



# ŠRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ

**Śrī Vyāsa-Pūjā**  
**August 26, 2016**

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Printed in the United States of America

Cover Design: Bhiṣmadeva Dāsa (Hoofprint Media)  
Color insert layout: Nitya-tṛptā Devī Dāsī  
Layout/Production: Arcita Dāsa

Limited Printing: 500 copies



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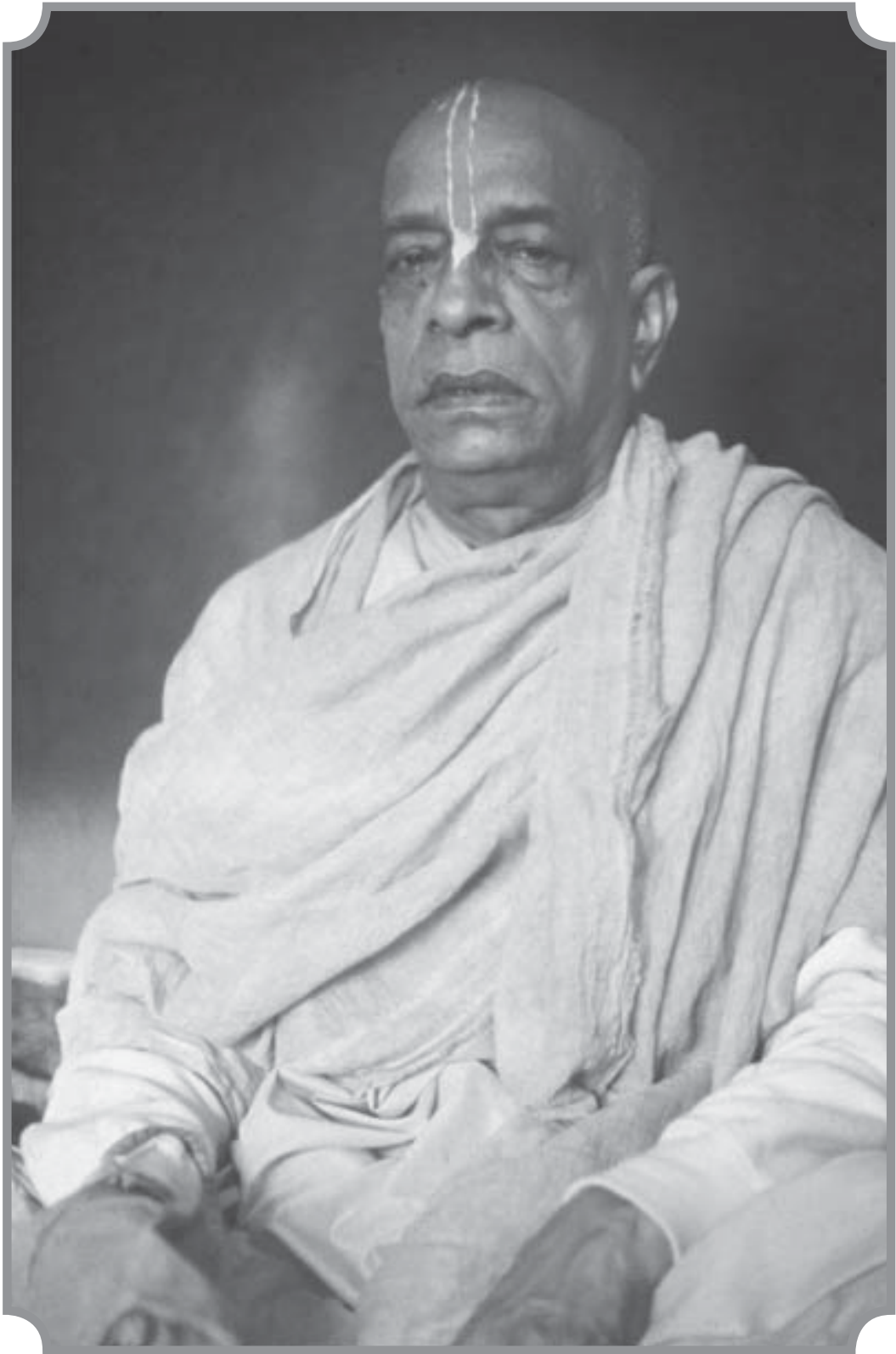
ŚRĪ VYĀSA-PŪJĀ

