounds every day"

For Back to Godhead sounds like a great gift!  
*Praṇāms* I bow the whole world can see,  
Why we chant the holy name eternally

*I remain your servant,  
Your teachings flow through me,*

Ujjala Devi Dasi

One afternoon, I found myself alone in the Boston Temple Room, and I remembered asking someone what the little silver container on the altar was and being told that it contained some of Śrīla Prabhupāda's hair. With no one around to tell me not to, I reached down, picked up the metal box, and carefully pried open the lid.

At the moment the lid opened, my whole body became electrified – it was really a lot like an electric shock – instantaneous, momentary, and powerful. I hadn't actually seen His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda yet, but in that instant, I knew I was in his presence. It was a tremendous affirmation that what I was doing with my life – promoting the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa – was the right thing to be doing.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrate obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace, who has saved humanity from the clutches of Māyā's snare.

In utter humility and despair, my life has been nothing but failure in trying to please Your Divine Grace. Reflecting upon the past, I see only the times you chastized and corrected me, how I caused you inconvenience in your service. But looking to the future, there is hope. I try every day to distribute your books. This is the only saving grace, both personally and collectively for the world. Meditating how to increase your book distribution is the one hope I have to someday please you.

Therefore, please forgive me, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for the failures of the past, and allow me to continue to try to please you, at least by distributing your life-saving books. We have no other shelter than your divine instructions. The world is a desert without your life-giving words.

Please allow me to forever take shelter at your lotus feet, with the hope to please you one day.

*Begging to remain your eternal servant,*

Daivisakti Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, our beloved savior, eternal well-wisher, and Guru Mahārāja,

Our most heartfelt obeisances to your holy lotus feet. All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga!

Scholars herald you as the prophet of all prophets, proclaiming that in the history of mankind, all others have taught within their own constituency. You, on the other hand, in the service of your beloved spiritual master and with the sole desire to fulfil his command, traveled alone and at great risk to a foreign land, to a culture that was the antithesis of your own. Speaking to people in their tongue, not your own, you who not only valiantly positioned the practice of Kṛṣṇa consciousness on the world stage, but fanned the sparks of devotion in each of your fledgling followers, such that within no time, the flames of Śrī Kṛṣṇa *saṅkīrtana* engulfed the entire world. *Time* magazine bore testimony to this with the headlines "THE HARE KRISHNA EXPLOSION!"

Spinning a globe atlas, you would point to a new, seemingly random location and send your *saṅkīrtana* warriors there. They traveled far and wide, and through them, you opened Kṛṣṇa conscious centers everywhere. You created *Dhāmas*. Now, even through the internet, you are spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness to every nook and cranny of the world. You are a magician who practically showed that anyone and everyone, regardless of their background, has the right to aspire for pure devotion.

You left us a legacy of transcendental literature, the law books for the next 10,000 years. By installing so many Deities, you created many holy places throughout the world where Their Lordships' pastimes are being celebrated daily during *āratis* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā* studies. You have given us residence in these holy places, and thus a golden opportunity to serve your mission. Knowing that merely expressing words of appreciation is severely lacking, we hope to convey our appreciation by dedicating our lives to you as best we can.

Although we are only infinitesimally aware of the blessings you have given us, by your mercy we may properly celebrate the life gifted by you by practicing your teachings and sharing your blessing with suffering humanity.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we celebrate you showing the world the eternal

religion, by aspiring to follow in the footsteps of those purest of souls, who steal out in the dead of night to dance with the Lord. But first, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to qualify for that, we need to fully surrender to you, become your faithful sevites so you can, in your own words, “Make us dance, make us dance, make us dance as you like!”

*Truly in Your Divine Grace,*

Kusha Devi Dasi

**GURU SEVA**

In Calcutta, 1896 under a Jackfruit tree  
September 1 appeared a special baby  
Not an ordinary condition soul  
This one was sent, it was foretold.

Gour Mohan with faith and devotion  
Put this child's spiritual life in motion  
Learning harmonium, playing the drum  
Everyone takes notice, an exceptional son

Rathayātrā was not just a child's game  
This was an opportunity to share the Lord's fame  
An exact cart, feast preparation, inviting everyone  
this was practice for future things to come

"No! I'm not going" I've seen the lot  
"So called *sādhus* cheating, smoking pot!"  
"Just wearing saffron, they've created a rot"  
"I don't have the time to not be smart"

"Just this once humor me  
I need your opinion desperately"  
Up the stairs to the roof top, there Guru sat  
regal, scholarly, sitting with straight back

Spontaneous *daṇḍavats* respect for the man  
But before they arose there came a command  
"Young men, travel and preach to all lands  
Lord Caitanya's message is in good hands"

This lad acknowledged a higher calling  
This guru was elevated, worth following  
His instructions become Abhay's perfection  
From this time forward there's no other destination

Performing his duties in *grhastha* life  
Never deviating and enduring so much strife



His qualities grew beautiful bold and bright  
His words were strong full of might and right

Kṛṣṇa set the sails for the difficult journey  
He took off, never hesitating, lamenting or yearning  
Two heart attacks, would this be the end?  
He deepened his devotion on Kṛṣṇa he'd depend

The old *sādhu* arrived in the foreign land  
Books in a trunk, 40 rupees in his hand  
Go right or left he didn't know  
He was focused, dedicated, and continued to go

An unearthly example of tolerance, patience and love  
He taught anyone who would listen about the God above  
Never before have these people seen in one being  
such compassion, intelligence, love and reasoning

Before long, East to West, North to South  
his message was spread throughout  
Sacred books were printed and distributed  
Everyone touched by the holy name he gifted

Temples appeared in all the Western lands  
It was not enough for this saintly man  
Russia and China were added to the story  
Even his country awoke to revive its glory

As he didn't stay for that long  
my heart continues to sing his song  
We strive to honor this elevated soul  
All he's given us cannot be told

Can we begin to grasp and understand  
how he lightened all the lands?  
From horrible reactions, so many sinful feats  
to glorious placement at Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet!

Our only desire now is to serve his mission  
take his lasting words with submission  
so that one day we can again be charmed  
by seeing him smile and follow him along

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace. These words never become hackneyed because they embody the constant meaningful factor of our life.

How fortunate we are to be able to speak to you still, to pray to you, to remember the unbelievable sweetness of your personal association and the profoundly powerful effect it has had on all of your fortunate spiritual sons and daughters, as well as whoever we meet with whom we can share Kṛṣṇa consciousness. On the blessed day you appeared, the Lord smiled upon us, giving the most rare opportunity to begin our journey Home. Without you, there would have been no chance for us.

With each passing year, it becomes even more inconceivable that we've been given such mercy. Now most of my godbrothers and sisters and I are around the age that you were when you went to America. We begin to realise more intensely the austerities you performed in order to come to the west and accept us as your disciples. How patiently and kindly you dealt with so many young men and women who were completely new to Vaiṣṇava life, behaviour and activities. I personally marvel daily that you gave us this amazing experience of devotional service. Through your books and personal example, you trained us in every possible way and continue to do so.

I deeply regret having been so slow to acquire a higher taste; yet in spite of my lack of qualification, I am inspired at how you still introduced me to the Supreme Lord's service. Slowly and as you said, gradually we can move forward by simply reading your instructions and embracing the purports you have written to guide every day, if not every hour of our lives. Spiritual and miraculous osmosis. Your association has changed the world.

More than ever before and increasingly, your words ring so true and it seems as if a new day is dawning in this 'spot life.' You have created such a rich and auspicious culture of living for us, enabling us to go forward towards the supreme destination. Sometimes in the course of meeting devotees and guests from India, upon inquiring about their well-being and health, we receive the response, "Oh, very good - by your mercy." I always think, "but how on earth have I done anything to augment your health! "But it's a different story

for us in relation to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. All our good fortune is due only to you. You have taught us even the simple rudiments of cleanliness and a godly life in service:

*“A life of service as drawn by you, pleasing and fresh like the morning dew,”* as you wrote in your offering to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī.

Indeed, the glimmering light is beginning to pervade my heart little by little and the meaning of the words, *“By the grace of Kṛṣṇa one gets the spiritual master and by the grace of the spiritual master, one gets Kṛṣṇa.”* Although I struggle with the miseries of the mind and senses, every difficulty diminishes on remembering the shining truths that you have injected into the core of our being and this has occurred, beyond a doubt, *“only by your mercy.”* When those we meet say this phrase, I reflect that is all we are here for – to somehow carry the torch of knowledge that you have lit in our hearts and try to be an instrument in this sacred movement. In this way, we can actually become well-wishers. You came and are present in your words every day of my life. There is hope always if we bring our attention back constantly to your presence in our very existence. You have brought us to life, real life.

*“He opens my darkened eyes and fills my heart with transcendental knowledge. He is my lord, birth after birth. From him ecstatic prema emanates; by him, ignorance is destroyed.”*

How can we thank you without it being mere words – it is impossible to repay the gift you have bestowed upon us. I can only continue to attempt to immerse myself in the spiritual practices you have instructed and to somehow connect with people we meet and share the joy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Even if we are not feeling joyful, as soon as we speak what you have taught, we immediately become happy beyond belief. There is nothing so enlivening as witnessing others taking to the process of devotional service. In this way, we experience your association and feel the presence of Kṛṣṇa. It is wondrous. I offer my deep gratitude at your feet for engaging me in this service. Kṛṣṇa is the doer and you, Śrīla Prabhupāda are His representative and external manifestation of the Supersoul. By your mercy, you have kindly allowed us to participate in the transcendental pastimes of Lord Caitanya.

*“My only wish is to have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from his lotus mouth.”*

The miracle is, as soon as we deliver this message that you have brought in service to Lord Caitanya, a change in consciousness is immediate, tangible and contagious. Your presence in your words and instructions have indeed created a fire that no-one can extinguish. To hear your voice is utterly moving and destroys the demon of doubt.

I thank you for accepting me. My only real fear is to be separated from you, and I pray at your lotus feet to forgive my slowness to apply your instructions consistently. I never want to leave your association, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please forgive my offenses and allow me to remain in service. I am trying with all my small might to improve and to become an authentic devotee and follower of Your Divine Grace.

*Your eternal daughter,*  
Sarvamangala Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

This year is the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your divine appearance in this world. On this occasion many feelings come to mind:

1. I am so grateful that you entered my life on January 5, 1970, when I prayed for a way to develop love of God on my special rock in Laguna Beach. When I was praying I remembered what some of you disciples had told me when I met them. “For real spiritual life we have to give up illicit sex and intoxication.” I remembered those insights that day. I told God I would give up these things if He would send me a way to develop the love of God. I had my eyes closed, and I wondered how long it would take for my prayer to be answered. I opened my eyes and you had immediately sent one of your servants to provide me with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He was standing there.
2. I do not know how I can survive without your personal association. It gives me great pain. Then I realize that I can have your association in so many ways.
  - A. You used to say that if I am chanting here and you are chanting there we are still together. So I wake around 2 a.m. to chant extra rounds.
  - B. You say that your books contain your devotional ecstasies, so I spend many hours studying your books.
3. I get great solace from written instruction and encouragement that you personally sent me. I try to remember them and apply them.
  - A. You wrote to me that you were very much pleased that I had taken responsibility to preach in South Africa at such a young age of 19. So today I try to take up responsibilities to preach in Laguna Beach and help new people become devotees. I also travel back to South Africa to preach all over the country. I also preach in India and Indonesia and attend festivals in Russia, Ukraine and other countries to encourage new devotees.
  - B. You wrote to me that somehow or other I had been left alone by Kṛṣṇa’s arrangement. Your letter encouraged me when I was alone in South Africa for six months at 19 years old. It also encourages me now that I am alone, no parents,

no brothers and sisters, no wife. I just have you and my service to you and Kṛṣṇa.

C. You wrote to me that you were praying to Kṛṣṇa that I would have the strength and enthusiasm to carry out my preaching mission. I continue to pray this way because without you praying for me I do not have the strength and enthusiasm to carry on.

D. You wrote to me to chant my 16 rounds and follow four regulative principles. This will keep my consciousness pure to engage in devotional service. The minute I awake in the morning, I offer my obeisances to you and I ask you to direct me to do these things and dedicate my day and my life to your service.

4. I feel your presence in my godbrothers and their disciples who are dedicated to your service. I just try to emulate them and assist them. As you said "We will show our love for you by how we cooperate with each other."

I am willing to travel and expand Kṛṣṇa consciousness rather than settle in one place.

I beg that in the following year I may be able to continue these practices all day every day.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Kshudi Dasa

*yasya deve parā bhaktir  
yathā deve tathā gurau  
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ  
prakāśante mahātmanaḥ*

“Unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master, all the imports of Vedic knowledge are automatically revealed.”— *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.23

What more can I say? Is this not reason enough to surrender to and love Śrīla Prabhupāda? Every single day, when we pick up our bead bag and chant:

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare  
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

Do we not understand, appreciate, and experience the contradistinction between the mortal bodily frame and immortal consciousness?

Do we not get unlimited, exponential realization, on a daily basis, regarding our absolute, true, glorious existence and being?

Kṛṣṇa is the ‘Supreme Pure’, so does it not make sense that we must also become *pure*, even if progressively, in stages, and make continuous advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness to chant inoffensively?

Is it not flawless logic and make impeccable sense that we *Bow down, Worship and Serve the Source of Everything and the Ultimate Cause of all Causes?*

Do we not desire to reside in *Eternity*, bathe in sublime *Knowledge*, and gradually awaken and pursue a *Blissful* relationship with the *Supreme Personality of Godhead?*

And so we must *pray and beg to Surrender*, wholly and utterly, dependent on Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava, *in the only way we know and relish:*

**AT THE DIVINE LOTUS FEET OF ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA.**

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

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

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, on the occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration I crawl to you as a lowly beggar, barely a human being despite receiving your causeless mercy, to pray again that you never let go of me and to pray that I may eternally serve you and your mission in any way that pleases you.

When you first came to America, you found the entire population to be no more than animals in human dress. Our condition was that we were covered by the darkness of identifying with our material bodies, under the control of the lower modes of nature. We were servants to unlimited and uncontrollable material desires and longings. We were a society made up of liars, filled with arrogance, greed, anger, lust, conceit, foolishness, madness, despair, violence and illusion. We felt alone, filled with distress and anxiety, believing that the ultimate goal of life was to gratify our senses up until our last breath. We were propelled by envy and sex desire and were destined to go down to the hellish worlds. We truly thought and behaved like dogs, hogs, camels and asses.

You came into this darkness as the source of light, of absolute knowledge and divine love. The Lord in our hearts enabled some souls to understand that you had descended into this material plane as a direct associate, ambassador and representative of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Lord Śrī Gaurāṅga. You knew Kṛṣṇa, you were/are His personal and confidential associate in Goloka. For the first time in our history, we heard and began to understand the true meaning of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as the source of all sources. We



had not known that God's associates experienced timeless ecstatic and ever expanding love for Him in every conceivable type of divine relationship. We did not know that all human emotions and relationships and love is but a dim and insignificant perverted reflection of the loving exchanges that the vast majority of all souls experience with God Himself in His innumerable spiritual abodes.

You created the only institution in the world to actually teach how we are not our material bodies, to teach how to awaken the vision of eternity, and to teach how to begin a true march back home, back to Godhead.

Just as the sun alone illuminates the entire universe, you appeared as the empowered sunlike guru to awaken our sleeping souls, have us rise above our conditioned state, and awaken transcendental qualities dormant within every soul.

Perhaps for the first time in billions of lifetimes, no matter who we were or where we lived, we felt that we were being perfectly loved. Your love for each of us was universal, unconditional and at the same time so very personal!

You gave us the ability to rise above selfish desires, even "selfish spiritual desires", and devote our life and soul to the mission of saving all conditioned souls. Setting aside what "we wanted to do for you and Kṛṣṇa", you gave us the vision and desire to instead devote ourselves to what pleases you and Lord Kṛṣṇa the most. Regardless of our natures, our propensities and personal interests, you turned us into your *Saṅkīrtana* soldiers to distribute your divine books and to distribute the holy name publicly to every town and village.

Once, when we were sharing a train car in India, you spoke to me about Lord Rāmacandra engaging an army of empowered devotee monkeys to help rescue Śrīmatī Sītā Devī from the great demon of the age. You compared that *līlā* to your coming to the West and engaging monkeys in human dress to help you rescue Laxmī Devī and bring Her back to the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

I pray to remain your lowly instrument, your puppet, your "monkey" to be used in any way that pleases you the most. On this great occasion of celebrating your divine appearance, I fervently pray with all my heart that you somehow find some use for me in your *Saṅkīrtana* mission, life after life.

*Your lowly aspiring eternal servant,*

Ramesvara Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my unworthy obeisances at your lotus feet, on this, the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your divine appearance. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, when you were present with us you exhibited extraordinary grace in ordinary dealings. Your exemplary behavior was an exquisite manifestation of your exalted consciousness.

You inhabited your physical body with ease and joy because you fully understood the difference between your external body and your inner self. On the other hand, because we conditioned souls take the body to be the self, and because we're filled with material motives and desires, our body becomes a bewildering, painful abode.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as an eternally liberated soul you have always experienced full, ever-expanding consciousness whether you inhabited an external body or not. And when you did inhabit a physical body, you respected it and cared for it as a valuable vehicle with which to render service to Kṛṣṇa in the material sphere.

Those of us who identify with our body are always in a state of fear. On some level we're always expecting danger; we know that our body will die one day, we just don't know when. Our ever-present fear means that we're never fully present – in the same way that someone who occupies a building that may burn at any moment *cannot* be at peace in that building.

Which brings us to a paradox: the only way to be fully present in a physical body is to not identify with it. If we identify with our body, we become enslaved by the modes of material nature, which cover our consciousness and blunt our self-expression.

But you were fully present in your external body, and this allowed you to perform wondrous deeds. On the “macro” level you turned *mlecchas* into Vaiṣṇavas, presented the essence of the Vedas in innumerable modern languages, and implanted the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* into human society everywhere. On a “micro” level you used your time wisely and efficiently, your movements were graceful and deliberate, and you were always fearless and joyful. You remained unaffected by bodily disturbances, such as illness, heat and cold, or hunger. (As you expressed in one of your Bhaktivedanta Purports: The pure devotee is always eager to use 100% of the energy in his body to serve Kṛṣṇa.) You were 100% immersed in your eternal pastimes with Lord Kṛṣṇa and at the same time you were 100%

present in this world, which to me is unfathomable and miraculous!

Some people have great impact on the world but their character is flawed or abrasive. Many people are superficially “nice” but have little impact on the world. Few are those who accomplish great things and do so with pristine character. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you epitomized such a person, for you taught us how to create the greatest benefit for the world and at the same time act in purity.

For the remainder of my life I shall thank you for the gifts you bestowed upon us all.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Jaya Jagadisa Dasa

All glories to A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda! He truly is Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's Divine Grace.

If Śrīla Prabhupāda had not made that journey to America in 1965, we, his disciples would have certainly all perished, having drowned in the ferocious ocean of Māyā.

Everything that Śrīla Prabhupāda has written and spoken is the Absolute Truth, which becomes more and more apparent with the passing of each and every day.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for coming to our rescue and giving us the opportunity to regain our original Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

All glories to your lotus feet.

*Your menial disciple,*

Anadi Dasa

*tasmīns tuṣṭe kim aprāpyam  
jagatām īśvareśvare  
lokāḥ sapālā hy etasmai  
haranti balim āḍṛtāḥ*

‘The Supreme Personality of Godhead is worshiped by the great demigods, controllers of universal affairs. When He is satisfied, nothing is impossible to achieve. For this reason all the demigods, presiding deities of different planets, as well as the inhabitants of their planets, take great pleasure in offering all kinds of paraphernalia for His worship.’ — *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.14.20

Thank you Prabhupāda for leading us as well on the path which is followed by the great demigods and brings the highest benefit to all living beings.

As each and every member of the *paramparā* followed the previous *ācāryas*, as you followed your guru Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami, we aspire to follow your example in spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the globe.

The benedictory effects of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement are to be felt not only by human beings of every ethnicity and nationality but by the birds, fish, plants, trees and animals as well.

*yad bhrājamānam sva-rucaiva sarvato  
lokās trayo hy anu vibhrājanta ete  
yan nāvrajañ jantuṣu ye ‘nanugrahā  
vrajanti bhadraṇi caranti ye ‘niśam*

‘The self-effulgent Vaikuṅṭha planets, by whose illumination alone all the illuminating planets within this material world give off reflected light, cannot be reached by those who are not merciful to other living entities. Only persons who constantly engage in welfare activities for other living entities can reach the transcendental world.’ — *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.12.36

Thank you Prabhupāda for your mercy in inducting us into the fraternity of great souls whose only desire is to retrieve the fallen souls back to home back to Godhead.

## Kurma dasa

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

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

“Rolls Royce is not enough!”  
Melbourne, Tuesday, 25 June 1974  
Early morning airport greeting,  
Devotees chant, their hearts a-beating.  
Another visit, more mercy planned  
For this distant Southern land.

Alitalia touchdown, drums a-thunder,  
Surely this time no arrival-blunder,  
But your Grace exits from a different gate –  
“Where are the devotees?” No time to wait!

You walk alone the corridor  
Until we notice – we hit the floor.  
Then – leaping, running, loving cries,  
For the cynosure of moistened eyes.

“Prabhupāda!” now tears are flowing,  
We gaze in rapture – you are glowing  
With love for us, your eyes shine light!  
We tremble at this awesome sight.

Madhudviṣa, ever forthright  
Shares the schedule with delight.  
“Press lounge is next, please walk this way–”  
Roaring kirtan, petals spray.

Mirrored umbrella, kartals clash,  
Your adoring children, unabashed.  
Locomotive of love, thundering loud,  
Sweeping through bewildered crowd.

Summum bonum of our greeting:  
Your expertise in bold press meeting.  
We settle quietly on the floor  
And gaze at you with wondrous awe.

Tanned and brilliant, aristocratic, bright,  
Unfazed by taxing long-haul flight.  
Months in Bombay – and now you're here!  
Paramahansa, smiling ear to ear.

Notebooks, microphones adjusted,  
Some friendly, some a bit disgusted.  
Reporters jostle, pens in hand,  
Kneeling close, a boisterous band.

Your moistened eyes slowly scan the room,  
We gaze back, awe and love abloom  
You scrutinise each and every face  
With contented, peaceful loving grace.

Your cane propped up, quietly chanting  
On your beads, your love implanting  
Each of us with causeless mercy,  
Transcending press club controversy.

Hostile questions begin, apace,  
"I've got a question, er, 'Your Grace,'  
Why do your followers bow, and what's more  
Press their faces to the floor?"

Interrogation brusque, aggressive, rude,  
Yet you're unfazed by envious mood.  
Fearless and sober, your answer is bold  
Abhaya! Your demeanour a joy to behold.

"Please listen, hear me carefully  
For what I'm going to speak:  
The Kingdom of God is open  
For the humble and the meek."

“You ask why they prostrate themselves,  
Heads humbly to the floor?  
I’m teaching them humility,  
Essential, and what’s more –”

“I help them to progress towards God,  
By bowing, humble acts.  
I have to collect obeisances  
As a taxman collects tax.”

We’re stunned, amazed at your reply,  
For sure you’re not going to humbly comply  
With irreverent aggressors, wont to dig dirt.  
The absolute truth is yours to assert!

Another reporter, equally cynical,  
Unaware of transcendence and matters brahminical:  
“Your Grace, I’m wondering if you have any idea  
Of the vast sums of money you raise in a year?”

You grin like a warrior challenged to fight,  
Kṛṣṇa’s dear soldier, not taking flight.  
Your answer, a victory banner unfurled:  
“We can spend all the money of the world!”

We roar out in joy, “Haribol!” “Haribol!”  
Uncompromisingly you’ve scored a goal.  
The added riposte is sweeter than honey:  
“Unfortunately, you do not give us the money.”

“We’re spending so much on printing our books”  
The reporters, unsatisfied, glare with sour looks.  
“How much?” cries one lady, like a jackal at feast.  
Your reply: “\$800,000 per month – at least!!”

A female reporter then asks with a smirk:  
“Tell us now – do you actually work?”  
(‘Best defense is offence’, this you certainly knew)  
“We’re actually working much harder than you.”



“I travel all over the world, in old age,”  
Your answers come quickly, to deftly assuage.  
But the best of all questions they’d saved ‘til the end,  
Outraged that the ‘Kṛṣṇas’ could grossly misspend.

“Your Grace...” (inferring financial foul play)  
“A Rolls Royce is waiting to whisk you away!”  
(Expecting your response to be apologetic):  
“You’re supposed to be living a lifestyle ascetic!”

You meet with this challenge, a *kṣatriya* spar:  
“We don’t disapprove of a luxury car!  
Why should I refuse it?” (you never think small)  
“We use everything for Kṛṣṇa and that’s really all.”

Reporter determined to stir the contentious:  
“But wouldn’t a small car be far less pretentious?”  
“If you give me a Rolls Royce, why shall I refuse it?  
It’s my favour on you that I can now use it!”

Penultimate truths for the silenced press hoard:  
“The guru represents the Supreme Lord!”  
Absolute truth as a merciful scold –  
“Lord Kṛṣṇa, he rides in a chariot of gold.”

Interview over, you rise to walk out,  
Still smiling, you leave them a cogent ‘takeout.’  
In case they still doubt, or have not understood:  
“What is this Rolls Royce? Tin, rubber and wood!”

After pulling no punches,  
You at last call their bluff,  
To jaw-dropped reporters,  
“I say ... Rolls Royce is not enough!!!”

Though they all want hot scandal,  
You give cool-headed facts,  
You’ve freely shared Lord Kṛṣṇa,  
The One who attracts.

You leave them all baffled  
By your transcendental style.  
Your heart love-filled,  
Not a morsel of envy or guile.

Prabhupāda! You saved me  
From many lifetimes' sleep.  
The ocean of your pastimes  
Is immeasurable and deep.

These pastimes, sweet and mellow,  
Attract my mind today.  
I stand on this vast ocean's shore  
And here I humbly pray:

"I am yours, my Lord and Master  
Help me Māyā's lures defeat!  
Please never let me wander  
From your fragrant lotus feet."

All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda!

*Your eternal foot soldier,*

Kurma dasa

## Mahasini Dasi

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you for creating the great tent that is ISKCON, where all who are so inclined may take shelter. If I take my subsequent births in ISKCON, and am able to help in some small way, I will consider it an honor to take those births. I owe you everything and remain;

*Your very grateful daughter,*

Mahasini Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You have given us hope for a life of happiness in service to Gaura-Nitāi, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Their dear devotees. We had no idea of how to live a spiritual life in association of devotees, but we were suffering without hope for a bright future. You gave us hope by giving us the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa that gives us a higher taste of spiritual happiness. Before we met you we were totally concerned about our bodies and minds, thinking ourselves the center of the universe. But by chanting we can experience something of spiritual life. In the beginning days we were so immersed in *harināma* that we would sometimes forget our bodies. After a month of living with devotees, they were concerned that I might be a little sick. They asked if I was ok. I answered that I cannot tell if I have a fever or if I am just in ecstasy. Now I am still tasting that happiness and wanting to share it with others.

You gave us hope by giving us knowledge of Kṛṣṇa in your many books. When I first learned to read I would go to the library and get a whole stack of books every week. My goal was to read the whole library. But fortunately I got your books and can now experience the ecstatic minds of the bygone sages and your own purports of ecstasy. Through you I can experience history of billions of years and how great devotees could be happy just by conversing about Kṛṣṇa and His friends. You have given us food for the soul.

You gave us beautiful Deities to worship so we could develop a personal relationship with Kṛṣṇa. When we were *pūjārī* priests in Calcutta we could see their expressions change moment to moment. Our desire was to please Them with flowers, food, clothes, jewelry and our prayers. Although living in Calcutta, we felt like we were living in the spiritual world.

You give us the strength to perform all the services for Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. Without your mercy we cannot make any advancement.

It is said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.15.45:

Significant in this verse are the words *jñānāsīm acyuta-balaḥ*. *Jñānāsīm*, the sword of knowledge, is given by Kṛṣṇa, and when one serves the guru and Kṛṣṇa in order to hold the sword of Kṛṣṇa's instructions, Balarāma gives one strength. Balarāma is Nityānanda. *Vrajendra-nandana yei, śacī-suta*

*haila sei, balarāma ha-ila nitāi.* This *bala*—Balarāma—comes with Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and both of Them are so merciful that in this Age of Kali one may very easily take shelter of Their lotus feet. They come especially to deliver the fallen souls of this age, *pāpī tāpī yata chila, hari-nāme uddhārila.* Their weapon is *saṅkīrtana, hari-nāma.* Thus one should accept the sword of knowledge from Kṛṣṇa and be strong with the mercy of Balarāma. We are therefore worshiping Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma in Vṛndāvana... Simply getting the weapon of *jñāna* is insufficient. One must sharpen the weapon by serving the spiritual master and adhering to his instructions. Then the candidate will get the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

In a letter to Satyachama in 1972 you said:

Without reading books it becomes hackneyed and such obnoxious ideas trouble us. Our thoughts are always changing, that is the nature of the mind, so you cannot expect that even the great saintly persons are free from thoughts coming and going. But after thinking, there is feeling and willing, willing being the stage of putting the thoughts into action. So if we are able to employ our intelligence, then we kill the thoughts before they become manifest in activity, but because we are so much inclined to enjoy something unintelligently, we have to therefore daily sharpen our intelligence faculty by reading and discussing and preaching to others. In this way we are able very easily to defeat all challengers to our philosophy and everything becomes very clear as it is revealed from different angles of vision. Kṛṣṇa makes promise to one who is striving to serve Him sincerely that He will give such devotees the intelligence by which he may come to Him. Therefore we should always pray that Kṛṣṇa may kindly provide me the intelligence to kill all demons of doubt, and because He understands the heart of His sincere devotee, immediately He gives assistance. For my part, for example, I am absolutely certain that anyone who challenges me I can defeat you. Why is that? Because Kṛṣṇa gives me the intelligence.”— Letter Satyabhama, 72

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we need your mercy to understand the knowledge, to joyfully chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and to worship the Deities with

devotion. To access all the gifts of hope you have given us we must always remember you and pray for your causeless mercy at every moment.

*Your servant,*  
Narayani Dasi

**Your Loving Lotus Glance**

Your Divine Grace came in a dream,  
Something you hardly ever do,  
We were walking in Mayapur  
A ground floor window opened  
You stopped to chat in Bengali  
Then you stepped back  
A tree's root caught your foot,  
You fell into me then I into you  
And we both toppled to the path  
I upon your chest, mortified,  
But you were smiling, softly glowing,  
Then your silent glance pierced like lightning,  
'It's been fifty years since I gave you shelter,  
When will you give shelter to others?'  
Abashed I awoke, "Śrīla Prabhupāda!"

That was last Autumn  
The day I returned home  
From an appendectomy at the hospital  
Where I'd gone from a spry 73  
To a bag of bones attached to wires  
I had to drag to the toilet, feeling 93,  
Now it felt so good to sprawl in my own bed  
Though I had to take a pain-killer,  
Your dream came as I was emerging from deep sleep  
Your smiling glance assuring me  
That everything was all right  
But also that old age was coming on fast  
That this was just the beginning  
Of the end, hence your question,  
"Will you ever give shelter to others?"

Six years earlier I'd received the "stamp"  
Even though I was the same old "Uncle S,"  
Less guru than kangaroo  
Still bouncing to my own tune,  
No one imagined I was licensed to initiate,

‘Really? Uncle S. initiates? Whodathunk?’  
Then a few of your aspiring grandchildren approached me  
I was giving them your *śikṣā*  
Till someone got really serious—  
Alas, I became delirious!  
And the fingers I’d previously pointed at “fallen gurus”  
Now had me in their crosshairs, about to pull the trigger  
When I dreamt of you again, your glance at first  
sad then furious  
‘You silly fool! Haven’t you learned anything?  
The spiritual master doesn’t enjoy his disciples,  
he serves them!’

O Prabhupāda!  
You’d pulled me back from the brink to think,  
About what you’d saved me from  
About the disciples who would aspire  
Then perspire and expire from my delusions  
And to make me remember:  
“A spiritual master takes his disciples  
as his spiritual master. That is the position.  
He thinks that, ‘Kṛṣṇa has sent me so many  
spiritual masters.’  
He does not think himself as spiritual master.  
He thinks himself their servant.”

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
How many times have I heard and taught those words  
Of yours, without realizing one word?  
Sadder but wiser I bow again at your lotus feet  
Amazed and grateful you never give up on me  
Praying to see you in the serious seekers you send  
Feeling myself their servant your lowly servant  
makes amends  
For those endless subtle falldowns, I scarcely had a chance  
But for the kindly causeless mercy  
of your loving lotus glance.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Suresvara Dasa



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I bow down at your lotus feet with great reverence and affection. Only by your great compassion and mercy can I execute any of the tiny services I perform. I am your eternal servant, and that is my greatest treasure.

Every morning, I awake to the transcendental sound of your voice, inspiring me. Every evening your recorded words enter my ears and touch my heart. Throughout the night, every night, I am bathed in the nectar of your divine instructions. Yet I remain so slow and hard-hearted.

Your Divine Grace actually pointed out to me the real nature of my shortcomings. That was in Mayapur in the spring of 1977. It so happened that, while in Mayapur, I had been composing a letter to Your Divine Grace, explaining that I was suddenly without an ISKCON project to get absorbed in. And I had been thinking: “Should I give my letter to Śrīla Prabhupāda today”?

Well, somehow, suddenly, I found myself as one of four disciples carrying you in your palanquin to the roof of the Lotus Building. In the tight confines of the stairwell, I had decided it wise to let go of the palanquin with one of my hands, as I helped to carry you to the roof. Suddenly, Your Divine Grace looked at me—or, rather, looked THROUGH me—and asked: “Why only one hand”? Those four words have stayed with me all these decades. They seem to be perfectly appropriate and just to the point.

As Your Divine Grace well knows—and as you so often remind me—my heart is not pure. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has instructed us regarding the proper condition for the heart in which the seed of *bhakti* has been planted. The heart of a Vaiṣṇava is characterized by a constant awareness that one is lower than the grass, as tolerant as a tree, that one must be eager to offer respect and service to all others, and that one must have no interest in being respected, honored, or even noticed. In the pure Vaiṣṇava heart, there is only room for unmotivated devotional service and constant chanting of the Lord’s holy names. How distant that horizon still appears to me, even today!

I am stunned at the love Your Divine Grace has shown for Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and the great mercy you have shown to all of your followers as you continue to allow us to be with you as you accomplish your “impossible task”. Your Divine Grace is fighting

a great Kurukṣetra-like battle just to please Lord Kṛṣṇa. And Lord Kṛṣṇa is accomplishing everything (through you and through your surrendered followers) just to reciprocate with the purity of your desire and the depth of your love.

Like thousands of other followers of Your Divine Grace, I often pause and question: “Why me? How did I become so blessed and so fortunate?” The answer comes in various ways, but inevitably it is as you have succinctly said: “I have created your good fortune”.

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, continue to instruct, rectify, and guide me—from within and without, preparing my heart so that I can eternally express my gratitude and loving service at your lotus feet in the association of your stalwart, inspiring, compassionate, and beautifully effulgent followers. As Your Divine Grace has pointed out, your followers are your jewels, and they look exactly as though they have just come from Vaikuṅṭha. I prostrate myself at their lotus feet and at the lotus feet of Your Divine Grace.

I know that I must become much more surrendered and useful. It’s all a matter of heart. I look within and question my faith: Do I have ulterior motives? Am I ambitious for profit, worship, and distinction? Am I maintaining material shelters? Do I have certain conditions that must first be met before I can place my conditional “faith” in devotional service and in taking shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa? Or, could I, by your mercy, truly choose to place ALL my faith in unmotivated, uninterrupted devotional service? And I remember, yes: “Why only one hand”?

I deeply long to assist Your Divine Grace and your sincere followers. Indeed, the only real obstacles to that desire are within my impure heart. Your Divine Grace is clearing away those obstacles through your perfect, unflinching, divine mercy. All the apparent challenges that I face are certainly not accidental. These are all blessings. And these challenges are necessary, imperative. By your mercy, they are not really obstacles at all.

I prostrate myself before you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, awe-struck, yet at peace, in the presence of your great wisdom, love, and compassion. And now, within my heart and before the world, I praise Your Divine Grace for what is certainly one of your greatest miracles: your creation of an army of sincere followers, who are faithfully, purely, and without speculation or deviation, carrying on your precious mission, continuing the *paramparā*, increasing the flood of mercy, and inspiring even me, today and always.

Bowing down at your lotus feet and at the feet of all your sincere, inspiring, beautiful followers, I thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, quite literally, for EVERYTHING.

*Your eternal servant,*  
Mandalesvara Dasa

“The Lord declares in the *Bhagavad-gītā* 18.69 that no one is dearer to Him than one who risks everything to preach His glory.” SB 1.2.16, purport

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble and respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

You are the personified universal panacea and perfect holistic health adviser. That’s a fact because you provide us with *all* the *perfect* directions and counsel to navigate this perilous world. And to achieve the highest expression and goal of our full spiritual nature in our relationship with Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and His devotees.

“**Everything** is in my books”, you declared boldly! (My emphasis added, and throughout.)

The more I become faithful in these words of yours, the more my life becomes easy.

However, *becoming* fully faithful in you and your words is, for me, the “hard” part, i.e. surrendering my mind in chanting Kṛṣṇa’s holy names without offense, and regularly studying, discussing and sharing your books.

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, continue to help me to better understand how to do that, and to choose to do it enthusiastically.

In London, in 1971, you told us “If you simply chant sixteen rounds a day and follow the four regulative principles, there is nothing in this world that can keep you from going back to Godhead in this lifetime.”

Then you raised your index finger for emphasis, and stated assertively, “And that is a fact!”

How do I *best* do that?

In my struggle to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa with lessening offense, Kṛṣṇa showed me something you said, which surprised and struck me.

I’ll preface that statement of yours – the third one below \* – with two other statements that segue into it.

In your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 7.9.38, you write:

1. “...The entire Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is based on the principles of the *saṅkīrtana* movement inaugurated by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
2. ... Therefore one who tries to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead *through the medium of the saṅkīrtana*

*movement knows everything perfectly.* He is *sumedhas*, a person with substantial intelligence.”

I wondered exactly what you meant by this, and more specifically, how that works for me/us. I then remembered that momentous statement you made in a lecture in Vṛndāvana (SB 1.7.19; 16/9/76):

3. “We have learned from our Guru Mahārāja that preaching is very, very important thing, and **when one is actually an experienced preacher, then he is able to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra without any offense.** Before that, this so-called chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, you may practice without any offenses...”

This astonishes and astounds me, as I always thought that when I become an expert and experienced *chanter*, then I will be able to preach effectively!

So far, I have never heard of anywhere else where you said or wrote anything like that!

It hit and impressed me profoundly – *more* than what you say usually – probably because it speaks so meaningfully and practically to me at present.

With this one statement, you have clarified and deepened my understanding of your message.

As always, you bring me to a deeper understanding of how to act in this world, here and now. You bring me closer to understanding and following our Śrī Gaurāṅga, the Pañca-tattva and Their *saṅkīrtana* lifestyle!

You are the transcendental Pied Piper!

Then I ask, “Well, how best do I become an experienced preacher?”

In my research, I’ve found many instructions about the proper mood and mentality required to bring ourselves and others closer to Kṛṣṇa.

Here are a few:

The highest development of Kṛṣṇa consciousness understanding will be when you are able to give anyone the truth ... in such a manner that they will respond in a positive way. — Letter 1972, Dec. 31st

*Bhagavad-gītā* 6:32: “He is a perfect yogī who, by comparison to his own self, sees the true equality of all beings, in both their happiness and their distress.”

Purport: “...One who is Kṛṣṇa conscious is a perfect yogī; he is aware of everyone’s happiness and distress by dint of his own personal experience...”

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.10.14: “By seeing their faces, one whose body has been pricked by pins can understand the pain of others who are pinpricked. Realizing that this pain is the same for everyone, he does not want others to suffer in this way.” Purport: “Unless one comes to the platform of actual experience, one cannot realize what is pain and what is happiness in this material world.”

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.10.9: “If one is unhappy to see the distress of other living beings and happy to see their happiness, his religious principles are appreciated as imperishable by exalted persons who are considered pious and benevolent.”

Purport: “In this verse...real religious principles are explained. Everyone should be unhappy to see others in distress and happy to see others happy.

*Ātmavat sarva bhūteṣu*: one should feel the happiness and distress of others **as his own**.”

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5:26, chapter summary: “God has given advanced consciousness to the human being. Therefore he can feel the suffering and happiness of other living beings. The human being bereft of his conscience, however, is prone to cause suffering for other living beings.”

September 1, 1975, letter to Badrinārāyaṇa Dāsa: “You have to deal tactfully in your preaching. Do not compromise the truth, but speak palatably so he does not reject it but accepts it. That is preaching.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are clearly advising me/us to be tactful, respectful (like gentlemen and women); to be empathetic and compassionate and generous...

AND that that is possible without compromising the truth!

AND YOU SHOW us how to be and act that way perfectly yourself! Your qualities and perfect abilities shine brilliantly in the darkness of the selfishness, avarice, lust, greed, hypocrisy and cheating of this terrible age!

You are the epitome of the '*ghoṣṭhyānandī*' who doesn't care for his own spiritual advancement or salvation. He – you – like Śrī Prahlāda Mahārāja, and Vāsudeva Datta, have one concern only: that people become free from illusion and suffering, become Kṛṣṇa conscious and live in loving service to Him.

You are the true empath, because you can “read”, see, understand, perceive and experience the happiness and distress of the individual soul, as if it's your own! And you are ready to give yourself fully to serve that person for his highest benefit, without any prejudice whatsoever.

What could be more kind, selfless, generous, empathic and compassionate!

Because of your purity and absolute surrender to and sacrifice for pleasing your spiritual master, Kṛṣṇa empowers you to continue to directly and personally guide ANYONE who is inclined to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and you will continue to do so for at least the next ten thousand years!

What I understand is that if I genuinely desire to understand Kṛṣṇa, chant His holy names without *any* offense, and thus become Kṛṣṇa conscious, the direct route is very specific and clear. Having said that, exactly how I personally apply and practice this direction will be seen in my personal efforts, surrender, association, inquiry – exploration – and service mood.

My focus must be on becoming an experienced, expert preacher, according to my own proclivity – my psycho-physical nature – in actively carrying that out.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you manifest Kṛṣṇa's quality of being the Supreme Mystic. That is, you give us all the instructions, and gradually, personally, individually draw us along the path to fulfilling them. You do this gradual beckoning and attracting by always revealing the next step or challenge on my/our surrendering journey. This is mystical because it is unlimited, both in quality and quantity!

This is certainly impossible on the mundane platform.

And inconceivable!

Please continue to bless me to understand your all-powerful

words and example, and to choose to surrender to them, instead of choosing my old, habitual fear, and avoidance of taking risks for you.

Also, please continue to help me to distinguish and thus avoid the two extremes of 'niyamāgrahaḥ': 1) either only performing religious or spiritual practices or rituals or ceremonies or vows, without understanding and achieving the realization, the knowledge - the 'vijñāna' - and ecstasy by doing so, or 2) conversely, giving up such practices out of whimsy; "...rejecting the rules and regulations of the scriptures and working independently or whimsically" NOI Verse 2.

When I first joined your army, I never had any questions. I found that I could relate with and accept everything. As I have become purified, due to *your* purity and the power of your words), I find that my deeper unclarity is revealed, and thus I have relevant questions. The process you have given us – connecting with Kṛṣṇa – guides me forward.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I cannot express my gratitude to you enough, but know that you never give up on me, and that by holding on to your guidance tightly and closely, I will always be safe.

*With the greatest appreciation and love,  
Your aspiring and committed disciple,*

Atmananda Dasa



Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances now and for all eternity. All glories to you, your Divine Grace, especially for all your miracles, blessings, compassion and for making all of our lives most fortunate.

Where would we be today, had we not met your transcendental, super excellent, *avatar-yogi* self? We both shudder to think what the forecast of this cruel and unrelenting material prison house would have condemned us too. By your miraculous calculations, grace and compassion, YOU saved us all from hellish lives now and into the future.

Reading your books today is just like you speaking to us directly as you did in our youth. Your words are as “on target” today as they were back then when hearing them for the first time.

Everything about you was so marvelous, astounding and special; your smile that lit up the whole world, your dancing “teaching” eyes, your graceful gestures and all your head and bodily movements that spoke of elegance, importance, generosity and royalty. Your impactful words. Your play on English words, often so humorous, deep and always instructive. You are the miracle worker of our time.

In Hawaii in 1975, you were seated on the *vyāsāsana* in a crowded temple room of over 65 disciples and guests. One young hippie male stood up at the back of the room and asked, “Can you perform miracles?” You immediately answered, “YES! All these devotees sitting here —they are my miracles.”

You had all the answers that we were searching for without our being fully conscious of what we were truly looking for. We just knew that hearing from you with your intriguing, insightful words that resonated truthfully into the deepest parts of our heart and soul were so pure hearted, it often moved us to tears and an increasing longing to be with you always. You have brought so many miracles into this wasteland of lawlessness, ignorance, arrogance and godlessness, blessing us with the light of pure knowledge directly coming from Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. You spared nothing in giving us the essence of *bhakti sevā*.

You have changed our lives forever. You are the greatest paradigm breaker of all. You were so rock solid fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, you convinced us all. Due to your compassionate determination, everything seemed possible, practical and peaceful to us. You

were resolute to spread Lord Caitanya's message throughout the entire world just to please your spiritual master and carry out HDG Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja's order.

You saw Kṛṣṇa everywhere and Kṛṣṇa's beauty in everything. Again in Hawaii in 1975 when you walked the grounds of the Honolulu temple at 51 Coelho Way, you saw a strawberry guava tree (known as Waiwi, in Hawaiian) growing alongside the driveway. That tree for the first four years of its life grew straight and tall, but after the temple became home to your disciples, the tree made a sharp right turn, growing sideways instead of straight up. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you said, "This tree is trying to go into the temple to see Lord Caitanya and the Pañca Tattva."

Honolulu was the first ISKCON temple to have Pañca Tattva Deities outside of India. So, of course this made perfect sense. The tree stood 25 ft. from the temple room window and having never seen Deities before, this tree wanted to gaze upon Their Lordships. What else could explain this strange growing behavior? Śrīla Prabhupāda saw everything in relation to Kṛṣṇa, we realized, and you confirmed it.

You knew absolutely everything and anything of any importance. By your purity and dedication, you were able to write so many books, translating them into English. Sleeping just a few hours at night and transcribing until dawn, you would say about your books, "Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke every word to me." Later saying, "These books are my ecstasies."

Just this year in 2021, we learned from Ramesvara prabhu that your entire ISKCON movement was built by these books getting distributed via *saṅkīrtana* to the world, as this was Kṛṣṇa's plan and you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, was His divine and loyal instrument.

Please never let time erode our memory of you, or mundane conditioning lessen our devotion and worship of your glories. You have written the law books for the next 10,000 years on this planet. In Hawaii in 1976 you stated, "Just like in our universe, there are hundreds of planets, so likewise there are millions of universes, and millions of planets. But on every planet there is *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with slightly different pastimes because Kṛṣṇa's activities in these universes vary some. But in every *Bhāgavatam* there is mention of our ISKCON society where the *yavanas* and *mlecchas* are joyfully chanting the holy name and dancing."

We can never repay you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, your gifts are beyond

measure. Your miracles are life altering. Yet may we pray to always be lowly soldiers in your transcendental army of *bhakti sevā*.

*Your servants,*

Gostabihari Das and Mahavisnupriya Dasi

## Mahamaya-devi dasi

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. Thank you for your compassion which is such a prominent quality among your many wonderful and exalted qualities. Because of your compassion—and with great sacrifice—you left your sacred Vṛndāvana to bring Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the West. The result is that unqualified beings are allowed access to the supreme knowledge if we follow what you teach. I am one such being, and I am truly grateful. Thank you so much!

*Your servant,*

Mahamaya-devi dasi

“Of many thousands of men, one will attempt to reach perfection, and of the few who reach this goal, only a rare soul will perhaps know Me as I am.”

This is you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! And by your mercy you have attempted to take us all Back to Godhead. If only I could understand your transcendental message. But as this past year showed me, I am still fearful of losing my body, my family. I am still so attached to this currently poisoned planet.

*Please have mercy on your disciple.*

Padmanabha Dasa

## Pancharatna Dasa

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

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

Surrounded by crisis  
Through the door of your shelter  
Shines the light of true friendship  
The promise of a true well-wisher

Your friendship and love  
Flowing without restriction  
Offered to us all  
Nītai Gaurāṅga's mercy extension

When walking amongst us  
We felt your friendship directly  
And now it continues  
Through the wealth of your legacy

You've bequeathed this to us  
So we may forever realize  
Those same qualities that manifested  
When you sat before our eyes

The qualities of a true friend  
So rarely found in this world  
Always there to help us  
Even when we don't deserve

When in pain, you comfort us  
With the promise of our Lord  
Never passing judgment  
Accepting us as we are

And holding out your hand  
To lift us from below  
We simply have to grab on  
Knowing you will never let go

To repay such friendship  
Is an impossible quest  
Still we try to return your love  
And give you all our best

Serving your mission  
To reconnect every soul  
With their friend in the heart  
Who makes us all whole

I pray to remain always grateful  
And ready to be  
Your willing instrument  
Serving humanity

Offering everyone the medicine  
Of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra  
For curing the heart disease  
Freeing us from *māyā*

To return to our eternal home  
Where there is only love  
Following you, our dearest friend  
We are sure to arrive.

*Your unworthy disciple,  
And most grateful recipient of your loving friendship,*

Pancharatna Dasa

I was in the room when a reporter asked you, “Why have you come to the West?”

Your answer remains one of my most cherished memories of you.

You said: “I have come to give you a brain.”

That reply stopped the journalist’s pencil from moving and made her countenance lift up, displaying eyes and mouth wide open in amazement.

The look she gave was priceless.

Your explication, though, is the very best part. The social body, you explained, is articulated like the individual human body, with head, arms, belly and legs: *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* and *śūdra*. But our so-called “advanced” society has no head, no brain. “In your society,” you announced, “everyone is a *śūdra*, and there are a few *vaiśyas*.”

To remedy this, your audacious mission was to construct—or reconstruct—a genuine human society, and that construction would begin with the head.

Accordingly, you stressed your books. But, as a famous eighteenth century German aphorist observed: “A book is a mirror: If an ape looks into it, an apostle is hardly likely to look out.” Books were necessary for your project but not sufficient. And so, paired with your books, you labored as much to bring forth the apostles who would be able to read and realize them.

In Sanskrit, *jñāna* indicates knowledge. But when the all-purpose intensifier prefix “*vi-*” is added to it, then it denotes directly experienced knowledge, or science. In this sense, you have quite correctly called Kṛṣṇa consciousness a “science.”

For this science to develop and to bring forth its fruit, the society’s brain, we naturally have to practice it properly. This requires that we strictly follow the four regulative principles. Without this practice, human society will continue to be misled and misguided by the impaired and incapacitated.

The four regulative principles should be recognized as more than merely principles of morality. They *are* that, but more importantly, they are also principles of knowledge, of cognition. When joined with the practices of *nāma-japa* and *kīrtan*, their observance endows the practitioners with *pratyakṣa*, direct perception—perception of themselves as everlasting individual spiritual entities who belong



to—are “part and parcel” of—that supreme entity from whom all come and in whom all eternally dwell. We will see God and God’s energies united together, perceiving that while nothing is different from Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa is different from everything.

For this reason, we praise you for making it possible to cure our blindness, and so restore in us our powers to see the complete whole: both matter, and spirit, and the origin of both.

And for us to properly honor you, to receive your gifts and to distribute them, we must make ISKCON itself become the “brain” for human society that you wanted it to be. And to do that, we need to follow your directions with reverent care and attention.

That will be how we pay true homage to you.

*Your fallen servant,*

Ravindra Svarupa Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

We offer our prostrated obeisances to you again and again at your lotus feet, here at your home at Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Mandir, in the dust of Vraja. It has been a most unusual year for everyone in the world, including your followers, but it is also one that you have prepared us for in your lectures and your books.

We couldn't have imagined that there would be a time at your Mandir when even *Janmāṣṭamī* festival was closed to everyone except for the few that lived in the temple compound and yet it happened and on the next day as well, the anniversary of your divine appearance. It was a shock to so many of us who had become complacent in life, not understanding your message which was given so clearly.

For some it was a pleasant reminder of what Vṛndāvana was like when you opened the Temple in 1975. The sound of car horns and rickshaws was replaced with the sound of the cooing peacocks and parrots. The few who lived in the temple and attended the programs could feel your presence so strongly, up close and personal. It was a reminder of simpler days. The times when you walked amongst us on what was then known as Chitkara Road and gave each one of us your personal, loving guidance. The same dirt road would later become a four lane boulevard named after you. It was given your name because you literally put Vṛndāvana on the map for spiritual seekers around the world, and all who entered this sanctified land would understand that you were the means to come here.

Month after month hundreds of your dedicated servants prayed for the day when they could again take *darśana* of your Divine Lordships in this most beautiful temple. The place where you personally supervised almost every detail as construction went on. For many it was as if their very life airs had been taken away, and we were left crying and praying for the day when we could again have your *darśana*.

Now as we write this offering we see just how fortunate we are.

The separation we experienced only increased our desire to serve the true controllers, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and Their most transcendental ambassador. Normally, as we write this homage to you it would be a quiet time in Vṛndāvana, but it is just the opposite. It is like Kārtika in February. Your home is flooded with thousands every day. They have also been locked up and are eager to come to Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Mandir and witness the life you have brought to Vṛndāvana.

They are eager to see you in your Samādhi, to meet the person who brought the Vṛndāvana atmosphere to towns and villages all over the world. They may also visit other temples, but they recognize that here there is life. It is you that has filled us all with life. They become fixed listening to the *kīrtana* as they take *darśana*. They are awestruck by the beauty of the Deities and stopping in front of the *kīrtana* party most times they have to be asked to move so more can come inside the temple.

We realize our immense fortune, that by Your Divine Grace we have been locked up in Vṛndāvana. More and more we can understand the priceless gift you freely gave to us. By your mercy you have given us residence here. You only ask that we pass this precious gift to all who enter.

One day in your sitting room a disciple declared that we are all your puppets. You smiled, and raising your hand in the air like a puppeteer replied, "Yes but I want you to go like this and you are going like this." It was such a subtle movement it was almost imperceptible that the two movements were distinctly opposite of one another. It is only because of your unflinching faith in following your Guru Mahārāja's instructions that you accomplished all that he wanted, despite that we were just learning how to follow in your footsteps.

During the month of Kārtika in 1972 you explained to us, some of the glories of Vṛndāvana to Hayagrīva and others as we sat in your room at Rādhā Dāmodara Mandir. As soon as he arrived in your sitting room, with a beaming smile you asked, "So, how are you finding Vṛndāvana?" Hayagrīva replied, "I never thought such a place could exist. Just passing the bazaar was an experience in Kṛṣṇa consciousness." Still beaming effulgently you replied, "Remember? On 26 Second Avenue, I was telling you and Kīrtanānanda and others about this Vṛndāvana atmosphere, how I was always longing for it there in New York." and later you declared, "Now I have hundreds of temples to go to, but I still like it here best of all."

Your longing was our good fortune. We observed that wherever

you went you carried that Vṛndāvana atmosphere with you. You established Vṛndāvana satellite temples all over the world. You did it in every way possible. Even your rooms around the world were similar in their simplicity and carried the same atmosphere as your rooms in Vṛndāvana. It was natural for you. You were satisfied sitting on a straw mat, facing the wall to honor *prasādam*, your *thālī* on a small table (*chowki*), just a few inches off the floor.

We are praying daily that you pull our strings so we can serve you according to your desire. While the temple was closed many projects have been thoughtfully carried out by the management to further enhance the beauty of what you left us so many years ago. The entrance to the temple is being updated to show the grandeur of your home and Samādhi, even the Deity rooms are being remolded so that your Lordships can be given the space required after 45 years of acquiring jewelry and gorgeous outfits. Many other areas have been renovated with the desire that you can remain proud of your servants here.

Just now we are preparing for Kumbha Mela that will bring crores of sādhus and seekers to Vṛndāvana over the next five weeks. We are trying to closely follow your instructions by offering all the simple program you have shown demonstrated to us. Everyone that comes will be given *prasādam* to the sound of *kīrtana* and offered your transcendental books. It is with this method that you brought Kṛṣṇa consciousness to all corners of the world.

We pray that you allow us to continue to serve you year after year no matter what goes on in the world and feel completely protected by you. We pray that you continue to make us dance according to your desire and in this way our lives will be successful.

Praying to always remain at your lotus feet,

*Your insignificant servant,*

Srutakirti Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

When I first met you I was new and knew next to nothing. My service was washing the Lord's pots. Older devotees instructed me that if I polish the Lord's pots well my heart will shine. Was that just their way of inspiring me to clean the pots, I wondered? Even so, I did the service of shining Kṛṣṇa's pots, including their outsides and bottoms. I tried to make them sparkle. All except the woks. They told me not to scrub the woks.

When you arrived at the temple, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I was at my service in the basement. Aravinda came into the pot room from upstairs carrying your three-tiered brass cooker. "Here, clean these," he said as he threw the three small pots at me and left. "Yes, Prabhu." (Mind you these are Śrīla Prabhupāda's personal pots that he brought from India and that he and his servants use to cook). All three were tarnished on the outside with caked-on black soot. I contemplated how to go about handling these three worshipable articles ... should I clean them in and out or might they be like woks? Hmmm ... I wasn't sure. There was no one to ask. I said a little prayer to you and Lord Kṛṣṇa, asking for help to do the right thing. Then I got to work scrubbing one of them. It took more than an hour to remove the soot. Then one pot shone brightly. Oops, there is Aravinda again and he wants the three pots back right away. "But I haven't finished yet!" "No matter, I need them now," he said. I surrendered.

Later, I heard from the devotees that you noticed the one shiny pot. And you were pleased! You didn't tell me directly, but I heard and was happy. I thought: "Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are one of the most important people in the universe. You are guiding all the devotees of the spiritually powerful Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, writing essential Kṛṣṇa conscious literature, and preaching dynamically to dignitaries and world leaders. Yet you noticed and can be pleased by a nobody who has done the simple service of shining just one of your three cooking pots. This is truly amazing." I understood then and there that there was hope for me in this Alladin-story reframed.

This was my first personal service for you. Years later, I realize you taught me valuable lessons for success by this elementary exchange. Lessons I still need to remember and practice in order to continue to have the hope of actually serving you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I took guidance from *sādhus* who repeated your instructions.

At that time, I didn't think I had any talent or qualification. Today, when I think I do, it precludes pleasing you. In doing the service, I wasn't seeking recognition from you or anyone, I was just trying to do my best for your pleasure. And, being an unsure neophyte, I requested help from you and Lord Kṛṣṇa to be able to do the service just for your pleasure. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I fervently pray to you on your Appearance Day; please help me capture and saturate my service to you with these very same attitudes today and every day. As you know, many dirty pots and my heart still need cleaning.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Visnugada Dasa

Dearest beloved followers and disciples of His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. You are all the manifestations of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mercy. By engaging in loving exchanges with you I am flooded by the mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Therefore, I must sincerely thank each and every one of you for being here on this planet earth to help me connect with Śrīla Prabhupāda.

What I want to share with you is that I am very much inspired by this instruction that Śrīla Prabhupāda gave us in a lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, First Canto, Chapter 15, Text 39 on 17 December 1973 in Los Angeles:

So it is not limited under certain country, certain atmosphere or certain population. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is open for everyone. So therefore our request is that these Europeans and Americans who have taken to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, just become perfect in the understanding of this science and become guru and deliver the whole world.

So this is our marching orders. We must carefully and fully understand Śrīla Prabhupāda’s teachings, we must become solidly fixed in bringing our minds, words, anger, tongues, bellies, and genitals fully absorbed in Kṛṣṇa’s service, and we must now make the whole world Kṛṣṇa conscious.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “whole world” what was he referring to? This planet, this universe, or the entire material world? When I inquired in this regard from Śrīmān Ravindra Svarūpa Prabhu, he very wisely answered me, “Let’s start with this planet. If we do that, I’m sure that Kṛṣṇa will show us the next step!”

So in this regard I am begging Śrīla Prabhupāda to please bless us that we can successfully carry out his order to deliver the world. This will be the perfection of our existence and the greatest blessing for at least our global society, if not for our entire universe or for the entire material existence.

*Your humble servant,*

Sankarshan Dasa Adhikari

## Jayagoura Dasa

---

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, ambassador of Goloka Vṛndāvana.

I need a visa for the spiritual world.

*Golokera prema dhana.....*

You and the holy name are coming in from Vaikuṅṭha into this world of fear,

showering your mercy on all conditioned souls like us.

We had experience of you showering mercy. In Paris 1972 when we, the German devotees, saw you for the first time, it was an other-worldly, mystical energy which many devotees experienced then, and spoke of later.

Another incident happened in London during your last visit. You did not eat nor speak anymore, but there was a power coming from you from another world. The devotees became mad in *kirtana* ecstasy. Caitanya Mahaprabhu made the wild animals chant and dance, and you made the fallen hippies become happies with chanting and dancing. Lifting us out of illusion, giving us a higher taste of transcendental love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

So please be merciful to this lonely dog, running behind you, hoping to get another chance of catching some mercy from you.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Jayagoura Dasa



My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

1. As a young, impressionable lad of 20 years, I stood with my newfound friends on the pavement outside the Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Temple at 7 Bury Place, Bloomsbury, awaiting my first glimpse of you, the founder of the fledgling Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement.

Your car pulled up, drums and *karatālas* sounded, “*Haribols*” and “*Jai Prabhupāda’s*” filled the street. Finally, there you were moving towards us, relaxed and grinning from ear to ear. With your personal assistants, you swept through the group of awestruck young devotees into the small temple room, carefully prostrating your whole body before your beautiful Lordships, Rādhā-Londonīśvara and Jagannāth, Baladev and Subhadrā. You then ascended what you later described as your ‘oversized’ Vyāsāsana, and gazed affectionately at your expectant audience.

“I am so happy to be with you all in London again,” were your opening words. Then, on reflection, you added,

“Actually we are not in London, we are in Vaikuṅṭha.

Wherever devotees come together to chant Kṛṣṇa’s names, that is Vaikuṅṭha.” In that moment, it felt to me that you had instantly opened a door to the spiritual world. That life, as I had known it, would never be the same again.

2. Today, 50 years on, I struggle for words of sincerity to offer you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and can only thank you again for not pushing me away and for letting me remain in the house of mercy that you built.

*Your misfit servant,*

Kishor Dasa

## Surabhi Devi Dasi

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Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I cannot thank you enough for you coming into my life and saving me from a life of ignorance.

Not knowing where to go next, you have given me a life of meaning and knowledge instead of one wandering around in darkness.

Whenever I can I share it with others and hope they will be able to have a better life also.

As you said, don't change anything. You have given us all of what we need.

I try my hardest to keep that deep within my heart and teach others. I will always remember the love you have for us, and I hope that I will meet you again at the end of this life.

*Your eternal servant always,*

Surabhi Devi Dasi

All glories to your Divine Grace!

All glories to you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, who surrendered your everything to come to this fallen place as the saviour of the forgetful living entities.

I pray that on this anniversary of your appearance, and every day thereafter, I may increase my participation in your mission of mercy.

*Your recalcitrant servant,*

Srikanta Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to you!

You have repeatedly made it unmistakably clear that this world is a miserable place, that material life is difficult, that disease is concomitant to material existence, and that disease is inevitably accompanied by birth, old age and death. The overall reality, materially speaking, is most dire.

Due to your teachings and example, however, your followers – including us – feel far more prepared than before for the material energy's challenges; the lengthy worldwide upheaval we've confronted and continue to confront due to the pandemic is one example. We feel unlimitedly fortunate to have had your teachings to guide us through this unusually dark time and to verify your many statements about the nature of this material world and our insignificance. We are definitely not the controllers.

For those caught up in only material activities, the future – which will consist of endless transmigration from body to body – is grim. Thus we are eager to absorb ourselves in your teachings and example and share those with others.

*Your servants,*

Yadubara Das & Visakha Dasi

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

All I ever really needed to know, I learned from you.

You opened my eyes through your books, lectures and letters.

You enlightened me in classes, on morning walks and in room conversations in Paris, New Mayapur, Vrindaban, Shree Dhām Mayapur, Mumbai and Geneva.

You taught me through your disciples everywhere.

