Śrīla Prabhupāda-tattvāṣṭakam

Prayers to His Divine Grace
108 Śrī Śrīmad A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda illuminating the philosophical truths around his divine character and activities

With explanations by the author



Śrīla Prabhupāda in Hamburg airport, around 1970

Foreword

I had been meaning to complete this aṣṭakam (set of eight Sanskrit verses) since around 2002, when I wrote the first two stanzas. At the time I was living in Śrī Rūpa-Sanātana Gauḍīya Maṭha and working on publications such as Śrī Brahma Saṁhitā. Our annual observance of Śrīla Prabhupāda's appearance day or Vyāsa-Pūjā featured many senior Godbrothers and Godsisters who eagerly took the opportunity to remember His Divine Grace and how he inspired us during his ācārya-līlā, and how he continues to inspire us through the teachings he left in his books, letters and lectures.

Feeling somewhat insignificant, as I only joined ISKCON in 1976 and only met Śrīla Prabhupāda briefly when I received harināma (first) initiation in Detroit in June of the same year, I still felt that there was an ocean of praise that could be offered at the lotus feet of Guru Mahārāja. Even an ant or an insignificant person can make a small offering, and we not only can but must do so for our own purification.

Although I did not have the opportunity to ask Śrīla Prabhupāda questions (even in letters – we were told not to write him) and never got to sit in a room conversation or get close to him on the few morning walks I participated in, I tried to immerse myself in reading his books. I had a strong belief that we, as his disciples, should read his books for at least an hour or two every day. As I was somewhat lazy I somehow found time to read his books, all of

them, once in the first 1 or 2 years after I joined. I may have spent more than an hour or two on some days.

On meeting Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja in 1997 and hearing him speak, I found that some of the parts of Śrīla Prabhupāda's books that had been relatively impenetrable (for example, the purport to SB. 1.1.1 and many sections in Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta) suddenly were clear and open. At the same time I came to understand what many senior Godbrothers and Godsisters had said about Śrīla Prabhupāda and his kind and loving nature, and understood the importance of direct association with the pure devotee.

I originally composed these verses and offered them at Śrīla Prabhupāda's Vyāsa-Pūjā in Alachua in 2025. This booklet is my attempt to expand the meanings behind these verses in light of the teachings found in Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. The meter is indirā, which is also found in Gopī-gītā (the verses spoken by the gopīs after Śrī Kṛṣṇa left the rāsa dance, beginning with *jayati te 'dhikaṁ janmanā vrajaḥ*). Just to separate these expanded explanations from the translations, I have used the heading Vyākhyā. Vyākhyā simply means an expanded explanation.

I am grateful to those who have reviewed various drafts and provided their feedback. Śrī Prema Prayojana Prabhu was kind to review the Sanskrit. Śrīpāda BV Nemi Mahārāja and Pūjanīya Śyāmarāṇī Didi graced me with their review of the content and siddhānta. My wife and partner Śrīmatī Mañjulālī Dāsī has provided her support and feedback throughout this process.

I am also indebted to the many senior devotees I have known throughout my life who shared with me their interactions with Śrīla Prabhupāda. Sadly, some of them are no longer with us.

I was especially inspired reading Śrīmatī Śyāmarāṇī Didi's book *The Art of Spiritual Life*.

Offered in loving service,
Atula Kṛṣṇa dāsa (Agrāhya dāsa)
Gainesville, Florida, USA

श्रील प्रभुपाद-तत्त्वाष्टकम्

छन्दः - इन्दिरा

गुरु-परम्परा-मूर्तिमान् भवान्
हरि-कथामृतं जीवनौषधम् ।
पतित-पावनो ऽदायद् अद्भुतम्
जयति भक्तिवेदान्त-नामिने ॥ १ ॥
य उरुगाय-लीलानुवर्णनाद्
अधम-गान् हि रूपानुगायते ।
स विकरोतु मां दैत्य-चेतसं
शरण-पादको भक्ति-दायिनः ॥ २ ॥
जय सरस्वती-ठाकुरोद्धर
जय विनोद-धारावतारण ।
जय यतीश्वराधार-तत्त्व-द
मम हृदि स्थितात्मानुकम्पयेः ॥ ३ ॥
मणि-निबद्ध-सिद्धान्त-सम्पुतान्
लिखित-पुस्तकान् चित्र-दर्शनान् ।
स कविराज-रूपाग्रजादिना
स्फुरित-भूरि-दो ग्रन्थ-दायकः ॥ ४ ॥
कमल-पाद-गौराङ्ग-सुन्दर-
प्रभु-पदाश्रयानन्द-वर्धनो ।
भुवन-मङ्गलं भाव-वर्षणं
प्रभुपदाभिदो गुर्वति-प्रभात् ॥ ५ ॥
भुवन-मन्दिर-स्थापितानि च
हरि-निषेवयोर्जास्तथा त्वया ।
सतत-तीर्थ-कृत्पाद-पल्लव!
तरसि पश्चिमे मत्त-मार्गये ॥ ६ ॥
हरि-कथोत्सवं कीर्तनाद्भुतं
हरि-महोत्सवं स्थापितं त्वया ।
द्रुत-विकर्म-बन्धानुमोचनं
हरि-प्रसाद-विश्वानुरञ्जनम् ॥ ७ ॥
परम-पालक-प्रीति-सिन्धु-द
परम-भावुकात्मानुशिक्षक ।
परम-देव-देव्युत्तमाश्रय
परम-पार्षदानन्द-सेवक ॥ ८ ॥

स प्रभुपाद-कीर्त्यावतारणः
पतित-सेवकाशानुबन्धनम् ।
सतत-साधु-सङ्गाश्रयात्मकं
परम-भक्तिमन्तं विधीयते ॥

Śrīla Prabhupāda-tattvāṣṭakam

Meter: indirā

1) guru-paramparā-mūrtimān bhavān
hari-kathāmṛtaṁ jīvanauṣadham
patita-pāvano 'dāyad adbhutam
jayati bhaktivedānta-nāmy uta

