

Vaiṣṇava Transmission

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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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Initial Contact

Gokulananda das

The preaching mission here in this area has been growing steadily. I can remember the days when there was no preaching going on in New York. Thanks to Sripad Giri Swami and our beloved Srila Govinda Maharaja, all that has changed! These days, the programs are well attended, and so many godbrothers and friends are there giving me nourishment in my life. I am so grateful for our guardians, who have made everything possible.

This publication has truly become a labor of love for me. I never seem to have the time to work on it, but despite so many other commitments, it seems to manifest in spite of my schedule. I am very grateful for all the articles and help I have been receiving, please keep writing articles and sending them to me, I want to print them!

The programs at Sriman Madhava Priya's residence have been very successful. Sripad Giri Maharaja has mentioned to me so many times how vital they have been to Srila Govinda Maharaja's preaching mission in New York, so please come!

Dayal Chand Prabhu and Krishna Balaram Prabhu will be finishing up the first issue of *Vaisnava Transmission* in Spanish. This momentous occasion will no doubt prove to be another auspicious occurrence in the history of our Mission here in this area of the world.

This issue marks the second year of publication for *Vaisnava Transmission*, and I want to thank all the Vaishnavas who helped this project grow during the past year. I could not have done it without you, and I only pray that I can get more and more mercy from all of you in the coming years!

I want to specially thank Pranasis das for all the beautiful photos of Srila Govinda Maharaja's preaching work in Germany. Pranasis also sent me two wonderful transcriptions, both of which are being published in this issue. "The Secret Ingredient" and "The Divine Mood of Mercy" both were transcribed by Sriman Pranasis Prabhu. Pranasis has also sent us some poetry, which will be published in an upcoming issue! Hare Krishna Pranasis Prabhu!

I also wish to thank Sriman Krishna Balaram das and Sriman Satya Hari das for writing such nice articles. Unfortunately, Sriman Satya Hari's article will not appear until the next issue, but it is worth waiting for. Gaura Haribol!

Letters

International letters to the editors

Warzone Revisited

Dear Sripad Giri Maharaja,

Please accept my humble dandavat pranams. All glories to our beloved guardians and to all their sincere servants. All glories to my beloved gurudeva, Sripad Narayan Maharaja.

Recently, I read your article “Peace the Enemy of Devotion” and a few questions came to mind. I beg you to give me answers to these questions.

You wrote that we are followers of radha-dasyam in the line of Srila Rupa Goswami, and that we are called rupanugas. Why is this, when we are followers of all six Goswamis. What is the special position of Sri Rupa that our whole sampradaya is called by his name?

You also wrote that the impersonalist simply removes himself from the plane of responsibility. Which kind of responsibility do you mean? What is our main responsibility, and what should our behavior be in relation to that responsibility?

Dear Maharaja, again I offer my humble dandavat pranams to you and all the vaishnavas there. If I can do any service for you, please let me know.

Your humble servant,
Radha Raman das
Croatia

Sripad Giri Maharaja Responds

Dear Radha Raman prabhu,

Please accept my obeisances in remembrance of our divine masters, in the line of our guru varga.

I received your nice letter some time ago but I am overwhelmed with so many services that I have not had time to respond. I am always very happy to hear from such a sincere devotee as yourself and pray you

will not think I am neglecting you, but understand my circumstances.

Your question about our rupanuga sampradaya is a very good question and an important one. This question can best be answered by Srila Govinda Maharaja as he is the most qualified person to give answers to such a topic. I can say something, by his grace, but it is not necessary since he has spoken about this matter and it is published in an issue of Sri Vaishnava Toshani . I don't know if you have the issue so I am enclosing it herewith for you. The article is entitled “Mahaprabhu's Divine Succession” and it is the most complete treatment of this subject that I can recall. Actually I was astonished when I read the wonderful explanation of Srila Govinda Maharaja. The question you have is the question of all of us and I was so enlivened by the depth and breadth of Srila Govinda Maharaja's treatment of this topic. I'm sure you will also be very satisfied with it.

As for my statement about the impersonalist removing himself from the plane of responsibility I think you must know my meaning but I will try to explain. You know the responsibilities inherent with material life. Eating, sleeping, mating, and defending are the engagements of every species. The materialist is constantly striving to meet the responsibilities of these various engagements. That is, to eat one must find food, to sleep one must find shelter, etc., etc.

The impersonalist is better than the materialist in the sense that he has decided to leave the mundane life and its concomitant responsibilities. Meeting the needs of the above mentioned engagements is the cause of suffering for men. Realizing this, the impersonalist makes a plan to escape from these different types of suffering and the responsibilities that cause them.

Of course they are not the real responsibilities of the jiva. *jivera swarupa hoye, nityera krishna das*, the real form of the living entity is that of an eternal servitor of Krishna. That is our real responsibility. The impersonalist also avoids this responsibility. This avoidance, however, is only temporary. Because of the soul's innate desire for activity and relationship he cannot remain forever in the impersonal brahmajyoti. Srila Prabhupada explains that he will come back to the material world with an interest to engage in different types of welfare work and philanthropy. Srila Sridhara Maharaja told us it is also possible that a jiva in the impersonal brahman may come in contact with a great devotee and thereby be lifted up from that plane to the plane of Krishna seva.

My point is that the impersonalist is characterized by a type of lazy selfishness. He wants to retire from all activities and responsibilities not knowing that real happiness comes from activity in Krishna Consciousness. And he is selfish because he is interested only in his own relief of suffering and has no interest in the service of our loving Lord. If he is successful the result is a type of blissful sleep. But because it is absent of activity and relationship, it cannot be properly called enjoyment, or ananda. Just as when we wake up from a pleasant sleep some one may ask us “how did you sleep?”, “Oh, I slept fine.” But to enjoy life we must be awake, and the highest enjoyment comes from a sense of accomplishment and the highest accomplishment comes by fulfilling our responsibilities of service to Krishna.

I am so glad to know that you want to publish some articles from “Vaishnava Transmission” in your “Gauranga”. To publish such a newsletter is a very nice service. I cannot think of any better way for you to do vaishnava seva.

I am enclosing a copy of our last newsletter. I hope you will send us a copy of your “Gauranga” when it is published.

Sincerely yours,
Swami BK Giri

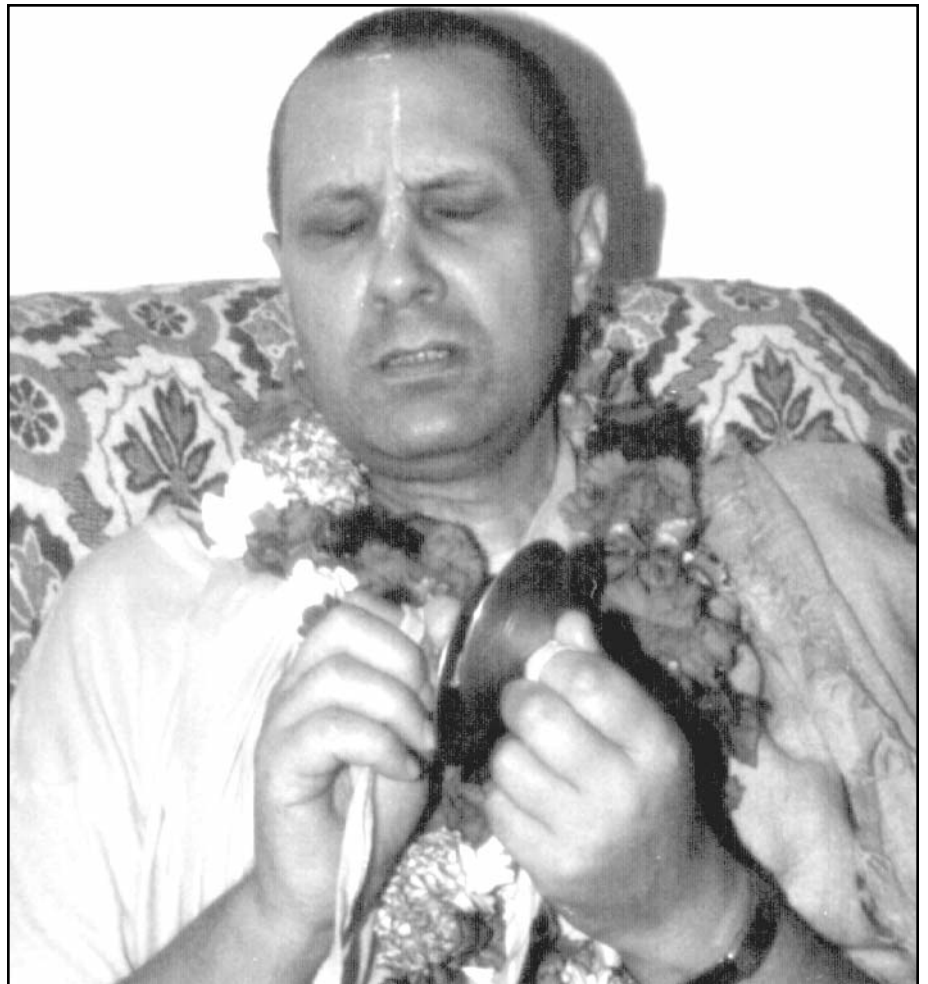
The Secret Ingredient

by Sripad Bhakti Ananda Sagar Maharaja

The following lecture was given by Sripad Bhakti Ananda Sagar Maharaja in Germany, on the occasion of Srila Govinda Maharaja's first journey to that land in 1994.

Sometimes when Govinda Maharaj is speaking when we're traveling around he says, "I feel that I have no qualification and that I have nothing to give you, but because I had such great fortune to serve Srila Guru Maharaj and I received so much mercy from him, I cannot say that I have nothing." We may feel from our own side that we have nothing, but when we consider what has been given to us by the higher section, then we can feel that we have everything. It is very difficult to understand how someone can have nothing, yet everything at the same time.

We get great pleasure in trying to direct our friends to our divine guardians, it is a great joy to see our friends become illuminated before our very eyes, they become enlightened, and at the same time we also become illuminated, it is a great experience. In many places it is mentioned like that, in the Chaitanya Charitamritam Mahaprabhu is described as a gardener (mali) and the tree which He is cultivating is laden with the fruits of prema and Divine Love. Kaviraja Goswami said that Mahaprabhu tried to distribute



those fruits to the whole world and at one stage Mahaprabhu said “I am only one man, and I don’t know how much I can distribute on my own.” He ordered His associates Nityananda Prabhu, Adwaita Prabhu, Haridas Thakur, and the devotees headed by Srivasa to help Him with the job.

Frenzied Distribution

When that work of distribution was happening, Kaviraj Goswami remarked that those devotees madly distributed those fruits, in a type of mad ecstasy. The more they distributed the more they had, it wasn’t that they gave everything out and had nothing left, but the more they gave to others the more wealthy they became. That same principal is working today for us, if we have some relationship, association with the great Acharya’s even though we may not think ourselves to be their associates, but by their blessings that day may come.

At the time of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur the question arose concerning the devotees of Mahaprabhu, if Mahaprabhu elevated so many people and gave them Krsna prema and made them all Vaisnavas, then they could not all have been His eternal associates otherwise they could not be elevated. Once one has been elevated to the highest level, he may be promoted, but before that there must have been a group of persons who were recruited.

So Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta made a list referring to the persons mentioned in the Chaitanya Bhagavat and the Chaitanya Charitamrtam and showed those devotees who were recruited and those who are the eternal associates of Mahaprabhu. Ramananda Raya and Swarup Damodar Prabhu’s are eternal associates of the Lord, but Sarvabhauma Prabhu and others were recruited. However, there will be a time when the transition period is imperceptible.

I may also mention at this point that a long time ago I was given the ser-



Srila Govinda Maharaja and Sripad Sagar maharaja travelling in Germany.

vice to try and bring the Chaitanya Charitamrita into English. It was done by Swami Maharaj Prabhupada of course, assisted by his disciples, but just as in the line of Srila Guru Maharaj we have received the ‘Hidden Treasure’ Bhagavad Gita, similarly we will get the Chaitanya Charitamrita. I am quite a long way off from completing it but having had the grace to get that service instruction I am trying my best. With the good will of you all and the Vaisnavas all over the world I know that it will be possible.

A Homely Approach

I have had to type it in the original Bengali and the Devanagari script and soon I shall come to the English. But having to do that it was actually like sitting in a Chaitanya Charitamrita-class in Bengal. Because when I am typing I hear it over and over again and I think what could that mean so I have to stop and check and rethink what it could mean etc. What I’m trying to say is that the very homely approachable method of Mahaprabhu comes out

in that book, just like Govinda Maharaj. In Govinda Maharaj we find that same magnanimous open-hearted approachability we find in Mahaprabhu’s pastimes, Maharaj will not like me saying that but it’s true. We find that same nectarean homeliness in Srila Maharaj as we find in the pastimes of Sri Chaitanyadev.

Some people may have trouble understanding why He came down in the form of a sannyasi, and that He took sannyasa in the mayavada sampradaya, but before He came down there was no one preaching against the Mayavadi’s at that time. Previously, there were Ramanuja Acharyya and Madhava Acharyya, but at the time of Mahaprabhu there was no one. The way that Mahaprabhu conquered, was not by scholarly commentaries. Rather, He preached love of God as a humble saint. In this way, not only did He defeat His opponents, but He made them His friends.

Sometimes the modern followers of Mahaprabhu get the idea that we should become very stalwart and

staunch, almost violent in opposing the mayavada doctrine or any other line. But that is not what Mahaprabhu showed us, and if you read the Chaitanya Charitamrita you will pick that up and feel it more and more. Mahaprabhu was very affectionate and almost rural in his simplicity in the way that He came across to the people. He was extremely simple and extremely affectionate.

Alienated From Humans

Srila Govinda Maharaj is very kindly showing us that mood also, how humility and tolerance and friendship with the environment is actually the only way to please Mahaprabhu and to become a true follower of Sri Caitanyadev. Another thing I've noticed is that due to an inability to get a grasp of the teaching and meaning of the sannyasa order, the sannyasis of the present day have almost alienated themselves from human society. They are unable to approach others and others feel unable to approach them, they are not able to have friendship with anyone. We have seen that ourselves in our own experience, there was always estrangement. Firstly they were not able to control their anger and secondly those who were not sannyasis and saw this, were frightened away. So to cut a long story short this will all be harmonized with the formula of Mahaprabhu, be humble and tolerant and give honor to others.

The Higher Platform

To come to a higher order of life to expect honor from others is the downfall of that order. The beauty of Mahaprabhu's life was His humility, whereby He embraced His sannyasa and took it to a higher platform, where He showed He was lower and inferior to everyone else. He accepted honor as a teacher and world preacher for without doing that there would be no apparent transfer from lower to higher, there would be no seva. Sometimes Mahaprabhu chastised errant followers or inferiors, but He only did that

to show the world what was right and wholesome in Vaisnava life. Mahaprabhu did not do this like an unapproachable threatening God, He did so as an approachable friend to all. At times, His demeanor was formidable and not approachable, but that is found in all great and higher personalities, but predominately it was not so.

Even more approachable than Mahaprabhu is Nityananda Prabhu, because whenever Mahaprabhu would not accept someone, they would be accepted by Lord Nityananda. Sripad Sudhir Goswami Maharaj who first published Srila Guru Maharaj's books in English, was a very vigorous preacher and we hold him with utmost regard for presenting the books of Srila Guru Maharaj in such a beautiful way, to the English-speaking world. When he was preaching very actively he used to say that we have the International Society for Krsna Consciousness, and consciousness means Chaitanya, therefore the true evolution for the international society for Krsna consciousness is to

become the international society for Krsna Chaitanya. That means to become conscious not only of Krsna which is more or less introductory, all Hindus are conscious of Krsna, but how many of them are conscious of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu?

Real Evolution

The true evolution of such a noble mission would be to find out more about Mahaprabhu and if we may be so fortunate to feel deep affection for Him in our hearts. Actually Mahaprabhu is more approachable than Krsna and it is only through the mercy of Mahaprabhu that anyone can get Krsna in this Kali yuga, it is not possible without Him.

Krsna das Kaviraj Goswami pointed out that Sisupala was an asura, a demon, yet he worshipped Visnu. It may be difficult for us to consider how someone could be a devotee of Visnu but yet a demon. Someone who worships Visnu is called a Vaisnava, but if we look carefully we will find divisions between the normal definitions.



The beautiful German countryside was blessed by the presence of Srila Govinda Maharaja.

In spiritual matters, unless we are broad-minded enough to try and accommodate the perception of everything that happens in between and not to take everything literally that we first heard or read in the scriptures, because the second time we read it or hear it may be something else. This does not mean that what our Gurudev tells us and what's written in the scriptures is a big puzzle, it's not. It means that concerning matters of the Absolute a 360 degree vision is required, it is like that.

All The Wrong Reasons

The Absolute is infinite, therefore there is an infinite scope which our perceptions must always fall short of. Even though we may think it difficult to understand how Sisupala was a devotee of Visnu and a demon, we can understand that he was worshipping Visnu for the wrong reasons. Just like someone may worship Lord Jesus for the purpose of inventing nuclear bombs or whatever to destroy the world's civilization, yet they may say they are a devout Christian. So Sisupala was a devotee of Visnu but he had one big problem, he did not like Krsna, he was against Krsna. He obviously did not know that Visnu is an expansion of Krsna, that Krsna is the original Visnu and that was the crack in Sisupala's mentality, that's what made him a demon.

In the same way Kaviraj Goswami says that anyone who worships Krsna but does not accept Chaitanya Mahaprabhu are just like Sisupala, and who wants to be Sisupala. This is another salient point for the mission of Mahaprabhu.

At times when we hear some of the stories of Mahaprabhu's Lila, for instance the punishment of Junior Haridasa and others, it can cause us to get a little discouraged and we tend to put those stories to the background and remember the others. But still to come to terms with those extreme stories if we hear them out to their conclusions, we will indeed find those conclusions to be nectarine and sweet. They are actually

life-giving to everyone, they have some type of inconceivable magnanimity in them. There is an extreme magnitude of love found there which cannot be approached by any religious conception or philosophy in this world.

The gift of Mahaprabhu is such a great gift of such fine, high and noble magnitude that it has never even been imagined by any section of humanity in the entire human race.

Sometimes when Srila Govinda Maharaj is speaking and I am sitting under his lotus feet, silently, sometimes

“Srila Sridhara Maharaj used to say that as long as these witches are haunting the heart, how can you dive deep into the ocean of ecstasy that is service.”

he might ask me to supply an English word etc., I think that maybe he might ask me to speak tomorrow, and I wonder what am I going to say. But if we have the association of devotees who really appreciate Gurudeva and Mahaprabhu then it does not matter if the devotees are new or old or middle devotees- it does not matter because by their association so much will come into our hearts. Maybe we know someone new and we want to help them, and suddenly everything that we have learned and found to help us in times of necessity will come in our hearts and with great pleasure we can give that to them.

A very good friend of mine, a san-niyasa godbrother, once said to me, “Maharaj when we preach sometimes

we find ourselves speaking about things we do not know, because there are many things we do not know, what should we do then” I replied with the obvious, to only talk about things you know. I am sure those who have tried to preach, know the feeling. But this kind of honesty and simplicity is very important in the heart of a devotee.

Sometimes when a mission becomes big, a peculiar type of illusion can creep in when people think that they should become more tricky than the man in the street, so that they can trick the man in the street to become Krsna consciousness. The problem is that when they think like that and do that, they are only tricking themselves to actually lose their Krsna consciousness. It can never work that way, because friendship, love and harmony and all things that are dear to our hearts cannot happen by trickery. This does not mean that one cannot use one's intelligence while preaching and doing service, I am only mentioning these points because adulteration can come into a big mission and that can be very heartbreaking for everyone in that mission. We have to be very wary of adulteration.

Irony is Often Ironic

There is a kind of diplomacy which is found in the renounced order and a tendency to see everything as bad. The other day Srila Govinda Maharaj was saying that those who want to enjoy this world are called karmis and those who want to get out of it are called jnanis. But those who are enjoying this world are looking at those who are renouncing the things of this world and thinking that the renunciates are great, and those who are renouncing everything are always looking back and thinking about all they have given up, thinking that they have lost everything.

The word 'pisaci' is usually translated as ghosts or witches but Srila Govinda Maharaj translates it as vampires, so to want to give up this world or to want to enjoy this world both of these desires are considered as vampires. Why,

because they take away our vital energy, our very blood, which is meant to be used for something far more valuable. Often it is difficult for us to fathom this, although it is one of the basic teachings of our Vaisnava line.

Srila Sridhara Maharaj used to say that as long as these witches are haunting the heart, how can you dive deep into the ocean of ecstasy that is service. If we are chanting the name offensively that will keep us in the mood of exploitation, and if we are chanting but commit namabhasa, which is considered like a reflection of the Name, or a hazy representation of the Holy Name of Krsna, that will keep us in the jnana stage and can give us liberation, but not devotion and service. I know these points are often spoken about by the Vaisnavas, but still they are very fine and if we reflect upon them again and again we will find even finer and finer thought.

No Vacancy Here!

Then the pure Name, Suddha Nama, will give us prema. We have all heard the wonderful glories of the Holy Name of Krsna, which is non-different from Krsna Himself, yet we maintain our worldly ego, oh I am renounced or handsome or great or intelligent or rich whatever but that love for the Name will not come into our hearts, because that egoistic thinking will cause us to make offense to the Holy Name of Krsna.

So, material gain, or to see everything as bad (like the renunciates), violence to others, to hanker for popularity, all of these things and other things also are like weeds and as the creeper of devotion tries to grow these weeds will smother that creeper unless we cut those weeds out. Now it is already ten o'clock, so if any of our friends have any questions I shall try and answer them.

Devotee: Maharaja, why is it such a problem for the western devotees to give respect to others.

B.A. Sagar: Actually the problem is not just in the west, but also in the north and south and east. You can take the word of a reasonably traveled man,

it is a universal problem. We can say that in the Hindu culture the ways of humility are more deeply rooted, but at times we find that diplomatic humility is more popular than real humility, in the Hindu society. It is, of course, better to be humble by habit than to be arrogant, but it is not genuine humility. Wherever there is a pure Vaisnava there we shall find real genuine humility.