Most wonderfully, you inspired me personally by your own example and association during an indelible 10-day visit to ISKCON Geneva in 1974:

- You first revealed yourself to me through the blue Collier-Macmillan abridged *Gīta* teaching me that I am spirit soul (*aham brahmāsmi*), not this body (*ahaṅkāra*).
- You convinced me that sense gratification never leads to happiness but to misery and repeated birth and death.
- You explained that all living entities have fallen under the control of the illusory energy but may be released from the clutches of illusion by Kṛṣṇa's will.
- You gave me hope that some day or other I may be delivered from this mire of delusion in which I am so deeply sunk.
- You instilled in me the conviction that I am nothing but a tiny servant of the Almighty Absolute Godhead.
- You proved that "Absolute is sentient" and removed impersonal calamity from my life.
- You taught me that the Supreme Personality of Godhead has a cheerful, lotus-like countenance with ruddy eyes like the interior of a lotus, and a swarthy body like the petals of a blue lotus.
- You demonstrated that if Kṛṣṇa likes, He can also make my power to speak suitable for the understanding of others.
- You convinced me that real knowledge is that everything is

the property of God (*īśāvāsyam idam sarvaṃ*) and that “no land belongs to the Americans or to the Swiss people or to the Indian people.”

- You wrote me that “we are teaching people to become first-class yogis in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”
- You made it crystal-clear that I cannot live peacefully without accepting God as the center of everything.
- You taught me that there is no scarcity in God’s kingdom, just our mismanagement.
- You wrote me that “*jṣana* alone is no good unless the *jṣani* surrenders to Kṛṣṇa.”
- You made me understand that the beautiful *Bhāgavatam* compiled by the great sage Vyāsadeva teaches first-class religion and completely rejects *kaitava-dharma* (cheating religion).
- You convinced me that the purpose of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is to make lovers of God: “It does not matter whether one follows Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism or this ism or that ism, but one must become a lover of God.”
- You recounted funny stories of Gopal Bhan, the court jester of Raja Krishnachandra, to make broader, serious points.
- You wrote me that, “we find no instruction in the *Bhagavad-gītā* except devotional service or bhakti-yoga.”
- You demonstrated that dying will happen to my body one day too.
- You described “the process for going back to Godhead” in my initiation letter signed by your hand in Delhi on December 10, 1971: “Follow the regulative principles, chant at least 16 rounds of beads daily, read our literatures, go for street sankirtan, etc. and keep yourself engaged in Kṛṣṇa’s business 24 hours so that you will be really happy in this life and in the end reach the supreme destination.”
- You demonstrated in the close quarters of a small ISKCON temple in Geneva that no matter how early I rose in the morning to sneak a peek at what you were doing, you were already up before me chanting *japa* or speaking your translation of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (5th Canto) into a dictaphone.
- You wrote me that I should “work with great enthusiasm in Paris to make Kṛṣṇa more prominent than Napoleon and

the Eiffel tower.”

- You sent an aerogramme from Vṛndāvana to warn me, “not to accept the interpretation of an outsider” regarding Kṛṣṇa’s statements in the *Bhagavad-gītā*.
- You showed me the love and care you felt for devotees who had left ISKCON (a leading GBC member) or who were ill (one of your earliest disciples) or disabled (a courageous *bhaktin*).
- You emphasized the importance of being prepared to preach by having me sit down next to you and sight-translate aloud excerpts from the book of a famous French-speaking *māyāvādī* professor whom you were scheduled to meet the next morning.
- You remembered me – even though I was unsure you would – by beckoning for me to come sit next to you in the waiting room of Santacruz Airport in Bombay in order to chat casually with me about the President of the Council of State of Geneva before we boarded an Indian Airlines flight to Calcutta.
- You relied on me as your French-speaking interpreter at big preaching events in Geneva and Paris.
- You wrote me from Melbourne that you are “very much encouraged to hear of our increased *saṅkīrtana* movement and return to Geneva to open up still another chapter in Lord Caitanya’s conquest of the world.”
- You assured me that “[the Geneva] police will eventually accept us and our sankirtan activities, [which will] will go on unchecked if we simply have the determination to continue our preaching work under all circumstances” – and you were right.
- You gave me the courage to go on door-to-door *saṅkīrtana* in low-income housing projects in the Geneva suburbs to sell French translations of your as-yet-unpublished books to be delivered at an indeterminate date in the future.
- You told me that you “tasted first-class milk in Switzerland and that it is the world’s best unless one has got one’s own cows.”
- You showed me how to rehydrate dried, sliced bitter melon and pan-fry it with ghee until browned and crispy in the kitchen of Geneva temple.

Life has continually examined me to verify whether I have understood your teachings. And ultimately, death, the great examiner, will do so as well.

This too you taught me, Śrīla Prabhupāda. As I said at the outset of my tribute to you, my divine master, "All I ever really needed to know, I learned from you."

*Your eternal servant,*  
Guru Gaurāṅga Dasa



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to Your Divine Grace.

Prior to visiting an ISKCON temple, I was most fortunate to find a copy of your “*Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*” in a friend’s apartment in Montreal. I took it with me and read it from cover to cover. The main understanding that I got was that if one desires to make progress in spiritual life, one must take shelter of a bona-fide spiritual master. Kṛṣṇa says this very clearly in verse 4:34, and you repeat the same point again and again throughout your purports.

On my way back to the UK I saw a large *harināma* party in New York. The devotees were chanting and dancing exuberantly, and I watched them in fascination. One devotee sold me a magazine and invited me to the temple. I told him that I had a flight to London in a few hours. He replied, “There’s a temple in London. The address is in the magazine.”

Shortly after arriving in London I went to the temple. Devotees gave me lunch *prasādam* and invited me to join them on *harināma saṅkīrtana* on Oxford Street. Previously I disliked the bad vibes of such places, but now I felt comfortable and happy to chant in devotee association. On returning to the temple, devotees invited me to stay for your lecture that evening.

My first impression on seeing you was your purity and effulgence. On hearing you I was especially struck by your gravity and spiritual authority. The devotees were listening with rapt attention to your every word. From their cries of “*Jaya Prabhupāda*” and their offering of obeisances, it was clear that they were surrendered to you. As for myself, I was immediately convinced that, “Here is a bona fide spiritual master.” I was so attracted that I didn’t want to leave the temple, but Tribhuvanāth Prabhu pushed me out the door saying, “Come back tomorrow. Kṛṣṇa will take care of you.”

I came again a couple of days later. Vishal Prabhu greeted me in the hallway and thrust a large *Kṛṣṇa Book* into my hands saying, “It’s a very auspicious day to take this book. The spiritual master will be giving a lecture.” He was a very convincing book distributor. I took both volumes and gave him all my money.

That evening I heard you lecture again – so very powerful, clear and authoritative. You often said that the reason for your success in

preaching was that you simply and sincerely tried to serve your spiritual master by carrying out these orders, and by faithfully repeating his instructions without adulteration. In this way the full potency of Lord Kṛṣṇa, Lord Caitanya, and the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* was coming down by *guru paramparā* through Your Divine Grace. I was fully captivated, and when later that evening devotees invited me to join the temple I immediately agreed. I was a wandering 20-year-old, but now I had found my real home – the shelter of your divine lotus feet in the association of your dear devotees.

Thank you so much for this most wonderful of all gifts, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I can never repay you fully, but still I know that my duty is to try my best to do so by following your instructions and serving the *saṅkīrtana* movement. Please bless me with the strength and determination to do so.

*Your servant,*

Prabhavisnu Dasa

*jogyatā vicāre kichu nāhi pāi ... Prabhupāda !*

Let us meditate on your glance [*kṛpāvalokana*] , on your indications [*īṅgita*]

*guru mukha padma vākya cittete koriyā aikya* — how in Henry Street in '74 when you abruptly and heavily 'crushed our political "intrigue" that "*tomāra kukura*" "you may get something material, but not *bhakti*". At the start of *Bhāgavatam* lecture on '*evam prasanna manaso bhagavat bhakti yogataḥ*, as the full force *mahabhavat*, only you had *śakti* to display 'for real' [*pāṭhāiyā dile tumi*, sent by Mahāprabhu and *tava nija jan*, His own man] Why the dog? because even the master KILLS {your emphasis} the dog , still he doesn't protest.

"You are singing every day but do you know the meaning?" a few in class meekly called out the word meanings. Or another time you said, "What if someone is buying a book and asks you to pronounce it?" Can we? Even now after half a century?

Prabhupāda, how in Mayapur in '74, you stood almost nonchalantly, as the sun had almost set, leaning slightly on the verandah railing. In the near night, you were amazing and glittering in silky transcendence as five or six men with flashlights frantically searched for a cobra that you deftly eluded in your bathroom. Only you could stand coolly undisturbed saying wryly, with only a hint of a smile in your eyes, "So many men for one snake?" The next morning, lecturing on Kunti's prayer, we heard, "We think we are very safe in this four storey marble building, but the snake is there and the snake is death [*kāla sarpa*]."

You didn't forget even a *mleccha* like me and so many others. After travelling around the world, in '73, you asked while putting *tilak* on and simultaneously glancing kindly at me in the mirror, "You can go to India for some days?" Months before we had volunteered, but were being kept back, but you were the powerful leader and are still the authority while others are servants.

### NEVER ENDING MERCY

Like a cloud from the ocean you have traveled great distances  
Being moved by the Lord's will with all its intents and purposes  
Your rain of mercy has proved to be never ending, everyone says  
Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept our most humble obeisances

Rains are the result of sacrifice, certainly not of vice  
Without following Vedic sacrifice, you can't even grow rice  
Abandon your sacrifice and you will again become mice  
Śrīla Prabhupāda, your delineation of the Vedas was so nice

Lotuses are born in the mud, everyone knows it is so  
But naturally it is seen that everywhere they do not grow  
Your presence gave auspicious conditions for new life to flow  
Śrīla Prabhupāda, now in all corners the scent of lotus breezes blow

Who has seen the sun? One who is free from the cloud of illusion  
You crushed all cheating philosophies filled with confusion  
You revealed Kṛṣṇa, the true source of all life's infusion  
Śrīla Prabhupāda, you led the Absolute Truth Revolution

Compassion for the cause of suffering is the nature of your creed  
You worked intensely for removing ignorance, humanity's greatest  
need

Your consecration has brought down the *devas* on bowed knees  
Śrīla Prabhupāda, please give us one drop of your compassion, we  
plead

For solving life's real problem temporary solutions miss the mark  
Technology leading to affluence is not progress but decadent and  
dark

"Dogs run on four legs and you run on four wheels, but both of you  
bark"

Śrīla Prabhupāda, on the flood of materialism sailed the harināma  
Ark

You warned us that spiritual life is as sharp as a razor's edge  
Daily we see our traditions being attacked, truly living on a ledge  
Misplaced compassion has become the fashion, we must enact a  
hedge

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your *siddhanta* will always be our judge

O Connoisseur of Truth and Beauty, O most munificent donor of  
Rasa

Resident of Vraja, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa *pāriṣada*, Knower of *Līlā Ullāsa*  
Friend of the poor, Recipient of all benedictions of pure love's *tapasa*  
Śrīla Prabhupāda, please always and forever keep us as your *dasa*

*Your servant,*

Adhiyajna Dasa

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

### **A Second Chance...**

In an unforgiving world bereft of mercy and compassion  
You came to show us the way  
Lifting us from Māyā's illusion so we could serve  
Lord Kṛṣṇa some wonderful day.

You gave us a second chance, a meaningful purpose  
to our lives, dear Vaiṣṇava soul  
You saw a spiritual potential within us all, never mind how fallen  
our role.

If I hadn't met you  
From animal to human my life changed immensely  
Now I see my true identity  
To serve our Lord eternally.

If I hadn't met you  
I wouldn't have the holy names to take shelter of  
Dear Gurudeva, your mission only, the fallen souls to save.

If I hadn't met you  
Your transcendental instructions so appealing, healing,  
Revealing  
My heartfelt gratitude I give to you with sincere feeling.

*Your servant,*

Advaita Acharya Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my unworthy obeisances. All glories to the divine purpose for which you have come.

When invited to speak about you, I immediately thought of what I would like to say to honour the fact that you have accepted me as your student and disciple. With a bowed head I offer this homage to you.

In early 1970 you were residing in Los Angeles with your young enthusiastic disciples in the Watseka Avenue temple. Your rooms were connected to the temple upstairs.

It was June, I believe, when my explorations brought me to Los Angeles on my way to England. I had decided on a career as an actress, and I wanted to spend a year outside Australia where I was born, to facilitate my success. In order to drop off a small gift that one lady had entrusted me to carry from Sydney for you and a letter of introduction from your disciple Upendra, I arrived on a Sunday at the Watseka Ave. address.

Somehow that day was to become the last day of my theatrical life and the first day of my spiritual life, which was far beyond my ability to comprehend.

On an impulse I moved into the temple that night just to try it out. That was incredibly difficult. But I saw you every morning before Deity greeting, when we would all line up outside the temple to greet you upon returning from your morning walk. As you stepped out of the car we each held a flower, and you were given a basket of flowers. We gave you our flowers one by one and as you accepted our flower you would give us a flower in exchange. I felt so odd, clumsy and unsteady then. One day you saw perhaps the look on my face, and asked me if I was happy there. When *you* asked such a question the only response I could give was:

“Yes Śrīla Prabhupāda!”

And you accepted my flower with a quiet nod.

But there is something else I want to share with you, about a meeting that took place after I had been staying in the temple a couple of weeks. As I mentioned, I’d arrived with a gift from a guest in the Sydney temple, who’d quickly wrapped up a fountain pen in a piece of turquoise cloth and stuck it together with scotch tape, then begged me to give it to you. I gave that pen to Gargamuni who was

in charge of the temple. A week later I observed it still sitting on his desk, and asked about it. He suggested that I could personally meet and give it to you myself.

I was so shy and excited when I knocked on your door and was welcomed in. You sat quietly in your rocking chair and offered me a seat. Instead of sitting on the ground, I nervously sat down on the couch beside you. And you began a conversation by asking about my accent. Was I from England?

I replied No. I was Australian, and my accent was because I was an actress.

You immediately showed interest.

Then we spoke about acting, and you told me how once you were in a play, and that I should put on plays. Now our movement was attractive to the hippies, you explained, but if we presented the culture of Kṛṣṇa consciousness we would naturally attract a higher class of people.

Then you called for Tamal Kṛṣṇa [who was not yet a *sannyasi*] and requested him to bring a copy of a play you had been dictating to Hayagriva. You wanted Viṣṇujana Prabhu to direct it and me to play the role of Sachi devi. You told me some pastimes of Lord Caitanya, and I tried to take in everything deeply. It was clear that you wanted me to feel at home, and use my gifts in Kṛṣṇa's service.

As fate would have it, next month everything in the temple would radically change. You left for Japan on your way to India. Many Vaiṣṇavas, including Viṣṇujana, took *sannyāsa* and departed for other places. LA temple became a very different place. Short of funds, with few devotees joining I forgot about the idea of the play completely. I had only a six month visa myself, so soon I too would also have to leave.

Then one day, perhaps two weeks before my departure, I remembered your instruction about the play you wanted to see performed. I remembered Viṣṇujana reading some parts of the script to me. And most mysteriously I even recalled where in the office, in which cupboard the script might still be found.

And there it was.

I found it! I gathered together a group of kind but under rehearsed devotees and we enacted that short drama as you had wanted. A few days later I was off to another world!

O dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you wanted so many things. You wanted culture, you wanted theatre, you wanted art, all to glorify



Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi all over the world! All over the universe actually!

Your greatness is visible in your books, your temples and the quality of your disciples, yet you were seeing even a most incapable person like myself as useful.

I cling tightly to your lotus feet and pray that I may offer you some insignificant service in all my future lives.

*Your daughter,*  
Jagattarini Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Today we celebrate the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your birth, or appearance in this world. One hundred twenty-five is an important milestone. It is a special opportunity for all of your disciples, granddisciples, and admirers to reassess your many accomplishments, to grasp more deeply your teachings, to better comprehend your personal example, and to reaffirm our sense of gratitude and commitment to you and to your mission.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, disciples are instructed to reveal their minds before the guru to seek his guidance. Thus, this year I wish to posit before you my thoughts and a fear I have. You write in your purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.18:

These are the miraculous effects of the association of *Bhāgavatas* . . . The more progress is made in devotional service under the guidance of the *Bhāgavatas*, the more one becomes fixed in the transcendental loving service of the Lord. The messages of the book *Bhāgavata*, therefore, have to be received from the devotee *Bhāgavata*, and the combination of these two *Bhāgavatas* will help the neophyte devotee to make progress on and on.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the greatest modern devotee *Bhāgavata* and the giver of the book *Bhāgavata* to the entire world. Thus your association and guidance are essential for all ISKCON devotees who hope to make progress in spiritual life. But I fear that this fact may be lost with the passage of time.

As time passes by, and as your direct disciples, the respected elders of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, pass on, I fear that your association, your preeminent position, your mood and teachings may be minimized—or even forgotten.

Of course, in one sense that can never happen. Your *mūrti* will always sit in our temples. Your *praṇāma* prayers will always be chanted

to begin our *kīrtanas*. Your books will always be published.

But my fear, Prabhupāda, is that the worship of your sacred form may become ritual; chanting your *praṇāma* prayers, just thoughtless repetition; your books, read less and less by ISKCON aspirants who are instead attracted by the words of contemporary charismatic preachers.

That is why today your Vyāsa-pūjā celebration is so important to all ISKCON members. It is a wakeup call—for now, and into the future. It should remind us to ask: Are we keeping you in the center of our lives and our communities? Are we looking to you to set the example and standards that we follow? Are we immersed in your teachings, your mood, and your vision? Are we understanding and applying both your strictness and your flexibility? Are we seeking guidance by regularly asking ourselves, “How did Śrīla Prabhupāda respond in a situation similar to what I face today?”

This past year I’ve tried to connect with you more deeply by again reading, then again rereading, your “official” biography, *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*. It’s a lovely book, Śrīla Prabhupāda. No one history, of course, can capture the whole picture of any great person, especially one as multifaceted as you. But I implore every devotee who reads this offering to consider the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary an impetus to read as many biographies about Śrīla Prabhupāda as possible, especially the *Līlāmṛta*.

It’s not just because your story, Śrīla Prabhupāda, is an amazing one—although it is. More importantly, with the march of time we need to better understand what a transcendental *person* you were (and are). Because we need you to remain a *living example for us*. Not just an historical figure, or an idol we admire.

By hearing about you from proper sources, we better comprehend the challenges you faced, the decisions you made, the considerations you weighed in making your choices. Not that we just recite, as if memorized, “Prabhupāda had two heart attacks on the ship, and he didn’t have much money in NYC, and he fought for the Juhu temple, and he published lots of books, and he opened a lot of temples, and it all came out ok, and that was his wonderful *līlā*. *Jaya Prabhupāda!*”

That is simply not enough. We need to know more. We need to know that you didn’t “have” two heart attacks, you *suffered* two heart attacks. You didn’t just face some abstract obstacles, you *sometimes went hungry* because of lack of money as you pushed on your

mission. In later years, *out of anxiety you couldn't sleep* many nights as you worried about the problems your movement faced. *You cried sometimes* when reunited with disciples who had left you. *You laughed and told jokes* that left disciples bursting with laughter. *You were excited by new challenges. Your eyes twinkled when teasing* your disciples and their children. And *you became angry at*, but never envious of, those who were too proud or who offended the Lord.

In short, we need to understand that you are not a silent *mūrti* sitting on your *vyāsāsana*. You are an awe-inspiring *person*. A person who demonstrated love, and hurt, and humor, and enthusiasm (against unbelievable odds), and every other human and transcendental emotion. You faced every type of obstacle we will ever face, and more. You showed us how to live in faith, and hope, and joy.

You are not just our Founder, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You are our *Ācārya*. It is essential that all of ISKCON—gurus and GBCs and novices alike—never forget that we can, and must, look to you as our example of how to live a Kṛṣṇa conscious life. How to live in the midst of success and failure; in the company of both kings and paupers; in sickness and in health; in wealth and in poverty; in fame and in obscurity; with family, and alone; at home, and abroad.

We know that you got angry, but that is not enough to know. Or we may think “Prabhupāda got angry, I can too.” We know you sometimes said people were living like “dogs, hogs, and asses.” We may think we can say that, too. But when we study your *līlā*, your *Līlāmṛta*, we learn that you—unlike us in our faint attempts to mimic you—said such things with purity, compassion, and love. This is the example that needs to remain alive in our hearts, in our minds, and in our words. Only in this way, *in active memory of you*, can your society and your followers hope to, “make progress on and on,” to become happy, and to inspire others to adhere to the path of the *Bhāgavatas*.

So this is my fear. That unless we are consciously striving to go deep in our understanding of who you are, and your mood and your mission, although you are our founder-*ācārya* you may slowly become a silent *mūrti* for most of us.

But if we use this 125<sup>th</sup> year, and every year, as an opportunity to push ourselves to go deeper to understand you—to learn about your life, with its very human struggles as well as divine successes—then you will ever be alive for all of ISKCON. Then when we make decisions we'll look to your ever-fresh example, when we suffer we'll remember that it was for our sake you suffered even more than we do,

and when we taste joy we'll remember that it was you who showed us how to laugh and love with meaning and purpose.

For ISKCON to continue, we can't just claim to be members of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, or disciples of this guru or that guru. We must be Prabhupāda-*anugas*, Prabhupāda followers. And we cannot follow you—we will fail to follow you—if we don't immerse ourselves in your *līlā*, your *līlāmṛta*.

Aspiring to remember your example every day, and moment to moment, I pray to become qualified to be

*Your eternal servant,*

Anuttama Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your lotus feet, which are the only relief for the inhabitants of this desert-like material world, into which you kindly agreed to make your sublime appearance 125 years ago.

In your purport to SB 1.9.13 you state, "...As long as a person is fully in cooperation with the wishes of the Lord, guided by the bona fide *brāhmaṇas* and Vaiṣṇavas and strictly following religious principles, one has no cause for despondency, however trying the circumstances of life..."

While tolerating the trying circumstances of my life, I continue to hold close to my heart the priceless gifts you labored so hard to give us in your old age such as the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, the *arca-vigraha*, Kṛṣṇa *prasāda*, your Bhaktivedanta purports, *harināma saṅkīrtana* and book distribution, your ISKCON house and the loving family of devotees therein. These continue to bring in the sunshine on what would otherwise be a meaningless life, overcast with the dark clouds of self-centered illusion. I cherish these gifts as my only wealth and ardently pray to always be able to hold on to them by sharing them with others.

Please help me to surrender my false ego so that I don't remain an obstacle in your efforts to spread Lord Caitanya's mission. Rather, I pray to become a pure instrument in your pure hands. Please do with me what you wish, while giving me the inspiration to cooperate.

*I remain your faithful daughter,*

Ragatmika Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

I must have done something right in my last life to have the opportunity to meet and take initiation from Your Divine Grace.

It is said that a moment's association with a pure self-realised devotee is the perfection of life. I only know that when I hear you explain the Vaiṣṇava philosophy, it is crystal clear, like the blazing sunlight. In that moment I am (temporarily) liberated, and have no doubt that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. And daily, when I read your purports, I get the same feeling.

I hope to continue to repay my debt to you by distributing the holy name, and cooking good (ghee) *prasādam*, as I learned from your servant, Upendra.

*Your eternal servant,*

Dwaipayana Dasa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Wow! It is 2021, and I'm still around and attempting to render you a little service. After the demise of my material body I surely will not have done enough service at your lotus feet. My only solace is that I tried hard and did not give up.

My material body is now reaching 71 years old, and surprisingly it's still in a reasonably good condition by your mercy. Let's see if I can offer you something nice and make you smile. In this life my acceptance of your service has been my greatest good fortune. Your service has saved me from hell, for sure, and I can never pay that debt to you but only try to render a little service to your preaching mission. I do not have any big achievements to offer you, and I hope you will overlook all my shortcomings and offences.

I hope and fervently pray that you will allow this unqualified soul to return to Goloka Vṛndāvana after leaving this horrible material world because if I were to come back here again Māyā would surely bewilder me again and again.

Thank you my Lord and Master for giving me the holy names of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Those unlimitedly sweet holy names are the greatest gift that anyone can give.

*I remain your most unqualified servant forever,*

Ajāmila Dasa



A Vyāsa-pūjā offering is an opportunity to glorify Śrīla Prabhupāda’s exalted character and many accomplishments. That can not be done in a few paragraphs, for that many books are required. Here, our attempt will be to express our appreciation of some aspect of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s great contribution, in hope that it will please his transcendental senses.

Before coming in contact with the knowledge that Śrīla Prabhupāda brought first to the United States, and then to the rest of the world, most – if not all of us – had no idea that we were something more than our bodies. That we were actually spiritual beings that had an eternal loving relationship with a Supreme Spiritual Being, Kṛṣṇa. And that by engaging in devotional service to Him we could revive our awareness of that relationship, so much so that we could experience it even during our lifetimes. And what to speak of after that, appearing in our original spiritual bodies in a transcendental realm where Kṛṣṇa and His pure devotees reside eternally.

In the purport to Texts 4 and 5 of Chapter 10 of the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes that ‘...those who are confident that they are not the material body, that they are spiritual parts of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and who are therefore engaged in the transcendental service of the Supreme Godhead ... future is very bright, because by their activities they are sure to go back to the spiritual sky.’

And in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.6.18 he writes: ‘The inhabitants of those planets are liberated from birth, death, old age and diseases and have full knowledge of everything; they have nothing to do there except to render transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord...’

Perfectly representing the disciplic succession and your spiritual master, you blessed us with this knowledge that could change one’s life infinitely for the better, forever! If someone were to try to minimize you as utopian or a bluff, our response would be that you gave us all the information we needed so that we could live our lives in a way that would enable us to realize the truth of what you had taught us. There are thousands of your followers around the world who are practically applying the knowledge you gave us in their lives and can attest to the fact that what you gave us is true and that the process works.

Inspired by your example and teachings, there are many devotees who have dedicated their lives to trying to serve you in different capacities. Some are nearing the fifty year mark. It's obvious that they are meditating upon an instruction that you gave on at least several occasions, "Now it is up to you all how to manage. If you cannot increase, you should at least maintain what I have given you. You cannot accuse me of not giving you anything. So it is a great responsibility you now have".

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, we would not dare to accuse you of not giving us anything. No one in their right mind would. Rather we would like to praise and honor you as having given us everything. Everything we need to both maintain and spread your movement. Everything we need to go back to Godhead, taking a lot of people with us.

On this special occasion we pray that you bless us with whatever we require to continue serving you until the end of our lives, and beyond.

*Your humble servant,*

Bhrgupati Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

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

Some devotees will remember this as the year of COVID, when temples were closed to the public and *harināmas* were curtailed. Other devotees will recall it as a golden opportunity not only to meditate more intensely on your *vāñī*, but, also, to associate with devotees across the globe from the convenience of their laptops. Very empowered devotees will think of this year as an explosion of innovative ideas for distributing your books and preaching Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Surely, the stay-in-place orders forced all of us to travel via the internet to unheard of destinations. The Strategic Planning Team ramped up its mission to produce now countless engaging talks and seminars. The GBC and other committees began meeting more often while exploiting the technology to its best potential – helping to spread the message of Lord Caitanya. In nearly 55 years of ISKCON, there has never been more conversations, dialogues, *kīrtanas*, *parikramas*, etc. What does this show? That nothing can stop the broadcasting of the holy names to every town and village all over the world. In our *guru praṇāma*, we glorify you for delivering the Western countries. However, the entire world has become “westernized.” Every town and village is “connected.” There is equal opportunity for nearly everyone everywhere (except those in the most repressive regime countries), to receive the message of Lord Caitanya. The goal of book distribution is to disseminate the teachings of the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, specifically, yours. You are the designated, empowered representative of Kṛṣṇa who single-handedly exported the secret mysteries of

Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* outside of the boundaries of *Bhārāta-varṣa*. From the *bṛhat-mṛdaṅga* of printing presses, you expanded the preaching via paintings, dioramas, plays, films, television appearances, festivals, Deity worship, and lavish temples with restaurants, libraries, theaters, and hotels. From your unlimited, fertile brain, you manifested and expanded the idea of *yukta vairagya* to heretofore unimaginable variety. Not only did you encourage your disciples to innovate, but you challenged us to “tax our brains” in thinking how to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Your uberbroadminded approach to spreading the glories of the holy names opened up the floodgates of creativity in your followers. Since your physical departure, devotees have expanded on that vision (sometimes going a little too far!) and used every available technology to advance the popularity of the congregational chanting and study of your *vāṇī*. For the first time in Vaiṣṇava history, even the *mūḍhas* could dovetail nearly all material propensities into devotional service. Thus, you encouraged filmmakers (now mostly videophiles) to use the medium in Kṛṣṇa’s service. An increasing number of devotees have devoted their time to using that powerful medium to broadcast the sublime philosophy and practice of *sādhana bhakti* to every nook and cranny of the planet.

When you were with us in your *vapu*, we looked to you for approval. Your satisfaction quenched the thirst of our soul for a transcendental loving exchange. Nothing has changed that! You are, indeed, present in your instructions. A person, any sincere individual, can have that same reciprocation with you because you are “living art in sound.” You advise and react with us on a transcendental platform that is available to anyone irrespective of their age, nationality, race, or guru. I see this loving reciprocation happening all around me. Devotees reveal their minds in confidence with one another as one of the principle exchanges of love, and I have heard the stories that devotees quietly tell about how they have experienced your presence in their lives. If I am silent and look deep enough, I can also see it in mine. Most of the time, my pride gets in the way. Once in a while, I get a ray of mercy...your mercy. No one dies. You are not dead. You are there for me and all the devotees just as the ether may not be visible to the eye but is pervading the sky. So you are present.

During my third year as the chairman of the SABHA, I have had the good fortune of having the *saṅga* of great and wonderful devotees, young and old. This gift that you have given to me is most undeserved, but, nonetheless, I’ll take it with great gratitude. In the

August assembly of such warm and kind-hearted souls, I can feel your presence in each and every one of them. Thus you have blessed me to have *sādhū-saṅga*. What greater gift I can never have imagined. You have arranged my life; I could never do this myself. That is how you are always present with me, guiding and counseling through transcendental orchestrations of the material atmosphere. If I am to see Kṛṣṇa, I can only do so through your mercy. You came to pick me – all of us – up from this calamitous condition. You told us what to expect and how to see it:

*vipadaḥ santu tāḥ śaśvat  
tatra tatra jagad-guro  
bhavato darśanam yat syād  
apunar bhava-darśanam*

I wish that all those calamities would happen again and again so that we could see You again and again, for seeing You means that we will no longer see repeated births and deaths.

[SB 1.8.25]

Purport: “...Therefore Caitanya Mahāprabhu says, *etādṛśī tava kṛpā bhagavan mamāpi durdāivam īdṛśam ihājani nānurāgaḥ*: “My dear Lord, You have given me such generous facilities by which to contact You, but I am so unfortunate that I have no attachment for these things. I have attachment for so many other things, but I have no attachment for chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. This is my misfortune.” Kṛṣṇa is so magnanimous that He is present before us by the transcendental vibration of His name, which has all the potencies of Kṛṣṇa Himself, and if we remain in contact with that name we shall get all the benefits of Kṛṣṇa’s benedictions. But still we are not inclined to chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. This is our misfortune. A devotee, however, is never disturbed by dangers, reverses, or calamities. Rather, he welcomes them. Because he is a surrendered soul, he knows that both dangers and festivals are but different demonstrations of Kṛṣṇa, who is absolute. In the *śāstra*, the Vedic literature, it is said that religion and irreligion, which are complete opposites, are merely the front portion and the back portion of God. But is there any difference between God’s front and God’s back? God is absolute, and therefore a devotee, either in opulence or in danger, is undisturbed, knowing that both of these are Kṛṣṇa. When a devotee is in danger, he thinks, “Now Kṛṣṇa has appeared before me as

danger.” In His form of Nṛsimhadeva, the Lord was dangerous to the demon Hiranyakaśipu, but the same Nṛsimhadeva was the supreme friend to the devoted Prahlāda Mahārāja. God is never dangerous to the devotee, and the devotee is never afraid of dangers, because he is confident that the danger is but another feature of God. “Why should I be afraid?” the devotee thinks. “I am surrendered to Him.”

Therefore Kuntīdevī says, *vipadaḥ santu*: “Let there be calamities.” *Vipadaḥ santu tāḥ śaśvat*: “Let all those calamities happen again and again.” Because she knows how to remember Kṛṣṇa at times of danger, she is welcoming danger. “My dear Lord,” she says, “I welcome dangers, because when dangers come I can remember You.” When Prahlāda Mahārāja’s father was putting him into dangerous predicaments, Prahlāda was always thinking of Kṛṣṇa. So if we are put into a dangerous position and that danger gives us an impetus to remember Kṛṣṇa, that is welcome: “Oh, I am getting this opportunity to remember Kṛṣṇa.” Why is this welcome? It is welcome because seeing Kṛṣṇa or remembering Kṛṣṇa means advancing in spiritual life so that we will not have to suffer any more of these dangers. *Tyaktvā deham punar janma naiti mām eti so ’rjuna* (Bg. 4.9). If one becomes advanced in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the result will be that after giving up the body (*tyaktvā deham*) one will not have to take birth again in this material world (*punar janma naiti*). This is to be desired.

Suppose I am very comfortable at the present moment. My body may be comfortable, but there will be death, and then another birth. After giving up my present body, if I get the body of a cat or a dog, what is the meaning of my comfortable position? Death is sure, and after death one must surely accept another body. We may not know what kind of body we shall get, but we can know from the *śāstra*, the Vedic literature. The *śāstra* says that according to our particular mentality, we will get a particular kind of body. Although I may be in a comfortable position, if I keep myself in the mentality of a dog, I shall get my next life as a dog. Therefore, what is the value of this comfortable position? I may be in a comfortable position for twenty years, thirty years, fifty years, or at the utmost one hundred years. Yet if, when I give up this body, my mentality causes me to become a cat, a dog, or a mouse, what is the benefit of this comfortable position? But people do not consider this. They think, especially in the present age, “I am now in a comfortable position. I have enough money and a good estate. I have ample comforts and enough food. When this body is finished, I am not going to take birth again, so as

long as I am living, let me enjoy life.” This is the modern philosophy of hedonism, but it does not correspond to the facts.”

The monster COVID has come to devour the earth, but you advise us to welcome such opportunities to depend on Kṛṣṇa. What a perspective! While the non-devotees see only death and destruction, the devotee is advised to take full advantage of even the most adverse conditions. Let it rain, let it hail, let it snow. Let lightning strike and zombies mindlessly seek the living. What should a devotee care? This is not callous thinking; it is real. Kṛṣṇa is the spike protein as well as the healing herb. Who teaches this stuff? Only you among us, Śrīla Prabhupāda, have dared to cross the Vaitarani ocean to save the souls groveling in ignorance.

*kṛcchro mahān iha bhavārṇavam aplaveśām  
ṣaḍ-varga-nakram asukhena titīṛṣanti  
tat tvam harer bhagavato bhajanīyam aṅghrīm  
kṛtvoḍupam vyasanam utara dustarāṇam*

[SB 4.22.40]

The ocean of nescience is very difficult to cross because it is infested with many dangerous sharks. Although those who are non-devotees undergo severe austerities and penances to cross that ocean, we recommend that you simply take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord, which are like boats for crossing the ocean. Although the ocean is difficult to cross, by taking shelter of His lotus feet you will overcome all dangers.

I can write unlimited volumes glorifying your qualities for they are fathomless. For nearly fifty years, I have had the good fortune of associating with you, your words, your example, and your direct/descendent disciples. Just as the soul is “amazing,” so are you and they. Whatever combination of the modes of nature manifest as they inflict both saintly and tainted qualities on your followers, the devotees are all *mahātmas*. When I honor you, I include them all, just as we worship Kṛṣṇa in His many expansions. My inadequacy in being able to glorify you is only mitigated by your unlimited mercy in forgiving me for my sins. I pray that I can continue to serve you in this life and the next. I beg to remain your follower, your servant, and your obedient disciple. The world would be empty and meaningless without your being here in *vapu* and *vāṇī*.

Nrsimhananda Dasa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I am eternally indebted to you for bringing this most fallen Kali-yuga *jīva* to the feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. My connection to God was made possible by your most magnanimous journey to the West where you came to us with a few trunks of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatams* and some rupees. No one could imagine how great your mission was, only you and Lord Kṛṣṇa. The entire universe – from the highest planets down to the lowest – have been benefited by your pure devotional service. Now there is a chance for any and all living beings to regain their Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Your presence in this world is more rare than a mountain of gold. We are barely able to recognize your supreme goodness. Somehow, by the mercy of Gaurāṅga and Nityānanda, we have been given the rarest opportunity to serve your lotus feet.

Over and over, I thank you for delivering me from the Ocean of Nescience. Now I am your servant. Please do not kick me away. Be merciful to this fallen disciple. Give me the intelligence to understand your books and the courage to practice the *aṅgas* of devotional service. My only desire is to please you and once again to have your divine association.

*Your fallen insignificant disciple,*

Mahashakti Dasa



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances and my expression of gratitude at your lotus feet. All glories to you and all of the exalted Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* in our line. I have been writing about and studying the lives of Their Divine Graces Gaura-kiśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja and Jagannātha dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, as well as His Divine Grace Ṭhākura Bhaktivinoda. They are so kind and always emphasize hearing from the great authorities and constant chanting of the holy name with all the sincerity we can muster, in the same way as you have emphasized in your perfect representation of the Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya-sampradāya:

*etan nirvidyamānānām  
icchatām akuto-bhayam  
yoginām nṛpa nirṇītam  
harer nāmānukīrtanam*

O King, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and also those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge.

In the purport to this verse, Śrīla Prabhupāda you have written in affirmation:

In this verse, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī recommends the transcendental chanting of the holy name of the Lord. By offenseless chanting and hearing of the holy name of the Lord, one becomes acquainted with the transcendental form of the Lord, and then with the attributes of the Lord, and then with the transcendental nature of His pastimes, etc. Here it is mentioned that one should constantly chant the holy name of the Lord after hearing it from authorities. **This means that hearing from the authorities is the first essential. Hearing of the holy name gradually promotes one to the stage of hearing about His form, about His attributes, His pastimes and so on, and thus the necessity of the chanting of His glories develops successively. This**

process is recommended not only for the successful execution of devotional service, but also even for those who are materially attached. According to Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, this way of attaining success is an established fact, concluded not only by him, but also by all other previous *ācāryas*. Therefore, there is no need of further evidence.<sup>1</sup>

Gaura-kīśora dāsa Bābājī Mahārāja, as a *bhajanānandī* Vaiṣṇava, once expressed concern that an elderly Vaiṣṇava friend that he greatly respected was being distracted by devotional practices other than the chanting of the holy name. He mentioned this concern to your spiritual master, His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Prabhupāda and stated that he felt that his aged friend should give all preference to the holy name, due to his conviction that everything is revealed by such association with the sound incarnation of Kṛṣṇa in the form of His holy name. This is the natural feeling of a *bhajanānandī* Vaiṣṇava for whom the Holy Name is the all and all. Most of us, Your disciples and grand disciples, however, require an array of practices centered around the holy name, as constant chanting has been proven to be too challenging. Sixteen rounds is prescribed for the members of the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement, and yet many devotees find it difficult to meet that standard. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have mercifully written:

**“In our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, this same path is being prescribed and followed. Thus the devotees have been advised to refrain from four sinful activities—illicit sex, intoxication, meat-eating and gambling—and to chant sixteen rounds a day. These are bona fide instructions. Because in the Western countries constant chanting is not possible, one should not artificially imitate Haridāsa Ṭhākura, but should follow this method. Kṛṣṇa will accept a devotee who strictly follows the regulative principles and the method prescribed in the various books and literatures published by the authorities. The *ācārya* gives the suitable method for crossing the ocean of nescience by accepting the boat of the Lord’s lotus feet, and if this method is strictly followed, the followers will ultimately reach the destination, by the grace of the Lord. This**

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1 SB 2.1.11 verse translated and purport given by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Bhaktivedanta Vedabase 2003.

method is called *ācārya-sampradāya*. It is therefore said, *sampradāya-vihīnā ye mantrās te niṣphalā matāḥ* (*Padma Purāṇa*) ["If one is not actually connected with a bona fide disciplic succession, whatever mantra he chants will not bring the desired result."] The *ācārya-sampradāya* is strictly bona fide. Therefore one must accept the *ācārya-sampradāya*; otherwise one's endeavor will be futile."<sup>2</sup>

What I have understood from this wonderful purport written during your final year in this realm is that you have made a special arrangement for us denizens of Kali-yuga. You have bestowed your mercy on us by giving us instructions we can actually and practically follow if we are sincere. You give wonderful assurances: "**Kṛṣṇa will accept a devotee who strictly follows the regulative principles and chants 16 rounds a day.**" You also state: "**These are bona fide instructions**" and "**...if this method is strictly followed, the followers will ultimately reach the destination, by the grace of the Lord. This method is called *ācārya-sampradāya*...the *ācārya-sampradāya* is strictly bona fide.**" As always, like Vāsudeva Datta, you have invoked Lord Caitanya's mercy as the essential ingredient in our deliverance, and Lord Caitanya responded to Vāsudeva Datta's request to deliver the fallen souls of this age by stating: "**Whatever a pure devotee wants from his master, Lord Kṛṣṇa doubtlessly grants because He has no duty other than to fulfill the desire of His devotee.**"<sup>3</sup>

I think that you have made a similar arrangement with Lord Caitanya. How can we expect a more merciful arrangement than the method you have prescribed for us? Please give me the power to take advantage of this amazing opportunity and your causeless mercy. Your kindness is unsurpassed and invokes the loving emotion of Lord Caitanya in the same way such emotion was invoked by the prayers and kindness of Vāsudeva Datta. I fall at your feet and pray to be worthy of your mercy.

*Your fallen servant,*

Rūpa-vilāsa dāsa

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2 SB 10.2.31 purport by Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Bhaktivedanta Vedabase 2003.

3 CC Madhya 15.166.

## Bhavatarini Dasi

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances falling at your lotus feet.

I know you are here, but I am so far away from you. I see your face, I hear your voice and feel the *prema* emanating from your effulgent form, but I cannot grasp it. Each day it is fading. You warned us about old age, but I didn't listen and now, when I should take shelter of the holy name, I fall asleep trapped in this old broken down body. You have taught us that it is a descending process, but I am still trying to catch the moon.

Please forgive my impudence and haughty demeanor. Somehow please let me serve you, please you, love you. I have no shelter other than you.

All glories to you! All glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga  
All glories to Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa Yugal.

*Your daughter,*

Bhavatarini Dasi

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhūtale  
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīne*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vānī-pracārīṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāśātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

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

Obeisances, obeisances, obeisances. All glories to your divine appearance. Your lotus feet touched Mother Bhūmī, impacting countless souls to this very day and far into the future. Your lotus feet are the ultimate shelter that offer total refuge forever.

By a stroke of good fortune you came and saved us from a horrible degraded existence and offered a much more viable alternative—*bhakti*-yoga. You assured us that by steadfastly clinging onto your lotus feet and by following your main instructions we can make it back home in this lifetime.

A wonderful solution indeed, but importantly the process can be greatly accelerated by keeping devotee association, which you stressed over ‘n’ over. Regularly absorbed reading of your divine books and audio transcriptions, viewing your pictures, hearing your divine voice, gives us all the tools required to be successful on our path back home—by Your Divine Grace.

We can never repay our debt, we can however show a sincere heartfelt gratitude in service to Your Divine Grace by cooperating with each other in mutual respect and with a warm brotherly attitude. We are not these bodies, let us show the world and everyone around us that we are not.

Continuing to pray for your divine mercy on this fool.

*Begging to be your servant,*

Ekanaṭha Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

All glories to you.

You are the modern day *mahajana*. With great empowerment bequeathed upon you by Lord Kṛṣṇa you have created the miracle of establishing Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement worldwide. May I assist you in this great endeavour.

During this pandemic, the obstacles to preaching to fallen souls have significantly increased. However, I find people in these trying times to be far more receptive to acquiring your books. *harināma* has also been noticeably more popular with the public. Our Saranagati team go out regularly and the ecstatic kirtan has people dancing to the beat.

For this Gītā Jayanti marathon team Saranagati has managed to distribute 336 hardback *Gītās*, 50 softback *Gītās* and 70 *Science of Self-Realizations*. The pleasure and satisfaction of spreading the holy name by way of your books is ecstatic May may we all persist in pushing on your mission until our last breath.

*May I always remain your insignificant servant,*

Kripanidhi Dasa

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

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūṅyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

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

### **Empowered by Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda**

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I offer always my humble obeisance unto your lotus feet over and over again.

I feel inadequate, but by your mercy, in this most auspicious and blessed of your Vyāsa-pūjā day I will try to write something about your glories.

I offer my respectful obeisances unto Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda, who are like the sun and moon. They have arisen simultaneously on the horizon of Gauda to dissipate the darkness of ignorance and thus wonderfully bestow benediction upon all. —Cc. *Ādi-līlā* 1.2

You gave us the worship of Śrī Śrī Gaura-Nitāi, and great *ācāryas* like Śrīla Narottama dasa Ṭhākura, have said that by Their mercy only we can enter into the worship, pastimes and understanding of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. In this way, you gave us also the worship of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

You gave so it is known and broadcasted all over the world that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu empowered you to do this, no one before had done it.

The religious practice for the Age of Kali is to broadcast the glories of the holy name. Only for this purpose has the Lord, in a yellow color, descended as Lord Caitanya. The luster of His expansive body resembles molten gold.

The deep sound of His voice conquers the thundering of newly assembled clouds. —Cc. *Ādi-līlā* 3.40-41.

However, Lord Caitanya also appeared for a confidential reason,

The loving affairs of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are transcendental manifestations of the Lord's internal pleasure-giving potency. Although Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are one in Their identity, They separated Themselves eternally. Now these two transcendental identities have again united, in the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. I bow down to Him, who has manifested Himself with the sentiment and complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī although He is Kṛṣṇa Himself.—Cc. *Ādi-līlā* 1.5

Lord Caitanya descended with His intimate associates to enjoy these pastimes and to broadcast the Saṅkīrtana movement of the chanting of the holy names. To do this, He empowered different devotees to glorify them.

### **He empowered Śrīla Rūpa and Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmīs:**

In the course of time, the transcendental news of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vṛndāvana was almost lost. To enunciate explicitly those transcendental pastimes, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu empowered Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī with the nectar of His mercy to carry out this work in Vṛndāvana. —Cc. *Madhya* 19.119.

### **Lord Caitanya empowered you to distribute His movement worldwide:**

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu empowered Śrīla Haridāsa Ṭhākura like the Nāmācārya. He empowered Śrīman Rāmānanda Ray to narrate the most confidential mellows and pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. He empowered so many of His confidential devotees in so many ways. In the same manner, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu empowered you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to distribute the holy name all over the world, no small task. You have brought the essence of all these great *ācāryas* to be known to the world.

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

The fundamental religious system in the Age of



Kali is the chanting of the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.  
Unless empowered by Kṛṣṇa, one cannot propa-  
gate the *saṅkīrtana* movement. — *Cc. Antya 7.11*

You have spread the *saṅkīrtana* movement of Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. Therefore, it is evident that you have been empowered by Lord Kṛṣṇa. There is no question about it.

According to the Purport in *Cc. Antya 7.12*, you are Jagad-guru, *paramahaṁsa-ṭhākura*. There you say, “The true *ācārya*, the spiritual master of the entire world, must be considered an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa’s mercy.” You are the combined mercy of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda, the most merciful Lords. You made the world fortunate by engaging your disciples in preaching.

All glories to you and your followers!

*I beg to remain your humble servant eternally,*

Nandanandana Dās

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble and respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

My offering is about gratitude.

I am grateful to Lord Caitanya and Kṛṣṇa to have given us you Śrīla Prabhupāda, my eternal spiritual master.

I am grateful you have most mercifully accepted me as your disciple, and have given me the ultimate, the *mahā-mantra*.

I am grateful to be part of your spiritual family, Śrīla Prabhupāda. This network of association that you have provided, of amazing god-sisters who have sustained us all for decades.

I am grateful to you to have engaged me in the most wonderful service, which I believe, is our eternal constitution, the one we serve Kṛṣṇa. How in this body, in this life, in this *yuga*, you enabled us to do the activities, should we go back to the spiritual world, we will be performing the very same ones.

Only you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, could have empowered us to do so. By your inconceivable mercy, you have allowed someone like myself to serve Kṛṣṇa directly and personally, designing, clothes, *śimhāsanas*. I was even able to do so for old temples such as the Dwarka temple for Lord Dwarkadish, and Bālajī in Tirupati. This would have been unthinkable without you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

At the moment, there is a global crisis, and we have restricted access for darśana, and for service at the temple. This made me realize how much I have taken for granted the opportunities to go and be able to behold Kṛṣṇa's personal form at any time. You, Śrīla Prabhupāda have facilitated it for us, by requesting Kṛṣṇa to come and bless us with His transcendental presence. You have brought Lord Jagannātha to hundreds of cities and given people a chance to have His *darśana*, and for thousands of people to hear Kṛṣṇa's name in every corner of the globe.

You have given us the literature that can liberate anyone from ever taking another material birth by surrendering to Kṛṣṇa and be eternally reunited with Him. What you have accomplished Prabhupāda, in your glorious mission to follow your beloved spiritual master's instructions is inconceivable.

I beg forgiveness for the offences I have committed at your lotus feet, at the lotus feet of the Deities, the Dhamas and

the Vaiṣṇavas, and for not being the disciple I should be.

I pray to Lord Nityānanda that I remain eternally at your lotus feet, and endeavour to be worthy of being your disciple.

*Your eternal spiritual daughter,*

Vishvadevi Dasi

**Śrīla Prabhupāda The Miracle Worker**

*mūkam karoti vācāraṁ  
paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim  
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande  
śrī-guruṁ dīna-tāraṇam*

By the mercy of the guru, even a dumb man can become the greatest orator, and even a lame man can cross mountains. (Cc. *Madhya* 17.80)

As advised by Lord Brahmā, one should remember this śāstric injunction if one desires success in his life. (SB 6.7.23, purport)

My most reverential and sincere loving obeisances unto you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You made devotees out of us, who were *mlecchas*, *yavanas*, *narādhamas*, the lowest of mankind wallowing in passion and ignorance. You performed the greatest miracle, comparable to that of restoring vision to the blind, giving the ability to walk to the lame and empowering the dumb to speak. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are indeed the “Miracle Worker” of the Millennium, nay, the next TEN Millenniums! Lord Caitanya’s golden era...

You came to the Western world to fulfill the order of your spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja to spread the teachings of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. When you arrived in America at the Boston Harbor on September 17, 1965, you composed the poem *Markine Bhāgavat*. This profound prayer represents not only your deep humility, but brilliantly illustrates the *jīva*’s dependence on the Supreme Lord while describing the only alternative, i.e., the abyss of passion and ignorance. Your poetic prayer is full of instruction revealing that we are all Kṛṣṇa’s puppets. Please enter our hearts so our only desire is to become your servant. Your genuine and fervent prayer is a lesson to the world, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

*boro-kṛpā kaile kṛṣṇa adhamer prati  
ki lāgiyānile hethā koro ebe gati*

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, You are so kind upon this useless soul, but I do

not know why You have brought me here. Now You can do whatever You like with me.

*āche kichu kārja taba ei anumāne  
nahe keno āniben ei ugra-sthāne*

But I guess You have some business here, otherwise why would You bring me to this terrible place?

*rajas tamo guṇe erā sabāi āchanna  
bāsudeb-kathā ruci nahe se prasanna*

Most of the population here is covered by the material modes of ignorance and passion. Absorbed in material life, they think themselves very happy and satisfied, and therefore they have no taste for the transcendental message of Vāsudeva. I do not know how they will be able to understand it.

*tabe jadi taba kṛpā hoy ahaitukī  
sakal-i sambhava hoy tumi se kautukī*

But I know Your causeless mercy can make everything possible because You are the most expert mystic.

*ki bhāve bujhāle tārā bujhe sei rasa  
eta kṛpā koro prabhu kori nija-baśa*

How will they understand the mellows of devotional service? O Lord, I am simply praying for Your mercy so that I will be able to convince them about Your message.

*tomāra icchāya saba hoy māyā-baśa  
tomāra icchāya nāśa māyār paraśa*

All living entities have become under the control of the illusory energy by Your will, and therefore, if You like, by Your will they can also be released from the clutches of illusion.

*taba icchā hoy jadi tādera uddhār  
bujhibe niścai tabe kathā se tomār*

I wish that You may deliver them. Therefore if You so desire their deliverance, then only will they be able to understand Your message.

*bhāgavater kathā se taba avatar  
dhīra haiyā śune jadi kāne bār bār*

The words of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam are Your incarnation, and if a sober

person repeatedly receives it with submissive aural reception, then he will be able to understand Your message. It is said in the *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.17-21):

*śrīvātām̐ sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ  
punya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ  
hṛdy antaḥ-stho hy abhadraṇi  
vidhunoti suhṛt satām*

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

*tadā rajas-tamo-bhāvāḥ  
kāma-lobhādayaś ca ye  
ceta etair anāviddham̐  
sthitam̐ sattve prasīdati*

*evam̐ prasanna-manaso  
bhagavad-bhakti-yogataḥ  
bhagavat-tattva-vijñānam̐  
mukta-saṅgasya jāyate*

*bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś  
chidyante sarva-saṁśayāḥ  
kṣīyante cāsya karmāṇi  
dṛṣṭa evātmanīśvare*

“Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramātmā [Supersoul] in everyone’s heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted. By regular attendance in classes on the *Bhāgavatam* and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact. As soon as irrevocable loving service is established in the heart, the effects of nature’s modes of passion and ignorance, such as lust, desire and hankering, disappear from the heart. Then the devotee is established in goodness, and he becomes

completely happy. Thus established in the mode of unalloyed goodness, the man whose mind has been enlivened by contact with devotional service to the Lord gains positive scientific knowledge of the Personality of Godhead in the stage of liberation from all material association. Thus the knot in the heart is pierced, and all misgivings are cut to pieces. The chain of fruitive actions is terminated when one sees the self as master."

*rajas tamo hate tabe pāibe nistār  
hṛdayer abhadra sate ghucibe tāhār*

He will become liberated from the influence of the modes of ignorance and passion and thus all inauspicious things accumulated in the core of the heart will disappear.

*ki ko're bujhābo kathā baro sei cāhi  
khudra āmi dīna hīna kono śakti nāhi*

How will I make them understand this message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness? I am very unfortunate, unqualified and the most fallen. Therefore I am seeking Your benediction so that I can convince them, for I am powerless to do so on my own.

*athaca enecho prabhu kathā bolibāre  
je tomār icchā prabhu koro ei bāre*

Somehow or other, O Lord, You have brought me here to speak about You. Now, my Lord, it is up to You to make me a success or failure as You like.

*akhila jagat-guru! bacana se āmār  
alañkṛta koribār khamatā tomār*

O spiritual master of all the worlds! I can simply repeat Your message, so if You like You can make my power of speaking suitable for their understanding.

*taba kṛpā ha'le mor kathā śuddha habe  
śuniyā sabāra śoka duḥkha je ghucibe*

Only by Your causeless mercy will my words become pure. I am sure that when this transcendental message penetrates their hearts they will certainly feel englanded and thus become liberated from all unhappy conditions of life.

*āniyācho jadi prabhu āmāre nācāte*

*nācāo nācāo prabhu nācāo se-mate  
kāṣṭhera puttali jathā nācāo se-mate*

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

*bhakti nāi beda nāi nāme khub daro  
"bhaktivedānta" nām ebe sārthak kor*

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

*Signed-the most unfortunate, insignificant beggar*

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami,  
on board the ship Jaladuta, Commonwealth Pier,  
Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A.  
dated 18th of September, 1965

On this auspicious occasion of your Appearance Day, Vyāsa-pūjā, and every day of our lives, all your disciples, granddisciples, and sincere followers, are immeasurably grateful to you Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your tolerance and compassion (*titikṣā, kāruṇika*) upon us. Please award us with the tenacity to adhere to the shelter of your lotus feet eternally. Our salvation is all due to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Therefore, with your blessings, we take liberty to quote your poetic offering to your spiritual master and offer it to you. Just as devotees in the spirit of humility when bathing in the waters of Mother Gaṅgā offer her holy water back to Her.

*"The line of service As drawn by you,  
Is pleasing and healthy Like morning dew  
The oldest of all But in new dress  
Miracle done Your Divine Grace."*

Yes, Miracle done by you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

*Your most fallen disciple,  
Vaisnavananda Dasa*



Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

This year, on the occasion of the most auspicious event of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I would like to borrow some words from a Western song, because I find them more than suitable to depict your appearance in my life.

“When I am down and, oh my soul, so weary  
When troubles come and my heart burdened be  
Then, I am still and wait here in the silence  
Until you come and sit awhile with me.”

I open one of your books in the silence of the early morning hours, and I feel your presence near me. Your Grace is here, speaking timeless wisdom, and as the soothing breeze of your words enter my ears, the fatigue of innumerable lives spent in this world vanishes.

The exhaustion of countless battles against the witches of lust, greed, laziness, doubts, duality, etc., burdens my heart, but as I hear your pure chanting and preaching, all obstacles subside and finally my mind finds peace.

Oh, what a great fortune to have met you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! You raised me up from the darkest well of ignorance, from the palude of petty grievances and desires, to more that I can deserve.

“You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains  
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas  
I am strong, when I am by your side  
You raise me up... to more than I can be.”

The law of gravity has no power on your mercy: even if my tendency is to fall down again and again, you keep raising me up, helping me to cross mountains of false ego and impersonal inclinations. As the best of captains, you are expertly steering my boat across the stormy dark seas of nescience to the sunny shores of the lotus feet of our beloved Nitāi Śacī-suta.

By remembering your resolute, fearless character I can honestly

say that I feel strong in my fights against *māyā* and her innumerable agents, and by remembering your unflinching determination I find the strength to stay till the end on the path you have traced for us.

Oh, what a great fortune to have met you, Śrīla Prabhupāda! You are everything to me: the most loving father, the eternal well wisher, the absolute master, the spotless example, the dispeller of all doubts and fears, and my constant shelter.

By filling my days with a myriad of occasions for serving your priceless mission, and filling my unstable mind with thoughts of Kṛṣṇa and His devotees, you are raising me up from a poor mediocre existence to heights that I could not even imagine, certainly to more that I can deserve.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for beautifying my life in countless ways. Your Grace is the most precious and brilliant jewel, and I hope to be able, one day, to reflect a ray of your light.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Ali Krishna Devi Dasi

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

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

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu-nityānanda śrī-advaita  
gadādhara śrīvāsādi-gaura-bhakta-vṛnda*

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare  
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving us so much vast knowledge and wisdom explaining the real meaning of surrender, devotion and love.

You have taught us the following:

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** “So everyone can know that independence means one can use it properly, or one can misuse it. That is independence. If you make it one way only that is not independence, that is force.” – Los Angeles, June 23, 1975

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** “Unless there is a possibility of misusing our free will, there is no question of freedom.” – *Dialectical Spiritualism*, Critique of Descartes

Ultimately each individual soul is a unique PERSON who can choose for themselves how to voluntarily serve Kṛṣṇa the Supreme Personality of Godhead and cause of all causes, or ignore Him if he wants.

As Prabhupāda explains, Kṛṣṇa NEVER forces the *jīva* soul to surrender to Him, never forces them to love Him, that MUST be voluntary in a two-way exchange otherwise love can NEVER exist without voluntary reciprocal exchanges.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** “Unless there are ‘two

persons', where is the question of love? . . . Love means 'two persons', . . . then there is exchange, . . . then there is love." – August 9, 1976, Tehran

Devotion, surrender and genuine loving selfless service can only exist when 'two' are involved in a 'two-way' trade off based on a reciprocal relationship of loving exchanges.

The experience of loving exchanges between the devotee, guru and Kṛṣṇa can NEVER exist in a selfish, inconsiderate 'one-way' forceful domineering impersonal way.

In other words, loving expressions and exchanges can NEVER exist in a dictatorial forceful one-sided relationship of just being told what to do, without the *jīva* souls having their own personal contributions and offerings in Goloka-Vṛndāvana and Vaikuṅṭha.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** "Kṛṣṇa NEVER forces you to love Him, that MUST be voluntary." – Melbourne, June 25, 1974

This is because loving devotion, obedience, trust and loyalty between Kṛṣṇa and His devotee is NEVER a one-way street in the spiritual planets, it is ALWAYS a two-way voluntarily loving considerate exchange.

Of course in the material creation under the guidance of a bona fide spiritual master, the conditioned soul is being trained up to always remember Kṛṣṇa.

Therefore such strict (sometimes even forceful) instructions by the genuine spiritual master are meant to help the embodied *jīva* soul wake up from material conditioning.

This should be understood properly by realizing the difference between the restricted material creation where free will almost does not exist and one's full freedom in the spiritual worlds.

Loving service can only really exist when the conditioned *jīva* souls is trained up to eventually reach their full potential as Kṛṣṇa's pure devotee where they realize their right of reciprocity with Kṛṣṇa.

Only then can love be genuinely expressed in its natural two-way relationship of reciprocal exchanges between Kṛṣṇa and the *jīva* soul. A relationship 'between two' can ONLY experience love, and that is why Kṛṣṇa gave the *jīva* souls their freedom (free will) in the first place.

The full expression and potential of the individual *jīva* souls

(marginal living entity) is only fully expressed, experienced and realized in the spiritual worlds and NOT in the restricted temporary material worlds.

Surrendering to Kṛṣṇa is enriched and further enhanced by the *jīva* soul's personal unique loving voluntary contributions of service Prabhupāda taught us. They increase and magnify the relationship of loving exchanges and reciprocation eternally between Kṛṣṇa and the *jīva* soul in a two-way exchange.

Kṛṣṇa gave the *jīva* souls their freedom (free will) for the purpose of establishing this 'two-way' voluntary relationship of personal unique loving feelings experienced differently with each individual *jīva* soul.

The fact is, real freedom or the full potential of the *jīva* soul's personality, is only experienced in Goloka-Vṛndāvana and Vaikuṅṭha where no one is forced to do anything.

This is because our loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa in the spiritual world is NEVER founded on a demanding forceful relationship with Kṛṣṇa where one is always told what to do, and just obey without personal contributions (offerings) and intelligent inquiry.

The fact is, this kind of mindless impersonal surrender only exists in a 'one-sided' dominant relationship where the *jīva* soul's personality and character are artificially suppressed.

This means their natural constitution of independent self-expression of choosing their own personal contributions to offer to Kṛṣṇa, is replaced by that one-way dictatorship of being told what to do and what to offer and how to think.

No, the spiritual worlds are NOT like that.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Love means two persons. . . I must deal with you open-hearted, you must deal with me open-hearted, then there is love . . . So if you want to love Kṛṣṇa, God, then these things MUST be there – Evening *darśana*, August 9, 1976, Tehran

Love or genuine selfless service is ALWAYS based on a 'two-way' exchange of feelings, this means each *jīva* soul provides their own individual contributions of personal inputs that express their own independent individuality and free will.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Kṛṣṇa does not want to become a lover like that, on the point of revolver. 'You love me, otherwise I shall kill you!' That is not love; that is threatening. Love is

reciprocal, voluntary, good exchange of feeling. Then there is love. Not by force; that is rape. Why one is called lover, another is called rape? – July 8, 1976 in Washington, D.C.

Serving Kṛṣṇa is NOT impersonal which includes a one-way domineering relationship.

Surrender to Kṛṣṇa does NOT mean giving up your intelligence, free will, individuality and the awareness of being an independent unique PERSON you always are eternally.

Goloka Vṛndāvana and Vaikuṅṭha are NOT totalitarian abodes for the individual *jīva* souls in their relationship with Kṛṣṇa or Viṣṇu.

No, the Kingdom of God is not like that, there are ALWAYS loving exchanges of feelings, respect and service based on reciprocation and cooperation between Kṛṣṇa and His dear devotees.

Without this free will and the ability to reciprocate, the *jīva* soul or marginal living entity is no better than dead stone that can never receive or give love.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** If you have no free will, then you are a stone. The stone has no free will. You want to be stone? Then you MUST have free will! But don't misuse your free will. But don't try to become stone either. That is not life.– August 5, 1976, New Mayapur, France

The spiritual worlds of Vaikuṅṭha and Goloka Vṛndāvana are personal Kingdoms based on loving exchanges and cooperation between Kṛṣṇa and His devotees, it is NEVER a one-way demanding forceful Kingdom.

