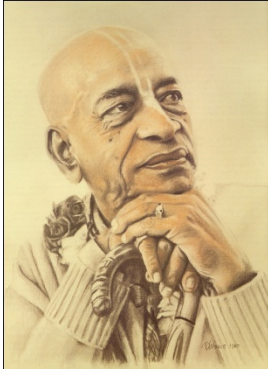


International Society for Krishna Consciousness
Founder-Acarya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



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1. Haridas Thakura

↓ Krishna appeared as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to open up the gate of Goloka Vrindavan

In this particular age the Hare Krishna Maha mantra has been given to us by Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Krishna appeared as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to create a very special good fortune for us. Krishna appeared as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu to open up the gate of Goloka Vrindavan, to enable us to go to Goloka Vrindavan. What is Goloka Vrindavan? Goloka Vrindavan is the topmost region of the spiritual sky. The spiritual sky has different levels: *goloka-namni nija-dhamni tale catasya Devi mahesa-hari-dhamasu te sute su*. The topmost region of the spiritual sky is Goloka and below Goloka is Hari-dhama that is the abode of Hari, Narayana. That is Vaikuntha. And below Vaikuntha is Mahesh-dhama, the abode of Lord Siva. Then below that is Devi dhama, this material nature, the abode of, the domain of Durga Devi, Mahamaya. That is the general description of the spiritual and material sky.

↓ The topmost region is Goloka Vrindavan

The topmost region is Goloka Vrindavan. And this Goloka has again two chambers, two sections. One section is Vrindavan and the other section is Navadvipa. In Vrindavan Krishna is enjoying the loving exchange with His most intimate devotees. That is the activity of Krishna in Vraja or Vrindavan. He is having a very intimate loving exchange with His devotees, predominantly in the middle of conjugal love. And the conjugal mellow is being supported by parental and friendship. That is Goloka Vrindavan. What Krishna is experiencing in Vrindavan, in Navadvipa the same Krishna as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is distributing that love. In Goloka Vrindavan Krishna is enjoying this loving exchange with His devotees and in Navadvipa as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu Krishna is distributing that love, Krishna-prema: *namo maha-vadanyaya Krishna-prema-pradaya te*. What is the special the characteristic of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu? *Krishna-prema-pradayate*. He is *.pradaya te*, .He is distributing Krishna prema.

↓ What is so special about Krishna prema?

What is so special about Krishna prema? Krishna prema. is the most precious object of the spiritual

world? *.Golokera prema-dhana*, this object is so precious, so rare that it is rarely available for Lord Brahma. It is rare even for Lord Siva; it is rare even for Laksmi Devi. This is how rare, how precious this *.Golokera prema-dhana*. is the loving exchange that Krishna has with His devotees in Vrindavan?

↓ *Krishna's tu bhagavan svayam*

Now in this particular age, what is this age? In Brahma's day, what is the length of Brahma's day, how many of you know? One thousand *catuur-yugas*, *one catur-yuga means: satya-yuga, treat-yuga, dvapara-yuga and kali-yuga*. All together they make one *catuur-yuga*. One thousand such *catuur-yugas* make a day of Brahma. So what is the duration? The duration is 4, 32 billion years. And in a day of Brahma there are fourteen Manus. One thousand divided by fourteen is roughly seventy one. The duration of one Manu, Manus reign is seventy *catuur-yugas*. And there are fourteen Manus and the seventh Manu is called Vaivashvatu Manu. The Manu who is the son of Vivasvan. *.imam vivasvate yogam proktavan aham avyayam vivasvan manave praha*. Vivashvan is the Sungod and Vivashvan gave it to Manu, his son. This is the Svayambhuva Manu, who is actually ruling over this Manvantara. And in Vaivasvatu Manu's twenty eighth catur yuga; out of seventy one catur-yugas is the duration of his reign ,out of that in twenty eight catur yugas in the Dvapara-yuga, Krishna, the Original Personality of Godhead comes in. Krishna is not an incarnation. Krishna of Vrindavan is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead. *.ete camsa-kalah pumsah Krishna's tu bhagavan svayam*. There are innumerable incarnations but all these incarnations are expansions and expansions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Krishna is that Supreme Personality of Godhead from who all these incarnations come. There are many incarnations: *.ramadi-murti su kala-niyamena ti sthan*. These are all, *.kala-niyamena ti sthan*, .they are called expansions and expansions and expansions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead but *.Krishna's tu bhagavan svayam*, Krishna is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead. That Supreme Personality of Godhead comes once in a day of Brahma and this is the catur-yuga, seven Vaivashvatu Manus, twenty eight catur-yuga and in Dvapara-yuga the original Personality of Godhead Krishna has revealed or enacted His pastimes. And in the following what comes after Dvapara-yuga? Kali-yuga. In this Kali-yuga where we are now, Krishna appeared as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. So Krishna is enjoying in Vrindavan and Caitanya Mahaprabhu is distributing what Krishna is enjoying, making it available to everyone. Although it is rare for even Brahma, Siva and even Laxmi Devi but Caitanya Mahaprabhu is distributing it without any consideration of eligibility or qualification. That is the special good fortune that we have.

