

Vaiṣṇava Transmission

Volume 1, No. 3 • June/July 1994

**Special 1994 New York/
New Jersey Tour Issue**



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Gokulananda das

The most auspicious time is almost upon us--His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev Goswami Maharaja will soon be here in the New York/New Jersey area for one week. The last time Srila Govinda Maharaja was here, the fire of bhakti was unleashed on the unsuspecting city. This time, we all expect that fire to immolate even more fortunate souls. I fall prostrated in front of my divine master.

Srila Govinda Maharaja surprised many of us when he agreed to return to New York only ten months after his last visit in October, 1993. This is due to the tireless work of Sripad Bhakti Kanan Giri Maharaja, the appointed local acharya of Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math. Sripad Giri Maharaja has knocked himself out for the last ten months trying to increase the pure devotional sentiments of our small community here. Srila Govinda Maharaja is now returning here because of Giri Maharaja's selfless efforts, and I cannot thank him enough. I offer my dandavat pranams at his feet.

Sriman Preet Prabhu, Sriman Dayal Chand, Sriman Jagannath Vallabha, Srimati Lila Sundari, and so many others have encouraged me in my service attempt by offering me the example of dedicated service to the divine feet of Sri Sri Guru Gauranga Gandarvika Giridhari. I offer my respects to them as well.

Many persons have approached me asking about serving Srila Govinda Maharaja personally while he is present in this area. There is no need to worry, so much service needs to be done, practically anyone wishing something to do to bolster Srila Govinda Maharaja's preaching program can be accommodated. Whether cooking, cleaning, making garlands, driving devotees, making a service donation towards the costly travel arrangements of His Divine Grace, or just informing your family and friends about Srila Govinda Maharaja's tour itinerary, every individual can become part of the divine seva descending here from August 14-20, 1994.

I hope to see everyone during this week long *bhaktifest*, and if I can be of any help to you, your friends, or family, please do not hesitate to approach me, and I will try to help you in any way that I can.

Substantial connection to the service plane of reality is very hard to attain, and yet, it will unquestionably be present from August 14-20, 1994, with no necessity of any extra exertion on our side. Simply put, Srila Govinda Maharaja's presence here let's even a fool like me make a small step into the divine realm of Reality The Beautiful.

V a i s n a v a
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This magazine is an offering to Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev Goswami Maharaja, who is fulfilling the innermost desires of Srila B.R. Sridhar Dev Goswami Maharaja and Srila A.C Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada by traveling this Earth planet and presenting the conception of Radha Dasyam in the line of Srila Rupa Goswami.

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Hare Krishna Guru Returns To NY



Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev Goswami Maharaja

Sevante Acharya, Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math

Second New York Area Tour August 14-20, 1994

TOUR PROGRAM

8/14	MORNING DAYTIME EVENING	HIS DIVINE GRACE ARRIVES AT PHILEDELPHIA AIRPORT LUNCH AT SRI CHAITANYA SARASWAT MATH, NEW JERSEY LECTURE: CENTER OF THE HOLY NAME 1025 MANHATTAN AVENUE, BROOKLYN (6:00-9:00PM)
8/15	ALL DAY	DARSHAN AT SRI CHAITANYA SARASWAT MATH, NJ
8/16	EVENING	LECTURE: 50 E. 7TH ST. (MIDDLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH) 2ND AVENUE & 7TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY (6:00-9:00PM)
8/17	EVENING	LECTURE AT SRI CHAITANYA SARASWAT MATH, NJ
8/18	MORNING EVENING	FIRST INITIATIONS AT SRI CHAITANYA SARASWAT MATH, NJ LECTURE AT SRI CHAITANYA SARASWAT MATH, NJ
8/19	EVENING	LECTURE: 50 E. 7TH ST. (MIDDLE COLLEGIATE CHURCH) 2ND AVENUE & 7TH STREET, NEW YORK CITY (6:00-9:00PM)
8/20	MORNING EVENING	SECOND INITIATIONS AT SRI CHAITANYA SARASWAT MATH, NJ HIS DIVINE GRACE DEPARTS FROM NEW YORK/JFK INTERNATIONAL

SRILA GOVINDA MAHARAJA LIVED AS AN INITIATED DISCIPLE WITH SRILA SRIDHAR MAHARAJA (FOUNDER OF THE MISSION) FOR OVER 40 YEARS. HE LIVED WITH SRILA PRABHUPADA (BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI) FOR OVER 12 YEARS. HE IS A PERFECT COMBINATION OF BOTH HIS GUARDIANS, AND IS ABLE TO PRESENT THE CONCLUSIONS OF THE KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT IN AN INSPIRED WAY. NOT SINCE THE TIME OF SRILA PRABHUPADA HAS SUCH AN AUGUST PERSONALITY BEEN SO CLOSE AT HAND.

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First Tour *Meditation*

By Chidananda Das Brahmachari

Chidananda das Brahmachari is a disciple of Srila Prabhupada, and he has been tirelessly serving Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math for many years. His ability to convey the excitement and hope brought about by Srila Govinda Maharaja's touring will reveal to the reader the importance of the current preaching mission. Chidananda Prabhu is primarily based in California, although he travels wherever Srila Govinda Maharaja can be found.

As I stood waiting for the arrival of His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswami Maharaj at the Honolulu airport in June of 1992, I had the exact same feeling I had twenty years earlier as I was waiting in the exact same spot for His Divine Grace Srila A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada to arrive from Fiji. Many planes were landing and taking off and many people were coming through the immigration doors to visit Hawaii from foreign countries. There were tour parties, flower garland greeting parties with big buses and cars to take the people to resort hotels. But Srila Govinda Maharaj and Srila Prabhupada weren't like these ordinary people. They were devotees of the Lord. They were coming to carry out work directly on behalf of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They weren't interested to gain anything from the people of Hawaii or the western world but wanted to give their life experiences in Krsna consciousness. There is one verse in the Srimad-Bhagavatam (1.5.12) where Narada Muni says to Vyasadeva, "Your vision is completely perfect. Your good fame is spotless. You are firm in vow and



His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda dev Goswami Maharaja- current maintainer of the line of Sri Rupa.

situated in truthfulness. And thus you can think of the pastimes of the Lord in trance for the liberation of the people in general from all material bondage.”

“Srila Sridhar Maharaj was the foremost and most important disciple of Srila Saraswati Thakur.”

Both Srila Govinda Maharaj and Srila Prabhupada were completely perfect and fixed in truthfulness and therefore they could think of the Lord and know which way to liberate the people in general from all material bondage. They knew what was right and what was wrong. They knew what the present situation was of the material world and they knew how to preach and guide the living entities from the bondage of material life. And their truth is *Satyam priya - hitam ca yat*. It is pleasing truth or tasteful truth. It is a truth which is not dry but brings joy and pleasure to one who hears it.

Amara anaya guru hara tara ei desa. And because they are distributing this truth in a pleasing way they have the bhava of Mahaprabhu when He said “I am distributing the truth for all who are drowning in the ocean of Maya. Go on with this relief work.”

They were coming as a pair of devotees with Srila Govinda Maharaj picking up and continuing to teach where Srila Prabhupada left off. I felt a great deal of happiness and joy as Srila Govinda Maharaj was about to arrive. I didn’t know what form his preaching would take but I felt it must be sublime.

Srila Govinda Maharaj and Srila Prabhupada had a long and close rela-



Srila Sridhara Maharaja’s dearest desire was to install Srila Govinda Maharaja as the successor acharya of Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math, and its international branches.

tionship and had prepared for their mission for a long time. Both were trained to preach in the western world by the most illustrious disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur, His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Dev-Goswami Maharaj.

Srila Sridhar Maharaj was the foremost and most important disciple of Srila Saraswati Thakur. He had traveled all over India helping him establish 64 branches of his Gaudiya Math. In the eyes of most of the elevated disciples of Srila Saraswati he was the finest preacher the world has ever seen.

Rupanuga Sampradaya

Just before Srila Saraswati Thakur left this world he called Srila Guru Maharaj and asked him to sing Sri Rupa Manjari Pada the song which symbolizes and gives us light of the highest quarter of bhajan life. Our sampradaya is named as the Rupanuga-sampradaya and our Guru-parampara is adjusted according to that. And this great and most noble personality had agreed to train and teach Srila Prabhupada and Srila Govinda Maharaj

to preach in the western world and give devotees relief from the onslaught of material nature.

Sloka Instruction

Both Srila Prabhupada and Srila Govinda Maharaj spent many years working together and studying under Srila Guru Maharaj. During the later 1940’s and 1950’s Srila Guru Maharaj had a branch temple in Calcutta at the family home of Srila Prabhupada. Whenever Srila Guru Maharaj and Srila Govinda Maharaj were there they would associate intimately together. If Govinda Maharaj was by himself Guru Maharaj asked him to study Bhagavad-gita from Srila Swami Maharaj. He would go to his room early in the morning when he was doing his translation work and Srila Prabhupada would instruct him in the slokas. Srila Govinda Maharaj is extremely intelligent and has a perfect memory so he learned the Bhagavad-gita very rapidly.

Srila Govinda Maharaj enjoyed associating with Srila Prabhupada and sometimes they would go to preaching engagements together. They would

sit on the same Vyasan together. Govinda Maharaj would read the slokas and Srila Prabhupada would preach. During the question and answer period both would take time answering the questions. In this way Govinda Maharaj began to know the western mentality as most of Swami Maharaj's friends were business friends who had a connection with the western way of life.