Ultimately we are all Kṛṣṇa's servants and very dear friends, however, that does not mean we have to give up our free will and individuality.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** Love is reciprocal, voluntary, good exchange of feeling. Then there is love. Not by force, no, Kṛṣṇa does not want to become a lover like that, 'You love me, otherwise I shall kill you!' – Washington, DC, July 8, 1976

As already explained, free will in its full potential ONLY fully exists in Vaikuṅṭha and Goloka Vṛndāvana and is greatly restricted in the material creation.

The conclusion is, of course free will exists fully in Goloka Vṛndāvana and Vaikuṅṭha because it is part and parcel of the constitutional make up of the marginal living entity.

And Kṛṣṇa ALWAYS allows free will in Goloka Vṛndāvana and Vaikuṅṭha because if He didn't, then loving exchanges would NEVER exist.

If Kṛṣṇa denied the *jīva* souls their free will, then they can NEVER experience love or know what love is. Therefore, love is a two way exchange of feelings, it is NEVER one way or one-sided because a relationship expressed by a one way dominance without having an exchange between two, is NOT love at all, it is impersonalism and slavery.

Therefore without free will, without being allowed to contribute personal offerings and having independent choices, even though fully dependent on Kṛṣṇa, the *jīva* soul can NEVER experience wonderful loving exchanges of reciprocation and offering personal unique individual contributions to Kṛṣṇa.

Free will or the ability to choose is eternally part and parcel of the *jīva* soul's (marginal living entities) natural constitution and ALWAYS exists without beginning or end.

Therefore freedom or free will means the *jīva* souls can choose to serve Kṛṣṇa, or even reject Him if they want, it is their choice. Kṛṣṇa does not force the *jīva* soul to surrender to Him, if He did, then that is NOT love, it is force.

**Śrīla Prabhupāda:** In Bengali it is said, 'If you catch one girl or boy, 'You love me, you love me, you love me.' " Is it love? 'You love me, otherwise I will kill you!' Is that love? So Kṛṣṇa does not want to become a lover like that, on the point of revolver.- Washington, DC, July 1976

The amazing thing is, Kṛṣṇa ALWAYS serves (loves) His pure devotees far more than they can EVER serve Him!!

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for inspiring all these realizations based on your teachings.

*Your fallen yet determined servant,*

Gauragopala Dasa

P.S. My love for your wonderful *saṅkīrtana* mission grows stronger every year.

In the summer of 1971, when I first met Śrīla Prabhupāda’s very sincere disciples in Vancouver, I was so deeply touched to the core of my being by their complete dedication to his every word. After associating with them for over six weeks, I finally decided to also join them to experience for myself some of that same reciprocation of faith and love. And so began my journey of discovery into Śrīla Prabhupāda’s inconceivable spiritual opulence. I wanted to learn from every possible source how Śrīla Prabhupāda was transforming so many fortunate souls into his dedicated followers. After poring over thirty or so *Back to Godheads*, I also found the booklet of his 1969 Vyāsa-pūjā. One offering was from one very sincere American *mātāji*. In her short yet inspiring offering she was thanking Śrīla Prabhupāda for all the blessings he had poured on her life. And she concluded by saying an unusual yet quite revealing truth: “And thank you for not cheating us”.

In her own simple words she expressed what we all feel: how Śrīla Prabhupāda is the authorized messenger of the most merciful Golden Avatar. Thus all of his empowered utterances are the essence of all truth, guaranteed to propel us all towards the complete realization of our real self in our eternal service connection to the all-attractive Supreme Lord. And we are all still trying to understand the scope and power of such divine transmissions that Śrīla Prabhupāda has been delivering all over the world through his sincere followers. For he is specially chosen to reveal that purest *Gaura vāñī* in its most succinct and accessible format for the salvation of mankind.

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda is the perfect lover of God and the full embodiment of His selfless service whose miraculous life forever shines as the beacon of hope for the millennia of the Golden Age of Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Gokulananda Dasa  
ISKCON Montreal



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

I don't have the vocabulary, the words, to praise and glorify you. My vocabulary is limited to express selfishness and lamentation. Therefore I would like to shout and call out:

O personified Vedas, you who possess the proper language to express glorification of the Mahātmās, please sing and let everybody be enlightened and affected by this incomparable compassionate nature of our Śrīla Prabhupāda. If you, dear Vedas, start singing of it, we others (and even myself ) might be able to tune in this hymns (and thereby purify our hearts).

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, how much we would like to see you again smiling and glancing over us like you did at events like the Rathayātrā in New York, when you were riding on Subhadrā's chariot. Or at the grand opening ceremony of the temple in Mayapur, and on so many other occasions! We were swimming in an ocean of enthusiasm then, as you were pulling us into your distribution mood: 'Here, take this Kṛṣṇa *bhakti*, practice and distribute it to all and everyone without discrimination.'

To give Kṛṣṇa *bhakti*, the highest of which there is nothing higher...to give that to the least qualified is the mood of your heart. Thank you so very much!

*I aspire for being your loving disciple and son for eternity.*

Janmanalaya Dasa

**A Paramahansa in the Park, October 1966**

Up Second Avenue to Tompkins Square,  
*Ching-chi-chi-ching*, and what strange words you sing.  
You need spare change? For food or subway fare?  
Some curious dogs, some pigeons on the wing.  
Flamboyant freaks, out to get their groove on.  
Is this some hippie psychedelic dream?  
GAURAHARI'S PREMA NAM SANKIRTAN!  
At last it's here – the dream of Love Supreme.  
A holy man sits down with such aplomb,  
To heal a world besieged with countless rifts,  
Transporting all who hear to Vraja dham.  
These gifts you bring are truly "Matchless Gifts."

And this, from one so fallen, may seem odd:

All Hail! All glories, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

The only words I ever spoke to you personally, Śrīla Prabhupāda, were: "Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!"

I spoke these words on presenting you with my *dakṣiṇā* the day after you initiated me and gave me the name Janakaraĵa Dāsa.

Actually I said, "Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!" twice on that occasion, once on entering your room and again on leaving. I knew what that phrase meant: "Victory to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!" and on saying Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda I remembered the meaning and thought, "yes I do wish you all victory, Śrīla Prabhupāda, in your mission to deliver Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the whole world.

Since you have left this earthly realm, I have missed you terribly, Śrīla Prabhupāda. But I have also realised that you are always with those who remember you, listen to you, or read your books.

Many times it is through remembering you that I become convinced that I have done the right thing in dedicating my life to trying to become a devotee of Kṛṣṇa.

Of course it is only due to my weakness in that regard that I need to re-convince myself at all. But by remembering you I think "Śrīla Prabhupāda would not cheat, Śrīla Prabhupāda would not lie, Śrīla Prabhupāda's only motive was to serve his Lord." I can follow his teachings with confidence, faith and conviction.

Yet today another aspect of your mercy occurred to me: your disciples.

When I think of them, I think: "they are the most wonderful people I have ever met. They are the most intelligent people I have ever met. They are the sanest people I have ever met. If they follow you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, then my aspirations to follow you must be right.

And so just as you, your character and swan-like countenance convince me of the truth of Kṛṣṇa, your disciples convince me of the truth of you. And even though I am such a hopeless person, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I thank you for allowing me to come in contact with you, your followers and your Kṛṣṇa.

*Your humble servant,*

Janakaraĵa Dasa

AT LOTUSFEET

*nama omi viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale  
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī itī nāmīne*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīne  
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīne*

One green and very pleasant English summer  
You sit upon a golden *vyāsāsana*  
And speak at length about the iron age of Kali-yuga  
As revealed within the pages of the *Srīmad-Bhāgavatam*

“Don’t take your birth again in Kali-yuga!”  
You warn us, each and everyone who’s gathered there  
While this complacent fool thinks temple life is altogether pleasant  
“Why should I worry? I have no plans to leave or live elsewhere...”

A tudor manor house beyond the wildest dreams or expectation  
Complete with gardens, stables, orchards, lake and croquet lawn  
A selfless way to show a deep and very real appreciation  
From one whose music helps you usher in the Hare Kṛṣṇa dawn

Every day a festival of new adventure  
Your morning class, *prasādam*, artwork, service, *harinam*  
Preparing for Their Lordships’ installation  
Construction of your scratch-built *vyāsāsana*

Association with your growing family of devotees -  
Eager souls from each and every walk of life  
Idealist, hippy, plumber, artist, carpenter, musician  
Your pioneering spirit calls the world to come and join you in your  
fight

The *japa* walks with you on peaceful summer mornings  
Your striding briskly down the winding English country lane  
The dusty path across the fields towards the village  
That brings us back to New Gokul’ again

The gravitas and halo of your saffron presence  
The all-embracing mercy that you share  
Your smile and glance that only hint at your compassion –  
Your never ending sacrifice that saves us from despair

The joy to see you dance in jubilation  
Along the crowded Rathayātrā route with arms raised to the skies  
And then again, at Rādhā-Gokulānanda's installation  
Ecstatic circumambulation as you lead our dance of jubilant surprise

Your sitting daily on your saffron cushion  
To spend an hour each afternoon upon the Manor lawn  
An eager gathering of mothers, children and disciples  
Establishing your legacy for both the living and unborn

Receiving daily – eager guests who've come to meet you  
Politician, popstar, journalist or local cop  
Scholar, teacher, sportsman, poet, religionist or writer  
Your role as Lord Caitanya's envoy never stops

Reel-to-reel recordings for transcription  
Catch your treasured words for generations yet to come  
Along with film of your expressive interactions  
Those precious images through which so many hearts and minds  
are won

Your rising early in the dark and chill of every morning  
Your dedication to the mammoth task at hand  
To inundate the world with Kṛṣṇa *bhakti*  
In keeping with your Guru Mahārāja's grave command

Hour by hour and week by week your loving labour  
Year on year around the clock you daily strive  
To propagate the timeless message that alone will save us  
And spread your Hare Kṛṣṇa mission far and wide

You travel tirelessly to capitals and continents  
Full fourteen times around the globe you fly  
Yet jet lag never seems to dull your glowing countenance  
And all the while the titles in your Book Trust multiply

How many of your books – now scattered in their millions –  
Still wait to be discovered in some library or long forgotten shelf ?  
Your words of ecstasy and pure devotion  
Reveal the long forgotten science of the self

Your books – to help a broken world return to Kṛṣṇa  
And heal the empty heart of all mankind  
Reveal the root of every starving soul's existence  
Is fully nourished when we simply serve The Most Sublime...

The Lord of All – of Whom we're each eternal part and parcel  
You showed us by example how to glorify and serve  
That seeing Him in everyone and everything around us  
The seeds of love we might awaken and preserve

The Love we seek outside is dormant deep within us  
Until we hear your urgent call to waken from our sleep –  
The lifeline of your timeless, ever fresh instructions  
Which alone illuminate the shelter of your lotus feet...

Your lotus feet,  
Our only refuge in the times of darkest disappointment

Your lotus feet,  
Our only haven in a world of never ending change

Your lotus feet,  
Our only rescue from the sinking sands of ego-filled enjoyment

Your lotus feet,  
Our only shelter as we beg to chant Lord Kṛṣṇa's Holy Name

Your lotus feet,  
The only antidote to self-deluded independence

Your lotus feet,  
The only medicine to cure us from *samsara's* cruel dance

Your lotus feet,  
Eternal gateway for the blessings of transcendence

Your lotus feet,  
The key to capture Nityānanda's loving glance

Your lotus feet,  
The only beacon for the leaders who'd guide others on their journey

Your lotus feet,  
Via sound vibration, picture, *mūrti*, printed book, or spoken word

Your lotus feet,  
You freely offer all who come to you without pretension, pride or envy

Your lotus feet,  
The cynosure of hope and reconciliation in a world that seems progressively absurd

Fast forward now and fifty years have slipped away so quickly  
And many waves have come and gone upon the tides of time  
The world has changed far faster than we care to know it  
A stern reminder we must daily strive to hold the line...

And pray to follow each of your sublime instructions  
Our only lifeline to protect us from the weight of Māyā's chains  
Another chance to catch a taste of life's perfection  
And not take birth in Kali-yug' again

Instead, to serve your lotus feet in separation  
And facilitate your mission in whatever way we can  
Caitanya's blessing – chanting, dancing, feasting  
The *yuga-dharm'* philosophy of *harinām*

And then, as time unfolds, *varṇāśram-dharma*  
The villages where daivic souls will take their human birth –  
Our children's children – to roam the world like fearless tigers  
Establishing the *yuga-dharma* 'cross the Earth

When every saintly soul  
will sing your glories  
Uniting all the Vaiṣṇavas round the world  
When presidents and kings will hear the stories  
Of how you changed the hearts of countless boys and girls

How, with their youthful vigour they surrender  
And try to do your bidding, every woman, every man  
Inviting all the world to come to you for shelter  
Through books, *prasādam*, Sunday feasts, and *harinām*

Meanwhile, it seems an empire tilts on the brink of ruin  
A growing storm of karmic retribution for the crime  
Of godless living at the cost of countless others  
Destroying body, mind and soul of all mankind

You urge we recognise the virus of our own illusion  
And take the cure – the vaccination of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s Holy Name  
Or face conditioned life of neverending lockdown –  
Samsāra’s cycle of repeated birth, old age, disease and pain

“Don’t take your birth again in Kali-yuga!”  
You’re still imploring all who come to serve your lotus feet  
“But bravely preach the message of Caitanya  
By Kṛṣṇa’s mercy you will never know defeat.”

Still chanting:  
Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa...  
His Holy Name – transcendent to the boundaries of space and time

Still calling:  
*Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare...*  
His mercy gift descending through your pure discipic line

Now crying:  
*Hare Rāma Hare Rāma...*  
And praying still, to chant His Holy Names without offence



Now begging:  
*Rāma Rāma Hare Hare...*

That by your grace this fool may still somehow uproot the weeds of  
deep pretence  
Begging for the shelter of your lotus feet,

*Your wayward servant,*  
Sākshī Gopāl Dasa

*nama omi viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale  
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnī itī nāmīne*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

“It Is True!”

It is true that I was fortunate, by His causeless mercy, to take initiation from Śrīla Prabhupāda and aspire to become his disciple and servant.

It is also true, that from the very beginning I understood that service to Him was to serve my godbrothers and godsisters; in other words, TO BE the servant of servants of THE SERVANT.

It is also true that to have the association of a self-realized soul is the perfection of one’s existence, because he can impart you with real knowledge, and that is, we are ALL part and parcel of the Supreme Absolute Truth.

It is also true that I could not always be with Śrīla Prabhupāda physically. As a matter of fact, whenever I did get the chance to be where Śrīla Prabhupāda was, I was very shy and completely overwhelmed. I remember once in 1975, before Śrīla Prabhupāda came to the Atlanta Temple, His Holiness Satsvarūpa Mahārāja gave a class on the proper etiquette when in the presence of the spiritual master. He said that one should always think of oneself as a fool! I remember thinking, “I do not have to think I am a fool, I AM A FOOL!”

It is also true the way we can associate with Śrīla Prabhupāda is by reading his books, letters, or listening to His tapes daily!

It is also true that regularly, whatever doubt, or inner or outer conflict I may be going through, somehow or other, I will be directed to a purport or tape that will perfectly resolve any question or issue I am facing. It is as if Śrīla Prabhupāda is personally instructing me, and I am at peace.

In conclusion, it is also true that this process of serving the servants of Śrīla Prabhupāda, and hearing His instructions IS the PERFECT PROCESS.

While he was amongst us, his teachings were true then, and they are true now! If only we can take advantage of this PERFECT PROCESS, he or she WILL become PERFECT!

I pray that whatever condition I find myself in, I will always be able to serve the servants and hear the instructions of the perfect self-realized soul, His Divine Grace, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

*Your servant,*

Gokularanjana Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my unlimited obeisances at your two lotus feet. All glories to you and all gratitude to you!

Thank you for drafting me into your beautiful family of devotees. Māyā Devī's grip was not so strong that I could resist your scholarly and logical presentation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in person and in your books, nor the beauty of the Lord's Deity forms that you installed in your temples for us to serve and worship — learning that God is a person and that our greatest joy will be to come to love Him. I also couldn't resist the bliss of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* in *kīrtanas* on the streets or in the temples, nor the taste of honoring the Lord's *prasādam* — mercy all — and the most amazing of weapons.

I had no choice but to find the ways and means to serve and assist you in your efforts to please your guru to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the West — and for a time in the East, too — taking full advantage of this amazingly simple process that Lord Caitanya has brought to this world — chanting, dancing, and feasting. I was a hypocrite otherwise. I couldn't handle that. What could be easier? Only our minds and crooked hard hearts, conditioned by our selfish desires to enjoy in this material world, and wanting to control out of ego and fear, could resist. Fortunately, your mercy was there, and you gave me some service and your merciful association.

You are a pure devotee of the Lord. For some time I have been really trying to understand what that means. How can I aspire for that level of purity? What does it feel like? I know what it looks like. It looks like you — pure spirit in flesh, transcendental, doing the work of your Gurudeva and engaging us in helping you to do it. You have no resistance to His or Her will, no matter the inconvenience or difficulty in execution.

I'm not a scholar or a memorizer of *ślokas*, but you have helped me to see the truth of Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the illusion of the material world and of her agents. I love your books, and I love that you are in the line of an entire family of *ācāryas* — all teaching the same truths. You have helped me to see and hear you in them, especially when I am feeling separated from you. They can never touch my heart in the same way — but I certainly appreciate that you have allowed me to connect with them, without feeling disconnected from you.

I pray for your continued guidance and mercy to stay steady on this path, following the path of yourself and of the previous *ācāryas*. Help me to chant the pure holy names free from any desire but to serve the Name (and thus the Lord) and one day my heart will melt with love, by your grace, Your Divine Grace.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Karlapati Devi Dasi

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I wish to confide and speak with you today in honor of your divine and merciful 125th Appearance Day celebration. Please forgive me, and tolerate my puny attempts to glorify your most pure, supremely merciful, generous, tolerant lotus feet.

Śrīla Vishvanatha Chakravarty Ṭhākura wrote in Verse 8 in his *Śrī Gurvaṣṭakam*:

By the mercy of the spiritual master one receives the benediction of Kṛṣṇa. Without the grace of the spiritual master, one cannot make any advancement. Therefore, I should always remember and praise the spiritual master. At least three times a day, I should offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of the spiritual master.

Actually, with the spiritual master being the external manifestation of Kṛṣṇa / Super Soul, and the one who gives us practical instructions on how to serve and demonstrate our love for the Guru Mahārāja and Lord Kṛṣṇa, to be conscious of you and Lord Kṛṣṇa is essential. “*Acintya-bhedābheda-tattva*”, simultaneously one and different.

Once, a disciple of yours asked you whether being conscious of you at the time of death would save us, just as being conscious of Lord Kṛṣṇa would? You replied thoughtfully, saying that the devotee *Bhāgavata* is a direct representative of Bhagavān, the Personality of Godhead. So by pleasing the devotee *Bhāgavata* one can receive the benefit of the book *Bhāgavata*.

You even related to us on at least two or three different occasions that Śrī Kṛṣṇa told you to go down to earth and write some transcendental scriptures, saying he will take care of everything. You replied, “Oh no, Kṛṣṇa! That is a horrible place. I do not want to go! Please do not send me there.” Kṛṣṇa replied again and said more forcefully, “You just go and write your books. I will provide you with fine

palaces with servants everywhere you travel and everything you could possibly need.”

Of course, you had intimate knowledge of where at least half of the desire and idea originally came from. You knew the inner secret about Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s extraordinary manifestation and mission. And, of course, you also knew that Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī Devī was the greatest source of all faith in the desires and efforts to spread the holy names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and of all preaching and aspirations to save all the fallen souls. You always taught us that it is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī Who whispers and requests Śrī Kṛṣṇa to see the souls who would be a fine devotee and give him/her mercy.

You are a *nitya-siddha*, *mahā-bhāgavata*, *uttama-adhikārī*. Fully empowered by Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī, Gaurāṅga Candra, Nityānanda Rāma, to spread the glories of the holy names of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* all over the world. You are the great *Senāpati* General that Lord Śrī Caitanya predicted ... the *Śaktyāveśa avatāra* to propagate His *saṅkīrtana* movement and mission all over the world.

Of all of this thus described, there is not an ‘Indra Gopa’ amount of doubt that you are an ocean of compassion, duty, gratitude, love, mercy, and tolerance – indeed all Godly qualities! Also, you never rejected or turned anyone away! Instead, choosing to only accept the good side of his or her service, while refusing to accept the bad, be it mental, or physical. Exactly like your own Guru Mahārāja did and taught you to do. Just like Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, your tolerance and mercy are unlimited.

Although all this is the Absolute Truth, still we causelessly, shamelessly hold back from complete surrender and complete, constant consciousness of both Your Divine Grace and The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. This of course is causeless, spiritual suicide or sabotage.

You told us in one lecture during an initiation ceremony that when one becomes a little committed and takes *dīkṣā* initiation from the guru, every evil element and creature serving under Māyā Devi (Kali personified, *asuras* from the Abyss, the Patala Region, Rakshasas, Nagas, Bhutas, Pisachas, ghosts – both bodied and disembodied, atheists, Māyāvādīs and voidists will be after you. Therefore, we must be very careful and very sober about chanting the holy names, following the regulative principles, keeping the association of the devotees, and above all, following the instructions and orders of the spiritual master.

You went on to say in another lecture that to obstruct a devotee from performing his instructed, personal service to his Guru Mahārāja is the absolute worst, most terrible, sinful spiritual violence that can ever be performed. You suffered and tolerated such spiritual violence repeatedly from your godbrothers before finally going to the West, and afterwards as well.

My daily meditation, as stated by Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura in his *Śrī Guru Vandana*, is:

1. The lotus feet of our spiritual master are the only way by which we can attain pure devotional service. I bow to his lotus feet with great awe and reverence. By his grace one can cross the ocean of material suffering and obtain the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.
2. My only wish is to have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from his lotus mouth. Attachment to his lotus feet is the perfection that fulfills all desires.
3. He opens my darkened eyes and fills my heart with transcendental knowledge. He is my Lord birth after birth. From him ecstatic *prema* emanates; by him ignorance is destroyed. The Vedic scriptures sing of his character.
4. Our spiritual master is the ocean of mercy, the friend of the poor, and the lord and master of the devotees. O master! Be merciful unto me. Give me the shade of your lotus feet. Your fame is spread all over the three worlds.

My dearest, most compassionate and loving Spiritual Master, Śrīla Prabhupāda, please allow me to stay in, or at least near the cooling shade of your lotus feet, and please do not kick this tiny, but devoted aspiring servant away.

*Eternally yours,*

Sevananda Dasa



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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance, with the torchlight of knowledge.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda.

To this day, I still remember the overwhelming feeling I had when I first came in contact with devotees at Woodstock in 1969 who handed me a transcendental peacock feather. When I heard the devotees on *saṅkīrtana* chanting the holy names. When I first heard Śrī *Gurvaṣṭakam* in Boston in 1970. When I began devotional service by blissfully cleaning the men's bathroom in Denver. And when I traveled and preached in West Africa. Because in all these activities, I felt your presence and your mercy on me.

I pray that I may continue to remember these times, for by so doing, I may remain at your lotus feet.

*I beg to remain your aspiring servant,*

Makhana-taskara Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
Hare Kṛṣṇa.

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāñī-pracāriṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

Thank you so much for giving up your peaceful life in Vraja and coming to the West in 1965. I was a university student at that time and the Vietnam war was raging. As students, we had no idea why our country was killing millions of people in a small country in S.E. Asia, but you gave the complete explanation in your translations of the *Bhāgavat śāstras* – the actions and reactions of karma.

From the highest planet in this material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery, wherein repeated birth and death take place. But one who attains to My abode, O son of Kunti, never has to take birth again.” — *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* 8.16. Luckily for everyone, you also gave the antidote for all problems ... Kṛṣṇa consciousness. “Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a perpetual festival for the mind which dries up the ocean of material misery.” — *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 12.12.50. One more verse which explains your mission is: “May there be good fortune throughout the universe and may all envious persons be pacified. May all living entities become calm by practicing *bhakti-yoga*, for by accepting devotional service they will think of each other’s welfare. Therefore let us all engage in the service of the supreme transcendence, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and always remain in thought of Him.” — *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.18.9.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for allowing me to be a small part of your book publication and distribution program, which has seen over a half billion volumes go out, in dozens of languages, in the last 50 years. Finally, I too, am becoming happy in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

*The humble servant of your servants,*

Vaninatha dasa Vanachari

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, before meeting you my devotion lay in ever-changing eye candy.

I was a destitute rogue, cheating myself of life's goal.

No sin had I not crawled under a rock with.

As a result I found myself churning in the ocean of material existence.

As I drowned you sent your disciples to save me.

You then compassionately engaged me in beneficent services to aid other drowning souls.

You still patiently teach me through your books, still inspire me through your tireless examples, still open door after door to the spiritual world for me by introducing me to the writings of the saints of the past.

Please continue to guide this stumbling pilgrim.

May I always follow your lotus footsteps as your aspiring servant.

*Your humble servant,*

Adideva Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Whatever I have wanted to say, I have said in my books. If you want to know me, read my books. — Śrīla Prabhupāda

Śrīla Prabhupāda, although your physical presence, your *vapu*, is no longer with us, you still remain close to us, in our hearts, through your spiritual writings, your ‘literatures’, your books.

Every day that I connect with you personally, I remember you by choosing any one of your books to read and study. In your writings, you give us deep understandings of this world, our place in it — and beyond it — our place in the spiritual realms. None of this is possible to comprehend without the gift of your books. Your writings, your books are gemstones, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Each one is a window to the spiritual world, and they are all worshipable.

Dear Gurudeva, your promise of knowing you through your books is a divine gift to all your direct disciples, your grand-disciples, and the generations to come. Your transcendental love for all of us, for all living entities, transforms anyone who reads or listens to the words of your *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Śrī Īśopaniṣad*, etc.

I am remembering you on this Vyāsa-pūjā day, forever grateful and indebted for my initiation at your lotus feet, and every day I am experiencing my connection with you through your gemstone words and books. You are present in your words, Śrīla Prabhupāda, of this there is no doubt.

Thank you for planting the seed of *bhakti* and protecting me throughout this lifetime.

*Your eternal disciple and servant,*

Krodhasamani Devi Dasi

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

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

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

**I offer my prostrated dandavats at your lo-  
tus feet, my beloved spiritual master**

Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-śata Śrī  
Śrīmad

**Founder-Ācārya: Tridandi Goswami His Divine  
Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda**

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your miraculous accomplishments within this Earth planet have prevented millions and millions of sincere fallen souls from gliding down to hell. This is inconceivable compassion during the short time in the western world and beyond. From your birth on 1 September 1896 and during your life of preparation then right on cue from 1965 to 1977, as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa's ambassador, our *senāpati* began to deliver the sacred message. Your transcendental legacy still ever expanded until today and knows no boundaries giving real shelter to suffering humanity.

Your achievements were due to your uncompromising mood and unalloyed devotion. I offer my humble gratitude to you for teaching me devotional service which is the essence-of-peace in this world there is no higher gift than *bhakti*. I pray to serve you without any motivations. It is a great privilege to have served your world-wide book distribution of which I have recorded in my memories of Your Divine Grace as the highlights of my life.

All over the Earth planet, misguided leaders have plundered the world and failed mankind whom were spiritually-void. The British Empire, the Roman Empire, the Greek Empire and the Egyptian Empire and so many *asuras* like Stalin — communism and Nazism,

and now the so-called new world order elites. The European States may well collapse and crash out of history as a centralisation system—unworkable with corrupt capitalist lusty, greedy goals. None of these oppressions have worked but have failed to deliver mankind from suffering and serve exploitation.

However, the *yuga dharma* of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu that you have implemented worldwide is the opportunity for all to obtain real absolute freedom from birth, death, disease and old age. YOU HAVE NEVER PROMOTED NATIONALISM at all but put Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the forefront in all your activities. Your success is that you have implemented the instructions on behalf of your spiritual master His Divine Grace Tridandi Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja in such a timely manner, and with such potency and purity.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the world's greatest revolutionary. Because of your uncompromising determination and compassion, you are a true visionary whom can manifest your pure visions. You are indeed the genuine *ācārya* —*paramahansa* my spiritual master for the Golden Age who teaches by his personal example, who is truly renounced, never keeping any opulence for yourself but offering all to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

You have stated: *"I will never die. I will live forever in my books."*

I pray, to render pure devotional service in your service, kindly bless me with the strength to serve you nicely in whatever situation.

*Your unworthy servant,*

Riddha Dasa Adhikari and family  
Śrī Dhām Mayapur

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you and to all that you have done to help humanity by sharing Kṛṣṇa consciousness throughout the world.

This morning I was trying to think of one word that would most describe the impact you have had on every aspect of my life. That word is “guidance”. Guidance through your words, your example, your books, and your followers has been the one constant in my life since before I was even old enough to move into an ISKCON ashram.

It is hard to imagine life without your guidance. What a lost soul I would be. Your guidance has brought many good times in my life and your guidance has gotten me through whatever bad times I was destined to experience. Your guidance has brought meaning and fulfillment to my life. The more I accept your guidance, Śrīla Prabhupāda, the more content and peaceful my mind becomes. Your guidance has helped me develop the healthy, spiritual habits of rising early, chanting 16 rounds, following the four regulative principles, offering all actions in service to Kṛṣṇa, and remaining in the association of devotees. I have full faith that accepting your guidance brings me the best possible life I can live.

Your beautiful disciple Yamunā Devī Dāsī once told me how wondrous she found it when she would meet godsisters and godbrothers whose lives were so touched by you without ever having had your personal association. In her sweetness she made it seem like it was even more marvelous than having had your personal association. Perhaps she is right about this as I also now find myself marveling when I see new young people taking shelter of your guidance at Kṛṣṇa House. It is proof that you are still present for all who want the wonderful guidance you have to offer.

As the whole world has now been coping with the COVID-19 pandemic for more than a year, your guidance seems even more valuable than ever before. It is no shock to devotees that something like this pandemic is attacking everyone’s sense gratification and sense of security. You taught us that this material world will be fraught with such difficulties, especially as the Age of Kali progresses. To those of us fortunate to be under your guidance, the inconvenience of this pandemic is so much less, for it cannot check any aspect of devotional service. Where and how one performs devotional activities

may change, but the activities themselves remain our life and solace.

I wonder if you were still physically with us how you would cope with the pandemic? Would you continue to fearlessly travel and preach with no regard for your personal safety? Or would you adhere to your disciples' wishes that you stay safe in one place? Would you be fascinated by Zoom as an amazing new way to reach spirit souls everywhere? One thing for certain is that you would not be phased by the pandemic and you would remain fixed in your Kṛṣṇa consciousness, always engaged in service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Knowing this keeps your followers enthused to do the same during this time when the world is being forced to make changes to their lifestyles and restrict what they can do for enjoyment.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your mercy, may I continue to always be guided by you for the remaining days of my life in this body and forever after that.

*Your servant and loving daughter,*

Jitamitra Devi Dasi



My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances.

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we have personally seen your wonderful benevolent kindness to all the inhabitants of this planet.

We have heard your uplifting classes on spiritual life to help us out of our miserable condition.

We have heard your description of our real original home and our eternal family we left so long ago.

You so kindly introduced us to Lord Kṛṣṇa and His many divine incarnations.

You have told us of the loving exchanges between Lord Kṛṣṇa and His dear friends and family, both in the spiritual world and His pastimes throughout various places in the universes.

You inspire those who surrendered to your lotus feet years ago and continue to inspire them today.

Your many inspirational books are like the sunshine in Spring revitalizing dormant love for Lord Kṛṣṇa after a long cold winter of material anxiety.

You give hope to all those who read your books and listen to your lectures for a bright future.

Please excuse my many defects and shortcomings in executing the rigid practice of devotional life you expected of your followers. I have no excuse except my weakness for material enjoyment which should have ended long ago.

Thank you for occasionally still speaking to me in such a way that allows me to do a little service which I hope will ultimately please you.

I keep stumbling and falling but as long as you give me a little service to help your preaching mission then my stay in this world will have meaning.

If you are pleased, even a little Śrīla Prabhupāda, then I will be very happy.

Thank you again and again and yet again. Hare Kṛṣṇa.

*Your servant,*

Kala Dasa

Śrīla Prabhupāda never liked to be referred to as Jagat Guru, though he was the *Ācārya* at whose feet all masters sit.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was not only this world's foremost spiritual educator, but a gentleman with a wealth of humility and grace bestowing on this planet pure love of Kṛṣṇa and causeless mercy to those unqualified souls who were lucky enough to receive his benedictions and abundance of love.

Fortuitously for the world, Śrīla Prabhupāda, following Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta's example, adjusted the traditions of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to conform with the social conditions of the twentieth century. By considering the printing press the effective means of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness, this resulted in many souls induced to turn around with declarations from early devotees such as *Self Realization* going for 50 cents, make your life sublime, or here take an *Easy Journey to Another Planet*. Such colourful proclamations by the first book distributors often repeated by ourselves when on book distribution pushed this movement forward through the causeless mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

As many of the senior devotees can contest this ISKCON movement was pushed forward by an array of souls whose qualities ranged from the educated, uneducated, to worldly and innocent personalities, and who at times also possessed a vast degree of stupidity, zeal and ignorance when carrying out the orders of our beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda. It is often accompanied with the desire to serve our spiritual master, whose unending love and compassion for the fallen conditioned souls is boundless rests.

The rigorous logical and scriptural analysis through which the *ācāryas* in our *Paramparā* whose knowledge flows through Śrīla Prabhupāda have established unequivocally that God is a person with a transcendental form. In a letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> February 1968 to Mahapurusha Das, Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote, "The spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa are like two parallel lines. The train on two tracks moves forward, they must be served simultaneously. Kṛṣṇa helps one to find a bona fide spiritual master and the bona fide spiritual master helps one to understand Kṛṣṇa."

It is only by the mercy of the spiritual masters and God that this truth becomes indubitably established in our heart, thus we can wholeheartedly aspire to love and serve the Supreme Personality

of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and gradually achieve *prema*, divine love, which alone will eternally and completely satisfy our heart's longing for happiness.

All glories to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda

*Yours in service,*

Sukla Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances. All glories to your 125<sup>th</sup> appearance day, wherever you may be at this time.

You often write that the disciple attains success in spiritual life under the training of an expert spiritual master.<sup>1</sup> I have wondered how this applies in my own life: How much training did I get from you, my expert spiritual master? Since your disappearance 44 years ago – I was a brahmachari of 25 years of age then. I haven't received any direct training from you, but exclusively depended on your *vāñī* as it was understood in the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness. I only saw you for a few days each in the years 1972 through 1975, and only received one personal instruction, "sit properly", and two initiation letters.

Now that I have reached the age at which you set out for America in 1965. I wonder how it was possible to stay engaged in your service for all those years, and how my service is going to continue. Especially in the beginning, I was certainly trained by your expert representatives, and later benefited from the biographies shared by some of those who had your close association. By the accounts of others, I also got to appreciate your transcendental personality.

But most importantly, I have relied on your transcendental books. I remember turning to those books for guidance and always receiving advice whenever I needed it most. In your purport to SB 1.2.18<sup>2</sup> you explain that there is no difference between the book *Bhāgavatam* and the person *Bhāgavatam* and that one can derive as much spiritual benefit by serving one or the other. Since I have experienced this transcendental truth in my life, I have made up my mind to devote more time now to the dedicated study of your books.

Based on your instructions, essential structures were instituted in ISKCON, including many facilities for education. You are quoted as

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1 "Sincere candidates must, therefore, approach an expert spiritual master for such a progressive march, and the bona fide, expert spiritual master is competent to direct a disciple from any stage of life: *tamas*, *rajas* or *sattva*" – SB 1.2.24, purport. "The expert spiritual master knows the art of utilizing everything to glorify the Lord, and therefore under his guidance the whole world can be turned into the spiritual abode by the divine grace of the Lord's servant" – SB 1.5.23, purport.

2 By regular attendance in classes on the *Bhāgavatam* and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact.

saying: “There is nothing new to be said. Everything is in my books. Therefore, if you want to know me, read my books.” Similarly, when the sages of Naimiṣāraṇya asked Sūta Goswami: “Since Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth, the master of all mystic powers, has departed for His own abode, please tell us to whom the religious principles have now gone for shelter” (SB 1.1.23), Sūta answered: “This *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* is as brilliant as the sun, and it has arisen just after the departure of Lord Kṛṣṇa to His own abode, accompanied by religion, knowledge, etc. Persons who have lost their vision due to the dense darkness of ignorance in the Age of Kali shall get light from this Purāṇa” (SB 1.3.43).

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I hope I will be able to please you by rediscovering the power of your transcendental books.

*Your servant,*

Vaidyanath Das

## Unique

Unique is quite an adjective.  
It can't be modified  
by "somewhat," "more" or other kinds  
of adverbs one may try.

A thing's unique, or it is not.  
Unique, too, is the man  
who acts in great, transcendent ways  
no other person can.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are  
a man unique like this,  
who managed the impossible  
and brought your matchless gifts.

Your books, a massive library  
of transcendental pages,  
for every seeker of the truth,  
uniquely advantageous.

The sole Founder-*Ācārya* of  
a worldwide institution  
uniquely poised to vaporize  
affliction and illusion.

Uniquely sitting in the hearts  
of Vaiṣṇavas everywhere,  
your loving glance unfailing through  
our rapture, our despair.

You are unique, our one and only  
Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
a fool who tries to take your place  
inevitably flawed.

Please keep me, Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
a speck of dust applied  
with countless others at your feet,  
uniquely satisfied.



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

The word *ācārya* means “teacher.” The special function of such a teacher is to make people Kṛṣṇa conscious. A bona fide teacher following in the footsteps of Advaita *Ācārya* has no other business than to spread the principles of Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. The real qualification of an *ācārya* is that he presents himself as a servant of the Supreme. Such a bona fide *ācārya* can never support the demoniac activities of atheistic men who present themselves as God. It is the main business of an *ācārya* to defy such imposters posing as God before the innocent public.— *Cc. Adi Lila*, 6.28.

True compassion originates in Kṛṣṇa; or in other words, only Kṛṣṇa’s pure devotees can be truly compassionate. The special quality in true compassion is that it is unconditional. Kṛṣṇa and the devotees who convey mercy on His behalf never expect any reciprocal favors. They freely distribute mercy to anyone who will take it.

O most esteemed Śrīla Prabhupāda, O Lord and master of the devotees, how much I am feeling such profound gratitude for your unconditional mercy and compassion upon us fallen conditioned ignorant souls, wandering since time immemorial throughout this mundane atmosphere of birth, death, old age, disease and total delusion!

Seemed like eternal pain fear and suffering life after life. But you have appeared before our darkened eyes to bestow Lord Caitanyadeva’s *saṅkīrtana līlā*. And I am feeling so much gratefulness.

How fortunate we are is actually incomprehensible and inconceivable, my dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Whatever unhappiness I experience in the endeavor to carry out the orders of my spiritual master is my greatest happiness—Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

My spiritual master’s instructions are my *sādhana* and my life, both in the beginning stages of *bhakti*’s perfection stage. I desire only to follow His instructions, I accept nothing else as my life work, even in dreams.

Whether I am happy or distressed, whether the material world remains or is destroyed, I don't care. There is no loss for me. I simply must carry out the orders of my spiritual master—Viśvanātha Cakravatī

What a loving example you set for us Śrīla Prabhupāda, not by criticizing but by always being so kind, forgiving, friendly and merciful.

Without being self-controlled, without being disciplined, without being fully obedient, no one can become successful in following the instructions of the spiritual master and without doing so, no-one is able to go back to Godhead, you have stated Śrīla Prabhupāda.

When I left your country on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of July, I had very little hope to come back again. But Kṛṣṇa informed me that I'm not going to die immediately; therefore, I have come back again to get inspiration of Kṛṣṇa consciousness from you all good souls. Although officially I am your spiritual master, I consider you all students as my spiritual master because your love for Kṛṣṇa and service for Kṛṣṇa teach me how to become a sincere Kṛṣṇa conscious person.—Letter to Jadurani

Such towering mercy and humility!

With profound appreciation and with blazing affection, I thank you for returning to save a wretch like me!

I stand to be inspected, corrected and directed. Hoping to never be neglected!

*Your shamed aspiring disciple,*

Arjuna Das

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
Kṛṣṇa's mercy  
Hit the ground running  
When you arrived in the West.  
Young people  
Soon started coming –  
Hard to imagine how much they were blessed.

You knew  
Your own time was limited.  
How very foolish was I?  
Not to see  
That's how things had to be –  
Prabhupāda's army arranged in battle-lines.

Ready or not,  
You scooped me up.  
I wasn't fit for the job.  
Fresh from school,  
And not at all cool;  
Running in my mind were lines from a song:

*Where'er you walk, cool gales shall fan the glade;  
Trees where you sit shall crowd into a shade.  
Trees where you sit shall crowd into a shade.  
Where'er you tread, the blushing flowers shall rise,  
And all things flourish,  
And all things flourish, where'er you turn your eyes –  
Where'er you turn your eyes,  
Where'er you turn your eyes.*

Handel's aria  
From one of his works  
Written in 1740.  
Words that came true  
Relating to you  
As seen in the series of *Prabhupāda Memories*.

Melbourne, Australia  
Talking to scientists  
And one young boy, Sabhapati.  
From the plane you had seen  
Wasted acres of green  
And your glance at that boy said, 'Start a community!'

Fast-forward decades:  
That temple's still going,  
Proving that Vaiṣṇavas don't die.

Where'er you tread  
The blushing flowers are growing,  
And all things flourish, where'er you turn your eyes.

*Your fallen servant,*

Govardhana Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances!

All glories to Your Divine Grace!

I have never been a good devotee! I have wandered in and out of your wonderful ISKCON, and I'm certainly not qualified on any level to write this tribute. I've asked you to accept my humble obeisances, but it was you who taught me what true humility is.

I recall as a new devotee in 1972 watching you enter the temple room in Los Angeles with a beautiful smile and filled with love for your disciples. You stood at each altar with *praṇāmas* and offered full prostrated obeisances to your beloved Deities. I watched you closely, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and I could witness the deep humility and holy connection you had at each altar.

You would sit on your *vyāsāsana* and begin to sing the *Jaya Rādhā Mādhava* prayers. Your eyes would close and your head would vibrate in divine ecstasy! We all knew you were experiencing transcendental bliss. It was so amazing listening to you give *Bhāgavatam* class with all relevant adjacent *ślokas* supporting the day's lesson. It would usually involve relevant humorous stories, and when you smiled and laughed, the entire temple room erupted in joyous love for you. You would end class with the "Jai Om" prayers, and at the conclusion you would always say "Thank you very much". I could never understand why you would be thanking us. It was us that owed you our eternal gratitude! True humility from a pure devotee!

These were the best times of my life, but because I was so fallen, selfish and self-centered, I was unable to understand it at the time. The years have had a way of opening my eyes to what an amazing miracle you were to me and to all my godbrothers and sisters.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for all your endless mercy and for accepting a struggling devotee like me.

*Your worthless servant,*

## Baraha Murti Dasa

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

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I want to ask you to please forgive me for all my material attachments which are surfacing in my mind on a daily basis. For some reason I am really struggling to bring my mind under control and to allow me to taste the sublime teachings that you have brought to us in the West when you left India on the Jaladuta on that all-auspicious day in 1965!

Of course, I am suffering the results of my *karma* and what destiny has written for me, but Śrīla Prabhupāda, I beg you to give me the strength to combat and defeat all these mundane material desires for enjoyment regardless of where or why they come.

It is only by the mercy of you, the guru, and Lord Kṛṣṇa that I may be successful in my feeble attempt in becoming Kṛṣṇa conscious. So please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, be merciful unto me and grant me your causeless mercy so that I may be engaged by you and Lord Kṛṣṇa in your eternal service. That is my only real desire.

All glories to His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*Your servant,*

Baraha Murti Dasa

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

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

I offer my respectful obeisances unto His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda who is very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa having taken shelter of His Lotus Feet.

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

I was looking online to make sure I was spelling everything properly as I write my offering and found so many mantras for Śrīla Prabhupāda but was heart sick to not find this one eternal connection with him. It frightens me that our deviation from his simple instructions could be lost in time and clouded in “mystery and hidden meanings”. We are definitely from a place of impersonalism and voidism and need the daily shot in the soul of attentive chanting and remembrance of the one who saved us.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I fall at your lotus feet and, in my fallen condition as I try to hold on to the rescuing rope you have left for me to follow you home, I falter as fear and doubt arise keeping me entangled in material affairs.

The clarity I felt as I moved into your temple the day I turned 21, is now foggy with responsibilities and attachments. This year of 2021 is making it clear to the world that nobody gets out of here alive.

Your clear instructions and undeviating certainty that Kṛṣṇa is God, not only the Father, but the Dearest Friend of all living things, attracts my heart to know it too.

You so kindly engaged me as the servant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī to please Her glorious Lord. I thought I would never leave that temple, one room in the house you built for the whole world.

Still, that temple is in my heart, that service is driving me forward towards my next lives, how many or how few is up to me as I make my choices.

Thank you for this opportunity to turn to you and pray. Thank

you for teaching us how to be devotees of the Lord. Thank you for dissipating the darkness from our eyes and the hardness of our hearts.

Today I awoke with the word RESPECT going through my mind. I got up to chant *japa* and wrote these lines.

R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

Being good to yourself and others

We are all sisters and brothers

Remember

Everything

Śrīla

Prabhupāda's

Example

Clearly

Taught

Receive

Energy from

Supersoul

Perfecting

Every

Conscious

Thought

Render

Each

Sense of

Purpose

Equally

Centered in

Truth

Realize

Eternal

Spiritual

Persons

Exist here

Covered by

Time



Reverence and  
Exceptional  
Service  
Protects  
Evolving  
Conditioned  
Travelers

as they  
Remember  
Everything  
Śrīla  
Prabhupāda's  
Example  
Clearly  
Taught

All glories to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami  
Prabhupāda.  
Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Kṛṣṇa  
Consciousness.  
Pure devotee. Savior of the World.  
On whose foundation we stand.  
Simple for the simple, but difficult for the crooked.

*Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare  
Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

*Your daughter,*  
Mrgaksi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

How can I find words to glorify you when everything's been said thousands of times in thousands of different ways by thousands of different people who are far more advanced and qualified than I am?

I could try to be deep and philosophical, making pertinent statements backed up with scripture and quotes, or I could try to be clever and analyze what's going on in the world today with the virus and the vaccine and the confusion of it all.

I could express dismay and concern about why so much seems to have been taken away from us: association, *kīrtanas*, festivals, services, Rathayātrā...temples and a big new building standing empty, so many devotees fallen sick or departed this world.

It would be easy to be negative, to complain about isolation and disruption to our familiar ways of life, and the secure patterns of the days and weeks and of the festivals that punctuate the year.

But instead of doing all that I will just say a heartfelt thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda for the opportunity to go beyond the familiar and safe and, in isolation, to go deeper within ourselves.

For the time and space to read more and listen more and to try and gain a deeper understanding of what a truly wonderful gift you have given us and to begin to realise that actually that is all we have.

Nothing else matters but the knowledge which you have brought us. Nothing else has any value.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for this unique opportunity to learn what is truly important in our lives.

Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda!

*Your aspiring servant,*

Ramya Devi Dasi

The Golden Age of Kali is predicted. We are at the infancy stages. And yet we see so much increase of sinful activity and atheistic philosophy contaminating the environment. We are experiencing the predominance of fear propaganda being spewed into the ether. There are deep and pervasive levels of corruption and deception. Much of the population is waking up to this.

And then there are the ever present threats of atheistic communist orientated philosophy often disguised as something benign along with materialistic godless science which have both insidiously infiltrated our educational systems and think tanks of America. We as your *dīkṣā* and *śikṣā* disciples must be vigilant in this regard lest sentimental conceptions weaken the foundation of our faith in your bold preaching vision and mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda. While the message of the sweetness of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's love and the magnanimity of Nitāi Gaurāṅga *Patita Pāvana* is the esoteric essence and ultimate goal of our Gauḍīya tradition, there are formidable forces which must be overcome in order for that pure love to become manifest in the world. You Śrīla Prabhupada made this very clear – you didn't mince words in this regard.

Room Conversation — April 4, 1975, Mayapur. Prabhupāda:

But they are uncompromising. The communists, they, they are staunch enemy of the capitalist. Their whole philosophy is against God and against capitalism. So if America becomes Kṛṣṇa conscious and fights, they have got strength plus God's blessing. They'll come out victorious. Fight is going on. We cannot stop. But if the American people take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness and fight with the communist, they'll come out victorious. Then the menace of communist movement will stop. And we want that. We want that these demonic communists should be finished.

Morning Walk — December 18, 1973, Los Angeles, Prabhupāda:

Yes. The main point is that "In God we trust," on this slogan ... so the same point that, "What do you mean by God and what do you mean by trust? That you do not know." So you have to explain what is God and what is trust, thoroughly, from our books ... And our propaganda

is like that, to teach actually what is God and what is trust. And you important men of the state, you come forward, try to understand, and open schools, colleges. Make it perfectly known what is God. And make America strong. As the Communist party, they are preaching godlessness, now America should preach, 'No, in God we trust.' Now there should be a fight, not on the political point of view, but actually it includes everything. A class of men godless and a class of men who knows God. There should be fight.

Conversation with Śrīla Prabhupāda & Ramesvara:

WW III ...this has been a topic of great concern all over ISKCON for years. I asked Śrīla Prabhupāda if there was any chance of the war being averted. At first he said, "No". He said, "Communism is so evil we must force this war to happen. Communism has to end." In fact SP said, "Just as Kṛṣṇa appears to protect the devotees and annihilate the demons, so this Hare Kṛṣṇa movement has arisen to annihilate the two great demons of our age – Godless communism and Godless science. So there must be a war to end it." Then Prabhupāda sat back and thought for a moment. He said, "But there is a possibility that this war may be averted. It depends on your book distribution." He continued to say, "your book distribution is creating a spiritual environment throughout the whole world. And that will awaken spiritual sentiments in everyone's heart. And as that awakens, as you continue this book distribution, that spiritual sentiment may bring down communism from within." Then Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "Yes, and future historians will note how communism failed because of your book distribution. They will note how a revolution, a spiritual revolution throughout human society took place."

Conversation with Śrīla Prabhupāda & Ramesvara: "... and after communism is defeated we must attack and defeat godless science, the demons of godless science, Darwin. We must attack. We must defeat." We were traveling by train and Śrīla Prabhupāda looked out the window and said, "there is so much illiteracy in India right now, and that is Kṛṣṇa's blessing."

I said, "Why?"

He said, "So they don't have to hear the nonsense atheistic philosophies of Darwin."

Prabhupāda's last instruction to me as a BBT trustee was to publish books that defeat Godless science and sell them to the temples at cost. They were going to be exempt from the markup that every other book had. He carved out an exception for the science books and he ordered me to take money from the BBT as a budget for the science preaching – \$10 - \$20k a month, whatever they needed. That's how much he was determined that through the BBT we were going to defeat "Godless science."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the *Senāpati bhakta* that Śrī Mahāprabhu predicted – the great General of *Bhakti*. As the general you are leading the troops of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement and *saṅkīrtana* army into many battles / epic battles between the devotees and the demons / between good and evil. There is a war and we are in a fight, make no mistake about it. We must choose our moves, decisions and alliances carefully based not on sentiment but on an impartial study of your words, your mood and your directives such as those quoted above.

And we must take up this fight for the principles of righteousness, godliness and morality. Otherwise society is doomed. We must be the tip of the spear. That is how you trained us – a transcendental revolutionary army. And we were revolutionaries back in the day, and we must continue in that same spirit. There are forces which seek to divide us, discourage us and weaken us. We must be vigilant and attentive to the tenor of your teachings and take heed to your instructions, even if they may seem to rock our world, our bubble. The *saṅkīrtana* mission is one that is fundamentally counter-opposed to atheistic communistic ideology and material scientific dogma. You were adamant: "that this Hare Kṛṣṇa movement has arisen to annihilate the two great demons of our age – Godless communism and Godless science. So there must be a war to end it."

So let's roll up our sleeves, put on our boots and grab our weapons in the form of your books, Kṛṣṇa *prasādam*, innovative preaching, loving kindness, compassion, a mature spirit of appreciation and cooperation and armed with knowledge, Oh Arjuna, oh stalwart devotees of Śrīla Prabhupāda, oh sincere dedicated followers of this glorious Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, stand together and fight!

I am – and we are all eternally in your debt. Śrīla Prabhupāda ki JAYA!!!

*Your eternally grateful and lowly aspiring servant,*

Badarayana Dasa

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

My dearest Guruji, Śrīla Prabhupāda ... *Daṇḍavat Praṇām ...*

*nṛ-deham ādyaṁ su-labhaṁ su-durlabhaṁ  
plavaṁ su-kalpaṁ guru-karṇadhāram  
mayānukūlena nabhasvateritaṁ  
pumān bhavābhim na taret sa ātma-hā*

This human body can be compared to a perfectly constructed boat having the spiritual master as the captain and the instructions of the Personality of Godhead as favorable winds impelling it on its course. Considering all these advantages, a human being who does not utilize his human life to cross the ocean of material existence must be considered the killer of his own soul. (*Bhag.* 11.20.17)

Guruji, I had a spiritual awakening in 1969 at the age of 19. I began to read whatever spiritual books I could get my hands on since I lived in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, a small city in the middle of Canada which could best be described as a remote outpost.

I quickly gravitated to Eastern Philosophy — Ashtanga Yoga, Vedanta and meditation. Most of the books I came across advocated an impersonal conception of God (Brahman) and that we must become one with the energy of God and merge into that oneness. At the time, it was the best explanation of God and spiritual philosophy I had ever come across so I read extensively and began to absorb myself in my spiritual development. By the age of 21, I knew that my relationship with God was the most important thing in my life and all other things were secondary.

I began to buy and burn Spiritual Sky Incense in our little house. We had two small bedrooms — one, the bedroom and the other, the meditation room. On the back of the Spiritual Sky Incense packages, they advertized the *Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Temple* album. I sent away for that album and it became the soundtrack of my life each morning. I listened to the wonderful chanting and loved the Sanskrit songs. It had

such a deep resonance for me.

The *Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Temple* album advertized the purchase of the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, translated and commented on by Your Divine Grace. I eagerly ordered this book and read it in the summer of 1972 when I was 22. Every morning, I would go to the park in the middle of the city which had a beautiful lake in its midst. There, I would either sit on the grassy bank next to the lake, or I would paddle out onto the lake in my little rubber dingy, and I would devour the *Bhagavad-gītā* in the sunshine. That summer, my life changed ... forever. It had a total impact on me. And I understood God, Kṛṣṇa and so many things about the material energy, the spiritual energy, the modes of nature, etc., like never before in my life.

There was a pictorial poster hanging up in my house which said, "The Hare Kṛṣṇa Explosion," with pictures of the devotees chanting and dancing. And I would look at this poster and wonder, "But will they ever come to the remote outpost of Regina so I could meet them?" Then, one day, that same summer, I walked downtown to do a little shopping, and standing on a street corner were two devotees in saffron robes and big smiles handing out incense sticks with big smiles on their faces. Balakrishna Dasa and Ayodhyaapati Dasa. I was overjoyed to meet them and explained some of my spiritual path the last few years. They were excited and invited me and my girlfriend to join them for *prasāda* at 6 pm the same day on the Big Blue Bus which they rolled into town all the way from Toronto, 2000 miles away!

We eagerly met the devotees on the Big Blue Bus and enjoyed *kīrtana* and *prasāda* afterwards. I told them most sincerely that it was the best and tastiest food I had ever had in my life. One devotee, Kṛpasindhu Prabhu, was left behind to open a temple in Regina, which he did. We attended regularly, participating in *ārati* and *kīrtana* and *Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā* classes. It was most powerful and highly transformative for me, personally. Over time, a few more souls were attracted and some moved into the temple. Within a year, I decided I too must get serious about my path of *bhakti-yoga*. I did not want to join my home town since I knew so many people. So, I decided I would head to Toronto and join there. My girlfriend did not want to move into the temple but decided to accompany me anyway. All in all, through Your Divine Grace, Gurudeva, I believe Kṛṣṇa rescued about seven souls from the remote outpost of Regina by sending the Big Blue Bus! And my gratitude knows no limits.

I can never hope to repay you for what you have given me,

Gurudeva. You have given me everything and asked for little in return. If we could do a little service, you would be happy with that. But I was compelled to offer my life to Kṛṣṇa and my service to your lotus feet. And now, some 50 years later, I am so grateful that I did. Thank you for surrendering to the wish of your Gurudeva, Bhaktisiddhānta Swami. For if you had not, there are now millions of us that would have missed this Golden Gaurāṅga opportunity.

A million *daṇḍavats* at your lotus feet in deepest love and gratitude,

*Your eternal servant,*

Duryodhana-Guru dasa



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

For so many years, I have been allowed by your causeless mercy to associate with your real disciples who serve you with genuine *bhakti sevā*.

Now at age 78, I am experiencing the ravages of time. And once again I am astonished at the incredible mercy you have allowed me, who has little so called qualification for such kindness. You present the perfect persons to care for Śrī Śrī Rādhā Ramaṇa when I no longer am able to serve Them properly...

You send a HomeCare worker who is a devout Christian '*Bhakta*' and helps me make flower arrangements for the Deities, and who cooks vegetarian food that can be offered.

The health situation is 'inconvenient' yet there is no overt pain or suffering...you have brought 'my' son Raghunātha, who you initiated as a 12-year-old boy in Vṛndāvana Gurukula, to shower his Kṛṣṇa conscious love in helping care for me. At night as I lay down to take rest, I send my heartfelt prayers of gratitude that I 'have' a clean, comfortable bed to take rest in, out of the rain and elements of nature. Your continued kindness and mercy is overwhelming and I am so grateful for all your blessings given to such an unworthy disciple. When you gave me initiation, I asked you, "Śrīla Prabhupāda, how am I going to remember you and serve you for the rest of my life?" You replied, "If you chant 16 rounds and follow the four principles, you will remember me and serve me." And being a neophyte I could not even do that 'bare minimum'. Yet you continue to allow me the association of wonderful devotees to hear Kṛṣṇa *kathā* and *kīrtana*...

Please bless me that someday I may be able to render *sevā* properly.

*Your servant,*

Jagaddhatri Devi Dasi

## Anavadyangi Devi Dasi

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My dearest beloved father Śrīla Prabhupāda whose lotus feet are my only shelter. Today is April 7, 2021 and Ekādaśī here in Stagecoach, Nevada, USA.

I am continually begging for your forgiveness and blessings. I am such a rascal. It is not easy living in a desert without any devotee association, but I am working on changing that by giving to others the *mahā-mantra* and distributing your books.

It is only by your mercy that the hearts of others can become receptive to hearing the holy names and stirring their interest in reading and absorbing the eternal knowledge that can free us from ignorance.

In Nevada gambling, prostitution, meat-eating and intoxication are not only legal but openly engaged in by most. Fortunately some are taking to a vegetarian diet and healthier lifestyles.

We live on five acres in a rural area and endeavor to lead a simpler more sattvic life.

Praying to increase my chanting and developing more taste. Bless me in all my devotional efforts to make a difference in this world.

*Your lowly servant,*

Anavadyangi Devi Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

A Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* is self-effulgent due to his mature Kṛṣṇa consciousness, which allows the all-attractive qualities of the pure soul, such as compassion, humility and detachment, to manifest.

He is glorious because his whole life is devoted to the service of the Lord and his spiritual master, evident by his performing wonderful activities for the benefit of the conditioned souls. The sincere follower must glorify such a Vaiṣṇava *ācārya*. However, an offering of simply fruits, flowers and ghee lamp is not the actual glorification of the spiritual master. Rather, to be able to in turn devote one's full life to pure devotional service and to imbibe the spiritual master's words of instruction is the true glorification. The purified disciple will consequently similarly manifest transcendental qualities and activities.

Śrīla Prabhupāda is the shining example of one who fully and perfectly glorified his spiritual master and the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* through his realized teachings and sacrifices, evident by his success in transforming countless souls into Kṛṣṇa *bhaktas*. He was also expert at eulogizing saintly followers of Lord Caitanya. In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* 15.163, Prabhupāda writes the following:

As the perfect Vaiṣṇava, he [Vāsudeva Datta] was *para-duḥkha-duḥkhī*, very much aggrieved to see others suffer. The entire world is purified simply by the appearance of such a great devotee. Indeed, by his transcendental presence the whole world is glorified and all conditioned souls are also glorified. As Narottama dasa Ṭhākura confirms, Vāsudeva Datta is the ideal devotee of Śrī Caitanya Mahārabhu:

*gaurāṅgera saṅgi-gaṇe, nitya-siddha kari' māne,  
se yāya vrajendrasuta-pāśa*

One who executes Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's mission must be considered eternally liberated. He is a transcendental person and does not belong to this material world. Such a devotee, engaging in the deliverance of the total population, is as magnanimous as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself.

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

Such a personality factually represents Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu because his heart is always filled with compassion for all conditioned souls.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I pray that I may someday be able to properly take advantage of your association and guidance so that I may truly glorify and eulogize you.

*Your humble servant,*

Prthusrava Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you for directing me to Kṛṣṇa in this lifetime. Believing in God is a blessing, but knowing who God is, is truly miraculous. No one definitively told us who exactly God is. How could we not have known? But you explained simply in the plain direct language of the revealed Vedic scriptures, which you brought to the West. Your purports unlock so many mysteries of both the material and spiritual energy and even of our identity. Thank you for giving us such a treasure and for being the via medium through which we can offer service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Without you, I am afraid we would be lost – and we were lost. But you brought us the message of Lord Caitanya and the *paramparā*, the chain by which we can link to Kṛṣṇa. You carried the message of Kṛṣṇa to us without any adulterations and you did it for us, for the sole reason of giving us a chance to be saved from the cycle of birth and death.

I continue to try to serve you and your ISKCON mission, although my efforts are full of discrepancies. But I know you are merciful, as Kṛṣṇa is merciful. Please allow me to serve the mission of your ISKCON, and to stay in your service and in the presence of your wonderful disciples and granddisciples, despite my inadequacies. I pray someday to be worthy of the gifts you have brought to us.

Thank you forever.

We are all in your debt.

*Your grateful disciple,*

Kadamba Devi Dasi

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

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

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

Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda, my dear Guru Mahārāja,

Please accept this most insignificant offering on this most auspicious day of your holy Vyāsa-pūjā celebration all over the world.

Thank you for giving us the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

In one of your lectures you said, "This *saṅkīrtana* movement is the incarnation of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu."

In this most holy land of Vṛndāvana, in your Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple, you are preaching the topmost knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is the fountainhead of religion.

By traveling all over the world 15 times and preaching the glories of the holy name, translating your precious books, making devotees, and most importantly, preaching the glories of the *Bhagavad-gītā* *As It Is* all over the world.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you showed what a great *ācārya* and powerful preacher you are. From the very beginning of your movement, you empowered your disciples with *bhakti-shakti* to perform so many incredible activities never before seen, to establish in a very short time your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement all over the world. By your unlimited causeless mercy and by the direct guidance and instructions of your Guru Mahārāja Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami Mahārāja, you came to the West. By visiting all the main cities of this world you saved us from hell ... you saved us and shaved us, too!

By your great mercy, we were fortunate enough to see you when you came to ISKCON in Mexico City, your temple which became a *tīrtha* when you touched it with your lotus feet in 1972 and 1975.

Also, thank you for sending us the beautiful Deities of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa in 1973, which you named Śrī Śrī Rādhā Madan Gopal.

Before you visited us in 1975, you had these beautiful Deities in a pandal preaching program in India with thousands of Indian people and your disciples on stage, with nice *kīrtana*, lecture, *ārati*, *prasāda*, and the very high standards of Deity worship you established all over the world.

You mentioned that you would like to have the same standards at the Mexico City temple, and that something was not right with the Deity worship there. You asked about who the *saṅkīrtana* leader was, and, to the surprise of all, you said that he should be the head *pūjārī*.

You are the *saṅkīrtana* army general of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu's movement. Your instructions and desires for the devotees in this temple were to read your books for five hours each day, maintain high Deity worship standards, and have good book distribution. You told us that *saṅkīrtana* and deity worship have to be on the same level, like railroad tracks, in order for the train to run smoothly.

At the reception upon your arrival, while we worshiped your lotus feet with *panchamrita*, *ārati*, and flower garlands, you smiled and said, "This arrival reception is very much pleasing to me. I like it very much. This is the only temple who made very nice arrangements for me in the airport. Thank you all so much."

