

# Śrī Vyāsa Pūjā

**Śrī Vyāsa-Pūjā**  
**The Most Blessed Event**  
**August 25, 2008**

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Printed in the United States of America

Limited Printing: 700 copies



**THE BHAKTIVEDANTA BOOK TRUST**  
Los Angeles • Stockholm • Mumbai • Sydney

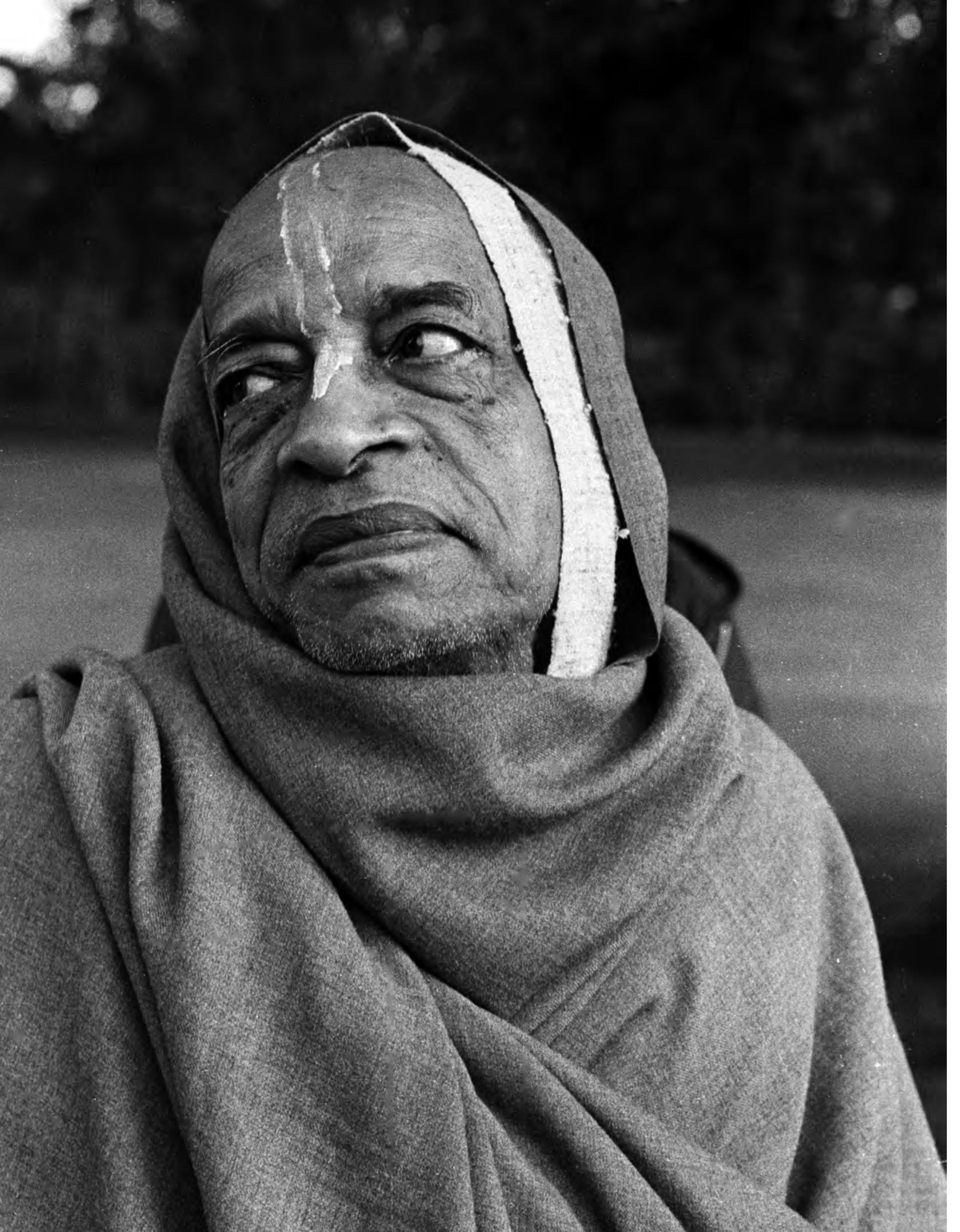
# Śrī Vyāsa Pūjā

The Appearance Day  
of Our Beloved  
Spiritual Master

His Divine Grace Oṃ Viṣṇupāda Paramahaṁsa  
Parivrājakācārya Aṣṭottara-śata Śrī Śrīmad