↓ So Krishna's pastimes and Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pastimes are in a way two sides of the same coin

So Krishna's pastimes and Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pastimes are in a way two sides of the same coin. Krishna is enjoying and Caitanya Mahaprabhu is distributing the same Krishna prema. Krishna enjoys in His pastimes in Vrindavan and in a way you can say that the counterpart of Krishna's Vrindavan pastimes is Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pastimes in Navadvipa and of course Jagannatha Puri. These are the two places where Mahaprabhu spent most of His time.

↓ Brahma started to wonder, who is this boy?

In Krishna's pastimes there was a very wonderful incident. Brahma could not recognize Krishna. When Krishna killed Aghasura Krishna was only six years old. And He killed Aghasura, a demon who was terrible that even the demigods were afraid of him. Not only afraid of him, just by hearing the name Aghasura they used to tremble with fear. And that Aghasura was so easily killed by Krishna, this six year old cowherd boy. Brahma started to wonder, who is this boy? Is he my Lord and Master Narayana? Because other than Narayana who could kill Aghasura? Even Lord Siva could not deal with him. He was so powerful. And this boy so easily killed him! So he considered to just see who this boy is. He kept on watching. And after killing Aghasura, Krishna along with His friends went to the bank of Yamuna and they let the calves graze in the field. They all sat down having a picnic. Different boys carried his breakfast packet. They sat together and started to eat and Brahma saw an unusual happening that these boys, some boy when he liked what their mother made for them, he said: "Krishna, Krishna, see how tasty this sweet is that my mother made for me!" Krishna said: "Let me see." Krishna would take that and eat it. Now eating the remnants is not a done thing. Generally people don't eat remnants because remnants are considered to be contaminated. When Brahma saw that Krishna and His friends are dealing with each other in such a way; like some boy saw something in Krishna's plate and he wanted to take it. And he would say: "Krishna look at the bird there" And when Krishna looked at the bird, he took fully the food from Krishna's plate and he would eat it. In this way they were having their exchanges. Brahma saw that and he felt: "Narayana will never behave like this and nobody will ever dare to deal like this with Narayana; offering his remnants to Narayana!" So Brahma became very surprised, who is this boy? So in order to check him out, Brahma just stole their calves that Krishna and His friends were taking care of. And all of a sudden they saw that the calves are missing. They became very worried, where did the calves go. Krishna said: "Don't worry, they most probably went into the forest, I will bring them back, you just carry on taking your food."

Krishna went to look for the calves and He did not find the calves. When He came back He found that the cowherd boys are also missing. So when Krishna went to look for the calves, Brahma stole the cowherd boys and He put them in a cave." Krishna came back and He saw that his cowherd friends are also missing. So Krishna started to wonder what happened and then Krishna realized - after all He is the omniscient Supreme Personality of Godhead; so He could figure out what happened. He figured out that Brahma actually was trying to check Him out. Then He said: "Okay, Brahma, I will show you who I am." Krishna expanded Himself into all those cowherd boys and into calves. So it took Brahma just one second to take these boys and the calves and put them into the cave and then as Brahma turned around and saw; although it took Him one second but according to our calculation it was one year. So Brahma saw that the same boys are there and the same calves are grazing in the field and the cowherd boys are still there having their picnic. And Brahma then again looked at the cave and he saw these cowherd boys and calves are all fast asleep due to his arrangement and then Brahma again looked back at the scene in Vrindavan and what did Brahma see? Brahma saw that all those cowherd boys and calves are Narayanas. Brahma knew about only one Narayana but here he was seeing so many Narayanas in place of the cowherd boys and the calves. Then Brahma recognized Who Krishna is. So Brahma fell down at His feet and begged forgiveness profusely. Krishna said: "Don't worry Brahma, it is okay." Although Brahma was forgiven by Krishna but Brahma still felt very guilty and very embarrassed and guilty. So Brahma went and performed great austerity to free himself from this sinful reaction - And then Brahma when he was lamenting and performing austerities, he did that in Navadvipa, in one of the islands of Navadvipa which is called Antardvipa. So then Krishna appeared to him. Here Krishna appeared in a rather unusual form. Krishna's complexion is generally like monsoon cloud but this Personality, although Krishna was like molten gold. Then Brahma asked: "I have never seen You this form before." Then Krishna said: "Yes, I will appear in this form, soon in this place at Navadvipa, in the beginning of Kali-yuga. Then Brahma requested: "I also want to be part of Your pastime." Krishna said: "Fine." Or rather Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. "Yes, you can come in this pastime."