You were referring to the arrangements that the devotees had made with the airport authorities to avoid customs. You did not like all those airport formalities. From the airplane, we escorted you in a limousine by two police officers on motorcycles all the way to the temple.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you showed your compassion for all the conditioned souls on this planet. In 1972, during your first visit, you gave us transcendental bliss by coming into our lives. When a news reporter asked you on live TV news show whether you could give your blessings to all the people of Mexico, you replied "Yes, all the people of this country of Mexico have my blessings" (approximately 55 million people in 1972). You went to this show at 11:00 pm after preaching all day at the Universidad Autónoma de México (UNAM) one of the best universities in Latin America.

There are many stories of devotees who for many years after this, met people on the street who would say they had seen you on TV and asked for your books. Thank you for coming to Mexico City, and into our lives.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, Guru Mahārāja, what an amazing

personality you are. You descended on this world in the holy land of Bengal, the same place where Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu performed His pastimes. And you demonstrated by preaching the glories of Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu, and exhibited pure love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu, full of bliss.

Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, help us to complete and develop the TOVP in Mayapur Dhāma, your ISKCON world headquarters, under the supervision of Sriman Ambarīṣa Prabhu and his good wife Mother Svāhā.

Please Śrīla Prabhupāda, let me be your eternal servant, and may you always be the object of my vision. Also, please destroy my pride and illusion. My mind and intelligence are contaminated by wicked inclinations. I meditate upon your lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please protect us and kindly shower your compassion throughout your ISKCON movement.

*Your most insignificant and lowest servant,*

Ramanya Dasa



Śrīla Prabhupāda, His Divine Grace

*mūkaṁ karoti vācālaṁ  
paṅguṁ laṅghayate girim  
yat-kṛpā tam ahaṁ vande  
śrī-guruṁ dīna-tāraṇam*

“I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, the deliverer of the fallen souls. His mercy turns the dumb into eloquent speakers and enables the lame to cross mountains.”

Prabhupāda, you are our savior. Without your grace we would be adrift in this miserable ocean of birth and death. By your grace only can one overcome so many obstacles. You are so kind and merciful, unnecessarily taking on so many hardships, just to give the Lord’s mercy to us conditioned souls.

You once asked one of our godbrothers, “Are you thinking of Kṛṣṇa? It’s alright. If you think of me thinking of Kṛṣṇa, that’s just as good.” Without your mercy where would we be? Even the most powerful cannot stand up against this material energy, but just like Lord Kṛṣṇa gave shelter to the residents of Vṛndāvana, offering them refuge under Govardhana Hill, in the same way the cooling shade of your lotus feet and your endearing smile give shelter to all from this burning fire of material life.

In Vṛndāvana you once said, “If you remember me I will be with you.” Because your mercy is all we are made of, please always allow me to remember your lotus feet, so as to remain your faithful servant and messenger and assist you in your mission of delivering all the conditioned souls of this land.

*Aspiring to become your humble servant,*

Raghupati Prana Dasa

My Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you on this auspicious day of your appearance.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for allowing me to serve you since I was a young girl of 16 years old. You picked me up from a very precarious position when I was blinded by the dangerous lifestyle of the “hippie movement.” Only by your causeless mercy, you lifted me up from the hippie movement and so kindly introduced me to Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement. You saved me from a dangerous and confusing life of searching for God in all the wrong places. With the kindest and most loving and compassionate demeanor, you woke up a generation of sleeping souls who were frustrated and disillusioned with this world as it was.

I wrote to you in the summer of 1972 and asked you, “What can I do to serve you.” You kindly responded to instruct me and also wrote, “If you follow the rules and regulations in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the problems of this material world will shrink to no more than the size of a hoof print left by the calf.”

Your words were like a soothing balm on my agitated mind. I felt safe at your lotus feet. Reading your letter, I knew you understood my heart, and you knew exactly what I needed to surrender to you. I knew then that I had found my eternal spiritual master, and I felt an immediate sense of safety, protection and immense gratitude, being certain you would guide me in my spiritual life. I knew Kṛṣṇa had mercifully arranged for me to meet you again, to connect with you once again, and to take shelter at your lotus feet.

After a lifetime of you allowing me to serve you and to serve your beloved devotees by caring for them at the end of their lives, you have sent your blessings again and again. Throughout the decades you directed me to start Vaishnavas C.A.R.E. (Counseling, Assistance, Resource, and Education for the Terminally ill and Those in Need) and you have guided me every step of the way to teach others in your ISKCON movement to also care for your devotees. I pray it will please you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to hear that we now have Vaishnavas CARE Teams throughout the United States, and now in Latin America, specifically throughout Chile, Argentina, El Salvador, Ecuador, Brazil, Portugal, Africa, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Canada. In addition, we have individual Vaishnavas

CARE Volunteers in New Zealand, France, Italy, England, Germany and Spain. By your grace, this project has spread beyond my expectations. I pray to you to kindly give me the words to speak whenever I give seminars in order to educate the devotees to perform this much-needed service in your ISKCON movement.

Knowing it was, and still is, your desire for your devotees to be cared for all through life, we have expanded our services to care for the devotees, not just at the time of death, but our Teams are now working hard to care for the devotees in their communities through difficult times in life when they need emotional and spiritual support from the Vaishnavas. I am pleased to report to you that our Vaishnavas CARE Volunteers are reaching out to devotees when they stop coming to the temples. They are lending a helping hand when your devotees need it the most. They are attempting to create a more loving and kind environment within the temples and congregations so devotees worldwide will feel cared about. We pray this pleases you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. By Your Grace, I have experienced first hand how loving and caring you were to your disciples so we are trying to follow your example and carry on your legacy in this, and other ways.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please bless us to continue this service so all of your devotees for generations to come will also feel loved and cared about when they join your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. Kindly give us the ability and strength to expand our services in this way and allow us to become better servants to YOUR servants now, and for all of eternity.

Begging to remain,

*Your servant,*

Sangita Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*Gurubhyonamaha. Śrīla Prabhupāda jayojayojayaha!*

Words will not, I feel, do justice to glorifying you on your Appearance Day. Still, I will make some attempt here.

First my obeisances,

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

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

During your lifetime, you laid a very strong foundation for your ISKCON institution. Establishing Rādhā Kṛṣṇa, Jagannāth, Baladev, Subhadrādevī, and Śrī Śrī Gaur Nitāi temples on every continent.

You focused on India – the land of Lord Kṛṣṇa and of the Vedic culture and religion that you propagated worldwide. Your main focus was on developing the three centers you referred to as your “home”, “office”, and “place of worship”, i.e. Vṛndāvana, Bombay Juhu, and Śrīdhām Mayapur.

Your efforts during the twelve years of your worldwide preaching the message of Mahāprabhu with the aim of reestablishing Vedic culture and *daiva varnāśram dharma*, wherein you planted the seeds of the ISKCON institution, have grown into a massive tree, with branches and roots all over the world!

Particularly in the holy land of Bharata bhumi, your institution is now spread to almost four hundred centers! The grand temple you spoke about at Mayapur and inspired Ambarish Prabhu to sponsor and promote is now in the final stages of completion.

Only a worldwide outbreak of disease has delayed the planned inauguration of that magnificent edifice, that will be an everlasting tribute to you as the greatest ambassador of India and Vedic culture and religion in the history of the past many years!

You must be pleased to hear the Prime Minister of India recently visiting Krishnanagar for an election rally, and announcing to the gathered crowd of several lakhs, “Hare Kṛṣṇa!”, “Hare Kṛṣṇa!” “Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu kī jay!” “Nityānanda Prabhu kī jay!”! It seems he may be a modern day Pratāparudra, and our hope is that he would inaugurate the ToVP temple before he leaves office in 2024.

You must be pleased to know that the Chief Minister of West Bengal visited Śrīdhām Mayapur and announced that she would do anything to promote religious tourism in West Bengal. You must be pleased to know that she had a law passed in the State Assembly exempting ISKCON's Mayapur Tourist Corporation — wholly owned by your ISKCON India Governing Bureau, that you registered at Bombay during 1971 – from land ceiling laws, up to 750 acres! She further had the West Bengal State Assembly pass an exemption from Stamp duties that saved the Mayapur project approximately Fifty Crores of Rupees!

On this, your Vyāsa pūjā Day, I pledge to continue in my humble services to your ISKCON Institution as long as I am physically and mentally fit to do so. Keeping in mind that 75 years of age would be the last limit of managerial responsibility, thus giving me nine more years to execute various services to ISKCON, before retiring to Vṛndāvana or Mayapur to live out my last years performing *bhajan* in one of the most sacred places.

On this, your Vyāsa pūjā Day, it is my hope that ISKCON *pracāra pravṛtti* continues to grow and grow to fulfill your desire that this movement spread to every town and village in the world!

*Your humble, unqualified, and useless servant,*

Basu Ghosh Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

You have beckoned us to the spiritual abode beyond mundane existence where stones are *cintāmaṇi* – mystical and wish fulfilling. You have given keys to access that divine realm which is permeated with Kṛṣṇa *prema*.

Within the vast expanse of your writings and spoken works are sown innumerable *cintāmaṇi* stones of instructions – directives that are individually suited for everyone’s unique nature and character, awaiting to catch our attention, and enticing us to pick them up to utilize them in the service of Your Divine Grace. Instructions which can enable us to see the Lord face to face as you wrote in SB. 4.28.51:

When one becomes serious to follow the mission  
of the spiritual master, his resolution is tantamount  
to seeing the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

These are the stones of legendary “Kṛṣṇa magic” that bring empowerment, resources beyond expectations, that enable us to meet the persons we need to meet, to hear exactly what we need to hear and to open the doors we need to open.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have graciously revealed a spiritual key which can enable us to begin to unleash the power of this *cintāmaṇi*.

SB 8.15.28 Purport: “*We sing in our daily prayers, yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto ’pi. By the pleasure of the spiritual master, one can get extraordinary power, especially in spiritual advancement. The blessings of the spiritual master are more powerful than one’s personal endeavor for such advancement.* Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura therefore says: guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete kariyā aikya, āra nā kariha mane āśā.

Especially for spiritual advancement, one should carry out the bona fide order of the spiritual master. By the *paramparā*

system, one can thus be endowed with the original spiritual power coming from the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

By pleasing the spiritual master one can achieve what is beyond own limited abilities. And you gave a second key to protect the power of this *cintāmaṇi*, the vital quality of humility and dependence on Kṛṣṇa.

**Arjuna said: O King! The Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari, who treated me exactly like an intimate friend, has left me alone. Thus, my astounding power, which astonished even the demigods, is no longer with me.**

Purport: “No one, therefore, can be independently powerful in any measure without being endowed by the Lord.... *The lesson is, therefore, that no one should be puffed up for his powers borrowed from the Lord. The sane man should rather feel obliged to the Lord for such benefactions and must utilize such power for the service of the Lord.*” — SB 1.15.5

These crucial keys of humility and sincere endeavor can enable us to move past our individual limited potentials into the realm of empowered devotional service.

Travelling around the world we have witnessed devotees embracing this spiritual potential of Your Divine Grace and manifesting creative powerful ways to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, some seemingly small yet with great impact. The sincere, humbly devoted actions of these devotees is a most powerful testament to your greatness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we offer our indebted obeisances to you for blessing us with these keys to unlocking the treasures of empowered devotional service. We pray that you may guide us to carefully hold these sacred treasures to our hearts and fully utilize them to distribute this paragon of knowledge to others just as you have bequeathed it to us.

*Praying to follow in the footsteps of your sincere servants,*

Partha Dasa

## Uttama Devi Dasi

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

I have no idea where to begin, as I am grateful to you for so many things. I am grateful for your immense compassion for all of us. I am grateful for your eloquent, deeply insightful translation and commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. I am grateful for your witty comments, that cut to the essence. I am grateful for your perseverance to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness despite odds that would have sent most people back to the warm comforts of home. I appreciate the personal dealings you had with each Deity, every disciple, every guest. I appreciate witnessing, even second hand, the vast spectrum of love that you have for Kṛṣṇa. I pray that somehow, I too, may develop a sliver of that love.

So why do I think that there is still some enjoyment to be had in this world? Why do I think there is something better than the holy name to fix my mind upon? Because I do not deeply realize the essence of what you came to share. You did not simply teach, you invited us to also live in your world...the world of loving relationships, compassionate dealings, no thoughts other than, "Will Kṛṣṇa enjoy this? ... or this? ... or perhaps this?"

Please, allow me to give up thinking I am happy living just outside your door, smelling the good aromas. Please allow me to live in your house, and truly experience love of God.

*Your yard dog,*

Uttama Devi Dasi



My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my repeated sincere and humble obeisances unto your lotus-like feet.

On this glorious day of your appearance, I am so happy to offer my gratitude and glorification of Your Divine Grace, along with many of my godbrothers, godsisters and all those who have had the good fortune of meeting you, in some form or another.

By now, millions in the world are celebrating your appearance today. There is such a huge number of souls who come in contact with you each day – through your books and disciples – it wouldn't be possible to fit them all in any given physical space, only in the house you built where the whole world could fit.

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, let your name be glorified and your fame be spread. You are the only one who told the world, and me, the truth!

Since we were born we were led into assuming different types of illusory identifications and roles. We were continuously taught and told lies by our parents, teachers, political leaders and the church. According to them, we were supposed to be the center of the universe, the proprietors and enjoyers of everything that be and we only had to go to school, college or university and act according to their laws in order to qualify for such a position! That was and is their ideal of happiness, notwithstanding the certainty of disease, old age and death. And meanwhile ignoring God or considering Him merely an order supplier for the pious.

But you appear on the scene and, with the utmost sense of urgency screamed: "What are you doing with your human life? Wake up from this slumber and raise your consciousness to see the beautiful truth! You are not these bodies, you don't belong here, there is another much higher reality. You are all spirit souls eternally connected with God! Kṛṣṇa is God, chant His names and you'll be happy again with Him! Take to this Lord Caitanya's movement!"

You had the "impossible" task to establish the supremacy of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, Lord Caitanya and Lord Jagannāth in the midst of a cacophony of atheistic and materialistic theories! You had to defeat the scientific version of creation, expose the fallacies of modern education, and the unthinkable for the West, preach against the practices of illicit sex and intoxication.

You coined the term “Kṛṣṇa consciousness” for your “matchless gift”, and you underwent countless hardships to deliver it to us. Day and night you endeavored tirelessly to introduce the chanting of the *mahā-mantra* and translate the cream of the ancient Vedic scriptures to support the authenticity of this method. You also introduced us to the most elevated philosophers, saints and spiritual teachers that the world has ever known.

Alone, in the kingdom of ignorance, the uncivilized madhouse of New York, single-handedly you started the chanting and teaching of the philosophy, and the rest is glorious and miraculous history!

Thanks to this sacrifice of yours, I also had the untold fortune of coming in contact with you – first through your books and disciples – then personally meeting you, receiving your mercy and having thus my human life to finally attain its proper meaning and goal.

For me, this wealth of spiritual fortune was way beyond what I had bargained for in my research. All this has been producing so much nectar on a regular basis in my life for decades now, because indeed, everything works as you promised it would!

The holy name is indeed the all attractive Kṛṣṇa Himself, the reservoir of all pleasure.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness is indeed the highest state of blissful, knowledgeable and eternal existence.

And knowing and associating with these saintly personalities through transcendental sound is indeed the greatest honor and success!

You promised: “Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa to be happy!” Did this prove to be true? YES, with a sounding YES!

In the middle of this painful material existence, where pain is inescapably used for reformatory purposes, is happiness possible, one may ask? Thanks to your mercy it is, according to the degree of the sincerity, seriousness and determination with which one practices your teachings!

While sounds of sorrow, pain and despair are heard constantly everywhere in this Kali-yuga atmosphere, the echo of your voice can still be heard loud and clear through your books and your faithful followers: “...This transcendental vibration by chanting of *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare* is the sublime method for reviving our Kṛṣṇa consciousness...”

It is our main duty and mission, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to keep this

transcendental vibration expanding, amplified and refined, propagating Lord Caitanya's movement to all the receptive people around us and over the globe. This is your desire, our *paramparā's* mission, the *yuga-dharma* for this age and the pleasure of the Lord! Who will miss the golden opportunity to be a part of this glorious operation and get his ticket for going back to Godhead in just a few years!

While I haven't really any big external accomplishment to offer unto your lotus feet, as if it was ever possible to thus repay you, I am here to thank you immensely and testify about the amazing beauty and nature of this blessing we have being given ... the vision of Kṛṣṇa consciousness personified in your perfect example!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am praying intensely for your mercy. Please bless me to awaken again the forgotten art of serving and pleasing the Lord and His devotees. I remember, when you were with us, you wouldn't judge us for our fallen past, nor take seriously our then immature present, but you would look at our potential, how we could be in a purified, perfected and saintly future. Such a lovely and encouraging vision! I want to make it mine!

*With infinite gratitude,  
Your aspiring servant,*

Citraka Dasa

Preaching the principles of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is an open challenge to the values of modern society, or at least it should be. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is revolutionary literature. It is. "...a different creation, full of transcendental words directed toward bringing about a revolution in the impious lives of this world's misdirected civilization." A preacher understands that he or she is not meant to please the public with sugar-coated sentiment but is meant to "rock the boat" of a complacent, confused society gone astray. Preaching MEANS to rock the boat of misunderstanding, ignorance, and opposition to Kṛṣṇa *bhakti*. It means to confront materialistic science that promotes sense gratification. It means to confront the status quo of social values that deny the existence of God. It means to confront the outright atheists, and the covert atheists too, that hide behind a veil of religiosity. A preacher is meant to confront the modern, misguided educational system that only produces first-class sense enjoyers and prepares one to be a consumer cog in the corporate machine. They are all the enemies of Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* and the enemies of the prospect of a peaceful God conscious civilization. Godless principles of materialistic society obstruct the actual value of human life, devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Kṛṣṇa, and they need to be challenged, confronted, and corrected. That is preaching. A preacher is not the boot licker of popular opinion, he is not a sycophant.

Our Param Guru, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura declared "totalitarian war" on anti-devotional principals, and on anything else that contradicted the conclusions of Śrīla Rūpa Goswami. We pray at his lotus feet, "...*rūpānuga viruddhāpasiddhānta dhvānta hāriṇe.*" "You do not tolerate any statements against the teachings of devotional service enunciated by Śrīla Rupa Goswami." Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura wrote:

A chanter of Hari-kīrtana is necessarily the uncompromising enemy of worldliness and hypocrisy. It is his constant function to dispel all misconceptions by preaching the truth in its most unambiguous form, without any consideration of person, place, or time.

—*Harmonist*, 26.249–50 (Apr 1929)

Our Śrīla Prabhupāda, following the example and precept of his Guru Mahārāja, taught us exactly the same thing. He wrote:

*The fact is that I am the only one in India who is openly criticizing, not only demigod worship and impersonalism, but everything that falls short of complete surrender to Kṛṣṇa. My Guru Mahārāja never compromised in His preaching, nor will I, nor should any of my students. We are firmly convinced that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and all others are His part and parcel servants. This we must declare boldly to the whole world, that they should not foolishly dream of world peace unless they are prepared to surrender fully to Kṛṣṇa as Supreme Lord. — Letter of January 3, 1972*

By his uncompromising preaching spirit Śrīla Prabhupāda, was the greatest revolutionary and human society was the beneficiary. He actually did something useful for society while others only created havoc. Marx, Stalin, Hitler, Lenin, Mao, Martin Luther King, Roosevelt, Gandhi or Churchill, they all had their doctrine, their plan for a better world, a happier more prosperous, peaceful world, but it all ended in disaster. Everything they attempted came to naught, and no-one can say the world is a better place today on account of their effort. Neither has the struggle of “isms”, communism, socialism, or idealism left human society any better off. Dogma devoid of Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* has only produced a royal edition of animal life, so-called human beings mindlessly chasing the same objectives as the pigs, asses, dogs, and donkeys. And where are those big so-called revolutionaries now, and where are their grandiose plans for happiness, social order, and prosperity? All of it is gone, useless, ill-conceived, and all but forgotten.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was the only true revolutionary because he preached the unadulterated Absolute Truth found in the pages of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, without fear of reprisal or censure. He never feared public opinion and made liberal use of words like, fool, rascal, demon, *mūḍha*, dog and donkey in his preaching vocabulary. He simply wasn't concerned with who was pleased or who was not, he wanted to please Kṛṣṇa. That was enough. And if someone didn't like it, he was ready to fight with them. He wrote:

*Those who are opposing Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, we have to fight with them to our best capacity. Never mind if we are defeated. That is also service. Kṛṣṇa sees the service.*

*Defeated or victorious, depend on Kṛṣṇa. But fighting must be there. — SB lecture, March 1, 1977, Mayapur*

*Our preaching means to turn demons into devotees. That is our preaching. If you keep them demon, then your preaching is lacking.— Morning walk, August 29, 1975*

Once, after a Sunday feast lecture, Śrīla Prabhupāda asked for questions and a man stood up in the midst of a large crowd of guests and began to explain to everyone that he was “God”. Śrīla Prabhupāda listened without saying a word. When the so-called “God” ran out of words and was standing there like a fool in front of the audience, Śrīla Prabhupāda shouted at him, “YOU are God?? You are a DOG, sit down.” The audience loudly applauded. Śrīla Prabhupāda didn’t tell him, “We respect your tradition and point of view, perhaps you would like to join us in an interfaith discussion group.” Śrīla Prabhupāda called the man a dog. However, we should take note, we cannot imitate Śrīla Prabhupāda and insult everyone we intend to teach, but we should follow in his sacred footsteps, understand and appreciate his mood.

Today, as we gather to remember and worship Śrīla Prabhupāda, nations throughout the world are on the brink of war, at the expense of hundreds of thousands, maybe millions of lives. And what are they fighting over? “Stolen bread”, sovereignty over land and water they have no right to call their own. Land that was there before power-intoxicated leaders were born, and land and water that will remain after they die. Śrīla Prabhupāda introduced the only solution to the problem; “*iśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ yat kiñca jagatyāṁ jagat...*”. If the world accepts this simple, sublime advice, World War, and the unnecessary death and suffering it spawns, stops tomorrow. And who introduced this Vedic panacea on every continent of the world? It was Śrīla Prabhupāda, the only real revolutionary the world has ever seen. He gave the world more than any other *ācārya*. Even Rāmānuja and Madhva never left Bhārata! Yet, who recognizes Śrīla Prabhupāda’s contribution outside of ISKCON, and who is hearing him? That is the challenge that each of us should contemplate today; how to distribute his message, “as it is” for the benefit of an agonized, confused society.

So, this is our blessed task, the task that all Śrīla Prabhupāda’s followers must shoulder. “*Ebe yaśa ghuṣuk tribhuvāna!*” Declare his glories throughout the three worlds. Present Śrīla Prabhupāda to

society. Create a revolution! Distribute Śrīla Prabhupāda's mercy in the form of his books, his recorded lectures, his letters, his devotees, and his temples. And especially we should endeavor to bring the attention of the world to recognize his books as the most profound contribution to the welfare of human society that history will ever see. If we dedicate our life to this task of making Śrīla Prabhupāda the most well-known, authoritative, spiritual authority on the planet, there is hope for society. Doing this is more important, and more fruitful, than an abhiṣeka, obeisance, and a handful of flowers.

O Śrīla Prabhupāda, O Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura, I am simply begging at your lotus feet to be a participant in your revolution, in any way you see fit.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Sarva-drik Das

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Your blessed disciples are so kind to offer this opportunity to individually glorify you. You are thus manifesting your infinite mercy through them. Glorifying you is yet another opportunity to escape Kali's relentless influence. Meditating on you, your unfathomable devotion to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and the previous *ācāryas*, your overflowing love for Lord Kṛṣṇa and His entourage, your affectionate gratitude and concern for those who attempt to serve you, and your unfathomable compassion for all souls who are not engaging in a loving relationship with the Lord – all this draws my attention away from *māyā's* glaring and bewildering reflection.

In your translation and commentary on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi-līlā* 1.54, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja cites one of the verses that Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke to Lord Brahmā [SB 2.9.34]:

What appears to be truth without Me is certainly My  
illusory energy, for nothing can exist without Me. It  
is like a reflection of a real light in the shadows, for in  
the light there are neither shadows nor reflections.

In your purport, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you powerfully explain how both darkness and reflected light have their existence only in relation to the sun. You have spent so many "gallons of blood" to draw us away from these shadows and illusory reflections. And true to your words, your guidance and love are not limited by your manifest presence among us. Anyone can experience you and your loving guidance by associating with you through the unlimited treasures you continue to make available. It is simply a matter of being sincere and serious. I pray to be always blessed with the shelter of such sincere and serious souls.

*An aspiring servant,*

Jaya Bhadra dasi



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances at your soft lotus feet.

Thank you for bringing the amazing, satisfying, and comprehensive philosophy and practice given by Lord Caitanya to the world such that it came to me! Thank you for accepting me as your spiritual daughter. Your compassion and transcendental genius is manifested daily in the lives of all you touched. Your ageless love-filled fearlessness personifies what it means to have Kṛṣṇa-prema. May your fame be spread all over the three worlds. Kindly bless me so that I may satisfy you by my service.

*Your servant,*

Urmila Devi Dasi

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who with the torchlight of knowledge has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

A few weeks ago a line of a Beatles song '*speaking words of wisdom*' popped into my mind, and I desired to write a cover of the song in your glorification, and this is the outcome:

The first thing that I do each day  
Is hear a class from you  
Speaking words of wisdom so sublime  
I listen to your classes play  
Whether I am glad or blue  
Grateful for your wisdom all the time  
Prabhupāda, Prabhupāda, Prabhupāda, Prabhupāda  
Speaking words of wisdom, so sublime  
And when the searchers of the truth, living in the world agree  
That you have the answers, Prabhupāda  
For though you have departed,  
There is still a chance that they will see  
There will be an answer in your books  
If they look in your book it will be hard to overlook  
That you speak the truth, so sublime  
Prabhupāda, Prabhupāda, Prabhupāda, Prabhupāda  
Enlightening the world, all the time  
Prabhupāda, Prabhupāda, Prabhupāda, Prabhupāda  
Speaking words of wisdom, so sublime  
Prabhupāda, Prabhupāda, Prabhupāda, Prabhupāda  
Enlightening the world, for all time  
Hare Kṛṣṇa.

*Your grateful aspiring servant,*

Parividha Dasa

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda!

It's time again to put thoughts to paper and beg for the ability to offer you some drop of glorification, expressions of gratitude, and commitment to your message and mission.

I've never had a heavier heart in Kṛṣṇa consciousness than I do now, and it makes it a little difficult to express myself to you before others. I know that in your presence all doubts and misconceptions disappear, being replaced with the enlivenment of hearing, glorifying, and remembering Kṛṣṇa's names and glories, which emanate from you.

I know there was a time when you experienced discouragement and criticism from many of your godbrothers. You were not deterred in your determined execution of your spiritual master's instructions.

In a small but similar way, I have never thought of you and prayed to you as much as I have in the last few months. So despite my many disqualifications, I have never felt this close to you and enlivened in my practice of *sādhana bhakti*.

My dear Lord, O Supreme Personality of Godhead, because of my association with material desires one after another, I was gradually falling into a blind well full of snakes, following the general populace. But your servant Nārada Muni kindly accepted me as his disciple and instructed me how to achieve this transcendental position. Therefore my first duty is to serve him. How could I leave his service?— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.9.28

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your glories are declared in all revealed scriptures when descriptions of pure devotees and pure devotional service are discussed. You, although the master at whose feet all other prabhuhus take shelter, are firmly and eternally in the shelter of your own spiritual master His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and all our other previous *ācāryas*. All your words, qualities, and activities are worshipable, and I pray to remain fixed in aspiring for the same full surrender and consequent purification of the heart that you offer. I am so grateful that you accepted me and have not given up on me after all these years, and I wish to tell you,

“I dedicate myself and all within my sphere of influence to your service, to your message, with the loyalty and dedication of one who owes you his life.”

An aspect of your message and example that I hold onto with complete conviction is, “In Kṛṣṇa consciousness there is NO fear!”

You have taught us by words and example that this body is made to grow old, get diseased, and to die. You showed us that if we can gratefully tolerate whatever sufferings the body and mind experience while taking full shelter in Kṛṣṇa’s holy names, glorification and service when giving up this body we will go back home to Godhead. This is what Lord Caitanya, you and all His representatives have come to give us, eternal service to Kṛṣṇa and His friends and family.

Let the world become crazy. The world is crazy and all bad. Let everyone in the world join together to criticize the humble and insignificant attempt to practice and share pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The volume of their combined voices don’t deter a fortunate and surrendered devotee to change his convictions, his behavior in service to Guru and Gaurāṅga one iota.

Seeking your blessings, please allow me to represent your instructions and mood as they are. I don’t want to add anything or subtract anything. Let the light of the Absolute Truth be defended and repeated at all times and all circumstances. Please reveal in my heart through your books, through your *līlās*, through your followers the *siddhānta* of Bhaktivedānta. Guide my thoughts, decisions, and activities to always be in concord with your pleasure, your desires.

Lastly I pray to you everyday and will continue to gratefully pray for your followers, the preachers and the leaders of our movement. Please bless us all with intelligence and common sense in Kṛṣṇa consciousness so as to be empowered as your instruments to share Kṛṣṇa consciousness with the fortunate. May the envious and demoniac become pacified and peaceful by the purifying and merciful association of the devotees.

If we are sincere and serious and you bless us then your glories will be spread throughout the three worlds, and the Lord’s names and glories will be heard by everyone.

*Falling at your feet, your insignificant servant,*

Rajendranandana Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to you!

I'm now in my seventy-fourth year in this body, and my forty-ninth year of your service. And with each passing day, month, and year—and they seem to be whizzing by ever faster—my appreciation for your kindness and compassion on this wretched soul deepens.

Like so many of my contemporaries, children of the turbulent sixties in America, in the early seventies I had lost my way and was heading in a dark and dangerous direction. But Lord Kṛṣṇa had plans for me. He reached out to me through his dearest servant, your divine self, and through your representatives—your disciples—and through your books and the all-attractive Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda Deities at the precious Henry St., Bklyn., temple, where I joined on March 27, 1973.

Two weeks later you visited the temple! I'll never forget your lecture on Queen Kuntī's prayer at *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.8.21:

*kṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya  
devakī-nandanāya ca  
nanda-gopa-kumārāya  
govindāya namo namaḥ*

Pradyumna Prabhu read the translation: "Let me therefore offer my respectful obeisances unto the Lord, who has become the son of Vasudeva, the pleasure of Devakī, the boy of Nanda and the other cowherd men of Vṛndāvana, and the enlivener of the cows and senses."

You spoke for a few minutes on the verses leading up to this one, and then you spoke these words that went straight into my heart and drew me irrevocably to your lotus feet:

Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* and hear repeatedly, and take *prasādam*. These are the two businesses of the tongue. So you'll realize. Very simple method. *Sevonmukhe hi jihvādau svayam . . .* Kṛṣṇa will reveal. Not that by your endeavor you can understand Kṛṣṇa, but your endeavor in the loving service, that will make you qualified. Kṛṣṇa will reveal. *Svayam eva sphuraty adaḥ*. Kṛṣṇa is very much anxious to take you

back home, back to Godhead. But we are stubborn. We do not wish. So He's always finding out the opportunity how you can be taken back home, back to Godhead.

Just like affectionate father. Rascal son left his father, loitering in the street and has no shelter, no food—suffering so much. The father is more anxious to take the boy home. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa is the supreme father. All these living entities within this material world, they're exactly like the misled child of a big, rich man, loitering in the street. Therefore the greatest benefit to the human society is to give him Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I very much felt like the rascal son loitering in the street with no shelter, and I very much felt that you were my real father who was anxious to take this boy home. I still feel that way, and I fervently pray that by your mercy I can overcome my deep-rooted *anarthas*, stay in your service till my final hour in this body, and rejoin you in our eternal home at the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*Your aspiring servant,*  
Draviḍa Dāsa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I first met your disciples during the summer holidays one year when I was a school girl—at the Bury Place Temple in the summer of '72. I was fourteen years old, and the encounter was brief. When I returned to boarding school that September, I came across your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* while browsing in a book shop in Brentwood. Your picture on the back cover gave me recognition that this was a book from ISKCON. On impulse, I spent my piano lesson money to buy it. Money was not easy to come by, my piano lessons weren't going anywhere, the book had an uncommon aura of attractiveness to it, and I was a naughty girl.

As the intrigued new owner of a copy of your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, I spent many an hour in the common room at the boarding house reading it cover to cover and looking at the illustrations. Now the pictures aroused special feelings in me—especially the close-up one of Kṛṣṇa with His petal-like blue complexion blowing into His conch shell, Arjuna just behind Him doing the same—but study your writings as I might, I concluded without understanding one bit of what I had read.

It was only when I went back to the temple the following summer, and sat in *Bhagavad-gītā* classes given by your disciples, that understanding of your book came to me—quickly and easily. And this is the wonder of you. In giving your personal association to your early disciples, you transformed that small number of ordinary people into living, breathing, walking *Bhagavad-gītās* with the capability of rendering transcendental knowledge accessible and relevant to me – instantly.

Instantly. “Just add water” is the expression used in the instant foods industry. Instant mashed potatoes, instant noodles, instant *idlis*—whatever it might be. Water is the additive with that magic touch that plumps everything into shape, reconstitutes it and makes it recognisable. In the same way, when we are lucky enough to happen upon the records of wisdom left in this world by God, often thousands of years before our time, it is the personal association of the pure devotee, the emissary of God, that activates that knowledge for us, making it understandable and usable by us in our lives. This is the reason for the disciplic succession, the need every one of us has for personal exchange with a living guru.

My story shows that the process of receiving the torchlight of knowledge from the person of Your Divine Grace, and passing it on in person to others is not happening only now on account of the fact that you are not physically present among us, but was happening even then in the early days of ISKCON when you were physically present. My hearing from your disciples, who became my senior godbrothers and godsisters, in no way excluded me from a relationship with you, but brought me closer to your lotus feet and gave me a whole family of spiritual mentors. The bliss I feel on remembering my senior godbrothers and godsisters and the merciful guidance they have given me over the years is beyond wonderful.

It is my hope that young devotees of today and tomorrow will read this as an affirmation of their personal connection with Your Divine Grace as *śikṣā* disciples that will give them joy and inspiration. Remember, between *dīkṣā* and *śikṣā*, *śikṣā* is more important, and in that we are all equals and equally fortunate.

Recently I have had an evolution in my thinking about this. Very much wanting the young devotees to feel a personal connection with Your Divine Grace, I had been wracking my brains for ways to help them experience personal guidance from you in their own lives through prayer and seeing you in each other through the vehicle of empathic listening. I was also questioning the merits of our telling them stories as we do about the interactions we had with you. Today's young devotees need to have their own interactions with you, their own stories to tell, I thought—that's what we should be giving them, a way to enhance that. Well, in recent days, I've been thinking a different way. The stories we have to tell about our time with you as your *dīkṣā* disciples, Śrīla Prabhupāda, are valuable—not because we were particularly special. We were a canvas on which you painted. And anyone could have been that canvas. Anyone could have been with you and your dealings with them would have been as instructive and amazing. We were just lucky, that's all. But be that as it may, the stories we have to tell about you are important because your activities are examples of the applied science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and our accounts of them illustrate that applied science. Just as Jesus's pastimes with his disciples form the basis of the teachings of Christianity, so your pastimes with your disciples form an important body of teaching about the application of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You are the Person *Bhāgavata* living the Book *Bhāgavata*. We need those stories. So we will continue to tell them.



But if, by any chance, you think there is merit in my wish to find ways to help young devotees connect more strongly with you personally, please bless it. I will look for the signs of your blessings or lack of them in the persons of the devotees I meet.

May this message find you through the transcendental airways of the heart, wherever you are in the creation, blissfully engaged in the service of your Lords Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya, helping to weave the ever widening tapestry of Their blissful pastimes.

*Your eternal servant,*

Kṛṣṇaveśa Dāsī

YOUR BOOKS,  
YOUR COMPASSION,  
YOUR SMILES,  
YOUR ISKCON,  
YOUR DEVOTEES,  
YOUR PATIENCE,  
YOUR MISSION,  
YOUR SWEETNESS,  
YOUR MAYAPUR,  
YOUR VṚNDĀVANA,  
YOUR REMEMBRANCE,  
YOUR GENTLENESS,  
YOUR GIRIDHĀRĪ,  
YOUR HUMOUR  
YOUR RĀDHĀ-MĀDHAVA,  
YOUR INSTRUCTIONS,  
YOUR DETERMINATION,  
YOUR INTEGRITY,  
YOUR LOVE,  
YOUR NITĀI GAURĀṄGA  
YOUR EXAMPLE,  
YOUR HEART,  
YOUR JAGANNĀTHA, BALADEVA AND SUBHADRĀ  
YOUR GBC,  
YOUR PRESENCE,  
YOUR CARE,  
YOUR MAHĀ-MANTRA . . .  
They are all I have, They are all I am.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Madhusevita Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
Please accept my obeisances.

Thank you for all you do for us,  
Especially saving me.  
*Śrī Guru karuṇā sindhu*  
You are truly the ocean of mercy,  
Savior of the fallen.

Every year as I struggle with my shortcomings and weaknesses I'm always encouraged and supported by your nectarian words in your books and classes.  
Thank you.

You've given us all spiritual oases to quench our souls' thirst for our long lost dear most friend, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.  
Thank you.

And your disciples,  
particularly your saintly Vaisesika Prabhu who has literally dragged me along all these years.  
Thank you.

When I was a teenager I saw them regularly,  
*harināma* on the street in Ann Arbor and every concert, they were there.  
They gave us books, records, incense, posters and *prasādam* with *kīrtana* and a smile.  
Thank you.

I can't imagine my life without you and the movement.  
I've realized how much it meant to me to receive your mercy in my youth and have since dedicated my life to your mission.  
I'll keep distributing your books, "go on with your lifetime plans making secure in distributing of books" for however many lifetimes it takes me to finally surrender to Your Divine Grace.  
Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for all you do for us.

Please forgive my offenses, and don't kick me off the party.  
I promise to try to be a better devotee.  
Hare Kṛṣṇa.

*Your rascal disciple,*  
Divyanga Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances hundreds and hundreds of times at your lotus feet.

We offer our obeisances to you daily as our spiritual master and *ācārya* – the person who has brought to us, and to the entire world, the principles of the eternal religion in the form of your books, which provide the most suitable vehicle for an easy journey to the spiritual planets.

Perhaps initiated by the order of your spiritual master to preach in the English language, you developed a vision that the entire world should receive the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and become Kṛṣṇa conscious. To that end you struggled with great determination for years with no support and little help. By what can only be justly called heroic efforts, you presented the essential teachings of the Absolute Truth in your writing, and not just in English, but in all major languages so that everyone worldwide would have access to true spiritual knowledge. Instructing your disciples to simply do as you have taught them, you opened temples and installed Deities all over the world, to become beacons from which the Absolute Truth would radiate. You took the risk that by initiating more than 5,000 less-than-qualified disciples the spark of *bhakti* would become a flame of devotion, and in this way you passed the torch of disciplic succession to future generations. In all of your activities you gave the sterling example that with the combination of a steadfast vision of future success, tireless effort, and taking necessary risks, wonderful results could be wrestled from seemingly impossible situations.

You are justly appreciated and lauded for these efforts and activities by your followers every year on this occasion. Today I wish to acknowledge, thank, and praise you, not just for these, but for another of your wonderful gifts, that is too often overlooked – your vision and efforts as a social reformer.

While everyone in this mad world glorifies the continued materialistic development of modern civilization as “progress,” mesmerized by its baubles and bangles, you, as a spiritually cultured Vaiṣṇava, stood alone against the entire world, calling it out for what it actually is: a society of hogs, dogs, camels and asses. A soul-killing civilization that destroys the finer sentiments of the human being.

Indeed, it is a “civilization” created by the demonic to serve their

purposes at our expense, yet we cannot see it, blinded as we are by the pleasures it offers. We cannot see this because since birth every one of us is indoctrinated, by parents, schools and media, to the understanding that this is not only a great civilization, but that we are at the pinnacle of progress! Conditioned as we are by the sense gratification it offers, we think of this world as a benign place where we can pursue our dreams to find happiness and fulfillment.

But it is a demonic civilization that is organized to control and exploit us at every turn. And so conditioned are we in this “culture” that we think it normal and sadly, we even apply its demonic methods in our own activities.

What are those demonic methods? The first is money. The demons have created money to exploit and control everyone without our even knowing it. They have the prerogative to create it out of thin air, while we acquire it only by giving ourselves to others’ service, and doing so have little time to give to the rightful object of service – the Supreme Lord.

I can hear the objections! But Śrīla Prabhupāda used money! Yes, it can be used in Kṛṣṇa’s service and you did so. But you also said “Just like we do not want money. But they are having money by so many ways. So we take their money and construct a temple.”<sup>1</sup> That statement must not be minimized! Especially as we consider how to establish the spiritual culture of the future. Better that we follow your example that we need not focus on money as the means of performing our service. You said many times, “When you get money, spend it immediately, and Kṛṣṇa will supply more.” Yet due to our conditioned nature we too often take shelter of money, not Śrī Kṛṣṇa, for security. Again you demonstrated by your own example, how your success came as a result of *giving freely* everything without consideration of return: instruction, *mantra*, *prasādam*, etc. And because everyone was touched by your gifts they reciprocated with you, giving everything needed to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world. Thus you established the global society of Kṛṣṇa consciousness through the gift economy of devotional service – practically demonstrating the concepts of spiritual economics.

The second demonic method of control is institutional hierarchical control where authority is placed in a seat such as president, and power given regardless of qualification. The demons have created this system to allow them to control hundreds and even millions

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1 Morning Walk, March 14, 1974

of people, and to build huge enterprises to accumulate wealth and power. Such methods are antithetical to spiritual culture where authority is given not to a seat or position, but to individual persons according to their qualification.

History is littered with examples of abuse of such power positions, and we now see the demons abusing these powers and increasing their totalitarian control. Conditioned as we are, we fail to recognize the demonic nature of this method of organization, and accept it as the normal way things are done. This despite the fact that you instructed us not to have excessive hierarchical command-control authority within ISKCON, severely chastising your leading men when they attempted to do so, writing: "Once there is bureaucracy the whole thing will be spoiled. There must be always individual striving and work and responsibility, competitive spirit, not that one shall dominate and distribute benefits to the others and they do nothing but beg from you and you provide. No."<sup>2</sup>

And the third demonic system of control is their legal system based solely on written agreements between men, as opposed to that of a spiritual culture where laws are given by higher authority for both spiritual and material benefit. The factual lawbook of a spiritual culture is *Manu-saṁhitā* and other *dharma śāstras*. Yet again, due to our conditioned nature, in activities of devotees everywhere, whether in divorce, or business enterprise for example, we follow the prevailing legal system over *dharma śāstra*. In this regard you have written in many places things such as: "As for behavior, there are many rules and regulations guiding human behavior, such as the *Manu-saṁhitā*, which is the law of the human race. Even up to today, those who are Hindu follow the *Manu-saṁhitā*."<sup>3</sup> Yet we, who profess to be your followers hardly think about this and only rarely discuss how to apply them. However, if we are to establish a proper spiritual culture we must learn to follow *dharma* rather than the laws of men.

The point of the above is that you were a social reformer, condemning every aspect of this "civilization," while inciting us to see with your vision and through the eyes of *śāstra*, to see beyond our indoctrination and conditioning, so that we understand and apply these principles to make spiritual culture a living reality.

It amazes and inspires me, and it is crystal clear in your purports, that you intended nothing less than to change the face of this

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2 Letter to Karandhara, 22 December 1972

3 Purport, Bg. 16.7

entire world – eliminating the demonic methods and replacing them with spiritual principles. What audacity! What chutzpah! What vision! And it is that audacity, chutzpah, and vision that we love, that inspires us, and gives us faith that it can, and will, be done!

We have now come to this momentous time, a time of great change when everything in this world will be changed. This is the stated intention of the demonic powers that control this world. They say there will be a Great Reset. We heartily agree that a Great Reset is needed. The question is: in which direction? Towards more control, exploitation, materialism and impersonalism? Or towards a God-centered, spiritual, personal culture? Encouraged by you, our *senāpati bhakta*, our great devotee commander, we choose to use all of our energy to establish the latter. Although it seems like an impossible task from where we sit just now, it is no more impossible than the task that was before you of establishing Kṛṣṇa conscious all over the entire world.

We pray that you will give us your blessings for understanding and execution of this great task, and that we will please you, the *paramparā*, and the Supreme Lord with our humble efforts. We know from your perfect example that by the combination of a steadfast vision of future success, tireless effort, and taking necessary risks, wonderful results can indeed be wrestled from seemingly impossible situations.

*Praying to ever remain your humble servant,*

Dhanesvara Dasa



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

I am your servant in the farm community Almviks gård in Sweden. By your grace so many wonderful things are manifesting here despite so many material obstacles.

All glory to the devotees living here and to the Deities Śrī Śrī Pañca Tattva!

Thank you dear Master for Your Divine Grace  
You have bestowed on me, a fallen soul

I am not able to do much service  
There are so many others more advanced than me

But by some inconceivable mercy  
You could also recognise me

Small things over the years offered to the Deities  
Not much ecstasy no tears

More out of duty because it has to be done  
A little bit of austerity early to bed

Early to rise keep you happy healthy and wise  
Good association and a blessed life

One devotee said it is not my guru or your guru  
It is our guru

But I am privileged because you gave me my name  
Ariṣṭahā dās, such a beautiful sound

In the spiritual world the name is the same  
O Prabhupāda please bring me there

There is certainly a place for me in the highest abode  
Whenever I can pay the price

Whenever I become free from all vice  
A humble devotee non envious and nice

When I am here please let me do a little service  
And note it down on my account

So it may accumulate one day  
And show the way to a higher destination I never knew before

But which is destined for me  
To serve the Lord and live eternally

I bow down to your lotus feet and pray:  
Please give me a humble service to your feet

It may give me entrance to that supreme abode  
Beyond birth and death where pure devotees meet

My offering may be verses, my offering may be prose  
Whatever you love and make us spiritually close

So this was my offering: some pebbles to a king  
I feel like an infant songbird who just learnt to sing

Or like the squirrel who wanted to help Lord Rāma build the bridge  
Although a few grains of sand was all he could bring

The temple, the Deities, the devotees is my foundation  
And whatever service I have done is not my creation

I wish my heart was softer and was relishing a higher taste  
But if my life is built on devotional service it is a success and there-  
fore never a waste

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you saved me from disaster  
And you will always remain my loving master

We are living in a difficult age  
I feel so lonely and suffocated in the false ego cage

But by associating with sincere devotees a door is being opened  
When I lend my ear to hear I experience less fear

May I play a humble part in Lord Caitanya's movement by your  
grace  
He has such a beautiful moon-like face

Here, the youth is chanting every evening from house to house  
They have such love and youthful energy it is contagious

It is a moonlike ray of everlasting hope in our Swedish farm  
It proves that Lord Caitanya's movement is alive and full of charm

For myself I have not so much hope, I was saved by a glance  
From you who gave me a drop of faith in Kṛṣṇa, who is sweet and  
blue

*Your humble servant,*

Aristaha Dasa

### My Confession

O dear eternal spiritual master! O my ever-well-wishing instructor, I offer my humble obeisances at your lotus feet. It is you only who has kept me alive and well because you have given me vital commandments by which to live my life. I fell in love with you from the very first book I read, *Transcendental Teachings of Prahlāda Mahārāja*, in the summer of 1972. Every word rung true, and seeing your picture on the back immediately confirmed that you were indeed my spiritual master, whom I had been unknowingly searching for 22 years! Six months later one of your dedicated disciples sold me *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Volume 1*, and after reading just the first six chapters, your potent words convinced me to join your wonderful society of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. My spiritual journey has not been easy—so many ups and downs—but somehow or other I am still connected with your ISKCON. Fortunately I have a very supportive wife, also your disciple, who allows me unlimited facility to hear, chant and preach. When I received *brāhmaṇa*-initiation from you directly in Vṛndāvana in 1975, you could have easily denied me because of how I made such a fool of myself when I was right next to you. But despite my stupidity, you gave me a chance to slowly rectify myself. I am ashamed at how poor a disciple I have been since then, with so many failings, but by your grace here I am, with yet another chance to make some kind of advancement before I die. My connection with you remains because every day I hear your singing and chanting as much as possible, given the particular circumstances of my lot in life.

*guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete koriyā aikya,  
ār nā koriho mane āśā*

You once scolded us that we do not know what we are saying when we sing this song daily. But I try to remember at least this much...

One should not partially study a book just to pose oneself as a great scholar by being able to refer to scriptures. In our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement we have therefore limited our study of the Vedic literatures to the *Bhāgavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. These four works are sufficient

for preaching purposes. They are adequate for the understanding of the philosophy and the spreading of missionary activities all over the world. If one studies a particular book, he must do so thoroughly. That is the principle. By thoroughly studying a limited number of books, one can understand the philosophy.

In a letter to your disciple, Mandali Bhadra, in January of 1972, you wrote...

My first concern is that my books shall be published and distributed profusely all over the world. Practically, *books are the basis of our Movement*. Without our books, our preaching will have no effect.

In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, is it written...

Men become strong and stout by eating sufficient grains, but the devotee who simply eats ordinary grains but does not taste the transcendental pastimes of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Kṛṣṇa gradually becomes weak and falls down from the transcendental position. However, if one drinks but a drop of the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, his body and mind begin to bloom, and he begins to laugh, sing and dance.

You thus comment...

All the devotees connected with the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement must read all the books that have been translated (the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā* and others); otherwise, after some time, they will simply eat, sleep and fall down from their position. Thus they will miss the opportunity to attain an eternal, blissful life of transcendental pleasure.

In Atlanta 1975 you responded to my question during a Sunday Feast lecture by instructing me to "love Kṛṣṇa", and so there is still time and I have not given up on that instruction.

*Your eternal disciple,*

Nirantara Dasa

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

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

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, my eternal humble obeisances to you who have illuminated the path of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* and the sweet abode of Goloka Vṛndāvana. I remain an insignificant and useless disciple, yet the hope of doing some meaningful service keeps growing stronger in my later years. All glories to you! All glories to you!

By the arrangement of providence, I am situated in London, far from my country of birth and initial training in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Fortunately, I can envision much service for me here as the very large Indian congregation as well as the evolving British yoga-meditation-vegan community are reciprocating with my focus on extolling the glories of Śiva Mahādeva in relation to Kṛṣṇa *bhakti*. I am just beginning to appreciate the many profound mysteries of Lord Caitanya's teachings that surround the enigma of Lord Śiva and his unique personality. As I attempt to unravel, penetrate, and explain those mysteries, there are many intelligent and qualified second-generation devotees who also see the great potential for preaching through the medium of Lord Śiva as a Vaiṣṇava guru. As the greatest Vaiṣṇava, Śiva Mahādeva naturally wants to see the deliverance of the fallen souls of Kali-yuga by assisting the spreading of the movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The yoga-meditation communities are eager to understand Lord Śiva as the greatest yoga instructor and in so doing understand him as a Vaiṣṇava guru who advocates mantra yoga, especially the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* through *kīrtana* and *japa* meditation. The very large Sikh community in London is beginning to reciprocate with the *Rudra-gītā* from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as an introduction to your *Bhāgavad-gītā As It Is*. The various scientific communities are fascinated at the potential of understanding the essential building blocks of reality through the esoteric teachings of Eastern mysticism represented by Śiva Natarāja at the CERN Hadron collider in Geneva Switzerland. They just need to understand Lord Siva as a *bhakti* mystic, then their theoretical physics will perfectly align with the science of Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* as taught

by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The Hindu and Indian communities are desirous to hear the many glories of Lord Śiva as the greatest Vaiṣṇava who can help them achieve pure devotion to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Your growing number of intelligent followers and granddisciples want to hear just how intimately related Lord Śiva is to Lord Caitanya's preaching movement and how Mahādeva is essential for entering the spiritual realm of Goloka Vṛndāvana and engaging in the mood of pure spontaneous Vraja *bhakti*. There is still so much confusion and misconceptions that persist concerning Lord Śiva's enigmatic and contradictory character in relation to Kṛṣṇa *bhakti*. I am deeply grateful for the innovative preaching field you have so magnanimously bestowed to this useless and unqualified soul.

On this auspicious occasion of your glorious appearance in this world I am reminded of your own offering to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja that he so much appreciated:

**Absolute is sentient, thou hast proved, im-  
personal calamity, thou hast removed.**

**This gives us a life anew and fresh.  
Worship thy feet, your Divine Grace.**

This short poetic couplet encapsulates the entire mission of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and how you became the Lord's empowered representative to spread Lord Gaurāṅga's teaching all over the world. Indeed, you are the *jagat-guru* for the entire universe in this degraded Age of Kali. I beg for the benediction that the poem you wrote in glorification of your revered Guru Mahārāja reveal its inner secrets so that I can be transformed from an insignificant disciple contaminated with the poison of *māyāvāda* behaviour and thoughts into a devotee that would be of tangible value and assistance in your mission to spread the unlimited glories of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and his *sankīrtana yajna*.

I remain your foolish disciple forever waiting for your loving benediction on my head.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Ramanatha-sukha Dasa

## Ramananda Dasa

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my homage to you for the priceless gift of the opportunity to purify my existence by serving the Lord by hearing and chanting about His glories. I am forever indebted to you for otherwise what would be the value of my meager existence. I am of no significance to anyone. Please let me remain forever engaged in your service.

*Praying to stay eternally at your lotus feet,  
Your humble servant,*

Ramananda Dasa



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

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

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your message of good spiritual will to save us from repeated birth and death is very rich, and we find ever new and encouraging passages. For example, you told your former personal servant His Grace Nanda Kumāra Dāsa that calling out for Kṛṣṇa through the regular chanting of sixteen rounds of Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* will protect us from fall down just as a child is protected from falling by holding the hands of his parents. What a thoughtful, simple and touching example!

In the *Kṛṣṇa Book*, Chapter 20 you also write “This age, Kali-yuga, is compared to the cloudy season of the living entities. In this age, real knowledge is covered by the influence of the material advancement of civilization.” This is true eloquence, short and to the point. And it is so relevant.

I thank you for filling my life with meaningful service. The desire to distribute your books has sustained me throughout my life. You said that by the distribution of your books throughout the world, the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement will automatically increase. There have been many intense moments though. I remember how in Logan, Queensland, a follower of Islam stole my books. His manifest purpose was not to read them but to destroy them, and I accused him of being a thief, which he denied. It was only after the intervention of the shopping centre security officer that he agreed to return them.

On another occasion in Townsville, three dogs forcibly attacked

me. It is definitely the “*dharma*” of the more assertive dogs to bark, attack and bite. The use of your effective “*hut*” technique saved me from painful bites. For those who are not familiar, an illustration can be found in *Śrīla Prabhupāda Nectar 2.2*: “You do not know the process”, Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswami: “While Prabhupāda and the devotees were walking on the beach in California, a large Doberman pinscher approached them, snarling and baring his teeth. Prabhupāda continued walking peacefully, but Nanda-kumāra stopped and tensely faced the dog. This challenge only provoked the dog into more threatening and growling until Nanda-kumāra turned and ran to catch up to Prabhupāda. As soon as he ran, the Doberman pinscher pursued him, barking and threatening to attack. Before the dog reached them, however, Prabhupāda suddenly turned. He crouched with his feet somewhat apart, raised his cane high over his head, gave a loud “*Hut!*” -- and made a growling sound at the dog. At this display from Prabhupāda, the dog turned and retreated quickly back to its house.”

In the early days (1973) in the Paris Latin Quarter, some members of the public used to climb on the book distributor’s back.

I beg to thank You very much for your staunch determination and example to execute the *saṅkīrtana* movement, Śrīla Prabhupāda. As always, I am eternally grateful for your kind mercy and broad vision. I find that I am afraid of the disabilities of old age and look forward to joining you ASAP, if I may. This material world is mostly about deceit and forceful action. “For one who takes to spiritual culture, this material world is actually unfit. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī used to say, “This place is not fit for a gentleman.”” *PoY 6: The Fate of the Unsuccessful Yogi*.

Despite all my shortcomings, I am aspiring to remain a particle of dust stuck at your lotus feet.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Yadavendra Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*Aim gurave namaḥ.* To you, I attribute a half century of spiritual progress.

From hearing or reading the Absolute Truth, self-realization springs as easily as an automatic door swings open when it's approached. And by taking spiritual opportunities, profound progress materializes. By seeing and hearing devotees chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, I am inspired to chant; watching devotees' thoughtful acts to satisfy Kṛṣṇa shapes my acting. Such activities satisfy the *ātma* in my heart — there the soul can be close to Kṛṣṇa in communion with the Supersoul.

O Abhay Charanaravinda Bhaktivedanta Swami! After leaving the harbor of your hometown and sailing the seas & ocean, fearlessly situated at Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, you displayed your courage in America, compelling a young generation's own bravery to join you, and a far-reaching movement began.

You yourself, in college, felt energized by the nationalist ideals of Subhas Bose and Gandhi. About your guru and yourself, almost at the age thirty-seven, you wrote (in a letter): "I was initiated regularly in 1933 at Allahabad, when Sir Malcolm Haley, the then Governor of Uttar Pradesh, opened our Gauḍīya Math branch there." Forty-one years later, you were seventy-seven, when we met in Los Angeles by the arrangements of Śrī Caitanya and Nityānanda Prabhu. In the mid-1970s, your preaching propelled the young men in "the Library Party" across North America twice. As part of this wide-ranging team, I performed obscure tasks. You were with Americans and Canadians then, mostly in the summers. I heard your classes in eight cities. Warm weather suited you as you toured your centers (despite sometimes being ill), presided over Ratha-yātrās or a Deity installation, visited the home and family of an initiated congregation member. Before you entered the mobile temple of Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami, the *sannyāsī* in charge of the Library Party, I applied sandalwood paste on your forehead with a carnation.

In the spring of 1980 — you now physically absent — I was invited to live in the *Back to Godhead* house in Philadelphia to typeset the magazine. In the course of more than five years there, I learned to edit and write articles. By March 1986, I moved on because of changes in the managerial direction. Taking my first trip to India, for a year I traveled in all four directions to celebrate the quincentennial

anniversary of Śrī Caitanya’s appearance — “500 years of hymn” as the State Bank of India’s billboards in Calcutta called the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. Since then, in forty countries, the constant, able guidance of your extraordinary self, abiding in the divine nature, directed my footsteps and set right my missteps.

Recently, for a year, I co-edited the premiere issue of the revived *ISKCON Communications Journal*. Previously, the ICJ had appeared for more than a decade (1993–2005), but then it was dormant for sixteen years. The journal “presents ISKCON’s values and understandings on a variety of topics to the general public while also promoting internal analysis among its membership.” With a revamped cover and layout, fifteen hundred copies were printed in Belgium a few weeks before Gaura Pūrṇimā. The scholar Stamatoula Panagakou called it “a beautiful work of art. Wonderful colors on the cover design, excellent typeset, pleasing to the eye.” She recommended it to her colleagues: “I am sure the journal would be an excellent addition to your university libraries.”

My unwilling parents now unknowingly accrue devotional credit. In 2004, thirty years after I joined your movement, they left an annuity for my needs and health care. They are benefiting in somewhat the same way as householders contributing to a spiritual organization. My partial financial independence financially unburdens ISKCON. The faith I inherited was a foundation when growing up, but you are my eternal parent.

Lacking seriousness, I remain, endeavoring in this yoga,

*Your grateful servant,*

Tattvavit Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

We offer our humble obeisances to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You are the Founder-*Ācārya* of ISKCON.

We all are aware of you being the founder, however, we are slowly becoming more aware of how you are our beloved *ācārya*. More and more books by your disciples are allowing us to experience your loving, giving, and compassionate side. These remembrances help us and all future devotees to have a deeper appreciation and personal relationship with you.

As a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa, you are a transparent via medium to Kṛṣṇa. Devotees and non-devotees alike can catch a glimpse of Kṛṣṇa's love for us by reading your books and also the books or memories of your disciples. People are attracted by a "good personality". We are attracted to you because you are a perfect representative of Kṛṣṇa who is the greatest personality. We can try to follow the example of your perfect interactions with others so that they may be attracted to the process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, their only hope.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, please allow us to become more purified so that we can also become via mediums to Kṛṣṇa. While we are nowhere near this level of purity, we can at least give people a chance to know you and Kṛṣṇa by distributing your books. Continually engaging in the processes of devotional service under your expert guidance is our only hope.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for the unparalleled opportunity of unlimited lifetimes to engage in your service and the service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṣīracorā Gopīnātha.

*Your servants,*

Purnamasi devī dāsī and Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāj dāsa

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

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

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

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

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo  
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi  
dhyāyan stuvāms tasya yaśas tri-sandhyam  
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

“By satisfaction of the spiritual master, the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes satisfied. And by not satisfying the spiritual master, there is no chance of being promoted to the plane of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I should, therefore, meditate and pray for his mercy three times a day, and offer my respectful obeisances unto him; my spiritual master.”

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In my previous homage to Your Divine Grace, the one constant challenge throughout, was the formidable Coronavirus ‘global pandemic’ that, even now, continues to inhibit practical devotional service engagements for ALL of us!

The opportunity to utilize temporary obstacles such as this, to intensify the desire for sharing the unmitigated realized mercy from the Lord, simply magnifies the impact of the event itself. And, the temporary quarantine policies that inhibit our practical outreach efforts further strengthens our inevitable resolve that is required to leverage our empowered response to the public’s search for answers.

In this light, I want to submit to you my current annual report of my humble effort to serve your mission.

The two-acre “Food Forest Demonstration Site” has continued to develop nicely from the annual 57-inch rainfall. The swale slope that they are on, captures much more of the rainfall than the surrounding areas, and are demonstrating this ‘earthworks’ design advantage very well.

Some of the new-growth branching was as tall as eight feet, and had to be pruned-back down to reasonable heights again. The multitude of branches are beginning to take the shape of trees and are exploding with new leaf growth ... Being in their third year, and despite a late freeze, some of them may bud this year and produce immature fruit; but next year should be very productive.

The swales have received their Spring treatments of cow urine and cow dung mixtures into the compost trough, where it will be absorbed by the compost, and then be released to the trees throughout the next season.

The plan to intermingle berry bushes, medicinal and cooking herbs, and root crops as companion plants to “demonstrate” a series of rows of fruit tree guilds has been postponed until a viable plan for financing this expansion is sequenced into the community development plan!

Our “Master Plan” is being developed from several excellent proposals; and sites for proposed expansion projects have been identified using drone and LiDAR technology. A new multimedia presentation plan is in the works as a result. The introductory presentation was well received by the temple’s Community Management Team (CMT).

There are 15 hilltops that have been identified that can be used to harness rainfall runoff with a swale and pond system. This “hill-top pond” can then be used to irrigate fields and gardens downhill from there. Subsequent downhill ponds can again recapture the rainfall runoff with additional swale/pond systems. Thus, the entire 1200-acre property can stop, spread and sink the annual 57-inches of rain into these series of descending ponds; effectively irrigating the entire dhāma.

This swale and pond system has the capability of gradually raising the sinking aquifer level from the current 500-foot level over time, making water wells much more easily accessible at shallower depths.

Ultimately, there are 12 locations near the property perimeter lines that can be dammed to capture the entire watershed into 12 large lakes. These can be developed as lakefront homesites for global

devotees to settle here over the coming years.

We need devotees who want to turn their “hobby-interests” into marketable entrepreneurial businesses that would generate some additional cash flow, and create necessary community occupational handicrafts or subsequent cottage industry products for public sale. I am working on a plan to stimulate this latent potential in the greater ISKCON community; and strive to develop the appropriate marketing strategy to harness the land’s potential to the viable marketplace.

The herbal pharmacy that your disciple Dwibhuja Prabhu has developed as “Blue Boy Herbs”, is the initial leadership in this community that has taken your idea to heart! I personally find it deeply gratifying to see their effort bear fruit, and prosper so generously by Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Rādhākānta’s grace. Perhaps their good association will influence the aforementioned *handicraft* development – I pray so!

Although the temple’s Community Complex is now qualified as a state-licensed “Agri-Tourism” destination, and the signs for this have been installed throughout the local region this year; advertising broadly for it has been impeded by the ongoing (but, finally dwindling) Coronavirus threat.

During the interim ‘quarantine’, the Temple Garden has become a focus of manpower and increasing development. This will become a magnet for our Agri-Tourism outreach soon, and will be a prime opportunity to demonstrate your objective of “self-sufficiency”; to the masses – including *other* ISKCON communities. It IS the most viable outreach for rural farming communities! New Tālavana has so many positive factors already in place to facilitate this necessary progression.

