

Srila Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj Memorial Service at Sydney - Part 8

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Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my humble obeisances! All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudev!

This is the concluding part of the previous offerings transcribing the wonderful offering by H.G. Devakinandan Prabhujis on the occasion of the memorial service for our beloved Guru Maharaj held in Sydney, Australia on 24th April 2010.

25. **Our sincerity and gratefulness to our spiritual master:** If we really want to be sincere and grateful to our spiritual master for all that he has done for us, and for all that he continues to do for us, then really we must become useful instruments in spreading Krishna consciousness and in serving devotees. That is what Maharaj would like best from us. I asked Maharaj one question when he had the stroke. "What happens when you leave us? How will I be able to contact you? As it is I am calling you daily, I am taking instructions from you. How to hear your voice again?" Maharaj said, "***If you seriously study Bhagavatam, if you chant, if you obey every instruction that I have given you and if you try your best, then after I leave, I guarantee you that I will be closer to you than when I am right now. I will be with you the moment you want something to do with devotional service.***" When we took out Maharaj's diaries, in one diary Maharaj has written a sentence at 5.30 a.m. in Singapore in 1993. "***A disciple's love for his spiritual master is actually to be seen, in the level of his indebtedness to his spiritual master. And the spiritual master never leaves his disciple.***" So I live with the conviction, as Srila Prabhupada always told us that finally, Vani is infinitely more important than vapu. But having said that, how can we forget the loving way in which Maharaj took care of all of us. That will always carry us through our devotional service.

26. **No formalities in relationship:** We have to follow the instructions of the spiritual master and continue to perform our devotional service and this cannot be done alone. We can only do it in the loving association of devotees. ***I use the word devotees and not disciples because Maharaj would not like it if I use the word disciples. Maharaj always told everyone that our relationship has no formalities.*** "It is just like father and son or grandfather and grandson. Anytime you want to talk to me, you please pick up the phone." No one was exempt from calling Maharaj on the phone. Sometimes devotees say, "You mean your Guru Maharaj does not have a personal secretary - someone who will pass on the message?" Maharaj was his own personal secretary and would get angry if you do not call. For devotees who would not call for a week, Maharaj would say, "*Why you did not call me for so long? I was waiting for your call.*" And for those who were in difficulty, he would call them and ask them how they were. ***He did not ask them just spiritual questions. But he would ask them how is your family doing, how is your job, health etc.***

It didn't matter whose disciples the devotees were. In fact, our normal complaint was Maharaj spent more time with disciples of other Maharaj than his own. Whenever we asked Maharaj he said, "*That is because they are much much more qualified than what you are (laughter). That's why after one hour of sitting with you, I have to take some association of other disciples and it makes me feel very happy.*" One of the sannyasis was giving initiation to a devotee and that time HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj was with him and they were joking and talking with each other. After initiation ceremony that Maharaj said to his disciple, "*Now if you have any problems, turn to Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj.*" Guru Maharaj replied to him jokingly- "*Maharaj, you have given him initiation, you have taken the deeksha and the Lakshmi and now I have to take his problems! (laughter)*" and that Maharaj replied, "*You might take his problems. But end of the day, I am responsible for him. So please help me lighten the load. (laughter)*". This was the loving exchange, Guru Maharaj had with many Vaishnavas.

If there was a problem in marriage, the temple president would send them to Maharaj first. In London, Maharaj would take his three-wheel vehicle, drive up to their place and spend the whole day with them and come back. Within two weeks the devotees would come back to temple all fine. When Maharaj had the stroke, so many devotees came to see

him and everyone who came to see him told me, "You may not know me but you know why we are here? We are here as husband and wife because of him. He saved our marriage." Maharaj had only two things to tell them and this saved them always. He said, "*If you want to fight with each other, you do thing. You go into separate rooms and scream at each other (laughter). Just scream and shout all you want but not in the presence of each other. If you are very angry, please go into the room, see Krishna and please chant. After ten minutes you come out and you will forget why you were fighting in the first place (laughter).*" Another point he always said is, "*Always remember that getting married and thinking that marriage is happiness is a contradiction in terms. It does not work. If you accept it, your marriage is happy. If you do not accept it, you are in trouble*" and of course the famous point Maharaj said, "*Before wedding there is engagement ring, after that there is nice wedding ring but after two or three weeks there is suffering.*"(laughter) When he said all these things to these devotee couples, and counselled them, after a few moments they would say, "Alright! This is very nice" and they accepted Maharaj as their father.

Finally, H.G. Devakinandan Prabhuji heartily thanked H.G. Viraja Krishna Prabhuji and H.G.Tara Vilochana Prabhuji for having organized such a wonderful program to remember a wonderful devotee. The final word which Devaki Prabhuji spoke and we should always remember is that "***the real test when the spiritual master leaves is not only at the point when he has left but to imbibe the instructions in our heart as if it is the first day we met him as if it was the day we took initiation from him and keep that fire of devotional service and enthusiasm alive in our hearts and this can be done only in the loving association and cooperative spirit amongst the devotees.***"

Thank you very much for the opportunity to share this nectarean offering of Devaki Prabhuji.

H.D.G. Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj Gurudev ki Jai! H D G Srila Prabhupada ki Jai!

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,
Vaijayanti Mala devi dasi,
Abu Dhabi