

Founder Acharaya His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Promode Puri Goswami Thakur

BHAGAVATA

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DHARMA

President & Acharaya His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaj

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People experience depression and distress during troubled times. Those who are situated firmly on a spiritual platform experience the Lord's presence at all times; so situations of such distress do not affect them. Instead, they are always at peace. Just like a surgeon uses surgical instruments to operate on a patient for the purpose of treating his disease, we can use the Hare Krishna Mahamantra as the instrument through which we can treat our distress. With regular chanting, we can establish eternal peace and love, both within, and around us.

In the service of Sri Krishna Caitanya Mahaprabhu's Mission,

His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaj
President, Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math



DEDICATION

After the physical departure of Advaita Acharya prabhu, his potency manifested as Shyamananda prabhu, Nityananda Prabhu's potency manifested as Narottam Das Thakur, and Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's (aka Sri Gouranga Mahaprabhu) potency manifested as Srinivas Acharya. Thus, the Lord's potency is still running through His pure devotees (*guru-varga*). In this way, our Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur and all his disciples represent Sri Nityananda Prabhu, and Sri Gouranga Mahaprabhu.

With the potency of Lord Nityananda Prabhu, Srila Narottam Das Thakur had appeared in this mortal world on the day of Maghi Purnima (full moon day in the Bengali month of Magh— January/February). To mark the auspicious appearance of Srila Narottam Das Thakur, my Gurudev HDG Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Thakur used to organise annual celebrations at the Ananta Vasudev temple, Kalna, West Bengal, which was donated to my Spiritual Master, by the King of Burdwan.

When Srila Narottam Das Thakur was 12 years old, Lord Nityananda Prabhu appeared in his dream and told him to go to the Padma River and collect *prema* (Divine Love) which Lord Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had kept there for him. After seeing this dream, Srila Narottam Das Thakur went to the river, bathed and received the *prema* that was kept for him. Although Srila Narottam Das Thakur was still very young, he grew eager to take initiation. He soon left for Vrindavan. He was guided to Vrindavan by the sound of Krishna's flute. He met Jhanava Mata, potency of Lord Nityananda Prabhu on the way and received her blessings. Reaching Vrindavan, he was received by Srila Rupa Goswami and Srila Sanatan Goswami.

Srila Narottam Das Thakur was longing to take initiation from Srila Lokanath Goswami;

however, Lokanath Goswami refused to accept any disciples, and any services at all from Srila Narottam Das Thakur. Srila Narottam Das Thakur was born as a prince (son of King Krishnananda Dutta), and therefore while growing up had many servants serving him. But to please Srila Lokanath Goswami, he decided to serve Srila Lokanath Goswami secretly. At midnight, he would go and clean the place where Lokanath Goswami would go for his morning ablutions. Srila Narottam Das Thakur secretly did this every night, and would leave some neem twigs, a pot of water, and some mud for Lokanath Goswami to use for cleaning his body. Srila Narottam Das Thakur did this for several days.

If we look back into history, we can see a similar example where Sabari was also keen to receive initiation from a guru. In order to render service to sadhus, she left home on her wedding day, at a very young age. Because she had a very strong desire to serve sadhus, she abandoned her wedding, left home, and made her way to the Pampa Sarovar (lake) in Kishkindha. She saw that many sadhus were residing near the Pampa Sarovar, and decided to stay there to render service to the sadhus.

A sadhu's principle is that they would not accept services from anyone, unless they are physically unable to do something themselves. Should they accept any service at all, it should be only from a male. However, in the eyes of self-realised pure devotees, they see only the soul, and not whether someone is a male or a female. Sabari used to collect firewood from the deep forest, clean the ground, and leave the firewood for the sadhus' use near their hermitage. That way, the sadhus would not need to go into the forest to collect any firewood. Sabari was doing this for many days, when one sadhu called Matanga Rishi started to wonder who was doing all these. One night, Matanga Rishi came out early and saw that a young girl was sweeping with broom and cleaning the ground. Rishi



Matanga was an elevated and self-realised sadhu. He was unaffected by the principle that normally sadhus follow, and decided to initiate Sabari, after seeing her mood of service. Sabari used to think that since she is in a female body, she would never be initiated, but Matanga Rishi took her under his shelter and made her his disciple. After initiation, Matanga Rishi told Sabari that Lord Sri Ramchandra would come to the forest one day, and to prepare to greet Him, accordingly.

