

All Glories to Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga

Part One

Glorification of Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj

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Vaiṣṇava Ṭhākur

From a lecture given by His Holiness Tridaṇḍi Swāmi
Śrīpād Bhakti Sudhir Goswāmī Mahārāj
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So at last after many years we have the opportunity to glorify Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. And I say that because Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj has always been seen by us to be in the background of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh; moving, and doing so many different things, and acting as an agent of representation for so many devotees to the lotus feet of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣak Śrīdhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj. He did this because, as we know, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's nature was not to move with a large group of people. In fact after his time in

the Gauḍīya Maṭh and also after some attempts to work cooperatively with others, he more or less decided to enter seclusion; but he realised that Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Prabhupāda's whole mission relied upon his coming out of seclusion.

Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Prabhupāda himself was a qualified *bhajanānandi*. At one time he was chanting three lakh (300,000) Holy Names a day in the form of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahāmantra*. In a month that comes close to 10 million Names. His vow was to chant a billion Names of Kṛṣṇa which would take about eight and a half years to complete; and he was in the process of doing that. But from that position he received some divine inspiration to come out and help others. Sometimes it is said that once when he was crossing the River Saraswatī at its confluence with the Gaṅgā and Yamunā in the heart of Nabadwip, a piece of paper floated up to him which contained a part of *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* describing the essential items of devotional service including preaching the glories of the Holy Name. He took it that this was what he should do, and of course we know the rest: he came out and gradually converted so many to Mahāprabhu's creed.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was well aware that his Śrīla Prabhupādā did not favour devotion in seclusion, so he established the Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh and thought, "I'm not an aggressive preacher or canvasser, but if some will feel some relief from my *Hari-kathā*, I won't deny them."

Because Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was not inclined to do many of the various activities involved in preaching or to manage things so much, it made room for a very special assistant. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj came to him as a young *brahmacārī* of about 17 years old. He was given the name Gaurendu Dāsa Brahmachārī and within a week, *within a week*, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was introducing him to other Godbrothers as his successor. He asked Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāj, "I think this boy can be my successor. Examine him and tell me your opinion." So Bābājī Mahārāj examined him in a way I imagine only he could, and he concluded that he was fit for such special service!

When Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was living upstairs renting a room from Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda above his laboratory at Sitakanta Banerjee lane in Calcutta, Govinda Mahārāj was there as a young *brahmacārī*. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj related to us that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda and Śrīla Guru Mahārāj would regularly become very absorbed and spend much time discussing *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and related topics. They would become absorbed to such an extent that Śrīla Prabhupāda's neglect of his pharmaceutical business downstairs partly led to its decline.

Sometimes Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj would have breakfast with Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda and he mentioned, "Even for breakfast Swāmī Mahārāj would always have some *purīs* fried in ghee, as well

as a little *sabji* (cooked vegetable), and different things like that." But Govinda Mahārāj and Guru Mahārāj were always keen to have *muḍi* (puffed rice) on practically every occasion. Govinda Mahārāj said that Swāmī Mahārāj would always invite him to take *purīs* and *sabji* but he would decline saying, "No, no. *Muḍi* is fine for me," but Swāmī Mahārāj would object, "*Muḍi*? That is simply cheating the stomach." Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj was very happy during their stay there. He said, "Swāmī Mahārāj used to give me classes and he would teach me, amongst other things, *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*."

The point I'm making is that he was there from the very beginning, and in a very special capacity. When the different factions of the Gauḍīya Maṭh would meet, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj was there and he witnessed many of their negotiations with Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. He knows the discussions and all the personalities involved. In the Gauḍīya Maṭh he is therefore very well known and respected by everyone and they have known him since a long time ago.

He was so familiar with the luminaries of the Gauḍīya Maṭh and he knew their individual personalities so well that once he was going to a programme with some other Godbrothers of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj when the following incident happened. Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was not there, so Govinda Mahārāj was accompanying a Gauḍīya Maṭh *Ācāryya*, Śrīpād Bhakti Śaraṅga Goswāmī

Mahārāj, along with some of his disciples to a preaching engagement. As they were approaching the venue Govinda Mahārāj noticed indications in the sky that rain was likely. He then turned to one of Śrīpād Goswāmī Mahārāj's principle disciples and said, "Do you know which verse your Guru Mahārāj is going to speak on at the lecture?"

The disciple replied, "Of course not. I don't know what he's going to say, or what he is going to talk about."

"Well, I do."

"How is that possible?"

