

Srila Prabhupada's Legacy

[The following is a translation of the Bengali conversation between Srila Prabhupada and Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja, which transpired on Oct. 8, 1977. This conversation took place just before Srila Prabhupada's departure from this world on Nov.14. The Bengali tape from which the translation was made was kindly given by the BBT Archives. Credit for the translation goes to the sincere efforts of Sripad Tanmoy and Srimati Bindu Chakravarty, Sripad Krsna Kanthi dasa brahmacari, Srimati Uma devi dasi, Srimati Mulaprakrti devi dasi, Srimati Brajanaika devi dasi, Srimati Jadurani devi dasi, and finally Pujyapada Madhava Maharaja. Due to the deep richness of the Bengali language, it cannot be fully transmitted in the medium of English]

Srila Prabhupada: I have realized from my experience that if we are not independent, but rather meet and preach together, then we will be successful. Mahaprabhu has told, "Prithivite ache yata nagaradi gram. Sarvatra pracar haibe more nama". "All over the earth, in every town and village, my Name should be preached". There is a great possibility to fulfill the transcendental desire of Lord Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes.

Srila Prabhupada: I am in my last days. I hope you and all others will forgive and forget all of my offenses. During the time of preaching I have done some things which may have offended my godbrothers, some katha-kata-kati (argument, difference of opinion). I pray that you will save me from this aparadha, and when I leave this world you will all help take care of my mission, which I have established with so many temples, etc.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes, I will follow your order.

Srila Prabhupada: Perhaps Panbandi is in jail. Please take care to save our honor. They did so much for my auspiciousness. You must take care of everything, including the court-case. It is all under your responsibility.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Okay, I will see to it. I will obey your advice fully, because I consider you as my guru.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, I know it very well. Some wicked persons wanted to do some harm to the Mayapura Candradaya Mandira. In order to protect the temple some devotees were bound to use a gun, and for this reason there is a court-case. Some foreign devotees are in jail now. The proposal I gave. You must look at it. What do you think? Will they honor this?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Very nice. What you have done is very beautiful. And it will be even more beautiful if everyone tries to protect it with good cooperation. You have taught your disciples to cooperate and try to develop the mission with the help of other respectable Vaisnavas. In that

way everyone can help them, and in the future this movement will be a big transcendental organization to benefit the whole world.

Srila Prabhupada: (in a very low, soft, and choked voice, as if whispering.) After my departure, you must take care so that what I have done will go on well. I have brought these vanaras, monkeys, like mlecchas and yavanas (those outside the Vedic varnasrama system). There is no one fully qualified among them. I tried to teach them whatever I could, and according to their ability they have accepted something; but there is a lack of qualified persons among them who can train. Everyone should try together, because there is big big land, big temples, no want of money, and no scarcity of people- everything is there.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes, that is so very good. All should help them. More good will come of everything if the disciples treat all respectable Vaisnavas with humility. I will try my best to help them.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: When they call me for my suggestions or any kind of instruction, or if they want me to go anywhere, I will help them always according to what you have said. In whatever way is possible. I must certainly do that to the best of my ability. Although my qualification is limited, I will do my best to help them.

Srila Prabhupada: Are any of my Godbrothers in Vrindavan now?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: I think Srila Vana Maharaja may be in Vrindavana now. And perhaps Indupati Prabhu from Sri Caitanya Gaudiya Matha. He comes and goes. At present these two; no more.

Srila Prabhupada: Vana Maharaja?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes, Vana Maharaja.

Bhakti Caru Maharaja: Madhava Maharaja's matha?

Srila Prabhupada: (to Srila Narayana Maharaja) Please sit down. (to disciples) Someone go and ask Vana Maharaja and Indupati prabhu to come.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: This is a very good proposal. In these last days this desire is very good.

Srila Prabhupada: To argue with each other is not so good.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: These are insignificant matters in such a substantial worldwide mission. A little something here and there is of no consequence. You have done this wonderful preaching work for the benefit of the whole world. There was no self-interest. You did everything only in devotional service to Krsna—for benefitting all people at large.

Srila Prabhupada: That is your blessing.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: You have done a wonderful thing. It is necessary to care for and preserve this mission, and see that it is managed skillfully.