↓ Brahma made a very special request

Then Brahma made a very special request. He said: "Look, when I get the feeling that I am Brahma, when I am aware of my position as Brahma, you have seen how arrogant and conceited I become. Even I dare to test Your Identity. It is because of my elevated position that I developed this kind of attitude. So please allow me that in these pastimes I will come in a very fallen and degraded condition. Krishna also assured Brahma

that that would happen. And as a result of that, Brahma who is the best of the Brahmanas, he appeared in a Muslim family, which is considered to be untouchable outcaste. That is Haridasa Thakura. Haridasa Thakura appeared in a Muslim family but obviously from his childhood he was a pure devotee, although born in a Muslim family and the early part of Haridasa Thakuras' pastimes, there is not much description of that. Haridasa Thakura, it is understood that when he was young, he left home and came to a place which is called Benapola and which is now in Bangladesh, the Eastern part of Bengal. There Haridasa Thakura was chanting the Holy Name.

↓ He used to chant three hundred thousand Names a day that means hundred and ninety two rounds of Hare Krishna Maha mantra

He used to chant three hundred thousand Names a day that means hundred and ninety two rounds of Hare Krishna Maha mantra. We have difficulty to even chant sixteen rounds. He was chanting one hundred and ninety two rounds. And then naturally people became very impressed seeing his devotion and austerities.

↓ Can you all make him fall down?

But the landlord of that place became very envious of him. He felt that this person is a Muslim and even the Hindus are showing him so much respect. He wanted to dishonor him. And the way he decided to do that is that he called the prostitutes. And he proposed that: "Can you all make him fall down?" So, one young prostitute was extremely beautiful and naturally very confident of her ability. She proposed: "Okay, I will take up that responsibility. I will make him fall down." So this person, his name is Ramacandra Khan, he said: "Okay, I will send my soldiers with you. And when you make him fall down, my soldiers will go and arrest him and bring him here and then I will punish him. So this prostitute, whose name was Laksyahira, which means, 'Laksya' means one hundred thousand and 'hira' means diamonds. She was as brilliant as one hundred thousand diamonds. So she said: "First let me make him fall down and the next night you come and arrest him." You send your soldiers like that. She went, dressed up, naturally, in a very, very attractive way and she went to Haridasa Thakura and she proposed that he was such a very handsome man, "I want to have your association." So Haridasa Thakura said: "Okay, but you see, every day I chant a certain number of rounds of the Holy Name. When I finish my rounds, then I will give you my association. And so Haridasa Thakura was chanting, she just sat there listening and in this way the whole night went by. When the sun rose and it was morning, Haridasa Thakura said: "I am sorry I could not fulfill your desire." She said: "Okay, I will come again tonight." That night also the same thing happened. And on the third day her attitude completely changed. Just

by hearing Haridasa Thakuras's pure chanting she became transformed, she fell down at his lotus feet and she admitted what actually happened that she was sent by Ramacandra Khan. Haridasa Thakura said: "I already knew that and I would have already left the place but I stayed on, simply to deliver you, for your sake I stayed on." In this way Haridasa Thakura then told her that you distribute all your wealth to the Brahmanas and the Vaishnavas. And after giving everything away you come here and you sit here and you chant the Holy Name of the Lord and saying that, Haridasa Thakura left that place. So that lady became a great devotee. So great that many exalted vaishnavas used to come to see her and appreciate her devotion to Krishna.