To which Govinda Mahārāj simply replied, "I know what verse he is going to speak on!" He then proceeded to recite the following verse:

*jadacyuta kathā lāpaḥ
karna pīyūṣa varjjitaḥ
taddinaṁ dūrddinaṁ manye
meghācchannaṁ na dūrddinam*

This verse means: "Normally we judge a good day by the weather. If it is sunny outside we think it is a nice day, and if the weather is bad we think it is a bad day. But the criterion for a *Vaiṣṇava* is that he considers a day to be good if he has either engaged in, or has heard, some *Hari-kathā* on that day."

They arrived there and, as predicted by Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, that *Ācāryya*, a Godbrother of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, began his lecture by reciting and discussing this very verse. It is remarkable that by

Govinda Mahārāj noticing it was going to rain, he linked this with the fact that it would probably make everyone depressed, and knowing the nature of Śrīpād Goswāmī Mahārāj, he concluded that he would choose this verse in order to change the atmosphere of the meeting.

Not only did Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj compete with his contemporaries in this way but even at a very early age he could hold his own with the Godbrothers of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj. On one such occasion he challenged in a slightly mischievous way one *sannyāsī* who had a reputation for being a big *paṇḍit*. Govinda Mahārāj said, "Can I ask you a question?"

"Yes, what is it?"

"Can God commit suicide?" The Godbrother was incensed, "Why are you asking a question like this? It is not a good question!"

Govinda Mahārāj said, "Well, maybe it is not a good question, but can you answer it?"

"You shouldn't ask such questions."

"I know, but can you answer it?"

"Why are you pressing me in this way?"

Then Govinda Mahārāj said, "Well, I know the answer. I just want to know whether you can answer it also."

Guru Mahārāj's Godbrother then said, "You are just a boy, what do you know?"

To which Govinda Mahārāj quoted this verse:

*vālohaham jagattām nātha name vālā sarasvatī
vālabhyālasya garalam kim na hannta kalevaram*

Which, in summary, says: "A baby cobra can still kill you!" He then proceeded to answer his own question by saying, "Yes, God can commit suicide. He commits suicide in Brahman, His impersonal aspect: the *brahmajyoti* where the infinitesimal parts of Bhagavān, the *jīvas*, lose their individuality. In that way the Absolute commits suicide." Śrīla Guru Mahārāj used to tell that story often but I never heard him attribute it to Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. Only later I learnt who that boy was! Śrīla Guru Mahārāj would sometimes comment, "One should not ask, 'Can God commit suicide?!'"

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj many times revealed his brilliance before Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's Godbrothers. One occasion was at the Imlitalā Temple, a Temple established in Vṛndāvana by Śrīpād Bhakti Sāraṅga Goswāmī Mahārāj. When Mahāprabhu first entered Vṛndāvana He sat beneath the tree known as Imlitalā which is now in the courtyard of that Temple. There on the wall are some verses composed by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj inscribed in marble describing the exact date of Mahāprabhu's arrival in Vṛndāvana, and the time of His *līlā* beneath the Imlitalā.

In Sanskrit verse there are ways to describe numbers by implication. For example, if you say *Veda* it can mean the number three or four. This is because sometimes it is considered that there are three sections of the *Vedas*, and sometimes four. There are

also other words that numbers are associated with. Thus in a sort of mystical, poetic way Śrīla Guru Mahārāj mentioned the date, though that date generally is not known; it is only hinted at and described in a general way in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and other places.

When first reading the *ślokas* inscribed there, the Godbrothers of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj could not fully understand what he had written. From their understanding some were convinced that Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur might even have been of a different opinion concerning that date. So again the young Gaurendu Brahmachārī, our Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj, came and said, "Oh, I know what it means," and they were all surprised. He then explained the date mentioned there. They reacted, "But that differs from the date given by Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur."

Govinda Mahārāj replied, "That may be, but what my Guru says is right. What Śrīla Guru Mahārāj says is true; it does not matter if anyone else differs with it, whoever they are. It is true and I can prove it." He then proceeded to expand on various passages and thereby he explained how Śrīla Guru Mahārāj came to those conclusions by inference from *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. He astounded everyone.

Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj is always very competent, especially at representing Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and his conception, and he has a wonderful *Vaiṣṇava* heart. It was shown one time in the following way:

Even the *Gopīs* have groups and party spirit, this sometimes causes them not to get along with each other; and this is so also with their followers. In this way there were some differences between the different camps of Godbrothers of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and their disciples. One day many of them along with their disciples were going to Vṛndāvana to honour a holy festival. It so happened that Śrīpād Tīrtha Mahārāj and his disciples were at the same train station at the same time as Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and his entourage. Śrīpād Tīrtha Mahārāj was sometimes described by Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura as being most dear to him, *Prabhupāda-preṣṭha*, and he even had verses in Tīrtha Mahārāj's glorification chiselled into marble in the Bagh Bazaar Maṭh in Calcutta. But Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīpād Tīrtha Mahārāj at that time were not on speaking terms.