Srila Prabhupada: Please tell this to them (my disciples). I cannot speak now. Please sit a little longer.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes, I am here. Don't worry. (He called over Srila Prabhupada's senior disciples and instructed them in how to maintain and fulfill Prabhupada's desire in the future, and how to deal with each other.)

Srila Prabhupada: Are you keeping good health?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: It is so-so. All is going on. It is good that you are doing Bhagavat-smaranam, (remembering Krsna each moment). Many capable people are here to run things.

Srila Prabhupada: But there is some disturbance. Recently some disruption was caused in Mayapura.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: It will go away. This disruption was caused by those who create trouble for their own material gain. Everything will be all right. After some days those who are misbehaving will understand their own fault. Obstacles always come in any good work.

Srila Prabhupada: Twenty thousand people gathered at a meeting. Have you heard anything about it?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: I heard and I felt sorry. Some communists and other people created this trouble and have made a big mistake. They are doing so many illegal and offensive things. Now be free to peacefully remember Sri Radha-Krsna and Their sweet pastimes. Your people will take care of the necessities. All will be well by the wish of the Supreme Lord, Sri Krsna. No need to think about it at all.

Srila Prabhupada: You are affectionate to me.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: What affection can I have (as an equal)? I respect you as my guru.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, I know that very well. That is why I called you first. Please forgive any of my offenses.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: You should forgive us in your heart if we have made any offenses. In this way we can develop a taste for serving Lord Krsna's lotus feet. Please bless us this much.

Srila Prabhupada: Sesasayi?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Sesasayi has come with me to receive your darsana.

Srila Prabhupada: Brahmachari?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes, Sesasayi brahmachari. When you were in Mathura, Sesasayi did some service for you, such as cooking, etc. Sesasayi, now you sing one kirtan. Sri Rupa Manjari pada sei mora sampada. Sei more bhajana pujana. Very slowly, very clearly and softly, sing this kirtana so that Srila Swami Maharaja can hear. Srila Rupa Goswami is our heart and soul.

[Sripad Sesasayi brahmachari sings Sri Rupa Manjari Pada, by Srila Narottama dasa Thakura:] "The lotus feet of Sri Rupa-manjari are my dearest treasure. They are the topmost object of my worship and inner devotional practices. Her lotus feet are the wealth and beautiful ornament of my life. They are the very life of my life. Her lotus feet are the storehouse of rasa. They bestow that topmost desire (precious service to Srimati Radhika) and they are the conclusion of all the Vedas. Her lotus feet fulfill the goal of my vows and austerities, my harinama japa, my actions, and my spiritual practices-all performed with the aim to please Sri Rupa-manjari. When Mahaprabhu is pleased with me, then by his mercy I will attain perfection, and with these two eyes I will get the darsana of Sri Rupa-manjari's lotus feet. Her beauty is full of sweetness like the moon. Just as on a moonlit night the kumud lotus comes to full blossom, my heart will fully bloom night and day in the rays of her moon-like beauty. Your absence from my vision is like snake poison spreading throughout my body, gradually consuming my strength. For the rest of my life my soul will be burning. Narottama dasa laments, "Alas, Prabhu. O Rupa Goswami. Please give me the shade of your lotus feet. There I am taking shelter."

Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

[Srila Narayana Maharaja sings: Hari Hari, Kabe More Hoibe Sudina (O Hari. When Will That Auspicious Day Be Mine?) by Srila Narottama dasa Thakura:]

"O Sri Hari, when will that auspicious day be mine? Filled with prema, when will I worship Sri Radha-Krsna? As the sounds of the divine instruments mix and create the sweetest melodies, I will blissfully sing songs about Their forms and qualities. While singing "Radha-Govinda" I will weep loudly and my whole body will become soaked by the tears falling from my eyes. Be merciful now, Rupa Goswami and Sanatana Goswami. O my Raghunatha dasa Goswami. My life-giving Jiva Goswami. Be merciful now, O Lalita and Visakha. O Sridama, Subala, and all other friends in sakhya-bhava. Be merciful, all of you, so I may attain my deepest desires. Narottama dasa is always praying like this."

Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

[Jaya-dhvani prayers are recited]

Srila Prabhupada: I have only these few bones left in my body and nothing else.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: That is seen. It is very good that you came back to Vraja from the Western countries. This is very good.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, they took me to London and other places. I have seen so much opulence in London. The condition of my health is not good. I will leave soon. Please, tell them what their duty shall be after my leaving. (to disciples) You have consulted with Narayana Maharaja?