I also used to think that being western was a great disqualification etc., but Srila Govinda Maharaj says that the devotees in the west are more qualified

“We are very lucky that Krsna consciousness is so universal, otherwise we would never have been able to take it up in the first place.”

If I think in that way, then wherever I would go I would have a critical mentality. There would be very little point in me going anywhere, I might as well just stay in India, and say how great that is, like I used to say. But more recently I've found it much more necessary to leave that way of thinking in the past. I know your question was asked with all sincerity, but by the same token, if we only try and transplant Krsna consciousness, that will not be enough either. If we try to be like the devotees in India, for example, we've all said I'm sure, “No Prabhu, in India they do it like this”, and so on, you have all heard this many times, but many times this falls flat on its face. It is just like coughing if everyone tries to sing like the Bengali singers, it is stretching the vocal chords devotion in a false way.

The most important thing that matters is sincere desire and that will come to the real devotee, whoever he may be and wherever he may be. We also have special regard for India, of course, because there we find Sri Nabadwip Dham and Sri Vrndavana Dham and all the Lilas of the Lord. But the point I'm trying to make is that when Srila Govinda Maharaja is traveling from place to place and seeing them glowing in such a way that he does not see in India, he remarks that one day the Indians will ask the westerners to bring Krsna consciousness back to them. I think that Srila Prabhupada often said the same thing.

We are very lucky that Krsna consciousness is so universal, otherwise we would never have been able to take it up in the first place. Mahaprabhu also stressed the universality and adaptability of Krsna consciousness, that is the great mercy and gift that He gave to all of us.

Good Ol' Western Pride

Mahaprabhu said that His Name would be spread to every town and village, and we would say to Srila Guru Maharaj that “Krsna's Name is being spread, not Mahaprabhu's Name.” Then Guru Maharaj would reply, “Would we dare say that Krsna was not His Name?” Nityananda Prabhu was also sent out to spread the name of Krsna, but instead he spread the name of Mahaprabhu, and that is what I'm trying to speak about tonight. As westerners, we are proud that Mahaprabhu came down in that holy Dham of Sri Nabadwip, because now that we have this knowledge and a feel for Krsna consciousness, we have a better chance than anyone in the world to get the blessings of that special and rare humility and tolerance.

I think that we have an even greater opportunity to get that very rare and special mercy through the association of Srila Govinda Maharaja, because of all our Acharyas he has made it his special duty to preach the principles of humility, tolerance and to give honour to

others. This is the thread of Govinda Maharaja's preaching. This is also no wonder because he is the very embodiment of that, and his very nature is of that realm, and he is kindly showing us that.

Are You an Atheist?

I remember in Miami there was an immigration officer and she wanted to look in Maharaja's bag. This was a couple of years ago and I was very upset and I chastised that lady. After I chastised her she wished us a good flight. A few days later during a lecture, Maharaj said "even though Sagar Maharaj chastised that lady she believed in God because she wished us a good flight". To Maharaja this meant that my chastising the woman was wrong and because she wished us a good flight she believed in God, because to Maharaja I was misrepresenting the mood of Mahaprabhu. That's a little one but there is something in it, I always remember it, I was thinking that by chastising that lady I was defending Maharaja, and by doing that I would get his mercy. But mercy can come in many ways, and Maharaja said that, that lady believed in God and by dint of my chastisement, I may have been an atheist.

Devotee : Maharaja, how can we differentiate between the desires of our real self and from the desires of our false ego.

B.A. Sagar : That's a very important question. In the beginning we take that knowledge from the Guru or teacher. We must receive that knowledge from him. When he gives us the Holy Name, it is in the form of a seed, that seed of the Holy Name goes into our ear and pierces through the mind, intelligence and ego, because it is a transcendental sound vibration. Then it touches the soul and the soul vibrates spiritually, just like being touched by a cosmic ray, something like that we can consider.

Then the Guru tells us to chant and to try and avoid the ten offenses to the Holy Name. When we are chanting and

making offenses we are only listening to our ego, but the more we act on the advice of our Gurudeva and on scriptural guidelines, the more we shall dissolve the ego and chant offencelessly. In this way when we will one day finally be successful that same Name which entered our ear, will come out, but that Name will not be chanted by a material tongue. The Divine Name cannot be chanted by the material tongue, because that tongue is part of the body, the material ego. But when the Holy Name comes out from the soul through our practicing, then everything will be spiritualised, even our ego will be spiritualised.

What is Important

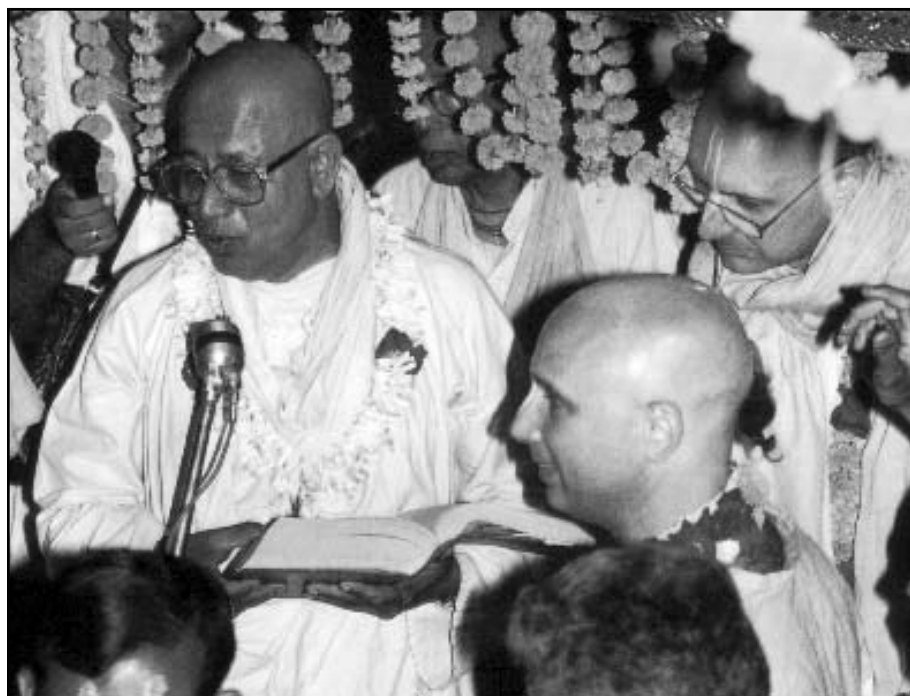
We will know ourselves not only to be servants of Krsna but even moreso to be a servant of the servant of the servant of the servant many times removed the servant of Krsna. That means that whenever we see a Vaisnava, immediately we shall lose our ego, they can help us even without speaking anything. That is why the association of Vaisnavas is so important, we may not have much direct association with our Gurudeva,

but he is reflected in so many other friends and disciples to whom he gave that seed. We shall see the light shining there and we will learn by association directly and indirectly how to conquer that ego and how to recognize which thoughts are pure and which thoughts are mundane and only our ego speaking. When our inner voice tells us to do something which maybe against our lower desires and we know that if we follow that advice that our Guru and Krsna will be pleased, then that advice is coming from the higher region. If we follow through on that advice it will take us upwards.

I'm trying to explain it in a short way, there are so many explanations. One explanation that Srila Guru Maharaj loved very much and indeed one that we all love very much is mentioned in the "Prappana Jivanamrtm" (PJ 9.43)

Jata-sraddho mat-kathasu, nirvvinah sarva-karmmasu veda duhkhat-makan kaman, parityage 'py anisvarah

This is a beautiful explanation where Krsna says "Those fortunate souls in whose hearts affectionate faith has been



The Divine kirtana of Srila Govinda Maharaja is truly worldwide.

born for hearing topics about Me, they become indifferent to work in this world, karma, and they know that work in this world based on desire will only bring them unhappiness and suffering. Knowing all this still they cannot give that up, they are living in this world, and they have faith in Me, and they know that anything done in this world will give them only sadness and sorrow but they still cannot give it up.” Then the next sloka (9.44).

*tato bhajeta mam pritah, sraddhalur
drdha-niscayah jusamanas ca tan
kaman, duhkhodarkams ca garhayan*

Krsna says, “That faithful devotee who tries to serve Me more deeply and with more energy and affection, I shall also try and give My mercy and affection to him.” When the devotees are trying harder but still they see that they are engaging in wrong life, they think that they are slaves of their desires, but they repent and are unhappy, they feel they are slaves. Everyone says chant Hare Krsna and be happy, but they will feel themselves to be the most unhappy persons in the world, at that stage they will feel like this, and that everything they do is wrong, but somehow they have found this beautiful Krsna. The more they act according to their lower nature the more unhappy they will become and they will start to hate themselves. They say, “It’s no wonder I’m suffering, I deserve it, just look at me what a mess! I came for the highest thing yet all I want is the lowest. I am the culprit, I cannot blame anyone else, all the blame is on my own head, just see my terrible position” Then Krsna says in the next sloka PJ 9.45)

*proktena bhakti-yogena, bhajato ma
‘sakrn muneh kama hridaya nasyanti,
sarvve mayi hrdishtite*

I am in their hearts and that thoughtful and faithful person who engages in my devotional service as mentioned “bhajato ma ‘sakrn muneh”, he thinks deeply in his heart like a Muni, and now

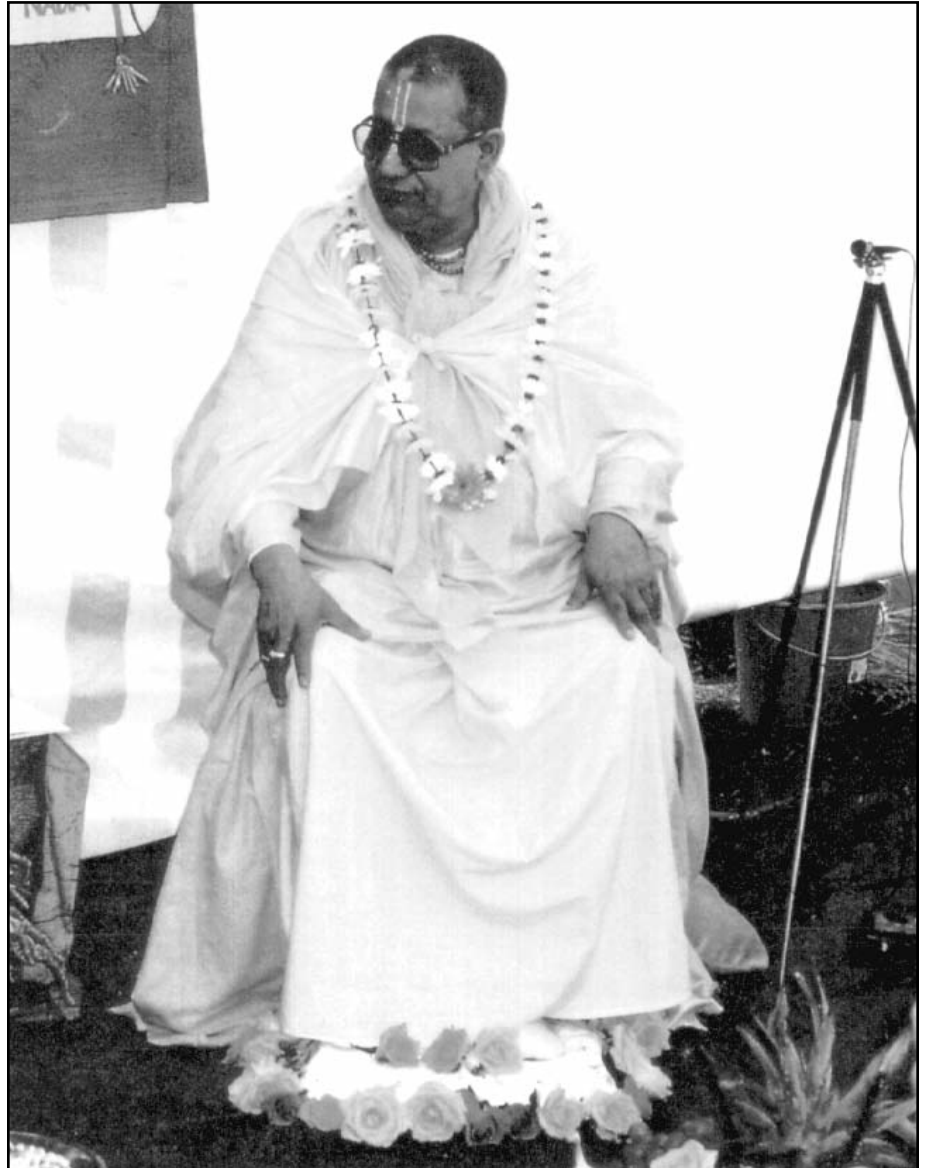
he serves Me without a break not even for a second will he leave that service. He applies himself with all his energy, his thoughts, words and deeds, and I am in his heart and when I see that attempt “kama hridaya nasyanti”, I destroy, demolish all that karma and all the lower desires”

