

Learn and Teach

The VIHE Newsletter

ISSUE No. 4

FEB - APR '17

The killing of Pralambāsura took place during the hot season in Vṛndāvana, when the rays of the sun become so fierce that, as the saying goes, “Only mad dogs and Englishmen go out in the midday sun.” Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī explains that the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, however, did not suffer from the extreme heat. No one can suffer in the presence of the Supreme Lord. There were cool breezes, shady trees, abundant water in the rivers and lakes, and the gopīs expertly prepared refreshing beverages. Even the harsh sound of crickets was covered by the melodious cascading of the many flowing waterfalls. It was summer in name only. Kṛṣṇa descends in this world to display the world of love — *sadā nirasta-kuhakam*, the topmost, peerless Absolute Reality of eternal loving friendship, untainted by material inebriety, in which the lover lives for the happiness and comfort of the beloved, free from all selfishness, in the land of Vṛndāvana, the place most worshiped by the seers of the truth, yet so difficult to see. In the secular calendar, it is holiday time. Cars horn, riksha drivers yell, loud speakers roar, dogs bark, monkeys attack, beggars roam about, and the dust, filled with the fumes of the vehicles, irritates the eyes and lungs.

The hot season is compared to the peak of material fever, experienced in the form of lust, which invades the consciousness of everyone in this world, except that of the pure-hearted. The demon Pralamba represented that lusty nature. Why would demons enter Lord Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes? Demons in Vṛndāvana-līlā represent the enemies of the conditioned living entity’s mind, which

Bhakti-śāstrī 2017

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The VIHE - A drawing by Bhaktin Alexandra Nikitina

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VIHE Calendar

2017 - 2018

- Jun 22 - Oct 22 : Bhakti-śāstrī (English)
Jul 3 - Oct 22 : Bhakti-vaibhava – Canto 4
Sep 8 - 11 : Vaiṣṇavī Retreat in Nepal
Oct 24 - 28 : Teacher Training Course 1
Oct 30 - Nov 4 : Teacher Training Course 2
Nov 8 - 13 : Holy Name Retreat
Nov 17 - 24 : Govardhana Retreat
Dec 4 - Mar '18 : Bhakti-śāstrī (Russian)
Dec 7 - Mar '18 : Bhakti-vaibhava Canto 1 & 2
Dec 7 - Mar '18 : Bhakti-vaibhava Canto 5 & 6

Sweetness through hearing

*sudhānām cāndrīṇām api madhurimonmāda-damanī
dadhānā rādhādi-praṇaya-ghana-sāraiḥ surabhitām
samantāt santāpodgama-viśama-saṁsāra-saraṇī-
praṇītām te tṛṣṇām haratu hari-lilā-śikhariṇī*

TRANSLATION

“May the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa reduce the miseries existing in the material world and nullify all unwanted desires. The pastimes of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are like śikhariṇī, a blend of yogurt and sugar candy. They overpower the pride of even the nectar produced on the moon, for they distribute the sweet fragrance of the concentrated loving affairs of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and the gopīs.”

— Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's introductory verse
to the Vidagdha-mādhava
(Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta, Antya 1.128)

keep one away from the association of the Lord. Pralamba sneaked in while Kṛṣṇa and His friends were playing, enjoying loving exchanges, and he tried to kidnap Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Appearing as a sweet cowherd boy, just as lust appears sweet at first, he thought he could lure the Lord, who is known as Sarvātmā, one who knows the heart of all.

The only heat the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana ever experienced was that of deep separation from Kṛṣṇa whenever He would be away in the forest or disappeared from their vision for even the fraction of a second while walking behind a tree. Neither the devotees nor the Lord can tolerate that separation from each other. Thus when Balarāma was being forcefully carried away, he became extremely angry and smashed Pralambāsura's head into pieces. Pralambāsura, his dark ugliness fully exposed, could not disturb the boys' playing. On the contrary, he enhanced the joy of all by providing a spectacular vision of his own destruction. Indeed, as Lord Balarāma's fist cracked open his head, it seemed as if red manganese was gushing out of an erupting black volcano. “Well done! Well done!”