HIS DIVINE GRACE

Om Viṣṇupāda Paramahansa Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-śata

**A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA**

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness



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# INTRODUCTION

As with last year's Vyāsa-pūjā offerings, this year many devotees' homages center on "ISKCON 50." Unlike last year, however, when the fiftieth anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's heroic journey to the West in the late summer of 1965 was the major theme, this year it's the fiftieth anniversary of his founding ISKCON in July 1966 in New York City.

Looking back over the five decades of ISKCON's history, several devotees focused on Śrīla Prabhupāda's "Seven Purposes of ISKCON," which he first wrote in 1953 when starting the League of Devotees in Jhansi. Giridhārī Swami has been presenting seminars on these purposes to various assemblies of devotees, and he provides a thorough review, ending with this expression of gratitude and a prayer we can all embrace:

Thank you, Śrīla Prabhupāda, for so kindly giving us the seven purposes of ISKCON and for providing clear directions on how to practically apply them. Please bless us so that we can play our parts in making your glorious ISKCON into the preaching mission you envisioned. We offer our bodies, minds, and words in your service.

Jayapatākā Swami wrote an original Bengali song celebrating Śrīla Prabhupāda's being sent by Lord Caitanya as His commander-in-chief of the Vaiṣṇavas to fulfill His desire that *kṛṣṇa-prema* be spread all over the world. Stanza 10:

*deśe deśe kṛpā śraddhā śikṣā dīkṣā dila  
divya jñāna pracāra śaktye bhakata bāḍila*

In country after country, all over the world, he bestowed mercy, instilled faith, gave instructions, and performed initiations. Thus by his potent dissemination of transcendental knowledge, the numbers of devotees increased. Śrīla Prabhupāda thus showed personally how to apply the principle of "preaching is the essence."

Practically every offering recounts some of Śrīla Prabhupāda's remarkable accomplishments during his eleven-year worldwide preaching efforts, from 1966 to 1977, but none give such a thorough review as Bhakti Anugraha Janārdana Swami. Here is just his recounting of Śrīla Prabhupāda's breathtaking literary output and the distribution of literature he inspired, just until 1976:

You wrote approximately seventy books on the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, sleeping only a few hours a night. Dozens of prominent scholars and educators from leading universities have praised your literary work. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* proclaimed that your voluminous translations from the original Sanskrit and your lucid commentaries "have astounded literary and academic communities worldwide." This feat is even more astonishing considering that you wrote the translations and commentaries in English, your second language.

You founded the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT) in 1972 to produce your books. By 1976, over 55,000,000 pieces of literature had been published in twenty-five languages and distributed in almost every country, making the BBT the world's largest publisher of Indian religious and philosophical texts. One printing alone of *Bhagavad-gīta As It Is* required seventy-six railroad cars to ship the paper needed to print it.



Today, we learn from the offering written by Vinoda Vihārī Dāsa on behalf of the devotees in Malaga, Spain, the number of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s books printed and distributed stands at 516,000,000. And each year millions are added to that total.

Finally, we present an excerpt from the offering written by Sandhinī Devī Dāsī from China. Since the government crackdown in Tiananmen Square in Beijing thirty years ago, we’ve been cautioned to publish any offering from Mainland China under the heading “Khasadeśa.” In other words, the devotees preaching there wanted to keep their activities discreet. Not this year, Sandhinī assured me. You’ll see why when you read this excerpt from her report:

From the pioneer days in China, when we could only privately meet in small apartments for association, to the present day, when we are able to present countless public programs where hundreds of enthusiastic people chant and dance, a lot of hard work and perseverance have gone into devotees’ endeavors to please you. But that is not all. For the fiftieth anniversary of your ISKCON Society we wish to offer you a long garland of hundreds of enthusiastic Chinese Vaiṣṇavas, who are now getting trained to be great preachers and educators. We have the Chinese BBT, which has produced and legally registered your *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, and many small books. All across the country, more and more people are buying your books. Your expert devotee scholars are also cultivating the field of academia. Important books are being presented to Chinese scholars to establish the concept of Vedic culture based on your teachings.