**A.C. BHAKTIVEDANTA  
SWAMI PRABHUPĀDA**

Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness



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# Contents

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**Introduction, vii**

**The Meaning of Vyāsa-pūjā, ix**

**Mārkinē Bhāgavata-dharma, xi**

**“Adore, Adore Ye All the Happy Day,” xv**

**Vyāsa-pūjā Homages from the GBC, 1**

Anuttama dāsa, 3; Badrinārāyaṇ dāsa, 4; Bhakti-bhṛṅga Govinda Swami, 5; Bhakti Caitanya Swami, 6; Bhakti Chāru Swami, 7; Bhaktimārga Swami, 8; Bhakti-puruṣottama Swami, 10; Bhaktivaibhava Swami, 10; Bhūrijana dāsa, 11; Bīr Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Goswami, 12; Devāmrita Swami, 14; Giridhārī Swami, 14; Girirāj Swami, 15; Gopāl Krishna Goswami, 20; Guru Prasād Swami, 20; Hridayānanda Dāsa Goswami, 22; Jayapatāka Swami, 22; Kavicandra Swami, 23; Madhusevita dāsa, 25; Mālatī Dāsī, 27; Nirañjana Swami, 28; Paraṁ Gati Swami, 29; Prabhaviṣṇu Swami, 31; Praghoṣa Dāsa, 32; Rādhānātha Swami, 32; Rāmāi Swami, 34; Ravindra Svarūpa Dāsa, 35; Romapāda Swami, 36; Śivarāma Swami, 37.

**Vyāsa-pūjā Homages from Non-GBC Sannyāsīs, 41**

Bhakti Rāghava Swami, 43; Bhakti Vighna Vināśa Narasiṁha Mahārāja, 44; Bhakti Vikāsa Swami, 45; Bhakti Viśrambha Mādhava Swami, 46; Candramauli Swami, 49; Candraśekhara Swami, 50; Dānavīr Goswami, 52; Gaṇapati Dāsa Swami, 53; Guṇagrāhi Dāsa Goswami, 55; Hanumatpresaka Swami, 55; Janānanda Goswami, 58; Jayādvaīta Swami, 60; Kadamba Kānana Swami, 61; Keśava Bhārati Swami, 63; Krishna Dāsa Swami, 64; Lokanāth Swami, 66; Mahāvishnu Swami, 67; Pārtha Sārathi Dāsa Goswami, 70; Prahlādānanda Swami, 71; Puruṣatrāya Swami, 72; Śacīnandana Swami, 73; Satsvarūpa Dāsa Goswami, 74; Trivikrama Swami, 75; Umāpati Swami, 76; Varṣāṇā Swami, 77; Vedavyāsapriya Swami, 79.