2) ya urugāya-līlānuvarṇanād
adhama-gān hi rūpānugāyate
sa vikarotu māṁ daitya-cetasaṁ
śaraṇa-pādako bhakti-dāyinaḥ

3) jaya sarasvatī-ṭhākuroddhara
jaya vinoda-dhārāvatāraṇa
jaya yatīśvarādhāra-tattva-da
mama hṛdi sthitātmānukampayeḥ

4) maṇi-nibaddha-siddhānta-samputān
likhita-pustakān citra-darśanān
sa kavirāja-rūpāgrajādinā
sphurita-bhūri-do grantha-dāyakaḥ

5) kamala-pāda-gaurāṅga-sundara-
prabhu-padāśrayānanda-vardhano
bhuvana-maṅgalaṁ bhāva-varṣaṇaṁ
prabhupadābhido gurv-ati-prabhāt

6) bhuvana-mandira-sthāpitāni ca
hari-niṣevayorjās tathā tvayā
satata-tīrtha-kṛt-pāda-pallava!
tarasi paścime matta-mārgaye

7) hari-kathotsavaṁ kīrtanādbhutaṁ
hari-mahotsavaṁ sthāpitaṁ tvayā
druta-vikarma-bandhānumocanaṁ
hari-prasāda-viśvānurañjanam

8) parama-pālaka-prīti-sindhu-da
parama-bhāvukātmānuśikṣaka
parama-deva-devy-uttamāśraya
parama-pārṣadānanda-sevaka

sa prabhupāda-kīrtyāvatāraṇaḥ
patita-sevakāśānubandhanam
satata-sādhu-saṅgāśrayātmakaṁ
parama-bhaktimantaṁ vidhīyate

Translation

1. All glories to Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda! You embody the teachings of the entire guru-paramparā, and rescued the fallen in the most astonishing way by giving hari-kathā, which is the only medicine for the sufferings of conditioned life in this material world.

2. He is that personality who narrated the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is glorified by transcendental songs, and took those who were on the downward path of material existence and set them on the

journey to become rūpānugas (followers in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī). His feet are worthy of taking shelter and he bestows pure bhakti. May he also transform my demonic consciousness (into a rūpānuga devotee).

3. All glories to the upholder of the teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura! All glories to he who carried the flow of teachings from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura [to the western world]! All glories to the lord of renunciates who gave all transcendental truths from the foundation up! May you reside in my heart always and bestow on me your confidential mercy!

4. He bestowed us with treasure chests filled with divine gems in the form of his books, along with amazing illustrations depicting windows to the spiritual world. He manifested the most gracious gifts as the giver of books carrying the writings of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, and other associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

5. His lotus feet (pāda) increase blissful existence at the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahā-prabhu (also giving pleasure to Mahā-prabhu and His associates). He bestows auspiciousness on the entire world and showers prema, and as the guru who manifests such an amazing effect on the world, he is known by the name 'Prabhupāda.'

6. You have established temples of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa throughout the world by the unstoppable strength of your service to Śrī Hari, and by constantly travelling across the globe your lotus feet created

places of pilgrimage. You have delivered even the Western countries which are on the path of intoxication [with material existence].

7. You made a continuous festival of hari-kathā along with astonishing kīrtanas. You established transcendental festivals (such as Ratha-yātrā) for the glorification of Śrī Hari (Kṛṣṇa). You freed others from the long chains of horrible fruitive activity by distributing mahā-prasādam and creating a pleasing atmosphere throughout the world.

8. You bestowed the supremely nourishing ocean of love for Kṛṣṇa with great affection, and you shared the ecstasy of your own realizations. You gave the supreme shelter of the Divine Couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa as an associate and intimate servant.

May he who descended [from Goloka Vṛndāvana] and is known as 'Prabhupāda' grant the fervent desire of this fallen servitor: to have continuous association of pure devotees and to attain uttama-bhakti (pure devotional service).

Śrīla Prabhupāda-tattvāṣṭakam

Verse 1

गुरु-परम्परा-मूर्तिमान् भवान्
हरि-कथामृतं जीवनौषधम् ।
पतित-पावनो ऽदायद् अद्भुतम्
जयति भक्तिवेदान्त-नामिने ॥ १ ॥

guru-paramparā-mūrtimān bhavān
hari-kathāmṛtaṁ jīvanauṣadham
patita-pāvano 'dāyad adbhutam
jayati bhaktivedānta-nāmy uta

guru-paramparā – the disciplic succession of bonafide gurus; *mūrtimān* – the embodiment; *bhavān* – you; *hari-kathā* – topics about Śrī Hari (Kṛṣṇa) or spoken by Śrī Kṛṣṇa; *amṛtam* – nectar; *jīvana-auṣadham* – the medicine for conditioned life in the material world; *patita-pāvanaḥ* – deliverer of the fallen; *adāyat* – gave; *adbhutam* – astonishing; *jayati* – glories; *bhaktivedānta-nāmī* – named Bhaktivedānta; *uta* – indeed.

All glories to Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda! You embody the teachings of the entire guru-paramparā, and rescued the fallen in the most astonishing way by giving hari-kathā, which is the only medicine for the sufferings of conditioned life in this material world.

Vyākhyā

These verses are addressing Śrīla Prabhupāda in the second person, speaking to him directly, but using the honorific forms of the third person (bhavān). It is essential that in the beginning, the disciple should have reverence for the spiritual master. The other side of this is that one should not become a spiritual master without having the competence to speak with full authority based on having realized the ocean of truths (śabde pare ca niṣṇātaṁ brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam).

There is an allusion here to one of the verses of Gopī-gītā: *tava kathāmṛtaṁ tapta-jīvanam* – the direct meaning is that the nectar of Kṛṣṇa katha alleviates the suffering of conditioned souls who are burning in material existence, and those magnanimous sādhus who distribute the very sweet and pleasing Hari-kathā are the most munificent, and they are the real welfare workers. Thus Śrīla Prabhupāda said, “Kṛṣṇa book is our medicine.”