“The relationship between Srila Guru Maharaj, Srila Govinda Maharaj and Srila Prabhupada grew in a very affectionate way.”

Govinda Maharaj appreciated having the association of Srila Prabhupada and began to help him in his mission by distributing *Back to Godhead* magazine. He often states that he was the first distributor of B.T.G. magazine.

Their relationship grew through the 1950's and reached a culmination in 1955 when Srila Prabhupada sent him a letter of congratulations on his revitalizing the Gaudiya Darsan which was begun by Srila Bhaktisiddhanta. In this letter he said “I can see in time you will become a great transcendental humorist in the art of journalism. You have the complete mercy of your Divine Master ...”

The relationship between Srila Guru Maharaj, Srila Govinda Maharaj and Srila Prabhupada grew in a very affectionate way. Srila Prabhupada had seen Srila Saraswati Thakur only a few times. His main association was with Srila Guru Maharaj and Govinda Maharaj. When Srila Prabhupada would come to Nabadwip or when Srila



Srila Govinda Maharaja had an intimate relationship with both Srila Sridhar maharaja, and Srila Prabhupada.

Guru Maharaj would stay at his Calcutta temple they would have high level discussions of the finer points of Krsna consciousness. Srila Prabhupada would question Guru Maharaj and Guru Maharaj would give the answer. Sometimes their discussions would go all morning or late into the night. Srila Guru Maharaj knew everything of both material and spiritual knowledge.

A Good Preparation

He taught Prabhupada how the major philosophers of the western world from Socrates to Plato to Bishop Berkeley, David Hume, Hegel, Kant and Charles Darwin compared to the various Vedic Philosophers of Buddha, Sankaracharya, Vyasaadev, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur and Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur. They would discuss many things from many different angles and establish the superiority of the Vedic conception and the teachings of Mahaprabhu.

Guru Maharaj directly taught Prabhupada the philosophy of objec-

tive evolution that states life comes from life. In this modern age the whole world is under the misconception that life comes from a fossil, a rock, a black hole in space or some combination of dead inert matter.

Fallacious Science

The modern scientists think that by the proper arrangement of dead matter and given enough time, that somehow another life will be created. Despite the fact that no scientist has proved this, they still cling to this idea. Many secondary theories are based on this great misconception.

For example, people believe the food they eat can be manufactured in a laboratory or saturated with many chemicals that take the life and vitality from food. The whole synthetic drug and food industry is based on this misconception. They think that if ultimately life comes from dead matter then we can maintain our body from dead matter.

Srila Guru Maharaj taught that “Evolution comes from inside, from

consciousness, and is the cause of seeing the different things of this world. Evolution is from within, not from outside. Reality does not develop from imperfection (a stone) to perfection (a human being). To theorize that imperfection is producing perfection is ludicrous.” (Subjective Evolution of consciousness by Swami B. R. Sridhar, p. 52)

“Srila Govinda Maharaj was always eager to help Srila Prabhupada in his missionary activities.”

And how does consciousness evolve or what is the force behind evolution. Srila Guru Maharaj said, “Our consciousness evolves through dedication.” Dedication or devotion is moving force behind evolution and is the innate property of all living entities. Everyone has some degree of devotion. The more one has the higher he has evolved. The Vedas say there are 400,000 different species of human beings. The higher class such as the Brahmins and Ksatriyas are understood to have evolved more and are closer to God than the lower ones. The quantity and quality of devotion that one has acquired determines whether he is in a higher or lower of the 400,000 human species, not some random force the scientist can’t put their finger on or explain.

These ideas and conceptions were all explained to Srila Prabhupada by the mercy of Srila Guru Maharaj, so when he went to the west he was able to defeat many great scientists and scholars who were operating under this misconception.

Heavy Discussions

Srila Govinda Maharaj was always at these high level of discussions. When Guru Maharaj was in Calcutta speaking with Srila Prabhupada, Govinda Maharaj was there taking part in these discussions. When Srila Prabhupada came to Nabadwip, Govinda Maharaj was there also.

When the exalted Godbrothers of Srila Guru Maharaj came to question Srila Guru Maharaj, Srila Govinda Maharaj was always there. He has often said the reason he became perfect in Krsna consciousness was because he received the full blessings of his spiritual master as well as the exalted disciples of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta.

When Srila Prabhupada was ready to go to the west, he approached Srila Guru Maharaj for sannyasa. Guru Maharaj wasn’t able to give him at that time as he had a close relationship with the family of Srila Prabhupada. He asked him to wait six months but when Srila Prabhupada said he was very eager to go, he advised him to go to Kesava Maharaj. He said he had given the mantra to him and it would be the same as taking sannyasa from himself.

The First Ambassador

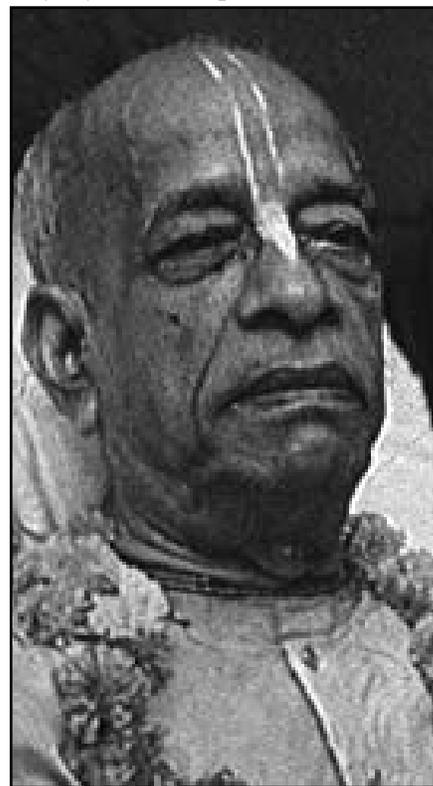
Srila Govinda Maharaj was always eager to help Srila Prabhupada in his missionary activities. When he first returned to India in 1967, Govinda Maharaj arranged a grand reception from the residence of Nabadwip Dham. He rented a large hall and invited the town leaders. Govinda Maharaj introduced Srila Prabhupada as the first true ambassador of India to go abroad. He said many Indians and religious teachers had gone abroad but they hadn’t made one devotee of Mahaprabhu. Srila Prabhupada had single handedly established Krsna consciousness in the west. He had undergone many difficulties and austerities and the residents of Nabadwip should be proud that Mahaprabhu’s teachings had been successfully established abroad.

After this reception, he took Srila Prabhupada to a large (the blue) house next to the Math and arranged for his lodging needs. Everyday many respectable people came to speak with Srila Prabhupada.

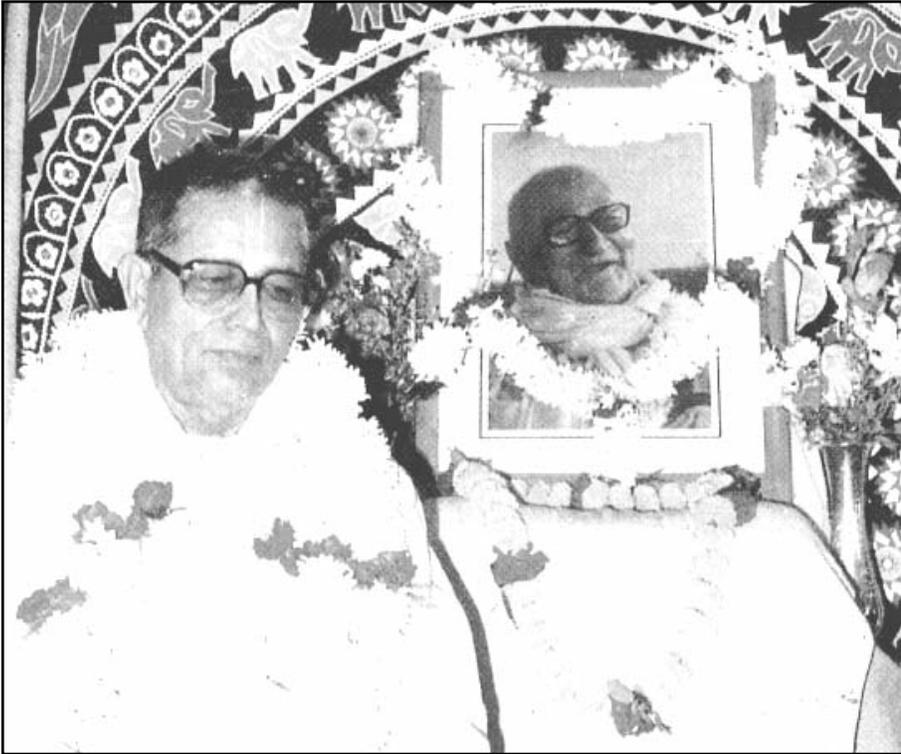
Opening Speeches

In 1973 when Srila Prabhupada was opening the Sri Chaitanya Chandrodaya temple in Mayapur he invited Srila Guru Maharaj and Srila Govinda Maharaj to preside over the ceremonies. Srila Prabhupada introduced Srila Guru Maharaj who spoke first. Afterwards he called on Srila Govinda Maharaj. He was a little surprised and wasn’t prepared. As he was rising to speak he was praying for guidance. Just as his time had come he caught a glimpse of Krsna das Babaji Maharaj and this one verse from the Padyavali 1.26 came to his mind.

*srutim apare smrtim itare
tam anye bhajantu bhava-bhitah
aham iha nandam vande
yasyalinde param brahma*



Srila Prabhupada considered Srila Govinda Maharaja as his spiritual son—his real son.