In accordance with her Spiritual Master's instruction to greet Lord Sri Ramchandra, from that day, Sabari would daily prepare fruits and flowers. Many years passed by. Sabari became very old when one day, suddenly, Lord Sri Ram with His brother Lakshman, appeared in front of her hut. In this way, Sabari showed that if we follow the order of a guru who is a pure devotee, eventually we will be able to serve the Lord.

Here, Srila Narottam Das Thakur also served Lokanath Goswami in the same manner that young Sabari served the sadhus, without their knowledge. Srila Lokanath Goswami mentally decided not to accept any disciples in his entire life, but Narottam Thakur's service attitude was so sincere that it broke Lokanath Goswami's principle and he finally initiated Srila Narottam Das Thakur, and accepted him as his disciple. My Spiritual Master often used to say that Srila Narottam Das Thakur has the potency of Lord Nityananda Prabhu. Without Nityananda Prabhu's mercy, no one can get the service of the Divine Couple, Sri Sri Radha Krishna.

We know from studying the family tree of Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur that he is a descendant of Srila Narottam Das Thakur's family (his father is Krishnananda Dutta), and so the potency of Srila Narottam Das Thakur also existed in Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur and the founder Acharya of Gaudiya Math and its branches, HDG Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. Srila Prabhupada's

preaching mission represents the writings of Srila Narottam Das Thakur and Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur. My Spiritual Master, His Divine Grace, used to remind us that all the songs sung from morning to night at the temple (Mangal arati, Bhoga arati, and Sandhya arati) were all composed by HDG Srila Sachidananda Bhaktivinode Thakur. The ultimate spiritual goal of Sri Gaudiya Math is to be in the eternal service of the Divine Couple. In this regard, Srila Narottam Das Thakur composed many songs which can be found in his books, Prarthana and Prema Bhakti Chandrika. One of them is:

śrī-rūpa-maṣjarī-pada, sei mora sampada,
sei mor bhajana-pūjana
sei mora prāṇa-dhana, sei mora ābharāṇa,
sei mor jīvanera jīvana

Sri Rupa Goswami's eternal form is Rupa Manjari, and her lotus feet are my wealth, my devotional service, treasure, and ornament of my life. The lotus feet of Rupa Manjari's feet are the life of my life.

sei mora rasa-nidhi, sei mora vāṣṭhā-siddhi,
sei mor vedera dharama
sei brata, sei tapa, sei mora mantra-japa,
sei mor dharama-karama

Her feet are the ocean of mellows, my ultimate desire, my dharma according to the Vedas. They are my vows, my spiritual practice, and chanting of the mantras and my spirituality and activities.

anukūla habe vidhi, se-pade hoibe siddhi,
nirakhibo e dui nayane
se rūpa-mādhurī-rāśi, prāṇa-kuvalaya-śaśi,
paphullita habe niśi-dine

Rules and regulations of devotional practice will be favourable for attaining the lotus feet. I will look with both of my eyes, the beautiful sweet form of Rupa Manjari, which is like the moon and shines day and night, and brings joy to my heart.



tuwā adarśana-ahi, garale jāralo dehī,
 ciro-dina tāpita jīvana
 hā hā rūpa koro doyā, deho more pada-
 chāyā,
 narottama loilo śaraṇa

Without your presence, life is like a poison and I am constantly suffering in life. Oh Rupa Goswami, Narottam has taken shelter of your lotus feet, please bestow your blessings and give me the shade of your lotus feet.