This year we wish to offer you two major projects, one in Shanghai and one in Beijing. The former is a very nice new cultural center, and the latter is a very large temple complex, complete with *āśrama* facilities and an educational center for seminars and retreats. Last but not least, July will see the very first National Yātrā festival, with many senior devotees and hundreds of Chinese devotees coming together to glorify Your Divine Grace.

Now nothing can check the flood of devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa and His holy names spreading across this vast land.

And nothing can check the flood of devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa and His holy names spreading across the world. How ecstatic Śrīla Prabhupāda must be to see the movement he founded in a tiny storefront fifty years ago flourishing in all corners of the globe. Śrīla Prabhupāda-*kī jaya!*

Draviḍa Dāsa  
Vyāsa-pūjā Book Editor

# THE MEANING OF VYĀSA-PŪJĀ

Expression reflects and reinforces emotion. The celebration of Vyāsa-pūjā is an expression of the gratitude that the disciple feels for the spiritual master. And that feeling becomes reinforced when a disciple expresses his own gratitude and hears other disciples express theirs.

The spiritual master's guidance and grace are indispensable for elevating and liberating souls caught in this treacherous material existence. The spiritual master is nondifferent from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as the sacred scriptures proclaim. At *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.17.27, in the *Uddhava-gīta*, Kṛṣṇa Himself declares that the *ācārya* is nondifferent from Him (*ācāryam mām vijānīyān*). This nondifference is not because of a merging of beings but because of a joining of hearts. The spiritual master is purely and selflessly surrendered to Kṛṣṇa, as was Arjuna at the end of the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.73). The spiritual master is not just the conveyor of Kṛṣṇa's will—he is also the gateway to Kṛṣṇa; on Kṛṣṇa's behalf, he receives the disciple's service and bestows mercy.

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo  
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi*

Only by the mercy of the spiritual master is the mercy of Kṛṣṇa accessed. So potent and transformational is the spiritual master's mercy that the sincere disciple feels and remains indebted, lifetime after lifetime. The disciple strives to express that gratitude by dedicating his life to the spiritual master's service.

During the course of our life, Vyāsa-pūjā offers us a precious annual opportunity to meditate on and better appreciate our spiritual master's gifts. In composing our offering to the spiritual master, we go deep into our heart. Going beyond the routines and superficialities that frequently crowd our consciousness, we focus on that which matters most—the supreme treasure of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*, with which the spiritual master has enriched our heart. And by hearing the offerings of other devotees, we see those devotees with greater appreciation—not just for their functional roles in this world, but also as devoted and exalted souls committed to the spiritual master's service.

Śrīla Vyāsadeva is the quintessential spiritual master. He is the literary incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By rendering the Vedic message in written form, he preserves and propagates that timeless treasure of wisdom. Therein, he provides a comprehensive gamut of guidelines for elevating people at all levels. And he also gives, in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the ripened fruit of the Vedic literature (*Bhāgavatam* 1.1.3), the conclusive guidelines of pure devotion for those seeking life's highest destination—eternal spiritual love for Kṛṣṇa.

All spiritual masters follow in the footsteps of Vyāsadeva and carry on his mission. Thus, the spiritual master represents Kṛṣṇa, specifically Kṛṣṇa in his manifestation as Vyāsadeva. Through the numerous representatives of Vyāsadeva over millennia, culminating for us in our spiritual master, we receive the treasure of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*.

Among the many spiritual masters who have carried forward Śrīla Vyāsadeva's legacy, the position of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda is distinctive. Śrīla Prabhupāda was the empowered devotee who fulfilled the prophecy of Lord Caitanya that the holy names would be chanted in every town and village of the world.