Srila Govinda Maharaja is always glorifying the name, form and pastimes of his merciful guardians.

“Those who fear rebirth in this world may follow the advice of the Vedic scriptures - others may follow the Mahabharata - but for me, I follow Nanda Maharaj in whose courtyard the Supreme absolute truth plays as a child.”

Who'd Have Figured

He began by saying who could believe that this grand person, Srila Prabhupada, who was formerly a simple householder disciple of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta, and who was always struggling to maintain his family, had now gone to the west and successfully preached Krsna consciousness. Now he had returned a world famous devotee and was opening a grand temple. It was as unbelievable as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all causes, playing as a simple child in the backyard of Nanda Maharaj.

As I stood waiting at the Honolulu airport for the arrival of Srila Govinda Maharaj, I was thinking of the intimate

relation between these three great souls. By looking at their relationship I could understand the verse of the Bhagavad-gita that says:

*mac-citta mad-gata-prana
bodhayantah parasparam
kathayanta ca mam nityam
tusyanti ca ramanti ca*

“... the lives of the great souls are surrendered to Me and they receive great satisfaction and bliss enlightening one another and conversing about Me.” (Bg. 10.9)

The Training

I knew the three of them had spent much time together and had enlightened one another in Krsna consciousness. I knew Srila Govinda Maharaj and Srila Prabhupada had been trained for their mission by Srila Guru Maharaj. Srila Prabhupada teaching had been sublime and I knew Govinda Maharaj would be also. I didn't know how it would manifest but it must be auspicious for the world. The Srimad-

Bhagavatam (1.5.11) states that literature (or words) spoken by great souls bring about a revolution in the impious lives of this world's misdirected civilization.

*Srila Govinda
Maharaj is doing
the highest relief
work for human
society.*

Many calamities had come to the world since Srila Prabhupada's preaching stopped but now a brighter future would result because of Srila Govinda Maharaj's coming to the west.

He, like Srila Prabhupada, was coming to do good for the people.

*tava kathamrtam tapta-jivanam
havbhir iditam halmasupaham
sravana-mangalam srimad-alatam
bhur grnanti te bhurida janah*

“O Krsna, we are always suffering in this world but just hearing the nectar of Your words and pastimes gives us life and as by-product it removes all of our sinful reactions. This sort of hearing is all auspicious and fills us with spiritual wealth. Those who deliver this message of Godhead are doing the highest relief work for human society and are actually the greatest humanitarians.”

Srila Govinda Maharaj is the greatest humanitarian and he is doing the highest relief work for human society. However his preaching would manifest itself in this world would be for the good of everyone. I knew when his plane landed and he walked through the immigration doors that the whole world again was blessed just as twenty years earlier when Srila Prabhupada walked through those same doors.

Who Is The Acharya?

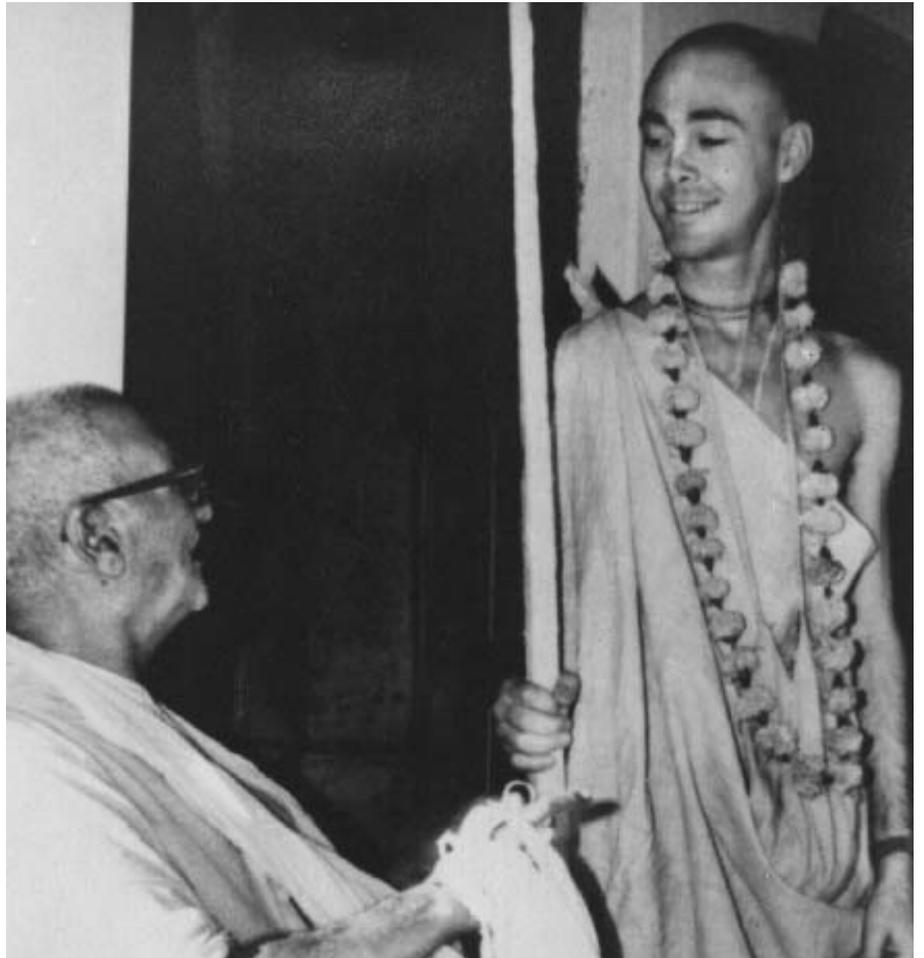
By Swami B.K. Giri

acharyamam purusha veda

“By associating with a genuine acharya
all knowledge of the Vedas will be revealed.”

Study of the Vedas independent of the supervisory eye of the acharya is useless. Mere study of the Vedas will not allow entrance into an understanding of them. Yet, even without study of the Vedas themselves all their wealth will be transferred to the genuine disciple who is connected to a bonafide acharya.

The basis of association with the acharyadeva is threefold. Pranipat, pariprashna, and seva. Pranipat means serious, submissive and sincere inquiry. Devotional knowledge will never be attained by a challenging spirit. The ideal of proper inquiry can be found in the example of questions posed by Maharaja Pariksit to Sri Sukadeva. Pariksit Maharaja inquired of Sri Sukadeva with humility, sincerity and respect. One other element may be added here-urgency. Pariksit Maharaja could see the immanence of his death and he wisely abandoned all other



interests and engagements to concentrate his total attention on his ultimate welfare and the welfare of his kingdom. Without urgency we will not be able to concentrate our energy sufficiently to take full advantage of the acharya's instruction.

The Positive Region

Pariprashna (submission) describes the proper method of approach to any inquiry or service. Pariprashna is the negative irresistibly attracting force on the positive Absolute which draws Him to us. The soul may be thought of as an infinitesimal atom of consciousness, in Sanskrit called atma. Krsna, the super soul, is the infinite all attractive, all pervading super consciousness, known as Paramatma (the super atma). When the soul is negatively charged with the wholesale submissive spirit to the Absolute, he will be drawn into the positive region of the absolute good—the spiritual kingdom of God.

The embassy of the spiritual world is found in the region of the person, personality, paraphernalia and associates of the acharya. The acharya himself is the ambassador of the spiritual kingdom of God.

Submission to the acharya allows entrance to this embassy and all asso-

ciated benefits. Just as an embassy is, in essence, a country within a country, so this spiritual embassy is the domain of the spiritual world within the mundane plane of existence. As such, all the benefits of the spiritual world may be found within the boundaries of the acharya's sphere of influence.

“Therefore, submission to the will of the acharya is non-different to submission to Krishna.”

Krishna says “*acharyam mam vijaniyam*”- “I am the acharya, never disrespect him or think of him as your equal for he is greater than the sum total of all the demigods.” Krishna is telling us there is no difference between the acharya and Himself. Therefore, submission to the will of the acharya is non-different to submission to Krishna, and will bring the same benefit.

