

শ্রীশ্রীগুরু-গৌরঙ্গো জয়তঃ

All Glories to Śrī Guru and Śrī Gaurāṅga

শ্রীভক্তিসুন্দরদিব্যবাণী

Srī Bhakti Sundar Divya-vāṇī

Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj's
Divine Message of Devotional Love and Beauty



Issue Number II

The Name of Our Āsram

Compiled from a lecture given on the evening of May 9th, 1996, in the Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Sevā Āsram in Soquel, California in which Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj explains the meaning of the Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Sevā Āsram's name.

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Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Sevā Āśram ki jaya!

om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-salākayā
chakṣur unmilitaṁ yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ

vāñchhā-kalpatarubhyas' cha
kṛpā-sindhubhya eva cha
patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo
vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ

By the grace of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Mahāprabhu we have already passed a few days here with Kṛṣṇa-*saṅkīrtan* in the association of the devotees. Through this we have received what we need for our life. Our practicing life is very simple. Our *āśram*'s name is also very simple and simply identified—Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Sevā Āśram. You know of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, He appeared from Goloka Vṛndāvan as the non-different form of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. Why? Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī has explained this and he has quoted some *śloka*s of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī Prabhu and Śrīla Svarūp Dāmodar.

rādhā kṛṣṇa-praṇaya-vikṛtir hlādinī śaktir asmād
ekātmānāv api bhuvi purā deha-bhedam gatau tau
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 1.5)

When the Sweet Absolute wants to taste His own super-sweetness, His own loving mood and the supreme loving expanses expanded from Goloka Vṛndāvan, He manifests in the form of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. This is the only way Kṛṣṇa can taste Himself fully because Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī alone has the highest mood of devotion and without Her mood He cannot taste Himself fully. So Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu's Pastimes come as the next edition of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's eternal Pastimes.

aṣṭāviṁśa chatur-yuge dvāparera śeṣe
vrajera sahite haya kṛṣṇera prakāśe
(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 3.10)

“At the end of the *dvāpar-yuga* in the twenty-eighth millennium of Vaivasvata Manu *Svayam-Bhagavān* Śrī Kṛṣṇa appears with His eternal abode of Vṛndāvan.”

īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ
sach-chid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ
sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam

(Śrī Brahmā-saṁhitā 5.1)

“Kṛṣṇa is the origin of all, everything transcendental and mundane. He is the cause of all causes and He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” That Kṛṣṇa appeared in this material world and showed His Pastimes to us and then again withdrew with His paraphernalia, abode, etc., to His transcendental abode. After the appearance of Kṛṣṇa the time came for the *kali-yuga-avatār*, the incarnation to distribute the dharmma of the age of Kali—*Hari-nām-saṅkīrtan*, congregational chanting of the holy Name of the Lord. At that time the Lord appeared as Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. But inside of Mahāprabhu there are two forms. One form is the *yuga-avatār* and the other is Kṛṣṇa Himself. Kṛṣṇa wanted to taste His own beauty, His own love, His everything. He Himself took the mood and color of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and appeared in the form of Mahāprabhu as He merged into His *yuga-avatār* form. This was hinted to by Kṛṣṇa Dās Kavirāj Goswāmī when he quoted this *śloka*,

rādhā-bhāva-dyuti-suvalitaṁ naumi kṛṣṇa-svarūpam

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Ādi-līlā, 1.5)

“Kṛṣṇa Himself took the mood and color of Rādhārāṇī and appeared in the form of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu.”

That Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu is more merciful than Kṛṣṇa! Mahāprabhu is Kṛṣṇa Himself appearing in the form of a *bhakta*, His devotee. A devotee’s nature is to distribute Kṛṣṇa. And when Kṛṣṇa Himself is a devotee, then it is in such a merciful mood the He comes to bestow mercy upon the conditioned souls. In this way Kavirāj Goswāmī expressed that when Kṛṣṇa wants to give Himself He appears in the form of Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

The *jīva*-souls are so fortunate because they are receiving this special form of mercy in a very wide way. Otherwise it is very rare to get a connection with the abode of Kṛṣṇa where He is playing with the *gopīs*. Kṛṣṇa has varieties of forms. We can see them everywhere: *yuga-avatāras*, *līlā-avatāras*, *manvantāra-avatāras*, *śaktyāveśa-avatāras*. Kṛṣṇa so many forms. But to get a connection with Kṛṣṇa in His original form, the ever-playful Sweet Absolute, where He is enjoying with the *gopīs*, is very rare. But when Kṛṣṇa wants to give Himself, then there is no question whether He can bestow His mercy.