Then lastly (PJ 9.46):

*bhidyate hridaya-granthis, chidyante
sarvva-samsayah ksiyante casya karm-
mani, mayi drste ‘khilatmani*

Then he will see like the sun rising above the horizon but not just the sun rays coming through the clouds will he see, but the beautiful sun will rise fully and clearly and all the “fog” is absolute-

ly destroyed. The knot of his ego, the knot in his heart, means the ego, that is slashed, like with a big semitar sword. “Bhidyate hridaya granthis”, like that gordion knot “*chidyante sarva samsayah*”, all his doubts are slashed. Then “*ksiyante casya karmmani*”, and all his karma vanishes and “*mayi drste khilatmani*”, like the sun he will see Me in all souls. This is the explanation of the Srimad Bhagavatam of the stages a devotee will feel as he tries to progress more and more. All through the different stages sincerity is required and I pray that Srila Govinda Maharaj may bless us or chastise us or praise us, or whatever it takes, so that we may get that sincerity. Hare Krsna.



Srila Govinda Maharaja seated in Germany, about to give a lecture.

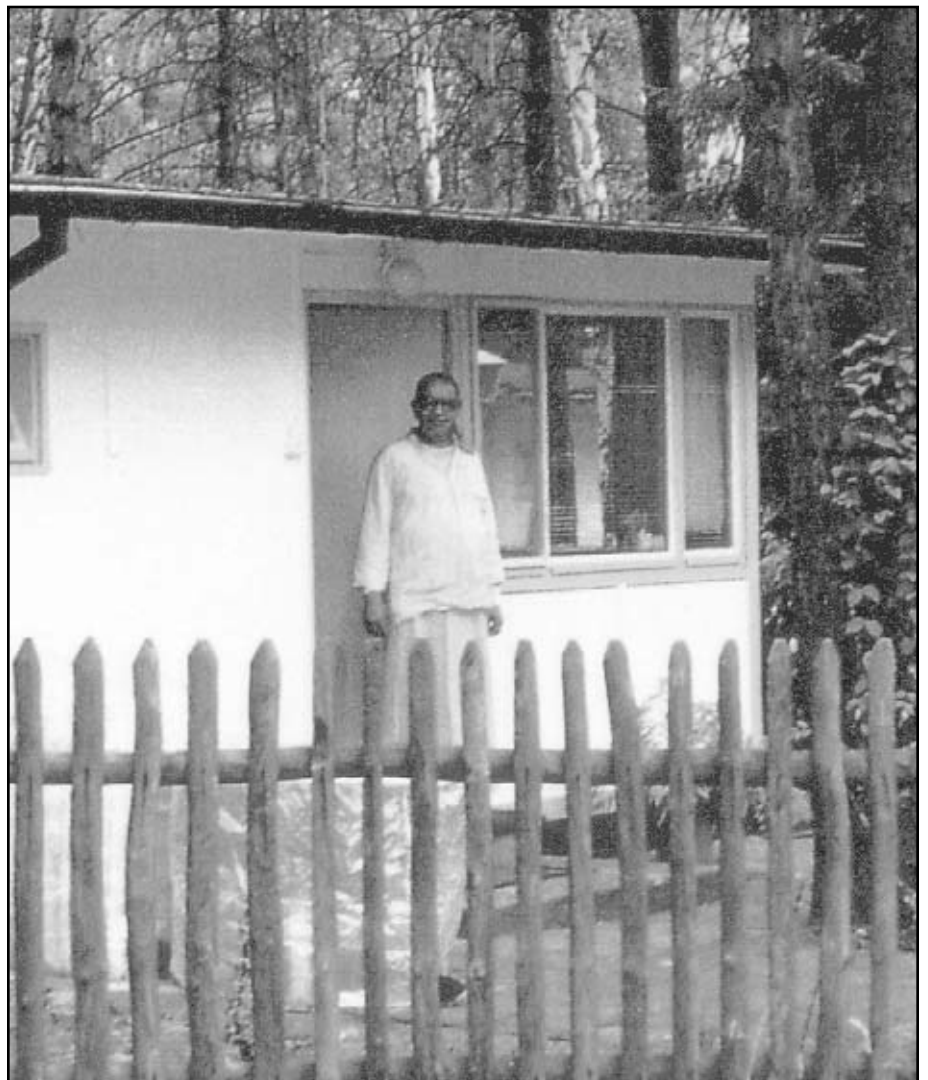
The Divine Mood *M of* *Mercy*

Srila Bhakti Sundar Govindar Dev Goswami Maharaja

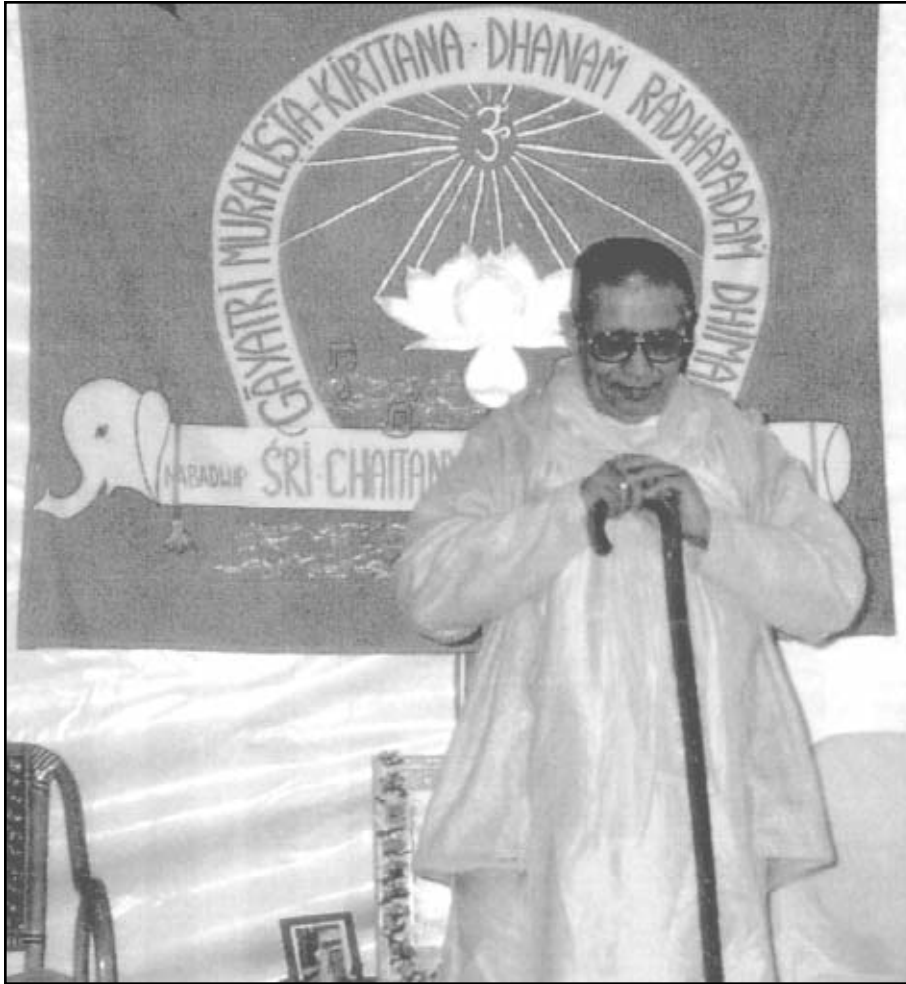
The following is a
lecture delivered by
Srila Govinda
Maharaja in Berlin.
(August 1994)

This time in Venezuela the devotees arranged many nice programs for preaching, in Caracas they organized a TV interview for me as well as a newspaper article. The television program was very nice and was broadcast live to the whole country on a breakfast time channel for one and a half hours. The translating and interpreting was done in a very quick way and it was a question and answer format and that is very good for me because I cannot speak Spanish, or English perfectly.

I also do not speak German, but you can ask some questions if you like and I shall try to give a sufficient answer. Actually the questions are never short and the answer can also be very long. We are giving short answers in a few minutes but that is not actually satisfying me. I heard from



Srila Govinda Maharaja in front of his cabin in the German forest.



The embodiment of the Math: Srila Govinda Maharaja.

Srila Guru Maharaj that Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura would spend one month on the slokas of the Srimad Bhagavatam. I had just taken shelter of the lotus feet of Srila Guru Maharaj and at that time I could not imagine, one month per sloka, but now I think that even one month is not sufficient time. We can even consider to spend one year discussing a sloka, now I can believe it because there are so many channels to discuss.

Don't Even Think it!

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura explains the sloka “*api cet sudaracaro, bha ate mam ananya-bhak sadhur eva sa mantavyah, samyag vyavasito hi sah,*” The twelve great Mahajana’s were discussing this verse. Krsna Himself said that “if you see an exclusive dedicated devotee of mine, an ananya bhak, and

he does something terribly wrong or you see some very bad activity in him, still you must never think that he is not my devotee. Not only that but it is my declaration that he is a sadhu and what he is doing that is right because he is my exclusive devotee. Through your vision of Vedic knowledge and what you think to be good or bad, even if you see in him some extremely bad activity you must never think that he is not perfect and that what he does that is also perfect.” This is very difficult to understand.