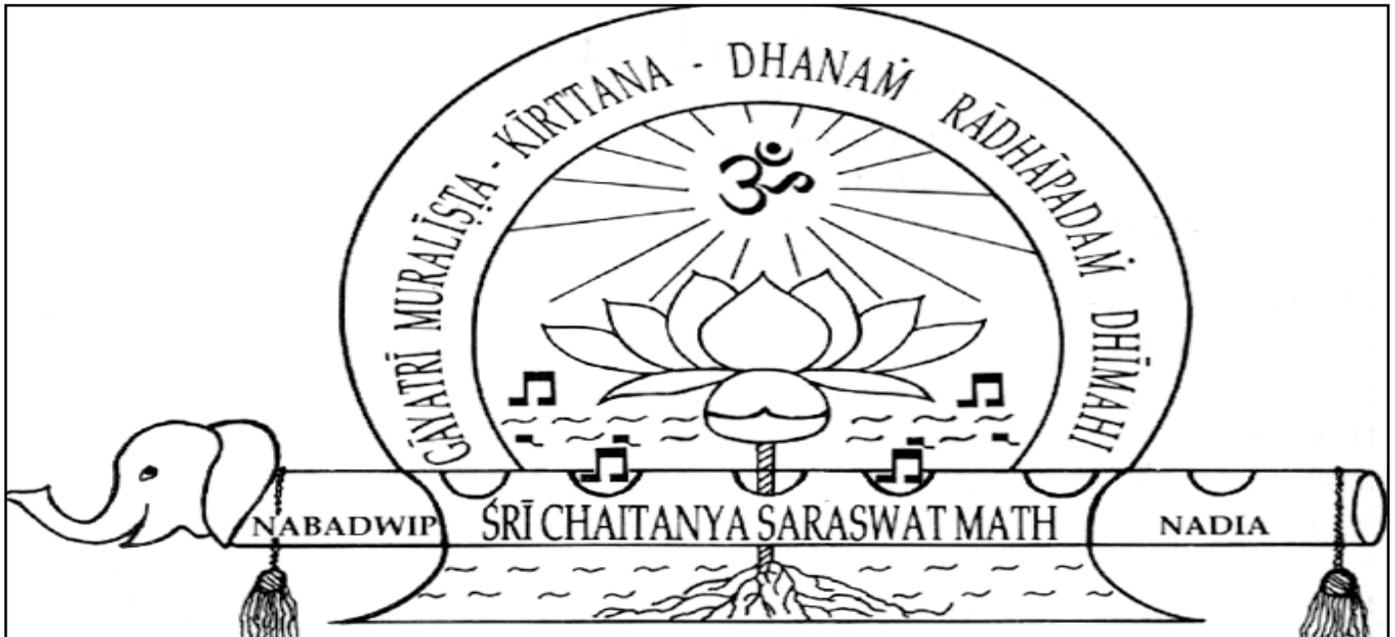
But this is not all Krsna has to say

on the subject. When speaking to Uddhava, Krsna told him, “You are more dear to Me than My own self, My own life.” Krishna told the gopis that he felt unable to adequately respond to their exalted service. God Himself is feeling inadequate in His ability to reciprocate the loving dealings of his devotees, who never accept any service from Him. It is this feeling of inadequacy on His part that gives the jiva's their greatest opportunity.

My Devotees Are My Heart

By serving the devotee of Krsna we get the opportunity to do what Krsna Himself is unable to do. In the Bhagavatam Krsna states, “*bhaktair bhakta jana priya.*” He who is the devotee of my devotee is the most dear to me, no one is more dear to Me than he. In the Chaitanya Charitamrta this verse appears “*sadhunam hridayam mayam, sadhunam hridayam tva ham, mad anyet te na janati naham tebhyo manag api*”, “My devotees are My heart and I am the heart of My devotees. My devotees do not know anyone but Me. Similarly I do not know anyone but My devotees.

This brings us to the final point of the triumvirate precepts-seva. Seva performed with full submissive spirit to the acharya is the greatest means of



attracting his benevolent will. It is this benevolence which brings our ultimate benefit, not study of the Vedas. The impersonal school of the mayavadis has brought forth some of the greatest scholars of the Vedas, yet, they never rise above the stage of offenders to the absolute. Srila Sridhara Maharaja once said their chanting of the holy name of Krsna is like thunder striking His body.

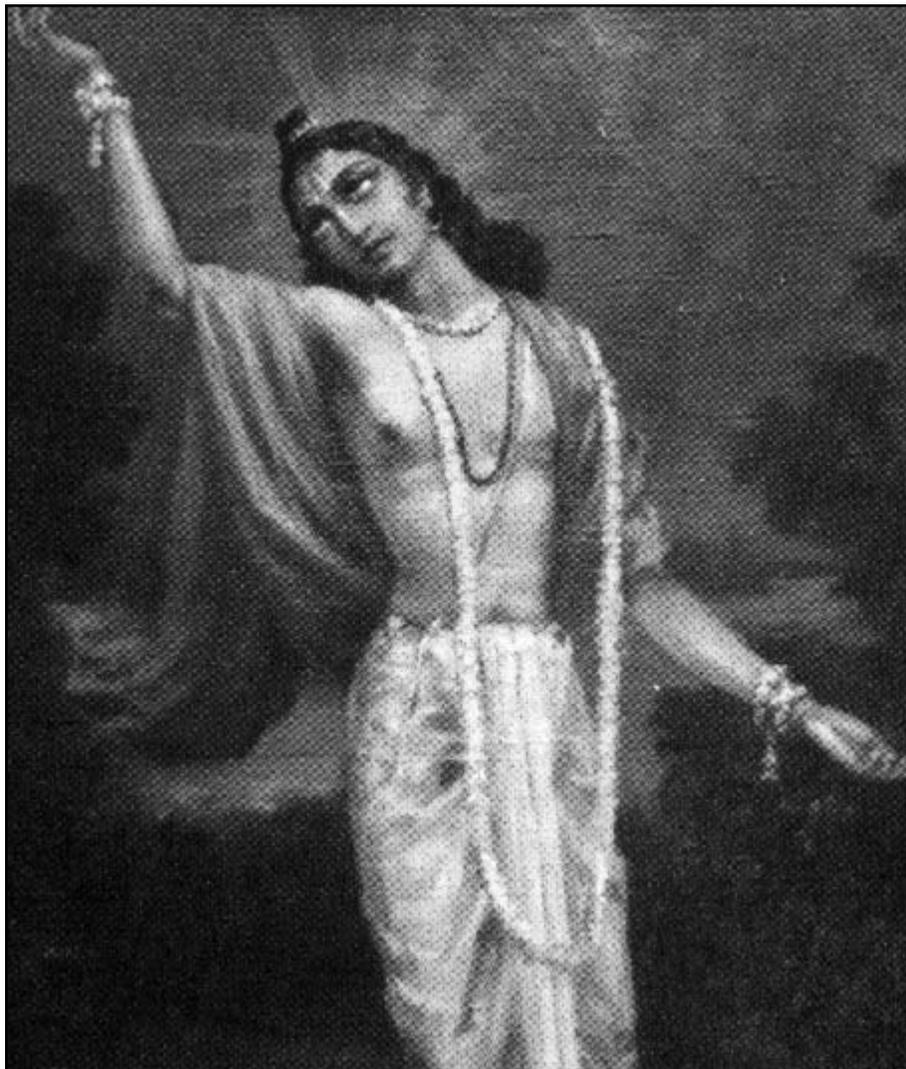
Self Realized Soul

Tad viddhi pranipatena pariprashnena sevaya, upadekshanti te jnanam jnaninas tattva darshanam. In the Bhagavad Gita Krishna says “Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth.

The method of discovering the acharya, however, is very mystical. Although the scriptures describe the quality of a bonafide guru, there is some ambiguity, between what the shastras describe and what we are able to see in the acharya. For proper vision of the acharya one must have real faith and genuineness. *Na hi kalyana krt kaschit durgatim tattva gacchati.* “If we are sincere no one will be able to deceive us.”

Don't Make The Mistake!

In the Upadeshamrta Srila Rupa Goswami describes some of the characteristics by which a bonafide guru can be identified. *Vacho vegam, manasa krodha vegam, jiva vegam, udhara-pasta vegam,* etc. One who can control the urges of the tongue, anger, sex desire, etc. is qualified to initiate disciples. However, we would be mistaken to think that the acharya doesn't get angry, doesn't eat, etc. He may, as a householder, even engage in procreation as did Vyasadeva. In the verse *krishneti yasya giri tam manasadriyeta*



The real acharya presents the conclusions of Sri Krsna Chaitanya, in the line of Sri Rupa. Only by the Acharya's mercy can we make real progress.

Rupa goswami tells us that the pure devotee is completely devoid of the propensity to criticize others, yet there are innumerable examples of the greatest acharya's engaged in the criticism of others. While compiling the Srimad Bhagavatam, Srila Vyasadeva criticized all forms of religion that did not promote exclusive devotion to Krsna. In the same vein Srila Bahktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura declared “totalitarian war against maya and even all other existing conceptions of religion”.

Finally, the pure devotee subdues any outward appearance of the symptoms of devotional sentiment such as tears, ecstasy, etc. and criticizes such exhibitions in others as indications

sahajiyaism (cheap or imitation devotion).

Are we then helpless in finding a true acharya? Not at all. But most of the responsibility rests in a true evaluation of ourselves and our eagerness for devotional life. As mentioned before *na hi kalyana krt kaschit*-if we are sincere to ourselves no one can deceive us.

Just Find Him

We must make a sincere attempt to find a preceptor who will guide us in our spiritual development and we must be very cautious not to accept a guide on any basis other than we find him to be the most qualified servant of the

absolute. We will always be tempted to accept an easy path from a guide whom we find agreeable. But, this mode of searching will almost certainly mislead us.

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur described the best religion as the one which gives the purest and highest ideal of God. The acharya is the purest and highest representative of that ideal.

Embarkation

Once again, we are anticipating the blessings of such an acharya. He is none other than His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Sundara Govinda Deva Goswami Maharaja. He has already embarked on his fifth world tour and enlivened, encouraged and inspired thousands of devotees in Brazil, Venezuela, Ecuador, Mexico and California. In a few days he will travel to Detroit, and then here to our Math in New Jersey with additional programs in New York city. Afterwards he will go on to England, Germany, and Hungary.