Sometimes we see that when the government of a country changes or some

very respectable persons come to a country, prisoners are given relief, sometimes thousands of prisoners are released. Like that, when Kṛṣṇa Himself comes, there is no question whether He can bestow His mercy. He can give Himself and there can be no opposition to that by any law. So Mahāprabhu Śrī Chaitanyadev is the supreme giver of His own Self.

Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu wanted His flow of mercy to continue in this world after His presence here. By His grace we have the *ṣaḍ-goswāmīs* and other Vaiṣṇava Āchāryyas representing His line and through them His mercy is continuing to flow. Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu Himself taught Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī and Sanātan Goswāmī in Kāśī Dhām and Prayāg. The *Rūpa-śikṣa* and *Sanātan-śikṣa* are very famous chapters in *Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta*. Mahāprabhu gave all His instructions on *bhakti-yoga*, *ananya-bhakti* (exclusive devotion), to Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī and Śrīla Sanātan Goswāmī. Later, Mahāprabhu personally told all His devotees, “I have given everything to Rūpa Goswāmī.” In this way He identified Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī as His successor. So there is no question whether there is a continuation of the mercy of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu.

Our *āśram*, this *āśram*, is following Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu’s mission in the line of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī. So the *āśram*’s name is very appropriate, Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Sevā Āśram. We are eager to serve the representatives of the preceptorial line of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī who are headed by our Guru Mahārāj. And we are also eager to serve those who are connected with Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, may they be his god-brother or his disciple or his disciple’s disciple. We are all the *Sāraswatas*, the followers of Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur is our Guru Mahārāj’s guru, and also the guru of Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupād. That is our main identification.

And who is Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur? He is the rectifier of whole *sampradāya* of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur appeared at a time when varieties of *apasampradāyas* (deviant sects) polluted Mahāprabhu’s conception. We know he is a *pārṣad* (eternal associate) of Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. He rectified everything and again established the pure conception of Kṛṣṇa consciousness given by Śrī Chaitanya Mahāprabhu. He tried to make his mission worldwide and by his grace we have our gurus, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj and A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj. Now by their grace people all over the world are connected with the line of Śrīla Rūpa Goswāmī. We are servitors of their mission.

‘*Āśram*,’ ‘*Maṭh*,’ ‘*Mission*,’ all these words have different meanings. ‘*Maṭh*,’ means, *maṭhanti vasanti chhātra yatra maṭha*, “Where religious students are living,

that is a *math*.” And ‘*Āśram*,’ “Where service is going on continually for the Supreme Lord, that is an *āśram*.” In an *āśram* anyone can live and engage in service. Our vision and intention is that everyone can live and serve here in Soquel. Anyone who wants to serve will have a space to live and be provided with all accommodations. And our mission here is growing day by day very happily and that happiness is not for only me, it is for everyone. Anyone who tries to understand our missionary work, our line of service, if they are a real searcher, if they are faithful and sincere, they will easily understand everything, what Kṛṣṇa consciousness is and what the service of Kṛṣṇa is. It is for the benefit of those sincere seekers that our *āśram* is manifested here.

We are all servitors, from top to bottom. Our intention is to exclusively serve Śrī-Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga and we are so happy that day by day our mission is growing happily. Actually we are not so big, our numbers in this world are very small. But we have no shyness or unhappiness about this because we know Kṛṣṇa consciousness is a very rare thing. In the Scripture it is said,

**muktānām api siddhānām
nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ
su-durlabhaḥ praśāntātmā
koṭiṣv api mahā-mune**

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam: 6.14.5, Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 19.150, Madhya-līlā, 25.83)

“If you search amidst millions of *mukta-puruṣas*, liberated souls, and *siddha-puruṣas*, mystically empowered souls, very rarely will you find a few devotees of the Supreme Lord.” Many times Śrīla Guru Mahārāj gave us this conscious reminder. He also reminded us that we need quality not quantity, that we should make our own selves devotees. We are always living within an examination hall and from top to bottom we will be examined by Śrī Guru-Vaiṣṇava. But we will not be hopeless in any way. “If ten persons will get a promotion, my name must be there. If one person gets a promotion, I must also be there.” In this mood we shall try to offer ourselves for the service of Kṛṣṇa. No doubt it is very rare to get this mood, but I am surprised to see that most of our devotees here are fully dedicated to Kṛṣṇa. Not only are they dedicated, but they are overly dedicated sometimes. They have this type of mood of devotion and we are fortunate to have their association here.