Govinda Mahārāj noticed Tīrtha Mahārāj and seeing such an august personality he felt some disturbance at not being able to properly honour him due to the differences between the two parties. He then went and asked Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, "Tīrtha Mahārāj is over there. I feel compelled to offer my obeisances to him. May I have your permission to do so."

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj replied, "Yes, of course you may." The faces of Tīrtha Mahārāj and his group of devotees up to this point were a little stern, but Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj went over and offered his *dandavats*

to Tīrtha Mahārāj and talked a little with him as well as with his group, and soon they were all smiling: he had a way of charming all of them.

Govinda Mahārāj always liked to glorify the devotees and he wrote many stanzas in their praise. With his charm he liked to utilise words in a way that allowed sometimes three or four meanings to be drawn out from each verse. Occasionally, though, others would interpret his verses in other ways than he intended, as was shown when he once wrote a poem glorifying Śrīpād Keśava Mahārāj. Keśava Mahārāj took *sannyāsa* from Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and he was an important figure in the Gauḍīya Maṭh. He was so pleased with the poem composed by Govinda Mahārāj that he published it in his *Maṭh's* journal.

Later when Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāj came and read it he saw that there was a double-entendre throughout. Although apparently on the surface it was a glorification, there was another way of reading it in which it appeared he was making fun of Keśava Mahārāj. Up until this time all the devotees there had been saying, "Look what he has written! What Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj's disciple has written is really wonderful. Isn't it great!" But Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāj went and told Keśava Mahārāj, "Don't you see what he has done?"

Keśava Mahārāj replied, "His composition is very good. What have you found?"

Then Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Bābājī Mahārāj said, "Very good! But this could also mean something else..."

Keśava Mahārāj started, "You're right...!" And they called for Govinda Mahārāj and asked, "Is that what you meant?"

"Oh no! No, Mahārāj!"

Through everything he was always Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's eternal associate and constant companion. When Śrīla Guru Mahārāj would go to Māyāpur to visit Śrīla Śwāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda, Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj would always be there. We have a picture in which Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj and Śrīla Śrīdhara Mahārāj are sharing the same *vyāsāsana* and at the microphone is Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj. He spoke on that day by the request of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj who was feeling unwell and therefore reluctant to speak.

In his address Govinda Mahārāj quoted a verse spoken by Raghupati Upādhyāya.

*kaṁ prati kathayitum iṣe,
samprati ko vā pratītim āyātu
go-pati-tanayā-kuñje,
gopa-vadhūṭi-viṭaṁ brahma*

(C.c. Madhya 19.98)

"Who will possibly believe me if I tell them that the Supreme Absolute Truth is playing in the bushes with the *Gopīs*? Who could possibly believe this?" The way he used this verse was to say, "So who could believe me that Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj who we knew before as 'Abhay Babu', a regular attender at the programmes in Śrī Gauḍīya Maṭh—a householder with various family commitments,

business concerns, etc.—that *he* is now a World *Ācāryya* and is known all over the planet. *He* has spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness the length and breadth of the earth, *he* has done this impossible of all impossible things.”

Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda really appreciated this sort of appropriate glorification which Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj always is capable of providing.

It may not be common knowledge, but in the realm of composition Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj has given much. In the words of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj: “Govinda Mahārāj’s contribution is very great.” The *Paṇḍit-sabhā* presided over by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj gave Govinda Mahārāj various titles: one was *Bhakti Sāstrī*, later to be followed by *Upadeśaka Paṇḍit*, *Mahopadeśaka Paṇḍit*, and then *Jyotirbhūṣaṇ Vidyā Rañjan*. One of his ornaments is Sanskrit *alaṅkāra*—the knowledge of how to properly use the Sanskrit language. As Guru Mahārāj would contemplate different verses he was composing, Govinda Mahārāj would be with him suggesting various alternatives. Some of these verses were never published and some are no longer written down anywhere: at present they are only to be found within Govinda Mahārāj. It is very fortunate for us all that he not only remembers them but he can represent them very nicely.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj has said also that the relationship between the Guru and disciple is not

limited to *dāsyā-rasa*, or the master and the servant, but there is also friendship, and in some cases even a sort of paternal feeling by the disciple towards the Guru in providing care and so forth. The reality is that Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj were intimate friends. After all these years, distance was removed by their intimacy. I remember sometimes when we would speak to Śrīla Guru Mahārāj confidentially about making some particular decision, Guru Mahārāj would express his opinions in a particular way, and we would listen to those. Then he would, as it were, perk up, put his hands respectfully to his forehead, and say, "But Govinda Mahārāj says we should do this, and I think that what he suggests could actually be better."!