Right At Home

Over the centuries the continent of India has been the home of many great gurus. However, even in India, whether in the past or the present, it is extremely rare that one would get the opportunity to associate with and serve such a pure devotee. Now by the grace of our guru varga we may find more benefit for ourselves in our own country than any gain we might achieve by traveling to the holy places of India. In Chaitanya Charitamrta it is said “*brahmanda brahmite con bhagyavan jiva, guru krishna prasade pai bhakti lata bija*” The living entity is traveling throughout the entire universe in one body after another, birth after birth. However, if he is very fortunate he may one day get the mercy of Krishna, and by the mercy of Krishna he will get

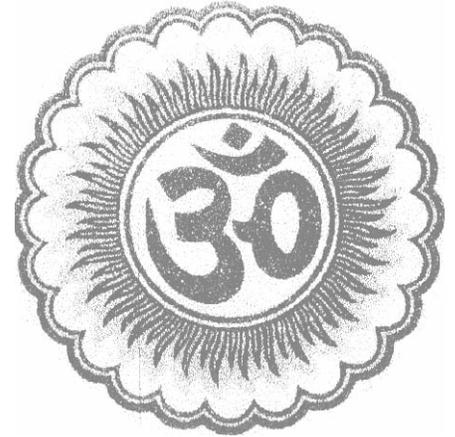
connection with a vaishnava guru. By the grace of such a guru he will get the seed of devotion to Krishna and his spiritual life will begin”.

*“Associate with
the sadhu,
associate with
the sadhu,
associate with
the sadhu!”*

In another verse we find this expression “*sadhu sanga sadhu sanga sarva siddhi haya, lava matra sadhu sanga sei guru haya*”. Associate with the sadhu, associate with the sadhu, associate with the sadhu. For even a fraction of a moment’s association with a genuine guru will enable one to achieve the highest perfection. Now by the mercy of Sri Sri Guru Gauranga such an opportunity rests at our doorstep. How unfortunate we would be to miss it.

Just Admit It

The mortal world is the repository of all kinds of miseries, disappointments and heartaches. We have all exerted extraordinary effort to avoid, alleviate, or mitigate these sufferings. Yet we unable to do so. We must admit our frailties, but we must never give up hope. We will remain ever vigilant to nurture our hope and rightful expectation of a future which shall prove too wonderful for the greatest imaginations to conceive. Our acharyadeva is the via media to that hope and nourishment. We humbly and sincerely invite one and all to join with us in our celebration of the joyous occasion of his visit.



Emotion Or Devotion?

Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev Goswami Maharaja

This article originally appeared in the most glorious Vaisnava Publication from London, *Counterpoint*. We wish to sincerely thank Sripad B.A. Sagar Maharaja and Sri Devasis Dasadhikari for their inspirational work.



Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev Goswami Maharaja

Devotee: I want to know if it is okay to read the higher books by the Goswamis, describing the intimate pastimes of Radha and Krsna?

Srila Govinda Mahraj: We are not doing that. In my forty-two years with Srila Guru Maharaj (Srila Sridhar Maharaj) I never once heard him give permission for that to us. I know many of the books you are speaking of, very well; that is my position was somewhat different. Srila Guru Maharaj is a paramahansa Vaisnava and I was his personal servant up until about 1983, when I engaged some others for his personal service. At that time my seva responsibility increased in such a big way that I was unable to always

serve Guru Maharaj in person, still I was always looking after his health. From 1973 I was treating Srila Guru Maharaj as his doctor. Guru Maharaj was so ill that all the doctors had said that no medicine could work in his body, and they were sure that within a few days or a week at most he would leave his body. Of course Guru Maharaj's body is siddha body, but still all the most qualified doctors said that it was beyond their capacity to treat him.

Then one day, I was taking my bath and I was crying, and I called to Lord Siva, "Oh Lord Siva, you have said that I am your son, and really I feel that I am. You are the master of a l l

medicine, so please my Lord give me some medicine for my Guru Mahraj." After my desperate prayer I heard the name of a medicine, as if from the air. At first I thought I had mistaken the sound of the water from the shower as the name of the medicine, so I prayed again, "Please let me hear that name again so that I may be sure." And again the sound of that medicine came.

The Doctor Enters

I knew that medicine because at that time I was practicing as a doctor of Homeopathy to the people, but until now I had never treated Srila Guru Mahraj. This was because firstly I was not always staying with Guru Maharaj, and secondly I had never considered myself to be a very good doctor. I was able to give some help to the poor but I felt that was as much as I could do. In any case after hearing the medicine from Lord Siva, I felt very free in my mind and I knew that Guru Maharaj will not leave us now. In the meantime Hari Charan prabhu called me on the telephone, "Srila Guru Mahraj is sinking fast, he has no pulse, only a slight heartbeat, and no blood pressure." I told him, as a matter of fact, "Prabhu, don't worry, I have just now been given a medicine by Lord Siva, give it to Guru Maharaj and he will be cured. I am coming right away."

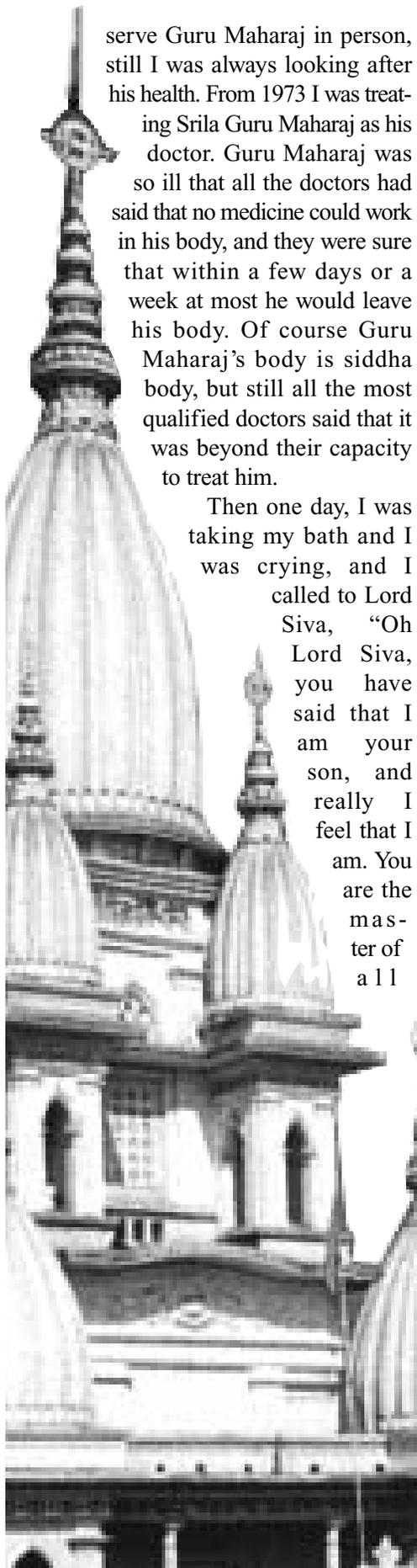
A Doctor In The House?

I took the last train from Calcutta, which was late, and arrived at the Math at about 12 O'clock midnight, and when I arrived I saw Guru Maharaj sitting in his chair and taking prasadam with his own hand. I asked Guru Mahraj, "What happened? Hari Charan prabhu told me you were sinking." And Guru Mahraj replied, "Yes, I was but Hari Charan prabhu gave me the medicine that

you told him, and now you can see." Then his pulse came back and blood pressure became normal, and Guru Mahraj said, "From this day you will be my doctor." All of Guru Maharaj's doctors consented, but still I was thinking that Guru Maharaj is so great that somebody will chastise me, "Why are you not calling the doctor, why are you treating Guru Mahraj?" I was a little afraid and still I could not consider myself as a very good doctor. Then Guru Maharaj said, "All the doctors have already said that no medicine can work for me, so now happily you can treat me." So I became Guru Maharaj's doctor, and after that his main illness was chronic headache. He had suffered from the headache from the age of seventeen, and from twenty two it became very strong. When Guru Maharaj was suffering with this headache he could not eat anything. Only he would take water and constantly throwing up. Sometimes this would last for three days, sometimes six days, and sometimes up to twelve days. So I began researching, and finally I told Guru Maharaj, "Maharaj, now your headache must go. I can treat you and forever it will be gone."

A New Prescription

All the Homeopathic doctors who had treated Guru Maharaj had prescribed Nux-Vomica and administered it from 30 to MM potency, but none had had the desired effect. As they had all prescribed this same medicine, I concluded that Nux-Vomica must be Guru Maharaj's constitutional medicine. I then went to an Allopathic doctor and asked him what is the dosage of Nux-Vomica mother tincture in Allopathy. It was eight drops maximum, so I decided to give Guru Maharaj five drops. When the first signs of the headache came I administered the five drops of the



mother tincture and the headache was reduced to a standby position. I was confident that now this headache will go because previously no medicine could check it. The only other medicine that could give Guru Maharaj relief from his condition was Cafergot, a type of Ergotamine. Ergotamine is a very serious drug, and through taking this, all of Guru Maharaj's health problems came, but it was the only relief possible before now. After about two or three hours again the headache came and so I gave Guru Maharaj 1/4th dose of the Ergotamine, and again after about another six hours the headache returned and I gave the Nux-Vomica. In this way alternating between the two, and then after twenty four hours I stopped the Ergotamine and continued with the Nux-Vomica along with Lord Siva's medicine and two other homeopathic medicines I had selected. That headache was then completely gone forever and so in this way I was the doctor of Srila Guru Maharaj.

Don't Call Me!