↓ Then Haridasa Thakura was traveling

Then Haridasa Thakura was traveling, going to different places. And in the course of his travel he came to Saptagrama. Saptagrama literally means seven villages. Those seven villages are situated on the confluence of Ganga, Yamnua and Sarasvati, which is known as Triveni. There, that was the place where Raghunatha Dasa's father and uncle were ruling. There were very, very wealthy landlords there. And they were also very pious. Ragnunatha dasa Goswami's father and uncle were very, very pious personalities. So Haridasa Thakura came there and that is the time actually Raghunatha Dasa Goswami came in contact with Haridasa Thakura and he got influenced by him. And he was a young boy and one very wonderful thing happened there. Haridasa Thakura was explaining the glory of the Holy Name and in the course of his describing the glory of the Holy Name, Haridasa Thakura mentioned that the liberation that one cannot achieve after millions of lifetimes of Brahman realization, that liberation is achieved just by Nama-abhasa in the clearing stage of chanting the Holy Name. It is a very heavy statement. Generally people used to think those days that liberation is the ultimate goal of life. *koï-janme brahma-jïäne yei 'mukti' naya* And Haridasa Thakura pointed out that the liberation that cannot be achieved by not only million, the liberation that cannot be achieved after ten million lifetimes of Brahman realization, impersonal realization or Brahman, just by Nama-abhasa the clearing stage of the chanting of the Holy Name, just by chanting in that stage one achieves that liberation.

↓ The Holy Name can be chanted in three ways

The Holy Name can be chanted in three ways: offensive chanting, clearing chanting and pure chanting. Offensive chanting may give some material benefit but it is not desired, it is offensive. Chanting the Holy Name of Krishna is Krishna Himself. But if there is offense while chanting then the Holy Name will not manifest as Krishna. The Holy Name, just the syllables of the Holy

Name will be uttered but that is not Name of the Lord. So that is the offensive chanting. But when the offenses are removed, then that is the clearing stage of chanting. And when the chanting is performed purely, pure chanting gives Krishna-prema.

↓ Krishna-prema, love of Krishna is the ultimate achievement

Chanting in the clearing stage gives liberation and the pure chanting gives Krishna-prema, love of Krishna, which is the ultimate achievement, which is way beyond liberation. Liberation is like getting out of the prison house. Getting out of the prison house cannot be the ultimate goal. When one goes out of the prison, then what will he do? Just going out of the prison is not enough. In his free state he will have to do something. Krishna-prema is something like not only becoming free from the imprisonment but going straight to the palace of the king and living with the king. Can you imagine? Like being in the prison and getting out of the prison and going to the king's palace and live with the king. How many prisoners can achieve that good fortune? Who can give us that good fortune? The holy Name can give us that good fortune and that is the ultimate purpose of chanting the Holy Name. *Kṛṣṇa-prema pradāyate*. The pure chanting of the Holy Name gives Krishna-prema. Anyway, in the course of that discussion when Haridasa Thakura said that the liberation one cannot achieve even after millions of lifetimes of Brahman realization, that liberation is achieved just in the clearing stage of the Holy Name.

↓ Gopala Chakravarti

So there was a very arrogant and puffed up Brahmin there. His name was Gopala Chakravarti. He protested. He just challenged that. "What are you talking about? This cannot be true. This statement is inappropriate." And in this way he even said that, if such a statement is true, then I will cut off my nose. In this way he embarrassed Haridasa Thakura and in his humble, Vaishnava way he just tolerated that. But surprisingly, within three days time that Gopala Chakravarti developed leprosy. What happens when one gets leprosy? Leprosy causes the flesh and bone to melt away. It's an ulcer that causes even the bone to decompose. And true enough his nose fell off due to this offence. Also he used to be the tax collector of Hiranya Majundar, Raghunata dasa Goswami's father, his uncle. And they immediately sacked him. When he behaved like that with Haridasa Thakura they fired him from his job also. This person was thrown into a very, very miserable condition, just due to offending a pure devotee like Haridasa Thakura.

↓ Haridasa Thakura then came to a place called Phulia

Haridasa Thakura then came to a place called Phulia.

He lived in a place called Phulia which is on the bank of the river Ganges. He used to live in a cave. And people used to come to see him in that cave. People used to come and visit him in the cave but after a while they used to feel that their body started to burn. They could not understand what was happening. Why coming there, they used to come with the intention to listen to Srila Haridasa Thakura, but they started to feel very uneasy and burning sensations in their body. Then a snake doctor, in India there used to be people who are expert in snake charming, dealing with snakes. One such snake doctor came there and he pointed out that actually there is a very, very poisonous snake living in that cave. And the effect of its poison of that snake is so intense that what to speak of being bitten by that snake simply breathing the poison of that snake people are actually feeling the poisonous effect. They told Haridasa Thakura, you should not live here in the same cave. There is such a poisonous snake here. So Haridasa Thakura accepted that proposal. He said: "Okay, let that gentleman stay here, I will leave." But then, to everyone's great surprise they saw a huge snake crawling out of the cave. Even that snake had such great respect for Haridasa Thakura that he felt that: "Rather I will leave the cave than Haridasa Thakura leaving." So much was the power was Haridasa Thakura's devotion to Krishna that even a snake could recognize it and respond in such an honorable way.