Śrīla Prabhupāda manifested both the literary vigor of Vyāsadeva and the itinerant vigor of Vyāsadeva's spiritual master, Nārada Muni. Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote prolifically and profoundly, thus doing in English what Vyāsadeva had done in Sanskrit. And Śrīla Prabhupāda, following in Nārada Muni's footsteps, circumnavigated the globe fourteen times, making Kṛṣṇa's message accessible to millions who had never heard it before.

The Vyāsa-pūjā celebration of 2016 is special because this year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of ISKCON. Devotees in various parts of the world have prepared inspiring presentations that demonstrate movingly the global spread and devotional depth of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s legacy.

One way of contemplating Śrīla Prabhupāda’s unparalleled contribution is by adapting a quote attributed to Julius Caesar: “I came, I saw, I conquered.” Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mission was not one of political conquest but of spiritual compassion; so, the variant applicable to him is “He came, he gave, he conquered.”

**He came:** Śrīmad-*Bhāgavatam* 3.5.3 states, “O my lord, great philanthropic souls travel on the earth on behalf of the Supreme Personality of Godhead to show compassion to the fallen souls, who are averse to the sense of subordination to the Lord.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda descended from the spiritual world to the material world on the sacred day of Nandotsava, the day after Kṛṣṇa’s appearance day. That Śrīla Prabhupāda’s appearance day immediately follows Janmāṣṭamī signifies his mission: to carry forward Kṛṣṇa’s message.

Śrīla Prabhupāda went to the Western world with the message that one can be supremely happy only by loving Kṛṣṇa—a message that had never before been highlighted despite the many gurus who had come before him to the West from India. And he came back to India with a living demonstration of the universal appeal of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*: hundreds of young Western men and women who had given up everything to devote themselves to Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Prabhupāda encouraged us to meditate on his coming as a mission for our personal redemption. During one of his visits to Australia, a girl asked him why this message hadn’t been brought earlier. He replied sweetly that it was because she had not been born earlier; the message had been brought now so that she could be delivered.

**He gave:** At Śrīmad-*Bhāgavatam* 10.31.9, the topmost devotees, the *gopīs*, laud those who shower the world with *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* by sharing his glories: “Those who spread the message of Godhead are most munificent.” This world is like a quicksand of ignorance, wherein we are not only kept in ignorance of life’s spiritual side but are sucked deeper into that ignorance by the lure of material pleasures. And in the present times, the accumulation of material knowledge creates an illusion of progress that not only lures us into ignorance but also makes us complacent and arrogant, thus keeping us ignorant of our ignorance. Śrīla Prabhupāda rescued us from this ignorance by sharing generously the timeless spiritual knowledge of the *Vedas*. And his charity went far beyond offering spiritual knowledge alone: he offered spiritual love—love for Kṛṣṇa that was revealed to the world by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. And this charity of love enabled him to conquer hearts.

**He conquered:** Śrīla Prabhupāda won the hearts of thousands of people all over the world by the power of spiritual love. He radiated pure, pristine love; his selfless, surrendered consciousness transmitted Kṛṣṇa’s love to all those who came in contact with him. By that love, he inspired people from incredibly diverse backgrounds to enthrone Kṛṣṇa as the Lord of their heart, conquering the many illusions that misdirected their love toward worldly things. The *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* states that Lord Caitanya descended to this world to bless it with the garland of *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Śrīla Prabhupāda made that garland manifest by establishing all over the world temples that made loving Kṛṣṇa practical and relishable.

The glory of his feat has been recognized not just by his followers but also by secular authorities, in both the West and the East. The religious scholar A. L. Basham stated, “The Hare Kṛṣṇa movement arose out of next to nothing in less than twenty years and has become known all over the West. This is an important fact in the history of the Western world.” The phenomenal propagation that Śrīla Prabhupāda pioneered has continued after his disappearance through the vision and vigor he has imparted to his followers.

