

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

# Loving Exchanges in Los Angeles

[An Informal Darsana]

LA, California: June 10, 2006

[During Srila Narayana Maharaja's visit to Los Angeles in mid-June, he resided at the home of his disciple Gaurasundara prabhu and his family. On the morning of June 10<sup>th</sup>, he held a darsana on the veranda of his temporary residence, where devotees visiting from America and elsewhere came to meet him after a long separation. The following is a transcription of the informal darsana which took place there:]

[Krsna-mayi dasi:] (Krsna-mayi is a school teacher in the public school system. She has been secretly cultivating her students to become devotees. Now she is showing a sketch.) This is from one little girl – one of my young students. She wanted to come and meet you so badly. She was weeping yesterday, because her dad forbade her from coming here because it was his Birthday. She was crying so much because she couldn't come, so she asked me if I could give these pictures to you.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Very good.

[Anita dasi:] Srila Gurudeva, Vasanta just came from Mexico City this morning.

[Brajanatha dasa:] He worked on your 'Gaura-vani Pracarine' book. He is always working so hard on your books in Vrndavana.

[Syamarani dasi:] He just worked on designing a lot of your Spanish books too.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Is he helping you?

[Syamarani dasi:] He is helping us, and the Spanish department.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Very good.

[Vasanta dasa:] We just translated the book 'Origin of Ratha-yatra' in Mexico City. We distributed lots of books with Damodara Maharaja and Rohini Nandana Prabhu

[Brajanatha dasa:] Have you also finished the 'Origin of Ratha-yatra' in Spanish?

[Vasanta dasa:] Yes, they are bringing it to Badger.

[Sripad Padmanabha Maharaja:] When I was there in Mexico, I was also with him just before the Miami festival. Vasanta was working day and night on designing and publishing your books. He is a very, very, valuable devotee for preaching.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] (Now addressing the young students brought by Krsna-mayi dasi.) A beautiful boy, playing on a flute, grazing cows, playing with boys and girls. Do you know Him?

[All the children:] Gopal!

[Brajanatha dasa:] Gopal. They are not allowed to say Krsna in their school?

[Krsna-mayi dasi:] I have to be somewhat careful.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] His name is Gopal. He is very powerful. He can fulfill all of your desires. If you pray to Him, He will come and play with you and your life will be happy. You can please Him by chanting, "Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare." [The students chant along with him.] If you chant this daily, or even once, you will be happy for your whole life. You will be very intelligent. (To Krsna-mayi dasi) Give them good teachings. They should all become devotees.

[Brajanatha dasa:] Sivananda Prabhu has brought one student. He is learning martial arts and wrestling.

[Sripad Padmanabha Maharaja:] Sivananda Prabhu is his guru for wrestling.

[Sivananda-sena dasa:] He is very good and has a soft heart. He is qualified.

[Brajanatha dasa:] Srila Gurudeva, he has some interest in bhakti.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Don't take eggs, meat, fish, wine or any alcohol. And be happy. Do you eat meat?

[Martial arts student:] Only fish and poultry.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Meat means ME EAT. Whoever you eat will take revenge and eat you. Don't take any of these things. Alcohol makes the mind disturbed. Chant and remember the Supreme Lord, and then you will be happy.

[Brajanatha dasa:] Srila Gurudeva, this is the wife of your host, Gaurasundara. She has not met you yet.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Where is she? Come on, I wanted to meet you but you are always very busy. Will you come to Badger?

[Devotee:] I'm not sure.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] You should give some time for this. If I am here, you should attend my classes. After some time you will be old. No doctor or scientist will be able to help you. After some time this body will be finished. You should know that when you die, you can't take a single farthing with you. You cannot take even one hair.

In this human life we should try to realize the soul and the Supersoul also. You are not this body. This is a bag of stool, urine and so many germs. Krsna has very mercifully given you this very strong and beautiful body. You should utilize it for realizing Krsna, the Supreme Lord, and your relationship with Him. You have a relationship with the Supreme Lord. Material relationships last for one, two, three or maybe one

hundred years. After that they will go away, but your relationship with Krsna never goes away. Your body will change, but that relationship will never change. We cannot be happy without chanting and remembering Him. Try to realize all these things in this human body.

I wanted to meet you. Thank you. I am very happy in your house, but I am giving suffering to you and your children.

[Devotee:] No. It's a blessing. Thank you.