There is no doubt that we are fortunate to associate with these types of devotees. This world is full of illusion. If somewhere within this illusory environment we will see the light of a perfect connection with Kṛṣṇa, we must be happy. We must think that we will attain our goal happily and we must proceed on

to our destination. The light shows us, “Yes, we are in the proper line.” This type of service connection has been given by our Guru Mahārāj and in his name we are trying to make this institution. Still it is under construction no doubt, but day by day it will develop and a very happy form will come.

I must confess that I have hundreds of friends here and they are all dedicated to Kṛṣṇa. Some have a little fault, some have a little more fault and that is natural. But they are dedicated.

jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu

nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu

(Śrīmad Bhāgavatam: 11.20.27-28)

They are *śraddhālur evam sampattivān*, faithful and wealthy, rich in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Actually they left their own habits and happiness for the service of Kṛṣṇa. Yesterday I heard one lecture of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj. He was giving a lecture in Bengali, he said, “You try to see these people who have come from the Western world. For me they have left so many things. They left intoxication. Normally they are taking intoxication. It is natural in their country. They left drinking, meat-eating, illicit sex, gambling; they left all these habits. With that sort of material enjoyment they were living in their own country but they left everything for me. Then how dedicated are they? And how much can you expect from them? Whereas in the Indian section, who has done this for their guru? Is there someone present here who can show that they have left everything for their guru? So the Westerners are exemplary! They are showing their devotion. How much more you can expect from them? I have allowed some relaxation in their lifestyle and I think it is appropriate for them.” In this way Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj gave support to the Westerners and Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was happy. But the word ‘happy’ is not sufficient. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj very highly appreciated the missionary activity of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj.

When Guru Mahārāj’s Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākura, wanted to make a student home in London there was a conference and Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was present during that consultation. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākura said, “So many students are coming to England to study. We will make one student home there and we will give free shelter to the students. From there we can collect good souls and in the future we will get them as our students even though they will read and study mundane things, such as engineering and law. They will stay with us, they will see us, and then some of them will get our religion. If it is necessary, we will not disturb them so much, and if necessary, we can serve them their own food from a hotel.” Śrīla Guru Mahārāj objected, “It will bring a very bad name to

our mission if we serve them this sort of food.” But Prabhupād Saraswatī Ṭhākur said, “I decided this a thousand births before. *Vaikuṇṭha-vṛtti hote habe*, for the service of Kṛṣṇa we must be ready to do anything. We know they are suffering from Māyā. Birth after birth they are here suffering. They are all our friends, all our brothers. So we must help them in this way.” When Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur used this phrase, *vaikuṇṭha-vṛtti hote habe*, Guru Mahārāj said, “I now have the clear idea that for the service of Kṛṣṇa we must do everything. That is the vision of Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur.” In this way Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur inspired his disciples and now his mission has spread in the world in a very big form and we are happy that we are a part of the institution of Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur.

Prabhupād Saraswatī Ṭhākur bestowed his mercy upon whole world and now in the Western world they are dancing, chanting his name, and glorifying his divine grace. And how happy are Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj! I must take the name of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj because there is no other way to conceive of things. We are all so surprised that everything has happened within only a few years. Śrīla Saraswatī Ṭhākur disappeared in 1937 and after that there were a few years of unrest. Then Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj started in 1965 and within 10 years people all over the world understood Chaitanya Mahāprabhu, Nityānanda Prabhu, the Hare Kṛṣṇa Mahāmantra and became cultured in Vaiṣṇavism more so than Indians.

I have witnessed one Western lady devotee worshipping Tulasī-devī everyday. Tulasī was living with her in a clay pot and somehow she fell down and broke. Tulasī was hit and maybe injured. That lady devotee was crying and crying for her Tulasī-devī. She did not take *prasādam* for the whole day and she gave so much nourishment her Tulasī. In this way she served her Tulasī. We cannot easily see this type of affection for Tulasī-devī within the Indian section. Many times I have seen her affection and it is unbelievable. I can also say, one of our devotees, Dāru Brahma *Didi*, in Govarddhan, I saw that she was very scrutinizingly looking at some ornaments being made for her Deity and she found some fault in them and she began crying. “I am leaving tomorrow, how will I get this ornament for my Deity? This ornament is not appropriate for my Deity.” She was crying. And money is not a question for her. I saw how much affection she had for her Deity. It was unbelievable. Seeing her crying, I thought, “Kṛṣṇa has not given that type of love to me. So how much love does she have for Kṛṣṇa!” I was surprised by her.

When the question came to me, “Can ladies serve the Deity when necessary,” I immediately replied, “Yes. They are not ladies actually. They have a lady form but they are devotees. One who is devoted does not have a caste or any mundane

form or qualities. We must be conscious about our mood of devotion. The rules and regulations are for us (the Indians), not for them (the Westerners).” This type of feeling came to me and I have also seen that in Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj’s mission many ladies are serving the Deities. That is difficult in India but in the West it is not difficult.

