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1977 Oct-Nov - Vrndavana - Srila Prabhupada's Conversation with Srila Narayana Maharaja

Prabhupada's Final Order:
On Iskcon and Srila Narayana Maharaja

Submitted by Jadurani dasi

At the present moment there is a controversy about whether or not devotees who consider themselves followers of Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada should take spiritual guidance from Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja. The following is a transcription, translated from a cassette-taped Bengali conversation between Srila Prabhupada and Srila Narayana Maharaja on this subject. On this cassette, made in October-November, 1977, we hear from Srila Prabhupada himself in this regard about his final order, spoken with his last breaths. Because the original conversation is in Bengali, with only small parts in English, it is probably a cassette you have never heard before. The respected readers will be pleased to see from this transcription that Srila Prabhupada has personally ordered Srila Narayana Maharaja to give spiritual guidance to his disciples and followers, and that he wants his disciples and followers to accept that guidance. The cassette was kindly given by the BBT Archives.

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[Srila Prabhupada]: Narayana Maharaja. He will come tomorrow?

[Tamal Krsna Gosvami]: He will come when we.(discussing with others). If we pick him up he might come tonight.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Hmm.

[Tamal Krsna Gosvami]: If we go just now with the car. Bhakticaru is going just now with the car. Maharaja may come tonight.

[Someone begins to sing govindam adi purusam...]

[Tamal Krsna Gosvami]: Yeah, Srila Prabhupada. Should we put a little fan on? A little bit.

[The conversation with Srila Narayana Maharaja begins]:

[Srila Prabhupada]: Prabhupada (Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura) had a desire to preach all over the world - in Europe, America. I tried my best to fulfill his desire. Now we should preach together.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes.

[Srila Prabhupada]: We have got experience that if we endeavor collectively, there is great possibility to spread the message of akara matha: the mission of Mahaprabhu, 'prithvi te ache, everywhere in the world. I have contributed to this end to the best of my ability.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Hmm.

[Srila Prabhupada]: I wish that my god-brothers forgive my offenses...While preaching, many times we do say things contrary to each other, or we cut each other's philosophical arguments. That happens. Please ask my god-brothers to forgive my offences.(inaudible)

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: All right.

[Srila Prabhupada]: (inaudible)

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Whatever you will order I will accept completely. I consider you as my guru.

[Srila Prabhupada]: (inaudible)

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: It has been done very beautifully. This is the proper way. It's good that you have raised this point - that everyone should protect the mission of Mahaprabhu that you have established in Western countries, by good cooperation. Though you have taught them, still, in the future if everyone helps them, a wonderful movement can be established on the Earth.

[Srila Prabhupada]: (inaudible)...I have brought these mlecchas and yavanas. They are like monkeys (banaras), very expert in quarreling. Accepting those who were sent to me by the arrangement of Krsna, and considering their qualifications and disqualifications, I tried educating them, just to get things going. They learned to their capacity. Things can be done in good cooperation. There is enough land, big, big temples, and no shortage of money...(inaudible)

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: It's proper for everyone to help in this matter. Everything will be still better if they are also humble and try to cooperate with everyone, with each other as well as with other Vaisnavas. I will do my best to help. Whenever and whatever they will ask, I will try my best to help them. Whenever they will call me, any advice they will want, wherever they may want me to go, although my qualification is limited, I will try to help to the best of my ability.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Are any of my god-brothers in Vrndavana now?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Who?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Van Maharaja might be there, as well as Indupati Prabhu from Caitanya Gaudiya Matha.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Any more?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Only these two at the moment.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Who is Indupati?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Indupati. He comes here often.

[Bhaktiaru Swami]: From Madhava Maharaja's matha?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes. No one else is here.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Please call both of them. Van Maharaja and him.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: This is very good proposal by you.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Please sit down. They will call them.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: All right.

[Srila Prabhupada]: This cutting of arguments happens sometimes...

[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]: It is all by your blessings.

[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]: YOU KINDLY INSTRUCT THEM ON THIS MATTER. I'm unable to speak.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes. Please take rest.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Please sit a little longer.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes. I'm here.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Your health is all right?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes. You please keep remembering about Krsna. These are all very qualified men. They will manage nicely.

[Srila Prabhupada]: There is some problem (disturbance) in Mayapura.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: That will all be worked out. The gundas have done that for their selfish motives. Everything will be all right. Some obstacles are always there in any work.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Twenty thousand people gathered for the meeting. Have you heard anything about it?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes I have heard something. It was painful. The communist party people have done that nonsense. They have done utmost injustice. 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]: Hmm.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: You don't worry.

[Srila Prabhupada]: You have some affection for me? [This is an Indian expression of love.]

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Affection! What to speak of affection, I regard you as my guru.

[Srila Prabhupada]: I know that. That's why I beg you to please forgive my offenses.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: You kindly forgive our offenses, so that our intelligence may be fixed at the lotus feet of Krsna. Please give us this blessing.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Where is...

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: He has gone to Bengal.

[Srila Prabhupada]: When did he go?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: He went about a month ago. Sesyai has come with me to take your darshan. He has rendered some services to you.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Brahmachari?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes Sesyai Brahamacari. Sometimes he has cooked for you.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja speaks to the other devotees in Hindi]: He used to cook for Swamiji when he was in Mathura.)

[Srila Prabhupada]: Where is Tamal?

[Devotee]: He is just coming, Srila Prabhupada. He is in the other room.

[Srila Prabhupada]: (inaudible)

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes, I can see that. It is very good that you have returned to Vraja from overseas.

[Srila Prabhupada]: They wanted to keep me there, but I said, "No". My health is not fit for anymore travel..