**Vyāsa-pūjā Homages from ISKCON Centers, 81**

Ahmedabad, 83; Aravade, 89; Bahia, 89; Bali, 90; Baroda, 91; Beed, 91; Bhaktivedanta Manor, 92; Brahmapur, 94; Brampton, 94; Brisbane, 97; Budapest, 97; Chamorshi, 98; Chandigarh, 99; Coventry, 101; Dallas, 102; Darwin, 103; Denpasar, 103; Detroit, 104; Durban, 106; East Hartford, 107; Eger, 108; Gainesville, 109; Ghana, 110; Gītā-nāgarī, 111; Guyana, 112; Hare Krishna Dhāma, 113; Honduras, 114; Hong Kong, 114; Las Vegas, 115; Lome, 116; London (Soho), 118; London (South), 119; Longdenville, 120; Malaga, 121; Manokwari, 122; Melbourne, 123; Mexico City, 124; Miami, 126; Mumbai (Chowpatty), 129; Mumbai (Juhu), 130; Mumbai (Mira Road), 131; Nagpur, 134; Natal, 135; New Badarikāśrama, 136; New Biharvan, 137; New Dvārakā, 138; New Gokula (Millfield), 143; New Gokula (Vancouver), 144; New Goloka, 146; New Govardhana (Murwillumbah), 147; New Govardhana (San Diego), 148; New Hastināpura, 150; New Kulīna-grāma, 151; New Navadvīpa, 153; New Raman Reti, 154; New Remuṇā, 154; New Seva Kuñja, 155; New Tālavana, 156; New Varṣāṇā, 158; New Vraja Dhāma, 158; New Vrajamaṇḍala, 160; New Vrindaban, 162; New York (Brooklyn), 162; New York (26 Second Avenue), 165; Noida, 166; Padayātrā (India), 167; Pandharpur, 169; Paris, 170; Pecs, 170; Perth, 171; Philadelphia, 172; Prague, 174; Puerto Rico, 175; Pune, 176; Radhadesh, 177; Richmond Hill/Markham, 178; Rijeka, 180; Rome, 181; St. Louis, 183; Seattle, 184; Silicon Valley, 186; Slovenia, 188; Stockholm, 188; Sydney, 190; Taipei, 192; Tallahassee, 193; Tokyo, 193; Tripura, 194; Tucson, 195; Vṛnda-kuṇḍa, 196; Vṛndāvana, 197; Yogyakarta, 200.

### **Vyāsa-pūjā Homages from the Publishers, 201**

Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (Brazil), 202 ; Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (North America), 202; Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (Northern Europe), 207.

### **Vyāsa-pūjā Homages from Other Sources, 209**

Academic Outreach Preaching, 211; Ātmā Yoga, 211; Austin Nāma-haṭṭa, 212; Back to Godhead/Krishna.com, 213; Bhaktivedanta Benevolent Association, 214; Bhaktivedanta College (Budapest), 215; Bhaktivedanta College, (Radhadesh), 217; Bhaktivedanta Gurukula and International School, 218; Bhaktivedanta Institute (Berkeley and Mumbai), 219; Book Distribution Ministry, 221; Centro Studi Bhaktivedanta, 222; Child Protection (Central Office), 225; Cleveland Nāma-haṭṭa, 226; Congregational Development Ministry, 227; Dandavats.com, 228; Dubai Congregational Preaching, 229; Food for Life Global, 230; Global Varṇāśrama, 231; Guadalajara Preaching Center, 233; House of Vaiṣṇava Culture for Śrīla Prabhupāda, 234; International Society for Cow Protection, 235; ISKCON Prison Ministry, 238; ISKCON Television, 240; Krishna Center, 241; Matchless Gifts Preaching Center, 245; Māyāpur Institute for Higher Education and Training, 245; Māyāpur International School, 246; Padayātrā Worldwide, 247; Prabhupāda Manor, 249; Prabhupāda Village, 249; Prahlāda and Kuntī-devī Āśramas, 250; Radio Krishna Centrale, 251; Sacramento Preaching Center, 254; Sāndīpani Muni Āśrama, 255; Śaraṇāgati, 255; Ultimate Self-Realization Course, 256; Vaiṣṇavas C.A.R.E., 257; Vṛndāvana Institute of Higher Education, 258.

### **Vandanam — Śrīla Prabhupāda Praṇāmāṣṭaka, 261**

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# Introduction

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In his *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindu*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states that the first element of the process of devotional service is *guru-pādāśrayah*, taking shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master. As a practical matter, the first expression of this surrender is when one offers obeisances, bowing down fully in *daṇḍavat praṇāmas*. Likewise, every homage in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s Vyāsa-pūjā book begins with the offering of obeisances—*nama om viṣṇu-pādāya . . . namas te sārāsvate deve . . .*

But what is the deep meaning of the word *nama* in these verses? The *Padma Purāṇa* (2.2.2) states:

*aharī-kṛtir ma-kārah syān na-kāras tan-niṣedhakaḥ  
tasmāt tu namaś kṣetri- svātantryaṁ pratiśidhyate*

“The syllable *ma* indicates false ego, which is negated by the syllable *na*. Thus by offering obeisance one denies his independence as possessor of his material body.” So each offering begins with the offering of one’s very body, mind, words, and heart to Śrīla Prabhupāda. On the foundation of sincere obeisances, the edifice of one’s devotional service is built. Likewise, the remainder of each homage here—the glorification, prayers, expressions of gratitude, yearly reports of service rendered—rests on this foundation as well.