I remember one of the last things Śrīla Guru Mahārāj told me: as he was turning over his *Acāryya*ship to Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj he said, "Actually in many ways he is more qualified than I am," and also, "If you get to know him more intimately, more personally, you will come to understand what sort of transcendental character he has."

Furthermore, there is something that is hard and indeed impossible to erase from my memory, and I don't try to: I was soon to be going to America and it was towards the very end of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's manifest pastimes. He called me into his room and, knowing that I was leaving for the West and maybe would not see him again, he called me over to his

bed. I was very close to him: eye to eye, face to face. He grasped both of my shoulders very firmly and then started shaking my body with my head jostling about, and he said, "Goswāmī Mahārāj, this may be my last instruction to you..." The whole time he just kept on shaking me and he continued, "It is my sincere and earnest desire that you assist Govinda Mahārāj. Do you understand?" I replied with my voice in a tremolo, "Yes, Mahārāj."

That is the way of the *Vaiṣṇavas*, and it is further illustrated by the statement of Lord Śiva:

ārādhanānām sarveṣām, viṣṇor ārādhanām param

"Of all the varieties of worship, the worship of Viṣṇu is said to be the best."

tasmāt parataram devi, tadīyānām samarcanam

"But the highest and complete concept of worship is to serve the one who is most dear to Viṣṇu." Just worshipping Viṣṇu is not complete without the potency of the one who is most dear to Him. So if we look at this in another way, the highest possible *sevā* is the service of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. It is higher than service to Viṣṇu or Kṛṣṇa.

Tadīya—what is dear to Him? The cows are dear to Him, Vṛndāvana is dear to Him, His friends are dear to Him, His mother...; there are so many things, but the one who is most dear to Him is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. He is making it clear that service to Her is the highest service possible to be performed. In the highest concept Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is the Guru. So if we extend that same concept further, then there are

those who are most dear to the Guru. If we search we shall see that there may be someone who's service outshines all the rest. In their connection the prospect of our own service may increase greatly.

Guru Mahārāj was fond of telling the example that a small capitalist stands to gain much by connecting his lesser wealth with the resources of the big capitalist. With our small reserves anyone of us can buy some shares in a huge multinational corporation and thereby reap the benefits. Similarly, the devotees can connect with those who are rich in devotion and, although we may only have a small amount of serving capacity, any service rendered to them connects to something higher, and we receive a greater remuneration from that. So there is no doubt in my mind that Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj is the most dear disciple and assistant of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj, and that our position becomes enhanced by serving him, by glorifying him, and by participating in some way in his *sevā* which has been given to him by Śrīla Guru Mahārāj.

It is not by accident that everything in Śrīla Guru Mahārāj's possession was entrusted to Govinda Mahārāj. If you look in the various Wills of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj you will find repeatedly emphasised that every last property has been entrusted to him. If there is a rice field that they own somewhere in Navadwip, he is in full charge of it. Furthermore, in his Last Will and Testament Śrīla Guru Mahārāj clearly appoints Swāmī Bhakti Sundar Govinda

Mahārāj as the *Ācāryya* of Śrī Chaitanya Sāraswat Maṭh, of the Hāpāniyā Maṭh, of Kṛṣṇānuśilana Saṅgha, and of all other Maṭhs under his Maṭh.

The great *Vaiṣṇavas* never think in a possessive mood, instead they see that some *sevā* has been entrusted to them by their Guru and they are compelled to try to perform that service.

I heard from Govinda Mahārāj that, "*Vaiṣṇavas* recognise other *Vaiṣṇavas*." This is the opposite of *Vaiṣṇava-aparādha* (offence to the devotees). They avoid finding fault in other *Vaiṣṇavas* because they know it is so detrimental to spiritual development—in fact it is the one thing that is said can uproot the *bhakti-latā*, the creeper of devotion. But our goal is not just to try to avoid offending other devotees, although for us it may be a goal worth aspiring for! Beyond that we are to make progress and become enriched by giving recognition and appreciation to *Vaiṣṇavas* and their service; and really we *must* do that. We must do that to the extent seen in the example of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj who was so appreciative of the devotees of ISKCON.