It was a bit mysterious that Śrīla Prabhupāda completed Kṛṣṇa Book, a summary study of the 10th Canto of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, back around 1970, and encouraged devotees to distribute it widely. This was years before Śrīla Prabhupāda completed the first nine Cantos of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. The 10th Canto contains descriptions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes with the gopīs in Vṛndāvana, and is revered by Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas as the centerpoint of the entire Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. The expression of unalloyed and unreserved pure love (premā) shown by the cowherd damsels of Vraja is worshiped by sages such as Nārada Muni, Uddhava, and

the personified Vedas (in verses such as nibhṛta-marun-mano 'kṣa-dṛḍha-yoga-yujo-hṛdi yat).

Yet he wove the narration of these pastimes with always establishing Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Absolute Truth, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes with the residents of Śrī Vṛndāvana dhāma as the topmost reciprocation of love between the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His topmost devotees.

What is most astonishing (adbhutam) is that he found fallen members of society and lifted them up. He gave us bhakti, and he taught over and above everything the doctrine of pure, unalloyed devotional service.

Even before accepting the renounced order (sannyāsa) and the name Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Swami Mahārāja, he was known amongst devotees in Gauḍīya Maṭha as Bhaktivedānta Prabhu. It was always his characteristic to give bhakti (devotion) along with vedānta (the summary knowledge of the vedas). Śrīla Prabhupāda himself wrote this in his prayer Mārkine Bhāgavata Dharma:

> *bhakti nāi veda nāi nāme khub daro*
> *"bhaktivedānta" nām ebe sārthak koro*
>
> I have no devotion, nor do I have any knowledge, but I have strong faith in the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. I have been designated as Bhaktivedānta, and now, if You like, You can fulfill the real purport of Bhaktivedānta.

He also established many things such as Bhaktivedānta Book Trust, Bhaktivedānta Institute, and so on. Thus while he was not the only one to receive the name Bhaktivedānta, he certainly made the name Bhaktivedānta globally recognized.

Verse 2

य उरुगाय-लीलानुवर्णनाद्
अधम-गान् हि रूपानुगायते ।
स विकरोतु मां दैत्य-चेतसं
शरण-पादको भक्ति-दायिनः ॥ २ ॥

ya urugāya-līlānuvarṇanād
adhama-gān hi rūpānugāyate
sa vikarotu māṁ daitya-cetasaṁ
śaraṇa-pādako bhakti-dāyinaḥ

yaḥ – who; *urugāya* – of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is broadly glorified in song; *līlā-anuvarṇanāt* – by means of describing the pastimes; *adhama-gān* – those who are going downwards; *hi* – indeed; *rūpānugāyate* – making into followers of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī; *saḥ* – he*; vikarotu* – may he reverse [the conditioning] and transform; *mām* – me; *daitya-cetasam* – having the mentality of a daitya (demonic person); *śaraṇa-pādakaḥ* – his footsteps are worthy of giving shelter, and also worthy of being followed; *bhakti-dāyinaḥ* – the giver of bhakti, pure devotional service.

He is that personality who narrated the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is glorified by transcendental songs, and took those who were on the downward path of material existence and set them on the journey to become rūpānugas (followers in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī). His feet are worthy of taking shelter and he bestows pure bhakti. May he also transform my demonic consciousness (into a rūpānuga devotee).

Vyākhyā

Śrīla Prabhupāda often said that we are all rūpānugas. There is a very profound meaning to this term, which has been applied to great ācāryas in our line (for example, in the praṇāma mantra for Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, *rūpānuga-varāya te* – [we offer our obeisances] unto you, who are the best of all rūpānugas). It is not just "follower" as in "fan" or "I like the ideas of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī." It means that we have embraced the essence of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition as it has been given in the writings of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, and it's not just a designation that we can switch for being "Prabhupādānuga." Of course we are followers of our Guru Mahārāja, as every disciple should be, but our Guru Mahārāja was a true rūpānuga, and he said that we are also rūpānugas both to guide us in the right direction and to encourage us. We don't need to invent new terms but should accept what he has given us.

Urugāya is a name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa meaning "one whose glories are broad like the ocean, and whose glories are spread all over the universe via transcendental song." Śrīla Prabhupāda took the teachings of our Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava line on the order of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and brought them to America, a country which is fully signed on to the downward path of gross materialism and sense gratification. Although the hippie movement appeared to outwardly reject the path of materialism, it was just another form of hedonism. Śrīla Prabhupāda made hippies into "happies."

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Śrī Kṛṣṇa performs various wonderful pastimes, both as His puruṣa-avatāras (creating and sustaining the material creation) and in His original form as Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda and Yaśodā. It is said that all of the activities of the various avatāras are to give the devotees subject matter for hearing and chanting, and Śrīla Prabhupāda did this. He nourished us with narrations of all of Kṛṣṇa's activities and instructions, and by giving us daily classes in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.

Taking shelter of the lotus feet of a pure devotee like Śrīla Prabhupāda has multiple meanings. One is to actually take the dust of his feet, and to take the water which has washed his feet.

> *bhakta-pada-dhūli āra bhakta-pada-jala*
> *bhakta-bhukta-avaśeṣa, — tina mahā-bala*
>
> The dust of the feet of a devotee, the water that has washed the feet of a devotee, and the remnants of food left by a devotee are three very powerful substances. (CC. Antya 16.60)

We also want to take his remnants (*bhakta-bhukta-avaśeṣa*) including remnants of Hari-kathā. This is all not strictly possible when he is not present; although we may listen to audio recordings and read his books, we are not able to take the dust of his feet, his remnants of prasāda, or take water which has touched his feet. Even hearing recordings is not the same as hearing from him directly, because the sounds coming from his lotus mouth are actually originating in the spiritual world and cannot be captured

on a magnetic tape, CD, hard disk or any other form of storage. We can follow his words and remember him through the sound of his divine voice, and most importantly we can try to follow in his footsteps. It is this last meaning which is most significant when he is not physically present. Nowadays we like to present ourselves as being his disciples, or disciples of this great ācārya or that great guru, but the real meaning of "disciple" is that we should instead ask ourselves what kind of disciple are we? If we have taken his instructions fully to heart, we are truly disciples and truly serving his vāṇī or instructions. Simply quoting his words without realizing them fully has great value but that is not the type of disciple he wanted us to become.