Kṛṣṇa killed Pralambāsura through Balarāma, the first servant, the original spiritual master. We pray that the hearing and chanting of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes from the mouth of the ācāryas may enthuse us to follow in their footsteps and uncover in our hearts the shining jewel of separation from Him who is the dearest, so we may swoon in that welcomed heat of love and be protected from the furnace of both the Vṛndāvana summer and the demons of material existence.

This is the fourth issue of “Learn and Teach.” We invite you to read ahead.

- Praśāntā Devī Dāśī

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Seminars since 1987

http://vihe.org/audio_lectures.html

Separating the Soul from the Body

Excerpts from a lecture by Śrīla Prabhupāda



Śrīla Prabhupāda in London

Arjuna was not a coward. He was a competent warrior. But still, dehātma-buddhi, the bodily concept of life is so strong that Arjuna admits, *dr̥ṣṭvā tu svajānaṁ kṛṣṇa*: [Bg. 1.28] "My dear Kṛṣṇa, I have to kill my own men." What is that "own men"? "Own men" means this bodily relationship. Why others are not own men? Everyone is own men, because everyone is Kṛṣṇa's son. So when one becomes Kṛṣṇa conscious, he can see everyone as own men. And when he is not Kṛṣṇa conscious, he simply sees own men where there is bodily relationship. This is the defect. They are advertising, humanitarian work, philanthropic work, communism, this "ism," but when there is question of bodily relationship, immediately everything is changed. You know, in the Communist country, Khrushchev was driven out because he was patronizing his own men. That was the defect. So you can advertise that "I am for everyone," but there is affection for own men. It's called nepotism. So many big, big leaders. Our Jawaharhal Nehru, he was sending his own men as ambassador. Vijaya Lakṣmī, a woman, she was being sent as ambassador. She was high commissioner here. So this "own men" question is very prominent everywhere.

Arjuna is a great warrior. He could fight all the soldiers. The other party, they were also

assembled, yuyutsu, with fighting spirit. Other men, even if they are not in fighting spirit, we can kill very easily. But own men, although they are in fighting spirit, still he hesitates. Because own men. So this "own-menship," in relationship with the body, is the barrier for spiritual understanding. So long this conception of life will exist, that "I am this body, and anyone who is related with this body, they are my own men, kinsmen, relatives..." This conception of life is the greatest barrier for advancing in spiritual consciousness. Therefore the Vedic civilization is so planned that one has to give up this rascal "own men" conception. That is *vairāgya*. *Jñāna-vairāgya*. Two things required in human life: knowledge and *vairāgya*, detachment. The attachment increases. First of all, it increases. *Puṁsaḥ striyā mithunī-bhāvam etaṁ* [SB 5.5.8]. This whole world is based on sex life. A man has got attraction for woman; a woman has got attraction for man. This is nature's bondage, shackle. And when they are actually united, either by the father, mother, or by their own way, that shackle, that attraction, increases. *Puṁsaḥ striyā mithunī-bhāvam etaṁ tayor mitho hṛdaya-granthim āhuḥ*. *Hṛdaya-granthim*: the knot in the heart. "She is my wife." "He is my husband." Of course, now that knot is very slack. Formerly it was very strong because the woman was not allowed to mix with any other man, and the man was also not allowed with any other woman. This intermingling has slackened even that knot, *hṛdaya-granthim*. Therefore, even in trifle cases, quarrel between husband and wife, there is divorce, because that unity is not very strong now. That is good. Some way or other, it is slackened. So this "own-menship" comes from the bodily concept of life.

So Arjuna is preparing the ground, how to receive the instruction of *Bhagavad-gītā*. Spiritual instruction begins with separating the soul from the body. Unless one understands that there is a soul different from this body, there is no spiritual education. This is the basic principle. If you do not understand what is soul, what is spirit soul, then where is spiritual education?

— *Bhagavad-gītā* 1.28-29 -London, July 22, 1973

Why Study? - An Interview with H.H. Yadunandana Svāmī

Q.] What are your realizations about the effects of śāstric studies on devotees?