Tamal Krsna Gosvami: This morning Bhakti Caru Swami, Bhakti Prema Swami and Sridhar Swami went to see him, and Narayana Maharaja described the ceremony for the departure of a great Vaisnava sannyasi or guru.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: I have instructed them about all the details. Whenever it is necessary, you can come to me. There is no problem. I will come to help in the final ceremony in any way that is needed.

Srila Prabhupada: I have one special request-that you will put me in samadhi with your own hand. Where will the entrance gate of the samadhi mandir be? Right side? Instruct them.

Tamal Krsna Gosvami: The entrance is on the left side. Entering- looking towards the Deity, on the left side. In other words, when you come into the temple there's a big open area. It's on the same side as the vyasasana.

Srila Prabhupada: (lavan tavan) Tell them to arrange for the salt and other things.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: I have given complete instructions. Everything has been arranged.

Srila Prabhupada: On the left side?

Tamal Krsna Gosvami: It's on the same side as the vyasasana. Faces east.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes. Will there be a Puspa samadhi in Mayapura?

Tamal Krsna Gosvami: Hmm. Yes. Flowers to Mayapura.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: I have told them. Some flowers have to be kept there for putting in desired places.

Srila Prabhupada: You please stay and supervise this.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: I will be here. Just inform me. (In English) You should call me, and I will come right away.

Tamal Krsna Gosvami: He described the entire ceremony in detail, Srila Prabhupada.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, he is very expert and knows all the Vaisnava ceremonies.

Tamal Krsna Gosvami: Yes.

Srila Prabhupada: Has Sesasayi taken sannyasa? Yes?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: No. He has not taken. He is still brahmacari.

Srila Prabhupada: Hmm.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: You have completed all your life's work. Everything has been fulfilled. Do not worry.

Srila Prabhupada: It is all your blessings.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: You have no task left in this world. (In English) You have fulfilled all; everything is done.

Srila Prabhupada: Hmm.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Please give some advice and instruction that they (your disciples) should not fight and quarrel with each other for their own self-interest. Their only goal should be to try to fulfill your heart's desire, and proceed purely for the mission.

Srila Prabhupada: (English) Don't fight amongst yourselves. I have given directions in my will. Execute it properly.

Tamal Krsna Gosvami: Yes, Srila Prabhupada.

Srila Prabhupada: (bells ringing.) Is today Ekadasi?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes, Ekadasi.

Srila Prabhupada: The service of Sri Mahaprabhu is going on well? Yes? Mahaprabhu of Jhansi?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes, Your Mahaprabhu, that Mahaprabhu who is a gift from you, is with me in our Kesavaji Gaudiya Matha; and His service is going on well.

Srila Prabhupada: Has he been with you all along?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes, Mahaprabhu has been with me. His seva is going on very beautifully, after having applied new color (angarag) on His body, decorated Him and doing other things for Him.

Srila Prabhupada: I had a good chance to start a temple and serve Him in Jhansi. Then I realized that Krsna wanted a much bigger service from me.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: On a very big scale. That's what happened.

Srila Prabhupada: We had a fair plot of land.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes. Why would you remain preaching only in Jhansi? Krsna desired that you preach throughout the entire world, and that has been fulfilled.

Srila Prabhupada: I had wished to reside in Vrindavana. I wanted to pass my life as a niskincana devotee, without material desires, and do sadhana-bhajana. But Bhagavan did not accept this. He inspired me at the age of 70 years to go outside to the Western countries, all alone, to preach—with only 40 rupees. Virata—very boldly. Then it took a grand shape.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Srila Rupa Goswami's special mercy is bestowed upon you. And also that of Sri Sri Radha Damodara. Thus you have been able to fulfill the transcendental desire of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Srila Prabhupada: All this is also vidamvana (distraction, tribulation). Order them to do kirtana. (Devotees sing 'Sri Guru Carana Padma'.)

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Do you have any physical difficulties?

Srila Prabhupada: A little cough, and wind is there. The only difficulty is in speaking. I have already given up eating.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: (In Hindi) If he asks for water, keep caranamrta for him. You can put some tulasi under his head. That's right. Very good.