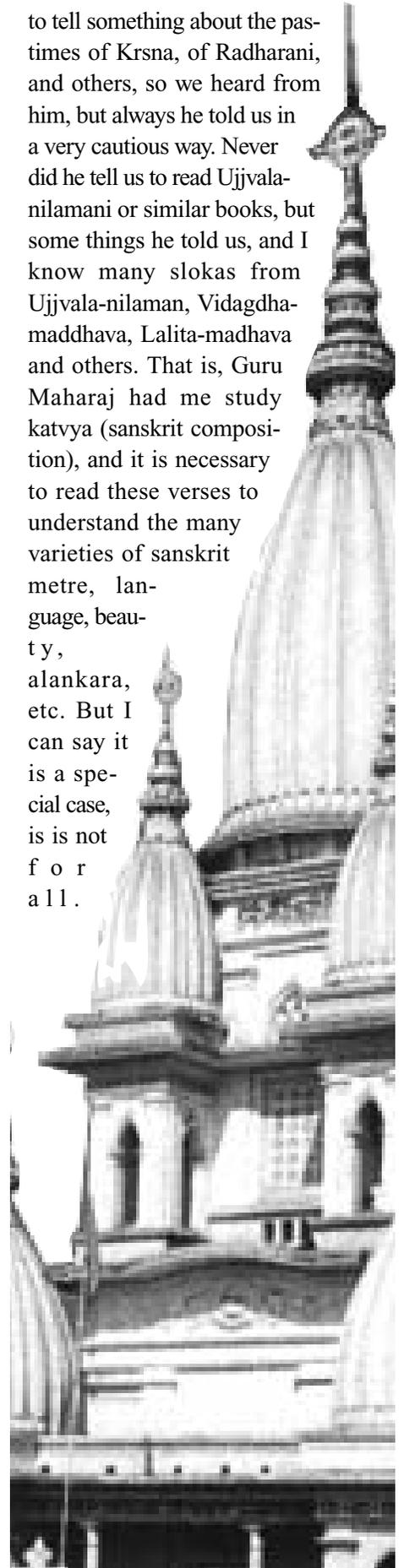
Still if I was not at the Math I left instruction that if the need arose then the Allopathic doctor should be called. Once Guru Maharaj was suffering from bronchitis and so Hari Charan prabhu called the top doctor of Nabadwip, the president of the district medical board. He came and after seeing Guru Maharaj prescribed some medicine. Guru Maharaj flatly told him, "No, I will not take your medicine. Govinda Maharaj is my doctor and only after he comes, will I take your medicine." Then the doctor was very angry and said, "Then why did you call me?" Guru Maharaj said, "I did not call you. Hari Charan called you." So the doctor replied. "Do not call me again if Guru Maharaj will not take my medicine then why should I come?" And angrily the doctor left. When I arrived, I asked Guru Maharaj

what had happened and he told me the events, so I went to see the doctor. When I reached there the doctor was still angry and he said, "Oh, Govinda Maharaj you have come. It is not necessary to come. I shall not go with you. I shall not see Guru Maharaj as my patient." I told him, "You must continue to see Guru Maharaja." "Why should I come, he will not take my medicine, No!"

"Prabhu, don't worry, I have just now been given a medicine by Lord Siva, give it to Guru Maharaj and he will be cured."

I said, "He will not take your medicine, that is the truth. That is because you yourself have said that your medicine will not work on him. I am calling you because I am not a very good doctor and you are the best doctor in all of Nabadwip, and if you will examine Guru Maharaj and give your diagnosis and prescription, then immediately I can understand from you medicine what homeopathic medicine I should give. This is why I call you, and you have love for Guru Maharaj, so you must come." Then the doctor was quiet and said, "Yes, if that is the cause, then I shall come." Anyhow this was the history. I could not always stay with Guru Maharaj and so I engaged some others for that. But before that, Guru Maharaj had no other servant, and so we heard many things during our association. And not only that, it was the desire of Guru Maharaj

to tell something about the pastimes of Krsna, of Radharani, and others, so we heard from him, but always he told us in a very cautious way. Never did he tell us to read Ujjvala-nilamani or similar books, but some things he told us, and I know many slokas from Ujjvala-nilaman, Vidagdha-maddhava, Lalita-madhava and others. That is, Guru Maharaj had me study katvya (sanskrit composition), and it is necessary to read these verses to understand the many varieties of sanskrit metre, language, beauty, alankara, etc. But I can say it is a special case, is is not for all.



These books are no doubt the supreme books of our Sampradaya, but they are not for everyone's reading. If anyone will read these books then they will become prakṛta-sahajīya, and what will be for them? We do not want that our brother and sister will become that, so we must be very serious about our practicing life. You have left everything; your culture, your allegiance to country, community, your habits, everything you have left to try and practice Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, so you will have to be serious. And you also need the result. To only practice, that is not your life's goal you need the end result — Kṛṣṇa Consciousness — and how will you get that result? It is necessary to first understand this. We are chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa but we have not become perfect. Why? We must research this. Why is it not happening, why is the feeling not coming inside? If it were merely a cheating matter then it would be no problem.

Time To Know Why....

But it is not a cheating matter, it is proven in the scriptures of India; the Veda, Vedānta, Upaniṣad, Purāna, there is five thousand years of culture, there are munis and rishis who have all got the result. If you study the scriptures like Mahābhārat you will say that all the advices are very good and you will see that so many have gotten the result. Then why are we not getting the result? The time has come for us to know why. Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda has come to this world, Śrīla Guru Maharaj has come, Śrīla Prabhupāda Sarasvatī Thakur has come, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thakur — their books and everything are with us, all the property of Śrī Chaitanyadev's Sampradaya is with us, but it is not fruitful to us. Why is this? It is necessary to know. We do not want to cheat anybody, we want to do something good for others, and if we cannot do anything good then at least we will not

do anything bad to others. So we must be serious about our practicing life, and that means we must follow the directives given by Śrīla Guru Maharaj. Before approaching the rasa-tattva, the serious high pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, we must prepare ourselves for that, otherwise that will not give us the perfect sentiment.

In Śrīmad Bhagavatam is written:

*vikṛitām vraja-vadhūbhīr idam ca
visnoh*

*śraddhānyitā nūirnūyad atha var-
nayed yah*

*bhaktim param bhagavatī pratilabhy
kamam*

*hyd-rogam asv apahinoty acirena
dhirah*

(Bhag. 10.33.39)

“If you hear the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa with the Gopis, especially the Rāsa-līla, etc., — which have been revealed in this mundane world by the grace of Kṛṣṇa — if you hear with full faith from a bona-fide Guru or Vaiṣṇava, and if you subsequently describe that to others, then you will get the topmost supreme devotion to Kṛṣṇa. The conjugal play of Kṛṣṇa with the Gopis in paramour Love — which He tastes in a variety of ecstasies — if you hear that, then your heart disease of lust will be

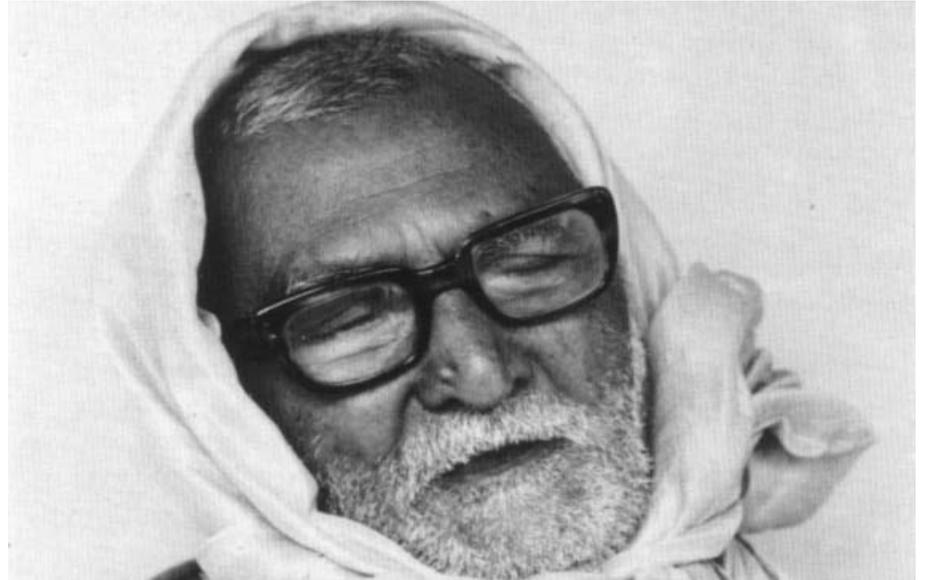
expelled forever.”

Do Your Research

So why is it that when we contemplate that Līla we are getting difficulty and we are going to a hellish position? This we must research carefully, and that knowledge has been given by Bhaktivinoda Thakur and especially by Śrīla Sarasvatī Thakur. Śrīmad Bhagavatam has declared that the lust will be driven out of the heart, and one's consciousness will come to the level of Kṛṣṇa-Prema — bodily consciousness will be forgotten and that will be overtaken by Prema consciousness. One must get that position. So why are we not getting it? Hari-nam is transcendental vibration non-different from Kṛṣṇa.

This Is The Truth

We are chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa Mahamantra, but in which way shall we chant? The Mahamantra manifests Himself by appearing in your heart and dancing on your tongue, but if Hari-nam is transcendental, then I cannot chant with my mundane tongue. This is the truth, the mundane cannot play with the transcendental. Only when the mundane becomes itself transcendental can it come in touch with the transcenden-



Śrīla Sridhar Maharaja empowered Śrīla Govinda Maharaja to continue his divine legacy and mission.



Through Srila Govinda Maharaja we can get the supervisory mercy of Srila Sridhar Maharaja

tal Name. It is very clear, so somehow or another we must make ourselves transcendental. There is a very nice analogy of the moon. The moon is always in the sky but sometimes it is obscured by the clouds. Sometimes we can see it and sometimes we cannot. So the position of Hari-nam is like that. Like the cloud we are always coming and going, and according to our standard of chanting sometimes Hari-nam may reveal a glimpse and sometimes He will remain covered, then finally He will reveal himself in our Hearts. We are getting some result, then we can say yes, it is the truth. But if we get nothing then we will become hopeless and think, why should I spend my time for that? But behind that we will have to see that the reason is because I cannot chant properly.