Yadunandana Svāmī (YS): I was a teenager when I started reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. I served as a cook in a saṅkīrtana party and I was having a hard time to keep up. It was very demanding in terms of hours, intensity of service and so on. I was going through a very tough time. H.H. Keśava Bhāratī Mahārāja, who was regional secretary for Spain at that time, advised me to study Śrīla Prabhupāda's books regularly. Taking his advice, I started to read on a daily basis for minimum an hour. I began to study systematically, especially the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. It totally transformed my life. Studying on a daily basis gave me spiritual nourishment, inspiration and strength. It helped me to understand why I was doing what I was doing. I have also observed that devotees who study śāstra thoroughly become committed to Śrīla Prabhupāda's movement, to the process of sādhanabhakti, and they get spiritual realization. The more thorough they are, the deeper they become.

Q.] What is the importance of making the Bhakti-vaibhava course available in our society?

YS: Our movement is based on the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and the Bhakti-vaibhava course is based on the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. When Śrīla Prabhupāda came to the U.S.A., he carried with him the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, which is a masterpiece of a literary contribution. The teachings of Lord Caitanya are also presented in the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam and hearing the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is the process to attain perfection. Bhakti-śāstri books like

the Bhagavad-gītā are the foundation, whereas Kṛṣṇa-prema is awarded to those who are sincere in reading and practicing the teachings of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. The Śrīmad Bhāgavatam helps in going deeper into developing a personal relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Śrīla Prabhupāda established daily classes on the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam. In each centre, there should be a facility to teach the Bhakti-vaibhava in a systematic fashion. Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is the life of our movement. As Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī says, "it is the life-breath of the Vaiṣṇava devotees".

Q.] What is the role of education in building the future generations of devotees?

YS: If we educate the devotees in terms of values, culture, knowledge of śāstra and the practical application of that knowledge, then we will have a very solid spiritual society. If we fail to educate the devotees, we will have a weak and superficial society without any spiritual



Śrīla Prabhupāda teaching at Rādhā-Dāmodara Temple

strength and stamina. In the first purport to chapter four of the Bhagavad-gītā, Śrīla Prabhupāda says that the leaders of the world, like the saintly kings, establish the knowledge of the Bhagavad-gītā and it is their duty to ensure that the members of the society receive this knowledge. Śrīla Prabhupāda mentions that this should be done through education, culture and devotion. So education is essential, not just devotion. Education and culture should be there in order to enhance the devotion. In chapter six of the Bhagavad-gītā, which describes the yoga-bhraṣṭas or those who do not finish their spiritual process and take birth in families of transcendentalists, Śrīla Prabhupāda mentions that in India, there are many ācārya or gosvāmī families. They are cultured by... [continued on page 5]

The Retreat Spirit

By H.H. Śacīnandana Svāmī



The success or failure of whatever we do in our life depends on how much energy and focus we put into it. In our devotional life, trying to do our best, trying to put our energy into the process is called *sva-ceṣṭā*—one’s own endeavor—and for this, focus is important. While discussing focus and energy, however, let us not forget about the third most important factor: the mercy of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. But since this is something outside of our own will, something which is given freely from

above, I shall talk about applying focus and energy. First, let me give you a little history of the events we call “retreats.”

Retreats were conceived long ago in different spiritual cultures of the world—Islam, Christianity, and so on. It has been common knowledge that to deepen one’s practice, one has to retreat from the world and enter into a space—not a physical space but an atmosphere—that helps one to concentrate on one’s spiritual life. In ancient Vedic times or even in recent times, it was known that pilgrimages would offer such a facility. Leaving home and going to holy places would bring one more closely in contact with Kṛṣṇa. The pilgrims would look for the resident saints, listen to spiritual discourses, increase their wakeful hours, attend āratīs and take sacred baths while meditating on the Deity they wanted to please. They would perform activities which would turn what could easily have been likened to ordinary tourism into a sacred experience. Going on a pilgrimage was thus one of the traditional forms of retreating, and the Lord could be contacted in that way. In our Gauḍīya culture, we find the same concept in the concentrated observance of the month of Kārtika and of Ekādaśī.

