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2001 Nov 20 eve - Varsana - Disappearance Day Festival of Srila Prabhupada

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from Syamarani - Gurudeva's lecture on Prabhupada's Disappearance Day

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

WE WILL NEVER LEAVE ISKCON

A Lecture on Prabhupada's Disappearance Day

Submitted by Vasanti devi dasi

[Dear Maharajas, Prabhus, and Didis,

Dandavat pranamas. All glories to Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga. On Nov. 20, 2001, under the guidance of Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja, six hundred devotees attended a grand observance of Srila Prabhupada's tirobhava mahotsava (transcendental Disappearance Day festival) in Varsana, the birthplace of Srimati Radharani. After calling on several of Srila Prabhupada's disciples to speak about his glories, Srila Maharaja also offered his own puspanjali speech. The following is a transcription of that glorification:]

[Srila Narayana Maharaja:] I offer my humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of my transcendental guru, om visnupada Sri Srimad Bhaktiprajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja, and also unto the lotus feet of my siksa-guru, om visnupada Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja.

I want to clarify something. We know that Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja established Iskcon. What is Iskcon? He himself has clarified the meaning:

krsnah bhakti rasa bhavita matih
kriyatam yadi kuto 'pi labhyate
tatra laulyam api mulyam ekalam
janma-koti-sukrtair na labhyate

["Pure devotional service in Krsna consciousness cannot be had even by pious activities in hundreds and thousands of lives. It can be obtained only by paying one price; that is, intense greed to obtain it. If it is available somewhere, one must purchase it without delay." (Caitanya-caritamrta Mad.8.70)]

Those persons who follow this verse are actually Iskcon members. (from Prabhupada's folio - "I have translated the words Krsna consciousness from krsna-bhakti-rasa-

bhavita.") Iskcon is not new. Your Prabhupada did not actually establish Iskcon. Iskcon was established by Brahma, and by Krsna Himself. Brahma is one of the four sampradaya gurus, and he established Iskcon by the mercy of Krsna. Narada is the first Iskcon member, Srila Vyasadeva is the second, and Sri Sukadeva Gosvami is the third. All pure devotees in the guru-parampara are Iskcon members. (from Prabhupada's folio – "I have given you the process of disciplic succession: from Krsna, Brahma; from Brahma, Narada; from Narada, Vyasa; from Vyasa, Madhva; from Madhva, Madhavendra Puri; from Madhavendra Puri, Isvara Puri; from Isvara Puri, Lord Caitanya. So, evam parampara. In the parampara system, in that disciplic succession, you will find no change... They are not foolish to manufacture something new... If you want the real thing, then you have to take the old - the oldest. You cannot change anything. Can you change the law of the sun rising or setting? The old laws are going on, and you have to follow them.")

Srila Swami Maharaja translated the name 'Iskcon' into English, but Vaisnava society has actually existed since the origin of creation, the beginning of time. As he himself has said, it is 'the same wine in a new bottle.' He never created anything new. He gave the same philosophy that Krsna gave in His Gita, the same philosophy that was given by Srila Vyasadeva in his Srimad Bhagavatam, and the same philosophy that was given by Krsna dasa Kaviraja Gosvami in Sri Caitanya-caritamrta. He took all these teachings from his guru, Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Gosvami Thakura. He also took something from his sannyasa guru. He received the sannyasa mantra from him, the mantra for attaining the service of Radha. After that, he preached this mission. In this way, only the name of his mission was new, and it was mainly only new to Western countries. In India Iskcon has been extant from the beginning of time.

We should not give up Iskcon. Those who have left that eternal Iskcon are really very unfortunate. Those who are following Srila Vyasadeva, Srila Sukadeva Gosvami, and Srila Rupa Gosvami are actually in Iskcon. They can never give up Iskcon. They can give up their lives, but they cannot change. Those who are not following the principles of Srila Rupa Gosvami, Srila Swami Maharaja, and our guru-parampara are not in Iskcon. They have nothing to give up. They always remain outside.

[Srila Maharaja then noticed a devotee in the audience who had received sannyasa from our Srila Prabhupada and who, after Prabhupada's disappearance, took babaji-vesa. He then commented:] "I have not seen any instance that a devotee who took sannyasa from Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura has ever taken babaji-vesa. There is no example at all."

[The devotee in the dress of the babaji:] What about Krsna das Babaji?

[Srila Maharaja:] Krsna dasa Babaji was not directly the sisya (disciple) of Srila Prabhupada Sarasvati Thakura. My Guru Maharaja never accepted him as a babaji. He always called him by his brahmacari name, Svadhikarananda Brahmacari. Krsna dasa Babaji had not previously accepted Srila Prabhupada as his sannyasa-guru. Also, he was not previously a sannyasa. He had been a brahmacari. There is no example in the entire

history of Srila Prabhupada's sannyasis that anyone has given up his sannyasa dress and taken the dress of a babaji. The proper conceptions and principles of sannyasa is in line with the principles of Iskcon. We are Iskcon, and we will be Iskcon forever. One who is actually a member of Iskcon will never leave Iskcon, in this life or any future life.