[Vrndavana dasa:] Srila Gurudeva, I brought my brother, his wife and their new born baby. His name is Abhimanyu Hare Krsna dasa.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] How old is he?

[Vrndavana dasa:] He is three weeks old.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] (After chanting some Vedic mantras for auspiciousness) You should be happy in your life. My blessings to you. Kalyanam bhavatu, krsna bhakti bhavatu.

(Addressing another devotee) How are you?

[Visvambara dasa:] I want to be more attentive in your classes. I get myself into so much trouble, obviously – always. But this is the material world. I am so conditioned.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Yes. You should realize that this world is full of so much suffering. We should not waste our time in sense gratification. Be careful.

[Visvambara dasa:] But I cannot control myself.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Try.

[Visvambara dasa:] When I'm with Radha-kanta prabhu and strong devotees, it's easier. But if I'm by myself, it is difficult.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] You should associate with the strong devotees.

[Visvambara dasa:] But they are always busy, so that is a problem. Gaura-vani is helping so much with GVP, also Vrndavana and Radha in Martinez. She comes for one full day a week to do service for GVP and Bhakti-projects. She is helping so much. There is so much happening – so much growth. I can't keep up with it. It's very difficult to keep up with everything happening around the world. We need more help in Martinez. There is a 300% increase in book distribution! Asrama Maharaja in England ordered so many books, and now he wants more printed! We can't keep up with the growth.

[Sripad Sajjana Maharaja:] Tell Gurudeva about China.

[Visvambara dasa:] Radha-kanta Prabhu donated one big pallet palate of books – four or five thousand dollars worth – to China. Vrndavana Prabhu is helping out so much in the warehouse with all the books.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] And how are you?

[Gaura-vani dasi:] Thank you so much for bringing me into your family.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Be careful.

[Visvambara dasa:] Gaura-vani and myself are behind the book table. She is very dedicated.

[Brajanatha dasa:] Tirthapada prabhu has come.

[Tirthapada dasa:] I have also brought someone to see you. His name is Zawa. He is chanting thirty two rounds a day and also reading your translation and commentary of 'Bhagavad-gita'. He is looking for a bona fide guru. He is requesting that you give him initiation.

[Zawa:] Very much so. I have been praying for a long time to find a bona fide guru.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] You should pray to Lord Krsna to give you a bona fide guru.

[Syamarani dasi:] He said that he wants to take initiation from you now.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] First examine me, to see whether or not I am qualified. If you are satisfied, then you should take initiation.

[Zawa:] I have been reading your books, and I have had lots of association with your devotees. I think, from what I have seen so far, that you are the only one I could accept as my Gurudeva. I have been involved with ISKCON for many years, and I have prayed for many years, but I have not found a guru there. So I appeal to your mercy.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] In ISKCON they are very beautiful, strong and very learned. You can go and see.

[Zawa:] I tried for many years.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] They are very qualified and learned.

[Zawa:] Yes, I'm sure that there are many good and qualified gurus in ISKCON, but I have not had the association of them yet. I have heard so many wonderful things about you, so I have come to receive your mercy today.

[Brajanatha dasa:] Will you be coming to Badger?

[Zawa:] I am hoping to come to make it, but I have a job so I'm not sure if I'm going to make it. That is why I have come today – to humbly ask you to give me initiation and to help me with my Krsna consciousness. I have been praying for so long, and chanting for so many years, but I feel that without a good guru it would be impossible for me to make further progress.

[Brajanatha dasa:] There may be an initiation ceremony tomorrow at 9am. Srila Gurudeva, he is saying that he wants to take initiation tomorrow, because he may not be able to come to Badger due to his job.

[Zawa:] I take care of horses at a ranch, so it would be very difficult for me to leave. Feeding, grooming, exercising and taking care. They will starve if I am gone.

[Zawa:] I would really like you to know, Gurudeva, that I have prayed so, so hard! I have not been able to come to the temple for a long time because of my work. On one day that I prayed, I was at my very lowest. I prayed to Krsna to bring me a guru. Then I came to the temple and I met my dear Tirthapada prabhu, and he told me that you were coming this weekend. It was a miracle to know that you were coming to the Venice temple. I was thinking that at last my prayers had been answered. I appeal once again to your mercy.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] You can come here tomorrow at 9am.