Although Śrīla Prabhupāda gave us many wonderful instructions and spoke on many topics, there is one central topic he emphasizes over and over again in his books. He was a teacher of pure *bhakti*, unalloyed devotional service which is not mixed with any tinge of *karma* (fruitive activities) or *jñāna* (speculative knowledge). He quoted this verse from Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu many times throughout his books:

> *anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam*
> *jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam*
> *ānukulyena kṛṣṇānu-*
> *śīlanaṁ bhaktir uttamā*

> "The topmost *bhakti* or pure devotional service is performed only for the pleasure of Śrī Kṛṣṇa without any other desire or aspiration, and is done with a favorable mood. Such *uttama-bhakti* must be free from

any tinge of *karma* (fruitive activities) and *jñāna* (speculative knowledge) and so on.”

In Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī’s commentary on this verse, he explains that *jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam* means not only that *uttama-bhakti* must be free from fruitive activities and speculative knowledge in the usual sense of *jñāna*, but must also be free even from knowledge of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s opulence. This is the special characteristic of *bhakti* rendered by the residents of Vṛndāvana – although both *aiśvarya* (transcendental opulence) and *mādhurya* (transcendental sweetness) are present in Goloka Vṛndāvana, any trace of opulence is completely covered by sweetness or *mādhurya*.

In Śrīla Prabhupāda’s translations of the verses in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam he specifically used the term “devotional service” where the Sanskrit might have indicated something less direct. Although we may think we could “improve” his books by making translations more in line with what Sanskrit scholars may accept, he was giving us the most direct and esoteric meaning in this way. Like everything he did, his translations and purports were completely perfect.

Although Śrīla Prabhupāda encouraged devotees to distribute his books, he wanted us first and foremost to become pure devotees, to love Kṛṣṇa. Like Nārada Muni, like Śukadeva Gosvāmī, like his Guru Mahārāja Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura and all the previous ācāryas, he emphasized pure devotional service above everything else, exclusively.

Verse 3

जय सरस्वती-ठाकुरोद्धर
जय विनोद-धारावतारण ।
जय यतीश्वराधार-तत्त्व-द
मम हृदि स्थितात्मानुकम्पयेः ॥ ३ ॥

jaya sarasvatī-ṭhākuroddhara
jaya vinoda-dhārāvatāraṇa
jaya yatīśvarādhāra-tattva-da
mama hṛdi sthitātmānukampayeḥ

jaya – glories; *sarasvatī-ṭhākura* – of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura; *uddhara* – you uphold, you carry on your head; jaya – glories; *vinoda-dhārā* – the flow of bhakti teachings coming from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura; *avatāraṇa* – you brought down [to us]; *jaya* – glories; *yati-īśvara* – lord of sannyāsīs; *ādhāra-tattva* – fundamental truths; *da* – you give; *mama* – my; *hṛdi* – in the heart; *sthita* – situated; *ātma* – of your own [confidential mercy]; *anukampayeḥ* – please be merciful.

All glories to the upholder of the teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura! All glories to he who carried the flow of teachings from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura [to the western world]! All glories to the lord of renunciates who gave all transcendental truths from the foundation up! May you reside in my heart always and bestow on me your confidential mercy!

Vyākhyā

The verb *ud-dhṛ* means to raise up, hold up, or sustain. Śrīla Prabhupāda showed by his own example how to honor the request of one's guru. He kept the order of his Gurudeva, Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, on his head throughout his life. From the time of his first meeting, Śrīla Sarasvatī Ṭhākura requested our Śrīla Prabhupāda to preach in English.

In Śrīla Prabhupāda's own words, he did not invent anything new. He gave us the process and teachings of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness as received from his own Guru Mahārāja. He humbly said "I have just repeated without changing" but although he is a perfect devotee and not an ordinary *sādhaka*, he showed by example how we should be the type of disciple who fully accepts the *vāṇī* (instructions) and *ādeśa* (order) and finds a way to serve. Nowadays it is popular to quote Śrīla Prabhupāda's words and say that we are also just repeating, but we need to make these instructions one with our heart.

The *dhārā* or stream flowing from Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has all of the instructions of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Six Gosvāmīs. For this reason, and in particular because he appeared in a time when the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition had fallen into ill repute, he is known as the Seventh Gosvāmī. Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura wrote prolifically, providing numerous books and commentaries to show the nature of pure *bhakti* in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Our Śrīla Prabhupāda, on the request of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, continued carrying

this flow of pure bhakti and presented it in the form of his books, along with his lectures and kīrtanas.

The term *dhārā* (flow or current) is not used lightly – in the case of Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, he re-established the current of *bhakti* which flows like the holy river Gaṅgā but had been almost completely lost. This divine current has nurtured all Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in the modern age. Śrīla Prabhupāda carried this divine flow throughout the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda showed the highest example of renunciation by sacrificing everything for the sake of fulfilling the order of his Gurudeva. He did not think of his own comfort but emptied himself of everything else but the desire to serve the order of Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura.

In his books Śrīla Prabhupāda ensured that there was never any doubt regarding fundamental *tattva* or truth. To lay a foundation for the teachings of pure *bhakti*, atheism, *māyāvāda*, *karma-kāṇḍa*, *jñāna-kāṇḍa*, and all such bogus ideas had to be completely cleared away. But *ādhāra-tattva* does not mean just the fundamental truths of Vaiṣṇava philosophy; he also repeatedly emphasized that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāja and Mother Yaśodā, is our object of worship. “There are many Kṛṣṇas, but we are especially interested in that Kṛṣṇa who is the son of Nanda Mahārāja and Mother Yaśodā.” (purport to *Bhaja huṅre mana*, San Francisco, 1967)

Verse 4

मणि-निबद्ध-सिद्धान्त-सम्पुतान्
लिखित-पुस्तकान् चित्र-दर्शनान् ।
स कविराज-रूपाग्रजादिना
स्फुरित-भूरि-दो ग्रन्थ-दायकः ॥ ४ ॥

maṇi-nibaddha-siddhānta-samputān
likhita-pustakān citra-darśanān
sa kavirāja-rūpāgrajādinā
sphurita-bhūri-do grantha-dāyakaḥ

maṇi-nibaddha – bound with gems (or full of gems); *siddhānta-samputān* – treasure-chests of; *siddhānta* (scriptural conclusions); *likhita-pustakān* – books written; *citra-darśanān* – visions through paintings; *saḥ* – he; *kavirāja* – Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī; *rūpa-agraja* – Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and his elder brother (Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī); *ādinā* – by them and others in their line; *sphurita* – manifest; *bhūri-daḥ* – magnanimous; *grantha-dāyakaḥ* – giver of transcendental books.