Some highlights this year include a moving report from Rādhānātha Swami about a wonderful, courageous devotee in Mumbai who risked his life to save that of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s dear disciple Śyāmasundara Dāsa, who needed a partial liver transplant to avoid imminent death:

Gopīnātha Prabhu was the first to spontaneously come forward. However, he entrusted the final decision to his wife, Pārijātā Devī, who was mother to his two-year old son Rasanāth. Was she willing to risk the fate of widowhood, with a baby, at such a young age? Pārijātā Devī’s appeal was firm: “In your lifetime there may never again be such an opportunity to please Śrīla Prabhupāda. We have been taught that to be the servant of his servant is the way to his intimate blessings.” She consented.

What an example of sincere obeisances: offering up one’s body in service to the guru and those dear to him!

Another highlight, this time from the homage authored by Bhakti Viśrambha Mādhava Swami:

In 1975 you instructed your disciple Hṛṣīkeśānanda Dāsa about how to attain perfection. (The conversation, absent from the VedaBase, was related to me by your disciple Dīnabandhu Prabhu.) Hṛṣīkeśānanda asked, “Śrīla Prabhupāda, how are we to attain perfection after your departure?” You replied, “When you chant *harināma* purely, then the sun of love of Godhead will rise up in your heart. You will then see everything clearly, as when the sun rises in the morning sky. You’ll see Kṛṣṇa and you’ll see yourself [your spiritual body], and I will be there and will instruct you.”

Amazing what unexpected jewels you’ll find in the Vyāsa-pūjā book.

This little passage from the homage offered by the devotees in Hong Kong typifies the sincere prayers found in so many offerings:

Śrīla Prabhupāda, O *kalpa-vṛkṣa*, O great servant of the lotus feet of the Lord! We sincerely beg your kind forgiveness for all the offenses we have committed unto the holy name, the devotees, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the holy land, and the scriptures. We beg your mercy so we may awaken from ignorance and be able to remember our role as Lord Kṛṣṇa’s humble servants; in this way we can serve you, the Lord, the spiritual masters, and all devotees.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, O ocean of mercy, lord and master of the fallen souls! Please kindly continue

to guide us so we may please you. Please tell us how we can focus our hearts and minds on the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. And please bless us so that we may continue your mission of spreading the holy names of Lord Caitanya to the whole world.

And finally, the last stanza of Kuśakratha Prabhu's *aṣṭaka* to Śrīla Prabhupāda, offered first in the 1980 Vyāsa-pūjā book, versified by our humble self. The final obeisance:

An ocean of compassion, he has taken shelter of  
Śrī Nanda's Son with all his being in everlasting love.  
He lives on by his teachings; with the followers he remains—  
To Śrīla Prabhupāda I bow; his glories I proclaim.

Draviḍa Dāsa  
Vyāsa-pūjā book editor

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# The Meaning of Vyāsa-pūjā

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Śrīla Prabhupāda often used the analogy of an ambassador when describing the spiritual master. As an ambassador is shown all respect due to his post, the spiritual master is respected as we would respect God due to his function as the Supreme Lord’s representative.

The etiquette of honoring the spiritual master, however, is not a dogmatic social convention, like those practiced on the political scene. The bona fide spiritual master is not an ordinary human being. His qualities are all transcendental to the modes of material nature, and by those equalities he endears himself to his disciples and helps them develop their love for him and for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Although how he does this may not always be apparent, there are times when one can peep into the spiritual dimension and appreciate the spiritual master’s uncommon nature.

Such a circumstance occurred with Śrīla Prabhupāda in Vṛndāvana on Janmāṣṭamī night, August 18, 1974. Śrīla Prabhupāda was visibly ill, but he still insisted on greeting the governor and other dignitaries in the unfinished Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma temple. Despite extreme inconvenience, Prabhupāda spoke publicly that night and then returned to his room, barely able to walk without assistance.