Bad is bad and good is good, this definition we are all getting from the scriptures, so how can we digest that he is perfect, the twelve Mahajanas were discussing this point over and over. They accepted the declaration of Krsna. Krsna Himself said that this was the final conclusion and meaning of this

sloka but how can we harmonize this with our relative vision? Then after much discussion another question came to them, if Krsna says that this man is his exclusive devotee then we must believe it, but the next sloka confused them even more.

“ksipram bhavati dharmmatma, sasvac-chantim nigacchati kaunteya prati-janihi, na me bhaktah pranasyati”

Krsna declares that yes he is my exclusively dedicated devotee and that what he does is also perfect but he will become even more perfect and his defects will rapidly be dispelled through the purification of his remembrance and service to me. He will be dharmmatma and he will get eternal peace and he will not have any more trouble in the future. This is Krsna’s promise to his unalloyed devotees. If Krsna said to me pointing to a bullock cart, “Oh look at that motorcar,” I would believe it because everything is possible by His word.

All is Infinite

I can see that any type of question, even if someone asks is that vegetable sweet or sour, that question is also infinite. Actually all inquiry can expand to the infinite, it is possible, then time is no factor. But your questions must be for my benefit and for your own benefit and that will be good for us both. Yes Prabhu, you are the master of questions .

If we hear some good things about someone then we will get a good impression and good feelings will come to us and we will be attracted to them. If you hear some good things about Rsabdhi Prabhu, then your heart will be melted and you will think, yes look at Rsabdhi Prabhu, he can do this and that and so on. If someone hears something good about someone but no affection comes then you must think that, the goodness has not entered his heart. The reason the goodness has not entered his heart is because his heart is like a stone. That means there is no

fertile land in his heart, and if you put the seed of Harinama there it cannot grow nicely.

Devotee: Maharaj, Prithi means love, and the goal of our sadhana is to cultivate love for Krsna, but can we have love for Krsna if we are making Nama aparadha?

Srila Maharaj: He who hears the glories of Krsna's name, but does not develop love for Krsna, that explanation is given in the Srimad Bhagavatam.

“That stone-like heart may be very strong but if he continues with sincerity one day he will get love for Krsna's name.”

Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura gave much emphasis to this sloka: “He who hears the glories of the Harinama, but no affection for that holy name develops in his heart, you must consider that person to be a great offender, otherwise why is he not getting any love for Krsna's Name. He has made some offense, but that offense will also go if he continues steadily in his chanting. That stone-like heart may be very strong but if he continues with sincerity one day he will get love for Krsna's name.

The explanation given by Bhaktivinoda Thakura for “atma saram” means that there are different varieties of stone, and some types are much harder than others. It will take more time to melt the harder stones, so much later they will get love for the Harinama. The association of a great sadhu can also melt that type of hard heart, by his mercy it is possible.

That stone like heart is coming from the strong material mentality, that I am this body and what belongs to me is mine, he will make offense to the Harinama.

First Things First

Firstly, I thought that we must try to avoid the ten offenses to the holy Name, at first I did not think that this would be too difficult, but after some time we are thinking that it is very difficult. Later on we will get the result no doubt. We have seen many and they have got the result, that is our great fortune actually, it is necessary to see that result in others otherwise we will not know how to see that Harinama playing in the hearts of others.

A very old man and very good friend of mine told me a very good explanation how to understand this principle. Before I joined the mission of Srila Guru Maharaj I was a professional singer of kirtan for about two years. When I was very young I learned

all the meters and songs automatically, because my father was a famous-professional singer and many people were coming to learn from him and any time other singers were going through our village they would come to our house. I had a very good memory so I could keep all those songs and melodies in my mind. Then my father died and everyone was crying and nobody knew what to do next. They did not know who could sing the songs. My family and uncles were discussing what to do and I said to them that I could sing all the songs, they all looked at me very surprised but my uncle asked me to sing this particular song and I said all right. It was a very difficult song, but I sang it perfectly, while my uncle played the mrdanga. When the song was finished my uncle embraced me and declared to everyone that I shall be their new leader, at that time I was fourteen years old.

There was one old man who was a very good singer and he was always



Many devotees came from far and wide to hear Srila Govinda Maharaja's talks in Germany.

going to the kirtans, wherever there was an expert singer. I asked him what he was getting from all these different kitana leaders. He told me “*Gan shunto sikha hoy.*” This means that you must learn how to hear the songs properly. This is my point, we have to learn how to see the Harinama dancing inside of others, this is necessary for us to learn.

A Terrible Situation

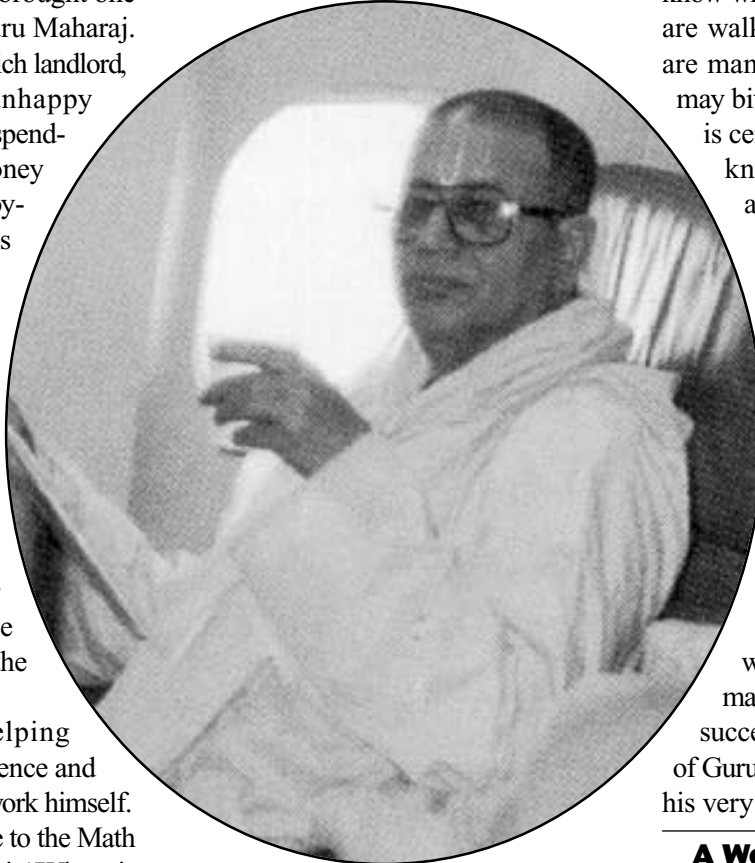
Actually that old man brought one big asura man to Srila Guru Maharaj. His son in law was a very rich landlord, but his daughter was unhappy because her husband was spending so much time and money on his material sense enjoyment. At that time he was spending one thousand rupees per day on his sense pleasures, he was not a bad man but a big asura without doubt, and his wife who was the daughter of the old man was unhappy. Guru Maharaj had only started his mission about two or three years before and he was the only sannyasi in the Math.

One day we were helping Guru Maharaj to make a fence and he was doing the binding work himself. Anyway this old man came to the Math and asking to Guru Maharaj, “Where is Sridhar Maharaj, where is Sridhar Maharaj?” Guru Maharaj asked the man where he has come from and for what reason. That man said that he had heard that a great sadhu sannyasi called Sridhar Maharaj is living in this place. Guru Maharaj told the man to go inside and then Guru Maharaj went and washed his hands and feet and dressed only in a kumsha went to that man and said “I am Sridhar Maharaj, how can I help you”.

That man was very surprised that this was Sridhar Maharaj and that he was making the fence with his own hands. Then he told Guru Maharaj his

problem about his son in law wasting so much money on his sense gratification and that his daughter was very unhappy, and that if Guru Maharaj could give that asura man some spiritual consciousness then everybody would be very happy. Guru Maharaj told the man that he does not go outside the Math but if he brought his son in law to the Math he would try and help him.

One day that asura man was walk



ing with his wife and father-in-law and some family members by the banks of the Ganga. The father in law said that there is a sadhu living nearby let us go and see him, the wife also insisted so they all came to see Guru Maharaj. When they saw Srila Guru Maharaj they knew that he was genuine and the wife asked could they sit for a few minutes by his lotus feet. At that time the Ganges was very close by from the road you could jump in, even at that time Guru Maharaj was renowned as a big sadhu sannyasi, and they had heard mention of Sridhar Maharaj. Then Guru Maharaj started preaching to that man

in a very enthusiastic and penetrating way, explaining to him the actual position of the jiva soul.

Guru Maharani told him, “You have got this great opportunity now that you have this human body to do some good, even the demigods are doing tapasya hoping to get a human body. This human body can help us achieve the supreme benefit of life, but death may come at any moment and you do not know when or where you will die. You are walking by the Ganga and there are many poisonous snakes and one may bite you and you may die, death is certain for us all and you do not know where or when you will again take birth you do not know what awaits you.” That man listened very attentively to Guru Maharaj and when Guru Maharaj finished that man cried, “Oh! I am losing everything, my wealth and happiness, everything, please save my life!,” he begged to Guru Maharaj. To such a degree he wholeheartedly surrendered to Srila Guru Maharaj. Guru Maharaj was trying wholeheartedly to make that man perfect and he was successful, that man fell to the feet of Guru Maharaja begging him to save his very life.

A Wonderful Conclusion

After this happened that old man whose name was Nityananda Chowdhri, and his daughter were very happy. When that man went back to his house he threw out all the whisky and wine bottles, and he took Harinama from Guru Maharaj and he left all the bad things in his nature.