He bestowed us with treasure chests filled with divine gems in the form of his books, along with amazing illustrations depicting windows to the spiritual world. He manifested the most gracious gifts as the giver of books carrying the writings of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, and other associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Vyākhyā

This verse directly quotes from Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja, who said: “His [Śrīla Prabhupāda’s] books are treasure chests full of transcendental gems.” This itself is a profound statement. Śrīla Prabhupāda often said that he has given everything in his books, yet we know that he intended to continue translating and publishing books. He also gave references in his books such as the imperative, “Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī Prabhu, the teacher of the science of devotional service, wrote several books, of which the Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta is very famous; anyone who wants to know about the subject matter of devotees, devotional service and Kṛṣṇa must read this book.” (purport to Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta Adi 5.203)

The conclusive philosophical truths (*tattva-siddhānta*) of our Gauḍīya line are not only profound, they are consistent and are all interconnected. The interconnected nature extends far beyond the books that Śrīla Prabhupāda translated and gave his Bhaktivedānta purports to. When he said that we should read his books for at least an hour or two every day, it was understood that we would do it under his guidance. But even before his departure, some people asserted that they actually understood everything and we could receive his instructions through them. This was a serious fallacy. In particular, Śrīla Prabhupāda wanted all his disciples to come see him in Vṛndāvana in 1977, but this request was subverted by certain people. Some of these people also propagated the idea that Śrīla Prabhupāda was sick due to taking too many disciples and therefore no persons could receive initiation – this was a

fundamental misunderstanding, at the very least, of Śrīla Prabhupāda's nature as a *mahā-bhāgavata* and liberated devotee who came to this world to play a part in Mahāprabhu's movement by exhibiting extraordinary activities of a great *ācārya*.

If a child in the fourth grade can read the textbooks used in a great university like Oxford, it does not mean they have understood everything, and it certainly does not make them qualified to call themselves professor and begin teaching. A qualified teacher or a qualified *śikṣa-guru* has already understood the deep meanings of every philosophical conclusion, and can explain and answer questions with reference to all the other interconnected references. This applies not only to *tattva-siddhānta* (philosophical conclusions) but to *rasa-siddhānta* (conclusions related to transcendental mellows in devotional service). The limited analogy of grade school and college textbooks does not fully apply to the path of pure devotional service in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. Although we may teach philosophical truths to others according to our level of understanding, we should not claim to be *guru* without having fully realized the topics of *bhakti-rasa*. Otherwise there will be confusion and we run the risk of introducing our own mental speculation instead of realized truths.

Verse 5

कमल-पाद-गौराङ्ग-सुन्दर-
प्रभु-पदाश्रयानन्द-वर्धनो ।
भुवन-मङ्गलं भाव-वर्षणं
प्रभुपदाभिदो गुर्वति-प्रभात् ॥ ५ ॥

kamala-pāda-gaurāṅga-sundara-
prabhu-padāśrayānanda-vardhano
bhuvana-maṅgalaṁ bhāva-varṣaṇaṁ
prabhupadābhido gurv-ati-prabhāt

kamala-pāda – lotus feet; gaurāṅga-sundara - Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Gaurasundara; *prabhu-padāśraya* – taking and giving full shelter of the Lord's lotus feet; *ānanda-vardhanaḥ* – increasing bliss; *bhuvana* – of the entire world; *maṅgalam* – auspiciousness; *bhāva-varṣaṇam* – showering prema; *prabhupada-abhidaḥ* – by the name Prabhupāda; *guru* – spiritual master; *ati-prabhāt* – exceedingly powerful influence.

His lotus feet (*pāda*) increase blissful existence at the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahā-prabhu (also giving pleasure to Mahā-prabhu and His associates). He bestows auspiciousness on the entire world and showers *prema*, and as the *guru* who manifests such an amazing effect on the world, he is known by the name 'Prabhupāda.'

Vyākhyā

Here the name 'Prabhupāda' is used to indicate additional meanings. Generally 'Prabhupāda' is taken to have two general

meanings: 1. One who is at the feet of the Lord (Prabhu); 2. One at whose feet there are many Prabhus (qualified spiritual masters).

The feet of Śrī Gaurāṅga-sundara, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, are compared to a lotus flower. In the hot season, there are some lotus flowers which open and provide shelter for the fish and other aquatics, so that the heat of the sun does not cause them distress. Kamala also means that the lotus flower, which appears to grow from muck, is completely pure. The Lord's appearance and activities in this world are sometimes analyzed by mundane scholars who think He is an ordinary person, according to the logic of fish and the moon. In this logic, the fish in the ocean seeing the full moon in the sky think it is a big, round, glowing fish somewhere in the water above them. Similarly the conditioned souls in this world have no concept of the divine nature of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and even if they accept Him as an incarnation they have no concept of His identity as Vrajendranandana Śrī Kṛṣṇa taking the *kānti* (lustre) and *bhāva* (deep internal mood) of Śrīmatī Rādhāraṇī in order to understand three confidential truths.

Although Śrī Gaurāṅga-sundara is also Prabhu (the Lord of everything) He has appeared primarily for the confidential reasons known to devotees in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī as described in the verse beginning *śrī rādhāyāḥ praṇaya-mahimā* (CC Adi 1.6). Our Śrīla Prabhupāda embraced the shelter of the lotus feet (*pāda*) of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and this is another meaning of 'Prabhupāda'.