[Devotee:] Srila Puri Maharaja gave some babaji-vesa.

[Srila Maharaja:] We are not speaking about giving babaji-vesa. He never gave babaji-vesa to anyone who was previously given sannyasa. [It is offensive to one's sannyasa-guru if one gives up sannyasa and takes babaji-vesa from another person.] Our Guru Maharaja also gave babaji-vesa, and Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura also gave babaji-vesa to some, but they never changed anyone from sannyasa to babaji. There is almost no difference between sannyasa and babaji, in the sense that the mantra of both is the same. The main difference is that the babaji is mostly a bhajanandi and the sannyasi is a gosthyanandi. Only those who don't know the principles of either can change their dress. We should not change. We should always be Iskcon. Don't try to be out of Iskcon.

I know hundreds of devotees who pretend to be the disciples of Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja, but they were not actually initiated by him, because they never followed him. [There are two kinds of initiation: formal initiation (anustanika-diksa), the fire sacrifice and the utterance of svaha and so on, and the other initiation is called vidvad-rudhi, which is internal, and it comes when the disciple actually follows the guru in the real sense. The formal initiation is also real, but only when vidvad-rudhi also occurs.]

Nowadays, the rtviks pretend that they are all disciples of Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja. They were never his disciples. If they are his disciples, why are they acting against him? Can we say that the rtviks are Iskcon? Never were they Iskcon, and never can they be, even after thousands of lives.

We should follow the words of Srila Swami Maharaja. What is his internal mood? It is the same as that of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. What is His internal mood? It is the same as that of Srila Rupa Gosvami, our guru-parampara, and Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura. We in this world have forgotten Krsna, and we are deprived of Krsna's service. We are bahir-mukha, opposed to serving Krsna, and the only business of the guru-parampara is to bring us to Krsna's service. That is the internal mood of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

Krsna came to this world as Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. He is Parama-karuna and Rasika-sekhara. He is causelessly merciful, but somewhat 'weak,' and therefore He took the mood of Srimati Radhika to become stronger for preaching this mission. By the strength of Her moods, He was able to give krsna-prema even to trees, creepers, and animals, and He turned the moods of all kinds of living entities. It was amazing, however, that although Kala Krsnadasa was traveling with Him, He was not able to help him. This is because Kala Krsnadasa was only engaged in Mahaprabhu's external service. He did not

inquire from Him about bhakti, neither did he have taste for His hari-katha, neither did he have a taste for chanting. In other words, he could not adopt Mahaprabhu's inner mood.

Similarly, your Prabhupada attracted everyone in just a couple of years and spread the holy names everywhere, but are the rtviks actually his disciples? A doubt comes. Are they actually following his principles? Actually, they are not qualified to say, "We are disciples of Prabhupada." They are actually against his teachings. Their interests are in collecting money and winning court cases, and some of them engage in smuggling.

They say that Srila Swami Maharaja was not omniscient. They question, "If he was omniscient, then why did he give sannyasa to so many who later fell down from the sannyasa order?" They say, "If he was omniscient, he would have known about the abuses in Gurukula, and that omniscience would have disqualified him from being a bona fide guru." Actually, Srila Swami Maharaja did give sannyasa to so many who returned to a material life of drinking, eating meat, and engaging in other sinful activities, and some of those who remained became rtvik.

Was your Prabhupada's mission successful or not? He himself has said, "If even one really follows me and hears me, then I'm successful." Hundreds and thousands may have come, but all are not following. So many of those who claim to be disciples of Prabhupada neither have faith in him nor in nama-bhajana. Rather, they have faith in universities and mayavada professors. Did Prabhupada tell anyone to learn from mayavadi professors? How can we accept them as Iskcon devotees? They have no faith in Iskcon and Iskcon principles.

[Now addressing a devotee who had given the previous speech, and had said that Srila Prabhupada had given nama-prema to everyone. Srila Maharaja continued:] "We cannot say that Prabhupada delivered so many (otherwise they would now be liberated souls), but even if one person follows, the mission is successful. You cannot say that he gave nama-prema to all. If that were the case, why have so many fallen? You should try to fully surrender, and try to realize his internal mood."

I have read in Bhagavad Gita (2.40):

nehabhikrama-naso 'sti
pratyavayo na vidyate
sv-ल्पam apy asya dharmasya
trayate mahato bhayat

["In this endeavor there is no loss or diminution, and a little advancement on this path can protect one from the most dangerous type of fear."]