In order to regenerate one’s spiritual life, one has to leave one’s entangling life behind and go to a space which allows maximum concentration. One

Why Study? cont...

tradition, but are degenerating due to lack of sufficient education. Because Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī established here in Vrindavan a center for education, great devotees like Narottama Dāsa, Śrīnivāsa Ācārya and Śyāmānanda Paṇḍita could study. We have what we have because of the Six Gosvāmīs. ‘Nānā śāstra vicāraṇaika nipunau...’ They were thorough in śāstra and they presented the science of Kṛṣṇa consciousness systematically to the society. We need education on all

levels, especially for the leaders, both at the brahminical level—theologians who can present the teachings of Lord Caitanya to the modern society—and for the leaders who are managing. They too need to have a strong foundation in śāstra and culture to take care of all members of the society. So in conclusion, if we develop a thorough educational system, then the movement will be very strong, otherwise it will remain weak with many faults.

of our ācāryas, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, went on a retreat with a very particular motive which all of us would like to emulate: bringing Kṛṣṇa consciousness back to the foreground in the history of the world. In his time, there were many new movements that had left the pure path taught by Śrī Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu. He single-handedly created a counter movement—the Nāmahatṭa movement—which spread the pure chanting of the Holy Name and the reading of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in the association of devotees. He also wrote many books. Then something happened... He writes, “Alas! Alas! I tried my best to establish the noble truth of Gaurāṅga’s movement, but again the false intellectualism and the various apa-sampradāyas that do not follow the teachings of Lord Gaurāṅga have spread. I can see that on my own I can’t spread the movement of Gaurāṅga Mahāprabhu.” So he went on a retreat on the beach of Jagannātha Purī, threw himself on the sand, wailed and cried, “Oh Gaurāṅga! Unless you empower me to do this impossible work, I will fail.” He could understand that on his own he could not accomplish the impossible mission of spreading Kṛṣṇa consciousness. So, he earnestly retreated from his endeavors to connect himself with

Mahāprabhu. He describes in a very moving way that once, as he was thus lying on the hot beach of Purī, the waves of the ocean thundering against the beach, he saw the golden complexioned Lord, who said, “My dear child, do not worry. This is the age of Kali and it is natural that there will be opposition. I will empower your work. You may go back and continue your preaching.” This is the ideal picture of a devotee going on a retreat, who understands that he is helpless and needs help.

Let me ask you a question. Have you achieved in this life what you wished to achieve spiritually? A few bold individuals, mostly those who are a month old in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, will say yes, and I sincerely congratulate them. However, I would like to ask a second question. Do you feel that what you have achieved stays with you and doesn’t leave you? Do your happiness and contentment in Kṛṣṇa consciousness always stay with you? My dear devotees, what the questions intend to express is very clear. In truth, most of us feel that, “Oh! I need to focus more! There is so much more ground to cover. After all these years of chanting, my heart still looks like the Joshua Tree National Park.” I was in California very briefly during my

“O Holy Name, O ocean of bliss, I fall down at Your lotus feet for I am feeling very distressed and troubled at heart. At the lotus feet of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, I constantly beg that at every moment there may be constant revelation of the Holy Name.”

— Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura



The Lord is always ready to give directions. Indeed, His directions are elaborately given in Bhagavad-gītā. If we take advantage of these directions, then in spite of our being conditioned by the laws of material nature, we shall become free to attain our original constitution (mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etāṁ taranti te [Bg. 7.14]). We should have firm faith that the Lord is supreme and that if we surrender to Him, He will take charge of us and indicate how we can get out of material life and return home, back to Godhead. Without such surrender, one is obliged to accept a certain type of body according to his karma, sometimes as an animal, sometimes a demigod and so on. Although the body is obtained and lost in due course of time, the spirit soul does not actually mix with the body, but is subjugated by the particular modes of nature with which he is sinfully associated. Spiritual education changes one's consciousness so that one simply carries out the orders of the Supreme Lord and becomes free from the influence of the modes of material nature.

- Easy Journey to Other Planets

last visit to America, and this Joshua Tree National Park, which I had heard so much about in the past, turned out to be a huge disappointing desert. When it comes to the practice of spiritual life, we feel our heart is like a huge disappointing desert.

Through these retreats we try to help the devotees and also ourselves to cross over the bridge between theory and practical understanding; to bridge the abyss between the mechanical practice of spiritual life and spiritual life which is practiced with deep feelings. And the way we do it is by creating an atmosphere where devotees will be able to apply their focus and energy so the Holy Name may reveal itself.