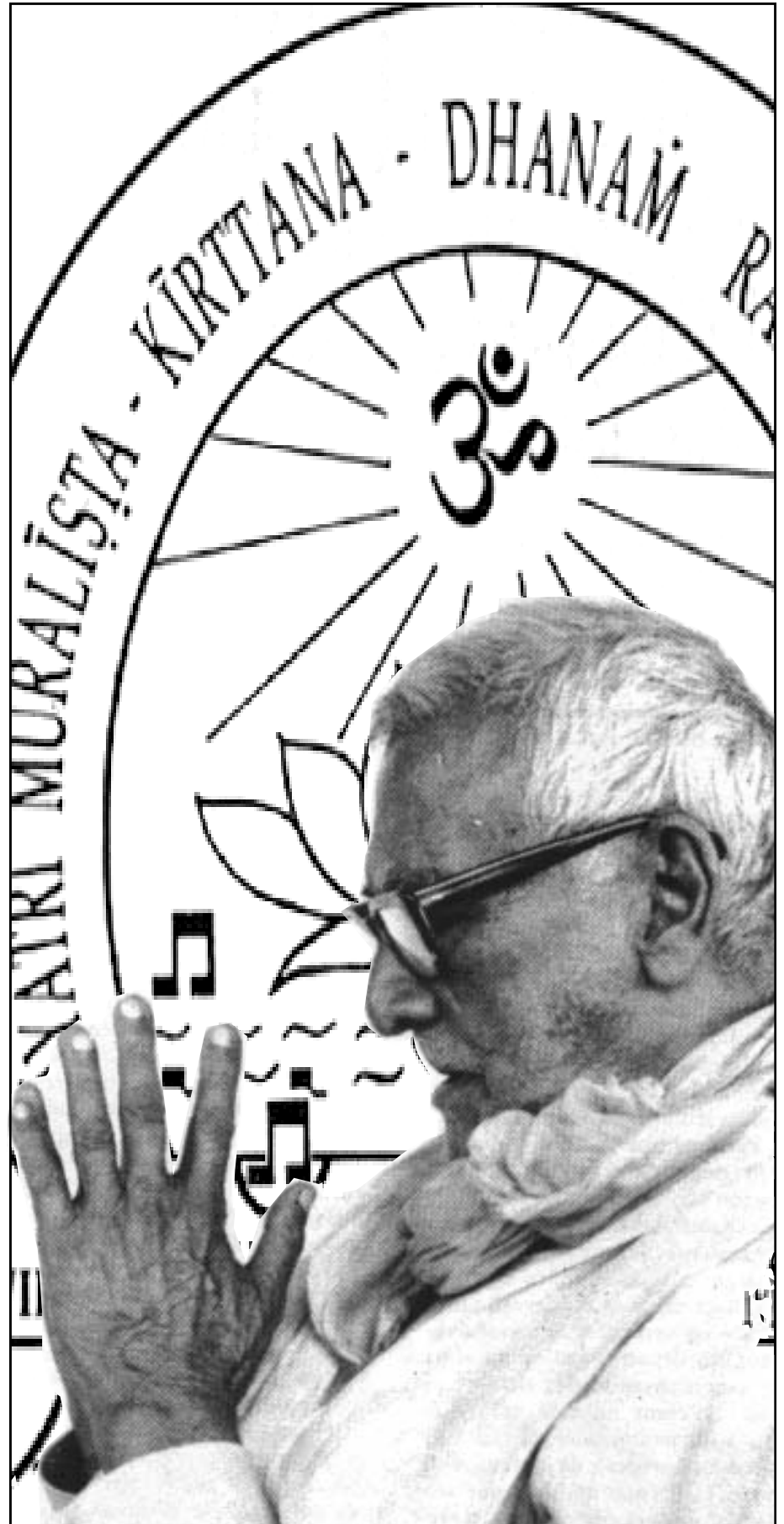
His barber was also the barber of Srila Guru Maharaj and would come to the Math once a month and shave Guru Maharaj. He would go to that mans house every day and shave him, although the charge was only a few paisa he would pay the barber five rupees. Although he was an asura he

was a generous kind hearted man also. The next day the barber came running into the Math and giving full satsanga dandavats to Guru Maharaj said “O Sridhar Maharaj, Mahaprabhu rescued Jagai and Madhai, Devananda Pandit and many Muslims, and we heard that Jagai and Madhai were the most sinful, but we only heard these things, but I have seen in my life with my own eyes what that man was doing. He was spending so much money on women and wine doing more wrong then Jagai and Madhai. Every day I am praying to Mahaprabhu to please give him some sumati, good mentality, but you Maharaj are more merciful than Nityananda Prabhu, you have rescued this man!

“He told me that this transformation was brought about by the mercy of Sridhar Maharaj of Kolerganj!”

Today I went to his house to shave him but he was dressed in dhoti and wearing tilaka he was chanting Hare Krsna with Tulasi mala and his mind and heart were peaceful, it is a great miracle. He told me that this transformation was brought about by the mercy of Sridhar Maharaj of Kolerganj!”

That old man, the father-in-law of the asura man, told me that we have to learn how to hear the song properly, so we must learn how to see the Harinama play within others. That old man also became a Prabhu and Guru Maharaj gave him the name Gaurahari Bhakti Sampada, he was my very good friend and he has done much service for the Math. Actually, it was through him that the Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math began to grow.



Srila Sridhar Maharaja: through his mercy we have Srila Govinda Maharaja.

Srila Guru Maharaj would never ask anyone for anything and I never asked that man for anything, but I asked him if he could introduce me to his friends that would be very good. I told him that he was a great man and his recommendation would be sufficient, if he would introduce me to the people of his village. So he invited me to come to his village and I met many good gentlemen there and automatically after some preaching some help for the Math came from them.

They also gave me the nickname “kyuto daka”, baby cobra. They would say to others, don’t try to debate with him he is like a baby cobra and will smash you. Those men were also big men and that name was a good certificate from them. I was fearless because I was a disciple of Srila Guru Maharaj so how

could I be afraid of anything, and through them the Math began to grow.

Generally Guru Maharaj would wait six months before giving initiation to the brahmacharis who wanted to live in the Math, but he broke that rule with me and gave me Harinama after three months.

Usually he would wait and see how they were serving, if they were humble and steady in their service, then he would give them japa mala. I heard that Swami Maharaj was also following like that but he gave another instruction and that was that they could begin chanting before formal initiation. Maybe that was necessary for the western devotees to see how they were doing.

Please excuse me, now I shall go to my camp.

Jaya Srila Guru Maharaj all glories to the assembled devotees, Hare Krsna!



The mission of Srila Govinda Maharaj is the fulfillment of Mahaprabhu’s promise.



The Nature of Faith

Sriman Krsna Balaram das

Krsna Balaram das was the first disciple of Srila Govinda Maharaja in the New York area. He, again, writes with deep clarity and authority on the subject of faith in Krsna consciousness.



Have you ever looked at sheet music? Not a guitar or piano crib sheet for performing at sis's birthday party, but a piece of real complex musical genius, such as, say, Wagner's *Gottedamerung* or Beethoven's *7th symphony*? If you are like me, musically untrained, chances are that not only will you be unable to understand the language of musical composition, but the very act of being able to think and create in such an alien complex way would suggest to you the existence of another plane of being, the "plane of music" to which you and I are denied entrance by way of ignorance.

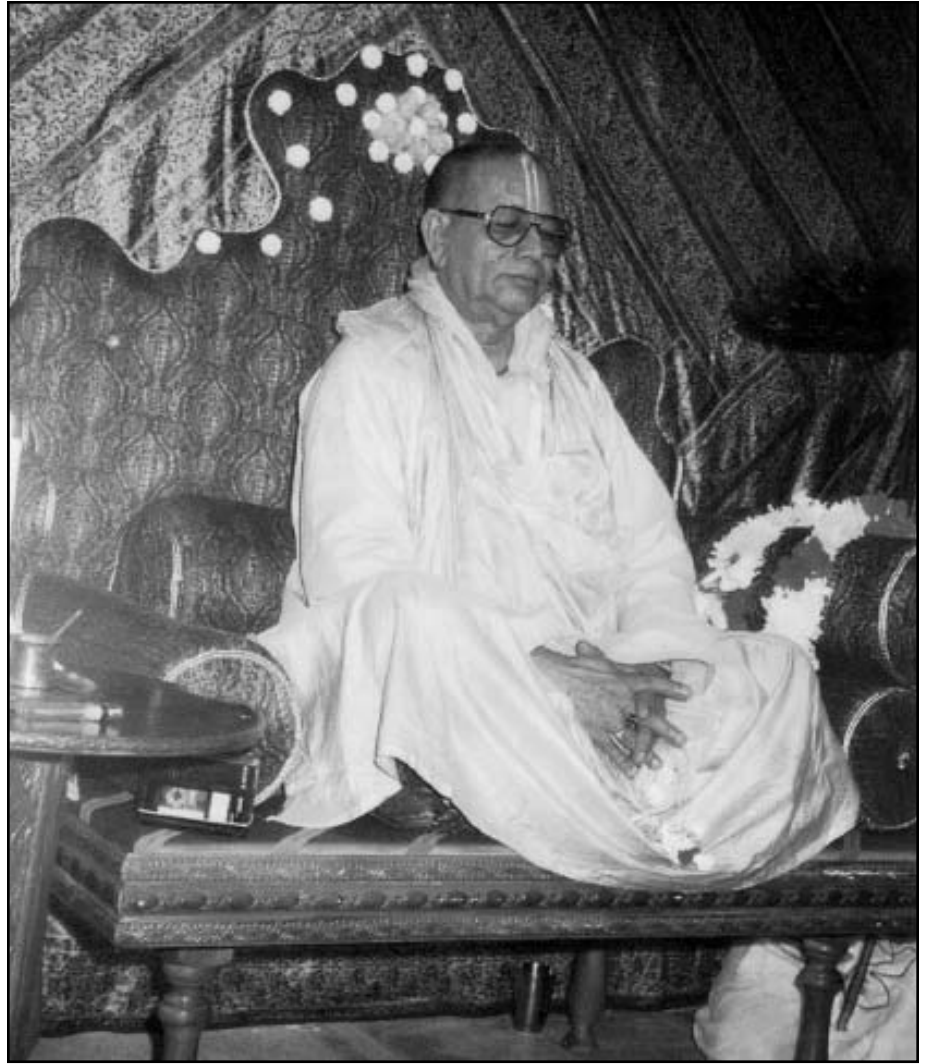
Another example, a book of quantum physics; again, not some pop tome such as "The Tao of Physics," but,

rather Einstein's own basis for the Theory of Relativity or the mathematical formulae in *The Emperor's New Mind*. Again, would not the language before you not only remain undecipherable but suggest an entirely "other" plane of consciousness, a plane unglimped, perhaps even unknown, to the common man.

“Nobody, it seems, would ever decry any human potential as useless, and yet, the capacity of Faith is somehow considered different, an aberration!”

Let us now turn to a religious scripture, the Bhagavad Gita is a good choice. Although you might be quite familiar with it and its language and format, for many people a book such as the Gita or, indeed, any religious scripture will be as alien and incomprehensible as the previously mentioned musical score or scientific tome. Another plane of consciousness, yet one no less real than any of the others mentioned before. Unfortunately, for them, some folks cannot accept the existence of this particular area of existence. They lack the key to enter there, the key of faith.

Srila B.R. Sridhar Maharaja, one of the foremost sages of modern times, who was noted for his saintly lifestyle and his intellectual acumen and ability to distill the meaning of the



The Nature of consciousness can only be learned from a pure devotee of the Lord.

world's oldest and most philosophically astute scriptures (the Vedas of India) and present them in unique and relevant ways, often used this metaphor of the "planes of consciousness" while explaining the paramount importance of faith in our religious lives. The existence of these planes is easy to comprehend, on one level, the level of gross sense experience, most people dwell; they react to sensual input, make arrangements to live comfortably and use the skills picked up along their lives to exist contentedly, scarcely dreaming that there can be more to life than eating, fornicating and defecating their way to the inevitable grave. But on a higher level, the plane of intellect- an expanded view of life is revealed. Here dwell the scientists

artists, historians who have the key to another plane of life; they have an awareness that the world contains much more than meets the eye, and the ability to communicate this to like-minded individuals.

The Road to Reality

To attain admittance to the planes of science, music, and art much study and discipline is needed, in some cases years of it. And the more study and austerity undertaken, the greater the reward. The human spirit seems capable of incredible feats of intellect and even inspiration which can be glimpsed even by those of us who dwell far from these awe-inspiring areas but nevertheless have the capacity to appreciate the wonders of life and the uni-

verse. It is just such capacities, awarded to us by nature, or the Supreme, which when developed harmoniously, allow us the most complete, honest picture of existence. The capacity to love, to feel, the intellectual capacity, each reveals more to us, and the more they are developed, the more complete and whole we feel. Nobody, it seems, would ever decry any human potential as useless, and yet, the capacity of Faith is somehow considered different, an aberration, an outmoded mistake, as if nature had “goofed” in one instance of human design. Yet, just as there is a plane of sense reaction, just as there is a plane of intellect, there is a plane of spirit, and the way to get there is through Faith

In Walks the Skeptic

“But how can I have faith in something I can’t see?,” the skeptic might ask. The sadhu can reply, “Can one see the atoms spoken of by scientists, can one see the mind and its wonders? Not offhand, but it is possible through struggle and application. Then what wonders are opened to you!”