↓ Haridasa Thakura's name and glory started to spread

Haridasa Thakura's name and glory started to spread in this way. People became very, very respectful towards Haridasa Thakura. Naturally his glories started to spread. But hearing that, the Muslim Nawab, the king of that place, the king of Bengal at that time, became very, very upset and envious. He felt that it is not a good example that a Muslim is behaving like a Hindu. He was arrested; he was brought to the king. The king at first tried to tell him that: "Look, this is not right." Due to your great good fortune you were born in a Muslim family and you are accepting the activities of the Hindus. Haridasa Thakura said: "So many Hindus are becoming Muslims, if one Muslim becomes a Hindu what is the big loss?" The king said: "As I told you, to be born as a Muslim is a great good fortune. Due to your heaps of pious activities you got your birth in the Muslim family. You should take full advantage of that birth. Then Haridasa Thakura said: "Look, I am just chanting the Name of the Lord. The Lord is not Hindu or Muslim. He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I have developed this attachment of glorifying the Name, glorifying Him. Please allow me to do so. The king became furious. And especially he was being provoked by his ministers and other associates: "This person must be punished." The king said: "I am telling you, give up this business of your chanting, this chanting of the

Hare Krishna mantra.” He did not say that but he meant that. Then Haridasa Thakura said: “Look, even if my body is cut to pieces, even if my life air leaves my body still I will not be able to stop chanting the Holy Name. Then the king said: “Okay, let see how true your word is.”

↓ Beat him publicly in twenty two market places

And he ordered his executioners, those who execute people, and told them to beat him publicly in twenty two market places and kill him in that way.

Publicly beating him they should kill him so that everybody can see the consequence of a Muslim becoming a Hindu. If a Muslim takes to Hindu practices then this is going to be the consequence. They took Haridasa Thakura and started to beat him. But Haridasa Thakura just tolerated that, he simply kept chanting, totally unaffected by this merciless beating. Not only one person was beating, there were three, four of them. They were beating in such a way that cannot actually breathe. Because when you are about to gasp then another stroke comes and another stroke comes. In this way they were beating Haridasa Thakura but Haridasa Thakura just kept on chanting the Holy Name totally unaffected. This incidence has been revealed by Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu later on, during his Mahaprakasha lila. When Mahaprabhu in Srivas Thakurs house revealed His identity as the Supreme Personality of Godhead then Mahaprabhu started to tell them about various incidences that happened to various devotees long time ago. And he told Haridasa Thakura: “Haridas, do you remember that this nawaab ordered to kill you by being beating in twenty two market places. At that time, seeing your condition, seeing what they were doing to you, I was about to kill all the Muslims, all these yavanas. But because you were wishing them well, that’s why my sudarshan chakra could not do anything. He was ready to send his sudarshan chakra to kill all these people. But in spite of treated in such a way Haridasa Thakura’s nature as a devotee. Even though people hurt him, even people mistreated them but they maintain their merciful attitude towards their worst enemy. A devotee does not have any enemy. And then Caitanya Mahaprabhu showed him his back carrying the marks of this slashing of the whips. “When you did not allow Me to get rid of them by killing them through my sudarshanchakra, then I took all these beatings on my back. This is how the Supreme Personality of Godhead protects all His devotees. A devotee surrenders to the Lord and the Lord takes care of His devotees in all respects. So Haridasa Thakura did not feel any pain because Caitanya Mahaprabhu was taking the beating Himself.

Those jalads, those executioners became very, very afraid when they saw how, in spite of this merciless beating nothing was happening to him. He was simply chanting the Holy Name in ecstasy. They could understand that he is a very, very exalted spiritual

personality. They realized what they have done. They had offended such an exalted personality. Then they had another consideration: “Look we have been ordered to kill you. If we go back to the king without killing you, then the king will kill us because we did not follow his command.” Then Haridasa Thakura said: “Okay, then I will die.” So he lay down and no sign of life. There was no sign of life. Then they thought they would carry him and take him to the king but his body was so heavy that they could not lift him. They tried their best but they could not make his body even move an inch. Then they started to cry: “What should we do, we cannot carry you.” Then his body became light they could carry him and they took his body to the court of the king. The king said: “Good, you have killed him, very good.” Generally Muslims are buried. They think that burial gives them liberation. So he felt that he should not get the touch of earth. He should not be buried, throw him in the river. They threw him in the river Ganges and Haridasa Thakura’s body drifted on the river and he came to Shantipur where Advaita Acharya was. And in Shantipur Haridasa Thakura started to chant the Holy Name so loudly, they all were very worried because they heard what had happened. They were all very, very worried. And Avaita Acharya seeing and hearing Haridasa Thakura’s voice chanting the Holy Name, he became so happy, he just came running and both them embraced each other.