It is the very good fortune of the Westerners that they have not heard so many things. They were in a relaxed mood enjoying mundane life in several ways. They did not know about God or anything. Sometimes they were Christian, sometimes they would go to church and pray to God, “Thanks!” And then go back to their house. For formality they would go to Church well dressed, sometimes search for some man or search for some woman, give thanks to God, and go back to their home. But the type of mood of devotion I have seen in the devotees here one will not get easily. But they have got it. And why have they got it? Behind them is good *sukṛti* (spiritual fortune), they have not made offenses to their Lord, Kṛṣṇa. They have not had the chance to make offenses to Kṛṣṇa or offenses to the devotees because they have not heard the Name of Kṛṣṇa before and they have not had association with devotees before. But suddenly they have seen open before them one big jewel treasury that anyone can enter who is sincere and who has hankering and love for the jewelry. One must be chaste and faithful, and then he will attain that wealth with no problems. The Westerners left many things and their mundane enjoyment. If you see this, you will feel it.

In our the *āśram* gardens there are many tents. At night it is very cold. The devotees made a very nice room for me here but they are all staying outside. It is very good, there are maybe thirty or forty tents and they are sleeping there happily. Just now I asked Jagannāth-Vallabha Prabhu, “Where is your tent?” He showed me, “This is my tent.” I said, “You are not feeling cold at night?” He said, “Yes, at night I am feeling cold but I am happy to stay here. I have a good wrapper and with that I am living here. I have no problem.” And I have heard about his very luxurious flat in New York. There he is sleeping, living, dancing, and enjoying with the devotees in a princely style. But here he is living very happily like a poor man. I have eye-witnessed this. I asked him about this and he said, “Yes, Mahārāj, I am very happy.” I did not tell him anything then but I am surprised how much devotion he has. With this mood the devotees are feeling happiness and a fortunate soul will fortunately get this type of devotees’ association here. In this way I must say I am very fortunate that I have so many friends here by the grace of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. What more can I say?

Jaya Om Viṣṇupād Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj ki jaya!

Jaya Śrīla A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Mahārāj ki jaya!
Jaya Śrī Śrī Guru Gaurāṅga Gāndharvā Govinda-sundarjīu ki jaya!
Samaveta Vaiṣṇava Maṇḍala ki jaya!
Samaveta Bhakta Vṛnda ki jaya!
Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Sevā Āśram ki jaya!
Gaura-Premānande!

Puṣṭa Kṛṣṇa Prabhu: One thing though Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, the feelings that you see in the devotees, they are emanating from you. That is the truth. Without your association the glow coming from your heart cannot reflect off of our hearts. We have no heart other than what you’ve given us.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj: Hare Kṛṣṇa. That feeling has also given me light and with that we will try to serve Śrī-Śrī Guru-Gaurāṅga more and more. Just now I was saying upstairs, “How much have we given for the service of Kṛṣṇa? We cannot claim we have love for Kṛṣṇa.” What did Mahāprabhu Himself say?

na prema-gandho ’sti darāpi me harau
krandāmi saubhāgya-bharam prakāśitum
vaṁśi-vilāsy-ānana-lokanam vinā
bibharmi yat prāṇa-pataṅgakān vṛthā

(Śrī Chaitanya-charitāmṛta: Madhya-līlā, 2.45)

“Really I have no devotion for Kṛṣṇa or love for Kṛṣṇa. If I did have love for Kṛṣṇa then how could I be alive? I am living without Kṛṣṇa, so how then can I say I have love for Kṛṣṇa?” This is the mood of the devotee. So how much are we serving Kṛṣṇa? It is actually necessary to give more and more attention to our service. Service has no end and service gives us more service. That is nature of service. We know how true this is. We have this beautiful land. It was our land before but we did not know that and now we have entered this land and we are thinking about expanding it. So our service has no end. Kṛṣṇa has given us this opportunity and it is so nice no doubt. So it is only necessary to our attention to service. That is for everyone. Then we will be rich in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. The business of *bhakti-yoga* has no loss.

na hi kalyāṇa-kṛt kaśchid
durgatim tāta gachchhati

(Śrīmad Bhagavad-Gīta 6.40)

Whoever practices Kṛṣṇa consciousness will never lose anything and he will never go back in any way. Even if he dies suddenly, he will start his practicing life again from a higher position. We will get this sort of opportunity only in *bhakti-yoga*. Hare Kṛṣṇa. Now we can sing a little. I’ll finish here.