[Tamal Krsna Gosvami enters the room]

[Srila Prabhupada]: Have you consulted with Narayana Maharaja?

[Tamal Krsna Gosvami]: Yes. This morning. Bhakticaru Swami, Bhaktiprema Swami and Sridhara Swami went to see him, and Narayana Maharaja described the ceremony.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: I have told them everything needed to be done. I have said, "Whenever you need me, I'll come here."

[Srila Prabhupada]: (inaudible)...When you enter in the gate on the right side?

[Tamal Krsna Gosvami]: On the entrance on the left side. On entering, looking towards the Deities. In other words, when you come into the temple. There is a big open..

[Srila Prabhupada]: You must put salt around the body.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: I have explained to them everything.

[Tamal Krsna Gosvami]: It's on the same side as the vyasasana.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Flowers should be placed in Mayapura.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: I have told them to keep some flowers, and wherever you desire those can be...

[Srila Prabhupada]: You be there.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes, I'll be there.

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

[Srila Prabhupada]: (inaudible) Has Sesyai taken sannyasa?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: No. He is still a brahmacari.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: All of your duties are completed. You have fulfilled everything in your lifetime. There is no need to worry for anything. Only remember the lotus feet of Sri Radha-Krsna.

[Srila Prabhupada]: By Their blessings only.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes, you have done everything. Nothing is left unfinished.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Hm.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Only one thing. They should be told not to fight with each other for self-interest. They should work in cooperation to spread your mission.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Don't fight among yourselves. I have given you my will. Execute that... Today is Ekadasi?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes, today is Ekadasi.

[Srila Prabhupada]: How is the service of Mahaprabhu going on?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Hmm.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Of Jhansi. Now he is at your place.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes, your Mahaprabhu is with me. His service is going on nicely with great affection.

[Srila Prabhupada]: At first I was trying to do something in Jhansi, but Krsna had bigger plans. We have got so many places.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Why should you be confined in Jhansi? Krsna wanted you to preach everywhere.

[Srila Prabhupada]: I wanted to live like a niskincana Vaishnava in Vrindavan; but Krsna inspired me to go out and preach at the age of seventy with only forty rupees in my pocket. And then it took a grand shape.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes, you have received the special mercy of Sri Rupa Gosvami, and also that of Sri Radha-Damodara.

[Srila Prabhupada]: (inaudible)

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Do you have any pain in the body?

[Srila Prabhupada]: It's so so. (inaudible)

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: (speaks to the devotees:) Give him caranamrta when he feels thirsty. Also, keep some tulsi leaves under his head.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Yei bhaje sei bado.[This is a verse from Sri Caitanya Caritamrta:]
"One who worships Krsna is exalted."

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Hmm. Sei bado. "He is exalted."

[Srila Prabhupada]: Abhakta hina char. "One who is a non-devotee is low-class and abominable."

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Char. "Abominable."

[Srila Prabhupada]: (inaudible)

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: They are fortunate. If one has single pointed devotion to Lord Hari, then, even if he has any faults, "api cet suduracaru bhajate mam ananya bhak, sadhur eva sa mantavya samyak vyavasthito hi sa". This is the principle.

[Indupati prabhu enters in the room]

[Indupati prabhu]: Hare Krishna.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Please come. Has Van Maharaja also come?

[Indupati prabhu]: (inaudible)

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Indupati prabhu has come.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Narayana Maharaja has called you on my request. I was saying to Narayana Maharaja that I beg forgiveness from you....

[Indupati prabhu]: Hmm...

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: (speaking softly to Indupati prabhu.) Maharaja is having difficulty in speaking. I'll tell you.

[Srila Prabhupada]: I beg forgiveness for my offenses. I did not wish to offend anyone. While preaching sometimes we cut each other's arguments...

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: (he is softly explaining Srila Prabhupada's desire to Indupati prabhu.)

[Srila Prabhupada]: Will you forgive me?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: (to Indupati Prabhu) Will you?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: (to Srila Prabhupada) Maharaja, you have not committed any offence. Please be merciful to us. You haven't committed any offence.

[Indupati prabhu]: (inaudible)

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: If anyone considers that you have committed an offence, then he himself is at fault.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Hmm...?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja (speaking softly to Indupati prabhu about Srila Prabhupada)]: He has just returned from London.

[Srila Prabhupada]: They had arranged the world tour program, but I had to return...

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: I will speak to those disciples of Srila Prabhupada (Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura) who are not here about your wish. Everyone should try to help and give them (your disciples) the needed guidance, so they can manage nicely. Please do not worry about anything. Remember only the lotus feet of Sri Radha-Krishna.

[Srila Prabhupada]: Please guide them in arranging the festival properly and giving appropriate donations to the gosvamis.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja (to Bhakticaru Svami)]: Have you understood what he is saying?

[Bhakticaru Svami]: Yes. (He softly speaks with Srila Narayana Maharaja.)

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: I have a special request. Please do not worry about these matters anymore. They are qualified and they know your desires. Now only think about Krsna. Everything will be taken care of. You have made the whole world dance in Krsna Nama.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Now I'll take leave.

[Srila Prabhupada]: First take some prasada.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja]: Yes I'll take.

[Bhakticaru Svami]: Srila Prabhupada, I'm arranging that.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja leaves]

[Credit for the translation is due mostly to the efforts of Sripad Madhava Maharaja, Sripad Krsna Kanthi dasa brahmacari, and Sripad Tanmoy Chakravarty. Although the volume of the original cassette was improved by digital technology for the ease of the translators, still some parts remained inaudible, and in the above transcription they are labeled as such.]