When I was young, my parents wanted me to learn many things, one of which was bicycling. I got a little red bike in an auction for ten dollars. I was a very slow learner. If you look at my knees, you will still see the marks from falling so often from my bike as I struggled to learn. Everyone would say, "You have to experience balance." I said, "What is this balance?" And people replied, "Balance is balance." This was very vague for a German boy. Then one friend suggested something which finally made a breakthrough. He said, "You have to put your feet on the pedals and gaze at something distant, not at the wheels of the bike; and while thus putting your focus and energy in cycling, you will get it, you will know what balance is." I thought "Wow!" And it just took me a half an hour to figure out what is balance by applying focus and energy. You cannot explain balance, which is a very complex physical principle. You can only experience it when you walk on a tight rope or do cycling. In the same way we want to chant with taste, which is definitely more esoteric than cycling. To get that, we will need three components: energy, focus and mercy. But since mercy is so beyond, we just want to show our eagerness/seriousness/determination to the Lord by giving what we can give. During retreat time, remain committed to the work in front of you, seek to improve your relationship with the Holy Name and remain focused by following the program laid out by the facilitators. This is a tried and tested formula based on the experience of senior Vaiṣṇavas. I guarantee you will get something sublime.

“Windows to the Spiritual World” - Govardhana Vaiṣṇavī Retreat 2017

By Bhaktin Prathna



“Vibrant,” “Enlightening,” “Ecstatic,” “Śrīla Prabhupāda’s mercy manifested”—these are but a few of the expressions used by devotees in describing their experiences of the recent six-day long International Vaiṣṇavī Retreat held at Govardhana.

The event provided a special opportunity for learning and allowed for loving exchanges between the Vaiṣṇavīs from different walks of life and parts of the world who attended: thirteen disciples of Śrīla Prabhupāda, many senior devotees, as well as new devotees and first time attendees. In the blissful atmosphere of Govardhana, the participants relished wonderful lectures, short pilgrimages, workshops, personal reflections by senior devotees and personal association with exalted souls.

The morning japa meditation was infused with steadiness, seriousness and commitment and the numerous kīrtanas were filled with sweetness and ecstatic devotion. Following the japa session and morning prayers, everyone gathered to listen with rapt attention to “The Killing of Pralambāsura,” a rendition of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Canto 10, Chapter 18, complete with the commentary of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī and other revealing references. At the close of each day, devotees heard soothing līlā-kīrtana presentations by Her Grace Yaśomatī Devī Dāsī. During the day, some chose to take karatāla and mṛdaṅga lessons, while others

attended a “Painting for Kṛṣṇa” workshop, given by Her Grace Dhṛti Devī Dāsī. Other presentations and lectures ensured ongoing participation and activity throughout the retreat.

One of the highlights for many of the devotees was a visit to Ter Kadamba on the sublime day of Pāpamocani Ekādaśī. In this extraordinarily beautiful place, after darśana of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī and guru pūjā, the devotees did six hours of glorious kīrtana, calling out to the Holy Name with sincerity and devotion.

On the individual level, the activities of the retreat provided many of the Vaiṣṇavīs with the opportunity to whole-heartedly reflect upon their spiritual practices and personal sādhana. It was clear that all the participants took very seriously the message given on the opening day—that the retreat would require deep introspection and a retreat within oneself in order to receive spiritual nourishment.

On a group level, the retreat brought in an opportunity for care, compassion and friendship between devotees in female dress to blossom. Lasting friendships were formed as a source of support and strength, thus fulfilling the motto of the Vaiṣṇavī Retreat—Peer Support for Spiritual Progress. The personal and unique journey of each of Śrīla Prabhupāda’s disciples was very much appreciated and has left a lasting