The plane of spirit, of soul, is most wondrous of all, so how much more must we struggle to attain it. And it is worth attaining, as the scientists of the spirit, the great saints sages and yogis have revealed to us. “Dive deep into the plane of spirit, there you will find your sweet, sweet home,” Swami B.R.Sridhar has told us and sraddha, faith, is the key to that realm. Just as academic discipline develops the mind, faith develops the spirit, who alone can comprehend the endless wealth available to us?

Admittedly it is not an easy journey, there have been many more scholars and artists than saints, although at times a fortunate blend occurs. The greater the reward, the harder the struggle. “No risk-no gain” it has been said. And is it worth the risk, anyway? those who have had even a glimpse of the Land of Faith assert that it is, so much

so that, although the Upanishads warn of the difficulty of spiritual life, and point out that achieving Krsna consciousness may take not only a lifetime, but lifetimes of work, we are advised that it is more than worth the struggle to achieve. Sri Jagganatha Vasudev, a companion of the renowned Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu, when he was informed that he would achieve God consciousness in a million lifetimes, danced with joy at the prospect!

The Real Potential

Although I’ve mentioned struggle and austerity, I must remind our readers that the realm of spirit is a realm of love. Our presence is actually desired there, and the great saints and devotees

who dwell on that plane are distributing the nectar of that love far and wide. In fact, that is the mission of the Vaisnava, the true devotee, and one of the exercises of our capacity for faith is to find someone, a teacher of spiritual knowledge and aid that person in his or her quest to awaken everyone to their real potential.

It is my heartfelt wish that every sincere soul may come in contact with a genuine Vaisnava, and I must also confess my own gratitude at having come into contact myself with the plane of faith, through the persons of Srila B.S. Govinda Maharaja, Srila B.R.Sridhar Maharaja and their sincere followers. Faith is the Key.

Gaur Hari Bol! Hare Krsna!



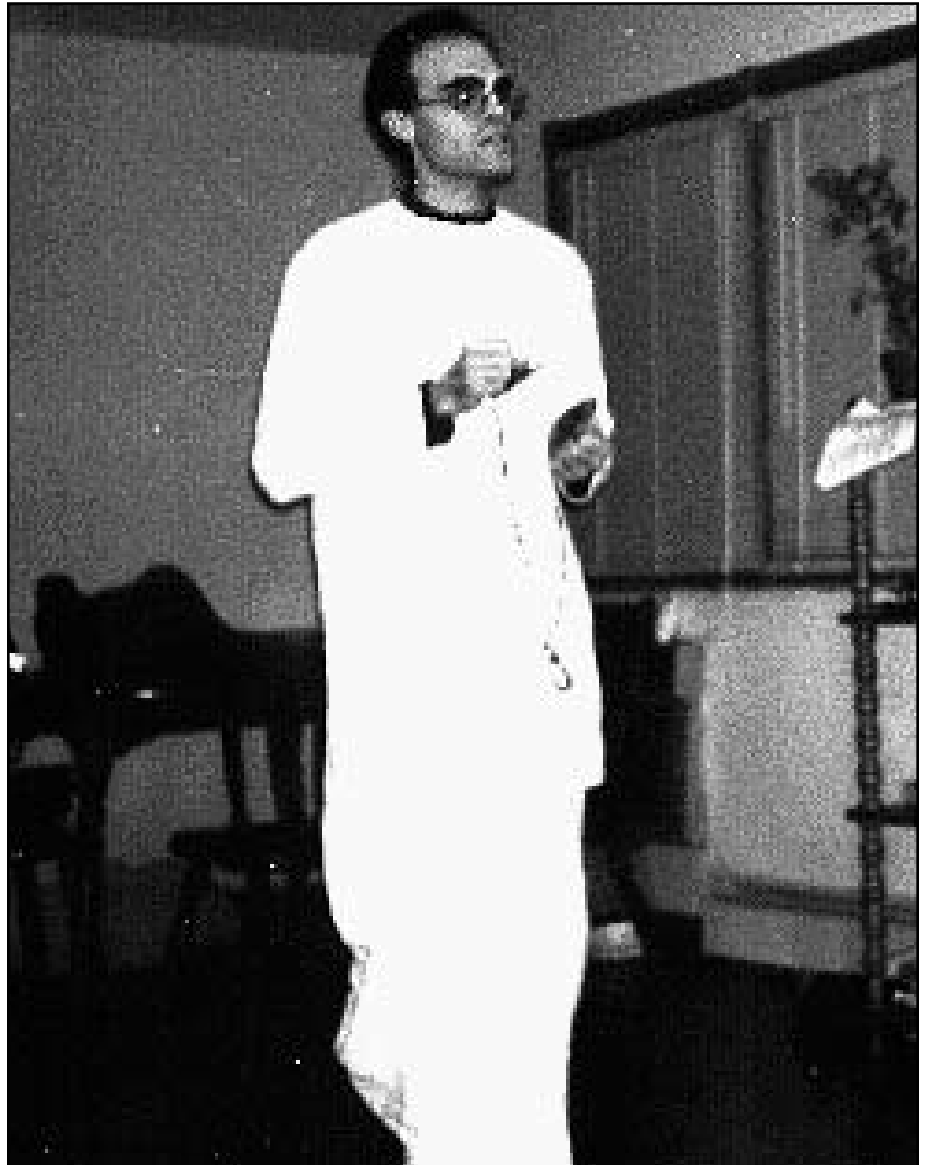
By approaching a pure vaishnava with faith, the soul can be freed from the snares of mundane affairs, and ultimately gain entrance into the Lord’s Abode and Pastimes.

N Report from *ew York*

Sriman Gokulananda das

In January we had the good fortune of being visited by Sriman Hasyapriya prabhu, one of the leaders, of the Santa Cruz ashram. He is a dear friend of Giri Maharaja who was extremely happy to have his association and hear the news of his many other friends in Santa Cruz. In his usual spirit of tireless service Hasyapriya spent several long days helping to catch up the bookkeeping work of the math. After staying for about a week Giri Maharaja had only one complaint about Hasyapriya's visit, it was not long enough.

More recently, Sripad Giri Maharaja commented how pleased he was that the size of the New York City programs have been steadily increasing after the visits of His Divine Grace Srila Govinda Maharaja to the New York branch of Sri Chaitanya Saraswata Math. Every week our programs have been well attended by the local devotees and their friends. We are always seeing some new faces which encourages us to know that the relief work of our Gurudeva is having its effect. After Srila Govinda Maharaja's last visit we held programs weekly in the home of Sriman Adi Purusha das who





Srila Govinda Maharaja inspecting his Math in New York/New Jersey.

is always eager to welcome the devotees and their friends. After several months his living arrangements changed making it unfeasible to continue our programs there. At that time Sriman Madhava Priya prabhu offered his home to us and made many special arrangements to accommodate the devotees there. Due to his irregular work schedule as an officer of the New York city fire department he is not always able to host our programs and at those times Sriman Jagannatha Vallabha prabhu invited us to have the programs at his home.

The Russian Connection

Recently, Jagannatha Vallabha went to Russia with his father Sriman Vijaya Raman prabhu (also a disciple of Srila Govinda Maharaja) to arrange for Srila Govinda Maharaja's preaching tour there. Before leaving we had a special program at Jagannatha Vallabha's to celebrate the momentous occasion of preparing for Srila Govinda Maharaja's

entrance into Russia. Jagannatha Vallabha had already arranged for the printing of "Sri Guru and His Grace" in Russian last year. All the devotees were enlivened to hear Vijaya Raman prabhu's accounts that he had already distributed hundreds of copies of "Sri Guru and His Grace" and held programs in his home in St. Petersburg to read and discuss Srila Sridhara Maharaja's books. In a spirit reminiscent of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta's address to his first preaching party sent to England, Giri Maharaja expressed his hope, support, and encouragement for the success of our first preaching party to go to Russia.

The last issue of "Vaishnava Transmission" was a double issue of almost forty pages printed for the first time on our own 600 dpi printer which I recently purchased with the help of my brother Ben. At last count at least three more newsletters are in the works and by the mercy of Guru and Gauranga I have been lending a hand in developing and producing each of them. Sriman

Dayal Chand has translated the first edition of "Vaishnava Transmission" into Spanish which will be published as soon as some proofreading and editing can be done by Krishna Balarama prabhu. "New York Harmonist" is the brainchild of our Satya Hari prabhu who has become one of our most enthusiastic supporters. He has a burning desire to preach the message of Mahaprabhu and has acquired his own Desktop Preaching System complete with computer, scanner and 600 dpi printer to help satisfy his appetite for preaching. Before Jagannatha Vallabha went to Russia he had some articles translated into Russian for his new Russian newsletter "Sat Sanga". I took time off from my job to help design and layout the whole newsletter so it would be finished in time for Jagannatha Vallabha's departure. It was a wonderful opportunity to serve the vaishnavas.

Vyasa Puja Celebration

On March 4th. we celebrated the appearance of His Holiness Sripad Bhakti Kanan Giri Maharaja. Srimati Lila Sundari devi planned and organized the event with the help of Satya Hari, Satya Sundara and many others. There was a big turnout for the celebration. Each of the devotees expressed their appreciation for Sripada Giri Maharaja and he in turn spoke of the many contributions each of them had made toward establishing our New York branch of Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math. He was especially moved by the letters of appreciation sent by Srila Govinda Maharaja, Sripada Sagara Maharaja, and Sripada Janardan Maharaja. After hearing their letters Sripada Giri Maharaja expressed his feeling of utter dependence on their guidance, encouragement, and support for his devotional life. Vaishnava Puja was performed in honor of His Holiness followed by enthusiastic kirtan led by myself (the guy with the horrible voice) with Prabhu Satya Sundar accompanying on mrdanga (he's very good). Prasada was distributed with cake and ice cream along

with a numerous variety of sweets brought by Satya Hari. Sripada Giri Maharaja remarked “You couldn’t have found more sugar in a Bengali sweet shop.” Needless to say everyone left in a happy mood.

Gaura Purnima 1995

Sri Gaura Purnima was celebrated at our Math in New Jersey. All day the devotees engaged in hearing and chanting the glories of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. The afternoon was taken up with preparing a wonderful feast for Sri Sri Guru Gauranga Gandhavika Giridhariju. Sripad Kanan Giri Maharaja wrote out a menu and then supervised the cooking while making several preparations himself. It seems that everyone had developed their own specialty and with great enthusiasm set about their tasks like a well oiled machine. Dayal Chand made several delicious subjis and dahl while simultaneously cleaning the pots. I cut all the vegetables for the subjis and made a fantastic nectar drink (which is surprising, since I am a pathetic cook) as well as lending a hand with the cleaning. Sripada Giri Maharaja made rice and savories including salted and fried corella and puris. Srimati Lila Sundari made the dhal, and a great cake with icing as well as garlands and flower decorations for the altar.