Then Advaita Acharya took Haridasa Thakura to his house. Haridasa Thakura was very close to Advaita Acharya and they used to spend time together. And one day Advaita Acharya was performing the shraddha ceremony of his father. So he decided to give the shraddha- patra to Haridasa Thakura. Generally the prasadam of the Lord that is offered on the occasion of the shradha is the main plate of the maha prasadam is offered to the most exalted person. Advaita Acharya decided to offer the shraddha-patra to Haridasa Thakura. And as a result of that the brahmanas became very upset. So many of us are present and he totally disregarded us and gave it to this Muslim. That was the attitude of the cast brahmanas. They decided to ostracize Advaita Acharya because of this act of him. That means to cast him out of the brahmanical society. Now brahmanas at home they perform yajna and generally the fire of the yajna continues to burn, it does not extinguished. They may keep the fire on and at the time of yajna they put some more wood and things and light the fire and they continue the fire. That is the general custom. When they all went back home everyone found that the yajna fire has been extinguished, not only the yajna fire. When they would try to light the fire the fire would not burn. They could not light the fire to even cook their food. The fire just disappeared from the whole village. Then they decided to bring some fire from other villages. They were carrying fire but as soon as they came to the vicinity of their village, the fire got extinguished. So they started to

wonder, what is happening? Then somebody suggested that: “Look, we may have committed a great offense to Advaita Acharya and Haridasa Thakura. They fell at Advaita Acharyas lotus feet and said: “Please save us from

this situation. Advaita Acharya said, “You all are such exalted brahmanas.” The fire generally stays in the mouth of the brahmanas. That means that by chanting mantras the brahmanas can create fire. You are brahmanas, so create fire. From chanting mantra or from your mouth. Then Advaita Acharya told them: “That offense was not really committed to me.” You have committed offenses to this Haridasa Thakura. Go and beg forgiveness from him. Then they fell at his feet and Haridasa Thakura, naturally a Vaishnava, he immediately forgave them and again fire came back to their house.

↓ Mahaprabhu made him the Namacharya

When Haridasa Thakura and Caitanya Mahaprabhu met as you all know, Mahaprabhu made him the Namacharya. Mahaprabhu came to give the Holy Name and He made him the acharya, although he was born in a Muslim family. Now there is another point. The caste brahmanas cannot even accept that fact that Haridasa Thakura was born in a Muslim family, although they are Vaishnavas, like those who are adhering to the brahmanical heritage. They said that Haridasa Thakura was actually born in a brahmana family but brought up by some Muslims. But our acaryas, Srila Prabhupada, Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur and Bhaktivinoda Thakura don't accept that statement. Haridasa Thakura was born in a Muslim family, which actually indicates that Krishna consciousness is meant for everybody. *.vaisnave nahi jati kulati vicar. .*

↓ There is no consideration of caste and creed amongst Vaishnavas

There is no consideration of caste and creed amongst Vaishnavas. *Caëöälo 'pi dvija-çreñöho hari-bhakti-paräyaëâu.* When one accepts Hari bhakti. Even if a candala or the most degraded of the human race, if a candala even accepts Krishna consciousness, he becomes superior to a brahmana, *dvija-çreñ* In order to make that point clear Caitanya Mahaprabhu arranged for Haridasa Thakura to be borne in a Muslim family. And Srila Prabhupada demonstrated that all over the world. Anybody can become a devotee. Devotional service is not relative to our physical condition. Devotional service is exclusively pertaining to that spiritual identity of the living entity. Mahaprabhu showed how even the animals became affected by the chanting of the Holy Name. They were dancing, the wild animals of the forest of Jarikandha, hearing Caitanya Mahaprabhu's chanting, they started to dance. In their own way they started to chant the Holy Name. That means that the effect of the pure chanting the Holy

Name penetrates through the gross and subtle body and comes to the region of the soul. It awakens the spiritual identity of different individuals. That is what the Holy Name does and that's why Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu set such a wonderful example through Haridasa Thakura.

↓ The Holy Name will take care of everyone.