And now we have a new Temple building plan that is in the final stages of preparation for ground-breaking and foundation ceremony, prior to construction!

I pray ceaselessly for the community’s collective realization and compliance with Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s “Vṛndāvana-like village” concept, that you have come to deliver to us!!!

As you have described Śrīla Prabhupāda:  
“AFTER the war, preaching will be good”!

Let us first learn the message that is being shared by this Corona anomaly, then, when this event subsides, teach others to prepare for



the inevitable tests that are yet to follow!

Hare Kṛṣṇa!

*Your struggling servant in the groves of New Tālavana Dhāma!  
Carriere, Mississippi – USA*

Langaganesa Dasa

My dear eternal master Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
Please accept my prostrated obeisances at your lotus feet.  
In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is stated:

*etad eva hi sac-chiṣyairiḥ  
kartavyam guru-niṣkṛtam  
yad vai viśuddha-bhāvena  
sarvārthātmarpaṇam gurau*

‘This indeed is the duty of all true disciples: to repay the debt to their spiritual master by offering him with pure hearts, their wealth and even their very lives.’—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.80.41

Yet, it is not possible for even a sincere disciple to repay the debt that he/she owes to one’s spiritual master. Thus, in the purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4. 22.47, you explain that the word *vinoda-pātram* means a joker; that is if someone thinks that he can repay his debt to his spiritual Master, he is a joker.

We shall be never be able to absolve ourselves of the debt that we owe you for the invaluable jewels of *bhakti* that you have given to this world.

Yet, you also said that if at all we feel obliged to you, we should preach, preach as vigorously as you preach.

I therefore pray to you that I may have the strong desire and enthusiasm to preach.

This whole world, including the atheists, is wonderstruck at your achievements, which is the greatest miracle of this world.

By the divine potency of ISKCON, love of Godhead is made available in every town and village; indeed in every home.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is beyond our ability to conceive how single-handedly without any financial or manpower, resources, etc., you established the greatest movement for all times to come.

The present, as well as future generations will recognise you as the saviour of the world, with the unlimited compassion of a truly saintly person.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have no qualifications or devotion but I feel myself indebted (indeed as the entire world should be) to you.

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

'Although I know that my spiritual master is a servitor of Śrī Caitanya, I know Him also as a plenary manifestation of the Lord.'—  
*Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, Ādi 1.44

Begging forgiveness for offences committed knowingly or unknowingly at your lotus feet and thanking you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

My *koṭi koṭi daṇḍavats* to you.

Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda!

*Your servant,*

Mahaman Dasa

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, as our Founder-*Ācārya* and pre-eminent *śikṣā guru* for all time, you are the centre and the life force for all members of ISKCON. Your direct disciples and the generations of devotees that have followed are taking your worldwide mission of mercy to heart, despite our feeling deep separation from you. Somehow or other we are managing to struggle on! At least speaking for myself, I am such a mercy case, so please continue to shower me with your kindness.

You gave us so many wonderful devotional practices, and two of them are the very important principles of *śravaṇam kīrtanam* – hearing and chanting. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you stressed this so much: hear the Lord’s holy name and His activities, and reverberate His name and His pastimes.

And how are we hearing, and how are we chanting? We hear the holy name and we listen to the glories of the Lord from His great devotees and the authorized sources.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you gave us two definitions of the meaning of the holy name: The first one is: “O my Lord, O energy of the Lord, please engage me in your service.”

The second definition I heard recently in a lecture given by your dear disciple Indradyumna Swami. He recounted how a guest had asked you what the *mahā-mantra* means. And you replied, it means: “O, my friend!”

And that is Kṛṣṇa! He is our best friend, our closest companion. He witnesses our endeavours to hear about His qualities and to hear His holy names. Similarly, you told us that if we think of you, you will think of us. And you encouraged us by saying that if we just hold onto your *dhotī*, you will take us back to Kṛṣṇa, because you have a key to the backdoor of Goloka Vṛndāvana!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you personally provide the most inspiring example of how to hear.

In 1932, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura conducted a month-long circumambulation of Vṛndāvana. You joined the Gauḍīya

Maṭha camp one evening during the *parikramā*. One of the *sannyāsīs* made the announcement that there would be a scheduled visit to see the Deity of Śeṣaśāyī Viṣṇu at a temple close by. It was also announced that your Guru Mahārāja was also going to speak that same evening for the last time, as he was leaving the *parikramā* party the following day. You had a choice, Śrīla Prabhupāda, to go on the *parikramā* or stay for the lecture.

From your biography by Satsvarūpa Goswami, he writes that you recounted: “So I met them in Kosi, and Keśava Mahārāja was informing that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta is going to Mathurā tomorrow morning and he will speak this evening. Anyone who wants to may remain. Or otherwise they may go to see Śeṣaśāyī Viṣṇu. So at that time I think only ten or twelve men remained—Śrīdhara Mahārāja was one of them. And I thought it wise, ‘What can I see at this Śeṣaśāyī? Let me hear what Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī will speak. Let me hear.’

An hour went by, two hours. . . . The already small gathering in Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta’s room gradually thinned. A few *sannyāsīs* left, excusing themselves to tend to duties connected with the *parikramā* camp. Only a few intimate leaders remained and you listened with such awe, such deep attention that Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Ṭhākura marked how you liked to hear and he mentioned it later.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you frequently stressed the importance of hearing – and upon hearing, asking questions in a mood of humility and genuine inquiry. In letters to your disciples you spoke about this many times. To Prajāpati on 16 June 1976 you wrote:

“... But in general we cannot say that any of the nine processes is more important than the others, except that if hearing, chanting and remembering are there, that is the most vital consideration for the general class of men in this age.”

And to Mr. Patel, you wrote on 19 April 1975:

.... By associating and rendering service to the Vaiṣṇavas and hearing the philosophy of *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as well as chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa, your life will become perfect.

You explained to Kīrtirāja Dāsa that, “our process for learning is by hearing. Hearing is so important.”

We know how much you sacrificed to write your illuminating books, Śrīla Prabhupāda. You strongly encouraged us to study them daily. And isn't another aspect of *śravaṇam kīrtanam* is to read your books, because by doing so we are also hearing you?

It was by reading *Bhagavad-gītā* As It is that I began this path of *bhakti*, aspiring to be your disciple. I heard from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Many of us came in contact with your books before we joined a temple, like I did. And it was this small desire to hear that saved us from the ocean of darkness engulfing us.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you would often use the analogy of watering the leaves as opposed to just watering the root. Water the root, then the whole tree benefits. In a recent lecture of His Holiness Lokanātha Swami, he gave a wonderful example of how reading your books is hearing from you. He explained that we are the leaves on the branches, and the Lord is the root. And your books are the fertilizer that makes us thrive in our spiritual lives!

Your books have been our companions through all the different stages of our lives, from when we were young and reading this wonderful philosophy for the first time to our more mature years, where each time we read your books, we learn something we didn't see before. We hear your voice through reading your wonderful purports that you described as your ecstasies.

In your scholarly and deeply erudite purports, you also give us such personal insights into your own wonderful, exquisitely transcendental personality. For instance, in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, 4.12.33, you wrote: "The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is spreading now all over the world, and sometimes I think that even though I am crippled in many ways, if one of my disciples becomes as strong as Dhruva Mahārāja, then he will be able to carry me with him to *Vaikuṅṭhaloka*."

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your deep, spiritually authentic humility is like the sparkling sun glimmering on the waves of the ocean of your wonderful qualities. In these words, you reveal your innermost heart to us.

We know how perfect you are, so it is heartbreaking to hear you describe yourself in this way, but indeed wonderful nonetheless because we see how your *prema* goes hand in hand with your exceptional humility.

Once again, in Fourth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.20.25) there is a mystical verse describing knowledge uttered by

great personalities:

*sa uttamaśloka mahan-mukha-cyuto  
bhavat-padāmbhoja-sudhā kaṇānilaḥ  
smṛtiṁ punar vismṛta-tattva-vartmanām  
kuyoginām no vitaraty alam varaiḥ*

“My dear Lord, You are glorified by the selected verses uttered by great personalities. Such glorification of Your lotus feet is just like saffron particles. When the transcendental vibration from the mouths of great devotees carries the aroma of the saffron dust of Your lotus feet, the forgetful living entity gradually remembers his eternal relationship with You. Devotees thus gradually come to the right conclusion about the value of life. My dear Lord, I therefore do not need any other benediction but the opportunity to hear from the mouth of Your pure devotee.”

In your purport to this incredible verse, you explain that the transcendental vibration from the mouth of a pure devotee is so powerful it can revive the living entity’s memory of his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa, because it touches the particles of saffron dust on the lotus feet of the Lord.

“As soon as a sleeping living entity hears the powerful voice emanating from the mouth of a pure devotee, he immediately remembers his eternal relationship with the Lord, although up until that moment he had forgotten everything.”

Reading your books is hearing that voice that has touched the saffron mercy particles of Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet. But how do we make your books our constant companions? How do we develop this eagerness to hear?

A person doesn’t become an alcoholic overnight. Every day they drink and slowly they develop the addiction.

So overnight we won’t become addicted to hearing you through your books, but if we read with intent every day, we will become attached to interacting with you in this way. This will please you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

This is a sure fire way to become and remain your dedicated servant, Śrīla Prabhupāda, by hearing from you through your legacy of your wonderful books. You live forever in them.

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. And forgive my innumerable imperfections. You are *Patita-Pāvana*, the deliverer of the most fallen, and I am, indeed, very fallen.

Many years ago, Tamal Kṛṣṇa Goswami had a dream, while under anesthesia, in which you were reporting to the entire disciplic succession on your progress in preaching to this world. There you said that we really had no good qualities, with the exception that we took shelter at your feet. When Tamal Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja woke up, he told you his dream, to which you replied, “Yes, this is so.”

While I TRY to read your books and study your *vāñī*, fallen as I am, I am mostly attached to your *vapu*, your divine form. The interactions I had with you, while you graced us with your presence, are very few, but each one is a rare gem which I cling to with all my might.

My first experience was seeing you in the San Francisco airport when you came in for Rathayātrā. Someone had forgotten to bring the car around, and so there you were surrounded by maybe 50 devotees. As you glanced around, your divine gaze fell on me and you looked into my eyes. Like so many other devotees, that glance poured into me and felt like it went all the way to my toes. Every cell of my body was blessed by that glance, and there was no question after that of who my eternal master is.

While traveling on a bus to the Rathayātrā sight, a young *gurukuli* student told me that my very orange dhotī was “*māyāvādī*” in color. I wondered who this child is to speak to me that way. But while walking along Subhadrā’s cart where you sat, again you glanced at me, then down to my *māyāvādī* orange dhotī, back up to my face, and then turned away, in what I was sure was disapproval.

In 1975, at the opening of the Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balaram Mandir, I received brahminical initiation from Your Divine Grace. While standing in line to enter your room and receive Gāyatrī *mantra*, I noticed that my fingernails were long and a little dirty. I did my best to clean them, but had no way to cut them. I also noticed that the devotee in front of me was holding a flower. I had no flower. All I had was my too-long nails. When I entered the room, it appeared to be a million miles to where you sat. I offered my obeisances, and you motioned for me to come sit next to you. Every step, which seemed to take forever, brought me to you, and I sat down next to you as you indicated.



When you showed me how to count on my fingers, you asked, “Your nails are so big. Why?” I had nothing to respond. You asked, “You are chanting 16 rounds?” to which I replied yes, but was thinking you may not accept me as I had long nails that had moments ago been dirty. But you did accept me, spoke the mantras to me, and sent me on my way – once more forever changed by your mercy.

During that same visit, you were standing before Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi at the altar, as *kīrtana* was going on. For some reason, I pulled out my *karatālas*, and handed them to you, thinking that you may want to play them. You did! And to this day I hold those *karatālas* as a special grace, touched by your divine hands.

You were reported as saying that if one holds tight to your *lungi*, you will take them Home. Yaśodānandana Swami once gave me a piece of your *lungi*, and as I tend to take things quite literally, I cut a small piece which I placed in a locket that I never take off. Perhaps too much sentimentalism, rather than practical service, but you are my eternal Father and Master, and I cry out that you might remember me, particularly now as the reminders of death knock daily at my door.

I was twice given the service of “guarding” you, keeping watch that you wouldn’t be disturbed. In Hyderabad, myself and three others formed a ring around you that you could safely pass through the crowds to get to the stage.

I am a nobody, and yet, I somehow received the benediction of your blessings and some tiny amount of service to you.

You and Kṛṣṇa’s holy names are the only thing in this material world that give me solace. Please, Śrīla Prabhupāda, bless me that my attachment for these things may increase day by day. Please glance kindly upon all of us, your disciples, and the rest of the world, and enthuse us in your divine service.

*Begging and pleading at your feet to eternally be your servant,*

Aja Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my fallen self at your compassionate lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace. You have come from Goloka at the behest of Lord Kṛṣṇa to write and distribute transcendental books that capture lonely souls and give them a reason—the best reason—to go on living, despite the difficulties of this Iron Age.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for pushing yourself to stay up long hours in the nights to translate *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, *Śrī Upadeśāmṛta*, *Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu*, *KṚṢṆA the Supreme Personality of Godhead*, *Teachings of Lord Caitanya*, *Light of the Bhāgavata*, *Easy Journey to Other Planets* and all the other amazing books that are listed to your credit because you empowered your disciples to put them together by providing us with your teachings—enough to fill volumes of books! Thank you for telling us that you wrote these books, not just so that we could distribute them, but also so that we could *read* them. You emphasized that we *must* read your books. Thank you for saying that.

We are forever indebted to Your Divine Grace because you have delivered to us the holy names of Kṛṣṇa and you gave us a fixed number of rounds to chant each day for the rest of our lives. You stressed again and again the importance of sticking to a vow of chanting at least sixteen rounds per day. We are grateful to you for establishing this minimum, so that no matter what happens to our bodies or our minds, we know that we must complete our rounds.

I heard you say in a lecture recently that we have promised to chant Gāyatrī mantra three times a day. Your Divine Grace said, “*Tri-sandhyā* means three times. We initiate...They promise that three times they will chant Gāyatrī-mantra, but I do not know what they are doing (you paused here a moment to let your heavy words sink in)...So these are the recommendation[s] in the *śāstra*. If we don’t follow, then we must fall down. There is no doubt about it.” (Lecture, SB 1.3.29, LA, Oct 4, 1972) Śrīla Prabhupāda, that’s scary. Please protect us from falling down by helping us to be strongly devoted to maintaining our vows that we made at our initiations.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, kindly continue to keep us on the path of *bhakti*, strictly adhering to the guidelines you have given us.

Your Divine Grace gave us the bottom line, the greatest of all instructions, and that is to always remember Kṛṣṇa and to never forget

Kṛṣṇa. By uncovering and reviving our dormant love for Kṛṣṇa, we are sure to always remember Him and never forget Him, because we will see Him always and everywhere. And by continuously chanting and hearing Kṛṣṇa's holy names, we will increase our chances of always remembering Him. That you have promised. We ardently crave such a reawakening in our hearts. May Your Divine Grace be pleased to bestow upon us the greatest of all treasures—love of God.

Thanking Your Divine Grace is not enough, though because we are bereft of proper words, we are limited to expressing our gratitude. We may speak about how grateful we are, but we must also show our gratitude by doing our part, by continuously working to cleanse our hearts of all *anarthas*, and by remaining enthusiastic to follow your instructions and to serve your mission in some small way, to the best of our ability.

*Your grateful disciple,*

Phalinī Devī Dāsī

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṅī-pracāriṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūnyaavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My most respectful and loving obeisances unto you, beloved spiritual master. You are the most munificent and empowered Śaktiāveśa-avatāra and ācārya, who so mercifully came to the West and saved me from a degraded and miserable life.

Because of the global pandemic, the last twelve months have been very unusual and challenging for my Kṛṣṇa consciousness. I have been completely bereft of the shelter of one of your temples for the first time since 1974. I quickly realized that the *darśana* of the Deities, the blissful *kīrtanas*, and the association of many devotees were the foundation of my spiritual strength. I found myself quarantining in Santa Cruz, California, with my dear husband, your disciple Jaya Jagadisha. For the past five years, when we were in Santa Cruz we were able to have the association of a small *saṅga*, and regularly had *harināma* and *prasādam* and book distribution in the downtown area as well as gatherings at our house. With the pandemic restrictions, however, all that came to a stop.

One day I went by myself to a local park to chant and sing. Then my husband joined me. Gradually, more and more devotees started coming to the park to have *kīrtana* together. We had to sit six feet apart and wear masks, but we were ecstatic to have each other's association. Every week Lord Caitanya invariably sent souls to come hear the *kīrtana* and take some cookie *prasādam* and a book. We had a large festival in the park for Lord Nityānanda's Appearance Day, with 38 devotees and guests and a wonderful feast of twelve preparations. In this way we have managed to take shelter of the holy name and continue to have the loving association of devotees. Our weekly gatherings have been the life and soul of all of us.

None of this would have been possible if you had not come to New York so long ago and sat alone to chant beneath a tree in the park. When I think of that, tears of gratitude well up and my heart feels full of love and appreciation for all that you have given to me

and to the whole world. I know that I can never adequately repay you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, but I pray that I always remember you and strive to live in a way that pleases you.

Begging to remain at your lotus feet, I remain

*Your aspiring disciple,*

Kalpalatika Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

In the year 1922

Something special happened for you

The second floor up on the roof

A saintly person spoke the truth

In the year 1933

Bhaktisiddhānta happily

Gave initiation to you

He gave you first and second too

In the year 1944

Towards the end of a world war

You wrote and printed BTG

Distributing the ecstasy

In the year 1955

Going strong and very alive

Preparing the mission ahead

Every town and village spread

In the year 1966

Lower East Side was a real mix

Twenty-six Second Avenue

From there Hare Kṛṣṇa just grew

In 1977

Fourteenth day of month eleven

Chanting Kṛṣṇa you departed

We were feeling broken hearted

It is now 2021

ISKCON is shining like the sun

Your association we pray

We can see you again one day

*Thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Your servant,  
Jagadvira Das*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I beg you to forgive me for not using my life to serve you with great urgency. Kṛṣṇa is so kind to us! Indeed, Caitanya Mahāprabhu sent you here! Then your beloved spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Prabhupāda, at your first meeting, requested that you come to us in the West! You completely surrendered, so full of love and dedication and compassion – and you came! What an incredible benediction to everyone!

You taught us how to become devotees, and you blessed us with your most exalted association. You engaged us in your mission to establish your International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness throughout the world and to print and distribute your books. You told us you would have to leave us, but everything we needed to go forward in our Kṛṣṇa consciousness was in your books. We had centers and glorious Vaiṣṇavas to associate with, and unlimited service. Then you departed and many of us became overwhelmed. It was really quite difficult to grasp what it would take for us to complete this life in service to you and to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

However, so many of your glorious disciples never let go of Your Divine Lotus Feet. You deeply empowered them to spread the message of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and now, close to five decades later, we are seeing crystal clear how Your Divine Grace has truly changed the face of this earth. Anyone who dives into your transcendental books with their full heart and intelligence, is also becoming empowered to impart this knowledge with such profound potency. How wonderful it is to see the plan of the Lord manifesting before our eyes. Śrīla Prabhupāda, our beloved Founder-*Ācārya* of ISKCON, through his books has continued to eradicate ignorance and establish *Bhakti yoga* and devotional service to the Supreme Lord as an irrevocable fact. We have become surrounded by so many devotees who serve with such purity of desire and direct so many souls to take to devotional life and serve in Śrīla Prabhupāda's movement.

Although there is much work to be done to ready my heart for this life's ultimate test, I must bow down to your divine lotus feet and thank you with all my heart for so kindly placing me in such exalted association with the Bhakti Sanga Japa Group. Their

transcendental association has affected me so deeply and has dramatically increased my desire to always remember and never forget both you and Lord Kṛṣṇa! I am praying to become an actual devotee. Please help me succeed!

*Aspiring to able to please you,  
Your disciple,*

Lalita Devi Dasi



Your Divine Grace  
My obeisances at your feet

What is poison at first  
Later on becomes sweet

Promise of a miracle  
Spoken by the Lord

Unbroken succession  
Your very words the sword

You cut through the illusion  
Repeating what you've heard

I am certain to be purified  
Developing faith with every word

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

“Write a tribute to Śrīla Prabhupāda”  
my godbrothers and godsisters said.  
“But how can a speck glorify the sun?”  
was the answer that echoed around in my head.

Yet still they conspired with their gentle reminders,  
compassion-filled letters, counting down the hours.  
“Help us glorify our Spiritual Master” they plead,  
In the end, this hardest of hearts was overpowered.

So many words spilling out onto paper,  
empty and hollow – they echo my answer.  
For it’s your sincere disciples that are the real tributes,  
serving you selflessly with body, mind, heart and spirit.

That’s the true glory of your life’s holy art,  
to have lifted up so many and set them apart.  
Miraculously transforming souls transfixed by *māyā*,  
cleansing their hearts, sparking spiritual desire.

With humor, compassion, strict and constant attention,  
you freely taught how to love and serve Kṛṣṇa.  
You built a house based on Love, Trust and Service,  
inviting the whole world to come home – Back to Godhead.

And they are still coming, those gentle souls who surrender  
at your lotus feet from now ‘til forever.  
For your love knows no limits, no restric-  
tions, no boundaries,  
Unlimited Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* – given free for the asking.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are full of kindness and  
loving compassion.  
Within you live devotion, surrender, Self-satisfaction.  
I've no claim to your mercy – my pride and of-  
fenses are endless,  
yet I still feel your love, your shelter, your fatherly presence.

By Kṛṣṇa's grace may we stay with you forever,  
may your words guide our actions, may your love  
lead our hearts.  
Inspired by your teachings may we chart our life's course,  
May your grace be our shelter as we  
race towards death's door.

*Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
I beg to remain your eternal servant,*

Tripti Devi Dasi

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

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale  
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-śvāmīnī itī nāmīne*

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my most respectful and humble obeisances prostrated at the dust of your divine lotus feet. Your glories are spread throughout the three worlds.

You have stated that to pay back the spiritual master for delivering the disciple, one should preach vigorously as you have done, and continue to do so in your divine instructions which you have given freely to a lost mankind treading repeatedly through the wheel of *samsāra*. This debt is an impossible task, for compared to what you have sacrificed and completely surrendered to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura can never be completely repaid. The mood of constantly trying in sincerity and earnestly acting upon your instructions to give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the many souls who have no knowledge of Kṛṣṇa and have fallen into a state of forgetfulness is following in your footsteps of compassion and mercy.

“I forsook you, O Lord, and came to this world of pain and sorrow. Now I submit my tale of woe at Your lotus feet.

While still in the unbearable fetters of my mother’s womb, I saw You before me, You revealed Yourself but briefly and then abandoned this poor servant of Yours,” so deeply expressed by Śrīla Bhaktinoda Ṭhākura.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, may I always remember serving you by guarding the left front wheel of Lady Subhadrā’s Ratha cart at both the ’74 and ’75 San Francisco Rathayātrās in Golden Gate Park. And the glance of Your Divine Grace I received when circumambulating the Berkeley Temple. You were gazing out of the window of your quarters and your window shade was up as I came around for the third time. May that memory forever stay with me.

You had just given a wonderful class on the life of Ajāmila, and

holding up the 6<sup>th</sup> Canto, you thanked everyone for helping you print these books to fulfill the request of your beloved guru. That class was so potent and inspiring that I didn't go to take breakfast *prasāda*, but chose to chant and circumambulate the temple, being recharged with conviction, and I thank you immensely.

Please keep me in the shade of your lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda. May I always hope against hope and grab onto a thread of your *dhotī*, and actively try to serve you and please you.

*Your unqualified servant,*

Edhaniyasvabhava Dasa

Please bless me that I always find myself in the shelter of Śrī harināma. All glories, All glories, All glories to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda!!!

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble and respectful obeisances. All glories to you.

On this day we find ourselves with many mixed feelings. Feelings of joy that we were fortunate enough to meet you and have you pick us up out of the mire of material life and that you have stayed in our heart to encourage us in our service...and there is the sadness of missing your personal association, letters, lectures and leadership, and so much more.

What would our life have been without you coming into it? Simply a useless waste of time...with no direction nor purpose. You gave us life and a mission to live for ... and to die for. What greater gift can be bestowed upon a wayward soul? As undeserving and unfortunate as we are, we hope that our small endeavors to fulfill your requests of us are somehow pleasing to you.

“We think that we have met your goodness by the will of providence, just so that we may accept you as captain of the ship for those who desire to cross the difficult ocean of Kali, which deteriorates all the good qualities of a human being.”

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*Your servant,*

Jayasri Devi Dasi

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

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

O' dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda  
My love for you stays strong.  
From 1973 to now,  
You remain our all-and-all.

Your preaching continues relentlessly,  
And it will never stop.  
And the TOVP Project,  
It will never flop.

So, I now present to you,  
Your fantastic words of wisdom.  
The more we taste the nectar,  
The brighter our hearts glisten.

"A devotee's business is to earn the favor of the Lord." [SB 2.8.21, Purport]

"Modern civilization is a patchwork of activities meant to cover over the perpetual miseries of material existence." [Śrī Īsopaniṣad, Mantra 9, Purport]

"In the Kali-yuga the population is just a royal edition of the animals." [SB 1.3.43, Purport]

"Kṛṣṇa is the center of all affection for all living creatures." [Kṛṣṇa Book]

"The material world is ultimately illusory, undergoing constant transformation." [SB 11.22.4, Purport by Your Divine Grace's disciples]

“The highest perfection of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is renunciation of the material conception of life.” [BG 2.41, Purport]

“The strong desire for sex can be subdued only by advancement in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.” [SB 9.19.16, Purport]

“When one is attracted to abominable objects of this material world, one’s vision to see Kṛṣṇa is obstructed.” [SBSST *Śrīmad Bhāgavata Tātparya*, Lecture 14]

“The unwanted condition of temporary life is called ignorance.” [SB 7.7.27, Purport]

“The root of ignorance is material consciousness.” [SB 7.7.28, Purport]

“Real intelligence means linking with the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” [SB 4.29.5, Purport]

“Without knowledge, one cannot become detached from material enjoyment, and without being detached from material enjoyment, one cannot make spiritual advancement.” [SB 4.25.7, Purport]

“The greatest loss in life is passing time without understanding Kṛṣṇa.” [SB 4.27.3, Purport]

“One’s actual duty is to learn how to conquer death.” [SB 4.28.22, Purport]

“Māyā, or illusion, is the condition of spiritual life contaminated by material infection.” [BG 6.20-23, Purport]

“In any condition, one is to be considered liberated if his only business is to serve Kṛṣṇa.” [SB 5.11.12, purport]

“The ultimate purpose of material creation is to facilitate the return of the conditioned souls back home, Back to Godhead.” [SB 11.7.22, Purport by Your Divine Grace’s disciples]

“Unless one has realized that Kṛṣṇa is one’s only



true friend, . . . one will remain attached to the temporary relationships of the material world.” [SB 11.7.30, Purport by Your Divine Grace’s disciples]

“The cause of material life is one’s indifference to the Absolute Truth.” [SB 11.8.30, Purport by Your Divine Grace’s disciples]

“Our engagement in material existence is the cause of our unhappiness.” [SB 11.9.14, Purport by Your Divine Grace’s disciples]

“One is considered to be a failure in life as long as he makes no inquiry about his real identity.” [BG 5.2, Purport]

“If one is not Kṛṣṇa conscious, he is uselessly dreaming without any understanding of his eternal situation.” [SB 11.10.3, Purport by Your Divine Grace’s disciples]

“A strong inclination for sense enjoyment is the cause of the material body.” [SB 7.6.9, Purport]

“One must understand that the material world is a hellish place, offering a permanent situation to no one.” [SB 11.10.13, Purport by Your Divine Grace’s disciples]

“Unless we go to the spiritual planets, there is no escape from death.” [*Beyond Birth and Death*, Page 35]

Going Back to Godhead, *Hari Hari Bol*.

*Śrīla Prabhupāda* kī jaya!

Haripada Dasa

## Hiranmayi Devi Devi Dasi

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

With the passing of time, more than ever I realize the matchless gift you have brought us in the Western countries. Ācāryadeva in the Gauḍīya-Vaiṣṇava *sampradāya*, you continue to distribute *Kṛṣṇa-sambandha-vijñāna* and enlighten the whole world. The shelter of your teachings and the shelter of your lotus feet are most salutary.

All through my life, I felt your support, your love and your protection which allowed me to pull through life's ordeals. In this Kali-yuga, people suffer a lot; they find it difficult to give up the harmful habits that cause their suffering. The virus that is now ravaging the world is without a doubt a collective karma. The billion animals sent each year to the slaughterhouse cannot bring any good to mankind. And what's more, the meat industry is most polluting for the planet (which doesn't belong to us).

Citizens have stood up with Greta for the environment but are sleeping still. They don't realize what they're doing. Fortunately, you've given us the *mahā-mantra* which is the best vaccine, the best remedy at the time of death or to continue living in this world. People have chosen Bill Gates and his henchmen in their laboratories as their saviours for a so-called vaccine that would solve all their problems!

We your disciples are now all quite old. Let's be careful to keep your lotus feet on our heads and your divine teachings in our hearts. The soul is spiritual and thus naturally full of spiritual knowledge. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that this original knowledge is also called "natural knowledge". It is eternally present in the soul. This knowledge is:

1. I am.
2. I continue to be.
3. I'm happy.
4. My happiness comes from a certain place, a shelter, a reservoir of happiness.

5. It's natural for me to take shelter of that reservoir of happiness.
6. I'm eternally a follower of that reservoir of happiness.
7. That reservoir of happiness is very beautiful.
8. I've no power to abandon that reservoir of happiness.
9. My present condition is lamentable.
10. Abandoning that lamentable condition, I should take shelter of that reservoir of happiness.
11. This material world isn't my eternal home.
12. By becoming elevated in this material world I don't become elevated eternally. (*Tattva Viveka*)

O Nityānanda, reservoir of happiness, let Your *ānanda* flow upon us so that we may also delight in living!

Thank you, thank you, thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda, and to the assembled devotees!

*Your daughter,*

Hiranmayi Devi Devi Dasi

Divine Lord Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Divine Father, Kṛṣṇa has empowered you with many of His divine qualities and powers, thus, I am fully convinced that you know and can see everything.

You knew me well when I first met Your Divine Grace face to face. You could see everything inside my dirty heart and mind, and yet, out of your unlimited compassion you so kindly accepted me as your unworthy disciple. Not only that, but you bestowed upon me much causeless mercy, and you also bestowed that same mercy to so many of my family members – my father, my mother, my brothers, my sisters, my cousins, my uncles, even my grandmother.

Who can be so magnanimous as Your Divine Grace.

This material world is a very dark well full of miseries, however, through the dense darkness of such a miserable place, a shining light cuts through, it is the light emanating from your beautiful divine lotus feet, a light that gives us hope and strength and wisdom to be able to get out of such a dark well and go back to our original home with Lord Kṛṣṇa.

In 1965 You kindly came to these Western countries to deliver so many of us rotting conditioned souls and turn us into a beautiful transcendental family; we were all so happy, so enlivened, so surcharged with your divine energy, that by your order and guidance we were doing wonderful things. It really seemed like there was no limit to what we could do under your guidance. We were invincible, we were empowered by you.

O divine master, those were such beautiful days, we were full of bliss and ready to do anything to please you and help you expand your mission.

But then, one dreadful day you physically disappeared from our sight, and we were all so devastated.

It is true that the spiritual master always lives in the heart of the disciple and manifests his presence in the capacity of the disciple following the orders and instructions of the spiritual master. But most of us are still so fallen, and without your *vapu* to guide us and give us strength and inspiration, everything is so difficult.

Nonetheless, we must prove our love to you by getting that

strength, that inspiration, that guidance from your divine *vāṇī*.

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, by your order, by your divine mercy, by your divine instructions, we shall do the needful and reach the goal. We have to chant our sixteen rounds everyday. We have to observe the four regulated principles very strictly. We have to read your books and hear your divine lectures full of nectar. We have to worship the beautiful Deities you so kindly installed for us. We have to preach your glories and the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa. All this we have to do and more if we really love you, for you are still and forever with us, in our hearts and in everything you've given us.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Even though there is no way to pay you back, Divine Father, I must try my best to please you and serve your divine orders and your divine lotus feet.

Please forgive my countless offenses and mistakes, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Please forgive all the unlimited bad qualities I have. Please forgive all my shortcomings, my lack of faith and devotion. Oh dear Father, please forgive your fallen, useless son and disciple, your worthless dog, and give me the strength and the power to serve you and to serve those devotees who serve your divine lotus feet and your divine mission. This I beg from you, my Lord.

I remember the few times you personally chastised me, and also the times you smiled at me and thanked me for the little insignificant services I was able to perform for Your Divine Grace. You even allowed me to prepare milkshakes for you which you drank and enjoyed. Without any need, you thanked me, sending me a message with your personal servant, that those milkshakes were very good and that the fruit that I used (Mamey from Mexico which is the same as Chikoo from India) was Kṛṣṇa's favorite fruit. What more can I describe than this, my Lord?

It is these sweet memories and the memories of all the times you so kindly allowed me to associate with You and personally render insignificant little services to your divine lotus feet that sustain my otherwise miserable life.

Please Gurudeva, let me be with you again, let me have your divine association. Let me serve your mission, your divine lotus feet, and those devotees who serve you, dear Lord, let me be a worthy son and disciple of Your Divine Grace.

All glories to you, my eternal Father, my Lord and Master, my

life and soul. All glories to your divine lotus feet, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*

[Śrī Gurov-aṣṭaka]

*Signed by the most wretched,  
insignificant fallen conditioned soul,*

Jaya Gouranga Dasa

All glories to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda!

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

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

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

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

*śrī-guro paramānanda premānanda phala-prada  
vrajānanda-pradānanda-sevāyām mā niyojaya*

My dear spiritual master, who gives the fruit of the highest bliss—the bliss of love of Godhead—please engage me in the blissful service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who bestows bliss upon the land of Vraja.

Dear, beloved, respected and eternally glorified Śrīla Prabhupāda, infinite ocean of mercy. I thank you infinitely for allowing me to see the light of each new day, in the absolute hope that I can offer my most humble obeisances to Your divine lotus feet, and have the opportunity to engage in humble, sincere, and enthusiastic devotional service to try to please Your Divine Grace.

This year I thought that I would not have the opportunity to write you a few lines again – to remember you and praise you as you deserve. The ravages of COVID-19 occurred in my person since January 3, and I was bedridden for two months in a very critical condition, and the doctors said it was not possible I would survive.

But when the critical days of semi-unconsciousness passed, I clung to your divine and holy lotus feet and begged you to do with me whatever you wanted. I was not afraid to abandon the body, I only wanted to abandon myself to your infinite mercy, and as a result I got out of that situation, and here I am again.

Now I am in recovery, without oxygen and without

medication. I thank you infinitely that once again you were with me in those moments so difficult, and at the same time, so significant in my present life.

The years pass, but each day is a new learning for us, as we dedicate ourselves to chant the holy names, following the four regulative principles, chanting a minimum of 16 rounds, performing the daily programs that we learned from you, reading your immaculate books and following your divine and perfect instructions... everything will be better for us.

Everything is an arrangement of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, nothing moves or remains except by His perfect and holy will. We just have to have faith that one day we will get out of here, out of this situation in the material world.

It is true that this pandemic is a scourge for humanity today, but we must understand that we are in Kali-yuga and this and more can be expected to happen. Hence the importance of propagating the congregational chanting of the holy names of the Supreme Lord.

We are infinitesimal particles of the Lord, and He can do with us what He wants, we only have to give ourselves with love, sincerity, devotion and humility, thinking that one day we will all be together doing a great *kīrtana* singing the *mahā-mantra*: *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare / Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*

You have always given us examples of a life given unreservedly to devotional service to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In all your books you teach us how to behave in order to aspire to merit His causeless mercy. In that we must have our current life consecrated, because that is what we saw when you were with us on this material plane.

I thank you infinitely for allowing me to continue in this material body, I confess that I was prepared to abandon you, I did not feel fear and I only clung to your divine lotus feet. The living example of your absolute dedication remained in my mind while I was in bed, and that encouraged me to do everything on my part to move forward.

I also perceived the infinite goodness of you in several of my brothers, nephews, spiritual grandchildren, who made prayer chains, *kīrtana*, readings for my health. Their expressions of solidarity injected me with spiritual enthusiasm.

There is no doubt that you orchestrated everything for this insignificant creature who deserves nothing, and yet you once again showed me your infinite mercy. I know that I am never alone because I have by my side the best of all and of this era, His Divine



Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Many, many congratulations on this, your day, Śrī Vyāsa-Pūjā 2021!

I wish you all the best at the lotus feet of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

ALL GLORIES BE FOR YOU FOR ALL ETERNITY!!!

*Your would-be servant,*

Maha Punya Devi Dasi

Celaya, Guanajuato,

Mexico

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your appearance, I am here to glorify Your Divine Grace's transcendental activities.

The *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, in the first chapter of *Ādi Līlā*, explains in detail how the spiritual master and the devotees of the Lord are one of the direct emanations of the Supreme Person.

*granthera ārambhe kari 'maṅgalācaraṇa'  
guru, vaiṣṇava, bhagavān,--tīnera smaraṇa*

In the beginning of this narration, simply by remembering the spiritual master, the devotees of the Lord, and the Personality of Godhead, I have invoked their benedictions. (Cc. Ādi 1.20)

The years are passing, inexorably, and this blessed day is the most memorable day in our existence within this material world.

You have taught us the Vaiṣṇava etiquette.

You have transformed hopeless souls into Vaiṣṇavas who now have a clear awareness of what it means to be devotees of the Lord.

You taught us the meaning of remembrance: remembrance of you, of your representatives and of the Supreme Person.

Whom else should we remember, if not the Supreme Lord and all these great personalities?

Our memories were a futile recollection of futile material activities, of futile materialistic people and of the futile and temporary vision of this material world.

*tīnera smaraṇe haya viḡhna-vināśana  
anāyāse haya nija vāñchita-pūraṇa*

Such remembrance destroys all difficulties and very easily enables one to fulfill his own desires. (Cc. Ādi 1.21)

By remembering Your Divine Grace, remembering the devotees of

the Lord and the Supreme Lord Himself, we become able to fulfill our spiritual desires without any difficulty.

That is why on this glorious day we are all here, before you, prostrate at your lotus feet, to express our utmost gratitude.

*kṛṣṇa, guru, bhakta, śakti, avatāra, prakāśa*  
*kṛṣṇa ei chaya-rūpe karena vilāsa*

Lord Kṛṣṇa enjoys by manifesting Himself as the spiritual masters, the devotees, the diverse energies, the incarnations, and the plenary portions. They are all six in one. (Cc. Adi 1.32)

Lord Kṛṣṇa enjoys manifesting Himself in your person and we, as devotees, automatically benefit from your transcendental activities. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. Even though we are in this material world and this hopeless age, you still have made millions of people happy.

Now our activities have finally acquired a true meaning, the meaning that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu had intended, and you are the one who has fulfilled His desire.

Everything has been conceived, planned, created, and executed to perfection as desired by the Supreme Lord.

Your Divine Grace is:

- The Planner
- The Creator
- The Executor
- The Enjoyer

### **The Planner:**

Since your first meeting with His Divine Grace Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami you started planning your mission.

### **The Creator:**

Your idea of how to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness in the Western world is unique; no one else was able to do this successfully.

### **The Executor:**

You have perfectly executed every step you have conceived, such as the spread of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, the spread of transcendental literature, the spread of the *Saṅkīrtana* movement and love between devotees.

## The Enjoyer:

Now, in His direct presence, you are enjoying the pleasure your success is giving to your dearest Supreme Personality, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*rādhā kṛṣṇa-praṇaya-vikṛtir hlādinī śaktir asmād  
ekātmānāv api bhuvī purā deha-bhedam gatau tau  
caitanyākhyam prakāṣam adhunā tad-dvayam caikyam āptam  
rādhā-bhāva-dyuti-suvalitam naumi kṛṣṇa-svarūpam*

The loving affairs of Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are transcendental manifestations of the Lord's internal pleasure-giving potency. Although Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are one in Their identity, They separated Themselves eternally. Now these two transcendental identities have again united, in the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. I bow down to Him, who has manifested Himself with the sentiment and complexion of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī although He is Kṛṣṇa Himself. (Cc. Adi 1.5)

Your intimate relationship with the Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, must be so intense that it evokes in the Lord Himself a desire to have you back sooner than expected.

Sometimes we wonder why Śrīla Prabhupāda left so soon, when he could have stayed another ten, twenty years more, to continue his activities.

Yes, thanks to your mercy we have come to know how Lord Kṛṣṇa acts.

Just as the devotee cannot tolerate separation from the Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa cannot tolerate separation from His most intimate devotees.

He longs to reunite with them to enjoy their company.

First separation then reunion; this is the pastime that the Supreme Lord enjoys the most and you are part of this transcendental pastime.

Oh, how I would like to understand this relationship, how I would like to understand these exchanges of love between Your Divine Grace and the Supreme Lord!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, my greatest hope is to meet you again in this world or another, but always as a humble servant of the lotus feet of Your Divine Grace and through that service please the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*Your eternal servant,*

Mrtyuhara Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my loving obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to you!

This year, 2021, is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of all your wonderful pastimes of 1971. I would just like to mention a few of the many highlights that occurred that year as you travelled around the world. For the first four months of the year you stayed in India: Surat, Bombay, Calcutta, Allahabad (Kumbha Mela), Gorakhpur, and Nasik. Then in May, 1971, you went to Malaysia: Kualalumpur, Ipoh & Penang. You also went to Sydney on your first-ever visit to Australia. Then back to India: Calcutta, Rajahmundry, AP (where now ISKCON has a gorgeous temple on the River Godāvarī), and Bombay.

Then, starting in the second half of June 1971, you made your historic trip to Moscow, followed by Paris and on to America: San Francisco, Los Angeles, Detroit, New York, Gainesville, Florida, and back to New York.

From August 3 to September 10 you were in London; September 11 to October 19 in Kenya: Mombasa and Nairobi. Finally you flew back to India to spend the rest of the year there: Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, Vṛndāvana.

Your disciple Nand Kumar Das, our godbrother, told us that at Kumbha Mela, January 12 to 31, 1971, a few enthusiastic devotees were preaching heavily to other sādhus there, that they should give up what they were doing and surrender to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. When you heard about this, you called the devotees in and thanked them for their faith in you and the Kṛṣṇa conscious process. But, you told them the purpose for coming to the Kumbha Melā was to have the association of saintly people. You told them, “You should be very respectful toward everyone you meet. There are people here who are thousands of years old, and you can’t tell who they are.”

Your disciple Kaushalya Devi, our godsister, was also there at the Kumbha Melā and remembers: “Śrīla Prabhupāda told us that we must be very careful and respectful because there are very powerful yogis here. Many have powerful *siddhis*, like the power to mystically move between places. There is a vortex at the sangam of the three rivers where yogis dive and re-emerge in different places.” You said, Śrīla Prabhupāda, “I have personally seen that they take bath in the Ganga and come up in the seven sacred rivers. They go down

in the Gangā and come up in the Godāvārī, then they go down and come up in the Kṛṣṇa River, and go down, like that.”

When you visited Moscow, Russia, from June 20 to 25, 1971, you held extensive conversations with Professor G. G. Kotovsky, head of the department of Indian and South Asian studies at the USSR Academy of Sciences. Even though foreigners were not supposed to speak with the general Russian population, your servant Syamasundar met a young Muscovite, Anatoli Fedorovich Pinyayev, and brought him to meet you. Astoundingly, although he was virtually the only Soviet youth you directly preached to, you initiated him, giving him the name Ananta-shanti Dasa, and he was the first Soviet Hare Kṛṣṇa devotee. Later, he suffered torture for years from the Soviets in prisons and hospitals, but Kṛṣṇa saved him and now, even though Ananta Shanti Das was the only Russian devotee directly initiated by you, there seem to be more devotees in that part of the world than in the West at this time. I was so happy to meet Ananta Shanti Prabhu when I lived in India in the early 1990s.

For one day only, July 29, 1971, you went to Gainesville, Florida, as the devotees got the University of Florida to pay you to speak there. The first thing you said to the devotees, Śrīla Prabhupāda, was, “It is so nice to see so many young boys and girls here in this remote corner of the world, so far away from the birthplace of Lord Caitanya.”

You spoke at the University of Florida at the location called Plaza of the Americas, right in the middle of campus, at which, ever since you spoke there fifty years ago, the devotees have been distributing Krishna Lunch, Monday through Friday during school days. Years ago they passed the millionth meal mark and are still going strong; they serve anywhere from 300 to 1500 meals per day to the students and faculty members alike.

After preaching at the University that day, you were filmed in an evening television interview. By the time you got back to the temple it was nearly midnight. Some devotee had been waiting to receive *dīkṣā* from you; your servant Aravinda told them there would be no time in the morning for a *yajña* as you had to be driven very early to Jacksonville to catch your flight. Suddenly Śrīla Prabhupāda, you announced that you would initiate them immediately, and they stood around your bed where you were seated. You chanted on their beads and pronounced: “Your name is Dharma...” “Your name is Armarendra...” “Your name is Gāyatrī Devī.” They held the *yajña* the next day after you left.

In London, August 3 to September 10, you took a team of devotees who were going to Mayapur to construct, to the Westminster Abbey and told them you wanted the interior of the temple to resemble the inside of the Abbey. Then at Russell Square, near the British Museum where you loved to walk, you told them the temple should be three times as high as the Russell Hotel which was ten stories, or one hundred feet high. A few months later, while walking around Mayapur, you pointed to an area and said, "The temple should go here, and it should be bigger than Westminster Abbey or St. Paul's in London." (Note: as of 2021, the TOVP, Temple of the Vedic Planetarium, is 370 feet tall, yes, taller than St. Paul's 365 feet and taller than Westminster Abbey's 225 feet.)

The first New Delhi Pandal was November 14 to 24, 1971. The Mayor of New Delhi, Śrī Hans Raj Gupta, inaugurated the program, telling the public that although he has had the honor of welcoming many important visitors, no one he had ever known could compare to Śrīla Prabhupāda, who is doing immense amounts of good work in India and the world. "He has also given me love and affection, and I am more affected by that than anything else."

Very dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I can see that by your association, such a myriad of people developed the utmost respect, admiration and affection for you. Please help me to serve you and push on your mission, so that others may be given the blessings of your association as well.

*Aspiring to serve you,*

Nartaka Gopala Dasi

ISKCON Miami/ISKCON Alachua, Florida

To our Ācāryadeva, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, my humble obeisances to you on this auspicious occasion of your 125th Vyāsa-pūjā.

In 1936, your offering to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura is amazingly accurate for many of us today.

I've added this paragraph to my 2021 offering to you;

Śrīla Prabhupāda you came to us, not as the guru of a sectarian institution or one out of many differing exponents of the truth. On the contrary, you appeared as the *jaḡad-guru*, or the effulgent guru of all of us, the only difference is that some obey you wholeheartedly, while others do not obey you directly.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the spiritual master of the entire world, your books are the law books for mankind for thousands of years.

Reading your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* in 1974 changed my life and millions of souls will be connecting with you by your books in the future.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura explains that unless one is directly empowered by the causeless mercy of Kṛṣṇa, one cannot become the spiritual master of the entire world (*jaḡad-guru*).

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are kindly revealing to this aspiring disciple, transcendental knowledge that is increasing our disciple/guru relationship by obeying these two instructions wholeheartedly;

1. Distribute my books
2. Don't change anything

The Spiritual Master is present wherever his sincere disciple is trying to serve his instructions. This is possible by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. In your attempts to serve me and in all your sincere devotional sentiments I am with you as my Guru Mahārāja is with me. Remember this always. (Śrīla Prabhupāda letter, 12/01/73).

I'll remember always, thank you Śrīla Prabhupāda.

*Your lowly servant,*

Rathayatra Dasa



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It is great and wonderful mercy for a conditioned soul when Kṛṣṇa sends him one of His dear devotees as His representative. The spiritual master will bring this aspiring devotee closer to Kṛṣṇa, to His service, to His loving relationship. The divine teacher is not a flatterer, but a bona fide well wisher of his sincere disciple. He teaches from authoritative scriptures real and practical knowledge of God, not some belief or materially motivated concoction. Thus the transcendental life of devotional service has nothing to do with activities within the three modes of material nature.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, our Lord Kṛṣṇa is inconceivable and wonderful, and it is inconceivable and wonderful that you came to me, carrying Kṛṣṇa and Vṛndāvana, on the merciful order of your Guru and Gaurāṅga. Somehow or other, all along these years, by your kindness I could remain tightly attached to you and to your ISKCON movement. You never let me down during difficult spiritual tests or material weaknesses. And now I am so grateful and happy!

So it is time to offer you some last practical service within your preaching mission and to focus on the essence of your instructions, which is to learn how to love Kṛṣṇa. I have these two desires in my heart, and I can see how far I remain from being fit to accomplish them. So let me realize sincerely that I fully depend on your mercy to serve you with heartfelt devotion.

Kṛṣṇa consciousness *kī jai!*

*Your humble servant,*

Gopaswami Dasa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances, all glories unto you!

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

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

What can I say, to relate the feelings of gratitude, for the path “Back to Godhead” that you have set me on. There is no way to repay the debt to the spiritual master.

You have given me everything in this life, and a goal to aim for in the next. Your gifts are boundless, the Lord’s holy names (the *ya-jna* for this age), these transcendental scriptures, devotional service, Deity worship, and association of so many advanced souls.

Even though you appear to physically be gone, I feel you always guiding me. Many times you have appeared in dreams, or other ways, to push me deeper into this ocean of devotion.

I can only shed tears of lamentation that I haven’t become the disciple fit to represent you. To give some glimpse of what your mercy can do, to change bits of coal into diamonds.

Please allow me to offer this life and any future lives in your service. You are everything to me! My prostrated obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Rucira Devi Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Recently, I happened to glance at the “Qualities of a Disciple” mentioned in the *Mantra-muktāvalī* quoted in *Hari-bhakti Vilāsa*:

The disciple is one who is born in a noble family, beautiful, humble, endowed with good qualities, truthful, of pure character, devoid of insolence and pride, free from lust and anger, dedicated to serving the lotus feet of Śrī Gurudeva, surrendered to the Supreme Lord, and who serves the Supreme Lord with body, mind and words throughout the day and night.

Needless to say, Śrīla Prabhupāda, how merciful you were to pick up this degraded, sorry excuse for a human being from the rubbish pile of this material world. You kindly engaged me in service to the mission of Lord Śrī Caitanya to save human civilization in its darkest hour. During your manifest presence, it seemed that we, your disciples, were in constant marathon racing one another just to present you with some pleasant preaching results.

After your return to Lord Kṛṣṇa and transfer to a new preaching field, we tried to maintain the same enthusiasm under your selected replacements but Māyā quickly brought them low. Confusion and lack of co-ordination soon followed.

Of course, this is all “ancient history.”

Somehow, my insignificant attempts at serving you are followed by elation, but then quickly by distraction into the seemingly spiritual. Therefore, I am a semi-Vaiṣṇava. My excuse, of late, is the isolation from the holy *dhāma* and from the personal association of your direct disciples due to the pandemic. But you were never one for excuses. You ask, “Are you reading my books?”

Of course, materially, life is a complete mess, no matter how one

may try to pay off this, repair that, replace this, renew that, there always is a constant line-up of unimportant but necessary things demanding attention. But your reply is, “Are you reading my books?”

Yes, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have been reading. “But if the Lord is so compassionate to His devotees, why does He expose them to special suffering.” The *ācāryas* give the analogy of the father’s love for his children by restricting their play and making them go to school; even though the children fail to understand.

The Supreme Lord is mercifully strict with all His dependents, not only the immature devotees struggling to become qualified. Even Prahlāda, Dhruva and Yudhiṣṭhira were subjected to great tribulations, all for their glorification. (SB 10.88.8, purport)

You would often ask, “What is the news?” The news is that you have, causelessly, accepted me as your servant and that I will spend lifetimes trying to repay you for that mercy.

I would like to report something that would cause you to smile or to respond that, “my heart swells with pride knowing I have disciples performing such activities.”

Being situated at the southern tip of Africa, sometimes I feel like the Japanese soldier who maintained his isolated post in the jungle of the Philippines for 30 years, not accepting that the war was over and the world had moved very much along. Some regarded him as a national hero, others considered him a fool. I can only report that I am still struggling, and that I am still here trying to serve the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in some small way.

After the ILS survey of 2016, that basically exposed that many (not all) of your leaders were not sufficiently reading ‘your’ books, I have made it my duty to rise early, offer *ārati* and *Guruvaṣṭakam* and then sit with your books, even before my *japa*, and study them for 1–1 ½ hours. I am not racing through them just to accumulate pages, for I am a slow learner. I re-read some sections and take notes to embed their importance. But every day, without fail, I find some tasty nectar or some priceless jewel of understanding that I try to distribute when there is opportunity to speak on your behalf. I pray that this little service is pleasing to you.

In the purport to SB 10.87.50 is included a wonderful prayer by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, which he has offered in all humility.

O devotees, this poor creature is standing at your door, waving his tail and barking. Please give him a little *prasādam* so that he may become exceptional among dogs and get the best of masters as his owner.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please forgive me for wasting your valuable time with my nonsense. Please bless me to become your serious and sincere servant and to always feel joyful for having attained the best of all masters.

*Your lowly servant, aspiring to be your loyal dog,*

Medhavi Dasa

My Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

You are an absolutely pure devotee directly from Goloka Vṛndāvana, the eternal spiritual kingdom. You came here to save the most fallen souls of Kali-yuga, and took so many troubles to save millions of lost souls who did not even know they were parts and parcels of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, The Supreme Personality of Godhead. But you so mercifully saved us from the dream of this illusory energy of Kṛṣṇa.

Your glories are actually beyond comprehension. You are a most rare and special śaktyāveśa-avatara, the Commander-in-Chief of Lord Caitanya's Sankīrtan Army. How wonderful and amazing this is. How absolutely wonderful and amazing you are.

I feel so fallen and inadequate to glorify you. But here is a passage from one of your purports in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that explains who you are as an absolutely, perfectly pure devotee, and how you see this world as it really is. To have this vision is amazing.

In the advanced stage of devotional service, the devotee does not see anything separate between his own interests and those of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Both interests become one, for the devotee does not act for a separate interest. Whatever he does, he does in the interest of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. At that time he sees everything in the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the Supreme Personality of Godhead in everything. Having attained this stage of understanding, he sees no distinction between the spiritual and material worlds. In perfect vision, the material world becomes the spiritual world due to its being the external energy of the Supreme Lord. For the perfect devotee, the energy and the energetic are non-different. Thus the so-called material world becomes spiritual (*sarvam khalv idam brahma*). Everything is intended for the service of the Supreme Lord, and the expert devotee can utilize any so-called material thing for the Lord's service. One cannot serve the Lord without being situated on the spiritual platform; thus if a so-called material thing is dovetailed in the service of the Lord, it is no longer to be considered material. This is how the pure devotee, in his perfect vision,

sees from all angles.”— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.28.42, purport  
Śrīla Prabhupāda, only by your causeless mercy will I ever be able to go back with you and Kṛṣṇa to the spiritual world. Please forgive me for not being able to glorify you very well. From my heart I can say that without you I am nothing. Thank you millions of times for saving me and giving me the greatest gifts of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Even a drop of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is greater than all the opulences of the entire material world.

I offer you my most humble obeisances at your beautiful lotus feet that never touch this material world.

*Your fallen servant,*

Lelihana Devi Dasi

My Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your beautiful lotus feet. All glories to you, my divine spiritual master.

Śrīla Prabhupāda what can I say? You certainly warned us about the nature of the material world, but somehow or other I didn't quite get it. I mean I had a rough idea; I knew things rarely went to plan and you never know what can happen next and you're guaranteed a few disasters in life, but I really wasn't expecting a total lockdown due to a pandemic. I mean you couldn't make it up. It's been as if my life was stolen away. Prabhupāda, I couldn't go to your daily Guru-pūjā! It never, ever, occurred to me that there would be a time when your temple would be closed to devotees. I always envisaged the temple as an all-encompassing entity that would always be there to nourish our souls, so that was a bit of a shock. No Rathayātrās, no festivals, no Scandinavian tour, no anything, just prisoners in our own homes. At the same time, in the back of my mind, I had this nagging memory of Umāpati Prabhu telling me in the 1970s that You had told him years earlier that, 'It would all be over in 50 years'. It, referring to – and I'm paraphrasing here – the material world as we know it. So with all this knowledge I really cannot understand why I was caught so off guard, but I was. Śrīla Prabhupāda, it has been such a challenging time. The worst part was being unable to go to Vṛndāvana for Kārtika. Spending Kārtika in Vṛndāvana is like finding water in a desert. It's such a rejuvenating experience. The pure majesty of the Kṛṣṇa Balarama Temple. Mādhava's *kīrtanas* in the M.V.T. gardens which I find such a soothing experience for the soul. And, imperatively, Your rooms. How I love Your Vṛndāvana rooms, although my memories of them can be bitter sweet.

One kind of exciting memory that centres on your rooms was when you returned from Rishikesh to Vṛndāvana. Pradyumna Prabhu arrived in the middle of the night by train to inform us that you would be arriving in the morning. There had been storms in Rishikesh and you wanted to return to your home. In those days in India phones were a luxury that didn't even work. Hence a man arrived at my door at the gośālā in the middle of the night informing me I had to get your rooms ready for your imminent arrival. In those days your rooms were not kept in the immaculate state we find them in today, but packed away until your return. When I arrived



at the house, it was abuzz with people, activity and ankle deep water. Someone had enthusiastically poured buckets of water all over the floors to sweep the dust away. Unfortunately, in those days the plumbing didn't always work and there was no way to drain the water out of the rooms. But it was still an ecstatic night of activity knowing you would be arriving in the morning.

To be honest your arrival was a bit of a shock as your body was showing signs of your ill health. I was actually shocked by your physical appearance. And that's another thing I didn't, at that point, quite comprehend. Repeatedly, You had spoken about the fourfold miseries of life: birth, disease, old age and death. When you are young you have no idea how old age can affect you. I mean practically speaking you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, being our living proof, had defied this old age principle by your amazing achievements so I took no heed of your warnings. Now I pay the price but that just makes me doubly amazed by your unprecedented achievements. Prabhupāda, You are a superhero.

That wasn't the only adventure I had in your rooms. Prabhupāda, now I confess, your *darśana* room curtains went up in flames! I was innocently cleaning the back of your house (I proudly announce I was your bungy) when I heard screaming from the brahmachari I had left washing the *darśana* room floor. Running in I found him standing next to a bucket of water watching your curtains burn due to him having pushed the electric fire up against them. Moving the heater and grabbing the bucket I doused the flames and looked on in horror at the tattered, now black, remnants of curtains that hung there. The floor was covered in charred pieces of curtains. I was beside myself with worry. How could I fix this? Well, Kṛṣṇa is the intelligence in man (and women) so off I ran to the Guesthouse store-room, which I luckily had a key for. There I miraculously found a huge amount of the same cloth as the curtains. I rushed back, acutely aware that this was a race against time, as you would reappear in your House after you had finished giving class. Now this is where the magic happened, the cloth turned out to be a perfect fit for the window, complete with curtain hooks to attach it. The only difference was instead of it being two curtains which open on either side of the window it was now one big curtain. I cannot tell you the relief I felt, Prabhupāda. To this day I do not know if you noticed that the curtains were different as you never said anything but I do know one thing, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are a magician.

Oh, how I missed the serenity of your rooms last Kārtika, Prabhupāda. So filled with your energy. I long to look at your paraphernalia again. To spend the afternoon and evening chanting around your bed as we observe your disappearance day. To press my head against your lengthy flower garland as I pay my obeisances to your bed. To hold your shawl and feel, once more, close to you. I always understood that you cannot buy a ticket to Vṛndāvana... I even practically experienced it, but that does not stop the pain of separation.

This new pandemic age has brought in new ways to associate, but it's not the same. Now everything is done via the internet, a new-fangled gadget not available when you walked amongst us. I always remember that you told us not to get some fax-like communication device that became available in India that enabled faster connection with the rest of the world, so I don't know what you would make of this internet thing that can rule one's life if you let it. So now we are left with this strange situation where we have to book a ticket to visit the temple through the internet thing. Then when we get there we cannot pay obeisances and no *kīrtana* to join in either. Bizarre indeed. This new situation I find myself in has forced me to be far more spiritually self-sufficient and work outside of the perimeters of the Temple. As they say, every cloud has a silver lining and some exciting initiatives have been happening around the Food For All *prasāda* distribution charity. A whopping amount of up to five thousand meals have been going out on the busiest days to whoever needs them. Well that may not have happened without the pandemic. So while I was lamenting in quarantine at home, my husband was having the time of his life, figuratively speaking, up to his neck in Śrī Śrī Nitāi Gourasunder *prasāda*. Also Prabhupāda, something I consider extremely important happened. Devotees came together to resurrect our traditional Sunday feast which had become a thing of the past. It has a pandemic flavour to it as it is on a Saturday and as devotees cannot sit down together to eat, after it is cooked, different devotees deliver it to the homes of people in the community. We even have a live *kīrtana* taking place while all the cars are loaded up with the *prasāda*. Consequently, I thank Kṛṣṇa for providing an incredibly well equipped kitchen in Watford that makes this all possible.

The internet thing has also given us the ability to watch the old films of you. I like to see you sailing on The Ganga in 1977 knowing that you will soon be on your way to Vṛndāvana where I am preparing your house for you. Also there is such a nice film of you

on the roof in Bombay. I can almost feel the glare of those white tiles as the sun hits them. Another film in Bombay shows a *kīrtana* and then you handing out *prasāda* to the street children. I love the way you treat everyone equally, everyone gets some *prasāda* regardless of their position. It reminds me of the time when we had the school in Bombay for those same poverty stricken children that are seen in the film. Śrīla Prabhupāda, You heard their *kīrtana* and enquired about who was chanting so enthusiastically and subsequently invited them to your room the following day. How amazing! There you are, one of the busiest people in the world, but you have time for these poor street children. That, to me, shows just how deep your humanity goes.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the greatest of altruists, your unselfishness knew no bounds. Your self-sacrifice was exemplary and your humility unmitigated. You cared for everyone from the richest of the rich to the poorest of the poor; Your mercy was there for every last entity. You surely saw only the soul trapped in its material body.

I thank you for scooping me up along the way and beg to remain in your service eternally. The shade of your lotus feet is the only safe place to be.

*Your unworthy daughter,*

MokshaLaksmi Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Many moons ago on one *Ekādaśī* I came to Vṛndāvana. It was a cold winter evening, and dark like my life was. I didn't know at that time why I came here. Lord Kṛṣṇa had his own plan, and he led me to Your Divine Grace.

Ever since, I am holding on to your *dhotī* like a child and seeking your guidance. Oh merciful one, please show mercy upon me and don't let go of my life. I go to the temple every morning for *Guru-pūjā* and offer flowers to your lotus feet. Oh great one, let me stay in Vṛndāvana for ever until I leave this material body.

There is no one I am attached to except you. There is no spiritual master like you since Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

On this glorious day, I beg for forgiveness with a straw in my mouth, seeking your guidance.

*Your eternal servant,*

Prassannatma Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I feel so fortunate to be your aspiring disciple. Having wandered in this material existence since time immemorial, to be fortunate enough to somehow or other be blessed with the association of such an exalted person as your divine self is an unfathomable blessing. I am sure it was simply by your desire to save the most fallen that I got this wonderful opportunity. When I examine myself I see nothing that would deem me worthy of your merciful glance. But somehow, just to glorify you as the most merciful, Kṛṣṇa has inconceivably directed me to your lotus feet.

Your contribution of a perfect example of a saintly person, who existed only for the welfare of others is only matched by other exalted Vaiṣṇavas who were sent by Kṛṣṇa to eradicate the ignorance of the foolish inhabitants of this planet. Your Divine Grace was empowered by Lord Caitanya Himself, to spread the glorious teachings of the Vedas, which are the panacea and solution for all the ailments of suffering living entities.

You established your own Kṛṣṇa conscious culture in the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement, that was uniquely and radically different from the ignorant, so called modern civilization. I sometimes feel afraid that the wonderful and strikingly beautiful culture you gave us, is in danger of being changed, eroded, watered down, or lost because of a lack of faith in your instructions, or, an inability for some to follow the proper Vaiṣṇava standards you so clearly established and demanded. This is very worrying to me, as, having based my life on your instructions and example, I can honestly say that they produce the desired effect of freeing us from material desires, and simultaneously increasing our attachment to hearing the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Therefore I pray that I may act as an instrument to lovingly instill faith in others to follow your teachings.