[Brajanatha dasa:] And you should shave your beard.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Do you have a sikha?

[Zawa:] No, I don't.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Anywhere where there is hair on your head, you can keep a sikha.

[Zawa:] So tomorrow I can receive initiation?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Be ready – if you are satisfied that I am really a guru.

[Zawa:] I must tell you, Gurudeva. With my whole heart I do believe that. I have not the slightest doubt at all.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Then you can come tomorrow.

[Zawa:] And receive initiation? Haribol!

[Brajanatha dasa:] Giridhari Prabhu, come forward.

Gurudeva, he writes you many letters and is always asking questions about how to make progress in bhakti.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] You should associate with elevated Vaisnavas, and try to follow what you hear. Especially follow "Upadesamrta [The Nectar of Instruction]" of

Srila Rupa Gosvami. Chant more. Read my books and try to understand them in the association of a bona fide Vaisnava. Sometimes you can be with me and hear my classes, but you must totally follow. Then you will become strong and make good progress.

[Brajanatha dasa:] (Introducing Paramananda dasa and Sukhada dasi) They have come from Ireland.

[Sripad Sajjana Maharaja:] Gurudeva, when I went to Ireland, Paramananda prabhu helped me so much. He took me all around to the different places.

[Sukhada dasi:] This is a letter from a nice devotee in Ireland. Do you remember you spoke to him on the phone in Govardhana, and then later I gave you a letter from him when you were in Mathura? He doesn't do email, but he likes to write letters to you. I sold him your 'Gaura-vani Pracarine' book. This is the money he gave me.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Have you read the 'Gaura-vani Pracarine' book?

[Sukhada dasi:] Me?

[Paramananda dasa:] We sold four in one day.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Have you read 'Gaura-vani Pracarine'?

[Sukhada dasi:] No I haven't.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] It is a very authoritative book.

[Sukhada dasi:] This is my first time in the States. I came to see you Gurudeva.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] You have come from Ireland?

[Sukhada dasi:] Yes. We arrived yesterday.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Where is Ireland?

[Sukhada dasi:] Next to England. You flew over it from Germany on your way to America.

[Paramananda dasa:] Gurudeva, I was thinking about buying a little piece of land in Ireland. Do you think that is a good idea? What is your desire for me?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] If it is favorable for bhakti, you can do so. Do you have a home in Ireland?

[Paramananda dasa:] No.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Where do you live? Do you travel?

[Paramananda dasa:] I have a little place near to Nidhuvana in Vrndavana.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Very good. (To Krsna-priya dasi who is entering the veranda). Where have you come from? I thought that you were in India. Will your father come to Badger?

[Krsna-priya dasi:] Yes, he is coming to Badger.

[Visvambara dasa:] (Giving a donation) This is from Radha, my sister.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Does your sister have a job?

[Visvambara dasa:] No.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Then how is she giving this?

[Visvambara:] She is so smart that her school gives her money. She is a very intelligent girl.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] (To Krsna-priya dasi) Are you okay? What are you doing here in America?

[Krsna-priya dasi:] I am working at a job in Canada.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Working?

[Krsna-priya dasi:] I have to maintain myself somehow.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Will you come to Vraja Mandala Parikrama?

[Krsna-priya dasi:] Yes, definitely. Gurudeva, is your health okay?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Yes, I am okay. I am better. Now I can walk so much, and I am writing and giving classes.

[Krsna-priya dasi:] Is this your final year in Badger? People are saying it is your last year.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] No, no.

[Krsna-mayi dasi:] These are from more of my students who couldn't come. They wrote you letters.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] (Looking over the letters) Very good.

In the evening there will be a class, and also tomorrow. On the third day we will go to Badger. We will be there for seven days?

[Sripad Padmanabha Maharaja:] Six days of programs.

[Syamarani dasi:] Gurudeva, what will you be speaking about here in Los Angeles?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] I am thinking about it. What do you think will be best?

[Vrnda dasi:] Rasa pancadyaya.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Padmanabha Maharaja will speak, you will speak, Madhava Maharaja will speak and some others also. I will also try to speak something. I will remind the devotees to be careful. Initiation alone will not do. Practically following all of my instructions will do. Merely taking initiation but not following is not sufficient. Positively follow, and you will see that, "atma samprasidyati." Your soul will always be happy. No obstruction will come. We should strongly accept that which is favorable for bhakti, and we should at once reject that which is unfavorable. Then progress will be made.