PhD of Religion

We can see that in every religion there is the chanting of the Lord's Name in one form or another, so they cannot all be wrong. So we can understand that there is great benefit in chanting the Lord's Name, there is no doubt. And further, in the scriptures of India it is recorded that if you chant this particular mantra then you will get this particular result, another mantra, another

particular result. The ancient rishis and munis have discovered and proven this. A rishi is he who can discover something in the field of Vedic religion, a 'Ph.D.' of religion and a muni is he who is successfully practicing the Vedic religion. The rsis and munis are all chanting the Lord's Name. Lord Siva, Lord Brahma, the demi-gods and gods, all are chanting the Lord's Name. Then inside of the chanting, like the Nux-Vomica, there is the medicine for us. This Krsna-nam is a Form of Krsna, and if you chant the Holy Name of your Lord, then you must get the result.

The Process

So what is the process to chant properly? Sriman Mahaprabhu has given the three-fold process: Humility, Tolerance, and Honoring others. If we cannot chant properly then in some way we are not following that process. It is our ego. We are getting some result, no doubt, otherwise we would give up chanting Harinam. Also, Bhaktivinoda Thakur has said that if we cannot avoid the Namaparadha, offense to the Name, and in all probability we will not be able to avoid, but if our intention is to try to avoid that, then we should pray to Hari-nam, "Oh Hari-nam, I cannot properly chant Your Holy Form, so

please reveal Yourself within my heart and purify me." And Bhaktivinoda Thakur has said, "Chanting, chanting, chanting, chanting — somehow, in any way, we need to get the attention of that Holy Name." In this way we must get the desired result. I can say it is so. Otherwise if it were only cheating then I would have left it long ago.

My nature is like that. I do not want to cheat anybody. I cannot beg from anybody, and I cannot cheat others. But sincerely I say to you, that you will get the result; if you chant in this way, following the process of Mahaprabhu, and carefully guarding against making any offense to the Vaisnavas.

“The time has come for us to know why Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaj Prabhupada has come to this world.”

Then we should pray to Sri Hari-nam, "Oh, my Lord you are transcendental, and I am living within the mundane world. I am jiva-soul, and so I am also transcendental by nature, but due to misuse of my finite independence, I am covered by illusion, covered by ego. Please be kind upon me. Oh Hari-nam, give me your mercy and reveal Yourself within my heart." This must be our mood of prayer.

I heard from Srila Guru Maharaj, that when his Godbrother, Srīmad Parvat Maharaj was a young boy he used to live in the house next door to Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur. He told us, "In my young age, I heard every night from about 2 a.m. until the morning,

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur would chant the Mahamantra on his rooftop, but you could hear that his chanting was more like calling, a heartfelt call to his Lord.” So we must be serious about our chanting, and we must make obeisance to Guru and Vaisnava. We should know our Guru as perfect, but who is Sri Vaisnava, that we do not know, and to what extent one is a Vaisnava, that we also do not know. Someone may be twenty five percent, or only five percent, we do not know. But we should know that everybody has some good qualities whether they are demon or a saint, be who is Vaisnava we do not know. So we must give honor to all and be respectful to everyone and be surrendered to the will of God, then the Vaisnavas must be kind to us. That is the process given by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur.

And Srila Prabhupada, Saraswati Thakur, has given that adjustment. He says that to just make some show of being very humble, lower than a blade of grass, will not be sufficient. Of course that is the fact, but some substance must be within your heart, and that must be the perfect substance. In every situation you must have some realization. Should someone abuse your Guru in your presence, then what will you do? If you think, “I am very humble and I shall be tolerant of him”, then that is not real *trnad api sunicena*.

The Original

We find the proper response in the person of Sriman Mahaprabhu who preaches this philosophy. When Sridhar Swami, the original commentator of Srimad Bhagavatam, was insulted by Vallabhacaryya, then Mahaprabhu said,

“Oh, you do not give recognition to Sridhar Swami? Whomever will not give respect to their Swami, they are a prostitute.”

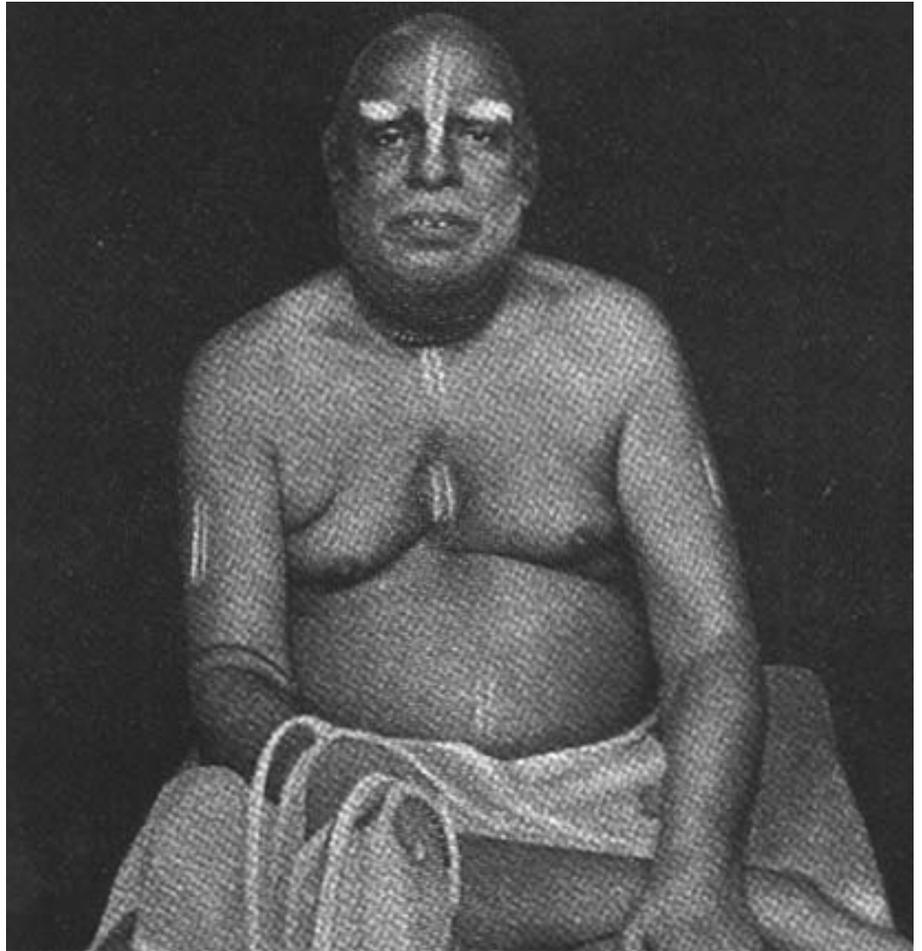
*prabhu hasi' kahe, — “swami na mane
yei jana vesydra bhitare tare
kariye ganana”
(Cc Antya 7.115)*

Then everywhere there is harmony, some adjustment, and with full consciousness we shall try to chant the Hare Krsna Mahamantra. Under proper guidance we can read everything. We have a right to read, but that must be under the guidance of a perfect person who knows fully that plane, then no offense will come to us in any way, and we shall not become prakṛta saha-jiyas.

Knowledge just for its own sake

“Suppose someone will kick my father in front of me. If I will tolerate that and be humble, then he may kill my father.”

It may be hard to follow that, but if we really need the true result, then we must proceed only in this way. And proper adjustment will be constantly required. Suppose someone will kick my father in front of me. If I will tolerate that and be humble, then he may kill my father. My father is to be protected by me, I am his young son, and he is old and weak, therefore it is my duty to protect him. So what is humility and what is tolerance, everything will need to be adjusted.



Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur-He would Call Earnestly the Names Of Krsna, thus a Movement was revitalized.

has no real value and will not give us our real goal. I recently met one old friend in New York, he is a disciple of Srila Swami Maharaj Prabhupada and famous as a pandit. He is accumulating much scriptural knowledge and learning, and he is constantly questioning me, and with very taxing, complex, scriptural questions.

The Truth Ain't Pretty

Finally I told him, “Prabhu what are you doing? You are questioning me and I am giving you answers, but then are you proceeding or are you remaining in your present position? If you think you are getting any benefit from me, then why are you not coming with me? Why are you remaining here? Come forward with me, otherwise why spend my time?” I asked him, “Are you satisfied with my answers?” He replied, “Yes Maharaj, I am very satisfied.” “Then what will you do with my answers? If that does not reflect in your life, then all your questions are useless, and all of my answers are useless to you. My time is wasted and your time is wasted. If you are satisfied with my answers then why are you not coming with me? The he replied, “Oh Maharaj, I have no money. I cannot come right now.”