Below is another song composed by Srila Narottam Das Thakur:

rādhā-kṛṣṇa prāṇa mora jugala-kiśora
 jīvane maraṇe gati āro nāhi mora

Radha Krishna are my life and soul. In life and in death, there is no other way for me.

kāḷindīra kūle keli-kadambera vana
 ratana-bedīra uparaba sābo du'jana

In the middle of the Kadamba forest, on the banks of Kalindi (Yamuna) river, I will sit Them down on a bejewelled throne.

śyāma-gaurī-aṅge dibo (cūwā) candanera
 gandha
 cāmara dhulābo kabe heri mukha-candra

I will smear chandana paste on the body of Shyama and Radha and I will fan the camara whisk and will see Their moon-like faces.

gāthiyā mālatīr mālā dibo dohāra gale
 adhare tulyā dibo karpūra-tāmbūle

I will string a garland out of Malati flowers and place them around Their necks. I will offer betel leaves with camphor into Their mouths.

lalitā viśākhā-ādi jata sakhī-brnda
 ājṣāya koribo sebā caraṇāravinda

Lalita and Vishaka along with other principal sakhis, I will serve the lotus feet of the Divine Couple with their permission.

śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-prabhur dāser anudāsa
 sevā abhilāṣa kore narottama-dāsa

Narottam Das is the servant of the servant of the servant of Lord Chaitanya and desires to serve the Divine Couple.

Devotees in the Gaudiya community sing these and many other songs composed by Narottam Thakur on a daily basis.

Srila Narottam Das Thakur and Srila Prabhupada have many similarities. We know that Srila Narottam Das Thakur was the one and only disciple of Srila Lokanath Goswami, and Srila Prabhupada was also the only disciple of his Gurudev, HDG Srila Gaur Kishore Das Babaji Maharaj. Both Srila Narottam Das Thakur and Srila Prabhupada extensively preached the philosophy of Lord Nityananda Prabhu and Lord Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. Srila Narottam Das Thakur's eternal identity is Champak Manjari, serving under the guidance of *Radha-pakshiya* (favouring Radha Rani's group) and Srila Prabhupada's eternal identity is Nayanamani Manjari, who is also serving in *Radha-pakshiya*.

My spiritual master HDG's heart was always absorbed in the teachings of Srila Narottam Das Thakur, Srila Bhaktivinode Thakur and Srila Prabhupada. Srila Gurudev used to feel disturbed if anyone, out of their ignorance, would say that Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur had no valid Vaishnava connection nor from a Vaishnava lineage. He used to say that even if the Parampara started with Srila Prabhupada, then it is still a valid line. The potency of Lord Nityananda Prabhu's mercy was situated in Srila Narottam Das Thakur. Without Lord Nityananda's mercy, we are not able to get Radha Krishna's services. Sometimes we hear people making



comments that we Gaudiya Vaishnavas belong to the Narottam parivar (family), but they do not mention his Gurudev, Srila Lokanath Goswami's name. In that way, according to my Gurudeva, there is no harm in identifying our line as belonging in the family of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur. Srila Prabhupada introduced us into the family of Brahma Madhva Gaudiya Sampradaya. Srila Prabhupada's grand spiritual master was Srila Nimai Chand Goswami who was the spiritual descendant of Advaita Acharya. In that sense, Srila Prabhupada belongs to the Advaita Acharya's spiritual family. So, in reality, we belong to the line of Advaita Acharya. To celebrate the auspicious appearance day of Srila Narottam Das Thakur on Maghi Purnima, my Spiritual Master set up an annual celebration at the Ananta Vasudev Mandir in Kalna.

In conclusion, Lord Nityananda Prabhu is the root personality of Gaudiya Vaishnava philosophy. Nityananda Prabhu is *guru-tattva* and guru is a pure devotee. My grand Spiritual Master Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Goswami Thakur established a lineage with pure devotees, which is called the *Bhagavat-parampara*. Therefore, my spiritual master, His Divine Grace, used to say that 'My Srila Prabhupada is also the source of this parampara'.