Another wonderful example, another very wonderful point here. One day Mahaprabhu was discussing with Haridasa Thakura: “Haridas, the Holy Name is there and the Holy Name is meant to deliver the entire world. The human beings will get the benefit by hearing and chanting, we can understand. But what will happen to the animals, insects? *sthävara-jaigama*, He used the expression, moving and unmoving living entities, trees and plants, what will happen to them. So Haridasa Thakura told Him: “The Holy Name will take care of everyone. Yourself demonstrated we heard from Vallabha Battacarya how You made the wild animals dance in ecstasy with Your chanting. That means, even the animals they may be able to hear, but when they hear this Holy Name, just by hearing they will become devotees. And then the consideration came: “What about the trees and the plants?” Haridasa Thakura said: “When the Holy Name is chanted, sound, the echo that is heard, that echo is not really echo, it is the chanting of the trees and plants. Even the trees and plants also will chant the Holy Name of the Lord. This is how inconceivable Your mercy of the Holy Name is in this age. Through Haridasa Thakura Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu set such a wonderful, glorious example of the effects of the chanting of the Holy Name, the potency of the chanting of the Holy Name, the mercy of the chanting of the Holy Name. And Srila Prabhupada so mercifully gave it to us.

↓ We can see what an amazing sacrifice Srila Prabhupada made

We can see what an amazing sacrifice Srila Prabhupada made. He was seventy years old, sixty nine years old at that time and he was wonderfully situated in Vrindavan, he was staying next to Srila Rupa Goswami's samadhi. What can be better fortune than that, in one of the most prominent temples in Vrindavan. Such a nice situation he had. But Srila Prabhupada left that wonderfully exalted spiritual situation and he decided to go to America in a cargo ship, a ship that carries goods, it is not meant for passengers. Did you ever consider traveling in a goods train? It moves so slow, no seat, no arrangements or riding properly. Being in a cargo ship was something like that. But Srila Prabhupada not only accepted that opportunity, he begged Sumati Murarji for that opportunity. Sumati Murarji was extremely reluctant to let Prabhupada go to America in that condition. She tried to persuade Srila Prabhupada: “Swamiji, place don't make such a

request, what will you do in America? Who will listen to you?" That is exactly what she told Srila Prabhupada. We had the good fortune of meeting her. And she was telling us how she tried to persuade Srila Prabhupada not to go. She even told: "Swamiji, what will you eat there? They don't eat anything but meat what will you eat there? You won't get any vegetarian food, what to speak of Krishna prasadam. But Srila Prabhupada appealed to her, practically begged her. "This is the last opportunity that I will ever have. My Guru Maharaja asked me to go to the West and spread Krishna consciousness there. I tried for the forty four years but I never succeeded. At this very end of my life maybe I get a chance, just let me try so please allow me to go". Finally Sumati Murarji agreed to let him go. She also made arrangements that whenever you want you can come back. All you have to do is just go to the office in New York and you can tell them that you want to come back. She was quite concerned that Srila Prabhupada won't be able to stay in America for a long time. But Prabhupada went and Prabhupada himself he wrote that many times he even thought of going back but then each time at the last moment he changed his mind. In this way there was an intense struggle for one year. No money, no support, no success, no preaching apparently. But then the amazing things started to happen. Prabhupada goes to the Lower East Side. Some young boys and girls came forward to help him. They got him a place and especially Mukunda Maharaja, Michael Grant, he played a very, very significant role in the early days. And Prabhupada started to preach in 26th Second Avenue and then things started to happen. And when it was established in New York then Prabhupada decided to go to San Francisco where the real thing happened. The youth of America was just rushing in towards San Francisco, the Golden Gate park, Height Ashbury, the centre of the counter culture. Srila Prabhupada goes there and amazing things started to happen. Wonderful devotees came forward, joined the movement and assisted Srila Prabhupada in such wonderful ways. And here we have one such wonderful disciple of Srila Prabhupada, Shivarama Maharaja. As a young man he offered himself to Srila Prabhupada's service and underwent so many difficulties and at the same time so many exiting situations. And as a result of this help from the youth of America Krishna Consciousness started to spread all over the world. This is also Krishna's arrangement. Srila Prabhupada's coming to the West, establishing ISKCON and spreading this movement all over the world, is actually Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's divine arrangement. And this movement is meant to spread all over the world in every town and village. When the Supreme Personality of Godhead says something, can it ever go in vain? His words never go in vain. Bhagavatam says it very clearly. The words of the Supreme Personality of Godhead never goes in vain. When He says in every town and village all over the