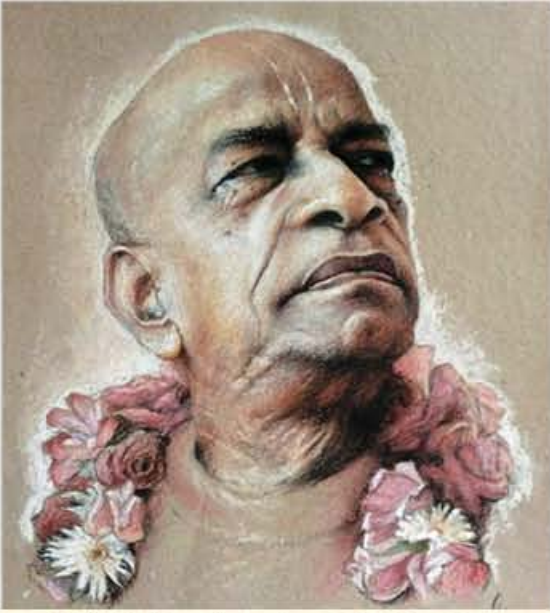


Workshop with Dhṛti Devi



Harināma along Govardhana

— WINDOWS TO THE SPIRITUAL WORLD —



Śrīla Prabhupāda by Anurādhā Devi Dāsi



Mādhava by Dhṛti Devi Dāsi



Kusuma Sarovara by Bhaktin Alexandra Nikitina



Govinda by Rādhā



Golden Rādhā by Līlā Śravaṇī Devi Dāsi

impression. The reflections of these senior devotees helped in building strength in understanding and facing opportunities, as well as challenges, that Vaiṣṇavīs may encounter in devotional life. Overall, the opportunity to associate with senior disciples was motivating and spiritually empowering.

One of the main focus points of the retreat was understanding and appreciating the significance of devotional art. The theme of the retreat, "Windows to the Spiritual World" originated from a phrase used by Śrīla Prabhupāda: "These paintings are windows to the spiritual world. They will be like the rain after the drought of mundane art, and everyone will be attracted." The title "Windows to the Spiritual World" was therefore used to describe the exhibition of art at the retreat and the topic of devotional art in general. Devotees were fortunate to have the association and guidance of Dhṛti Devī, who captivated her audience with stories regarding her personal journey with art as a means of devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. She provided enlivening workshops and quoted extensively from Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions to artists. A splendid array of art was displayed at the art exhibition, a

visual treat for all, who marveled at the workmanship, skill, patience and devotion—all important ingredients in producing devotional art. This was very inspiring and helped many to realize that each Vaiṣṇavī has a unique contribution to make in devotional service and that one's personal characteristics, endowments, talents, creativity and abilities can be dovetailed and used in executing devotional service.

Ultimately, the retreat lived up to its name and this year's theme. It indeed served as a window through which we got a glimpse into the spiritual world. Supported by panels of steadfast sādhana, empowering association, unwavering faith in the Holy Name, and a deep commitment to Śrīla Prabhupāda, this window was also delicately, yet opulently decorated by a beautiful curtain woven from love, care and, supportive exchanges between Vaiṣṇavīs.

We are most grateful to every devotee who attended and contributed to the success of the retreat. We also pray to again soon be in one another's association to further understand and relish the beauty of devotional service alongside the magnificently merciful Girirāja Govardhana.



Praying for Each Other at Surabhi-kuṇḍa



Kāliya Kṛṣṇa by Annapūrṇā Devī Dāsī

An Interview with Bhakti-vaibhava student Madhu Mañjarī Devī Dāsī

Q.] What was the motivation behind your decision to undertake Bhakti-vaibhava studies?

Madhu Mañjarī Devī Dāsī (MMDD): I felt that it was important for me to nourish myself. I came to Vrindavan for the Govardhana Retreat and Bhakti-vaibhava. These are unique opportunities to interact more with the Vaiṣṇavas and particularly with senior devotees. We can learn so much. We have Deity worship, sādhu-saṅga, the Holy Dhāma, the Holy Name and Śrīmad Bhāgavatam—the whole package together. Currently I am studying psychology in a university in Australia. In one way, the experience of studying in a university is quite draining and one needs to compensate that with more spiritual nourishment. So I felt the need to seek shelter of the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam.

Q.] Do you perceive a difference between studying Bhakti-śāstrī and Bhakti-vaibhava?