Therefore, I would not want us to have any confusion. We should be dedicated to, and serve the *parampara*, with due respect towards everyone. Then we can attain connection with the Divine Couple in our eternal identity. Nowadays, due to people's ignorance of the Vaishnava practice, we are promoting our faith and *parampara*, and in the process, criticising others' and committing offense towards other Vaishnavas. Instead of focusing on Mahaprabhu's goal of establishing Divine Love in everyone's heart, we see that Vaishnavas are quarrelling amongst each other. My humble request is that, as my spiritual master used to say, 'be dedicated

towards guru, the way Sabari and Srila Narottam Das Thakur were, and reach the ultimate destination of our spiritual practice.'

B.B.Bodhayan Swami

Written on the occasion of Maghi Purnima, February 2022



THE PANDITS TAKE INITIATION FROM SRILA NAROTTAM DAS THAKUR

By Sri Nityananda Das

The news spread to Thakura Mahasaya and his disciples in Kethuri that Narsimha Raya and a band of scholars were approaching with the intention of defeating Narottama in debate. The disciples quickly devised a brilliant scheme, and with the permission of Narottama, Ramacandra, Govinda, Ganganarayana, Harihara, Ramakrsna and Jagannatha started for Kumarapura. Each of them secretly accepted the guise of various types of shopkeepers (Sindi, Varai, Teli and Kumar). Corresponding with their new dress, each devotee sat in the appropriate shop selling their wares.

As expected, some of the pupils of the brahmana Panditas came to those shops to buy various items. To their amazement, when the pupils asked the price of an item, the shopkeeper replied speaking in Sanskrit. Being proud brahmanas, they concealed their surprise, and replied also in Sanskrit. One thing led to another and eventually each pupil found themselves caught in heated debates with the shopkeepers. Within no time, the pupils were easily defeated. The victorious shopkeepers jokingly teased the pupils, telling them to return to their studies and send their teachers for further debates. Humiliated, the pupils returned to their camp and reported the extraordinary event. "When we asked the shopkeepers where



they received their education from they told us that they had studied in Kheturi."

Outraged at the audacity of the shopkeepers, the indignant teachers rushed to the marketplace to save the honor of the brahmanas--or so they thought. To their dismay, the teachers were also easily defeated in debate by the shopkeepers. Humiliated, they returned to the king and said, "We will not go to Kheturi, let us leave this place immediately." Rupa Narayana tried to pacify them saying, "Don't be afraid, Narottama Thakura will shower his blessings on all of us. What is the need to run away. Actually, according to sastras the position of a Vaishnava is superior to all.

The goodhearted shopkeepers then came before the pupils with the items they had come to purchase in their shops and offered them to the students free of charge. "We could make a profit from you," they said, but we would rather give you these items as a gift to the brahmanas." Saying this the shopkeepers left.

That night after finishing their meal, the king and his followers took rest. As the Panditas slept, the goddess Bhagavati appeared before them in their dreams. Holding a sword in her hand she angrily chastised them, "You rogues, I shall behead you so-called Panditas. All your studies have been in vain because you have criticized Narottama. By this offence you have purchased your ticket to hell. It is not enough just to satisfy me. Narottama is the incarnation of the Lord's ecstatic feature. A true brahmana is one who has actually understood Brahman. Narottama not only understands Brahman, but he has captured the Supreme Brahman, Krishna within his heart and thus a bright sacred thread is permanently imbedded in the heart of Narottama. The sacred thread worn by brahmanas is simply the external sing of the class of brahmana. You must become true brahmanas by accepting initiation from Narottama tomorrow. You can be saved

from the suffering of hell only by the mercy of Narottama." Saying this Bhagavati disappeared.

The teachers woke up from their sleep trembling with fear. When they revealed the dream to the king he said, "You did not heed my advice regarding Narottama. He is not an ordinary man, even the gods and goddesses in heaven worship his feet." Understanding their mistake, the Panditas took their bath and rushed towards Kheturi.