Not understanding Śrīla Prabhupāda’s fragile condition, while he was at the temple I entered his room and placed many gifts on his desk for his Vyāsa-pūjā celebration the next day. When he returned to his room, I went into the garden and looked through Prabhupāda’s window, hoping to see him enjoy the gifts. Instead, what I saw gripped my heart with fear. Śrīla Prabhupāda had collapsed across his *āsana* and lay with his head motionless against the pillow. He looked feverish and weak, with no strength to move. I quickly ran to tell Prabhupāda’s servant of his serious condition.

The next day Śrīla Prabhupāda was too weak to attend his Vyāsa-pūjā ceremony. All his disciples chanted and prayed for his recovery while going through the formalities of Vyāsa-pūjā. Śrīla Prabhupāda was the person to whom we had given our life, the person who had given us life. Despite our deep love for Prabhupāda, however, we could do nothing more than pray for him that day. Twenty-four-hour *kīrtana* commenced in temples around the world as Śrīla Prabhupāda’s condition worsened.

Amazingly, despite Prabhupāda’s ill health, he dutifully sent letters to the various devotees who had given him gifts and written homages for his Vyāsa-pūjā. We each received the same letter:

I beg to thank you for your kind appreciation on the Vyasa Puja day. Your sentiments are appreciated by me. It is stated by Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakur, it is only by pleasing the spiritual master that one can be assured of pleasing Kṛṣṇa. So my only request to my disciples all over the world on this day is to go on pushing on this movement with determination and sincerity, rigidly following the principles I have given you.

I hope this meets you in good health.

Your ever well-wisher,  
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

I venture to call this letter the “Vyāsa-pūjā Sūtra” because it describes the essential meaning of Vyāsa-pūjā—our relationship with Śrīla Prabhupāda, our service to him, and the ultimate goal of that service.

In this year’s Vyāsa-pūjā book one will find innumerable offerings, but one will also sense an underlying theme, a thread of sentiment running through all of them—one of love and appreciation for Śrīla Prabhupāda. From the incidents of Janmāṣṭamī and Vyāsa-pūjā in 1974 we learn just how determined and selfless Śrīla Prabhupāda is, and why he is worshipable. Our debt to him is way beyond our ability to repay. As Śrīla Prabhupāda wrote in his *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Madhya* 7.148, purport), “Each and every member of this Society was rescued from a very abominable condition, but now they are engaged in preaching the cult of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

Let us therefore keep pushing on this movement with determination and sincerity, rigidly following the principles Śrīla Prabhupāda has given us to attain the goal of pleasing Kṛṣṇa. As most unqualified, wretched, and fallen recipients of Prabhupāda's causeless mercy, let us seriously try to please him by following his instructions carefully.

Daivī-śakti Devī Dāśī

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# Mārkine Bhāgavata-dharma

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## “Preaching Kṛṣṇa Consciousness in America”

On September 17, 1965, His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda arrived in Boston on board the ship *Jaladuta*, carrying within his heart the orders of his spiritual master to spread the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu beyond the borders of India, throughout the entire world. As he looked out upon Boston’s bleak and dirty skyline, he could understand the difficulty of this sacred mission and felt great compassion for the godless people. Thus, with perfect humility, he composed this historic prayer in Bengali, praying for the deliverance of all fallen souls.

(1) *baḍa-kṛpā kaile kṛṣṇa adhamera prati  
ki lāgi ānile hethā kara ebe gati*

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, You are so kind upon this useless soul, but I do not know why You have brought me here. Now You can do whatever You like with me.

(2) *āche kichu kārya tava ei anumāne  
nahe kena ānibena ei ugra-sthāne*

But I guess You have some business here; otherwise why would You bring me to this terrible place?

(3) *rajas tamo guṇe erā sabāi ācchanna  
vāsudeva-kathā ruci nahe se prasanna*

Most of the people here are covered by the material modes of ignorance and passion. Absorbed in material life, they think themselves very happy and satisfied, and therefore they have no taste for the transcendental message of Vāsudeva. I do not know how they will be able to understand it.

(4) *tabe yadi tava kṛpā haya ahaitukī  
sakala-i sambhava haya tumi se kautukī*

But I know Your causeless mercy can make everything possible, because You are the most expert mystic.

(5) *ki bhāve bujhāle tārā bujhe sei rasa  
eta kṛpā kara prabhu kari nija-vaśa*

How will they understand the mellows of devotional service? O Lord, I am simply praying for Your mercy so that I will be able to convince them about Your message.