A Grand Festival!

Towards the end everyone joined together to roll puris while Sripad Giri Maharaja cooked them. At moon rise Dayal Chand made the offering of bhoga while the devotees chanted kirtan. After the offering Dayal Chand performed the aroti while the devotees chanted kirtan. It was wonderful, despite my leading kirtan. Sripada Giri Maharaj then commented on Mahaprabhu’s pastimes while reading from Srila Sridhara Maharaja’s Golden Volcano of Divine Love. After the deities were put to rest everyone honored the maha prasadam of the Lord which they took to their full satisfaction.

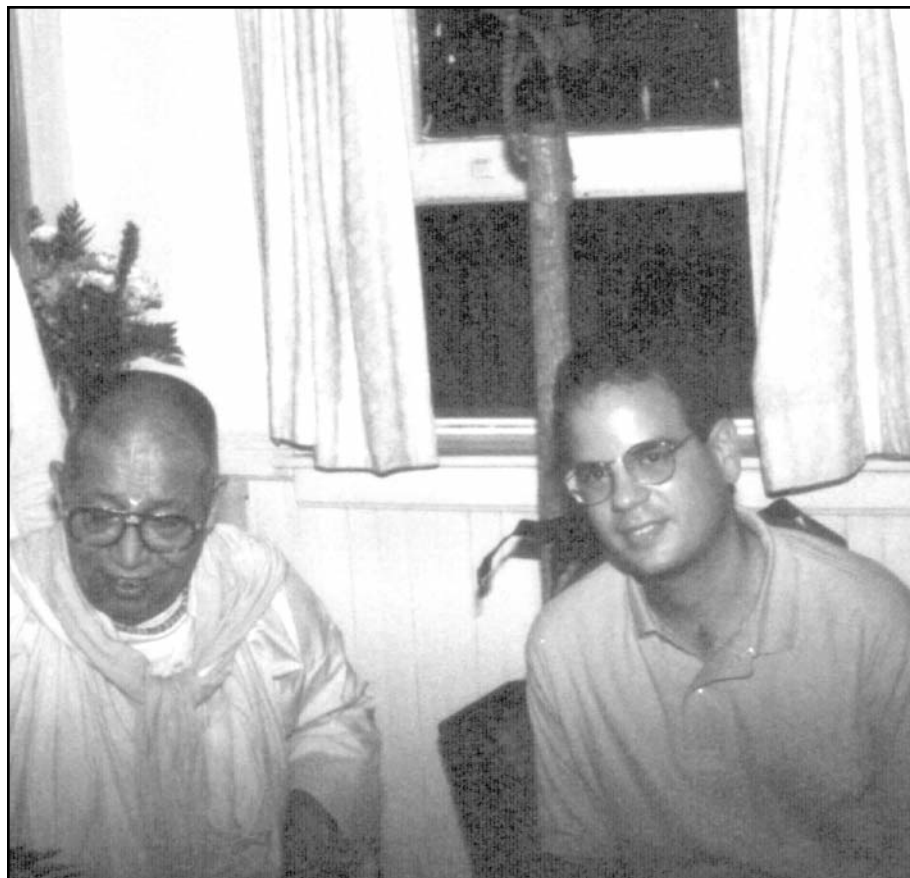
Sriman Arvin Ghosh, Ph.D., extended an invitation to Sripada Giri Maharaja to appear as the chief guest at their gathering of the Hindu Milan Mandir to celebrate Dol Yatra. A friend of Dr. Ghosh had met Srimati Vraja Mohini at the Calcutta Book Fair who told him of our Math in New Jersey. He wrote to Dr. Ghosh suggesting that he contact us and the invitation soon followed.

The event was celebrated with Krishna puja and bhajan performed by the members of the mandir. Afterward His Holiness Kanan Giri Maharaja took the stage along with Dayal Chand, Satya Hari, yours truly and Srimati Lila Sundari. By way of introduction, Sripada Giri Maharaja spoke of the mission of Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math and the Krishna Consciousness Movement in America. Since most of the members of the mandir were from Bengal, Sripada Giri Maharaja traced the history of our mission from its origins in Gauda Desha, beginning with the advent of Sri

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and the Pancha Tattva, to the present day preaching of Srila Bhakti Sundara Govinda Maharaja and Sri Chaitanya Saraswat Math. Everyone present seemed happy to hear this history and afterwards all joined in as Sripada Giri Maharaja led Kirtan. Delicious prasadam was distributed and relished by everyone, and there was a lot of it. I distributed Vaishnava Transmissions freely and Satya Hari engaged in spirited preaching while manning the book table along with Dayal Chand. Sripada Giri Maharaja remarked how nice the devotees looked dressed in dhotis, kurtas and tilak. He told us that Srila Prabhupada once said “When I see the devotees in dhotis and tilak they look like the residents of Vaikuntha.”

The Russia Report

The April 8th. program at Sriman Madhava Priya’s was marked by the return of Sriman Jagannatha Vallabha



Srila Govinda Maharaja in New York visiting with our journal’s graphic designer, Joseph Herman.

from his trip to Russia and India for Gaura Purnima. Sripada Giri Maharaja greeted him warmly and asked him to recount for us his memories of the trip. He told of his visit to Russia where he distributed all the copies of his Newsletter Sat Sanga. He also met a couple of new friends who accompanied him to India where they took initiation from Srila Govinda Maharaja. One of them, Adibhushan Prabhu is now at the Math in Navadvipa, enthusiastically engaged in service there. Jagannatha Vallabha went on to tell us how impressed he was with the simple beauty of the Math and the humility of the devotees there. It was a wonderful experience which left a deep impression on him.

Fit As A Fiddle

We were all relieved to see Sriman Rasikananda looking “fit as a fiddle” after spending more than a week in the hospital for heart by-pass surgery. He is recovering very quickly and seems to look better now than he did before the operation. Recently, with his characteristic enthusiasm, he suggested the idea of having a Srimad Bhagavatam study group in his home. Sripada Giri Maharaja was very happy with the proposal and the program was begun immediately. Now every Thursday evening from 6 to 9pm Prabhu Rasikananda will host the study group at his home. Everyone is invited to attend.

CSM Will Surf The Net!!

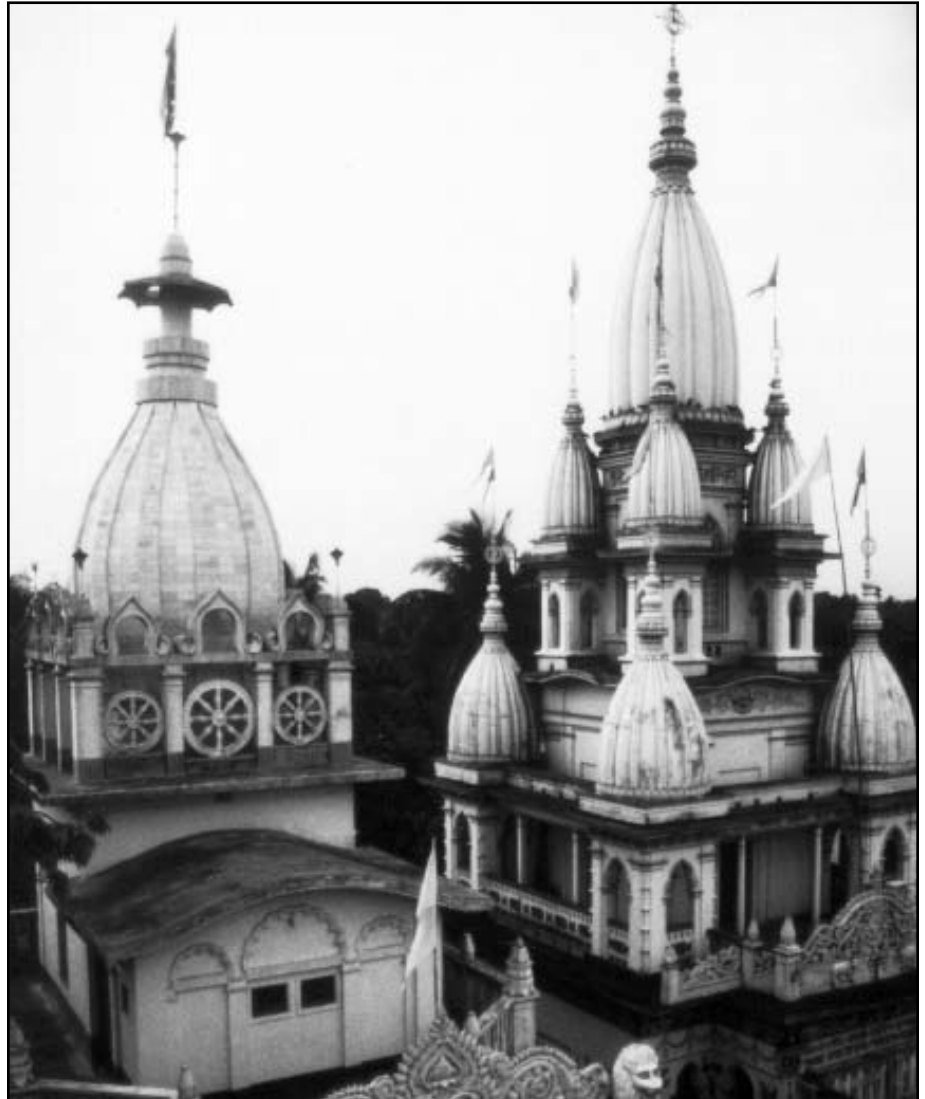
All you computer junkies will be happy to know you’ll soon be able to get wired into our own Chaitanya Saraswata Math homepage on the Internet! Kanan Giri Maharaja and our local team of computer nerds have started work on what may be the most dynamic preaching vehicle for the 21st. century. The Internet is currently used by tens of millions of people around the world and the numbers are increasing faster than service providers can accommodate. Imagine someone browsing the World Wide Web and landing on our

homepage. He’ll be greeted by a beautiful graphic displaying the domes of the world headquarters of Chaitanya Saraswat Math in Navadvipa. At the same time he can hear a recording of the devotees of Navadvipa chanting kirtan. He then discovers a variety of topics he can pursue according to his interest such as...our recent acharyas (Srila Govinda Maharaja, Srila Prabhupada, and Srila Sridhara Maharaja) with photos and recordings of their lectures or talks, our previous acharyas (Srila Bhaktisiddhanta, Srila Gaurakishora, Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakur, and so on), the disciplic succession, Sri Krishna, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and so forth. If he has questions he can correspond with one of our devotees. If he wants more information he can sign up for

our newsletter or access a bulletin board area which will have postings of Srila Govinda Maharaja’s preaching tours, festivals, and other events. Looking for more information he can find a list of our centers all over the world, and with links established with our other maths, he can immediately access the homepages of Santa Cruz, London and even Navadvipa. Imagine all of this with a potential to reach a wider audience than the total circulation of all the major newspapers of the world and you can understand why we’re so excited about our Internet connection. It is a rare opportunity.

That’s the news for now. We pray this finds you all well in health and spirit.

Jai Gurudeva! Hare Krsna!



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