In Kheturi, they offered their obeisance to the Deity, then went straight to Narottama and fell flat at his feet begging, "O respected Gosvami, please be merciful to us." Narottama offered his blessings and gave them initiation in Krishna mantra.

Adapted from Prema Vilasa (Chapter 19) by Sri Nityananda Das



A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO SRILA PRABHUPA

*by HDG Srila Bhakti Bibudha
Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja*

Śrīla Prabhupāda's father gave him the name Vimalā Prasād. He was born in the year 1874 in Śrī Kṣetra Dhāma Purī near Śrī Jagannāth temple. Right from childhood divine qualities were visible in this boy. Expert astrologers had predicted that Vimalā Prasād was the personification of the phrase 'utkale puruṣottamaḥ' mentioned in the Padma Purāṇa. The meaning of this phrase is that the glories of Puruṣottama Bhagavān will be spread all over the world from Puruṣottama Dhāma(Purī). His father Śrī Kedarnāth Dutta was appointed by the British Government as the Deputy Minister of the Purī district. Along with this he was also the precious gem of the Vaiṣṇava Society and was known as Śrīla



Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura. Under the guidance of his father, Vimalā Prasād received high education. Although being highly educated he took a vow to follow in the footsteps of Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu and preach Hari-nāma all over the world. Hari-nāma is the easy solution of the reformation of the jīvas of Kali-yuga.

According to the scriptures one should be qualified first and only then he should preach. Following this instruction of the scripture he took the vow to chant 100 crore (1 billion) holy names by doing 3 lakhs (300 thousand) names every day. During the practice of this vow, both his father Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and his dikṣā-Guru Śrīla Gaurakiṣora Dāsa Bābājī, left their bodies. After they left their bodies, Śrīla Prabhupāda decided to change his goal of preaching Hari-nāma. Instead he decided to become a Bhajanānandī or in other words, do his bhajana in seclusion. However Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu appeared in his dream one morning and gave him the instruction to spread the 'Hare Kṛṣṇa

Mahāmantra'. At that time Vimalā Prasād asked Mahāprabhu where will he get the manpower for this preaching from? Mahāprabhu replied that he will make all arrangements for manpower.

To follow this instruction of Mahāprabhu, Vimalā Prasād took sannyāsa (the renounced order) in 1918 with the objective of spreading the 'Hare Kṛṣṇa Mahāmantra'. After accepting *sannyāsa* he was known as Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī. However everyone addressed him as Śrīla Prabhupāda because he was an ideal person who followed in the footsteps of Mahāprabhu and also because one is not supposed to address a sannyāsī by his name. On January 1, 1937 at 5:30 in the morning our dearest Śrīla Prabhupāda left his body and entered the eternal abode of the Lord.

From Jagat Jāgaraṇ Hari-nāma :World Awakening Holy Name, written and published by HDG Srila Bhakti Bibudha Bodhayan Goswami Maharaja



KEY VAISHNAVA FESTIVALS: FEBRUARY - MARCH 2022

Date	Festival
16 February	Maghi Purnima Appearance Day of Srila Natottam DasThakur
21 February	Appearance of HDG Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Goswami Prabhupad
27 February	Krishna Ekadasi
1 March	Shivaratri
3 March	Disappearance Day of Vaishnava Sarvabhauma Srila Jagannath Das Babaji Maharaj Disappearance Day of Srila Rasikananda Dev Goswami Disappearance Day of HDG Srimad Bhakti Dayita Madhav Goswami
12 March	Adhivas festival of Sri Nabadwip Dham Parikrama
13 March	Nabadwip Dham Parikrama begins
14 March	Amalaki Ekadasi
15 March	Disappearance Day of Sripad Madhavendra Puri
18 March	Gaura Purnima

Bhagavata Dharma

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Dedicated to:

His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Pramode Puri Goswami Thakur, Founder Acharya of Sri Gopinath Gaudiya Math, and
His Divine Grace Srila Bhaktisiddhanata Saraswati Goswami Thakur PRABHUPADA.

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