MMDD: I did Bhakti-śāstrī many years ago. My understanding was different. My impetus for study came from my Guru Mahārāja and Nārāyaṇī Mātāji. This time it is more of a conscious endeavor from my side, knowing from my previous experience what we get by studying systematically. I am more consciously trying to connect with Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Most of the devotees I have met here share a common need in taking shelter in Śrīla

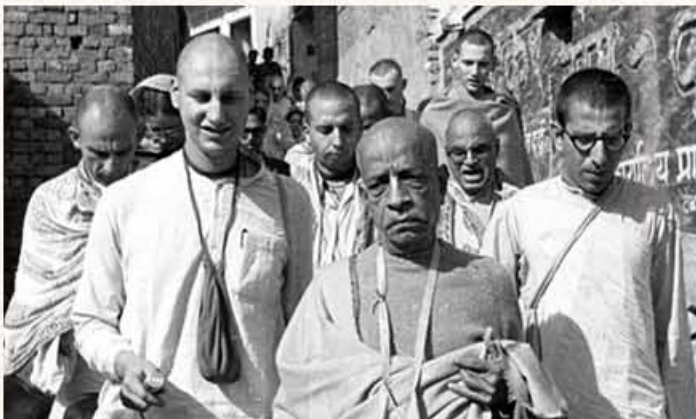
Prabhupāda's books and instructions, and to study under the guidance of senior devotees.

Q.] What is the best thing that you have learnt?

MMDD: I realized that studying Śrīla Prabhupāda's books in a systematic program under the guidance of senior devotees is not the same as studying on my own. It helps broaden the spectrum of our perception. In my batch, we have students from different parts of India, Russia, London, Ukraine and Australia. It enhances the learning experience. By coming here, we get the association of devotees who are motivated to study, so we get inspiration and encouragement. Being in the Holy Dhāma is also very conducive for studying. One of the key points is the teachers. I received a lot of inspiration from them, from the way they present and live the Bhāgavatam. Being with them is contagious and we also get their mood.

Q.] What are your plans for the future?

MMDD: I plan to go back to Australia and start some training program for young devotees. Actually we are already doing that, so we will continue with more strength. Of course, coming back to study for personal nourishment, self growth and becoming more active in Śrīla Prabhupāda's mission is also my desire.



"Now, because you are on the field work, you have to meet so many opposite elements. And you have to satisfy them or fight with them with conclusive statements from Bhagavad-gītā, and Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam; and as such it is needed that you should be thoroughly conversant with the truth."

- Letter to Gurudāsa, 30th September, 1968

Upcoming Courses

Bhakti-śāstrī

June 22 - October 22, 2017

CONTENTS OF THE COURSE

Bhagavad-gītā
Nectar of Devotion
Nectar of Instruction
Īsopaniṣad
Sanskṛt Pronunciation
Introduction to Deity Worship

TEACHERS

Bhakti Dhīra Dāmodara Svāmī (BG, Ch. 1-6),
Prāṇeśvara Dāsa (BG, Ch. 7-12), Lakṣmimoni
Devī Dāsī (BG, Ch. 13-15), Ādi-puruṣa Dāsa
(BG, Ch. 16-18), Praśāntā Devī Dāsī (Nectar of
Instruction, Sanskṛt Pronunciation), Atula
Kṛṣṇa Dāsa (Śrī Īsopaniṣad), Mukunda Datta
Dāsa (Introduction to Deity Worship)

Bhakti-vaibhava

STUDY OF CANTO 1 & 2

Dec 7, '17 - Mar '18

SEMINARS

Invocation
Sanskṛt Meters
The Ten Topics of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

TEACHERS

Yadunandana Svāmī, Sārvabhauma Dāsa, Ādi
Puruṣa Dāsa, Vamśī Vadana Dāsa, Praśāntā
Devī Dāsī

Bhakti-śāstrī (Russian)

Dec 4, '17 – Mar 2018

TEACHERS

Bhakti Rasāyaṇa Sāgara Svāmī, Ādi-puruṣa
Dāsa, Gaurasundara Dāsa, Rādhā Prema Devī
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Canto 5 & 6: Dec 7, '17 - Mar '18

SEMINARS

Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu (Southern Ocean)
Daśa Mūla

TEACHERS

Yadunandana Svāmī, Bhakti Dhīra Dāmodara
Svāmī, Sārvabhauma Dāsa, Kamala Locana
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