Homages

Publishers
Dear Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our most humble obeisances at your lotus feet. All glories to Your Divine Grace on your appearance day.

In previous ages, there was no need for books. Disciples would hear the Vedic teachings from their gurus and retain them in their well-developed memories. But in the Age of Kali the power of memory has decreased. And therefore Śrīla Vyāsadeva edited the Vedic teachings and set them down in writing. In addition, on the order of his guru Nārada Muni, he composed the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the spotless Purāṇa. In this spotless Purāṇa, Kṛṣṇa is present to the people of the Kali-yuga.

The essential Vedic texts, the Gītā and the Bhāgavatam, were thus set down in written form. The main method of distribution was copying the manuscripts by hand. This method continued through the time of Lord Caitanya. In more recent times, the technology of mechanical book printing spread throughout the world. In India, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thākura, one of your predecessors in the line of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava acāryas, began to use this technology to distribute the classic texts and texts of his own composition. He produced books in the English language and sent them abroad. His son, your own spiritual master, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvati Thākura, expanded the use of modern book production and distribution technologies. It became the central focus of his mission. He called the printing press the Brhat Mṛdaṅga. He personally instructed you about the importance of book distribution. He told you that if you ever got any money, you should spend it for printing books. He said that he felt like selling the marble from his main temple and using the money to print books. Over and over he stressed the importance of book production and distribution.

You have fulfilled his desires. You also made book production and distribution the central focus of your International Society for Krishna Consciousness. From the beginning of ISKCON, you engaged your disciples in assisting you in book production and distribution. After a few years, you formally established the Bhaktivedānta Book Trust to perpetually carry on the production and distribution of your books.

By your mercy, we have been engaged in serving you in the BBT you established. On this day, we dedicate ourselves to carrying out this special service to you to the best of our abilities. Praying for your continued mercy, we beg to remain

Your servants at the North American BBT in Los Angeles.

(written by Drutakarmā Dāsa)
Our dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda,

Please accept our humble obeisances at your lotus feet.

Thank you so much for warning and protecting everyone against “the atheistic propaganda of money-making men who have no knowledge of spiritual matters.” (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.3.22, purport)

You explain how Kṛṣṇa is actually the essence of all the imports of Vedic knowledge (vedaiṣ ca sarvair aham eva vedyah), and you give us access to this Personality of the Absolute Truth, since the process of devotional service you are preaching immediately brings the blessings of the Lord. Your books potently inspire and purify utter beginners and laymen in spiritual matters, and they give further guidance to those who are already to some extent purified and aware of life’s ultimate subtle interest. And certainly all advanced devotees enjoy reading them, as you yourself did! Please bless us, your BBT servants, to be able to continue to effectively assist sincere souls everywhere in their search for the fulfillment of self-realization by providing them with your perfect and complete teachings, transparently and attractively, without distortions.

And what to speak of your personal dealings we hear about from your direct servants! You were so purposeful and strict, yet amazingly loving, humorous, caring, and concerned—“always forgiving and encouraging” your often erring disciples, as your beloved Gurudās remembers it. These features of your personality can only now be presented through your biographies, videos, and the narrations of those who were there with you, and by our following your example as much as possible in our everyday lives.

We need your mercy—which is still being distributed through your books and by your followers—so that we will never stop endeavoring to attentively chant and hear the holy names of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to desire and then appreciate His presence in our hearts, to absorb our minds in His messages and share them with others, and to thus be ready for life’s final exam: ante nārāyaṇa-smṛtih. Let us make the best use of your matchless gifts, which can make anyone happy and fearless.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Trying to serve you with our bodies, minds, and words,

Your servitors at the North European BBT.

(written by Puṇya-pālaka Dāsa)