Although I may be destined to take birth many, many more millions of times, I pray that I may be born in an ISKCON devotee family, who follows your instructions nicely and who are engaged in the preaching mission of Lord Caitanya. Any other birth, I would deem to be useless, and hellish. As you are the external manifestation of the Supersoul, you know only too well of my deficiencies and

limitations. I feel crippled and embarrassed by my lack of love for you and your worshipful Rādhā Kṛṣṇa. Therefore I pray to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, being the most merciful and kindest servant of Mahā-Vadānyāya Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, that you please bless me with Kṛṣṇa *prema*, but more importantly, give me the determination to uphold the principles you struggled to establish.

When I look back on my life, I feel so grateful that it's been a wonderful life, because you saved me literally from hell, and let me taste the nectar for which we are all anxious. I have been very lucky since contacting your lotus feet. Somehow or other, by your mercy, it's been a blissful life, because I have been engaged in preaching your mission. My only desire, at this point in my life, is to become a beacon of light and hope for those struggling in this horrible place. You have shown us how to sacrifice everything for the benefit of others, please give me the courage and determination to follow your example.

I am in awe of some of your advanced students who have given so much to your ISKCON mission. I pray that I may help and cooperate with them, and be blessed by their company until my dying breath, because I know this will please you, and help me.

Wherever you are, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am absolutely convinced that you are still the same irrevocably, charming, sweet, beautiful, surrendered and lovingly attached servant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Her most beloved Kṛṣṇa, and I hope one day in the far distant future to be able to see you in Their divine abode.

Thank you again and again a million times over for all you have given me.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Adikarta Dasa

**A DAUGHTER'S RAP**

I ponder your nobility,  
Marvel at your ability,  
Wonder at your humility,  
Charmed by your tranquility.

When challenged you're serenity,  
With children sly passivity,  
To devotees total purity,  
To the world such credibility.

For ISKCON you're stability,  
Engaging with agility,  
Your principle, utility,  
Not a moody-blue futility.

No gender nix-ability,  
Just spirit capability,  
Bhakti's invincibility  
You welcome us to reality.

Displaying remarkability,  
With no whiff of debility,  
You show the possibility,  
Of earth's sustainability.

You've given us facility,  
To act with flexibility,  
Evincing great mobility.  
While teaching with gentility.

Your writings' readability,  
Full of *rasa* not sterility,  
Showing God's adorability,  
And ageless likeability.

You see our trainability,  
A spark of suitability,  
Our rounds with audibility.  
Your incredible incredibility!

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Who but Your Divine Grace would lovingly accept my non-traditional offering?

At ISKCON Tucson, Arizona, we follow your lead to find novel ways and means to flood the desert dwellers here with your mercy ocean.

*Your grateful daughter in service,*

Sandamini Devi Dasi



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer my obeisances with respect and care.  
With gratitude I extend a heartfelt prayer  
For remembrance of you, to be ever aware  
Of your great compassion for the world's welfare.

I bow before your empowered lotus feet,  
Praying for your mercy, whether bitter or sweet.  
Teach me to refrain from the tendency to cheat.  
Purify my heart, make my serving mood complete.

Your Vyāsa-pūjā day, a time for recollection,  
Honoring your many gifts of spiritual direction.  
With deep appreciation for your caring protection,  
For the holy name and meditative reflection.

You came to this world full of Kali-yuga tension  
Giving us a glimpse of the spiritual dimension  
Where would we be without your intervention?  
Surely in places we wouldn't want to mention.

Thank you for your clear, ongoing corrections.  
For initiating me without any objections.  
For your kind acceptance rather than rejection.  
Despite my many, many imperfections.

You awakened us to the root of our dissatisfaction  
Conferring upon us the highest benefaction  
Starting us out with a simple plan of action  
You prayed that we'd gradually develop attraction.

Alerting us to Māyā's keen ability to distract  
How fault-finding is her way to get us to react.  
When our *bhakti latā* creeper is clearly ransacked,  
Your grace fills our hearts with what we lacked.

Although I thought I was looking for perfection,  
Through years of transformative introspection,  
My goal is now simply to model your affection  
For Kṛṣṇa and His devotees through loving connection.

*Aspiring to be the servant of your servants,*

Sukhavaha Dasi

Earlier this year Pran Govinda Prabhu contacted various disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda, and asked them to share with him why they felt gratitude to Śrīla Prabhupāda after following his teachings for so many years.

Association with people of faith increases one's own faith, and Pran Govinda was inspired to swim in that ocean of faith in following Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I took several days to meditate on this topic before sending my reply, and thank Pran Govinda for planting that seed. It's a wonderful meditation, and my reply to his inquiry is my Vyāsa-pūjā offering this year.

Haribol Pran Govind prabhu,

Dandavat Pranams.

All glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda!

I was a very lost, confused young man, but due to Śrīla Prabhupāda's coming to the West at great personal inconvenience I was enlightened about the goal of human life and the means to attain it.

Before coming into contact with his teachings I did not know what that goal was, and without knowing this essential information, how can one progress? Progress toward what, if there is no goal? I was simply traveling here and there without any ultimate destination ... which is a very frustrating way of existence.

I was well-educated and brought up in a fairly wealthy family, but without a goal every material asset was more or less useless because I did not know how to use any of them.

The very day I met devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa and began to associate with them, everything I had learned previously in life began to make sense. It was like pushing one domino and having all the rest fall into place as they fell

against one another. In other words, all the things I had learned in my life finally had value because I learned how they should be utilized — finally understanding what their real purpose was (to be used in Kṛṣṇa's service).

Śrīla Prabhupāda explained this concept in a lecture on SB 1.8.26 in 1973 — “So everything can be utilized. Good parentage, if you utilize .... If you remain intoxicated, do not utilize it, then it is not very good asset. But you can utilize it for good purpose. If your asset, if you utilize the asset for Kṛṣṇa's purpose, it will be better position. The same example = Just like zero. Zero has no value. But as soon as you put one before zero, it becomes ten immediately. Immediately ten. Another zero---hundred. Another zero—thousand. Similarly these *janmaīśvarya-śruta-śrī*. So long you remain intoxicated with, it is all zero. But as soon as you put Kṛṣṇa, it becomes ten, hundred, thousand, millions. Yes. That is the opportunity. So you have got this opportunity. You American boys and girls, you have got this opportunity. You have got zeroes. Put Kṛṣṇa. You become ten. Yes.”

Thus, although there are many, many more things I am also grateful to Śrīla Prabhupāda for ... enlightening me ... revealing to me the actual goal of life and how to attain it is the feature I am most grateful for.

Thank you for your inquiry,

Your servant,

Dhruva Mahārāja Dasa

I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who with the torchlight of knowledge has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance. (SB 8.1.11, purport)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my fallen *daṅḍavats* at your lotus feet. All glories to your transcendental mission and divine causeless mercy. Prostrated *daṅḍavats* again and again.

It seems incredible and unfathomable to me how you have given so much mercy and love to me. I took a birth – while although blessed in many ways – was also full of inebrieties and very bad association. There is no doubt that I was spiraling towards an early demise which was inevitable before coming to your lotus feet.

O mighty-armed Kṛṣṇa, does not such a man, being deviated from the path of Transcendence, perish like a riven cloud, with no position in any sphere? (Bg. 6.38)

This was my position.

I was completely lost and totally out of place. Until I started reading your small paperbacks that a friend had given me. Immediately, I could see my place, in the universe and my relation to Kṛṣṇa. I had a place and I had an activity. By your purports and encouragement, the radiant plateau of Kṛṣṇa consciousness was opened. How fortunate you have made all of us.

I have faltered again and again. The enjoying spirit was so strong in me, that I neglected your orders and association. I have no taste for austerities, but by your grace and the mercy of Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi, I have developed an attachment to chanting the holy name.

You have distributed the unlimited mercy of Caitanya Mahāprabhu to this undeserving wretched soul. Still, I was avoiding that love again and again. Because your mercy is causeless, it is always there for me regardless of my level of consciousness.

You have given me out of that causeless mercy, a wonderful service to assist you in Śrīdhām Mayapur. I am like the small spider endeavoring to assist Hanumān build a bridge for Śrī Rāma by brushing particles of sand into the sea. Although I have no qualifications, you have tasked me with this service, and I am eternally grateful.

As waves of your mercy wash around the world in the form of the holy name, books, recorded classes or memories, how many countless others will be saved. How could I have known that day at Devasādhana when you planted the seed for TOVP in my mind, that its fructification would have saved me over and over again.

You wrote to me once that you had named me Ambarisa which means 'worthy'. I sincerely pray Śrīla Prabhupāda, that I will one day become worthy of the love and care you showed to me. You more than once said to me, 'better late than never'. I have taken these words to heart and continue to hope to please you.

Please bless me with your continued service birth after birth. I have no other desire than to have your service and association even though I am unworthy.

Please continue to bless me.

*Your useless and fallen servant,*

Ambarisa Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my respectful obeisances. All glories to you!

You are the most important person to appear in this world in our lifetimes. That's because you gave us your 'Matchless Gifts' of love of God. Your books will continue to bless unlimited souls for at least the rest of this Golden Age of Lord Caitanya!

You are all about your books. You compiled your books most of the nights sleeping barely a couple hours. You said Kṛṣṇa wrote the books through you. When a new book was published you were most happy. You examined all the writing and pictures of the books with great delight. You asked us to print and distribute the books to save the world and the people. You said simply by touching the books people will receive great benefit, what to speak of the benefits of reading and following the books!

You said that you will live on in your books. You worked tirelessly day and night for us. You said 'Books, Books, Books!' You live in the Books, Books, Books!

You practiced what you preached and showed us what an *Ācārya* really is. We are most fortunate to have you in so many ways like recordings, books and videos. You have a Matchless million dollar smile, and your pictures and videos are amazing.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were so merciful that you allowed me to serve you in the Summer of 1977. I have the best memories of those days. You were very happy when you caught me reading your books in my spare time.

On the day I joined your movement with Viṣṇujana Swami and the Śrī Śrī Rādhā Dāmodara Party, we got to meet you personally. You told us new devotees, "You are all very bright-faced and fortunate to come to Lord Caitanya's movement. Now that you are fortunate; make others fortunate. Preach this message of Lord Caitanya's all over the world!" — RC SF 7-7-1974

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You made us all very fortunate, and you continue to bless those who follow you, past, present and future. Thank you unlimitedly for your 'Matchless Gifts', the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. It is the greatest welfare work the world has seen in our lifetimes! You should be honored by all.

All glories to you,  
Well-wisher of all!  
Founder-*Ācārya*  
Bringer of Gopāla!  
*Om Tat Sat*

*Your menial servant,*  
Gauridasa Pandita Dasa



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

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

*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva  
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*

[Cc. Madhya 19.151]

Of all souls wandering in this material world how is it that I, an insignificant *jīva*, came in contact with a *nitya-siddha* spiritual master? A bona fide spiritual master is – at all times – in direct connection with the Supreme Personality of Godhead and his knowledge is infinitely expansive.

Encountering such a personality is as inconceivable as the ancient tale of the turtle, who swimming in a vast ocean sticks his head through a hole in a log floating directly above him. I find myself in such a sublime situation.

This unfathomable benediction is all one needs to achieve the goal of human life. Constant remembrance of such good fortune nurtures the strength to tread the path of thorns which lies ahead. That strength of gratitude and appreciation is the mortar which paves the path of thorns with humility.

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I am a conditioned soul in Kali-yuga and subject to all its faults and deficiencies. I beg forgiveness for my inadequate execution of your orders, though I have endeavored with all my heart.

Due to the causeless mercy of the Lord  
you have accepted me as your disciple.

There is no other identity for me,  
except that I am your servant.

This is our eternal relationship.

You are my commander, my captain, my ruler  
my master, my chief.  
If I dare to think of you in any other way I am doomed.  
Yet, you are also my dearest friend.

What you speak I must hear, and what you say I must do.  
Though you have captured me in your net of mercy  
I can slip out easily if I am not attentive,  
for Māyā is strong and without pity.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are no ordinary person,  
you have descended for the benefit of the universe.  
I do not know your greatness, for you have come to save the world.  
Leaving your footprints upon the scorched hearts of your devotees,  
they bathe in these pools of elixir that restores hope.

I fall at your feet O exalted Vaiṣṇava *Ācārya*!  
Grateful that I have the opportunity  
to serve you and your mission,  
I dedicate my life to your sacred words.

O Savior of the fallen, though I am inconsequential and useless,  
the desire to see your smile saves me.  
You are the great *Senāpati* of Lord Caitanya's army,  
and in your wake hundreds and thousands of fallen souls  
are conquered by your weapon of divine love.

I am following you Śrīla Prabhupāda,  
I am following you 'til my last breath.  
I am following you and singing your glories,  
for this song is a symphony of the soul.  
Conducting your mighty orchestra there is perfect harmony.  
And when your words are the prime objective,  
everything is in perfect order.

We are protected by the blessings that reside in your instructions,  
reading your books daily keeps us safe on the path of eternal life.  
We are totally dependent on the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*,  
and remaining in the fire of Kṛṣṇa consciousness burns away the

lingering desire to find happiness in this world...

O most exalted spiritual master, my constant prayer is to please you and become firmly fixed in my eternal relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of my life.

O My Lord, best of the givers of benedictions, if You at all want to bestow a desirable benediction upon me, then I pray from Your Lordship that within the core of my heart there be no material desires. [SB 7.10.7]

*Your grateful and dependent daughter and disciple,*

Samapriya Devi Dasi

*prabhupāda apni more dayā nā chāḍiha  
āpana kariyā dāsa caraṇe tadīyā*

O Śrīla Prabhupāda! Please do not neglect me and show me your mercy! Making me your disciple-servant kindly keep me situated at your own lotus feet.

*apnāra caraṇa lāgi saba teyāginu  
śītala caraṇapāyā śaraṇa lainu*

Making my goal attaining your feet, I have fully renounced everything. I have taken full shelter of your soothing lotus feet.

*laksāna e kule mui dilu tilāñjali  
rākhīho caraṇe more āpanāra bali'*

Whatever are my achievements or family – I have completely abandoned them all. I beg You to mercifully keep me by your feet, calling me your own.

*candrodaya dāse bale caraṇe dhariyā  
kṛpā kari rākha more prabhupāda dāya*

Caitanya dasa says, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have now tightly grasped hold of your lotus feet, please keep me here by always giving me your special Prabhupāda-mercy.”

**New York Blackout:  
The Eternal Light of Śrīla Prabhupāda**

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most unworthy obeisance. All glories to you — to your manifold and superhuman devotional accomplishments on behalf of our Guru-vārga.

On this bright and promising day, I am meditating on a dark New York phenomenon. And yet, dark though it was, it encapsulates your extraordinary work of light in the modern world, from your blazing arrival in Manhattan to your intense disappearance in Vṛndāvana.

Without further ado: There is clearly a spiritual metaphor in the now famous blackout of 1965, wherein large segments of the north-east found its electric supply temporarily disrupted, affecting not only New York but parts of Canada, Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, and Vermont.

Over 30 million people were left without electricity for up to thirteen hours. As Satsvarūpa dāsa Goswāmī writes in the *Śrīla Prabhupāda-līlāmṛta*:

While he sat alone at 6:00 p.m on November 9, the lights in his room suddenly went out. In India power failures occurred commonly, so Śrīla Prabhupāda, though surprised to find the same thing in America, remained undisturbed and began chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra on his beads. This was his experience of the first moments of the New York City blackout of 1965, a massive power failure that suddenly left the entire city without electricity. . . . Dr. Misra sent a man from his apartment with a candle and some fruit: The man found Śrīla Prabhupāda sitting in darkness, reciting the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. When informed of the breakdown (it lasted until 7:00 a.m. the next morning), Śrīla Prabhupāda responded by remaining in his place and chanting. For the cause of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he was prepared to work in the city as actively as any karmi [materialistic worker], but if all facilities were taken away, he would be ready — as he was in any calamity — to see this as Kṛṣṇa’s will and

turn his full attention to the utterance of the holy names.

This blackout laid bare a stark truth, a truth you repeated to us again and again: Material advancement has severe limitations. While the progressive and sophisticated West had many virtues and advantages over India, was it, in the ultimate analysis, really desirable or dependable? Was Kṛṣṇa not still ultimately in control? Will science and technology offer resolution to most of man's more serious problems? Could it resolve the irksome realities of birth and death, and of humankind's perpetual search for ultimate happiness?

Your mission was clear. The wisdom of the sages had something unique to offer, serving a special purpose in the West, where we easily forget — if indeed we ever knew — the basic truths of existence.

By this time in America's history, 1965, many had hoped that the promising technological breakthroughs of the 1950s and 1960s would signal an auspicious sea change inaugurating unprecedented ease and prosperity.

Others, however few, saw what you saw, though not as clearly: An evil twin was lurking in the shadow of modernity's beneficent face. For more perceptive people, New York's blackout of 1965 served as a cautionary metaphor for the darkness of the modern age, highlighting modernity's potential downside.

The irony of a complete city blackout occurring just as you began your New York mission should not go unnoticed. Conventional lights went out as a new light emerged. History will mark the metaphor: "This is the message we have heard from Him and declare to you: God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all." (1 John 1.5)

In a similar way, you carefully constructed the slogan for your magazine: "Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead, there is no nescience." With Śrī Caitanya's mission set to light up the world — first in New York and then throughout the universe — how could darkness ensue?

Apropos of this — or, one might say, "coincidentally" — the 1965 blackout was met with a certain amount of jubilation. People made their way to friends' homes and broke bread together, sat in conversation as never before, and kept each other company through the strange course of events. They simply waited for the lights to come back on — with hope.

Twelve years later, on July 13, 1977, the plot, as they say, thickened: There was a second blackout in New York, but this one was not characterized by amiable turnouts and simple-hearted rejoicing,

embraced with good will and in anticipation of better things to come.

Rather, it would be labeled the “bad blackout,” and it would be remembered, both literally and metaphorically, as one of the city’s darkest hours. Dark in two ways: New York was again powerless, yes, but this time it was denied both electricity and the ability to stop pervasive looting and violence. The level of crime was unprecedented. That is to say, it was New York’s darkest hour in more ways than one.

Indeed, as all devotees know, that very year gave us darkness in yet a third way, one that was not discernible to anyone but those in the Vaiṣṇava community: On November 14, my dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, you would return to Kṛṣṇa’s divine abode, leaving our external vision, at least in one sense, forevermore.

For many, New York’s 1977 blackout was a metaphor for the blackness of a city that had already degenerated beyond repair, at least for years to come, with economic decline and rising crime rates that culminated in the Son of Sam murders. Yet these tragic circumstances, terrible though they were, could not compare to your passing, your oncoming absence, for devotees would now be bereft of your physical presence (but not your spiritual potency).

Two blackouts, each manifesting in years that would prove pivotal for the Kṛṣṇa Consciousness Movement — one when you arrived, marked by hope and happiness, and another when you left, an evil portent of things to come. A coincidence? I think not.

What more can be said? “Whoever has ears, let him hear.” All glories to Your Divine Grace!! Vyāsa-pūjā 2021

## Sikhi Mahiti Dasa

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

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

*tvaṁ naḥ sandarśito dhātrā  
dustaraṁ nistitṛṣatām  
kalim sattva-haraṁ pumsām  
karṇa-dhāra ivārṇavam*

We think that we have met Your Goodness by the will of providence, just so that we may accept you as captain of the ship for those who desire to cross the difficult ocean of Kali, which deteriorates all the good qualities of a human being. — SB 1.1.22

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet on the 125th anniversary of your divine appearance in Kolkata, West Bengal, India.

I am writing this offering at your ISKCON Atlanta temple. The world is experiencing the second year of a pandemic that has crippled the world economically, socially, and politically.

The next generation of ashram devotees have rented a home near our temple and are distributing large amounts of your big books in Atlanta. They are also performing *harināma saṅkīrtana* in Piedmont Park. You took your morning walks in that park during your only visit to Atlanta. These devotees show that the Kṛṣṇa conscious movement is continuing to the next generation. And, we can see that they will pass it on to the next.

This is proof that you have established pure love for Kṛṣṇa outside of India. I have visited China twice in two years. Kṛṣṇa consciousness is taking hold there despite the obstacles of the communist government. People from all backgrounds and cultures are attracted to the message you delivered to the world. You stated once, "...they cannot stop this movement. The brainwashing books have been distributed."

The hairs on my body stand on end when I think of what I have



seen since the first day I began serving you in Chicago 1974. The people could not bear to hear the name Kṛṣṇa when we tried to sell your books or perform *harināma saṅkīrtana*. They would attack us verbally and physically. We had to engage in a war with the material energy. Now, these *brahmacārīs* are selling stacks of six big books at a time to one person. They are in Vaiṣṇava dress with *tilak* and people are happy to be approached by them. Many people are also searching for them. Just see how your movement has transformed the world since your arrival in the USA in 1965.

I am in my 66<sup>th</sup> year in this body. I reflect on what I have read about you at this age. That year is 1962. You are residing in the Rādhā Dāmodara temple in Vṛndāvana. You have published the first volume of your three-part series, First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The plan to go to America has not manifest yet. But, you are steadily working with determination to complete the mission your Guru Mahārāja gave you.

I pray to have a small portion of your kind of determination.

*mām ca yo 'vyabhicāreṇa  
bhakti-yogena sevate  
sa guṇān samatīyaitān  
brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

One who engages in full devotional service, unflinching in all circumstances, at once transcends the modes of material nature and thus comes to the level of Brahman. — Bg. 14.26

I want to do something to please you with the little energy and intelligence I have left. It is fading. You – at this age – were still up to fight to complete the order of your Guru Mahārāja and Lord Caitanya. Only an empowered soul could accomplish what you do. Please give me the intelligence and strength to push forward your mission!

In this temple in Atlanta, where you launched the Bhaktivedanta Institute, played *mṛdaṅga* on the Vyāsāsana while singing *Parama Karuṇa*, and displayed the softhearted love you have for Lord Nityānanda, Lord Caitanya, and your disciples, you cried while telling us how merciful these two Lords are.

You said: “Lord Kṛṣṇa said, you surrender to me and I will give you pure love of Godhead. But these two Lords (Nityānanda and Caitanya) don’t demand anything..... Just take shelter of Śrī Caitanya

Mahāprabhu..... thank you very much..."

You left your Vyāsasana with tears in your eyes after only speaking for a few minutes.

I pray that you continue to give me the shelter of your lotus feet. I pray that I may be able to do something to please you before I leave my body. I pray that you forgive me for my offense to you and your devotees.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for bringing me into your divine service.

*Your servant,*

Sikhi Mahiti Dasa  
ISKCON Atlanta

Often, and especially days like today, I ponder and relish the vision that Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us. Śrīla Prabhupāda *cakṣus*. Seeing the world through the eyes of Śrīla Prabhupāda ... seeing the world with eternal vision. You have operated on our cataracts, Śrīla Prabhupāda, and are attempting to replace our blindness with the truth – with Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, Kṛṣṇa *prasādam*, and Kṛṣṇa sound vibration.

You struck down the very essence of our “enjoyment” and revealed it for what it is ... .the shackles that keep us bound to this world. The four regulative principles you gave us appear to many to be a repressive lifestyle at best, you named them as the regulative principles of freedom.

Your vision is to some extent our vision. When in Hawaii, you saw the surfers as “sea sufferers”. You understood those eating non-offered foodstuffs as “...verily eating only sin”. You had tears in your eyes as you watched residents of Mayapur licking the banana leaf plates the devotees discarded after honoring *prasādam*, and instituted a FOOD FOR LIFE program to feed everyone within a 10-mile radius, that continues to this day.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, wherever we go we are reminded of Kṛṣṇa and yourself. When I went to New York Rathayātrā I walked the streets of New York, but not as a young girl anymore. I kept thinking of you, so elderly, by yourself, braving the New York world. Everywhere I went I thought of you walking the same streets. I recently saw 26 Second Avenue temple with my children. When I looked up at the apartment where you lived I started to cry. It’s just inconceivable the austerities you performed with such love and grace. New York has become a place of pilgrimage.

When there is danger, immediately Lord Nrsinghadeva comes to mind. A shark? Kṛṣṇa’s earrings and Kṛṣṇa Himself! Monkeys? Hanumān and friends. Elephants? Ganesh and Gajendra. Dogs? Śivānanda Sen’s dog, of course. The sun and moon? Kṛṣṇa’s eyes. The ocean? Kṛṣṇa’s waist. Instead of looking at a cow and how to exploit her, we know she’s our mother and the bull our father. Flowers? To offer to our Deities.

The goal of life? Not *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma* or *mokṣa*. Pure love of God is our ultimate goal. You have given us Kṛṣṇa vision.

The peace formula, you have given. *Vidyā vinaya sampanne*, the

sage sees with equal vision. This is the only solution to the madness of our world. To see Kṛṣṇa in everyone's heart allows real equality.

Your vision has become so much a part of our lives. The pastimes of *Kṛṣṇa Book* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are embedded in our hearts. The *mahā-mantra* reverberates on our tongue, and we share with the world.

Some time ago I met a woman, barely an acquaintance, that I spoke with at a Sunday feast. I entered the grocery store as she exited. I greeted her, and she stopped, asking if I would listen to a short story. She proceeded to tell me tearfully that she had tried to repair a broken relationship with her 94-year-old father. She called him, only to have him kick her away, again! The stepmother insisted that she needed to have a favorable relationship with her, before she could have one with her father. How painful! Immediately, the story of Dhruva Mahārāja came to mind, so I shared it with her. He was also similarly kicked away. Dhruva's solution was to go to the forest, worship Kṛṣṇa, and ultimately receive the highest gift, love of God. We talked about how difficult situations can catapult us to achieve self realization. She was pacified due to your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Seeing through your eyes and the eyes of the scriptures makes all the difference.

I came across an article written some time ago by an independent Irish journalist, Brendan O'Connor. Phenomenal article, as this man perceived Śrīla Prabhupāda's all pervading influence. He said: "I was reading somewhere recently that while we might think of Hare Kṛṣṇas as a marginal cult, their influence on the world we live in is enormous. The view seems to be that while the religion has not succeeded in the mainstream, as such, the ideas have. Everywhere you look there is watered down Hare Kṛṣṇa-ism, from the kinds of foods we eat, to the notion of sustainable, community based living, to the whole mindfulness thing." He says. "IT SEEMS WE ARE ALL A LITTLE BIT HARE KRISHNA NOW!!!" Mr. O'Connor goes on to say "Do you practice yoga? Are you a vegetarian? Do you believe in karma? Do you believe in positive vibes through social media? If you do, then, my friend, you might just be a little bit Kṛṣṇa conscious." Mr. O'Connor wonders if it's okay to take the trappings of spiritual techniques without buying into the "whole thing". He goes on to muse, "Or do the Hare Kṛṣṇas and the rest of them know something we don't? Do they know that the more people they can get to chant or meditate or not eat meat, or do the yoga, even if those people

just do it for well being, the more people they bring a little closer to Kṛṣṇa? He concludes his article, "WILL WE ALL END UP IN SAFFRON ROBES SOME DAY"" Well, guess what Brendon, that's Prabhupāda's plan, so that's our plan and we'll continue to give out your mercy. The seeds have been planted and continue to be planted.

This Kṛṣṇa virus is spreading ... be it often underground. Like my *saṅkīrtana* leader used to tell me that the work is already done – the books are distributed, the *mantras* chanted, the *prasādam* given ... it's just a matter of who will get the credit. I'd always jump into the *saṅkīrtana* van after a speech like that.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we pray today to become your instruments, taking your loving instructions, and vision to everyone, in every town, village, farm, and Facebook page. It's the only way we can begin to repay you!

*Your grateful servant,*

Sukhada Dasi

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are my very life and soul! Please let me offer at the dust of your divine lotus-like feet, my most heartfelt obeisances.

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

This year even more than before it's necessary for me to be focused on your instructions which are your real and ultimate 'lotus feet'! The instructions, this is the real heritage left to us from Śrī Kṛṣṇa, especially in His *Gītā* and from any other great *ācāryas*! *Vapu* presence may be there or not, we know it will not last forever, but *vāṇī* will be there forever and whenever we want to make real advancement towards the real goal of life:

“Serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness everywhere and every corner of this planet!”

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda, I thank you very much for sending me to Greece, the country of culture and philosophy. Now the Greeks can come to know the real culture and philosophy! Thank you my divine master, you are my life and spreading your glories is my very breath!

Your servant of your servants, forever at your lotus feet, knowing very well that in your lotus feet I can find Śrī Kṛṣṇa and all other perfections of life,

*śrī guru caraṇe rati ei se uttama gati!*

*Your aspiring servant,*

Dayanidhi Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet. All glories to you, *Jagad-guru*, who has liberated the world from nihilism and impersonalism, and permeated the three worlds with Kṛṣṇa consciousness. With each passing day your egregious figure grows gigantic, as the conditioned souls are nourished with the nectar of the perfect teachings of your books – massively distributed throughout the world in all languages – and with the vigorous preaching of your loyal followers, eager to please you and to meet you in Goloka Vṛndāvana.

It is pleasing to imagine that you are watching us from Kṛṣṇa's abode, and like Paramātmā, you appreciate our sincerity and encourage us to not slow down. In fact, our most visible and understandable Paramātmā is you. It is enough to delve a little into reading your books, to detect in your words and arguments, that you know our real needs as if you were observing us. Just thinking about it instantly fades the shadows of misery, and one feels lucky, confident, and optimistic.

Personally, I remember you at all times of the day, but I think I'm not following your instructions faithfully and in detail. Sometimes I feel like I'm doing things right, and sometimes I feel bewildered and out of place. What keeps me grounded, I believe, is to be aware of both states, therefore able to perfect my spiritual practice as long as I do not forget you and remember your enlightening teachings, filled with deep wisdom and pure love for God.

Sometimes I preach via Zoom, and when I do I feel that I am spiritually alive by your grace. Now that I have reached 78 years of age, I remember that when I saw you for the first time in Rome, (May 25th, 1974) you were the same age as I am now, and you had already revolutionized the world with your tireless production and distribution of books, and founding temples in five continents.

Now that I am experiencing the ailments of the body due to old age, I appreciate and admire infinitely, your heroic international dissemination campaign of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The inexhaustible and contagious enthusiasm with which you carried out your memorable and unsurpassed feats, leaving the entire planet mined with beautiful temples and with thousands of beating hearts, infected with Kṛṣṇa consciousness by your direct preaching. Since then, we have

all been progressively appreciating the unique treasure of Kṛṣṇa consciousness as we have been captivated by its beauty.

In my years of service, some of your phrases comfort me then, and still comfort me today, to overcome the dictates of the mind and know how to act in decisive moments. “The best plan is the one that works.” “What is started, must be finished.” “If they chant 16 rounds and follow the four principles, I guarantee they will go to the spiritual world.” The famous four rules, impossible to forget, have also shaped my consciousness: “Books are the basis; purity is the force; preaching is the essence; utility is the principle.”

In these disturbing times, dominated by psychosis and multiple calamities caused by the pandemic, a highly contagious and deadly virus, your figure as the undisputed savior of each one of us and the entire world, emerges in the hearts of all of us who know you, offering us real support and containment.

Saying ‘thank you’ is very little, following in your footsteps is encouraging, and complying with your instructions is the highest guarantee of perfection. At this moment I want to tell you, that I love you more than anyone in this world, but I fear that my words are not impregnated with the purity required to enter your heart.

We all acclaim you according to our level of understanding, which still may not be enough to value you with due breadth, because, as you well said, “only a pure devotee can understand a pure devotee.” I feel that no matter how much we glorify you, we will always fall short, because your qualities exceed our limited capacity for understanding. Therefore, I imagine that when you hear the offerings that we dedicate to you in commemorating your glorious appearance, you will smile with benevolence, like a tolerant father with his children.

No matter what, I dare to think that, by your grace, our heartfelt offerings generate a close bond of true love with you, which helps us to develop our latent Kṛṣṇa consciousness, through which we merit to return home and enjoy your loving company for eternity.

You once told a journalist that you came to remind us of what we had forgotten. In that way you gave us what we needed most: hope. After centuries of hopelessness in this part of the planet, you brought Kṛṣṇa to us in the form of the *mahā-mantra*, and since then we have very good hopes that we can get out of the material world and transfer to the spiritual world. Therefore, you reign in our hearts as the supreme monarch of the entire universe who guarantees



our spiritual development, and that of future generations to come. Before leaving for Goloka Vṛndāvana, you tied everything so well that all sincere souls who wish to know Kṛṣṇa will be able to achieve it and see him face to face (as Lord Brahmā saw him), to serve and worship him here and in eternity.

Your glories are unlimited, and although I am very limited, my gratitude is infinite. Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda! Thank you with all my heart for engaging me in your service.

*Your worthless but hopeful servant,*

Śrī Padambuja Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Once again it is time for my written appreciation of your unfathomable mercy as well as an annual report on my spiritual life.

By the mercy of the spiritual master one receives the benediction of Kṛṣṇa. Without the grace of the spiritual master, one cannot make any advancement. Therefore, I should always remember and praise the spiritual master...at least three times a day. — *Gurvaṣṭaka* 8.

As it is said, “Kṛṣṇa gives guru, and guru gives Kṛṣṇa.” There is no doubt about the deep import of this simple statement of *Gurvaṣṭaka*. Without your mercy, Śrīla Prabhupāda, I would very likely still be mired in the karmic struggle inherent in the ocean of birth and death, devoid of any exit strategy, or at best I would have continued being something of a *brahmavādī*, although feeling unfulfilled, that is, before I read your books. Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura says, “We are always suffering from material pangs, and our hearts are burning, but we cannot find any way out of it.” That comment of course is referring to gross materialists, but fortunately for us the way out of the quagmire of material misconception is associating with sādhus and chanting the holy names!

I have been reading a bit, chanting some rounds daily and watching Amarendra Dāsa and B. R. Chopra’s *Mahābhārata* on YouTube, which we can now put on our TV via a set-top box. It is really wonderful seeing Kṛṣṇa on TV! It is the perfection of screen life and many modern people, including myself, spend countless hours daily on screens. This allows the TV to really become an avenue for spiritual advancement. Amarendra Dāsa never fails to amaze me with his purity, enthusiasm, depth of śāstric knowledge and comments appropriate to my personal situation; I definitely consider him my *śikṣā* guru. *Mahābhārata* really makes Kṛṣṇa *līlā* come alive in a visual way that may not always be found in the books, although the best readers form a mental image of what they are reading and your books have always had wonderful paintings that captivate our hearts!

Since COVID is still going on, our mini *saṅga* is still holding *bhajanās*, *kīrtana* and *śāstra* readings weekly outdoors in a county park, and we have now been doing this for over a year. The core

group is a small contingent of mostly your disciples, but we are very steady and determined to carry on with this program. The predecessor programs to this current outdoor venue were started years ago, initially as monthly *kīrtana* programs in rented halls, then monthly devotee lunches, again as monthly *kīrtana* programs, and now the weekly outdoor programs.

For just over a year now, I continue to place your original (pre-edited) books in the “little free libraries” in my locality. I am determined to carry this on as long as I am able. I sense that these books have already started to make an impact in some of the local’s lives, just as *Kṛṣṇa book* made a tremendous impact in my life. I was thoroughly distraught at age 25 at not having found the Absolute Truth, then voila!! your *Kṛṣṇa Book* made its divine appearance in the public library, placed there by Satsvarupa’s library party, and my spiritual angst was immediately quelled by your very clever way of interspersing *bhagavat siddhanta* with the story line. Although initially I thought *Kṛṣṇa lilā* was fairy tales, I was primed for the supernatural by having had, as a child, a fantastic picture book of Old Testament prophets manifesting their amazing spiritual potency.

My body continues to slowly deteriorate, and I have finally grasped the fact that gross sense gratification is in no way or manner a worthwhile goal for anyone considering himself to be an aspiring *bhakta*. Sometimes I find the concept of physical deterioration depressing, and the fact that I can’t live in this body forever tragic and disturbing. But being under the sway of external energy and the control of *samsāra* is the price extracted for being renegade souls. Ultimately this is all Kṛṣṇa’s program; it is He at the center, and everything and everyone rests upon Him on the periphery just as pearls are strung upon a thread. I need to get with His program, although it is plainly obvious from my lifestyle, thoughts and actions I am not willing to fully surrender, at least not yet, although there is still hope that I can play catch-up and pass away with cent percent devotion. Of course, if I don’t, I hope that I can at least be born as a human in a Vaiṣṇava family and get another opportunity to continue this grand endeavor of spiritual purification, until I finally reach *prema bhakti*, which is described as *puruṣārtha mauli*, the crown of human ideals.

I can’t completely give up my Vaiśya tendencies, so I still work my business a bit. Since I never finished college, but made a pretty good living, I feel that some devotees, rather than going to college, incurring huge student loan debt, then begging door to door for a

job, if they have some common sense, a sense of value and a bit of know-how to market and sell necessities of life, could make a living in this simple way. All one needs to be a salesman is to know how to speak. No need to work as a cog in a large non-devotee organization. It is quite easy to find new or used items to re-sell; buy them low and sell them higher. A business such as this could be kept simple, maintaining just one household, or scaled up into a larger devotee-and-ashram supporting establishment. Of course, Śrīla Prabhupāda, you really wanted us out on the land with an ag-based economy; yet even with an ag-based economy, so many essentials need to be produced and distributed by the craftsmen and mercantile class.

Sometimes I think I would like to help establish and organize a rural ashram, and be part of it in my last days. At this point, however, I don't know how to go about this nor whom I would trust to join forces with. It would have to be in northern California, however, since I am not willing to move elsewhere. At this point, it doesn't look like it will happen.

My wife of 27+ years is slowly becoming more of a devotee. When we first got married, she aspired to make "bune," the Thai word for *punya*, so that she could go to *svarga loka*. After hearing a lot of preaching about the temporality of heaven (as well as earth) plus getting older, she has finally become more attracted to the *bhakti* viewpoint of the goal of life being loving service to the Divine, which I feel in her case must be to Lord Rāma, since she loves to offer bananas to a picture of Hanuman on our altar. Apparently everything is going according to Kṛṣṇa's plan for continued expansion of His loving relationships with His *bhaktas*.

In conclusion, the primary principle of our relationship is that I am forever indebted to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for giving me the *bhakti-latā-bīja* to cultivate, and I hope I don't inconvenience you in the midst of your ecstatic fun in Goloka with Kṛṣṇa and the other cowherd boys by having to make you leave for a moment to come back here to rescue me.

*Daṇḍavat praṇāmas,*

*Your disciple and servant,*

Anandamaya Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace. All glories to this most blessed event which is your Appearance Day.

It is with great joy and anticipation that we look forward to offer our glorification to Your Divine Grace on this occasion. It gives us an opportunity to deeply reflect on your bringing this greatest gift of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the Western world. To reflect on how you came to save us from the deepest ignorance of material life. To reflect on how much you had to struggle to do this. The more we hear from your close disciples on how this all took place, the more we appreciate how difficult it must have been for you.

Today we can read and hear about these activities in the comfort of our armchair and taste the nectar of the pioneering days of ISKCON. It is like surfing in the ocean. From one wave to the next. Here it is from one pastime to another. We always want to taste more and more. In this way we can keep remembering you even after more than 40 years since your disappearance. Furthermore, we are reminded of your unflinching dedication to have the order of your Guru Mahārāja executed. How pleased he must be with you. And how you always gave credit to him for all your success. "It is all the blessing of my Guru Mahārāja. He wanted this", you used to say.

At the same time we realize how much we are lacking and how short we are falling of your expectations. To surmount these shortcomings, to come to a point where we can actually give you full satisfaction, we depend fully on your mercy. Without this our situation is definitely hopeless. The way things are going presently in this world should normally make it very difficult for Kṛṣṇa consciousness to spread. So many restrictions of movements and lockdowns everywhere. The essence of the *saṅkīrtana* movement is to be in contact with the people. Distributing books and *prasādam*, Sunday feasts and festivals, *harināma* parties in the most populated parts of the cities of the world, house programs etc. These activities are now restricted. So we rightly wondered how things could carry on under so many restrictions.

But by your strong desire to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness, you bestowed your mercy on the devotees to be able to continue the preaching mission of Lord Caitanya. And – miracle done by Your

Divine Grace – the preachers adapted within a short time to the new situation by finding new methods to expand the preaching in different ways and with unexpected results. More books were going out including thousands of sets of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatams* and *Caitanya-caritāmṛtas* along with record numbers of *Bhagavad-gītās*. By the success of this strategy the devotees became so enlivened that they vowed to distribute even larger numbers of books for your pleasure. Just like the waves of the ocean never stop, so the *saṅkīrtana* movement also cannot be stopped. Inspired by your purity of purpose, your disciples and granddisciples have taken up the banner of Lord Caitanya’s movement and are spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness more and more.

Personally it is our greatest pleasure to enlighten the new generation of followers in the matter of your divine *līlā*. Many of them have little or no idea of how you struggled in India for forty years until you got a passage on the Jaladuta. How much austerity you had to undergo in America in the first years; how much opposition there was in India from the established religious and cultural circles; how you had to fight for the Juhu temple. Then finally in the West they tried to annihilate the movement through the deprogrammers. But you came out successfully everywhere. “Hare Kṛṣṇa is a bona fide religion,” the court ruled.

To relate these things to newcomers, unless they know you properly, how can they become inspired to push forward your movement.

Kindly, Śrīla Prabhupāda be merciful to this fallen soul and let us be constantly engaged in your service until our last breath. We hope in this way we will never forget you and always remember you. Because remembering you is remembering Kṛṣṇa, and that is the goal of life.

*Your unqualified servant,*

Sriniketana Dasa

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

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

Most dear and beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble and respectful obeisances.

All glories to Your Divine Grace.

With my heart filled with joy, I throw myself in the dust of your lotus feet; those lotus feet that have glorified this planet Earth by walking on its surface.

You are the crest-jewel amongst Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pure devotees.

Completely engrossed in pure love of Godhead.

So much so, that anyone who comes close Your Divine Grace, no matter how stone-hearted they may be, can, simply by induction, experience that profound "feeling" which is nothing other than a nectarine flow of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness pervading their own heart.

Such is the intensity of your desire to please the Lord and bring everyone back home back to Godhead, that by merely moving from place to place you are spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness like an epidemic.

By opening temples, starting preaching centers, introducing all kinds of preaching programs that embody your pure, unalloyed devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa, you are generating so many Kṛṣṇa consciousness "infection" outbreaks.

One after another, anyone who approaches such "contagious" places becomes infected by your same pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Just as an infectious pandemic disease takes over the whole world, the spiritual infection of your pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness has spread all over the planet.

The symptoms of such infection are that a person starts to feel disturbed and uncomfortable in his ordinary way of living, followed by an increasing sense of tiredness in dedicating his time to material comforts and achievements. Then comes a growing awareness of his real self with consequent gradual coldness toward material senses' gratification, followed by a feverish rise in interest toward Kṛṣṇa and activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Increasingly, he finds

it more and more difficult to breathe the “oxygen” of materialistic atmosphere. That breathing eventually comes to a halt and he fully immerses himself in the spiritual atmosphere of selfless devotional service to Your Divine Grace’s lotus feet, in the association of other similar pals.

In some people, these symptoms seem to be less evident and others appear as asymptomatic. Still, the infection has entered their consciousness and at the proper time it will act, even if they may remain in that condition for a long period or a lifetime. Nonetheless, they function as healthy carriers of the “disease”, “infecting” others just by talking to them of what they have heard about Śrī Kṛṣṇa or directing them toward Your Divine Grace’s devotees and books.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, just like with material infection, there are things that can contain the rapid spread of this Kṛṣṇa consciousness spiritual pandemic. For example, *prajalpa*.

Gossiping or talking of all kinds of material topics instead of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness subjects as found in your perfect books and eating just “foodstuff” instead of pure Kṛṣṇa *prasādam* offered to Deities; it would be like “**covering our mouths with a mask**”. The same thing would be for our nose if we only smelled the scents of this world and did not let the fragrance of the leaves of the sacred plant of Tulasī, incense and perfumes offered to the Lord, enter our nostrils.

Likewise, being in the company of non-devotees and avoiding close contact with highly Kṛṣṇa conscious devotees would be tantamount to “**maintaining the social distance**”.

Similarly, going to the movies, pubs, dance halls, watching TV shows, attending gatherings for either gross or subtle material senses gratification, and avoiding Kṛṣṇa’s festivals and spiritually contagious sacred places such as your temples and *āśramas*, where the atmosphere of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness prevails, would be equivalent to “**Stay away from crowded places**”.

To the same effects, dwelling in a place where we are surrounded by worldly images, objects and literatures, including those of philosophic speculators and so-called elevated spiritualists or *sahajiyā* pseudo-devotees, instead of spiritually infectious elements like Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s worship paraphernalia, pictures of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, of His pure devotees or books of Your Divine Grace, which are filled with pure, unadulterated Kṛṣṇa conscious words and images; we could call it “**keeping the house clean and sterilized**”.



The distribution of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in very small doses or in a watered-down version could lead to a kind of “**herd immunity**” to its infection. Injecting people with a variant, genetically modified by the influences of the *tri-guṇa* – material goodness, passion and ignorance – would work like a sort of “**vaccine**”, giving them the ability to develop antibodies against the infection of pure Kṛṣṇa consciousness, remarkably reducing its immediate effects.

However, in the end, none of these “preventative measures” would really work.

You are such an exalted, extraordinary and pure devotee of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, that Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself has manifested His full presence through Your Divine Grace.

Your chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and your Kṛṣṇa-*kathā*, the transcendental sound flowing from your lotus mouth, recorded in your wonderful literary works, is well above all levels of purity or offenseless chanting.

You are distributing nothing less than pure *Kṛṣṇa-prema*.

That is why your “Kṛṣṇa Consciousness infection” is so overwhelming.

It will never go away.

It is here to stay.

Everyone, willingly or unwillingly, will eventually be affected.

This is Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s stated plan – *prthivīte āche yata nagarādi grāma sarvatra pracāra haibe mora nāma* – “In every town and village, the chanting of My name will be heard.”

### From Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.5.25

*ucchiṣṭa-lepān anumodito dvojjaiḥ  
sakṛt sma bhūñje tad-apāsta-kilbiṣaḥ  
evam pravṛttasya viśuddha-cetasas  
tad-dharma evātma-ruciḥ prajāyate*

**Once only, by their permission, I took the remnants of their food, and by so doing all my sins were at once eradicated. Thus being engaged, I became purified in heart, and at that time the very nature of the transcendentalist became attractive to me.**

Śrīla Prabhupāda:

Pure devotion is as much infectious, in a

good sense, as infectious diseases.

A pure devotee is cleared from all kinds of sins.

The Personality of Godhead is the purest entity, and unless one is equally pure from the infection of material qualities, one cannot become a pure devotee of the Lord.

The bhakti-vedantas as above mentioned were pure devotees, and the boy became infected with their qualities of purity by their association and by eating once the remnants of the foodstuff taken by them. Such remnants may be taken even without permission of the pure devotees. There are sometimes pseudo-devotees, and one should be very much cautious about them.

There are many things which hinder one from entering devotional service, but by the association of pure devotees all these obstacles are removed.

The neophyte devotee becomes practically enriched with the transcendental qualities of the pure devotee, which means attraction for the Personality of Godhead's name, fame, quality, pastimes, etc.

Infection of the qualities of the pure devotee means to imbibe the taste of pure devotion always in the transcendental activities of the Personality of Godhead. This transcendental taste at once makes all material things distasteful. Therefore a pure devotee is not at all attracted by material activities.

After the elimination of all sins or obstacles on the path of devotional service, one can become attracted, one can have steadiness, one can have perfect taste, one can have transcendental emotions, and at last one can be situated on the plane of loving service of the Lord. All these stages develop by the association of pure devotees, and that is the purport of this stanza.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please hold me very close to your lotus feet at all times, so that your formidable infection of Kṛṣṇa

consciousness will eternally affect me and actually kill for good this terrible false identity that has overpowered me since time immemorial. I promise I won't move an inch from under their shelter.

Your Divine Grace is my life and soul.

I always think of you and working sincerely and tirelessly to serve your instructions is my only comfort to soothe the feeling of separation that resides deep in my heart.

I take the opportunity of this holy occasion to renew my plea to Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Gaura Nitāi: "Dear Supreme Lords, the inexorable Time factor is a manifestation of Your power and as such completely under Your control. You can make me forget or remember.

Please, whatever may happen, life after life, never take from me the memory of my beloved Śrīla Prabhupāda, and please let me always remember His Divine Grace's teaching and pastimes".

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

*Your humble and respectful servant,*

Narakantaka Dasa  
Italy (RKC)

### A Drop of Mercy

Your lotus feet didn't touch the ground  
Your words and philosophy were so sound  
When on a morning walk across the field  
In Letchmore Heath my faith was sealed  
To float along on your transcendental cloud  
With Your Divine Grace and devotees so proud  
To be with you, the greatest soul  
Who walked the earth in mood so bold

How could I be so fortunate, one so low  
To behold your grace and swanlike pose?  
One so dear to the Lord Himself  
"Is this a dream "? I asked myself  
You were in Vṛndāvana in Kṛṣṇa's embrace  
I blindly followed, trying to glimpse your face  
The face of the greatest servant of the Lord  
Pure devotee, father and my humble accord  
Whose compassion and love knew no bounds  
And gave this *mleccha* mercy to be around  
You came to save us from Kali-yuga hell  
With Absolute Truth, love and example as well  
Fearless and resolute, you came to the West  
To save us lost souls and instruct us the best  
In pure knowledge that you had written in books  
That could liberate a *jīva* with simply one look  
Following your guru and disciplic succession  
As dictated by Kṛṣṇa to you in a fashion  
That I can't understand but know to be true  
Oh dearest Prabhupāda, how can I serve you?

To please you is my sincere desire  
Please send me direction so I will never tire  
Of glorifying you with deep gratitude  
For the joys of chanting and spiritual food,  
Association of devotees all given by you  
A way of life and death with purpose anew  
The desire I pray to be always in place  
Is to serve you forever, Your Divine Grace

*Your servant and aspiring disciple,*

Śrī Kāma Dāsi

## Bhutiha Dasa

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I feel one of the luckiest few in this world.

Thanks for the gift you have brought us, Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a priceless gift.

I am forever indebted to you for everything you have done for us.

The world will always remember you.

*Your servant,*

Bhutiha Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Please accept my humble obeisances. Thank you, for taking me on and now I have to become worthy of being your disciple.

By some divine mercy I encountered you, and I pray that I can always be reminded of the fortune that I came across by doing so. Māyā and her allies of forgetfulness and illusion are all powerful, and I am firmly under their spell. Being worthy of being your disciple is making that firm decision to not be a slave to Māyā and her illusion but become the servant of the truth. Don't give up on me yet. Give me the ability to distinguish that reality from the illusion and the strength and courage to serve the truth and the light.

You are the genuine article, but I remain your ungrateful and fallen servant.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace on your appearance day.

When you arrived in America on September 17, 1965, in fulfillment of your guru's order that you introduce Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the West, I myself had returned to America after a three-year stay in Germany, where my father had been stationed with the American military. Now in Florida, I was starting my final year of high school. I graduated in June of 1966, and in the fall of that year I entered the George Washington University in Washington, D. C., in the School of International Affairs. I was eighteen years old. Unknown to me, you were in New York City where, motivated by selfless pure love for Lord Kṛṣṇa, you were manifesting the first elements of your International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness at a storefront temple on the Lower East Side, engaging whomever Kṛṣṇa brought into your sublime association. In late 1966 and in 1967, I passed through New York City a few times, even visiting Greenwich Village and the Lower East Side. But I did not encounter you or your fledgling followers. In 1969, in Berkeley, as I was running down Telegraph Avenue with a crowd of young people, chased by the police and National Guard, who had broken up a huge anti-war protest on the university campus. My eyes burning from tear gas, I saw and heard a chanting party of Hare Kṛṣṇa devotees, not really understanding who they were. Not long thereafter, I was sitting on a bench in a park in St. Petersburg, Florida, when I heard the same chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. A small party of your students were strolling along one of the streets bordering the park. A girl in a sari was walking through, approaching people, distributing your *Back to Godhead* magazine. She offered one to me. I refused it. At that time, I did not want to have anything to do with counterfeit spirituality. I felt these Western people were just faking it, putting on some Indian clothes and thinking that made them spiritual. But eventually, in 1973, I did get caught in the loving network you had spread across, first America, and then the world. I received a copy of your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* from your disciples at a Grateful Dead concert in upstate New York. I took it home, read it, and, following the invitation on the copyright page, wrote to the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust in Los Angeles. They sent me a catalog. I ordered more



books, a subscription to *Back To Godhead* magazine, some posters of Kṛṣṇa, and a subscription to your tape ministry. Hearing the sound of your strong voice, uncompromising yet compassionate, in your transmission of the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya, convinced me that your followers were not something counterfeit. Soon, I joined your temple in Washington, D.C., and eventually in 1976 you accepted me as your disciple.

The *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Adi* 7.35–37) says, “After accepting the *sannyāsa* order, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu attracted the attention of all those who had evaded Him, beginning with the logicians. Thus the students, infidels, fruitive workers and critics all came to surrender unto the lotus feet of the Lord. Lord Caitanya excused them all, and they merged into the ocean of devotional service, for no one can escape the unique loving network of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.”

In your purport to (*Cc. Adi* 7.37), you say: “As an ideal *ācārya*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu devised ways to capture all kinds of atheists and materialists. Every *ācārya* has a specific means of propagating his spiritual movement with the aim of bringing men to Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

Now that you have captured me, please do not let me go.

*Hoping to remain your servant eternally,*

Drutakarma Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances on to your lotus feet again and again.

Today is a very special day, your Vyāsa-pūjā day. A very special personality appeared on this earth to deliver mankind. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are glorious, but I don't know how to glorify you with my words.

You have all the good qualities in you which are hard to describe in my capacity.

You are a big author and wrote so many books at an advanced age to propagate Kṛṣṇa consciousness. You are affectionate and showed so much affection to us all.

You are compassionate to everyone. You are very kind, an ocean of mercy. You gave mercy to so many people and showed the *bhakti* path to get out of material entanglement and go back, back to Godhead.

Your heart is open for everyone with no discrimination. You accepted anyone and everyone as your disciple who was qualified.

You are great, great and great. You came with nothing in hand from India and did a wonder in the world. Amazing!

You are a pure devotee of Kṛṣṇa. That is why what happened, happened. Kṛṣṇa consciousness and your ISKCON are blooming all over the world. Because of your power of purity, it is happening.

Many obstacles came on your preaching path, but you faced them all and kept going on. You stayed strong and determined in your mission and became victorious.

You took your guru, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī's instructions to your heart and proceeded to preach in the Western world; not only the Western world, but all over the globe. You travelled around the globe 14 times to preach. Is it not very significant! A miracle happened on this earth. Kṛṣṇa consciousness spread all over the world. Lord Caitanya's *vāṅī* became true that Kṛṣṇa's name will be sung in

every town and village. It is happening.

You are a genuine guru, real guru, *jagat guru*. I can go on and on and on.

Until the sun, moon, and stars remain in the sky, your glories will remain, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Thank you so much Śrīla Prabhupāda for accepting me at your lotus feet, giving me so much mercy, and making us serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa.

Please make us serve you and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa always forever and ever, no matter what the circumstances may be.

*Your worthless servant,*

Ashalata Devi Dasi

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

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

Lord Caitanya describes 26 qualities of a Vaiṣṇava to Sanātana Goswami. I do not find anyone who I have ever met except you to have all of these qualities. I will describe them as I see them in you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I am so grateful to know you and because of your kindness even to know about these twenty-six qualities.

### **Kṛpālu – Merciful**

You are the most merciful who has given Kṛṣṇa to everyone all over the world. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the real well wisher of all.

### **Akṛta-Droha – Non-defiant**

You are the pillar of humility. You have always shown humility and you have taught us by example on how to be truly humble.

### **Satyasāra – Truthful**

You have always been truthful, providing bonafide knowledge “as-it-is”. You are always truthful in every circumstance.

### **Sama – Equal to everyone**

You are kind and compassionate to everyone, no matter the circumstance or background.

### **Nirdoṣa – Faultless**

You are a faultless personality and everything you did was done with perfection.

### **Vadānya – Magnanimous**

Noble of mind and spirit, generous in forgiving, unselfish, and gracious. Śrīla Prabhupāda, there is no one that fits this except you. You

were always kind and forgiving despite all of our shortcomings and faults.

### **Mṛdu – Mild**

You were always peaceful and treated all of us mildly. You were above all pleasure of senses.

### **Śuci – Clean**

You also taught us to be clean in every service we perform to Kṛṣṇa. You taught us that cleanliness is next to godliness.

### **Akiñcana – Without material possessions**

You not only showed us by your example but told us that our goal is to use our material possessions in service of Kṛṣṇa.

### **Sarvopakāra – Charitable**

You showed us the real welfare work for the benefit of everyone and to make everyone a servant of Kṛṣṇa.

### **Śānta – Peaceful**

You are the most peaceful, and we could feel that tranquility when around your *vapu* and *vāñī*.

### **Śaraṇa – Surrendered to Kṛṣṇa completely**

You wanted everyone to surrender to Kṛṣṇa with *bhakti* without any reservation. You have done this all over the world with so many devotees and temples.

### **Akāma – Desireless**

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had no other desire except serving Kṛṣṇa and taking us back to Godhead, to Kṛṣṇa.

### **Anīha – Indifferent to material acquisitions**

You were always satisfied with what you had. Any acquisitions you received were used for service of Kṛṣṇa and not for your personal enjoyment.

### **Sthira – Fixed**

You are fixed in the Absolute Truth. You were always thinking how to make everyone fixed in Kṛṣṇa's service. No matter how difficult

the circumstances were, you never lost hope.

### **Vijita Ṣaḍ Guṇa – Complete control of six bad qualities**

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you had no bad qualities. What to speak of lust, anger, greed, illusion, madness, and envy. You not only had control, but you had no bad qualities and only good in you.

### **Mita Bhuk – Eats as much as required**

You not only told us how to control our senses, but you also told us how to control our eating. Śrīla Prabhupāda, your famous saying to us was, “eat sumptuously, but not too much.”

### **Apramatta – Without inebriation**

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your great quality is to not act on the demands of the senses and to stop the cycle of birth and death. You led by example, and we all followed.

### **Mānada – Respectful**

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you offered respect to others. You also told us how to be respectful to all living entities. You even taught us to call other devotees “Prabhu.”

### **Amānī – Without false prestige**

Śrīla Prabhupāda, despite your highest position in ISKCON and *Jagat-guru*, you are without any false prestige of wealth or position.

### **Gambhīra – Grave**

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were grave because you were always thinking of Kṛṣṇa and how to serve Him. Please keep your mercy and blessings on me so I can even have a glimpse of Kṛṣṇa and His service.

### **Karuṇa – Compassionate**

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I do not know anyone more compassionate than you. You have taken the most fallen souls under your shelter in order to take all of us back to Kṛṣṇa.

### **Maitra – Friend**

You always wrote “your ever well wisher”. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you were the most generous friend and well wisher of everyone. You have given all of us the gift of Kṛṣṇa through your association, books and instructions.

### **Kavi – Poet**

Every *śloka*, every *bhajan* and every *kīrtana* coming from your lotus mouth was poetic. It was always the sweetest of sweet.

### **Dakṣa – Expert**

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the most perfect expert Vaiṣṇava. From teaching, singing and writing books to playing musical instruments, cooking and Deity worship, you did everything with expertise and perfection.

### **Maunī – Silent**

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you spoke only where speech was important and always about Kṛṣṇa. You taught us to never speak nonsense and to always speak glories of Kṛṣṇa. You told us that “we can speak Kṛṣṇa consciousness all day long.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am only yours and you are my guru forever. You are my shelter and saviour. I am nothing without you and your mercy and blessings. Please continue to keep me in your shelter. Thank you for being an exemplary Vaiṣṇava and allowing me to witness first-hand these 26 qualities.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Subhaviḷasa Das

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

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

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this auspicious occasion of your Vyāsa-pūjā, I come before you asking that you help me to understand how to strengthen my resolve to serve you, since you have taught us that it is only through your mercy that we can gain the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, the ultimate sacrifice of all our endeavors.

As a youth, you thanked us young boys and girls for helping you to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness around the world. Many of us willingly gave up the material dreams that our parents had for our success in this world, for a life of surrender, and *bhakti*.

I remember that on joining the temple in Toronto, I gave every penny that I had saved to your mission, asking only that I could purchase a one-way ticket to Chicago to see Your Holiness for the first time.

Even though I was just a teenager, I was convinced that real education started by understanding who we are as spirit soul, '*Aham Brahmasmi*', what is our real purpose in this life, and when we die where do we go? How do we understand our real nature?

Now in this older body, I praise your endurance, and your stamina for bringing this joyful way of life to the many around the world, who are happy in their bliss of ignorance. Chewing the chewed, surrounding themselves with so many *anarthas* or unwanted things.

Being on your team is a glorious thing, as you have armed us with the torchlight of knowledge, which we sharpen every day with the *mahā-mantra* and study of your books.



But alas, even though you have given all of these gifts, I still remain the most fallen.

Seeing so many of my godbrothers and sisters leaving their bodies, I remain a slave to *māyā*, only wishing that by some divine intervention you would once again glance my way, remembering the one who fanned you, walked behind in your footsteps, recorded your every word, as you lectured us at New Remuṇā Dhāma, fought for your remnants, the *mahā, mahā prasādam* you left on your plate.

Your ultimate teaching to us was, ‘don’t think this will not happen to you’ as you lay on your bed in Vṛndāvana, surrounded by your sobbing disciples, giving your last class.

Kali-yuga is progressing, sinful activities are rampant throughout the world, the four legs of *Dharma* – austerity, cleanliness, mercy and truthfulness are being attacked and weakened every day. As we sing in your *Guru Pūjā*:

*jāhāra prasāde bhāi, e bhava toriyā jāi, kṛṣṇa-prāpti hoy jāhā ha’te*

“By his grace one can cross the ocean of material suffering, and obtain the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.”

So, I have faith that by strictly following the program you have given us, we can rise above all the illusion (*māyā*) of this world. By sticking close to your lotus feet, we can again join you one day in that spiritual abode, free of all the attachments that presently bind us in this ocean of misery.

I look forward to that day.

*Your servant,*  
Ugresa Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my attempted humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

You once said, referring to Americans, “six foot tall, six foot puffed up”. Humility isn’t a natural trait for those of us born in America. In your presence, Śrīla Prabhupāda, that can change. Seeing you through your instructions and many of your disciples and granddisciples I’m humbled. I’m 65 years old now and don’t have much time left in this body. Please allow me into your association again. You did this once, so please do it again. I joined your movement only 2½ years before you left our vision. As an immature spiritual lad I didn’t cry. Now I privately cry. I miss you more now Śrīla Prabhupāda. Yes, you are there in your books, recordings, etc., etc. BUT you are also there in your *vapu*. I yearn for your personal guidance. You have done everything for me. I have a spiritually uplifting lifestyle with a daily *maṅgala āraṭi* and a class from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that you gave us. I have friends from devotees you made. I sing and hear *kīrtana* you taught us to relish. I have a rural lifestyle you encouraged us to imbibe. I put on the clothes you taught us to wear, I have the hairstyle you encouraged us to exhibit. All these things came from you which helps me remember you and Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is there for me when I want Him, thanks to you Śrīla Prabhupāda. Everything I have now and in the future that has any substance is because you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, entered into my life. I am simply running after you loudly singing KṚṢṆA!!! KṚṢṆA!!!

Your servant,

Sauri Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances. All glories to your beloved ISKCON New York and to Their Merciful Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda and Rādhā Kṛṣṇa.

Due to a poor fund of knowledge I cannot find the proper words that would adequately express my gratitude and indebtedness to you for saving and engaging a foolish rascal like myself. It seems like yesterday that I was standing before you in your Vṛndāvana Samādhi Mandir, as I had for many years, and mechanically mouthed the same refrain I had been repeating daily before beginning my *japa*; “My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, please engage me as you like in whatever capacity you desire”. Little did I know how you were about to test me in that regard. The phone, in silent mode, vibrated anxiously in my pocket. The caller identity indicated that it was my godbrother, your dear disciple, Guru Gaurāṅga Prabhu. I offered my obeisances and without hesitation, he said: “The GBC would like you to go to New York and assist in the recovery of the Brooklyn Temple”. Unexpected would be an understatement. My mind immediately began to conjure excuses; “I already have my service.” I was to look after the maintenance of your sacred Samādhi with your dear disciple Parvatī devi dasi and to continue the legacy of my friend and godbrother, your dear departed disciple, Kūrma Rūpa Prabhu. I was right where “I” wanted to be. In Vṛndāvana and in your association daily. “I” wanted nothing else. At that moment, by Your Divine Grace, I realized that it was not what “I” wanted that mattered. You were giving me a chance to serve you, as I had prayed, and as you had done in the past, according to your desire. You had answered my prayer despite, or in spite of, its mechanical nature; “please engage me, as you like, in whatever capacity you desire...” Therefore what else could I say, or do without disappointing you? Looking back at that moment, with 20/20 hindsight, I realize how merciful you are, continuing to guide us, as long as we desire to remain engaged in your service.