Pāda also means walking or movement, and by his movement throughout this world he gave the shelter of the lotus feet of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to so many people who had never been to India. By doing so he gave ever-increasing bliss (*ānanda*) to so many persons who were otherwise suffering in this world, as he was tasting *ānanda* himself. This is a fourth meaning of 'Prabhupāda'.

This activity of showering the world with his own moods and realizations (*bhāva-varṣaṇam*) is actually supremely auspicious. As an associate of Mahāprabhu and Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, he is an already perfect personality in whose heart *prema* is present. Such associates appear within this world in the guise of ordinary *sādhakas* or practitioners of *bhakti*, but in the association of such *mahā-bhāgavata* devotees, even ordinary persons become infected with the seed of pure *bhakti* and are inspired to take up the path of devotional service. Although he gave philosophical explanations and even guidance on how to live and act, one cannot imitate him simply by giving explanations. His influence spread to those around him in his divine association, and therefore a fifth meaning of 'Prabhupāda' is “that pre-eminent guru whose powerful influence has spread supreme auspiciousness throughout this world.”

Verse 6

भुवन-मन्दिर-स्थापितानि च
हरि-निषेवयोर्जास्तथा त्वया ।
सतत-तीर्थ-कृत्पाद-पल्लव!
तरसि पश्चिमे मत्त-मार्गये ॥ ६ ॥

bhuvana-mandira-sthāpitāni ca
hari-niṣevayorjās tathā tvayā
satata-tīrtha-kṛt-pāda-pallava!
tarasi paścime matta-mārgaye

bhuvana – in this world; *mandira* – temples; *sthāpitāni* – established; *ca* – also; *hari-niṣevayā* – by intense and confidential service to Śrī Hari; *ūrjāḥ* – the power, also the internal energy or svarūpa-śakti*; tathā* – also; *tvayā* – by you; *satata* – always; *tīrtha-kṛt* – making places of pilgrimage; *pāda-pallava* – by your lotus feet; *tarasi* – you deliver; *paścime* – in the Western world; *matta-mārgaye* – dedicated to the path of intoxication with mundane life.

You have established temples of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa throughout the world by the unstoppable strength of your service to Śrī Hari, and by constantly travelling across the globe your lotus feet created places of pilgrimage. You have delivered even the Western countries which are on the path of intoxication [with material existence].

Vyākhyā

The first temple established in the US was a small storefront at 26 Second Avenue in New York City. It did not have grand

architecture designed according to *vāstu* (Vedic architecture), and initially there was only a picture of Pañca-tattva. But Śrīla Prabhupāda cooked personally in the small upstairs kitchen, and offered *bhoga* personally, and offered *ārati* personally. He spoke *hari-kathā* and just like a powerful medicine which has effect even without the knowledge of the recipient, his association transformed the lives of those who came to hear him with even a small amount of sincerity. Yes, there was chanting, yes, there was Kṛṣṇa-prasāda, but it was his presence and his association which was the key transformative element.

The power of his divine association and his desire to bring Kṛṣṇa Consciousness throughout the world collided with Western society, which is overcome by a mad headlong rush toward improving the conditions of mundane life with unlimited facility for sense gratification. Where people mostly embraced materialism with religion as a side dish to provide comfort and a sense of doing the right thing, Śrīla Prabhupāda turned things upside down with the revelation that the human form of life is meant to develop pure unalloyed *bhakti* (devotional service) to the all-attractive Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

By the strength of his own service, calling Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa to bless the devotees with opportunity to hear from him and to serve the Lord in Deity form, he created places of shelter from the three modes of material nature. People go to temples in India to honor various forms of the Divine and to receive blessings, but those who are very fortunate go to temples and places of pilgrimage and meet

with great saintly persons, who can deliver others from material suffering and bless them with the ultimate goal of life.

Hari-niṣevayā means by very specific and confidential service to Śrī Hari (Kṛṣṇa). There is not a mundane formula where any person can just make a temple and some magic happens; a pure devotee who is deeply absorbed in the activities and moods of *bhakti* has such power (*ūrjāḥ*) to invoke the full manifestation of the spiritual world within a temple.

The lotus feet (*pada-pallava*) of such a pure devotee as Śrīla Prabhupāda transform every place he visits into a place of pilgrimage. This is a confidential truth revealed in Śrīmad Bhāgavatam in the conversation between Vidura and Maitreya; it is also said that persons who think that going to a *tīrtha* (holy place) simply to take a bath are foolish. Great saints sanctify even the places of pilgrimage, and if saints are not honored in a place it becomes condemned. This example has been given in Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta when Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu sat in the Durgā-maṇḍapa of Rāmacandra Khān and was asked to leave.

Verse 7

हरि-कथोत्सवं कीर्तनाद्भुतं
हरि-महोत्सवं स्थापितं त्वया ।
द्रुत-विकर्म-बन्धानुमोचनं
हरि-प्रसाद्-विश्वानुरञ्जनम् ॥ ७ ॥

hari-kathotsavaṁ kīrtanādbhutaṁ
hari-mahotsavaṁ sthāpitaṁ tvayā
druta-vikarma-bandhānumocanaṁ
hari-prasāda-viśvānurañjanam

hari-kathā – topics about Śrī Hari (Kṛṣṇa) or spoken by Śrī Hari; *utsavam* – festival; *kīrtana* – chanting and singing the holy name; *adbhutam* – astonishing; *hari* – of Śrī Hari (Kṛṣṇa); *mahā-utsavam* – great festival; *sthāpitam* – established; *tvayā* – by you; *druta* – lengthy; *vikarma-bandha* – binding of results of activity against Vedic injunction; *anumocanam* – release; *hari-prasāda* - prasāda (remnants of offerings; mercy) of Śrī Hari (Kṛṣṇa); *viśva* – entire world; *anurañjanam* – pleasing.