This verse is true for one is not committing vaisnava-aparadha, sastra-aparadha or tadiyavastu-aparadha (aparadha to things and people in relationship to Krsna). If one actually accepts bhakti-yoga, then even if he dies before perfection, or even if he gives up

practicing before he dies, there is no harm. He can continue practicing in his next life. Krsna will give preference to him, and from there he will begin.

prapya punya-krtam lokan
unitva sasvatih samah
sucinam srimatam gehe
yoga-bhrasto 'bhijayate

["The unsuccessful yogi, after many, many years of enjoyment on the planets of the pious living entities, is born into a family of righteous people, or into a family of rich aristocracy." (Bg 6.41)]

Also, in Srimad Bhagavatam it has been told:

tyaktva sva-dharmam caranambujam harer
bhajann apakvo 'tha patet tato yadi
yatra kva vabhadram abhud amusya kim
ko vartha apto 'bhajatam sva-dharmatah

["If someone gives up his occupational duties and works in Krsna consciousness and then falls down on account of not completing his work, what loss is there on his part? And what can one gain if one performs his material activities perfectly?" Or, as the Christians say, "What profiteth a man if he gains the whole world yet suffers the loss of his eternal soul?" (1.5.17)]

The navarshis said to Vyasadeva that if one performs his material duties perfectly and regularly, there is no true benefit. If he follows varnasrama-dharma perfectly, there is actually no spiritual gain. On the other hand, if one begins chanting the holy name, is initiated by a pure guru, and is trying to follow him, but he comes under the clutches of maya; as long as he does not commit offenses he has a chance for spiritual progress. What is the gain in varnasrama? Even if one performs his duty, still, the spiritual result is nil.

Srila Swami Maharaja's internal mood is the same as that of Caitanya Mahaprabhu and our guru-paramapara - to change the direction of the living entities' mood towards Krsna. This is the best mercy, and he endeavored throughout his life for this. In his last days he told me he was not satisfied, because he was remembering so many of his disciples who were not following him and not trying to be real Iskcon. He therefore ordered me, "Help my disciples and give me samadhi." He also told me, "I made some mistakes. Please ask my god-brothers to forgive me, because I preached to my disciples that they are not preaching." I replied to him, "You made no offense. It was your duty at that time. You said your god-brothers are not preaching. This was just to give your less intelligent neophyte disciples enthusiasm. You have not done a wrong thing. You spoke appropriately for the needs of your students at that time. Your internal desire was to turn their mood toward Krsna. Now you are seeing that they are offensive to your god-brothers, by saying they have not preached."

What is preaching? If one is 'preaching' and not following bhakti, then his activity is karma-marga (the path of fruitive activities). Where are the persons who were preaching all over the world? So many are not in Iskcon. Your Prabhupada therefore requested me to help them to become Iskcon in the real sense.

Don't follow the rtviks. They are not disciples of Prabhupada. They never actually served him in a real sense, and they are opposed to his teachings. You should try to realize what instructions Srila Swami Maharaja has given. He has never given anything other than the instructions of Srila Rupa Gosvami. He always followed Rupa Gosvami, and therefore he is a rupanuga-vaisnava. He wanted to very clearly give the path of rupanuga (manjari-bhava), but he first had to cut down the jungles of mayavada and atheism. Because he wanted to give this path, he requested me to help them. He could have given it then, but they were not ready at that time. He told me to help them so that they could become strong in bhakti; more strong than iron; as strong as thunderbolts. You should therefore preach your Prabhupada's real mission, Rupa Gosvami's mission, everywhere.

Only those who have had a high class of sadhu-sanga can realize his mission and his glories. Only a maha-bhagavata can understand another maha-bhagavata. You cannot realize this. You have heard from Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura that Vamsidasa Babaji was a paramahansa. Unless you heard it from Srila Sarasvati Thakura, how could you have understood? [Vamsidasa Babaji would, for example, keep fish bones in front of his hut, and sometimes he wouldn't dress his Deities. On other occasions he wouldn't follow Ekadasi, and sometimes he would offer tea and coffee to his Thakurji.] Prapujacarana Srila Bhakti Raksaka Sridhara Maharaja has also said about your Prabhupada that his power came from Sri Nityananda Prabhu, and therefore he is a saktavesa-avatara. Who can realize this? Only one who is following him in the real sense.

[When the class was over, Srila Maharaja requested the devotees to sing Gauranga Bolite Habe in the same tune that Srila Prabhupada used to sing. Then, after the kirtana, he commented:] But you did not sing it in the same pathetic (filled with feelings of separation and longing for Krsna) way. I used to see him when he was singing Sad Gosvami-astakam and Gauranga Bolite Habe. He used to sing in such a pathetic tune, with his voice choked up and tears in his eyes.

Gaura Premanande

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