It is especially a great privilege to be here in New York City, which you declared as your “most important project”, and where I first had the good fortune to meet Your Divine Grace and serve Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda, Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa and Chota Jagannātha, Baladeva and Subhadrā. I feel myself a completely undeserving recipient of your

causeless mercy and therefore, for what it is worth, I have firmly resolved, with all my remaining vitality, to do the needful for you with regard to your New York project, regardless of any obstacles and impediments. You have many qualified, sincere and dedicated disciples who are tirelessly carrying out your wishes all over the world. I pray to compliment their service, to the best of my ability, and to continue to serve you in “whatever capacity you desire”.

In the service of Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda.

*Your insignificant disciple,*

Hansarupa Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

Thank you for appearing in this world and for mercifully coming to the Western countries with your great vision of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness inspired by your spiritual master. In your *Prayer to the Lotus Feet of Kṛṣṇa*, you say that Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* will spread in the Western world by the strong desire of Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. You are the one who served ceaselessly to fulfill that desire of your spiritual master and are fully deserving of that credit.

One time, sitting up in a hospital bed in the early days in New York, you said, "I do not know Kṛṣṇa. I only know my Guru Mahārāja." Your Guru Mahārāja noted how you knew him when he was pleased by and shared with many your words: "Absolute is sentient thou has proved, impersonal calamity thou has removed." Another time, in Paris, you said that there was never a time when you forgot Kṛṣṇa. Thank you for sharing how you were attached to your spiritual master and always remembering Kṛṣṇa. You teach by example as our Founder-Ācārya.

As the bold yet humble leader of the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement you taught in very personal ways, by chanting, speaking, cooking, singing, writing, guiding, nurturing, empowering, correcting, and loving your followers. Your multi-faceted personality and tremendous talents "a devotee is always very expert in dealing", backed by your powerful preaching and writings brought many good souls to your lotus feet. Thus you have grown a thriving branch of the Caitanya tree blossoming with devotees in disciplic succession.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, there are many devotees who serve you without reservation. I pray to follow in their footsteps in serving you that way, too.

*Your dependent servant,*

Haridasa Dasa

## Rasesvari Devi Dasi

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My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Every day for almost half a century you have been by my side. Not always appreciated. Not always wanted. Sometimes cherished, worshiped and thanked. Always steady!

My sincere apologies for the days when I have taken you for granted, ignored what I know to be right and followed my own path, sometimes in contradiction of your instructions.

Like the loving father you are, you have allowed me to make mistakes, allowed me to learn a lesson from them and then guided and supported me back to the path of *bhakti*. A well timed lecture or verse always seems to appear when most needed.

I am truly grateful for your instruction, your guidance, your understanding and your love.

I pray that one day I might awake, and understanding your purpose make an effort to play my part in full. Until then, I humbly pray to remain in the association of your exalted devotees whom I am privileged to call my sisters.

*Your fallen daughter,*

Rasesvari Devi Dasi

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble *danḍavats* to your divine and soft lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace! All glories to your transcendental body – ISKCON!

You orchestrate all the affairs of the demigods. In your purport to SB 10.1.56, you wrote, “The spiritual master is glorified as *sarva-devamayo guruḥ* (Bhāg. 11.17.27)<sup>1</sup>. By the grace of the guru, the spiritual master, one can understand the different kinds of *devas*.”

Thus, I thank you for arranging this second lockdown. Your mercy is allowing us to dive more and more deeply into hearing and chanting, as our service to managing and lecturing for your ISKCON has been greatly reduced.

For those who may think I exaggerate, Your Guru Mahārāja, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, during his final days, spoke of the guru’s vision of seeing his guru everywhere:

It is my Gurudeva who is graciously present in all these different forms. If he is not graciously present in all these different forms then who would preserve me? Those whom my Gurudeva has made his own are my saviors. The order of the gurus who have in their nature the protecting power of the Divinity, are always present in different forms and figures to bestow their mercy on me. All of them are specific manifestations of Śrī Guru who confers spiritual knowledge. The transcendental reflections, which are also of the nature of supporters, are the worship of the Divinity, which appear in the different planes of cognitive existences – they are all my Gurudeva in his different forms. He, who is constantly showing us how to serve Godhead throughout life, is no other than our Śrī Gurudeva. Śrī

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<sup>1</sup> “One should know the *ācārya* as Myself and never disrespect him in any way. One should not envy him, thinking him an ordinary man, for he is the sum total of all the demigods.”

Gurudeva is present in every object as the supporting principle. He is graciously present in every object.

In 1976, during the Vṛndāvana part of the Mayapur-Vṛndāvana festival, I was staying in Fogal ashram with the Mauritian yatra devotees and we were all sorely stricken with chronic dysentery from drinking the well water there. The day you came to Vṛndāvana, I struggled out of my sleeping bag, showered, dressed in clean cloth and then slowly walked to Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Kṛṣṇa Balarāma temple to hear you give the morning *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class. My first impression of you when I arrived, while you were singing *Jaya Rādhā Mādhava*, was of being totally astonished to see your intense love and devotion while you sang. I remember thinking to myself that I have read about so many saints, but here's a living saint. How fortunate I was to come into contact, to be able to see and hear a living saint! I thought, if one can achieve such a blissful state of love of God, then all the miseries and sufferings of life are worthwhile. I sat in *siddhāsana* and looked at you intently and was astonished to see the reactions of your singing on the environment, how the sun would come out from behind the clouds, the birds would sing joyously, and even the walls became alive with ecstasy by the power of your love saturated transcendental vibration. Then, during your lecture, while you explained the unpleasantness of life in Kali-yuga and blasted us for being such nonsense rascals, the birds would fly out of the temple in apprehension, the clouds would hide the sun and even the walls would cringe. I thought, here's a perfected self-realized soul – *sarva-devamayo guruḥ*. I am so very much pleased – at last I have found a perfect guru! From that moment on my dysentery disappeared!

My second audience of your lotus self was in your house in Vṛndāvana, sitting right in front of your lotus feet during a 5pm *darśana*. I was astounded to see you as my eternal grandmother. How is this, I thought, but that transcendental to time recognition persisted, and I started crying. You were conversing with an Indian gentleman and you paused and looked deeply into my soul. So many of us, from amongst your disciples, experienced your omniscience as you looked deeply into us – seemingly oblivious to the blackness of our hearts and past sins. You did not differentiate between us, whether we were low born or aristocratic, male or female and pink, yellow or brown. You did not care about our being so fallen, knowing that we are originally pure spirit souls and eternal servants of Kṛṣṇa. You



were totally confident that you could again purify us by having us follow the path and teachings of Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga. On *Rāma-navamī* a week or so later, you kindly granted me my first initiation and spiritual name.

By your kind mercy I find that even the miseries and maladies of growing old are simply another great impetus for continuing this liberating process more seriously.

Thank you for your infinite mercy on this foolish disciple.

*I beg to remain, your servant,*

Arjuna Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On the auspicious occasion of the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of your glorious and merciful appearance in this world of suffering, kindly accept my humble offering.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have given me everything I have of value, and I will forever be indebted to you. All I can offer you in return is my continuing little endeavours to pass on to others whatever I can of what I have received from you. I know that this will please you more than anything else, because you dedicated your life to spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness and you wanted us to do the same, as much as possible, by following in your footsteps. You also wanted us to use our God-given intelligence to think of new ways and means to present Kṛṣṇa consciousness to Western society. I am trying to follow this instruction of yours to come up with ways of presenting spiritual knowledge to educated people in a non-sectarian way that they can relate to, free from the traditional cultural packaging. If we can somehow decouple the spiritual science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, as you called it, from Indian cultural trappings, for the purpose of presenting spiritual knowledge to non-Hindus, the freedom and the possibilities will be unlimited and very exciting. Śrīla Prabhupāda, please kindly bless me and empower me to assist you in some way with your mission to deliver the Western countries from impersonalism and voidism.

*Your eternal servant and daughter,*

Jagannathesvari Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your glorious lotus feet. All glories to you and to your divine *paramparā*.

Prabhupāda, I have no qualification at all to even speak your glories. You told us that Lord Caitanya has come for the most fallen, and I know I am one of them. As Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has written, “Your mercy is all that I am made of.” This is certainly true, dear Prabhupāda – I am a walking, talking example of your causeless mercy.

I see that when I attempt to do my *sādhana*, I am full of *anarthas* which block my connection with Śrī Nāma Prabhu. So, now, even after 46 years of practising, I am more than ever reliant on your mercy. My prayer is that you won’t kick me away, that you will continue to bestow your causeless mercy on me and that you will bless me with steadiness and even with a taste for the holy name.

Śrīla Rūpa Goswami has said that we should be confident that we WILL reach the goal, enthusiastic while practising the process, and patient. Again, Śrīla Prabhupāda, it is all by your mercy.

Please let me always remain your servant, and the servant of your servants, birth after birth.

*Your fallen but very grateful disciple,*

Jagatam Dasi

Beloved Master Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I bow my head and submit this offering at your feet. Offering respect and obeisances I thank you for accepting me as your disciple. I do not know what good deeds I may have done to receive such mercy because you have saved me from a dubious existence. I apologize for not strictly adhering to the devotional principles I learned in my youth and ask forgiveness for the many sins I have committed knowingly and unknowingly. If you may please bless me that I like you may be fearless when it is my time to leave this body. You are still my Lord and Master and I love you.

*Hare Kṛṣṇa.*

Abhilasa Dasa

My dear spiritual master, Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

I am reflecting on the journey that you are taking me on. I was in the position of being totally confused about the nature of existence and you have brought me to understand that these material bodies are received as terms of imprisonment for our past karma. They have nothing to do with our real selves as we are spirit souls temporarily inhabiting material bodies. You've told me that Kṛṣṇa is God, and we are His servants. You are a pure devotee helping us separate spirit from matter. You are teaching us pure *bhakti*. Our Vaiṣṇava philosophy teaches us that if you please your spiritual master then Kṛṣṇa is also pleased. My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda you are trying to deliver us spirit souls from the two types of entanglement: subtle and gross.

You are our preeminent guru of ISKCON. We have a personal relationship with you through your books, chanting and inspiration. Your *vapu* was an inspiration, but your *vāṇī* is the real thing. Your heart is as soft as a lotus petal. You taught us how *bhakti* dissolves the subtle body of the living entity without separate effort just as fire in the belly digests all that we eat.

A couple of years ago I went to Ujjain for treatment and could see how you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, had revitalized the understanding of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa in so many, many places in India. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you could understand the message of your spiritual master that if the message of Lord Caitanya could be taken to the West successfully, then India would follow. How ecstatic that this sublime peace formula is now flooding the world!!

I want to thank you so much Śrīla Prabhupāda, you have made the unbelievable, believable – the impossible, possible.

You would stay up every night translating the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* for the benefit of mankind. You made a miracle in our lives. We owe you everything. We can't repay you. You taught us that the spirit of engaging everything in Kṛṣṇa's service is *yukta vairāgya*. This is what Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Mahārāja wanted to teach the world and you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, were his emissary, the one designated as

his agent to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness around the world. You took the order as your heart and soul.

I have no special talent, but I am passionately curious. I am setting up my world according to your desires. Most living entities want peace, and you showed us how *ḥarināma* makes the devotees peaceful within themselves.

I remember in 1977, at Gaura Pūrṇimā in Mayapur, the ladies were able to have *darśana* with you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. We lined up outside the door to your room. Two ladies were able to get your *darśana* for two minutes at a time. Before I left for Mayapur from Australia I asked a friend what I could personally take as a gift for you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. She said, “full cream powdered milk.” I was startled because in Australia it is such a common commodity. I bought a tin of it along anyway. In those days every Australian devotee would bring you 2 kg of ghee each, and I also brought the tin of full cream powdered milk. I was so embarrassed to give it to you. I was thinking – this is such a common thing for us – how can I give this to my spiritual master? I thought you were going to say – this is so far from milk, etc. But when you saw the banged up tin of milk your eyes lit up and you said to your servant, “Make all my milk sweets out of this”. Then you talked for 30 minutes on cow protection and the incredible value of milk.

I felt that the reason I was born was to please you, my spiritual master, like this. You explained that if you have land and cows, you can become free from sin and be attracted to devotional service. Otherwise you go to the city and work in a factory instead of adopting a nonviolent way of life by agriculture and cow protection. You explained that this will control the mind and senses. And you went on to explain that a person who is not austere is not attracted to the charming form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, we need you to help us with our *bhakti* by talking to us within our hearts to nurture the *bhakti latā bīja*.

We nearly all came from the counterculture, and we were on a revolution against material culture, and you showed us the correct path to travel. You taught us the real revolution is within our hearts.

You blessed us so that we wanted to reach out to the fallen souls in a compassionate way. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you opened Vedic culture to the modern world. You are the real hero.

*Your insignificant servant,*

Atitaguna Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you.

Thank you for saving me. I have no idea how I was able to leave my old life to come to your shelter. It seemed quite natural at the time, but, looking back, I'm amazed. Surely it didn't happen because of any qualification of my own, but only by your mercy, coming through your devotees. As Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says:

*ki jāni ki bale, tomāra dhāmete,  
hoinu śaraṇāgata  
tumi doyā-moy, patita-pāvana,  
patita-tāraṇe rata*

“How has one such as I come to Your shelter? Surely it is by Your mercy alone, for You are ever seeking the purification and deliverance of the fallen souls.”

I didn't even know you, and yet you were thinking of my welfare. How can I possibly reciprocate? As, you've said, it's only by sharing my own good fortune with others. I pray to be able to spend the rest of my days in that way.

Thank you for the priceless opportunity to chant the holy name and to engage in the service of the *Saṅkīrtana* movement. Thank you for your books and the opportunities I have to repeat your words. My only shelter is your books, lectures and faithful devotees. I'm so grateful to your followers who have taken shelter of your instructions and are enthusiastically engaged in distributing your message throughout the world. I pray I can be of some service to them, to you and your mission. Please purify my heart and free me from envy and lethargy. Please give me the intelligence how to serve you to the best of my capacity.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Bada Haridas

## Damayanti Devi Dasi

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Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, thank you for guiding us this past year from within, as we learned how to adjust our lives while this mad virus rages through the world. It has been a year of compassionate lessons every day.

The Devotee Care teams are being trained and forming nicely around the world, and we pray that you continue to show us “what to do and what to leave undone” and how to really listen and care for one another unconditionally.

The last stage of *vānaprastha* service has become sweeter and sweeter with each passing day, knowing we are “one day closer” to departing to where Lord Kṛṣṇa desires. Together we close our eyes and pray to be relieved of all our sorrows as we try to “dance under Lord Kṛṣṇa’s shower of forgiveness.”

The internet Zoom classes and Mayapur TV, daily *darśanas* and Kṛṣṇa *kīrtanas* have kept us enlivened and loved.

As Spring has arrived here in Canada, garden planting is foremost on our minds as we strategically plan new ways to distribute your sacred books, *prasādam* and the holy names, staying mindfully safe with unflinching faith in your protection.

Keeping you in constant remembrance as gratitude turns into loving joy.

*With love, trust and understanding,  
Hare Kṛṣṇa.*

Damayanti Devi Dasi  
Victoria, B.C., Canada



Dearest Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda,

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

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

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your transcendental lotus feet, which traversed this troubled planet at a time when everyone was forgetful of Kṛṣṇa, spreading your precious love for your most beloved Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and planting the *bhakti-latā-bīja* in the hearts of your devotees. This granted us all a tiny glimpse of the nectar of the holy names, instilling in us the desire to do something to please you and your blessed Lord Kṛṣṇa. I wish to continually rededicate my life to your service, and pray that you may be pleased by my tiny insignificant efforts.

You manifested miracles in every place you touched and every heart you glanced upon. We had never known anything or anyone like you. The world had never seen your pure devotion to Kṛṣṇa before. You thundered a storm of love of Godhead across the globe, sparking a conflagration of desire to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead in every town and village. Kṛṣṇa became a household word in countries all over the globe, where no one had heard of Him before.

This material world is fraught with dangers and difficulties, and we are still mourning over the loss of your personal presence, like lost children, orphans. But you have so kindly left us your *vāñī* in so many forms. I pray to know your presence in every word of your books and lectures and tapes and letters.

I pray that this treasure trove that you brought from the spiritual world be preserved intact for all the world. I pray to dovetail all my thoughts and actions in your service. I pray for the opportunity to humbly be of service to your beloved servants in any way possible. I pray to understand your desires and instructions, that I may execute your will to the best of my ability. I pray to always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Kṛṣṇa. I pray to always remember your teachings and instructions in every moment. I pray for the understanding to serve your mission to my best ability.

There is nothing but your service to be had in all the three worlds. There is nothing more to exist for or aspire to.

I beg to remain your humble servant without cessation, without reservations, unconditionally and eternally.

*Your lowly, fallen servant,*

Madhavi Devi Dasi

My dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

You had mentioned on several occasions that a societal collapse and/or nuclear war were inevitable and would come in due course. Nowadays things are so stretched that your prophecy could occur at any time. Already wholesale man-made viruses are killing millions, including even your disciples.

By some stroke of good fortune many souls were, and continue to be, touched to different degrees by your truly wonderful association coming in many forms and especially in your books. We heard even Walmart are selling your busts in their stores now.

We have been noticing over the past years how more and more people are clapping and dancing as our *harināma* party chants by, and we look forward to the arrival of the “Golden Age” if we are still around. When the crunch does finally come you will already be manifested in so many people’s homes, and temples. Your mercy will shine forth and mitigate the extreme miseries that are likely to present. Your amazing presence can and will be experienced by the masses and your true glories will be sung as the “Golden Age” arises from the ruins.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you so tirelessly gave tremendous sacrifice for the benefit of all people, past, present and for ten thousand years to come. How glorious you are Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Please bless me with service and keep this wayward soul ever in your grip.

*Your menial servant,*

Mandapa Dasa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

These are dark and troubled times. The whole world has slipped into the shadows of ignorance. People are confused, bewildered, and very afraid for their life, family, and communities. The bodily conception of life again rears its ugly head. Racism and religious hatred fester around the world along with political unrest, economic collapse, and social chaos. And I could go on and on. This is the material world, the place of suffering, birth, death, disease, and old age.

However, in spite of all the doom and gloom, there is a positive side to our existence in the material world. His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda appeared as a ray of light and hope teaching the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, giving all of us a chance to be truly happy and to go home back to godhead, a place of eternal life full of knowledge and bliss, where there is no suffering. Godhead is light, nescience is darkness, where there is Godhead there is no nescience. This is the great message that Prabhupāda brought for the whole world to learn.

All glories to your lotus feet Śrīla Prabhupāda. I could never express in words my love and gratitude for everything that you have taught me about loving Kṛṣṇa. I know that in these times of madness to take shelter of your lotus feet and to stay fixed in my Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

*Your servant,*

Garuda Vahana Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

It has been twelve years since I started to look for all of my god-brothers and godsisters on a site called "Facebook." We managed to locate 874 of them, and invited them to come together to share their realizations, reflections and gratitude about you and for you.

I was initially inspired to do this because I was requested to write an offering for this book and this further inspired me to find others to tell them about this wonderful opportunity to glorify you in a united way. After contacting hundreds of your disciples I realized there was a big gap between your devotees in leadership positions and your rank and file devotees, many of them who have been former leaders in your society.

To bridge the gap, I tried to create a Ministry of Śrīla Prabhupāda's Disciples with the input of others, but it was not accepted by your GBC. It takes hundreds of gallons of blood to make even one devotee, so how precious your disciples are to you. I wanted to create an official department that could check in on the needs of your disciples since we are all in our 60s – 80s now, and many are isolated with no support, whereas others may be surrounded by thousands of assistants. If you want your disciples who may not have any to be supported, then please invoke some of your "Kṛṣṇa Magic" so that we can better serve and engage your treasured devotees in the best way possible during their final years. In a letter to Jayapatāka, Los Angeles, 17 April 1970, you wrote:

Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is based on complete fellow feeling and love, but there is a word *maryādā* which means respect which should always be offered to the spiritual master and elderly members.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your mood is always one of inclusion, not exclusion. You created a family mood for us so that we felt welcome to give class. How do we restore this happy loving mood when your movement is so huge and diverse now?

I recently started going out on *harināma* by myself, as I live far from devotees, with a book table of your books. Next time I will prepare some cookie *prasādam* because you said, "If you ever want to

make a friend, give them a cookie.” My godsister Sadhvī Devī Dāsī kindly sponsored some of your books for me to distribute. Your disciple Kavicandra Swami is the only person in the world that calls me every week without fail to share some inspiring Kṛṣṇa conscious reflections with me to keep me going in your service. He is a very kind soul. I am very fortunate to know him. He helps keep me connected to you. Your granddisciple Jīvanmukta Dāsa kindly sponsored me to record the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*, which I hope to spread through the airways, to every town and village.

As you stated to Rūpānuga Prabhu, Dec. 30, 1971:

I am very encouraged by the reports of the tremendous success of your TV and radio programs. As much as possible try to increase our preaching programs by using all the mass media which are available. We are modern day Vaiṣṇavas and we must preach vigorously using all the means available.

Lately I have been invited by your granddisciples to give classes in Pakistan. You will be very pleased to know that because of your pure desire, the Pakistan government extended financial support to sponsor and print 10,000 of your *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* in the Urdu and Sindhi languages. The devotees included in this milestone initiative are commended as the Maheswary Parivar and other devotees. May you and Lord Caitanya continue to bless the Government of Pakistan.

You are *tri kāla jñā*. You always see the writing on the wall, as to what is to come, and what we will have to endure. Thank you very much for giving us your words and the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* as our saving grace.

Your Divine Grace:

I can understand your concern about the deterioration of the civilization. Yes, the city will be more dangerous place as Kali-yuga advances. It will be very deteriorating. The modern civilization is so corrupt and as sinful activities are more and more committed, the people will be forced to face more troubles, by nature’s order. Our business, however, is simply to take shelter of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* and pray to the holy name to give us protection. We shall be unaffected by all that will happen. Kṛṣṇa will provide us with working facilities. Be assured of this, that the devotees will

be protected by the holy name. Others will have to suffer in the days that are coming. (Letter, Kurusrestha, 3 July 1973)

Śrīla Prabhupāda, these are very difficult times we are living in right now – more than I have ever seen before. A mass hysteria has been created over a virus that rascals are capitalizing on, and it is creating a great deal of fear, where some devotees are risking their lives to take unapproved and barely tested “vaccines”. It is having a divisive effect upon your communities of devotees who think more along the holistic lines of Your Divine Grace. I pray I can remain a servant to all of your followers in the best way possible. Please guide me. Please arrange for me to continue serving you, either in your physical presence or wherever you need me to go. Please help me increase my desire to increase the hearing and chanting of your wonderful books. I pray for your continued mercy to eternally be engaged in the service of your disciples and granddisciples.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Gaura Dasa

You are the center of all the universes. All worlds revolve around you.

You are the sun that has risen on the Eastern horizon.

You represent the strength and solid foundation of a thousand Himalayas.

You show the world what it means to be the living emblem and beacon of eternal mercy and gentleness for this fallen age.

You are the inner meaning of *Paramahansa*. Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Caitanya surface through your purity and presence.

You personalize and personify the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute. That fifth note is available through the words emanating from your divine lotus lips.

You are the spiritual world. Eternal love is exemplified through the sound of your divine revelations and guidance of simple living and high thinking.

You are the vehicle for entrance into the playful exchanges and loving reciprocations between Rādhārāṇī's parrots and their divine object of affection. Their love is seen through your eyes – your words have given us a glimpse of spiritual vision smeared with the ointment of Kṛṣṇa *prema*. With that rare gift you have forced open our darkened sight by spreading your causeless mercy.

You have the divine eyes Kṛṣṇa gave to Arjuna; this pristine vision is now available to us through your causeless mercy and divine instructions.

You have given us an opportunity to relish the spiritual world with all its unlimited avenues of bliss and eternal happiness.

You reflect Kṛṣṇa's sweet glances emanating from the spiritual world. The Lord's mercy is directed to you and passed on to all of us by the blessings you give to anyone who comes to the shelter of



your lotus feet.

You are the direct link with the loving intimate relationship of the divine couple. Śrī Śrī Rādhā Śyāmasundara is made available by your causeless mercy.

You are the vast ocean of the Lord's mercy. The Supreme Lord is bestowing unlimited nectar that is readily available through your words and sound vibration.

Your radiance is directly linked to the sparkle of Kṛṣṇa's flute and jeweled ornaments.

You are the decoration of spiritual love and mercy descending to us through the words emanating from your lotus lips.

You're the transparent via media, the antenna of reception, and the step-down transformer from the powerhouse of the high voltage coming down from the spiritual world; without you there is no connection.

You are the taste of the unlimited sweetness of the fruits, which are gathered from the spiritual world, which are first tasted by Śukadev and his green-feathered friends.

You are well known to all the fortunate souls who make a steady approach to *bhakti* through sincere love and service.

You are the pathway back home; the door opened by you is big enough for the whole world to return home back to godhead.

You have built a platform upon which all future approaches to the Supreme Personality of Godhead will be made possible.

You live in the hearts of all your disciples in this eternal present. You are the sound representation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's flute; you are the solid rock of spiritual life for all your countless thousands of disciples past, present and future.

You're forcing us to see Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in everything; especially in

each lotus flower that appears in this material realm.

You're the way, the direction and ultimate means to return home never to return to this material madness.

You have shown us that the Supreme Lord is lotus-like. His lotus lips, lotus eyes, His lotus fingernails – all of the Supreme Lord's features outshine a thousand moons. All of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is lotus-like. Therefore, let me offer my insignificant existence unto your divine service. Please allow me to be just a speck of dust that sits on the endless parade of lotus flowers that you offer to the Supreme Lord. I see that all your activities on this planet are meant as flower offerings unto the Supreme Lord. I humbly beg you to allow me some small place in your divine service unto the Supreme.

Through you the spiritual world is revealed. The sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute can be heard if we take the time to listen. The sound of His flute can charm the most violent demoniac force. The sweetness of His flute can melt any stone-cold heart. That sound vibration can cause every living entity to weep endless torrents of tears. Anyone who hears that sound will weep, including Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

The sound stemming from the lotus lips of the Supreme Lord evoke love tears of honey, which flow like a torrent rain of mercy. Those tears are affecting everything here in this entire material creation.

Śrīla Prabhupāda I offer my humble obeisances a million times over and over again at your divine lotus feet, the place where all spiritual qualities reside and are made available for those affected with the greed needed to receive that mercy.

I know the place where all mercy is available, where all forms of unlimited mercy come unrestricted, where all shelter and guidance originates. I know that place where I can find the peace required to exist in this material madness. Śrīla Prabhupāda I surrender to you and beg that you keep me as an insignificant speck of dust sitting in the cooling shade of your lotus feet.

You have bestowed this name Bhaktisiddhānta Dāsa on this shameless excuse for a human being; indicating that I should also sample the mercy coming from your spiritual master by engaging in his service by serving you. Please allow me the opportunity to render unto you some small service even though it may be totally insignificant and useless. Whatever little offering I can make to you

and through you to your spiritual master and the entire *paramparā* I know will go directly to the lotus feet of Rādhā Śyāmasundara. Please help me make that offering uncontaminated by all the faults I carry which anchor me in this material corruption.

I beg the opportunity to help in your divine mission to spread your words of love that will open lasting peace on this planet and throughout the entire creation.

I know this is all possible by the rising sun of your divine revelations. I pray sincerely that you please use me as an instrument in your service. Please allow me entrance into your world, amongst all of your disciples I have no place, but please let me stand in the back just hoping for a ray of kindness to open my darkened eyes covered by this impenetrable network of illusion and false desires.

Please overlook all my faults and shortcomings. I may be hopeless in all respects floating in this ocean of darkness, but I will always remain a beggar on your doorstep. Please give me the shade of your lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you are the sun, the moon, the pivotal point of all existence. You are the essence of gentleness, the epitome of greatness. You are the roar of unlimited oceans, primeval worlds past and future, yet you are the sound of silence.

Because your mercy is unlimited there is room for all to take your shelter, now and forever in the future, your words will live for the next 10,000 years. The golden age of Lord Caitanya's mercy is shining through you.

Because you are the transparent *via media* to the spiritual world, everyone in the perimeter of your vision is connected; no one can shake that understanding from my memory of those few days we all enjoyed in your divine association.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, may all your disciples help shed your golden light to the world? As living entities, we take birth, blossom under your guidance, and fade away. As a lotus flower appears, opens and returns to the necklace of love or garland of devotion embracing the Supreme Lord, let us be part of your offering of light emanation from each lotus flower that appears on this sea of darkness, through your causeless mercy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I thank you a million times over, again and again, I thank you with all my heart and soul for the causeless mercy who have shed on this world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda you are everything; everyone is crying when

they hear your sound vibration. Hearing your song, I can imagine the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa's flute. Everywhere drops of love coming from all the trees and creepers like tears of honey flooded this earth planet when Lord Caitanya walked through this material realm. When He came back to Vṛndāvana all the animals cried to see their darling Bāl Gopāl return. Oh my dear Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, please allow the sweetness of your flute to reach us all some day. I pray that your sound vibration will one day reach the ears of all living entities.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you come in a long line of perfected beings that carry this sweet sound of mercy that elevates from the lips of the Supreme Lord. Worlds may come and go, but the sound of the Supreme Lord's divine flute will carry on eternally. Let me never be attracted to the dim perverted reflections of pleasure this material world has available.

Please empower us all as instruments in your service, Śrīla Prabhupāda. As Rāmacandra gathered an army of monkeys, you gathered up an army of hippies. This flower power movement was formed especially to facilitate your preaching endeavor. We became purified monkeys or dogs of Your Divine Grace. Please let us never forget that without your causeless mercy, we are always dogs sitting on the lap of Māyā. Keep us next to your lotus feet, so that we never miss an opportunity to render some menial service.

*Your worthless servant,*

Bhaktisiddhānta Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your divine lotus feet.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you performed many wonderful and amazing activities to deliver all the fallen souls. In a purport to a verse in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (SB 1.5.16) you wrote:

The expert devotee also can discover novel ways and means to convert the non devotees in terms of particular time and circumstances. Devotional service is dynamic activity, and the expert devotees can find out competent means to inject it into the dull brains of the materialistic population. Such transcendental activities of the devotees for the service of the Lord can bring a new order of life to the foolish society of materialistic men. Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and his subsequent followers exhibited expert dexterity in this connection. By following the same method, one can bring the materialistic men of this age of quarrel into order for peaceful life and transcendental realization.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the great *Ācārya* and empowered devotee, who exhibited extraordinary and dynamic behavior in delivering all the fallen souls. You came to America on a boat since that was all that was available. You opened your first temple on the Lower East Side of New York City where the hippies and favorable young people were. You chanted under a tree in Tompkins Square Park and introduced people to the holy names. By so doing you attracted your first sincere followers. You continued your dynamic activities in San Francisco where many hippies and young people congregated. There was a Mantra Rock Concert where you enlightened many young people. You always found the right means to inject Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Travelling around the world many times, you opened many temples. In India you held many pandal programs, where tens of thousands of people attended. And, also started the glorious projects in Mayapur, Vṛndāvana and Bombay.

There was no end to your extraordinary activities. At the same time you produced so many transcendental literatures. These are just a few of your amazing accomplishments.

As far as your books are concerned, you have given us a storehouse of transcendental knowledge and happiness. Recently, after

hearing about the glories of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* during a talk on Bhadra Pūrṇimā, I started reading it again. What a wonderful treasure you have given us! I am appreciating it so much, and your wonderful purports as well. Thank you for this beautiful gift. I pray that I will never stop reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Not only can we read your books, we can distribute them to others. In that way we become purified, and help others on their path to transcendental realization.

You have given us everything we need to become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious. The holy names, your books, temples, and so much more. I pray that I may take full advantage of these, and help others as well. Please engage me in your dynamic divine mission to save all the fallen souls.

*Your servant,*

Cakri Dasa  
Dallas, Texas

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. You said once “better late than never.” If I was your surrendered disciple for so many years, then I could write you perhaps, a wonderful offering. But as you know, I have not been fully surrendered, far from it indeed. I am ashamed of this. But you have kindly kept me in the fold of your true devotees. And I still have hope that I can one day fully dedicate my life and soul to what pleases you the most, which is, the distribution of your transcendental literatures for the benefit of fall in humanity.

Since I am completely helpless and dependent upon your mercy, I humbly request you to please let me be an instrument of yours, to accomplish your mission. I have no qualification. Thank you for tolerating me for so many years, and I hope that one day I can repay you, and, thus become pleasing to you, instead of a pain in your side. All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda for fulfilling Lord Caitanya’s mission on this earth!

*Your lowly aspiring servant,*

Drumila Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Please accept my most humble obeisance at your lotus feet.

Somehow you have accepted me as your disciple. I am eternally full of gratitude for this mercy.

You are the perfect guide and master on how to exit this material existence. Your Divine Grace is mercy personified.

The spiritual master is the mercy representative of the Lord. Therefore, a person burning in the flames of material existence may receive the rains of mercy of the Lord through the transparent medium of the self-realized spiritual master. The spiritual master, by his words, can penetrate into the heart of the suffering person and inject knowledge transcendental, which alone can extinguish the fire of material existence. — SB 1.7.22

My luck, my joy, my fortune to have such a spiritual master. The mercy representative of the Merciful Lord, the Golden Dancer. May His Name always dance on my tongue into my heart, lifting this fallen soul to once again dance into eternal life of the God centered realm.

The spiritual master is considered to be the most able captain in that boat, and the information from the scriptures is the favorable wind for floating over the ocean of nescience. The human being who does not take advantage of all these facilities in this life is committing suicide. — SB 3.15.24, purport

O merciful captain, please continue to guide this fallen servant.

I am eternally thankful you have accepted this insignificant one.

*Your grateful servant,*

Nitya-trpta Devi Dasi



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Please accept my humble obeisances.

All glories to Your Divine Grace.

I want to tell you how very grateful I am to be connected to you, by your instructions, by your wonderful Bhaktivedanta purports that speak to me daily in such a personal way. Sometimes it makes me laugh, sometimes I'm filled with chagrin, how very much your words tell me just what I need to hear in the here and now.

I recently read one godbrother's complaint that most offerings to you these days are not philosophical but more anecdotal. I'm sorry to disappoint such persons, but can't we be forgiven, when addressing our father, our dearest friend, our intimate family member, not to always speak in the highest philosophy?

Naturally we are learning the philosophy. That's been going on since day one. Even after reading *Kṛṣṇa Book* for the first time, I knew that going to 'heaven' was a silly aspiration; we just wanted to be one of Kṛṣṇa's cowherd boyfriends, or serve Him in any capacity. Just to read your words, to give them out to others, to share this wonderful life of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

We are in the world but not of the world. Inconceivably, simultaneously, the same quality as God, but in a tiny capacity, only feeling really fulfilled when we engage our natural talents in serving Him.

Yesterday I happened to run into a godbrother in the grocery store. We were so happy to see one another – I told him whenever I see him, I remember that he'd said that when he chants *japa*, he feels as if he's talking to his best friend. He said he likes my classes, which he hears on the internet, because they are natural and spontaneous, yet filled with memorable verses and quotes. We concluded that our lives are unbelievably rich, blessed beyond comprehension, by all the hearing and chanting we've been able to take part in over the years. The rich devotional friendships, the festivals, visits to the holy *dhāmas*.

None of this, not one iota of our good fortune, would have been possible without you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. So thank you, thank you, and thank you again.

Life after life I hope to go on hearing your voice, reading your words, helping in some way to spread your movement, bringing people to Kṛṣṇa's feet. Please forgive my myriad shortcomings; help me to purify my wicked heart. I long to see you again!

*Your unworthy servant,*

Vegavati Devi Dasi

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to your lotus feet. All glories to your service to your beloved guru.

*Śrī-guru-vandana* by Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura so adequately describes the mood of the disciple towards one's spiritual master. After reciting these prayers for over 50 years now, the depth of gratitude is still lacking. The more I think I know the more I realize I don't know anything and that it is only by your mercy I am given the opportunity to learn.

Your books and teachings are the boat of mercy that can ferry me across this vast ocean of material existence. You are my eyes, your teachings help me hear real knowledge. I find myself in complete awe. I am part of a spiritual family that continues to grow and expand your love. I am so grateful to have the opportunity to participate in helping you serve your beloved spiritual master. I look forward to reading the offerings of your other disciples. It is such an inspiration. I pray that each breath I take deepens my love and gratitude for your shelter.

*Your eternal servant,*

Bhaja Govinda Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda

My obeisances to you and all your followers.

In 1977 I visited Vṛndāvana for the First International Conference on *Life Comes from Life* at the Kṛṣṇa Balarama Mandir. You were too ill to attend, so each evening you called in your five scientists (Swarupa Dāmodar, Jñāna, Mādhava, Sadāpūta and I) to give you our *saṅkīrtana* scores: what were the visiting scientists arguments and our counter arguments. You wanted to hear the details despite your declining health.

In your last few years with us the Bhaktivedanta Institute was a frequent topic on your mind and our first effort in Vṛndāvana was a success. Your disciples could hold their own ground and make cogent and convincing arguments based on the combination of science and philosophy (metaphysics).

Fast forward to 2021 and somehow I am the Director of the Bhaktivedanta Institute for Higher Studies, one of several BI efforts for your pleasure. We recently sponsored a follow up conference to the original *Life Comes from Life* and instead of five devotee scientists we had over fifty! We also had quite famous visiting scientists and the conference was by all criteria a success. A local prominent research physician commented to me that it was the best conference he ever attended. Truly your mercy.

Now our BI has a headquarters, the former mansion of the University of Florida President. We have BBT support, scholars on every continent taking an interest and many devotees engaged. We have several goals yet they all circle back to your original concept of demonstrating that *Life Comes from Life!*

I pray that we may please you and continue to increase the faith of the devotees, scientists and general population in the power of the *Bhāgavatam* to combine science and philosophy into a comprehensive explanation of matter, consciousness and divinity.

*Yours in service,*

Brahmatirtha Dasa  
Executive Director, BIHS

## ON THE AUSPICIOUS DAY OF YOUR APPEARANCE 2021

Your Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances to your lotus feet.

On this, your auspicious Appearance Day, I'm eternally grateful to you for accepting me as your disciple.

It goes without saying how low class and unqualified I am as your disciple. Nevertheless I've never given up on practicing my *sādhana* despite the numerous attacks on me by *māyā* and my personal shortcomings. Forgive me.

In July 1976, I was sitting in front of you as you gave your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class in the New York Temple. You stated that we are all here in the temple fulfilling our purpose of human life, serving Kṛṣṇa. Whereas the New Yorkers rushing to work in the skyscrapers have no Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore they are losing the purpose of their human life to be able to understand Bhakti yoga...love of God, Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness was only available to the human form of life. You further explained how despite the fact that the New Yorkers, while dressed in nice clothes and making big money, were not using their human form of life to cultivate God / Kṛṣṇa consciousness, so what is the difference between them and the animals? Nothing, therefore they are no better than two-legged animals in the human body!

I always deeply appreciated your no-holds-barred, strong and honest preaching, and I still do. I'm grateful that I took hold of your lotus feet when you were on the planet and you gave me Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the association of my godbrothers and sisters and devotees in your spiritual family, ISKCON.

Thank you from the bottom of my wretched fallen heart! I have a request, Śrīla Prabhupāda. In this year 2021, I'm gravely concerned about the safety of all devotees. Big *asuras* are taking the world into a very dark and dangerous place. They are creating dangerous viruses and shots. They use fear and lies to intimidate and close down our preaching and temples! They use fear and lies (as demons do).

I ask you for your blessings and guidance to all of your sincere followers in this very dark time in Kali-yuga.

You warned us of the coming of World War 3 and the collapse of the Kali-yuga Godless civilizations.

You asked us to establish hundreds of Varṇāśrama farm communities (as you wanted) to give shelter to your disciples and followers, so we know 50% of your work is not done yet, but it needs to be started now, ASAP, in earnest.

Please, please bless the leaders and your disciples and followers with the proper intelligence and conviction to pursue the Varṇāśrama farm communities in the West and elsewhere to give protection to your devotees. Now is the time we take your orders gravely, seriously as the false Godless civilization is falling apart right before our very eyes!

As I live in Russia, I ask for your continued blessings, protection and guidance to help and encourage your sincere followers here.

I also ask you to bless all the Russian devotees and pray to Kṛṣṇa to protect them in these hard and dangerous times.

Billions of thanks to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda is insufficient but that's what I give you today on your glorious and merciful appearance day in this material world, full of birth, death, disease and old age.

You and only you, dear Śrīla Prabhupāda have given us the ticket out of this terrible place, connecting to the Supreme Personality of Godhead with the *mahā-mantra*, chanting with devotees, devotional service to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Deity worship, your temples, Kṛṣṇa *prasādam* and your original perfect books.

Thank you.

*Your servant,*

Jaya Madhava Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Thank you for saving us, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

I cannot ever repay you for the great fortune you have given me. If I had not met your disciples and surrendered to your instructions I would have ended up as a worm in stool for my next birth. Now I am counting on you to have that back door key because as I advance I see how far I have to go, not how far I have come. How far I have come is simply due to your causeless mercy on me and the tens of thousands of other fortune *jīvas* you wanted to benedict with your years of unrelenting struggles to spread the holy name all over Bhārata Varṣa. How fortunate we all are. Unfathomable.

You woke me up for a brief second back in 1977. I still remember the moment. I was able to take your picture, and I got the shot. I remember standing in the Mayapur temple room, with my Honeywell Pentax, thinking, "They're gonna carry Śrīla Prabhupāda up the steps. If you go now and wait at the landing you will be able to get a good photo of Prabhupāda." So, I went and waited on the landing. I missed you dancing in the temple room, you had been sick and were not going to accompany the hundreds of devotees from the West who were moving onto Vṛndāvana that day. I heard the tumultuous cheering from the excited devotees. I heard you raised your hands and smiled and DANCED as you completed your circumambulation of the Deities, Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava.

I have been able to cherish your second glance upon me for so many years now. I take shelter of your loving compassionate glance upon me. You knew me and showed me that I also knew you as a close, dear friend. But I went back into forgetfulness in that split second, like older people who experience dementia. I am still asleep but you are relentless to wake me up. I am still here, trying to serve you, to please you, to remember how much I really love you and you really love me.

I am just so happy to be one of your "hippies turned happy." You really have given me true happiness in my heart. I was looking for a better life when I went to the Hare Kṛṣṇa temple in 1974. I really was fried with my life as a hippie. Thank you for saving all of us, Śrīla Prabhupāda. The sacrifices you took on to bring the holy name to the whole world are beyond imaginable! Who could have done what you have done? I can't wait to be woken up again and realize who

you are, how special to Lord Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī you are. Which wonderful devotee in Lord Caitanya's *līlā* you are. I can't wait. I only need to keep chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and make it to the death part of this material body I am encased in.

I am really grateful, Śrīla Prabhupāda. I am really developing genuine appreciation and love for you and I am so happy about that. That I can have real love for you. That I can understand how much you love me.

*Your humble disciple and servant,*

Mallika Devi Dasi



*guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete koribo aikya,  
ār nā korihō mane āśā*

My only wish is to have my consciousness purified by the words emanating from the lotus mouth of my spiritual master.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

My dear spiritual master, O venerable Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākura. Your *vāñī*, your words are written down in your books and recorded in “sound reflections” of your voice. I love to listen to your voice – pure *śabda brahman*. Not a day goes by without listening to your recorded lectures, conversations, morning walks, *bhajans*.

Recently I found a rare *śabda brahman* jewel, a lecture that you gave on October 20 1968 in Seattle, entitled, “On chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa Mantra”. It is only a ten-minute lecture, concise and highly philosophical. I was struck by your explanation of Śrī Kṛṣṇa being one and different from His energies. You gave the following brilliant analogy:

...The energies of Kṛṣṇa work wonderfully...just like this tape recorder. The electric energy is there. By the electric energy the tape recorder is so nicely working, so that when I speak, and my voice is replayed later, it is me who is speaking. It is I, with my personal energy, who is speaking, and the electric energy is helping. The machine’s energy is working and such a nice thing is produced...so energy is working. When this tape recording will play, it will reproduce exactly my voice. But still, that speaking is different from me. But my energy is there. There will be no change. There are two energies. When I speak, this is my real energy. And when the recording of my voice is heard, that is also my energy, but it is separated energy. Similarly this material energy is the separated energy of Kṛṣṇa – it is the reflection of the direct energy. Just like when this recording will be heard, it is a reflection of my direct speech. The material energy is a reflection of the original,

internal energy of Kṛṣṇa... — October 20, 1968, Seattle

In ten minutes you could say more than volumes of books on Vedic philosophy!

*Your faithful listener and ever-indebted servant,*

Jayagurudeva Dasa

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to you!!!

I fall at your lotus feet with great awe and reverence!

This 2021 has brought to the surface many *anarthas* to be purified. At the tender age of 65 I'm still a child in the field of self-realization.

The upbringing you gave me in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and the guidance you give me currently is my greatest fortune. Gratitude abounds in my heart for all your disciples' realizations populating the internet; they are my current *sādhu-saṅga*, and invaluable *sādhana* inspiration. As Rūpānugas, our path sprinkled with pearls of wisdom, create a propitious supportive atmosphere for our daily practice.

I pray to you this year for the realization of the self and for service to help disseminate the message of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya. Your pleasure is to see us becoming lovers of Kṛṣṇa. I want to be forever engaged in the service of your lotus feet, chanting the holy names with all my heart.

I'm blessed with healthy grandchildren and they are a source of great joy.

I have accepted this gṛhastha life for your pleasure, and I still do it for you.

But I can't hide the intense desire to do missionary work!

Please bless me with service to Lord Nityānanda's followers.

Serving your mission is my most fervent desire.

Please help me, Gurudeva,

You are my only hope!

*Your prema-greedy eternal servant,*

Jayagauri Devi Dasi

## Mitrasena Dasa

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

My teenage ambition was to repay you by becoming as dear to the world as you had been to us.

I assumed you would be happy with my aspiration, but I've found it to be unattainable after forty-five years of practice. I find no-one that can be quite like you.

I help people explore your books.

Where I live, the gold mines were abandoned long ago. Miners hoped to find a rich vein, but they always gave out.

When we read your books, we never come back empty handed. We always find something to carry home.

All I can do is bring people to your words.

Thank you for this.

*Your servant,*

Mitrasena Dasa

*rādhā-kṛṣṇa samārambhāṃ  
kṛṣṇa caitanya madhyamām |  
bhaktivedānta paryantām  
vande guru paramparām | |*

I offer my respects to that *guru parāmpara* which starts with Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa, with Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya in the middle and progresses to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Everyone knows you spread the message of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu all over the world. You were the first to take this knowledge and process to the masses in every country, city, town and village. Not only did you preach this message, but you introduced to the world all the bona fide Vaiṣṇava traditions or *sampradāyas*. You never claimed any personal praise for doing so. The glory for your achievements you humbly gave to the Supreme Lord and the previous *ācāryas* and Vaiṣṇavas before you. Keeping the Lord and His holy name central and expressing your own gratitude to Him and them, and even to your own followers, you sought no recognition for yourself. We have never seen such a teacher work so selflessly and tirelessly.

There is no way for us, or the generations who come after us, to repay this treasure that you have given us. We can only hope by repeating the message that we can somehow please you. Even though we are completely unworthy, we pray that you continue to shower your grace upon us. If one pleases you, then surely the Supreme Lord will also be pleased. By preaching the glories of the Lord similarly you become pleased. You spread the chanting of the Lord's holy name to every town and village fulfilling the prophecy and thus have given the world the chance to be easily saved in this Iron Age of Kali.

*śrī kṛṣṇa uvāca  
muktoā nāma sahasrantu nānyo dharmo'sti kañcana |  
kalau prāpte guḍākeśa satyam etan mayer itam | |*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa said: "O Arjuna, I am telling you the truth, in this Age of Kali, one who simply chants the thousand names of Lord Viṣṇu,

need not engage in any other religious activity.” —*Hari Bhakti Vilāsa*  
6.200

*pārvaṭy uvāca*  
*kenopāyena laḡhunā viṣṇor nāma sahasrakam |*  
*paṭhyate paṇḍitair nityaṃ śrotum icchāmy-aham prabho | |*

Pārvatī said: “What is that easy method by which the thousand names of Lord Viṣṇu are daily recited by learned men? I wish to hear this from you, O Lord Śiva.”

*īśvara uvāca*  
*śrī rāma rāma rāmeti rame rāme manorame |*  
*sahasra-nāma tat tulyaṃ rāma nāma varānane | |*

Lord Śiva said: [to his wife, Pārvatī] “O Varānanā (lovely-faced lady), I chant the holy name of Rāma, Rāma, Rāma and thus enjoy this beautiful sound. This holy name of Rāmacandra is equal to one thousand holy names of Lord Viṣṇu.”—*Bṛhad-viṣṇu-sahasranāma-stotra, Padma Purāṇa, Uttara-khaṇḍa* 72.334–335

(According to the Sanskrit Kaṭapayādi system of numerology, *rā* means 2 and *ma* means 5 so *rāma, rāma, rāma* is equal to  $(2 \times 5) \times (2 \times 5) \times (2 \times 5) = 1000$ .)

*dharany uvāca*  
*sahasra-nāmnāṇi puṇyānāṇi trir-āvṛṭṭyā tu yat phalam |*  
*ekāvṛṭṭyā tu kṛṣṇasya nāmaikam tat prayacchati | |*

Dharanī (The Goddess of the Earth) said: “The pious results derived from chanting the thousand holy names of Lord Viṣṇu three times can be attained by only one utterance of the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa.”—*Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, Upodghātapāda-khaṇḍa* 2.3.36.19

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

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

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

In the concluding words at the end of *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Śrīla Prabhupāda writes "...There are two ways of association – by *vāṇī* and by *vapu*. *Vāṇī* means words, and *vapu* means physical presence. Physical presence is sometimes appreciable and sometimes not, but *vāṇī* continues to exist eternally. Therefore we must take advantage of the *vāṇī*, not the physical presence. *Bhagavad-gītā*, for example, is the *vāṇī* of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Although Kṛṣṇa was personally present five thousand years ago and is no longer physically present from the materialistic point of view, *Bhagavad-gītā* continues.

A seed of devotional service may have been planted deep within me when listening to H.G. Yamunā Prabhu's rendering of "*Govindam ādi-puruṣam*..." in the summer of 1970 in Basel, Switzerland, at a friend's house. Did that take root when I read *TLC* in 1974, borrowed from a friend, in Leicester, UK – even though I didn't understand a word? Or did it sprout when I read the *Kṛṣṇa Book* on a ship, while sailing from Madras to Penang in 1975? The transformation I felt on reading the *Kṛṣṇa Book* that led me to finally surrender to full time devotional service in 1976 is indescribable.

I have never had any personal interactions with Śrīla Prabhupāda but only indirect ones, that are just as relishable!

There are three instances when I felt elated in having the great fortune to provide some service to His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda while he was visiting the UK in 1976/77. Mind you, we are all engaged in indirect service to Śrīla Prabhupāda's mission, always!

1976

During Śrīla Prabhupāda’s visit in 1976, when a devotee was bringing a plate of *mahā prasādam* from Śrīla Prabhupāda’s room, I grabbed at it and managed to get a slice of orange that Śrīla Prabhupāda had sucked on and honored it with such delight. I was thinking of the experience of Nārada Muni in his previous life taking remnants of *prasādam* from sages and thus purifying his life! I still consider that as being a spiritual prophylactic moment in my life!

1977

We were very despondent in 1977 when news reached us in the UK of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s failing health and a request to say a prayer after every service that went something like this, (if memory serves me right): “Dear Lord Kṛṣṇa! If you so desire please let Śrīla Prabhupāda live.” I’m paraphrasing.

Then, like a bolt from the blue, news arrived that Śrīla Prabhupāda had decided to visit the UK! This was so totally unexpected but still such overwhelmingly exciting news. Śrīla Prabhupāda is going to be with us during Janmāṣṭamī and Vyāsa-pūjā? Jaya! We surmised that Śrīla Prabhupāda was rewarding us, our *yātrā*, for the work of being world-class book distributors, under the capable and efficient management of H.G. Jayatīrtha Prabhu! We knew how much book distribution enlivened Śrīla Prabhupāda!

We were anxiously waiting at the airport not really knowing what to expect and then finally Śrīla Prabhupāda came within view, seated in a wheelchair, with sunglasses and hands clasped in the traditional greeting. Tears welled in our eyes as we strained to chant, “*Jaya Prabhupāda! Jaya Prabhupāda! Jaya Prabhupāda! Jaya Prabhupāda! Hare Kṛṣṇa! Hare Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa! Hare Hare Hare....*”

We were amazed at our good fortune that Śrīla Prabhupāda had chosen to come here and be with us, given the toll the travel must have taken on his ailing body! Then again we knew that Śrīla Prabhupāda was no ordinary person.

I heard that Śrīla Prabhupāda had told H.G. Jayatīrtha Prabhu that he decided to come to the UK to take shelter of his *tīrtha*! Or something of that nature.

Despite Śrīla Prabhupāda’s physical frailty, he was sharp and attentive, as evident on Vyāsa-pūjā day, when he sometimes corrected or added to H.H. Tamāl Kṛṣṇa Mahārāja’s eulogy of His Divine Grace. This was pertaining to details of preaching in the early years!



The temple room was *chokka* with devotees from all over Europe. The *kīrtanas* were out of this world. Any gesture from Śrīla Prabhupāda – like a flick of his finger or or a shake of his head – drowned us in waves of ecstasy as we jumped high and danced in ecstatic fervor.

I was given the task of cleaning Śrīla Prabhupāda’s bedroom. As soon as HDG exited his room in the morning I would enter the bedroom to clean and tidy. He would be carried on a specially constructed palanquin for *darśana* and to greet our Deities downstairs.

At every opportunity, I placed Śrīla Prabhupāda’s slippers on my head as a blessing. I knew I needed all the mercy I could get to sustain any semblance of being a practitioner of *Bhakti-yoga* and a worthy disciple. I hurriedly cleaned the room and made up his hardly ruffled bed, to rush downstairs in time to watch Śrīla Prabhupāda honour *caraṇāmṛta* and gaze at Śrī Śrī Rādhā Gokulānanda, only the way HDG could. While his gaze was fixed and intent, I couldn’t help but study Śrīla Prabhupāda’s face. He gave me the realization of the verse I had heard from the *Brahmā-saṁhitā*:

*premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena  
santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti  
yaṁ śyāmasundaram acintya-guṇa-svarūpaṁ  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who is Śyāmasundara, Kṛṣṇa Himself with inconceivable innumerable attributes, whom the pure devotees see in their heart of hearts with the eye of devotion tinged with the salve of love — BS 5.38

Only Śrīla Prabhupāda’s eyes exude such devotion that I have ever witnessed in anyone!

One morning while chanting *japa* after *maṅgala-ārati*, H.G. Vichy prabhu approached me and said: “Śrīla Prabhupāda needs grapes. Find grapes wherever you can get them from and don’t worry about any traffic violations. Take so and so (I can’t remember who) with you. Speeding away on the narrow roads from Letchmore Heath at 5.30 in the morning, I felt like Batman on a life-saving mission with my sidekick Robin! We did find grapes and returned feeling pleased with ourselves for the menial service we were able to provide our dear master, friend and guide.

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

I offer you my repeated obeisances.

By your mercy I am able to serve you, the pure devotee of the Lord. By service to you, Lord Kṛṣṇa becomes pleased and thus you become pleased. Then I become pleased that my spiritual master is pleased.

By some good fortune, many years ago, I was able to inquire within. What is the reason to be here? What should I do? What am I? Who am I?

Lord Kṛṣṇa, dwelling within my heart, responded by guiding me to your service.

And so, on your Vyāsa-pūjā, I bow my head to your lotus feet again and again. I thank you for coming and saving me from the entanglement of *māyā*.

For giving me an understanding of who and what I am.

For showing me the Supreme Lord and His associates.

Your compassion for the fallen souls such as me is fathomless.

Thank you for stepping on the Jaladuta and crossing the ocean, bringing Lord Caitanya and the holy names to the likes of me, floundering under Māyā's careful watch.

The world is being conquered by your masterful purports that have given so much enlightenment to millions.

The world is indebted to you – as am I.

*I remain your humble servant,*

Atmatma Das

Jaya Śrīla Prabhupāda, please accept my prostrated obeisances unto your divine lotus feet.

This year we are celebrating the 125<sup>th</sup> year since Śrīla Prabhupāda's birth. In 1896 he was born in Calcutta, India. Who could have known that at the ripe old age of 70 he would be preaching the message of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, with such conviction, in the USA and after establishing his ISKCON movement there, travelling throughout the world, planting the seeds for the emerging society as we know it today. Born in a different century, but bringing the timeless message of the Yuga-avatar, who foretold that the chanting of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa would be spread all around the world.

Despite so many challenges and inconveniences, you pushed forward with great determination, being fixed in your devotion to your beloved Kṛṣṇa and the desire to fulfil the instruction of your own spiritual master Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. Those early devotees who had the great fortune to serve your lotus feet and have your close association, were also enthused with this conviction and determination through seeing your wonderful qualities, compassion, genuine love and care for every living entity.

Not caring for your personal comforts, you not only established temples, preaching centres, farms and restaurants, but took the time to translate and write purports to so many important authentic Vedic literatures and empower your young inexperienced devotees to print, publish and distribute these books around the world.

These holy books which contain your Bhaktivedanta purports are the blueprint instructions for the future of humanity. They continue to inspire a new generation to make personal transformations in their lives. Nowhere can we ever find such depth of wisdom as in your Bhaktivedanta Purports. You expertly bring the conclusion, the essence of the Vedic literatures and make them available for generations to come. By carefully studying these literatures, by associating with other souls eager to delve into this wisdom and by sharing this with others, we can attempt to serve you in some small way. Kṛṣṇa says – one who says he is My devotee, he is not My devotee, but one who is a devotee of My devotee, he is My devotee.

The spiritual master is the representative of Kṛṣṇa, by serving the spiritual master with faith and love, our hearts can be purified and we can thus approach the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Śrī Caitanya

Mahāprabhu. This is such a wonderful gift you have so freely made available to the whole world. It is said that Caitanya and Nityānanda broke open the storehouse of love of God, plundered the treasures of this storehouse and made them available to the world.... You Śrīla Prabhupāda are the most confidential assistant of Gaura Nitāi, and our aspiration is to be a useful instrument in your hands to help to distribute this treasure to every town and village of the world.

Your vision for the world-wide society, your inspiration to the devotees, your loving care and deep compassion – may generations of devotees to come, continue to share this appreciation of you, *Jagat-guru*. As Founder-*Ācārya* of ISKCON within the Brahmā Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Sampradāya may your glories spread throughout the three worlds.

*Jagat-guru Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Śrīla Prabhupāda kī jai.*

*Your aspiring servant and disciple,*

Janaki Devi Dasi  
ISKCON Leicester, UK

At the moment of writing this tribute, there are almost a dozen devotees on the Swedish *yātrā*'s farm community exhibiting symptoms of infection, several of them having tested positive despite observing all precautions. Even Smita Kṛṣṇa Swami is afflicted. This tribulation is certainly not ordinary karma but rather a part of Lord Kṛṣṇa's unfathomable plan.

*tat te 'nukampāṁ su-samīkṣamāṇo  
bhujñāna evātma-kṛtaṁ vipākam  
hṛd-vāg-vapurahir vidadhan namas te  
jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk*

[Lord Brahmā prayed:] "My dear Lord, one who earnestly waits for You to bestow Your causeless mercy upon him, all the while patiently suffering the reactions of his past misdeeds and offering You respectful obeisances with his heart, words and body, is surely eligible for liberation, for it has become his rightful claim" — SB 10.14.8.

Our rightful claim is to become servants of our ISKCON Founder-*Ācārya* Śrīla Prabhupāda, and with renewed strength and determination spread his mission; the *yuga dharma* was propounded by Lord Caitanya that the chanting of the holy name of the Lord be heard in every town and village throughout the globe (*Caitanya-bhāgavata*, *Antya* 4.126, as often quoted by Śrīla Prabhupāda, such as in his purport to Cc. *Adi* 17.203).

It is our tribute this year to Śrīla Prabhupāda that, despite the circumstantial restrictions, we followers of His Divine Grace are virtually able to be in close contact by the daily recitation of BBT publications. We can thus humbly boast that within the last year our daily WhatsApp study-group has together read and discussed the entire *Bhakti Śāstri* syllabus, namely, *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrī Īsopaniṣad*, *Nectar of Devotion* and *Nectar of Instruction*. We are, moreover, studying the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* with Bhurijana Prabhu's *Unveiling His Lotus Feet* study guide. At this moment of writing, we this morning concluded Chapter 16 in Canto 1, "How Parikṣit Received the Age of Kali" and began Chapter 17, "Punishment and Reward of Kali".

My prayer is that I will always be able to remember Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions and recite them without difficulty.

Yogindra Dasa

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

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

While walking to school as a young boy I would often give thought to the purpose of life, what perfection and success might involve, and what may be required for their achievement. I came to accept that “going to heaven” was our ultimate goal (as was consistently impressed upon us at our Catholic primary school), and it seemed logical that – at the very least – one would need to become a priest or a nun to have any realistic chance of achieving that aim. If this was not the case then why would anyone choose such a life? I concluded, as a matter of inevitability, that I would also need to make that choice. However, suggesting, as it did, a certain bleakness of future my sentiments remained mixed in that regard. Not an easy choice to make. Still, the path of heaven held a compelling allure, calling to all that was good and noble in the human spirit.

Though distracted through my teenage years, by university I was again grappling with the issues of life and death, purpose and commitment. By now I was beginning to understand – from reading Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books – that “returning home, back to Godhead” was (generally speaking) the ultimate goal of life. Furthermore, that in the successful pursuit of this goal the status of a “pure devotee” seemed to be the minimum requirement.

As usual however the devil was in the detail. What *exactly* was a “pure devotee”, and how *exactly* does one go about becoming one? To what activity *particularly*, and in pursuit of what ideal *specifically*, should one become committed? Arriving at a rock solid conclusion in these regards is not as straightforward as might be assumed. Within the vast realm of spiritual endeavor, even within our own tradition, numerous options assail and beckon. Eager aspirants inspired by the charismatic, the assurance of quick success, the privilege of special access, can easily succumb to the many cults, fads, practices, personalities, places and objects being vehemently touted as the thing to have or do, the place to be, or the person to be with, etc. With so much on offer, so many possibilities and prospects,

confusion is common, deception rife, mistakes more likely than not.

For better or worse however, I quickly developed the conviction that short of somehow or other satisfying the desire of Śrīla Prabhupāda, the whole concept of perfection, either as a process or an outcome, amounted to nothing more than hubris or delusion. At least whatever my own spiritual possibilities might be, they simply did not – could not – extend beyond what was contingent upon serving and somehow satisfying Śrīla Prabhupāda. This conviction, and the course it has consequently dictated – apart from making my personal path very simple and clear – is the only treasure I possess. But its exponentially increasing value is so great I constantly thank all the powers-that-be for having somehow acquired it.

Now, as I reflect on those impulses first felt in childhood, I can clearly see how all those grand ideas of “going to heaven”, or “going back to Godhead”, or becoming a “pure devotee”, have found cheery resolve in the service of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Under the benign rule of such service my life – wonder upon wonder – has been rendered sane. And not just sane, but practical, viable, doable. I may even say – to the extent to which I can act in proper accord – meaningful! Śrīla Prabhupāda and his service now constitute my sole security, my confidence, my great good hope. As to whether such an adherence indeed constitutes the highest of possible gains, which – as a matter of deductive truth – I firmly believe, the point remains entirely moot. For regardless where all this may lead, I am not capable of understanding or aspiring to more than that.

This conviction, and the satisfaction and serenity it brings, remains as the only fruit of whatever grace I may have received in the course of my life. Within it however lies no feeble concession to inadequacy or weakness. Rather there exists the quiet and even prideful certitude of a rare thing, hard-won, and finally achieved. Within this experience the anxieties that first arose in me as a young boy have attained their final repose. And one day, were such to truly become “all that I am made of”, that day would surely see me full in all that perfection and success do truly comprise.