world, literally it is going to happen. And this is Mahaprabhu's divine arrangement. Bhaktivinoda Thakura coming, reviving Caitanya Mahaprabhu's sankirtana movement in India. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati coming and giving it a thrust, spreading it all over India. Then Prabhupada's arrival and spreading it all over the world. And the continuation of that mission is going to happen through this divine arrangement of Srila Prabhupada through ISKCON. We need an institution to make such a thing happen. The continuity of Srila Prabhupada's wonderful mission needs an institutional structure. And Srila Prabhupada structured it in such a perfect way, that even after thirty five years after his disappearance this movement is not only surviving but it is growing, it is spreading Krishna consciousness. This is how it is going to go on. With the passing of time this movement is going to grow. And eventually it will spread in every town and village, literally in every town and village. Thank you very much. All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

2. Questions and Answers

- ↓ Guru Maharaja: Sivarama Maharaja, can you say something?
- ↓ Sivarama Maharaja: Can you just quote the verse Haridasa Thakura mentioned that you can just cut my body up, you can beat me but I will never stop chanting?
- ↓ Guru Maharaja: Yes, you can cut my body into pieces and even if my life air leaves my body, even then I will not give up chanting the Holy Name.
- ↓ Shivarama Maharaja : I wanted to hear you say it.
- ↓ Bengali Lady : I am Bengali.
- ↓ Sivarama Maharaja : she is also Bengali.
- ↓ Guru Maharaja: Then you want to accept Mahaprabhu's teachings? And become a real Gaudiya Vaishnava. Bengali means Gaudiya Vaishnava. Otherwise it's 'Ben-Gali'
- ↓ Bengali Lady : Life is different here than in India.
- ↓ Guru Maharaja: Yes, come to the temple, associate with the devotees, take the directions from the devotees, they will guide you. Thank you.
- ↓ Bengali Lady: [In Bengali] You have a beautiful voice.

↓ Guru Maharaja : Okay, we can just sing one. She is requesting me to sing a song [laughter] Maybe we can just sing for a few minutes.

↓ *Tava kathamritam tapta jivanam Kavibhir iditam kalmasapaham*

3. Srila Prabhupada appreciation

And Srila Prabhupada demonstrated that all over the world. Anybody can become a devotee. Through Haridasa Thakura Lord Caitanya Mahaprabhu set such a wonderful, glorious example of the effects of the chanting of the Holy Name, the potency of the chanting of the Holy Name, the mercy of the chanting of the Holy Name. And Srila Prabhupada so mercifully gave it to us. We can see what an amazing sacrifice Srila Prabhupada made. Srila Prabhupada appealed to her, practically begged her. "This is the last opportunity that I will ever have. My Guru Maharaja asked me to go to the West and spread Krishna consciousness there. I tried for the forty four years but I never succeeded. At this very end of my life maybe I get a chance, just let me try so please allow me to go". Finally Sumati Murarji agreed to let him go. But Prabhupada went and Prabhupada himself he wrote that many times he even thought of going back but then each time at the last moment he changed his mind. In this way there was an intense struggle for one year. No money, no support, no success, no preaching apparently. But then the amazing things started to happen. Prabhupada goes to the Lower East Side. Some young boys and girls came forward to help him. They got him a place and especially Mukunda Maharaja, Michael Grant, he played a very, very significant role in the early days. And Prabhupada started to preach in 26th Second Avenue and then things started to happen. Srila Prabhupada's coming to the West, establishing ISKCON and spreading this movement all over the world, is actually Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's divine arrangement. And this movement is meant to spread all over the world in every town and village. When the Supreme Personality of Godhead says something, can it ever go in vain? His words never go in vain. We need an institution to make such a thing happen. The continuity of Srila Prabhupada's wonderful mission needs an institutional structure. And Srila Prabhupada structured it in such a perfect way, that even after thirty five years after his disappearance this movement is not only surviving but it is growing, it is spreading Krishna consciousness

4. Guru Maharaja's Instructions:

↓ A devotee surrenders to the Lord and the Lord takes care of His devotees in all respects;

↓ We need an institution to make such a thing happen. The continuity of Srila Prabhupada's wonderful mission needs an institutional structure;

↓ Pure chanting gives Krishna-prema, love of Krishna, which is the ultimate achievement,

↓ Come to the temple, associate with the devotees, take the directions from the devotees, they will guide you.

(The content of this E-magazine was based on a lecture given by His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami on 7 July 2013 at the London Ratha Yatra festival)

(Compilation & editing by Hemavati Radhika dasi)