You made a continuous festival of hari-kathā along with astonishing kīrtanas. You established transcendental festivals (such as Ratha-yātrā) for the glorification of Śrī Hari (Kṛṣṇa). You freed others from the long chains of horrible fruitive activity by distributing mahā-prasādam and creating a pleasing atmosphere throughout the world.

Vyākhyā

As Śrīla Prabhupāda travelled the globe, in addition to continuing his translation and commentary on Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, and other essential books, he gave daily lectures. Often books which were recently published were the topic of his morning lectures. This Hari-kathā or Kṛṣṇa-kathā has a profound effect on the heart when heard directly from the lips of an exalted pure devotee like Śrīla Prabhupāda. Even listening to a recording is not the same as hearing directly from him; it is true that he gave *dīkṣā* (second initiation) to many devotees especially in later years by having them listen to a recording of the *dīkṣā-mantras* (*gāyatrī*) but this was the type of thing he could do as a great *ācārya* in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

In Śrīla Prabhupāda's Hari-kathā there was a continuous festival. Mahāprabhu Śrī Caitanya, Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and all of Their associates were present in the sound vibration coming from the lotus mouth of Śrīla Prabhupāda. Śrī Vṛndāvana Dhāma and Śrī Navadvipa Dhāma were present in those divine sound vibrations. Śrīla Prabhupāda's words, his voice, his singing kīrtana, were all coming directly from Goloka Vṛndāvana as he is an eternal associate who came to this world for our benefit. The spiritual presence within that divine sound cannot be captured in an audio recording, although it carries a special quality of its own and his words, if preserved unaltered, carry a great amount of power.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's talks were often attended by eternal associates like Nārada Muni, by great sages and demigods – by Śrīla

Prabhupāda's own account. These are some of the meanings of *hari-kathā-utsavam*, a festival of Hari-kathā.

When Śrīla Prabhupāda sang *kīrtanas* (devotional chants) of the Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, he brought a truly astonishing quality to them which is impossible to imitate. He sang the *mahā-mantra* (*hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare, hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*) and gave a simple yet very profound explanation, understandable by all but also full of significance. He chose *kīrtanas* such as g*aurāṅga bolite habe*, *vibhāvarī śeṣa* and others which are not only full of names, qualities and pastimes but also full of profound meaning for practitioners on the path of *bhakti*. Nothing he did was random or ordinary.

In addition to his own recorded *kīrtanas*, beginning with the first recordings made in New York with Śrīla Prabhupāda making bongo drums sound like a divine instrument, Śrīla Prabhupāda attracted and inspired many disciples who led astonishing *kīrtanas*. Nowadays it is popular to hold a *kīrtana* festival, and this has spread to the yoga community in general, but the practice of *kīrtana* was really introduced to Western society by Śrīla Prabhupāda's own vibrations coming directly from Goloka Vṛndāvana.

Verse 8

परम-पालक-प्रीति-सिन्धु-द
परम-भावुकात्मानुशिक्षक ।
परम-देव-देव्युत्तमाश्रय
परम-पार्षदानन्द-सेवक ॥ ८ ॥

parama-pālaka-prīti-sindhu-da
parama-bhāvukātmānuśikṣaka
parama-deva-devy-uttamāśraya
parama-pārṣadānanda-sevaka

parama-pālaka – that which is supremely nourishing; *prīti-sindhu* – the ocean of divine love; *da* – you give; *parama-bhāvuka* – supremely ecstatic in divine love; *ātma-anuśikṣaka* – instructing how to follow your own path; *parama* – supreme; *deva-devī* – God and Goddess (Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa); *uttama-āśraya* – your supreme shelter; *parama-pārṣada* – intimate associate; *ānanda-sevaka* – the bliss of your confidential service.

You bestowed the supremely nourishing ocean of love for Kṛṣṇa with great affection, and you shared the ecstasy of your own realizations. You gave the supreme shelter of the Divine Couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa as an associate and intimate servant.

Vyākhyā

The concept of love is sublime yet it tends to be overused as a cliche. Actual love exists in Goloka Vṛndāvana, where Śrī Kṛṣṇa's dearmost devotees love Him in such a way there is no room even for the concept of Kṛṣṇa as Svayam Bhagavān, the original

Supreme Personality of Godhead who is full in six opulences. It has been explained by *ācāryas* such as Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura (commenting on the verse *anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyaṁ jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam*) that *jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam* does not only mean "free from any covering of mundane speculative knowledge, fruitive activities, and so forth," but also means "free from knowledge of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's opulence (*aiśvarya-jñāna*)." This does not mean that intimate associates in the divine abode are devoid of knowledge – in fact, the knowledge and opulence of Vraja-dhāma is greater than that of Vaikuṇṭha-dhāma, but it is covered completely by sweetness.

If we were to stop passers-by and ask them "what is the greatest glory of Śrīla Prabhupāda?" we will undoubtedly hear many great answers, especially related to things he did – bringing many conditioned souls to the path of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, travelling the world while simultaneously manifesting the esoteric literature of our Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava line in an accessible way, founding more than one hundred temples. Śrīla Prabhupāda never compromised on the philosophy, and said that if he had watered things down, he could have had millions of followers.

But at the core of it, Śrīla Prabhupāda's accomplishments in the external view were not significant for someone who is an eternal associate of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Devakīnandana dāsa Ṭhākura wrote in his *kīrtana* Śrī Vaiṣṇava Vandanā: *brahmāṇḍe tarite śakti dhare jane jane / e veda purāṇe guṇa gāya jevā śune* – even one of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's

devotees can deliver an entire universe. We also heard from authorities like Parama Pūjyapāda Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Mahārāja that our Śrīla Prabhupāda was *śakty-āveśa*, invested with the potency of the Lord, and that Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu resided within Śrīla Prabhupāda's body for some time. Those who claimed that Śrīla Prabhupāda could not take more disciples when he manifested the pastime of illness actually committed a great offense at his lotus feet. Śrīla Prabhupāda could have taken millions and billions of disciples.