*The Times of India*, in an editorial in 2006, stated, “Guess again if you think Bollywood or Indians writing in English is the country’s biggest cultural export. You may not come across any of these if you visit Cochabamba in Bolivia or Gaborone in Botswana; what you will find instead is a centre of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON).”

“He came, he gave, he conquered” is not just a historical and historic event—it is also an ongoing event.

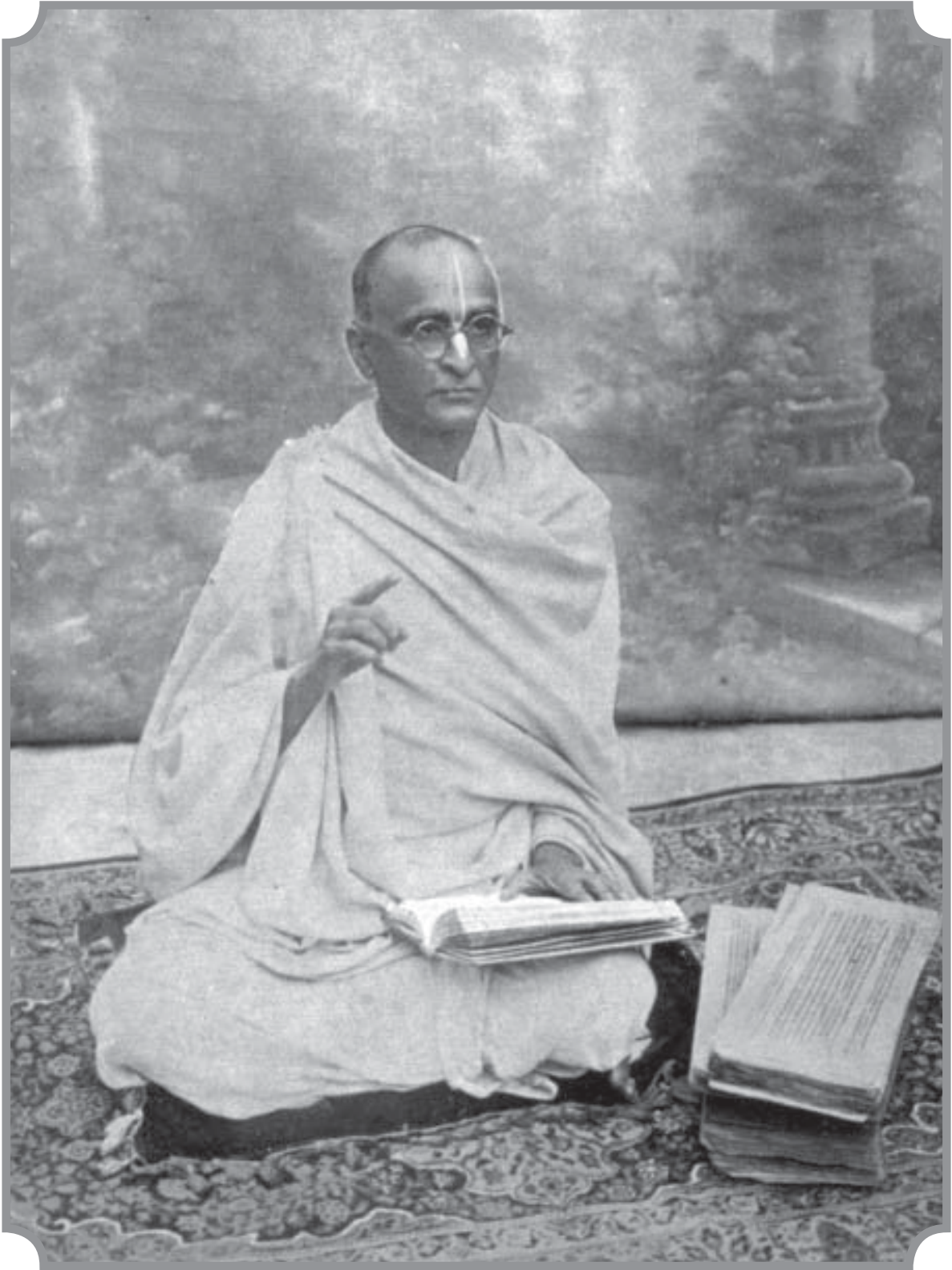
He conquers the hearts of new people who come in contact with him through the many manifestations of his mercy, such as his mission, his temples, his books, and his followers. And he conquers even more the hearts of us, his followers, as our appreciation of his gifts deepens.