*Śrīla Prabhupāda's aspiring servant,*

Ātmārāma Dāsa

## Satyaraja Dasa

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Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

All glories to your divine lotus feet.

Another year has passed and it has been a very difficult year for all.

Thank you for everything you have given to society. I wish I had the intelligence to do something good for you. You came here to the West to bring us love of Godhead. Without your sacrifice our lives would be miserable and meaningless. How can I ever repay you?

My debt to you is eternal. Please give me the strength and intelligence to serve you.

*Your lowest servant,*

Satyaraja Dasa



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

You are “a good and intellectual man”, a term you coined to describe a Vaiṣṇava—someone who possesses all good qualities. You are also ‘expert’ in all matters.

You taught us how to be Vaiṣṇavas by your perfect example. You played the *mṛdaṅga*, *karatālas*, and harmonium. You slept and ate very little, your every gesture and movement was poetry in motion. You preached constantly either directly one on one in your room, or to thousands at a time, or indirectly to millions via your books to pride-filled scientists, arrogant philosophical intellectuals, conceited misguided religionists, the vanity-filled ultra-rich, and most powerful sense enjoyers, defeating all their false conceptions about material existence.

You are expert in all fields and departments of knowledge and possess an expansive ocean of transcendental qualities, and by your mercy I was fortunate at times to glimpse your divine nature.

Many decades ago as a chemist in Tennent Creek, I met Gary Hamilton a miner, and John Love a geologist, who had become fast friends and had worked together for decades. Their sole concern in life was locating precious metals and minerals that could make them materially wealthy. They found slate, marble, copper and gold deposits, then after surveying the area and proving them up, they then bought the rights to mine. Gary even found three gold fields on mountains that he quickly purchased and then entered into a joint venture with ‘Shell’ on two fields worth hundreds of millions keeping the third to himself.

Each weekend John and I travelled hundreds of kilometers searching the bush and hills for lost gold mines in Tennent Creek and the surrounds. He taught me the signs to look for while we followed long lost dried up creek beds panning for traces of gold to secure – the next source of riches to increase material happiness.

A lifetime later I look back on my Kṛṣṇa conscious career, and I feel much like the miner and geologist for I realise I too have been looking for great riches to secure happiness just like Gary and John. However, my search was not in underground mines full of dangers where cave-ins or snakes could take my life, but within my heart where more subtle and more powerful dangers existed. Perils such

as weakness of heart, lust, anger, and greed, befell the careless miner. To my good fortune I met your disciples who taught me to search for and excavate something more valuable than the precious gems John and Gary sought.

A comparison can easily be made that you are the greatest of all miners and geologists, and by your mercy and guidance Śrīla Prabhupāda, I have been most privileged to have received tuition and instruction in these sciences from you. You are indeed expert in all things. Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Your vast spiritual knowledge and realisation has enabled me to identify and follow a vein of the most precious of all gems, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*.

By your causeless mercy, the direction you gave has enabled me to avoid the loss of years under the burning hot punitive sun of material existence looking for happiness. The same loss of years that John and Gary foolishly accepted as payment in exchange for their comparatively insignificant success as they followed forgotten rivers and vacant mountain tracks. Instead without delay you took me straight to the source of the eternal fountainhead of all wealth, knowledge, and happiness, that most sublime Person, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa.

You immediately gave bliss and real happiness, not the false sense of happiness that John and Gary chased by exploiting and possessing more and more.

I didn't have to put down stakes to lay a claim and purchase a lease to extract golden happiness from a government that falsely appropriated the land from Kṛṣṇa, its original owner – God. No... you gave me the tools, the *mahā-mantra* and the process of devotional service and showed me where to dig. You revealed the safe path that preserved the riches I eagerly mined.

In contrast to the government, you never charged yearly license fees or taxed the profits from my mining efforts, but allowed me to keep the lease and ecstasy discovered.

Although at times I found myself staggering and reeling in the bliss discovered, you taught me never to go to a secret place and enjoy my new found wealth alone. You never said call this mine my own, but wanted me to open the mine up for everyone to enjoy. You were socially conscious and requested that I pass on the bliss of my mining to others to allow them to experience happiness in the mine of the heart. Yet instead of lessening my overall wealth, you knew that

by opening up such a floodgate even more ecstasy awaited the giver of such compassion.

Unlike big mining corporations who leave devastation behind after mining, rarely cleaning up the mess they make, destroying the landscape and polluting the rivers, your mine never diminished or accumulated waste. The product mined was pure, and there was no loss or diminution, even if the miner put down his tools and walked away.

Even more amazingly, although you have mined every corner, crevice, and depth of this transcendental field of ecstasy, it never diminished in quantity. When called home by Kṛṣṇa you then bequeathed the mine to me as my very own. And as I now traverse its vastness and depths ...still every nook and cranny is ever fresh, full of blissful realisation that never runs out. As I mine and extract the precious gems of ecstasy I see that the mined area had not depleted but to my awe expanded growing ever wider and longer.

I recollect back in the 70s and 80s, each day before selling your books or paraphernalia, how I would sit in the morning and contemplate where I could go to find a suburb untouched by other eager spiritual miners. Many times finding the area I selected had been hit-up just the day before and despite being told repeatedly someone had been there yesterday, by Kṛṣṇa's mercy I would find glints of gold in a crack or fissure missed by previous miners. In fact, my mining method found many trolley loads of golden nuggets. Yet over time being material, the areas slowly became mined out.

In contrast, the same area I go to every day, where you have me excavating the holy name mine-face, I find is ever fresh. It appears to have no beginning or end, its breadth and depth are beyond calculation. All I can do each day is focus my desire then dive in and lose myself in its wondrous labyrinth. Although, unlike You Śrīla Prabhupāda, I simply scratch at its surface.

At first the work appeared hard, requiring great determination, but that illusion quickly passed as I observed the glittering golden source of happiness. All mundane miners desire is simply an illusion, not even a speck of a drop in an unlimited ocean of blissful happiness found within the heart. Here it is always fresh and enticing.

Mundane happiness cannot even be rated as happiness, but something to aid in fulfilling pointless material desires. Chewing what has already been chewed is dry and hard and has no nectar.

However, the mine you freely gave me license to access has gems

as big as mountains, lakes and waterfalls of molten gold, fields of precious rubies, emeralds, and sapphires, and paths glittering from gems of all description. The wealth is indescribable. Although there is no need for any of those beautiful gems as there is another far superior wealth abundantly available for one and all. The wealth is gained by selflessly offering pure unadulterated loving devotional service to Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

In this wonderful mine of the heart you revealed how everyone loves Kṛṣṇa, not their own selfish desires. This revelation allowed me to easily accept Kṛṣṇa's authority and immediately transport me to the spiritual reality. By submissively accepting your instruction and Kṛṣṇa's supremacy, this mood instantaneously opened-up the gates to the mystical place within the mine of my heart where Kṛṣṇa was seated patiently waiting for my return.

Although this previously undiscovered place revealed just a glimpse of the real transcendence that awaited me in Vraja loka, still its awakening outstripped every conceivable type of sense gratification material existence had on offer. I found that in this supernatural place that deep focus on your instructions and the holy name of Kṛṣṇa, where personal selfish desire is always searching for reward gave way to pleasing you. Placing this lowly creature on the threshold of the material and spiritual world allowed me to perceive Kṛṣṇa in all His splendor and endorsed me to approach Him and enjoy a tangible loving exchange with Him.

I am so very much indebted to your mercy Gurudeva, for if I stayed in the hills of Tennent Creek, my present old body's mining days would have been over long ago. But here in the mine of my heart I find even though the body's bones ache and are riddled with disease, still I am able each day to mine away discovering the unlimited number of wonderful pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the transcendental spiritual mine of ecstasy.

Thank you also Śrīla Prabhupāda for your unique books that do not merely convey a way of life that revealed and enticed me to learn about the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but its scientific approach persuaded me to believe in the existence of my own spiritual self and Kṛṣṇa as well.

By your amazing grace and expertise you have supplied every implement and device I need to see Kṛṣṇa at every instant. You provided me with the way to marvel at the miracles and spectacle of the creator of all. Thank you for your unique gift.

I humbly beg to remember and serve Your Divine Grace always  
so I may become completely lost in the infinite depths of the mine of  
transcendental bliss.

*Your eternal servant,*

Paurusa Dasa

All glories to the shining lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda, ever so beautiful. To those feet I bow down.

My most humble obeisances to His Divine Grace Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who took me out of this miserable ocean of birth, death and disease. He showed me the light of knowledge and *bhakti*, love of the *Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*, in ever revealing rays and waves of divine *bhakti*, love and *divya jñāna* knowledge, waking up my *bhakti* creeper, still caressing and ever watering.

By his mercy I am still alive while I should already have died many times before. Still, somehow or other, he seems to have mercy over my soul and maintained my life in whatever miserable position.

In October 1976 I was appointed as the Treasurer by GBC, Bhagavān Dās, in Śrī Śrī Rādhā Gopīnātha temple in the Amsterdam Herengracht and given a project to develop community farming. Mahānśa Swami from Hyderabad visited me and developed his Hyderabad temple into a community farm with many cows for many years. After advising some brāhmaṇas in Amsterdam to find a new temple, this little person advised them to look in the Ardennes for there were cheap buildings for sale while in Holland nothing could be found. From that search they found a castle bought by GBC Bhagavān Maharaj, now known as “Radhadesh”, famous throughout the world.

All glories to the assembled devotees, all glories to Śrīla Prabhupāda ever so beautiful.

*paraṁ vijayate śrī kṛṣṇa saṅkīrtanam.*

*Your ever humble servant & devotee,*

Vrsnivamsa Dasa  
Amsterdam

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to Your Divine Grace and your Beloved Vyāsa-pūjā.

The past year has increased your glories around the world and this has enlivened the devotees and all souls who have been fortunate to hear about you and your books.

This is all Lord Caitanya's plan unfolding to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness and we followers are so grateful to you for teaching us to follow in your footsteps by learning to compassionately be instruments in the *San̄kīrtana* mission.

Your books are written so that we can all advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Thank you for giving us this greatest gift.

*Your aspiring servant of your servants' servants,*

Nidra Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

On this auspicious occasion of your appearance anniversary, I offer my humble obeisances at the dust of your lotus feet.

Exactly 125 years ago you appeared with a mission already assigned to you. An astrologer who had seen your birth chart predicted that you will build a house in which the whole world can live. That house we know is the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, or ISKCON. As of this year 2021, there are over 500 temples, restaurants, preaching centres, Nāmahaṭṭa congregations, making your books, *prasādam* and *harināma* and *kīrtanas* accessible to thousands of newcomers.

I was very fortunate to have met with you in 1975, in the newly acquired, old church building in Montreal. You asked me this question, “Are you chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*?” At that time I was just coming to the ISKCON temple there out of some curiosity only. I had no interest in any devotional practices, neither had I thought I needed to do it. I simply answered that I was trying to chant. Immediately you told me “Why only trying? Why not just do it. What is the difficulty?” In a caring and kind way you convinced me to do it. When I look back at that encounter, I wonder why you took the time to speak to me in the way you did.

I liked the association of the devotees. So I also started to chant my rounds regularly. A few years later I got married and eventually our daughter was born. Then my life got busier in settling down with a job, an apartment to rent, later a car and much later a small house for three of us. Certainly all these demanded most of the time in a day.

Moreover I got interested in learning about technology related topics. It helped me in my career and material progress. Now after so many years, I realize I missed out making real progress in life which is the development of our love for the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

I now feel like a school kid with a poor report card to show his parents. Please bear with me for my foolishness and kindly guide me on the path of devotional service to Śrī Gaurahari and the ever enchanting Divine Couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā Mādhava.



*Gurudev!*

*kṛpā-bindu diyā, koro' ei dāse,  
tṛṇāpekḥā ati hīna  
sakala sahane, bala diyā koro',  
nija-māne sprḥā-hīna*

“Gurudeva, give to this servant just one drop of mercy. I am lower than a blade of grass. Give me all help. Give me strength. Let me be as you are, without desires or aspirations.”

*kabe heno kṛpā, labhiyā e jana,  
kṛtārtha hoibe, nātha!  
śakti-buddhi-hīna, āmi ati dīna,  
koro' more ātma-sātha*

“When will such mercy fall to this one who is weak and devoid of intelligence? Allow me to be with you.”

*Your humbled servant,  
Guruprasad Dasa*

## Karunaksi Devi Dasi

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

*śrī-caitanya-mano-'bhīṣṭarī sthāpitarī yena bhū-tale  
svayarī rūpaḥ kadā mahyam dadāti sva-padāntikam*

I was born in the darkest ignorance, and my spiritual master, Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, opened my eyes with the torchlight of knowledge. I offer my respectful obeisances unto his lotus feet.

When will Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, who has established within this material world the mission to fulfill the desire of Lord Caitanya, give me shelter under his lotus feet?

By the inconceivable mercy of Śrī Nityānanda-rāma Prabhu, in 1976, I, Caroline Ann/Karunaksi/Karunavatar/Kausturi-manjari dasi and my two daughters, Kimberly/Kilimba Dasi and Tamara/Tamra/Tapati/Madhavi Dasi, were guided on a magic-mystery-tour to the miracle of the lotus feet of Śrīla Prabhupāda! This is a whole, beautiful story for which there is no space here, but miraculously by the incomparable mercy of Śrīla Prabhupāda, we were put in touch with the shelter of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, and the means to follow his process, his course of action, for attaining true surrender at the lotus feet of our Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

My feeling is to highlight the divinely-inspired mission and spiritual character of the incomparable Śrīla Prabhupāda, who by the power of Śrī Nityānandārāma Prabhu incarnated in this world—from his position at the feet of Śrīmatī Rādhikā—for his divinely-ordered mission to shine the light of the Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa over the whole world.

Despite and even in view of his position of *Śaktyāveśa-avatāra* of Nitāi, his life showed much hardship in growing to the maturity and stature of actually entering and establishing that divine mission.

One might think that if divinely sent, there would be no problems, no hardship. But the ways of the Lord are merciful in revealing the courage, determination, surrender and faith of his sincere devotee.

We have read endless offerings glorifying these qualities shown so vividly by Śrīla Prabhupāda – from his whole long life of struggle

to reach others, his magazine *Back To Godhead*, austerities of living conditions, resistances from others, his attainment of *sannyāsa*, finding a way on a ship to come to America and suffering painful heart attacks on board in stormy seas, then what he graciously endured during the months after arriving at these shores. We have read many times about how he patiently endured resistance, loss, poverty, illness and theft of his few things while carrying on and on and making the most of any opportunity to reach other souls with his light and precepts for faith and surrender.

Hearing, chanting and learning to serve his lotus feet in the temple on the corner of 18th and Harrison Streets in Seattle, Washington, where we first found our divine ashram home under Śrīla Prabhupāda's love and guidance was the most beautiful time of my life, extending from September 15, 1976. When I returned in November 1977 from traveling around the southern states passing out literature and collecting donations for the temple, I heard that our Śrīla Prabhupāda had said that despite his illness he would stay another ten years. I was so much encouraged because I could not imagine living without Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Other devotees were also out on the road preaching and distributing books, etc, and our temple president, Śrīpad Rocana dās, was also out there. There had been a few accidents on the road due to traveling from state to state during night times to reach state ball games for good preaching opportunities. I was now worried that an accident may have occurred with our president, when one day, soon after my return there, our *bhaktin* leader, Mother Padyāvalī asked all to gather in the temple room for an announcement. When we were all gathered in there together, she announced, "Śrīla Prabhupāda has left this world." I am crying now, recalling that torturous moment of excruciating truth.

We sat together there, wailing aloud for three hours. We were now orphans. That was actually a wondrous and momentous time of togetherness with all the others in experiencing what seemed like the loss of this most crucial person in our life.

In that time of desolation, however, I and likely many others, found that his presence really did not vanish from us. He was there in our hearts, and I, myself, felt encouraged and somewhat thrilled that now he could never leave me.

When after three hours the wailing subsided and came to a communal resolution, my dear daughter, Tamra/Tapati/Madhavi, then

13, pulled out the harmonium and began to play *Śrī Guru Vandanā*, leading with the first line, “*Śrī-guru-caraṇa-padma kevala-bhakati-sadma...*” and we all chanted this beautiful prayer together as closure for our time of deepest grief.

Sometime after this, Śrīla Prabhupāda appeared to me in a dream. He was seated on a plain wooden chair, on a stage. I was sitting below. He was beaming into my heart his divine, ecstatic glance, and as I sat transfixed in his divine presence, receiving that glance into my soul, the devotional creeper of *bhakti* was ecstatically planted in my heart.

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

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Your visit to LA in June 76 aroused and filled my heart with bliss. Though an ignorant, dependent child of 13 still, Kṛṣṇa’s mercy started acting, by His own sweet will. By the mercy of Kṛṣṇa one receives a genuine guru, and then by the mercy of Śrī Guru, one can genuinely come to know Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Uplifted by this extraordinary divine mercy, the Lord placed me at your lotus feet, making me (and so many others, including my mom and sis) actually fortunate (*bhāgyavān*), as illustrated in one of the most nectarean and glorious precious gem-like scriptures you personally gifted to us in English:

*brahmāṇḍa bhramite kona bhāgyavān jīva  
guru-kṛṣṇa-prasāde pāya bhakti-latā-bīja*

“According to their karma, all living entities are wandering throughout the entire universe. Some of them are being elevated to the upper planetary systems, and some are going down into the lower planetary systems. Out of many millions of wandering living entities, one who is very fortunate gets an opportunity to associate with a bona fide spiritual master by the grace of Kṛṣṇa. By the mercy of both Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual master, such a person receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service.” — *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līla 19.151*

In your commentary on this verse, you further illuminate:

“...the living beings are engaged by *māyā* in suffering and enjoying the results of their fruitive activity, life after life. (Read: *exhaustion*.) This is the position of the materially conditioned living entities. Out of many of these living entities, one who is actually fortunate (*bhāgyavān*) comes in

contact with a bona fide spiritual master by Kṛṣṇa's mercy."

While encountering Your Divine Grace for the first time in this life during your final visit to California and though not consciously aware of the verse quoted above, still the total of that whole week's worth of experience\* delivered to my heart the most potent transformational message of this life. Encapsulated in that treasured moment of your *kṛpā-dṛṣṭi*, your merciful *glance* into my soul, which I was enabled to receive as awareness that you certainly know me (an old soul) and you are aware of what I've been through in my entire journey, through lifetimes. And though delivered through such gravity, your glance in just that pivotal moment was a phenomenal nonverbal communication to the heart of me of your true guardian-love (having my highest best interest) coming through. I had decided right in that moment at 13, "Whatever he's here to teach, I'm into it."

[\*all the segments of the total experience over approximately ten days that we were fortunate to have, starting at Los Angeles airport where we heard the tumultuous *kīrtana* of hundreds of exultant devotees gathered in the airport to greet you with such intense love, followed by actually beholding your golden effulgence as you emerged from the plane from Hawaii, garlands stacked upon garlands around your neck. You appeared to be floating and you were grave like a golden mountain. I felt free to weave through the crowd to walk near you as you glided along on the conveyor belt.

Then, entering the spiritual realm of the grand temple on Watseka Ave., marble floors covered in rose petals, monolithic altar doors opening slowly with only billows of frankincense visible, until the large round eyes of Jagannāth were gradually revealed, which felt friendly and comforting and.. like a *déjà vu!*

Then driving up daily from our home in Laguna Beach to hear your morning classes. I don't remember understanding a word of, though still thoroughly on board with all of it, vibration-wise; total-experience-wise. It was the 'Hey, we're *KIDS* right now'—realization from the balcony, observing and quickly joining all the young people lined up to have one-on-one encounters with you that held that special transformational nugget of fortune described above.]

It would be difficult to describe just how fortunate we feel (and perhaps how fortunate we aspire to increasingly feel by pleasing you more) to have been given this connection with Your Divine Grace. It was first in person, and secondly after six months of serving in your mission, via your will expressed by letter to our temple

president (which I still have a copy of), for our initiation into the superlative practice of serving through the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* for deliverance in this Age of Kali *Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare*. This ceremony took place in Seattle on the all-auspicious Appearance Day of your beloved spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura in February 1977, while you were physically with Śrīla Gaura Govinda Mahārāja in his humble hut in Bhubanesvara, planting other seeds for the *Saṅkīrtana* movement of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

This specific will of Your Divine Grace to accept and initiate disciples contained the potency of the '*kṛṣṇa-sevā-vāsanā*', the seed of the desire to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which is the most precious thing imaginable. It gives us the potential through growth into the beautiful '*bhakti-latā*', or 'creeper of devotion' which develops leaves of devotional qualities in us and sprouts fragrant flowers of advancement through the stages of attainment in devotional service, eventually producing the extremely auspicious fruit of pure love for God.

What more could there be than this? Your books are full of direction to life's highest attainment, the perfection of pure devotional loving service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, '*cid-ānanda-puruṣa*, the purely conscious and ecstatic original Person.'. We would not be able to fully develop this very high attainment without your mercy by our own devices, literally and figuratively:-)

As stated in my favorite of books you've gifted us with, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, in *Madhya-līlā* chapter 23, verses 14–15, the stages of advancement on this sublime path of devotional service are given beginning with '*ādau śraddhā, tataḥ sādhu-saṅga*'.

**'In the beginning there must be faith. Then one becomes interested in associating with pure devotees. Thereafter one is initiated by the spiritual master and executes the regulative principles under his orders. Thus, one is freed from all unwanted habits and becomes firmly fixed in devotional service. Thereafter, one develops taste and attachment. This is the way of sādhana-bhakti, the execution of devotional service according to the regulative principles. Gradually emotions intensify, and finally there is an awakening of love. This is the gradual development of love of Godhead for the devotee interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.'**

All this fortune comes to us via your causeless mercy from within and through many favorable channels of your mercy. And by upholding our part—following your instructions to act favorably for Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Kṛṣṇa’s pleasure (as encapsulated by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmīpada in another of the gem-like transcendental literatures you have given us, *The Nectar of Devotion*, 1.1.11: *anyābhilāṣitā sūnyam, jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam, ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanam bhaktir uttamā*). That our motivations for action become increasingly geared towards ‘*kṛṣṇānuśīlanam*’ or doing more and more of that which is motivated by truly benefitting and pleasing Kṛṣṇa), as well as following, studying and practicing the guidance you have delineated exhaustively in your books full of your transcendental ecstasies, which grant ever-deeper access (as we continuously practice and mature) to what you have given and are giving.

Importantly, also, I have come to understand seriously that we must carefully avoid committing any ‘mad-elephant’ offenses to the holy name by offending any pure Vaiṣṇavas, which would only ever misguide us on this sublime path. And not just focusing on the negative or fear-based aspect of that edict, but to embrace the part of it which encourages us to actively serve Vaiṣṇavas in order to gain your mercy as *sākṣād-Hari* and thus Kṛṣṇa’s mercy in greater concentration of what could then be for us, in the end of this life, ‘time well-spent’.

This humble offering of heartfelt words like flower petals unto your lotus feet is from one of your most junior and still immature ‘works-in-progress’. As a result, my words are often verbose for expressing gratitude to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda. But considering the sheer amount of lifetimes it must have taken to come face to face with your divine grace and be blessed on the levels already taken place and feel continuously called to come closer to *śuddha bhakti* by your causeless mercy, these words never seem to be enough.

I’ll close with a quote heard just this morning from our *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* class at home, from the prayers of Akrura who had just had the most wonderful divine *darśana* of his own worshipful Deity by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Kindly accept this as my prayer for your continued grace upon this wretched soul wanting to take best advantage of spiritual advancement in this short life:



'My intelligence is so crippled that I cannot find the strength to curb my mind, which is disturbed by material desires and activities and constantly dragged here and there by my obstinate senses. Being thus fallen, I am approaching your feet for shelter...' again and again. — SB 10.40.27–28.

*Your eternal servant,*

Kilimba Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Please accept my humble obeisance.

All glories to you on this most auspicious day of your Appearance Day. It has certainly been very auspicious for me that you came into my life and allowed me to help you in your mission of promoting Lord Caitanya’s Vedic movement of *harināma saṅkīrtana*. No matter what storm clouds may be present on the horizon, your mission will go on.

I recall a vivid dream that I had in the early part of 2001. It was during a very dark time in the history of the movement you had started. You were being publicly insulted by miscreants in your own institution, and your official representatives did not come to your defense or censure the guilty. In that dream I was weeping uncontrollably that such a horrible thing was happening in your own institution. Then suddenly in the dream the whole “screen” went black and then a white spot appeared in the center and this spot gradually expanded to cover the whole screen again. In this white area the whole *līlā* of Prahāda Mahārāja played out and in the end Lord Nṛsimha appeared and vanquished the demons and protected Prahāda. Then a loud deep voice booming like rolling thunder stated, “Just as Prahāda Mahārāja could not be vanquished, in the same way Prabhupāda’s mission cannot be stopped.” Then the dream suddenly stopped, and I woke up having fallen out of my bed in shock.

I always remember that dream. Śrīla Prabhupāda, I do not know who you are, or what your spiritual identity is. But I know that you are being directly supported by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself. And when in the past I sometimes felt discouraged, I would remember this dream and feel confident that no matter what may be happening before my vision that somehow or other your mission will go on and cannot be stopped. And now twenty years later I can see that this is true, that your mission will be carried on by those who are faithful to you. Especially by those who want to fulfill your desire to establish *Daiva*

*Varṇāśrama dharma.*

In the *śāstras* we read that the guru is the representative of Kṛṣṇa. With some there may be doubts but with you there is no doubt of this truth. You have come to fulfill the desires of the previous *ācāryas* to carry out Lord Caitanya's mission. I pray that in some way, insignificant as it may be, that I may be able to assist you in your mission.

Begging to get the shelter of your lotus feet.

*Your eternal servant,*

Shyamasundara Dasa

(Jyotisa Sastri)

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

You have taught us that the topmost necessity for all souls is to revive their love for Kṛṣṇa, but for conditioned souls who are wrapped up in the modes of ignorance and passion it is very difficult to even conceive of the highest self-interest what to speak of actually making efforts to engage in the process of self-purification. Kṛṣṇa for the conditioned soul is very far away so where does a fallen soul like me turn for help? You, Śrīla Prabhupāda are the answer to our cries of help to the Lord in the heart.

You Śrīla Prabhupada are the outward manifestation of Supersoul, come to help us to see and feel the reality of their loving Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Expertly weaving your inner ecstasies in your transcendental books, you show us in an easily understandable way, the path of *Bhāgavat Dharma*, the path of *Prema Dharma*, that leads us onwards to the highest pinnacles of transcendental realizations. Again and again you say “The process is simple yet sublime” to impress upon us that we can indeed engage in the process of *bhakti*, from whatever station of life we find ourselves in and by so doing enter into the most sublime realms of spiritual existence.

You constantly guide us, encourage us, correct us, acting as our ever well-wisher, just like a loving father who wants only the best for his children. The tolerance and compassion you show to us is a testament to your total commitment to acting as the loving hands of Divine Grace to gather the conditions souls up and deliver them as an offering to the lotus feet of their Lordships.

Over the years I’ve heard many godbrothers and godsisters say, “I don’t know Kṛṣṇa, but I know Śrīla Prabhupda,” and I can simply say the same. You, Śrīla Prabhupda are the totality of my spiritual life, and if I can please you the pleasure of their Lordships is secured. Please allow me to always remain at your lotus feet so that I can be of some service to you and your mission in fulfilling the desires our *guru paramparā* to make known widely the science of devotional

service to all the unfortunate souls who are suffering the constant tribulations of this wretched Age of Kali.

*A beggar for your divine glance I remain your eternal servant.*

Ankoththa Dasa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Prostrate *daṇḍavats* at your feet. May your glories be sung for millennia.

Fifty years ago last February I met the devotees. Perhaps I should say I met a devotee and that meeting changed my life. I was in my first year at college and was going to the Ceylon Tea Center to grab a salad for lunch. It was a bright, cold February day and as I turned the corner onto the street I noticed a devotee standing in front of the cafe distributing BTGs. I have a perfect picture of that devotee, he was tall and was wearing *dhotī*, t-shirt and flip flops. He was also very blue with the cold. I felt sorry for him and, since I had been chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa for a couple of years, I figured I'd buy one of his mags. When I came out he was no longer there. I cannot remember what I did with the BTG but in my mind it was significant.

The next time I saw the devotees was at a party near the art college. It was late when I arrived and the apartment was full of students all doing what students do. I opened the door to a room and there were all these students dancing around two devotees who were having a rip roaring *kīrtana*. It totally blew my mind.

Shortly after that a friend gave me a *Kṛṣṇa Book*, and I read it cover to cover many times. Understanding that God could be a cowherd was no problem for me, I had no conceptions of there having to be the God of Abraham or anything like that, having rejected Christianity many years earlier. This is when I knew you were my guru, and I was determined to somehow or another ask you for initiation.

My brother was also on a search and we, being close, took to Kṛṣṇa consciousness at the same time. He went to Canada and trekked across the country and on his way back happened upon the Winnipeg temple where he stayed for four months. When he came back to Scotland he convinced almost all of our friends to become vegetarian and to chant the holy names. As a result of that, 16 of us became devotees over the next few years.

I finally met you on July 76 when your lotus feet stepped on the ground at Bhaktivedanta Manor. Such grace and beauty, you appeared to me like a swan. Your talks were sublime, and I resolved there and then to surrender. In your room you exhibited your cowherd humor, joking with four Indian men and diffusing a tense situation. Even though you were speaking in Hindi we could appreciate

the joke and we were all laughing out loud. When you left for the airport I was fortunate to be able to go with you, and as you sat in the departure lounge I sat at your feet feeling very insignificant, but I also knew this was it for me and I would never again take shelter of the illusory energy.

The rest is, as they say, history, but I will always look back on you and pray, in some future life to be able to meet you once again and, in the words of your poem, “frolic in the pastures” with your dear friend Kṛṣṇa.

I am now coming to “the fag end” of my life, and I pray you will show me mercy as I leave this body. I know I am not free from false ego, and I have a long way to go before I can once more sit at your feet, but I pray I get the chance some life.

Praying at your lotus feet and always begging for mercy I remain,

*Your eternal servant,*

Indranuja Das

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Let me not hanker for fortune or fame  
And by your grace  
Let me find solace in the holy name

Let me not be absorbed in this world of shame  
And by your grace  
Find joy only in the holy name

Let me not find fault and criticize  
And by your grace  
Let the pure holy name be realised

Let me not be swayed by masters of deceit  
And by your grace  
Always find shelter at your lotus feet

*Dāsānudāsa,*

Jiva Pavana Dasa



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

I would like to thank you for all the amazing extra mercy you have bestowed upon me this past year. It was a very unusual year with the COVID pandemic which caused distress to so many. Yet amid all of it, there were so many blessings by your grace.

Two of the many blessings for me were (1) the constant flow of virtual worldwide *kīrtana* and *Kṛṣṇa katha* and (2) the inspiration from witnessing the ingenuity, dedication, and determination of devotees to continue serving unconditionally.

I felt that you were specially nurturing and uplifting me with the *kīrtanas* and *kathā*. Some of them were:

- Sādhvī saṅga online Vaiṣṇavī community
- GBC SPT presentations, especially the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* glorification
- New Jersey Temple's virtual classes
- The VIHE 's Govardhana retreat
- Gaura Govinda Mahārāja's 25<sup>th</sup> Disappearance celebration

And there was the Alachua Kirtan Festival of the Holy Name organized by your granddisciples. This was intended to be three days of continuous chanting of the holy name. It turned into two weeks because of the unexpected, overwhelming worldwide participation that kept asking for more and more and more.

Only by your special mercy and grace could all this nectar flow.

It was inspiring to watch the devotees' determination to serve unconditionally. In your Alachua Community, our president and the community of devotees ensured that the service to Their Lordships continued in the usual splendor; the lunch program, Sunday feasts and festivals with pre-packaged *prasādam*, *harināma* and book distribution, all continued in a safe, modified, and still ecstatic way. Devotees did a virtual Village of Vṛndāvana tour for Janmāṣṭamī, and pre-recorded plays for other festivals. Your schools continued excellently. Devotees launched new initiatives like the Alachua Hare Kṛṣṇa Community radio station and the *Nectar Talks* podcast.

Only by your special mercy and grace could all this go on.

And by all the knowledge you have given us in your books, you

gave us some clarity about the chaos that was going on all around us. In one purport you told us that when a civilization becomes atheistic, Kṛṣṇa will arrange to demonstrate His power, and prove them wrong, showing that He does indeed exist. Kṛṣṇa was clearly doing that with the Coronavirus. He brought the whole earth to a standstill with this tiny, insignificant part of his material energy. One of your devotees said that if all the Coronavirus could be collected, it might not weigh more than one gram.

Thank you again and again Śrīla Prabhupāda for always looking after us, providing for us and protecting us with such great care.

*Your servant,*

Mahendrani Devi Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the saviour of the entire world! This material world is full of extreme difficulties, challenges and suffering. By your causeless mercy we have been given the wonderful opportunity to serve you in Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhām. My mind is pacified by reading your books, *Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Your Bhaktivedanta purports shine with brilliant light and guidance for conditioned souls, to come back home to the spiritual kingdom. Give me strength to always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Kṛṣṇa by chanting the holy names of the Lord, constantly hearing His glories in the association of devotees. May I have the strength to enthusiastically read your books, become humble, always appreciating all others and carry out my services for your pleasure. Jai Śrīla Prabhupāda!

*Your servant,*

Pancagauda Dasa

## Prahladanatha Dasa

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Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my obeisances at your feet.

Your presence 24/7 in our home is the life force that keeps us going, chanting the holy names, doing *bhajan*s with neighbors and friends, thinking of you and remembering you.

You took my heart. Please keep it. The only way for me to feel safe. All glories to Your Divine Grace!

*Yours,*

Prahladanatha Dasa

Dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most respectful obeisances at your lotus feet.

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

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

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

I am writing this letter on the day that Gaura Pūrṇimā is celebrated this year (2021). I don't think I could have found a more auspicious or appropriate day to express to you my deep gratitude and acknowledge the shining light, joy and consciousness that you have brought into my life.

One day in India in 1976, following a long search which seemed almost infinite, at the age of 31, by the grace of Kṛṣṇa, I met you and accepted you as my spiritual Master. Ever since, I have dedicated all my material, intellectual and spiritual resources to your teachings. And, I continue to feel indebted in gratitude to You.

Since then, you have always been the most important, significant and transformative person in my life.

Thanks to your living example, which finds tangible confirmation in the wonderful works you have completed, through the knowledge and method of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava *bhakti* that I was able to learn from you, in the following decades I studied, practiced and disseminated those same teachings that, in essence, you imparted on me on that first day, during the first enlightening *darśana* you gave me.

In the following years I lived experiences that were coherent with greater levels of awareness of myself, of society and of the world in which we live. By your divine mercy, I reached levels of understanding that have led me to discover the dimension which is behind the empirical self and enables us to connect to the living self within each of us, regardless of the body with which we are clothed.

You had already revealed to me in that first *darśana* that powerful *asuras*, to better pillage nature, are imposing an ever more persuasive and pervasive socio-cultural orientation, moving peoples to perform unprecedented, dehumanizing anthropological transformations.

How can we liberate ourselves from the nightmare we have now been living for the last year?

You have taught us to be reborn through the spirit with the practice of *hari-nāma-japa*. You taught us the philosophy of the soul, by virtue of the practice through which one becomes aware of the ultimate meaning of life: Kṛṣṇa consciousness. To achieve this leap in consciousness, a change of paradigm is more necessary and urgent than ever. It consists in returning to drink from the source of divine love rather than becoming dried up within the agitated search for distractions, comforts and vanishing passionate satisfactions.

The human being, as *jīva-bhūta*, is located between Earth and Heaven, is a creature tormented by a pair of opposing instances, one who suffers until he resolves his metaphysical dilemma. The human being is, in fact, simultaneously bound to the imminent solicitations that anchor him/her to the Earth and irresistibly attracted by the eschatological call from Heaven.

Although with different words, many traditions have affirmed that man does not live on bread alone. On the other hand, if this were untrue, it would be impossible to explain why philosophy, art and religion, which have no material purpose, are so indispensable for the highest evolution of human society.

We could indeed peacefully prosper by organizing our psychophysical resources in a functional way to carry out social tasks in the here and now. But only so long as we are aware that we are immortal souls temporarily incarnated, traveling towards liberation and the realization of the special bond of love with Lord Kṛṣṇa.

The sentiment of *prema-bhakti* that you taught us through your life example is the way out of this earthly hell.

In the last year particularly, dominated by the looming, disturbing and invisible presence of the pandemic, I wondered many times what would have been of my life had I not received from you the vital teachings of the sacred science of the soul, in philosophical and practical terms.

Where would I have found the strength to resist so much injustice, a dangerous health crisis, socio-economic tension, disorientation and systematic falsification of public information?

I asked myself what reference point I would have had to orient myself and decipher the conflicting news to which we are exposed daily?

With a heart filled with devotion and heartfelt gratitude,

*Your grateful servant,*

Matsya Avatar Dasa

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

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

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

You are the true friend of the lost souls. Unfortunately, we have used our independence to make poor choices that continually entice us away from our actual happiness. If not for you, we might be lost forever, but by a great stroke of good fortune, we have found you.

There is a relevant children’s story about a kind man who desired to have a loving son. He created a puppet who came to life, but rather than being a good son as his father desired, the boy ran away to satisfy his insatiable curiosity. Then, he was influenced by bad association to try to find happiness in all the wrong places. Even though along the way, the boy received good counsel from an inconspicuous friend who followed him everywhere, as well as an angel who always showed him compassion, he ran into trouble again and again. Eventually, he learned that he could only become a “real” boy (not just a puppet), when he took responsibility for his actions and re-established his loving relationship with his loving father.

We are also learning that we will never find satisfaction until we are able to firmly reestablish our unique loving relationship with our original father / master / child / friend / lover, the Supreme Being, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Having heard from you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, now our desire is to become real again – not to hide behind mask after mask, pretending to be so many different imaginary characters.

Thank you for not being inconspicuous, for speaking loudly and clearly and for being willing to speak our language, even in a land where people would not have been willing to speak yours. Thank you for saying all the right things at all the right times, to patiently guide us to the land of reality. Thank you for also being our compassionate angel, who sees our faults, but continues to pray for us anyway. You are our good fortune personified; you are our link to the reality of love.



Alas, I have come to the stage of life where I speak in a grandmother's parables. Thank you for listening anyway.

I pray that I will be able to listen more and more carefully to your guidance and to be of service to you in some way.

*With gratitude,*

*Your puppet,*

Gopimata Devi Dasi

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

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

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

On this Vyāsa-pūjā day I beg to honor you, by your infinite mercy, with this simple offering at your lotus feet.

There is no question whatsoever that you are and continue to be the most empowered personality to spread this topmost important global *saṅkīrtana* movement. Anyone who doubts this even one iota has not at all understood your transcendental personality and unique position. Such rebellious envious conditioned souls are truly most unfortunate!

When someone has the supreme fortune of receiving your association, especially eternally manifesting in your ecstatic purports, if they are non envious and humble, they will very soon be delivered from the cycle of repeated birth and death.

Kṛṣṇa states in *Bhagavad-gītā* that no one is more dear to Him than one who helps other souls awaken their dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness, leading to devotional service in pure love of Godhead.

Wherever there is Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna there will be extraordinary opulence. Similarly wherever your books go out en masse, there will be extraordinary opulence in such a place!

Please bless your dedicated devotees on these beautiful Hawaiian islands, which you so fittingly renamed, New Navadvip, to once again revive and become divinely empowered to carry out the *saṅkīrtana* mission like never before. This would most certainly be the best means to glorify you on this holiest of days, and every day.

You gave me your personal eternal *darśana* just a few years ago. I asked you then, if I could possibly go back to Godhead in this

lifetime. You replied to me, that if I worked very hard for Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu and His mission that you would help me.

Therefore please allow me the spiritual strength and determination to work hard in your wonderful mission and die like a dedicated soldier, with my boots on.

*Your eternal aspiring loving servant,*

Daiva Das

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my most humble obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace who is the abode of infinite mercy and compassion.

O beloved spiritual master, you are always in the presence of the cowherd girl, Śrī Rādhā, the daughter of King Vṛṣabhānu. Please grant me service at your lotus feet which are the proprietors of devotional service.

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

*namaste sarasvate deve gaura vāṅī pracāriṇe  
nirvōeṣeṣa śūnyavādi pāścātya deśa tārīṇe*

Who is the moon in the galaxy of stars  
He who lived at the Rādhā Dāmodar temple

Who is the moon in the galaxy of stars  
He who boarded the Jaladuta to preach in the West

Who is the moon in the galaxy of stars  
He who led *kīrtana* in Tompkins Square Park

Who is the moon in the galaxy of stars  
He who accepted anyone that came to hear

Who is the moon in the galaxy of stars  
He who introduced devotional service to the world

Who is the moon in the galaxy of stars  
He who is the exemplar of loving devotion

Who is the moon in the galaxy of stars  
He who was not stereotyped in his devotion

Who is the moon in the galaxy of stars  
He who danced in the streets of London

Who is the diamond in a setting of gold  
He who cried when he saw children fight with dogs

Who is the diamond in a setting of gold  
He who saw a spiritual city

Who is the diamond in a setting of gold  
He who said plain living and high thinking

Who is the diamond in a setting of gold  
He who combined the blind and the lame

Who is the diamond in a setting of gold  
He who presented old wine in a new bottle

Who is the diamond in a setting of gold  
He who opened windows to the spiritual world

Who is the diamond in a setting of gold  
He who synthesized science and religion

Who is the diamond in a setting of gold  
He who gave the real peace formula

Who is the master at whose lotus feet all others sit  
He who shared his personal ecstasies

Who is the master at whose lotus feet all others sit  
He who beat the *brihad mridanga*

Who is the master at whose lotus feet all others sit  
He who taught renunciation of the false ego

Who is the master at whose lotus feet all others sit  
He who taught service in separation

Who is the master at whose lotus feet all others sit  
He who removed impersonal calamity

Who is the master at whose lotus feet all others sit  
He who built a house in which the whole world can live

Who is the master at whose lotus feet all others sit  
He who is the hub to which the spokes are attached

Who is the master at whose lotus feet all others sit  
He who is worshipped as the Founder-*Ācārya*

*Your lowly servant,*  
Nanda Kumar Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my prostrated obeisances as your divine lotus feet.

I am one of that cohort of your disciples who came to the movement too late to have the opportunity of actually experiencing your divine presence. I was initiated on 7<sup>th</sup> September 1977 at a fire sacrifice in Sydney Australia: it was your Vyāsa-pūjā day. On this same day you were at Bhaktivedanta Manor in England being worshiped in the Temple Room packed with devotees from all over Europe. For many of them, this brief encounter would be the first and only *darśana* they would have with you. But I cannot even claim to have had that experience. For those of us who joined in such remote places as Australia in the final year of your manifest appearance on this planet, we would never have the opportunity of seeing you face to face. So my association with your *vapu* is experienced vicariously through the recollections of my more fortunate godbrothers and sisters.

One such way is by listening to their anecdotes recorded on the “*Memories of Śrīla Prabhupāda*” DVDs. Throughout the series, I notice a recurring statement that is repeated again and again. Practically each of your disciples remarks on the unique way that you looked into their eyes the first time they met you. They each felt that you were looking beyond their false ego and into their soul where you saw exactly who they were. That silent exchange was suffused with your acceptance, love and compassion for them. Śrīla Prabhupāda, how I miss not having had you look into me and knowing me for who I am and not for what I mistakenly think I am. I want so much to be accepted by you.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Prahlada Bhakta Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances.

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, in my fallen condition I do not truly understand what it means to be grateful or thankful. I do, however, want to someday feel and demonstrate deep and eternal gratitude to you for your mercy upon me and for allowing me to be some small part of your life's mission to spread Lord Caitanya's movement to the fallen, conditioned souls that are lost in this material world.

You have made it very clear to us that you want us to have compassion for these unfortunate souls who are devoid of any hope whatsoever of getting free from the clutches of repeated birth, disease, old age, and death. Therefore, I pray to you again and again to please empower me to serve you and your mission and to keep me engaged in preaching your message. Only with your empowerment can I have any success at all. I beg you to please keep me engaged in spreading your Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement by preaching your words to all who will listen.

Having compassion for the fallen conditioned souls is somewhat difficult for those of us who have been trapped here in this world of self-centered impersonalism for billions of births. We have withdrawn our original mood of loving compassionate servitude for Kṛṣṇa, and all of His parts and parcels, and have focused it on ourselves. This is a struggle for us to overcome, yet, if we can only focus on your mood of loving compassion and follow your example, we can be successful in this battle within ourselves.

You have always demonstrated this mood of personal loving compassion in all of your dealings with all living entities. From the very beginning, you have been concerned with the welfare of all of us. Not just when preaching to us to take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, but continuously, even after we surrendered and began to practice Bhakti Yoga under your divine direction. Even in the final days of



your life in this world, you were always concerned with the health and well-being of those around you.

I recall the story of one occasion when you were being carried up to the roof of the Kṛṣṇa Balarama Mandir in Vṛndāvana in 1977. Your health was not at all good, and you had not been able to eat for months. Even in this condition, you were concerned about a boil on the foot of one of the two disciples that were carrying you up the stairs in a chair. Out of your loving compassion for your disciple, you were directing your attention to his suffering and prescribing to him a method to treat his boil. You were more concerned with his health than you were with your own. If somehow I can learn to follow in your footsteps in the matter of loving compassion toward every living entity I may learn, not only how to attract the fallen souls to your movement, but how to keep them eternally engaged in devotional service as well.

In your purport to *Bhagavad-gītā* 16.24, you said: “Those in the modes of passion and ignorance deride the scriptures, deride the holy man, and deride the proper understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They disobey the instructions of the spiritual master, and they do not care for the regulations of the scriptures. In spite of hearing the glories of devotional service, they are not attracted. Thus they manufacture their own way of elevation. These are some of the defects of human society which lead to the demoniac status of life. If, however, one is able to be guided by a proper and bona fide spiritual master, who can lead one to the path of elevation, to the higher stage, then one’s life becomes successful.”

These words of yours certainly describe the current situation with many people in this current age. In our humble preaching efforts, we see most often that more and more people, being caught in the modes of passion and ignorance, resist accepting the authority of a guru, a *sādhu*, or any *śāstra*. Having seemingly lost faith in organized religion, they are quick to, as you say here, “deride the scriptures, deride the holy man, and deride the proper understanding of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” They seem to be attempting to avoid accepting any authority other than their own as they sink deeper and deeper into an impersonal, self-centered existence. Thus their spiritual lives are based on their own homespun “truth” which is simply concoction and mental speculation. Instead of making spiritual progress, they are actually being controlled by the modes of material nature. Please empower me with the compassion and all

the skills I need to preach to these people firmly and without compromise while avoiding turning them away.

Although so many people have concocted their own impersonal spiritual path, often they are quick to become attracted to the Kṛṣṇa conscious philosophy when we share with them the spiritual truth contained in your books. The simple truth is that they have just never encountered anything of true spiritual value yet in their pursuit of spiritual life. The knowledge contained in your books has already changed the lives and the spiritual destiny of millions of people. All that is required is for us to continue to distribute Kṛṣṇa consciousness as you have so mercifully given it to us and then to continue to administer your personal and loving mood to all those souls that we encounter.

I beg you, again and again, to empower me with the courage to preach along with the compassion and patience that you have demonstrated to the world while serving your spiritual master's mission. I beg you to help me to become more and more personal in all of my dealings. I pray to you to keep me in the shelter of your lotus feet and allow me to serve you and your mission eternally.

*Your very fallen and aspiring servant,*

Jivananda dasa Vanacari

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

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

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to you and your devotees!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you possess unlimited qualities. Your glorification is sung in the three worlds. Being the dearest disciple of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, you were empowered by this mercy to establish the GBC. Following guru's instruction, you preached all over the world and achieved ultimate success. It is by your efforts that now ISKCON is flourishing and spreading *harināma* all over the world. Your focus was one and only one: Kṛṣṇa. You specially trained your disciples to spread the pure devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa. You never inspired us to fulfill material desires, instead develop our spiritual desires of becoming closer to Lord Kṛṣṇa. You are a real *sādhu* and exemplary for all *sādhus*. Your only business was to give Kṛṣṇa consciousness to others, and thus you focused on the primary welfare aspect of all living entities. Your books, letters, and lectures introspect and firmly establish the actual position and duty of a soul.

You are a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa and preached the message of *Bhagavad-gītā*, *As It Is*. Just like Arjuna received knowledge from Lord Kṛṣṇa, from you we received direct knowledge of *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. You are an empowered soul and very dear and near to all *mahājanas*. You got the special mercy of Śrīla Rūpa Goswami *pāda* and Lord Caitanya.

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I will always be indebted to you for accepting me as your disciple. In 1976, when you came to Toronto and agreed to give *harināma dīkṣā* and Brahman *dīkṣā* together to me and my husband, H.G. Kratu Das, I was thrilled. But as Gauḍīya Math initiated my mother-in-law, she suggested we take initiation from them. So that time, we could not take initiation from you. However, when my husband told you about their family guru during the

morning walk, you cleared that we can have you as our guru. I wrote you a letter in Vṛndāvana, asking for initiation. That time you were not in a condition to travel, but the president came and told us there was excellent news – Śrīla Prabhupāda had written him a letter for initiation and given him our names. I was delighted when you gave us *dīkṣā* on 16th September 1977. Thank you very much Śrīla Prabhupāda, for your love and care.

You can read the minds of your disciples. In my mind, I desired to have a name related to Kheer Chora Gopinath. You named me Amrita Keli Devi Dasi, as Amrita Keli is the name of the sweet rice offered to Kheer Chora Gopinath. I am, to date, grateful for all your reciprocations. It gives a feeling that you are always with us in our every effort to perform devotional service. Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, for preaching purposes, I am traveling with my husband everywhere. As you instructed my husband to become a preacher, he is trying to preach, and I am supporting him as his assistant. On this most auspicious occasion of your Appearance Day, I ask you for a boon so that I stay in this movement with love, trust, and cooperation, following the GBC, spreading your message all over the world, and become your first-class servant. Thank you very much Śrīla Prabhupāda. All glories to You!

*Your forever servant,*  
Amrita Keli Devi Dasi

My dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preñṭhāya bhū-tale  
rimate bhaktivedānta-svāminn iti nāmine*

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

Please accept my most humble obeisances at your lotus feet on your Appearance Day.

All glories to you and your followers!

Śrīla Prabhupāda, your qualities are unlimited. You are most dear to Śrī Rūpa Mānjarī. You had distributed the teachings of Śrīla Rūpa Goswami *pāda* to people all over the world. In your old age, you traveled all over the world tirelessly to deliver the fallen souls. Because of you, even Māyāvādīs became Kṛṣṇa's devotees. You made the impossible possible. You preached in the countries where Māyāvādī and Śūnyavādī were prevalent, and the whole world can now see your success. Lord Kṛṣṇa empowered you just like he empowered Śrīla Vyāsadeva. The celebration of your Vyāsa-pūjā is our utmost honor and fortune. I am always grateful to Lord Kṛṣṇa and the whole *Guru paramparā* for sending you into my life. You are the real ambassador who spread Vedic culture from India to the Western world. Many yogis and *jñānīs* tried to preach in Western countries, but they were not successful because they didn't have Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as their center. When you founded your International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, you named it a Kṛṣṇa conscious society, even though many advised you to call it a God-conscious society. You were very clear about spreading Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* all over the world. So, today I beg at your lotus feet that somehow or the other, please make me a tool in your hands that I can preach on your behalf, the way you desired. Because of your causeless mercy, the least I can do as your fortuitous servant is to preach Kṛṣṇa consciousness and follow your instructions to become a preacher.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you are the savior of the whole world, and you have done so by establishing this Global ISKCON movement. Thank you for giving us invaluable gifts such as the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, GBC, books, lectures, letters as your instructions, so many temples for association with devotees, Kṛṣṇa *prasādam*,

*mṛdaṅgas, karatālas, kīrtana, harināma yātrās, Rathayātrās, celebrations of festivals like Janmāṣṭamī, Gaura Pūrṇimā, Rāmanavami, Deity worship, āratīs, gurukulas, restaurants, gośālās, farming communities, and so much more.*

Your contributions to human society are incomparable. You told us that how much we love you will be measured by our love, trust, and cooperation with each other after you depart from this material world. So, I am submitting to you for this cause that somehow or another, I can follow your instructions for loving, trusting, and cooperating with my godbrothers, godsisters, and devotees in ISKCON at large.

On this most auspicious occasion of your appearance day, I am seeking your blessings. “Please make me your causeless servant, your first-class servant. First-class servant means one who does not have to be told what to do for the master, but knows the master’s mentality so well that he automatically carries out the master’s desires.”

Please give me the boon that I will never leave your ISKCON, your GBC, and keep serving as a humble, menial servant in ISKCON. Please grant me this boon so that I can causelessly serve you and your mission birth after birth. Thank you very much Śrīla Prabhupāda. Hare Kṛṣṇa! All glories to you, Śrīla Prabhupāda!

*Your forever servant,*

Kratu Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

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

What a year it has been!!! Although we have been locking down for the most part, on a personal level, you have been unlocking so many things for me within my heart and mind.

How wonderful to know that despite everything in the world nothing material can ever sever the bond that we have with you. In fact as the world's situations disintegrate, as Kali-yuga progresses...so proportionately the pages of the *Bhāgavatam* take on new life and our faith advances. As we grow older and the world becomes a more dangerous place we find shelter at your feet, we pray harder, we dive deeper.

Even though we could not go out and about, we could enter a world unaffected by viruses and pandemics...a world you have allowed us access to.

Even though we could not be in the association of devotees, we were able to connect through the airwaves and there were so many wonderful souls sharing inspiring wisdom on many levels....you taught us that this *saṅga* is most vital for spiritual life.

Being confined at home enabled us to expand our horizons and meditate on the gifts you have bestowed upon us.

*Prasādam* as the Lord's mercy also played an important role. We were receivers of the mercy via Bhaktivedānta Manor's generosity, Food for All, and individuals who knocked on our door with fresh vegetables, homemade bread and other delectables. We also ventured to try new recipes and in turn share with our neighbours and friends. This is the process that you taught....so lovingly played out in action! Reciprocations of love as taught in the *Nectar of Instruction* and elaborated in your purports!

Personally, this past year has given me the time to forge new relationships and associate through reading and discussing your books of timeless wisdom and wondrous and ecstatic pastimes. It has been a great blessing! As has the sweet sisterhood of your many disciples and granddisciples.

It is during strange, uncanny and difficult times as this that we have found strength in all the gifts that you have given us. It is at these times that our gratitude for you has multiplied many fold.

Words of thanks are never enough! We may be aging but not even at the age you were when you brought Kṛṣṇa consciousness to the West. Let our thanks manifest through active service in the coming years. Please engage us in actively spreading Kṛṣṇa wisdom to a population suffering on so many levels. Please show us the way forward and remove any obstacles.

*Your fallen servant,*

Guru Carana Padma Dasi



Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda!

Please accept my respectful obeisances in the dust of your lotus feet!

Another year has passed! Time is moving inexorably forward. Your disciples are gradually leaving this planet, but what you have done, taking on the mission of Lord Caitanya, not for years or decades, will have an effect for centuries! Taking seriously the instructions of your Guru Mahārāja, you have performed wonderful deeds by spreading the Lord Caitanya movement throughout the world, transforming people unqualified for spiritual life into qualified people. Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, let your fame spread throughout the three worlds!

Now your dream is becoming true. The construction of the Temple of the Vedic Planetarium, despite the complexity of the world situation, is gradually coming to an end. The temple will be open soon, and people from all over the world will come to Mayapur and receive the grace of Lord Caitanya!

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda, I am forever grateful to you for the mercy you have bestowed on our entire family by making us devotees. You have transformed the hearts of many like a philosopher's stone. Dear Gurudeva, please bless me to always remain your humble servant.

*Your servant and disciple,*

Krishna Namananda Dasa

## Devadeva Dasa

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*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāya bhū-tale  
śrīmate bhaktivedānta-svāmīnīti nāmīnī*

*namas te sārāsvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracārīṇe  
nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tārīṇe*

Thank you Prabhupāda for sharing the Sanātana Dharma.

I have been, and am fortunate to be in the association of devotees.

*Your aspiring servant,*

Devadeva Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for the most profound blessing of being able to worship and connect with the divine names of God – the most personal, the sweetest, the purest, all-powerful, and all-attractive names in existence!

The holy name is everything. Such a priceless gift! It is the lifeblood of our International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness that you created. The holy name is the ultimate goal and sustainer of our devotional lives. We cannot have peace and happiness without the holy name being at the center of our lives.

All of our reading, worship, and *sādhana* is to perfect our chanting of the holy name. Purified and thoroughly honest, we approach the holy name humbly and submissively, knowing we serve your lotus feet by doing so. Pure chanting, *śuddha nāma*, brings *prema* – pure loving devotion to Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa. We get so enlivened by chanting, we want to do everything with more attention and devotion. We want to soak in any, and all, of the knowledge about the Lord and His devotees, their spiritual affairs and abode. We want to broadcast the Lord’s glories and share the chanting with everyone.

Because of your deep and sublime faith in the holy name, your influence continues to sweep across the world, carrying multitudes of ignorant people into the magic of chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Because of your divine potency and that of *harināma*, we get surcharged every day, to live and practice the lifestyle that brings us closer to the holy name.

Where would we be, Śrīla Prabhupāda, without the holy name? Who can imagine how many souls will swim in the ocean of nectar, revealed by the holy name because of your dedication and love?

All glories to you Śrīla Prabhupāda, our divine master, and Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa’s personal emissary and intimate servant!

*Your humble servant,*

Saṅga Thakura Dasa

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

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

Śrīla Prabhupāda, you said "...perfect means to learn how to follow my orders. That is perfection". Instruct everyone to follow the orders of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa as they are given in the *Bhagavad-gītā* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*."— Cc. Madhya 7.128

The year was 1976, and I had the great fortune of serving you by going to the airport in Mexico City to distribute your *Bhāgavatams* and *Gītās*. I was among other great souls. And needless to say that experience carried me throughout four decades.

Last year, because of the pandemic, your instructions became not only a priority but a realization of our own mortality. Your words resounded, "To follow Kṛṣṇa's order that is *dharma*. Simply, fervently, very honestly, obey the orders of Kṛṣṇa."

"Make Kṛṣṇa be the center of your life otherwise everything is ruined". As I watched fear in people's eyes at the uncertainty of facing Yamarāja's rage in the form of the COVID-19 virus, I took shelter in your orders.

Devotees are concentrating on the individual process of purification to advance in Kṛṣṇa consciousness in lieu of gathered *kīrtanas* and *ḥarināmas*. This focused individual and internal process is comparable to the collective experience of the pandemic lockdown. Śrīla Prabhupāda, you mean the world to me. Please, may you allow me to serve you and your devotees in your ISKCON society.

I bow down again and again at your lotus feet,

*Your servant,*

Satyavati Dasi

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances, You who have opened our eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance, with the torchlight of transcendental knowledge.

On this auspicious day of your appearance, we would like to renew our commitment at your lotus feet.

By Your Divine Grace's mercy we are still attempting to practice *bhakti-yoga* the best we can, studying and sharing your books around and praying to enlighten others in doing so in turn.

We are grateful for your teachings and example and beg for spiritual strength to avoid seeing the faults in the management of your international society. Thank you for your divine protection.

Please Śrīla Prabhupāda, kindly bless us so we can set a proper example in greater society and encourage aspiring devotees to support your mission for your pleasure and everyone's benefit.

*We prostrate at your vyāsāsana as your humble servant,*

Krishna-kirtana Devi Dasi

France

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

In the mood of His Holiness Bhakti Tīrtha Swami and Her Grace Yamunā Devī Prabhu, who either spoke or wrote and read to you about their day, their accomplishments and their challenges, I sit before you and speak in order to develop a deeper internal relationship with you.

When my eyes first embraced your beautiful form, it was clear to me that you were and are a saint, perfectly capable of performing a miracle in my life, perfectly capable of seeing and hearing me, as I make progress or experience tests of faith. On that day your love for the Lord emanated from your very pores, as you walked among us and it washed over me, removing sadness, fear, doubt and in a moment all was crystal clear.

As you spoke from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā*, you strengthened me with more soothing waves of transcendence, but because I am lazy, quarrelsome, disturbed and unfocused, I must be reminded, constantly, and thus you are giving me so many instructions to illuminate the devotional path. Please, keep your eye on me. My minute particle of faith is reposed in you. Deep within my wavering mind and heart, I know that you are the only one in whom I can trust. I know that you will neither forget me nor forget the little service that I have performed. I firmly believe that you will not forsake me. I most respectfully bow at your lotus feet and beg for your mercy.

*Your servant,*

Mahapurana Dasa

Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept my humble obeisances. All glories to you and to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu!

Prahlāda Mahārāja prayed to Lord Nṛsiṃhadev, “How is it possible for me, who has been born in a family of *asuras*, to offer suitable prayers to satisfy the Supreme Personality of Godhead?”

I feel like that. I’m not qualified to praise you. I’m still conditioned by my birth in an ungodly family.

However, I aspire to achieve pure *bhakti* to you and to the merciful Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Now that I’m closer to the end of my life I realize that I should be eager to offer my mind, words, deeds, wealth, and life to you—that is, to your *saṅkīrtana* movement. In that way, I’ll truly be qualified to glorify you. And in that way, perhaps you’ll give me your mercy so that I might achieve pure *bhakti* to you.

I know that you don’t need my service. Even composing these words of praise to you is not for your benefit, but it benefits me.

Still, I must submit them to you with feeling. Śrīla Prabhupāda, when I chant and serve you, feelings of affection come and go. Eagerness to surrender to you comes and goes. It’s mixed with desire for prestige, adoration, and distinction. But I’m anxious to become purified of these desires. I want to serve so that my sentiment is without any tinge of selfishness. Mahāprabhu has shown the way. Let me serve you without selfishness.

My service is for your pleasure. You’re so kind that you came to this world to reclaim the fallen souls on behalf of Mahāprabhu, but in my self-centered way, I think that you’ve come to save me. Yet sometimes, in my right mind, I don’t care for saving. I just want to serve you wherever I go in the material universe.

Sometimes I lament my condition here in the world and cry out for you, but how am I qualified to do so, when I am the one who was eager to enjoy the illusory fruits of this world in the first place? I was excited at the prospect of false enjoyment, and now I’m bound by *māyā*. So, naturally I want liberation. Let me remember to love you so that I don’t get myself in that predicament again.

Sometimes I long for your association and I think that when I die I might go to serve with you, and the others at Mahāprabhu’s lotus feet, but unless I purify my mind, it’s a false hope. So, as I try to do just that, kindly show your mercy to me. I am Dayānanda. You

told me that my name means “one who takes pleasure in the Lord’s mercy.” So, kindly fulfill the name you gave me and allow me to bathe in your mercy.

Like Prahlāda, you’ve done a wonderful thing by converting the sons and daughters of the ungodly people of the West. Previously, we followed the *yavana* religions, which are meant for those conditioned by passion and ignorance. But you brought the *saṅkīrtana dharma*, which is pursued by those even beyond goodness.

Our forefathers conquered and enslaved the peoples of this world. They did this so that they might live like kings and queens without a thought of offering anything in sacrifice to Kṛṣṇa. Now we, in our arrogance, turn to machines to serve us. And those machines give us the enjoyment of kings and queens without the embarrassment of having to enslave other humans. Our ungodly societies are still based on the desire to enjoy this world. We don’t even offer sacrifice to the demigods. Our societies are truly absorbed in ignorance. And America is at the forefront. The people of our nation assume that they have the right to enjoy and control, and so our military and our businesses roam the world looking for opportunities to do so.

My relatives and countrymen and women kill billions of animals each year. The sin is unfathomable. But I stand by helplessly and complain that they are just not interested in *saṅkīrtana*.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, I beg to be an instrument in the conversion of these demons. They are my relatives and friends. Unfortunately, I still have affection for them. How will they be saved if I stand idly by? Please use me to liberate them like Kṛṣṇa did with Arjuna. Let me burn up their sins, not by extinguishing their bodies, but by using the great power of Kṛṣṇa’s name.

There’s no other hope for me in this world. And there is no other hope for those trapped here with me. I’m trying to have attachment for chanting and serving. As I do, please help me. Make me your instrument.

*Your humble servant,*

Dayānanda Dāsa



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