Śrīla Guru Mahārāj was very exalted and he was very much respected by all the members of the Gauḍīya Maṭh. Śrīla Bhakti Siddhānta Saraswatī Ṭhākur even said that Guru Mahārāj was carrying the conception of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākur, but, despite such exalted qualification and honour, Śrīla Guru Mahārāj never had an attitude that he was a big Guru and *Ācāryya* and that the members of ISKCON are

just young upstarts. He never took the attitude, "These young upstarts, what do they know?" But he saw, "Oh, they have some connection with Mahāprabhu—they must be respected." His attitude was like the verse in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*:

*śrīpāda, dhara mora gosāñira sambandha,
tāhā vinā anyatra nāhi ei premāra gandha.*

(C.c. Madhya 9.289)

When the *śanoḍiyā brāhmaṇa* saw the kind of ecstatic love of Mahāprabhu, he thought, "Oh, look at this, it is the most amazing thing. I know only Mādhavendra Purī to be in possession of such high feelings, therefore I can understand that Mahāprabhu must have some connection with him." Similarly Śrīla Guru Mahārāj always saw that, by the grace of Śrīla Swāmī Mahārāj Prabhupāda, so many people have some connection with Mahāprabhu. He really appreciated that and gave them recognition for their service.

Once I told Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj the experience we all have when we go to the *Maṭh*: "Yourself and others here, you express so much appreciation for everyone—sometimes to the point of embarrassment." Furthermore I mentioned, "I don't know, Mahārāj, but sometimes I think it's a little too much!" To which he said, "No, we *must* do this. It's not some arbitrary sort of thing but we actually must do this if we expect the grace of Mahāprabhu. If we hope to be blessed by Him then we must recognise and appreciate those who already have some grace or blessings from Him."

and appreciate those who already have some grace or blessings from Him."

Even when Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is with Kṛṣṇa She sometimes reflects about His flute: "That flute *always* receives nectar from Kṛṣṇa's lips but I get that only sometimes." This is an example of the highest devotee exalting someone in a lower position.

After publishing *The Search for Śrī Kṛṣṇa* I received a letter from Govinda Mahārāj. There was such an impact in this one little letter that when I read it I almost fainted. His appreciation for this principle of glorifying others even though they are of a lower standing was so strongly evident. He wrote to the effect, "Although I have been trying to serve the lotus feet of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj for 35 years, you have surpassed me." He made it seem through this letter as though he had been unable to do anything, but that I had achieved something, and within such a short time. The only place that I have found such a mood expressed of deprecating one's own position while glorifying others is in the writings and lives of the great *Vaiṣṇavas*. Govinda Mahārāj is a *Vaiṣṇava Thākur*.

So by one means or another the *Vaiṣṇavas* sometimes forcibly make us feel their love—whether by the way they distribute *Prasādam*, by the way they appreciate other devotees, or by their many, varied, affectionate dealings—they inevitably capture our hearts.

On one occasion I received some news from the

Maṭh via one of my friends who was there, but the news felt a little disturbing to me. It concerned something I wanted to be done but it was not being done, and it was somehow implied to me that I was an outsider and unfamiliar with the inner workings of the *Maṭh*. I guess everyone wants to know that their Guru loves them, so I felt hurt because that was really what I wanted to know inside—and Śrīla Guru Mahārāj knew it. He would make me feel that I was a very intimate friend, and that gave me great encouragement; but then some news came to the contrary through someone else. I was a little disturbed, so I wrote a letter to the *Maṭh* expressing this.

I received a reply from Śrīla Guru Mahārāj in which he was very disturbed to hear what had reached my ears. He reassured me to the contrary and then said, "This is so preposterous that when Govinda Mahārāj heard this, blood oozed from his heart!"

Govinda Mahārāj has always personally been my affectionate well-wisher, and I feel reassured and confident knowing that after the departure of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj he is there to give guidance and inspiration. Śrīla Govinda Mahārāj also has a great sense of humour, and really whenever I go to India I go there with the sole purpose of having a few moments of his association, because it is very purifying and rejuvenating. As is mentioned in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarvva-*

purifying and rejuvenating. As is mentioned in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta: lava-mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva-siddhi haya*—all success is achieved by even a moment's association with a pure devotee.

Therefore in many ways I am happy to have the opportunity to express my appreciation for him, however small and insignificant it may be coming from me. He is personally responsible for so many auspicious events in my own life in connection with Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and therefore I have a personal debt. I don't know to what extent the disciples of Śrīla Guru Mahārāj and other devotees all over the world are aware of just how much they are also indebted to Śrīpād Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārāj. So this is a wonderful opportunity that we could all come together and show some appreciation on this day.

Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Mahārājer āvirbhāva mahā-mahotsava tithi kī jaya!