Leading a life of devotion in a world of temptation is undoubtedly difficult, but meditating on the sacrifices of the givers of devotion lessens the difficulty. A child may be reluctant to take a bitter medicine, but if he remembers that his mother has sold her jewelry to pay for that medicine, then contemplating her sacrifice will replace reluctance with gratitude. Similarly, difficulties while practicing and sharing *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* may make us reluctant in our service. But by meditating on the innumerable and insurmountable sacrifices Śrīla Prabhupāda made just to give us the opportunity to practice *bhakti*, we can shed our reluctance and face wholeheartedly whatever challenges confront us.

If we keep the memories of his sacrifices alive in our hearts, he will come deeper into our hearts, the glory of his gifts will be increasingly revealed to us, and he will conquer our hearts more and more.

Śrīla Prabhupāda conquered by surrendering. On the *Jaladuta*, in his celebrated song *Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma*, he prayed to Kṛṣṇa, “O Lord, I am just like a puppet in Your hands. So if You have brought me here to dance, then make me dance, make me dance, O Lord, make me dance as You like.” On the sacred occasion of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Vyāsa-pūjā celebration, during ISKCON’s fiftieth year, we pray that we too may surrender so that we can dance like puppets in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s hands and do our small parts to push on his glorious mission.

Caitanya-caraṇa Dāsa  
Associate editor of *Back to Godhead* magazine  
Śāstric Advisory Council member



# “ADORE, ADORE YE ALL THE HAPPY DAY”

Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote the following poem in February 1935, on the occasion of the Vyāsa-pūjā celebration of his spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. It delighted Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta, especially the sixth stanza, which he felt captured the essence of his preaching against the Māyāvādīs. After reading this poem, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī was especially keen that Śrīla Prabhupāda preach and write in English.

The following version of the poem was prepared from two sources: the version Śrīla Prabhupāda included in the March 1952 edition of his *Back to Godhead* magazine, and the version he wrote by hand on the back of a letter he sent Rāyarāma Dāsa on March 20, 1969.

1.  
Adore, adore ye all  
The happy day,  
Blessed than heaven,  
Sweeter than May,  
When He appeared at Puri,  
The holy place,  
My lord and master,  
His Divine Grace.

2.  
Oh my Master,  
The evangelic angel,  
Give us thy light,  
Light up thy candle.  
Struggle for existence  
A human race.  
The only hope,  
Your Divine Grace.

3.  
Misled we are,  
All going astray.  
Save us, lord,  
Our fervent pray.  
Wonder thy ways  
To turn our face.  
Adore thy feet,  
Your Divine Grace.

4.  
Forgotten Krishna,  
We fallen souls  
Paying most heavy  
The illusion's toll.

Darkness around,  
All distress.  
The only hope,  
Your Divine Grace.

5.  
Message of service  
Thou hast brought,  
A meaningful life  
As Chaitanya wrought.  
Unknown to all,  
It's full of brace.  
That's your gift,  
Your Divine Grace.

6.  
Absolute is sentient  
Thou hast proved.  
Impersonal calamity  
Thou hast removed.  
This gives a life  
Anew and fresh.  
Worship thy feet,  
Your Divine Grace.

7.  
Had you not come,  
who had told  
The message of Krishna,  
Forceful and bold.  
That's your right,  
You have the mace.  
Save me, a fallen,  
Your Divine Grace.

8.

The line of service  
As drawn by you  
Is pleasing and healthy  
Like morning dew.  
The oldest of all,  
But in new dress.  
Miracle done,  
Your Divine Grace.