Srila Prabhupada: They should give me caranamrta. There is one sloka in Caitanya Caritamrta which states, "yei bhaje sei bada abhakta hina chara, krsna bhajane nahi jati kuladi vicara." "One who worships the lotus feet of Krsna is exalted. There is no distinction of caste, color and creed. However, non-devotees, though born in a high caste, are condemned and abominable. Their life has no value." So do not have disdain for those who were born in the West but have taken shelter of the lotus feet of a bonafide spiritual master and under his guidance worship the lotus feet of the Divine Couple. Never hate them.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: No. Not at all. Anyone who is engaged in one-pointed bhakti is sarvanuttama, the best of all. In Sri Bhagavad Gita it is said, "Api cet sudaracaro bhajate mam ananya bhak. Sadhur eva sa mantavya samyag vyavasito hi sa." (Bg. 9:30) "Even if one has performed sinful activities, if he has given up the worship of demigods and is detached from material activities and knowledge, and he unconditionally surrenders only to My lotus feet and worships Me, he is a sadhu." Everyone must respect him because he has determined that Sri Krsna is the Supreme Lord. If one has this kind of devotion to Radha-Krsna, one will be considered a sadhu, in spite of his having other drawbacks.

(Indupati prabhu, Vana Maharaja and others enter the room.) Hare Krsna. Please come.

Srila Prabhupada: Has Vana Maharaja come? The reason I have called you is that Narayana Maharaja has come. He will tell you my message. Please listen.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: You are feeling difficulty in talking. (To Vana Maharaja and others). He is requesting that we look after his disciples in his absence— so that his mission will remain successful.

Srila Prabhupada: (Addressing his godbrothers) Apanara amar saba aparadha ksama korben, kenona ami iccha kore kokhano aparadha karo chaini kintu prachar karte gele kicchu katha katakati. Haya. Tai apani amar aparadha ksama korben. Please, I wish to ask you to forgive my offenses. I never intended to offend anyone. During the course of preaching there arose some difference of opinion, some argument, which resulted in some offensive statements. Kindly forgive me for that.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: He is asking for forgiveness for any harsh words which may have been spoken while preaching. He is asking forgiveness from all; so you please forgive him.

Srila Prabhupada: (to Godbrothers) Will you?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Maharaja, we do not consider that you have committed any offense. Please give us your mercy. You could never commit an offense to anyone. He who takes offense is at fault.

Srila Prabhupada: Hmm. (Voices heard. To Srila Narayana Maharaja) What are you saying?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: He (Vana Maharaja) is saying that you just came back from London.

Srila Vana Maharaja: You travelled in this state of health?

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Anyway, whatever has happened has been good. You have come back to Vraja by the Lord's desire.

Srila Prabhupada: Going to London it was like a world tour. My health further broke down, just after reaching there.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: I will convey all of your instructions to all of Srila Prabhupada's (Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakura's) disciples, to those who are here present and to those who are not present. They should all give nidesh (direction) and adesh (instruction) to your disciples, so that they may lead good lives (susta) and stay on the decent path. I will tell this to all, and with your blessings everything will be all right.

Srila Prabhupada: Yes.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Please do not worry. Just go on remembering the lotus feet of the Divine Couple.

Srila Prabhupada: Also, tell them that this matha (Iskcon temple) will bear the cost of the festival (for departure to the spiritual world) performed in each matha according to status. Please provide us with a list of those (mathas).

Srila Narayana Maharaja: (speaks in Hindi to Srila Prabhupada's disciples) Did you all understand what he said?

Bhakti Caru Maharaja: Yes. I did.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Has Indupati Prabhu heard this? I will explain it again. Prabhupada is telling that some money will be given for a festival in every matha. You please attend to this matter and collect the funds. (To Srila Prabhupada) I have one request to you. Please give up any more thoughts on this matter. They (your disciples) are competent. Moreover, they now know and understand all your wishes. Just continue your remembrance of Sri Sri Radha-Krsna.

Srila Prabhupada: Mmm.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Please do not worry. They will arrange everything. The way you have "Krsna-ized" (made intoxicated with Krsna) the whole world—this will continue by itself. (silence) Now we shall go?

Srila Prabhupada: Take a little prasada.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes, we will take.

Srila Prabhupada: (To disciples) Bring some prasada for them. (To Srila Narayana Maharaja) Please take it in my presence.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Yes.

(Kirtan is heard in the background: "sri guru carana padma, kevala bhakati sadma".)