Only an associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu who is already full of *premā*, a *premi-bhakta*, can have such an impact on this world. Nowadays some people think that *premā* can be achieved in this same body, but this is not at all accepted by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī and Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. A *sādhaka* or practitioner of *bhakti* can only attain the stage of *rati* or *bhāva* in this body after having realized *svarūpa-siddhi*, the perfect realization of one's constitutional position, which has lain dormant within the heart until it is awakened by contact with the pure devotee and nourished by the practice of *bhakti* in the association and guidance of pure devotees. As Śrīla Prabhupāda explains in Nectar of Devotion, the *bhakti* creeper finally finds shelter at the lotus feet of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa in Goloka Vṛndāvana, and there bears the fruit of *premā*.

When such an associate comes to this world, the *premā* in their heart is carried through their sound vibration, and thus this *premā* is referred to here as *parama-pālaka-prīti*. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has sung, *prāptasya kalyāna-guṇārṇavasya* –

the *mahā-bhāgavata* spiritual master is receiving auspicious benedictions from the ocean of auspicious qualities [which are associated with Śrī Kṛṣṇa's name, form, pastimes, etc]. Such a spiritual master is therefore able to shower unlimited blessings which can extinguish the blazing forest fire of material existence. Thus *parama-pālaka-prīti-sindhu-da* means "you are distributing the supremely nourishing gift of Hari-kathā and *kīrtana* which is coming directly from this ocean of *premā* which exists within your heart."

Bhāvuka means literally "one who is experiencing *bhāva* (ecstatic love)." Although Śrīla Prabhupāda is a *premi-bhakta*, he on some rare occasions exhibited *aṣṭa-sāttvika-vikāra*, the eight types of bodily transformations which occur in the stage of *rati* or *bhāva*. In his *ācārya-līlā* he mostly hid these symptoms but there were many occasions when they manifested visibly. Śrīla Prabhupāda also referred to his Bhaktivedānta purports as his personal ecstasies. If someone thinks that the translations and purports in Śrīla Prabhupāda's books can be re-created merely by Sanskrit scholarship and vast learning, they will be mistaken. One will be equally mistaken to think that Śrīla Prabhupāda's books will be improved by people who have studied Sanskrit. He has written from the viewpoint of one who has already fully realized the conclusions of all Vedic literatures, who is standing on the other shore of the River Virajā which separates the mundane and spiritual worlds. He beckons us to cross over the ocean of fruitive activities, mental speculation, and impersonalism, and join him in the practice of pure *bhakti*. The term "Kṛṣṇa Consciousness" came

from Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī: *kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ* – the full absorption of the mind and heart in Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* which is imbued with *rasa*. The realization of *rasa* comes only in the stage of *svarūpa-siddhi*, so when Śrīla Prabhupāda asked us to be Kṛṣṇa conscious, he was setting the bar very high indeed.

Thus Śrīla Prabhupāda is also *parama-bhāvuka-ātma-anuśikṣaka* – he has come to this world with the topmost ecstatic realization of Kṛṣṇa Consciousness already present in his heart, and he is sharing these profound realizations with us. To think that we have understood simply because we can repeat his words (or worse yet, to think that we can just copy and paste) is also a mistake – we must take the words from his lotus mouth deep within our hearts and realize them through spiritual practice (*guru-mukha-padma-vākya, cittete koriya aikya* – make the words from the lotus mouth of Śrī Guru one with your heart).

Final verse

स प्रभुपाद-कीर्त्यावतारणः
पतित-सेवकाशानुबन्धनम् ।
सतत-साधु-सङ्गाश्रयात्मकं
परम-भक्तिमन्तं विधीयते ॥

sa prabhupāda-kīrtyāvatāraṇaḥ
patita-sevakāśānubandhanam
satata-sādhu-saṅgāśrayātmakaṁ
parama-bhaktimantaṁ vidhīyate

saḥ – he; *prabhupāda-kīrti* – celebrated as Prabhupāda; *avatāraṇaḥ* – descended; *patita-sevaka* – of the fallen servant; *āśā* – hope, desire; *anubandhanam* – fixed as the goal; *satata* – continuous; *sādhu-saṅga* – association of pure devotees; *āśraya-ātmakam* – of the nature of āśraya, shelter under the protection of the internal energy; *parama-bhaktimantam* – having the topmost devotion (uttama-bhakti); *vidhīyate* – may bestow.

May he who descended [from Goloka Vṛndāvana] and is known as ‘Prabhupāda’ grant the fervent desire of this fallen servitor: to have continuous association of pure devotees and to attain *uttama-bhakti* (pure devotional service).

Vyākhyā

Traditionally an additional verse is added to an *aṣṭakam*, offering some result to the reciter. But the author, feeling entirely unqualified to offer any sort of blessing, joins with the reader or

reciter in making a fervent request for mercy from the object of this prayer, Śrīla Prabhupāda.

It is not only our belief but the opinion of realized devotees and *ācāryas* that our Śrīla Prabhupāda was no ordinary practitioner of *bhakti* but an eternal associate who descended from Goloka Vṛndāvana to help conditioned souls like us. When the Lord descends to this world it is by His own free will; similarly, when eternal associates descend to this world it is to fulfill the Lord's desire that the conditioned souls of this world can be delivered from the cycle of repeated birth and death.

Specifically in our line of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu following Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, our goal is not just to become liberated from the sufferings of this world, but to attain *premā* or divine love specifically following the mood of the eternally perfect residents of Vraja. This can only be realized in the association of pure devotees, and the *ācāryas* in our line are all confidential associates who have come from the topmost abode Goloka Vṛndāvana. This is the inner meaning of *avatāraṇa.*

Completed on Gaura-Pūrṇimā, March 2, 2026.

Afterword

I hope this humble offering is pleasing to all Vaiṣṇava devotees who respect His Divine Grace 108 Śrī Śrīmad A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda. If any errors have been made in grammar, composition, or explanation, or if anything said here causes offense to anyone, I request the reader to overlook any such faults.

If anything said here appears to be critical of any person or any party or faction, it should only be taken as an attempt to clearly state philosophical positions based on the author's understanding, and not as an attack on anyone or on any group or organization.

Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare
Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare

Atula Kṛṣṇa dāsa (Agrāhya dāsa ACBSP:1976)