(6) *tomāra icchāya saba haya māyā-vaśa  
tomāra icchāya nāśa māyāra paraśa*

All living entities have come under the control of the illusory energy by Your will, and therefore, if You like, by Your will they can also be released from the clutches of illusion.

(7) *tava icchā haya yadi tādera uddhāra  
bujhibe niścaya-i tabe kathā se tomāra*

I wish that You may deliver them. Therefore if You so desire their deliverance, then only will they be able to understand Your message.

(8) *bhāgavatera kathā se tava avatāra  
dhīra haiyā śune yadi kāne bāra bāra*

The words of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* are Your incarnation, and if a sober person repeatedly receives them with submissive aural reception, then he will be able to understand Your message.

(9) *śṛṇvatām sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ  
hṛdy antaḥ-stho hy abhadraṇi vidhunoti suhṛt satām*

(10) *naṣṭa-prāyeṣu abhadreṣu nityam bhāgavata-sevayā  
bhagavat-uttama-śloke bhaktir bhavati naiṣṭhikī*

(11) *tadā rajas-tamo bhāvāḥ kāma-lobhādayaś ca ye  
ceta etair anāviddham sthitam sattve prasīdati*

(12) *evam prasanna-manaso bhagavad-bhakti-yogataḥ  
bhagavat-tattva-vijñānam mukta-saṅgasya jāyate*

(13) *bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś chidyante sarva-saiśayāḥ  
kṣīyante cāsyā karmāṇi dṛṣṭa evātmanīśvare*

It is said in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.17–21): “Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramātmā [Supersoul] in everyone’s heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted. By regular attendance in classes on the *Bhāgavatam* and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact. As soon as irrevocable loving service is established in the heart, the effects of nature’s modes of passion and ignorance, such as lust, desire, and hankering, disappear from the heart. Then the devotee is established in goodness, and he becomes completely happy. Thus established in the mode of unalloyed goodness, the man whose mind has been enlivened by contact with devotional service to the Lord gains positive scientific knowledge of the Personality of Godhead in the stage of liberation from all material association. Thus the knot in the heart is pierced, and all misgivings are cut to pieces. The chain of fruitive actions is terminated when one sees the Self, one’s master.”

(14) *rajas tamo ha’te tabe pāibe nistāra  
hṛdayera abhadra saba ghucibe tāhāra*

They will become liberated from the influence of the modes of ignorance and passion, and thus all inauspicious things accumulated in the core of the heart will disappear.

(15) *ki kare bujhāba kathā vara sei cāhi  
kṣudra āmi dīna hīna kono śakti nāhi*

How will I make them understand this message of Kṛṣṇa consciousness? I am very unfortunate, unqualified, and the most fallen. Therefore I am seeking Your benediction so that I can convince them, for I am powerless to do so on my own.

(16) *athaca enecha prabhu! kathā balibāre  
ye tomāra icchā prabhu! kara ei-bāre*

Somehow or other, O Lord, You have brought me here to speak about You. Now, my Lord, it is up to You to make me a success or failure, as You like.

(17) *akhila jagat-guru! vacana se āmāra  
alan̄kṛta karibāra kṣamatā tomāra*

O spiritual master of all the worlds! I can simply repeat Your message, so if You like You can make my power of speaking suitable for their understanding.

(18) *tava kṛpā ha'le mora kathā śuddha habe  
śuniyā sabāra śoka-duḥkha ye ghucibe*