You Have The Mercy

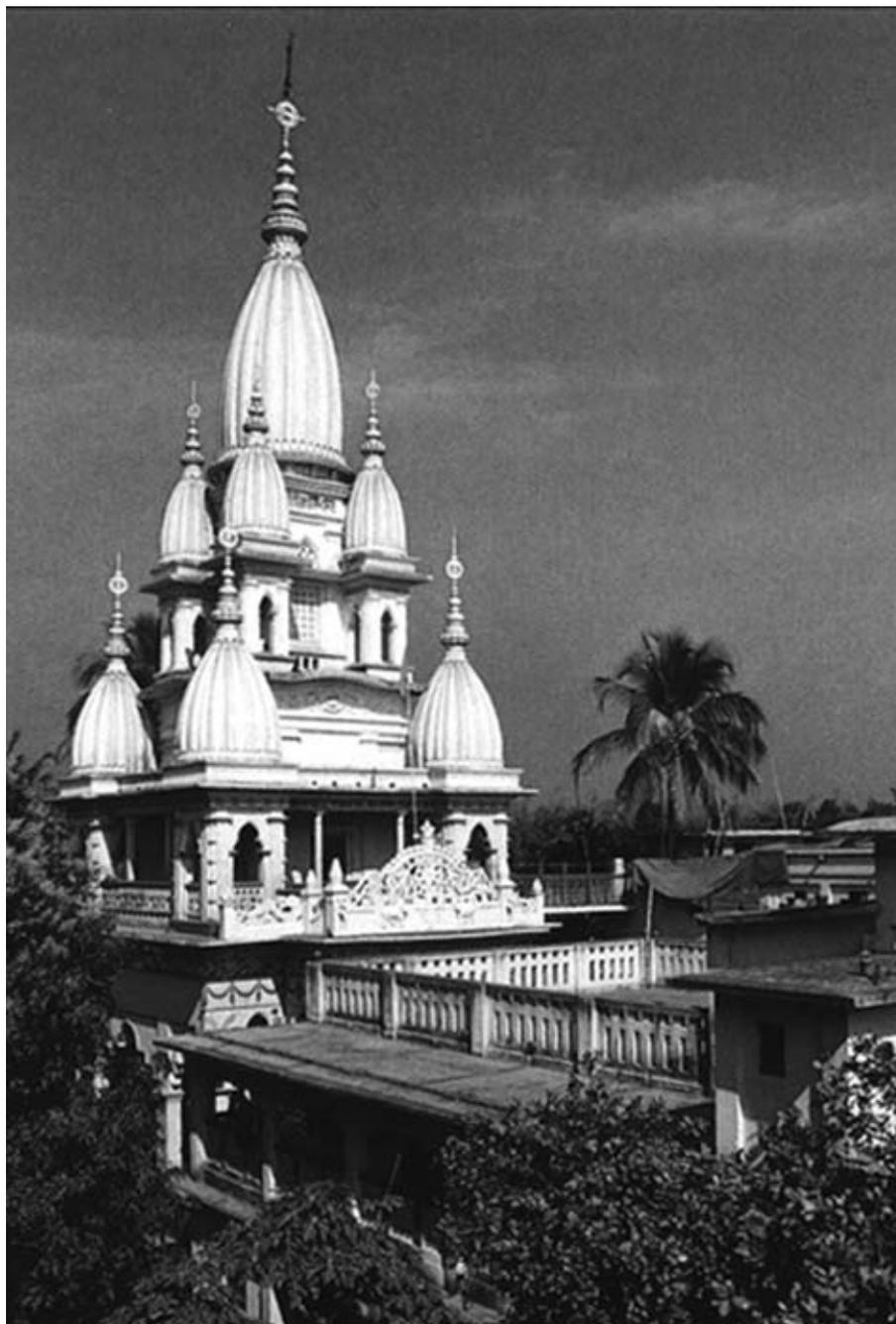
We must be very serious in our practicing life, then I can give you a guarantee that you must get your goal. You are in the line of Srila Guru Maharaj, you have the mercy of Srila Swami Maharaj and Srila Prabhupada Saraswati Thakura, then you must get it, but you must be very conscious about your practicing life. I have seen many in our line who think they are proceeding very happily and practicing very happily, but they are not seeing themselves through my eyes. Once, I said, “What is devotion and what is emotion?” Are you under emotion or are you under devotion? You cannot see.” Hearing this Sripad Janardan Maharaj said, “Oh Maharaj,

you are chastising me.” Actually it is not to chastise anyone, I want to be serious for everyone and for myself also.

Abandon That Emotion

Already sixty four years of my life have passed and how much longer I shall live I do not know. If we are under emotion, then we must leave that and try to go to devotion. Heart and soul I am trying. Guru Maharaj gave me some service. Previously in the time of Guru Maharaj whatever service I did he would digest. If I did right or if I did wrong, he

is digesting that and my service is getting some position, but now all my good and bad is coming to me, and so I must be even more serious. And all the devotees are really very good, otherwise why are they coming in the line of Krsna Consciousness? Then I must be serious for them also. I must teach them, “Please come this way, don't go that way.” That is my duty given by Srila Guru Maharaj, and if I can do that seriously and with all sincerity, then they will get the result, I will get the result and *visvam purnam sukhdyate* — the whole world will be benefited.



Real Sadhu Sanga

By Dayal Chand das

There are many processes in the spiritual path. But, Sadhu Sanga is the one recommended time and time again in the shastras. For years devotees have dreamed of having real Vaishnava sanga, but only a few get the opportunity for that kind of association. The question is, how do we become one of the fortunate ones?

The answer is not that difficult - for one who is sincere in serving the guru and Vaishnava his hankering is always to please his guardians. Such a person cannot be confused in his responsibility towards his guardians. I remember in 1992, in Mexico, when Srila Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev Goswami Maharaja stressed association with the Vaisnavas is the most important activity of the devotees. When Gurudeva expressed this I felt emotion in my heart. I figured out the benefit of having such association which also means serving and offering respect



to devotees. It is wonderful to see devotees united in the same goal of spiritual life, which harmonizes not only the external environment, but also the different devotees internal environment.

Never the Path

It is true that lack of association with the sadhus and vaishnavas brings us back down to the plane of mundanity. Therefore, sadhu sanga will help us improve our mental state. Our experiences with devotees who are very inexperienced in their practical devotional lives have shown the preliminary stage of ignorance in regards to the necessity of getting the sadhus association. Some of them claim that they don't need the Vaishnava, rather, they only need "Gurudeva". Unfortunately, the disrespecting of the Vaishnava is not ever the path to please Gurudeva.

Srila Guru Maharaja said that a devotee's attitude plays a large role in his or her devotional life, as well as worldly life. It is good for us to keep in mind this teaching. Actually, I have been corrected by my shiksa guru, Sripad Bhakti Kanan Giri Maharaja, to try to take the humble position and show honor to the other devotees (although by nature I show honor to no one). To the degree I can take this instruction I will be successful in my spiritual life. To associate with the Guru and the Vaishnava on the same level as you would associate with your street friends or family is unhelpful in spiritual advancement. To challenge the authority of the Guru, under the banner of "spiritual inquisitiveness", only exposes the challenger as in need of attention, and also in need of an attitude adjustment. Such a person is going in the wrong way.

Sadhu Sanga is the seed of devotion given by Guru-Vaishnava to everyone, and by watering it with our humble services, we will be enabled to taste the sweet result of rasa. Krishna Himself states in the Bhagavad Gita that those who serve my devotees are very dear

to me, and I will protect them.

I have experienced the association of my Guru and the Vaishnavas for the first time in 1993, at the New Jersey Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math, when Srila Govinda Maharaja spent five days with the devotees and friends. I never thought that in my lifetime I could ever end up in the same van with my Gurudeva, Sripad Sagar Maharaja, and Sripad Giri Maharaja. It was a wonderful experience to hear these august and spiritual personalities expressing themselves, and their supra-mundane vision of this world. They also raised topics about Krishna-Katha, and Srila Govinda Maharaja was discussing everything through the siddhanta of Srila Guru Maharaja. They talked about their experiences with Srila Prabhupada and Srila Govinda Maharaja, and how much indebted they are to their Gurudevas. What really impressed me was their simple mood, and their ability to show honor to others, even a lowlife like me. They try to see only the good in others, that way their compassion can allow everyone a place in the association of the sadhus.

Cannot Harm Me

As far as I am concerned, sadhu-sanga not only clears our hearts and minds, but also will save us from the danger of bad association, not to mention the subtle or gross sinful activities. I try never to forget my Gurudeva's instructions, because whenever I have forgotten them, I always end up in trouble. Srila Gurudeva constantly is trying to convince me of the necessity of sadhu sanga, he knows what is the most nourishing for the neophyte, such as I. Since Srila Govinda Maharaja is the representative of Sri Krishna he cannot harm me. Therefore faith will be increased by his directives.

Someone can talk very big about preaching, serving, or whatever, but if they are not in the association of the sadhus, and the guru, then they are not giving the

correct example by their actions, although their words might be very "inspiring". Therefore, we neophyte devotees must avoid these persons, who are bad association. Instead of helping us, they will only put us into a relativistic world of mental speculations and doubts.

"The disloyal and mentally deranged must be ignored."

Loyal and dedicated devotees will enlighten and guide us towards a safe future. Srila Gurudeva will encourage us to beg the association of these precious servitors of the Math. The disloyal and mentally deranged must be ignored. When we gradually learn how to discriminate, the mercy of our Guru and the Vaishnavas, then our problems will be reduced. The need to be accepted and agreed with will give way to the need to be corrected and bettered. To base one's association on the criteria of who agrees with your own philosophy more will not bring good sadhu-sanga. Rather, we should try to associate with those who will challenge us to follow the order of our Gurudeva more strictly.

The Bottom Line

Without good association and service to the guru and vaishnava an individual cannot control his or her mind. We must pray not to be a victim of our own mental illusions and egoistic desires. We must beseech Srila Gurudeva to send us real Vaishnava association, and that we will be challenged to higher planes of spiritual consciousness.

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