Don't divide your mind – placing your love here and there. Be one-pointed like the gopis. They left their fathers, mothers, relatives and all others; they were one pointed towards Sri Krsna. If you are like this, all your lust will go away and your mind will always be happy. It may be that some suffering will come, but it will then return to where it came from. If you are not one-pointed, your mind will always be worried.

Be determined, like Srila Rupa Gosvami and Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami. Don't be in a dilemma: "Should I marry or not? What should I do?" This life is meant only for the practice of bhakti yoga; nothing else. You may be male or female, no matter, but your life should be given to Krsna.

[Devotee:] What if we cause pain to others by giving our lives to Krsna?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] You are not the cause of happiness or suffering for anyone. The Supreme Lord arranges everything, so you should not worry about this. Before your birth the world was going on, and after your death it will also continue. Why are you bothering about these things? You should also consider that if suffering is coming without calling it, happiness will also come without any effort. We have nothing to do in this regard.

Go on chanting and remembering. If you become fully surrendered to Krsna, He will take full charge of your life. You will have nothing to worry about. Sri Krsna will think, "I am now responsible for him, because he is a surrendered soul." He is very powerful, so don't worry.

[Krsna-priya dasi:] Gurudeva, does surrendering mean that we should give up all our material possessions?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] A small boy is surrendered to his mother. He has nothing to do. If a mosquito comes, he will simply weep; his mother will take care of everything. If he feels hungry, he will weep; and his mother will come and feed him. He only knows: 'Mother, mother, mother.' This is saranagati.

Manasa, deha, geha, jo kichu mora  
Arpilu tuwa pade, nanda-kisora



[Mind, body, family, everything I own I offer at Your lotus feet, Oh Nanda-kisora!  
(From Saranagati, by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura)]

Be satisfied with whatever Krsna is doing. You cannot do anything, so why not surrender?

[Govinda dasi:] Gurudeva, sorry that I came late. I was just printing copies of this letter – a plea to save the temple – and I want to give you the first copy.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] (After looking over the letter) I discussed everything with you yesterday. You are not satisfied?

[Brajanatha dasa:] Yes she is satisfied, but she wants to distribute this amongst the devotees, to request them to help save your temple.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Yes you can distribute it.

[Visvambara dasa:] Gurudeva, I am so passionate, and it is so difficult to sit down and do bhajana and sadhana. That is why I engage in so much physical service; because my mind needs to be occupied.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Who has made your mind upset?

[Visvambara dasa:] Myself, most likely.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] You are responsible for this. You should understand. You are always making your mind upset. Why are you doing so?

[Visvambara dasa:] It has always been like this – so passionate.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] That is why I am telling you to follow me and my instructions. Don't desire anything in this world. Always be totally surrendered to Krsna. Do you know Draupadi? She only thought of Krsna.

[Visvambara dasa:] That's intense surrender. That's too much. That's too much. I engage according to my comfort.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Try to know my teachings and my character. I have so much responsibility in this world.

[Visvambara dasa:] How do you do it?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] I have thousands upon thousands of devotees, but I am happy and peaceful.

[Visvambara dasa:] Param-gurudeva too. It's so amazing. He managed all Gaudiya Mathas, he went to court, and he was doing so many other things – and still he managed to chant.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] But at the same time he was not doing anything.

[Visvambara dasa:] How?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Like Krsna is in this world, and at the same time He is not in this world.

[Visvambara dasa:] This is very complicated.

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] Very complicated, but you must try to follow.

[Visvambara dasa:] Please give me that strength...

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] (Addressing a young boy, Kamal Krsna dasa, the son of Krsna-mayi dasi and Sivananda-sena dasa) You should always be a brahmacari. Don't become entangled. You should study, then come and be with me. Be a good brahmacari. (To parents:) From the beginning he has been in saffron; don't disturb his saffron.

[Sivananda-sena dasa:] Srila Gurudeva, you can give him this instruction because you are perfect; I can't. I can only support you instruction. I'm eating sweets, so how can I tell him not to?

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] This is my son. I have given him to you and his mother. You should nourish and support him and help him with his studies. After that you will have to give him to me.

[Sivananda-sena dasa:] Yes Gurudeva. He is a very good athlete. When he scores, the whole stand chants the name of Krsna. He is pursuing that, and also your instructions.

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