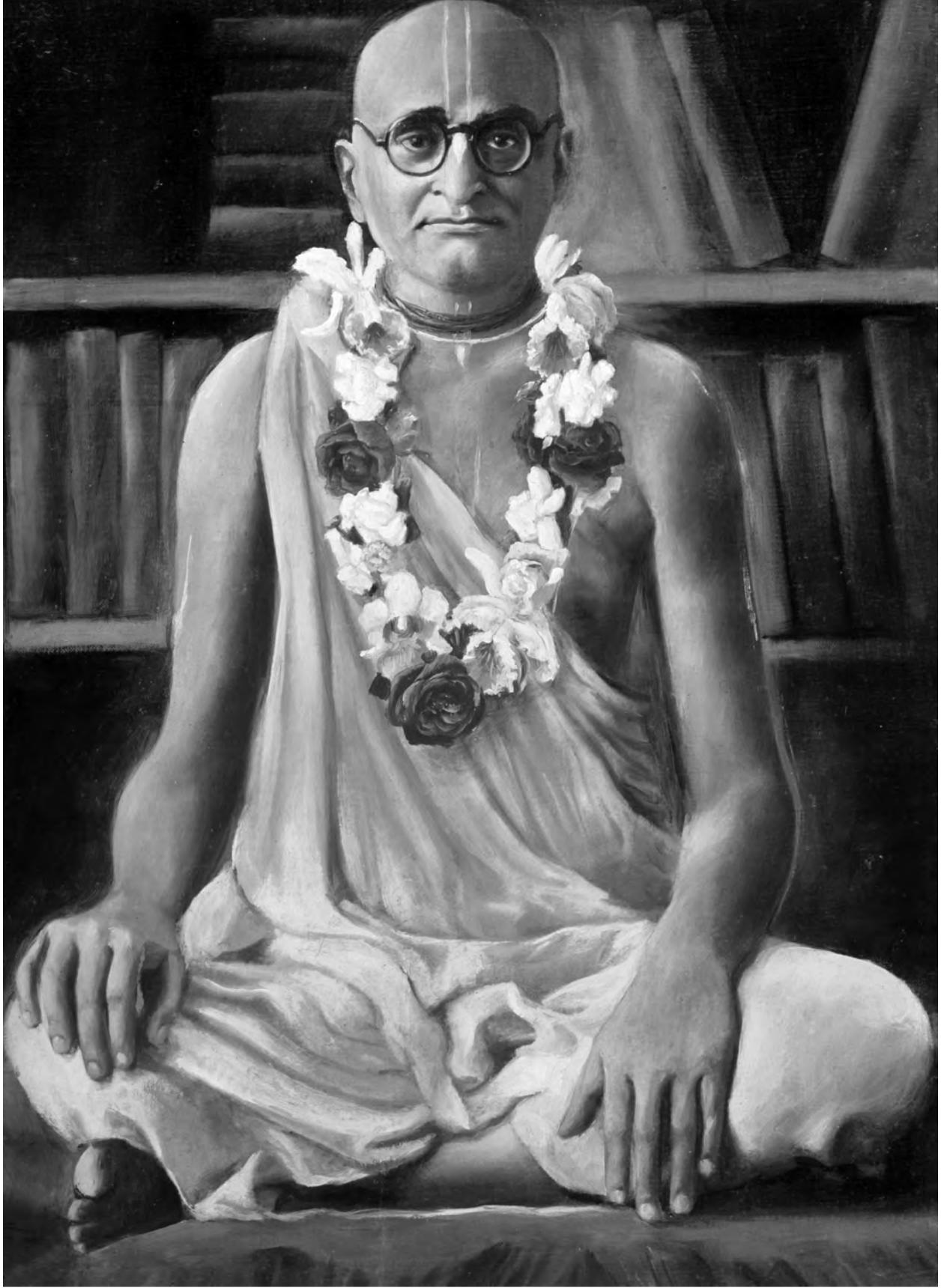
Only by Your causeless mercy will my words become pure. I am sure that when this transcendental message penetrates their hearts they will certainly feel engaddened and thus become liberated from all unhappy conditions of life.

(19) *āniyācha yadi prabhu! āmāre nācāte  
nācāo nācāo prabhu nācāo se-mate  
kāṣṭhera putula yathā nācāo se-mate*

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.

(20) *bhakti nāi veda nāi nāme khuba baḍa  
“bhaktivedānta” nāma ebe sārthak kara*

I have no devotion, nor do I have any knowledge, but I have strong faith in the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. I have been designated as Bhaktivedānta, and now, if You like, You can fulfill the real purport of Bhaktivedānta.



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# “Adore, Adore Ye All The Happy Day”

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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.

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.

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

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.

Forgotten Krishna,  
We fallen soul  
Paying most heavy  
The illusion's toll.  
Darkness around,  
All untrace.  
The only hope  
His Divine Grace.

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

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

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.

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.

