

## Offering Obeisances with Body - Part 1

**Date:** 2014-10-16

**Author:** Narahari Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my dandavat pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

One of the important activities in devotional service is offering obeisances to the Lord and His devotees (especially the spiritual master). Even when devotees meet, they greet each other by saying "Haribol" or "Hare Krishna" and mutually offer obeisances. One also is advised to offer obeisances to elders, devatas, people who are learned in Vedas, saintly persons etc., Offering obeisances to the Lord is one of the nine types of bhakti and technically called '*vandanam*'. Srila Prabhupada explains in the commentary to the verse 7.5.23 as "***Vandanam means offering respectful obeisances*** . *man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yaaji maam namaskuru [Bg. 18.65]. Vandanam means namaskuru — offering obeisances or offering prayers.*"

When we offer obeisances to some one, we acknowledge that they are superior to us in some respect and accept our inferior position and this helps in cultivating humility. When offering obeisances to the Supreme Lord, it expresses our acknowledgement of Lord's Supremacy and our eternal subordination to Him. This action very much pleases the Lord. The shruti mantras (Narasimha Tapaniya Upanishad - (2.10) states that the Lord is called as "*namaami*" since He is offered obeisance by everyone.

*yasmād yam sarve devā namanti mumukṣavo brahmavādināscā  
pra nūnam brahmanaspatir mantram vadatyuktam  
yasmin indro varuno mitro aryamā devā okāmsi cakrire  
tasmād ucyate namāmi iti*

**Bhagavan Narasimha is called 'namaami', because He is being offered obeisance by all devas, all those who aspire for liberation and all those who are self realized and liberated. The Lord of the Vedas worship Him by chanting 'namaami' (I offer my obeisances to Him) and Indra, Mithra, Aryama and all other devas are supported by Him.**

The Bhagavata Purana advises that one should offer obeisances to the Lord with his body, mind and words and one who does this even in most difficult circumstances of his life becomes a rightful heir for entering the spiritual world.

*tat te 'nukampām su-samīkṣamāṇo  
bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtām vipākam  
hṛd-vāg-vapurbbhir vidadhan namas te  
jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk*

**My dear Lord, one who earnestly waits for You to bestow Your causeless mercy upon him, all the while patiently suffering the reactions of his past misdeeds and offering You respectful obeisances with his heart, words and body, is surely eligible for liberation, for it has become his rightful claim.**

One can offer obeisances with the body by falling flat like a rod in front of the Lord's deity or picture. One can offer obeisances to the Lord with his words by uttering the word '*namah*' or chanting mantras which contain '*namah*' like '*Om namo bhagavate vasudevaaya*' or '*Om namo Narayanaya*' etc. One can offer obeisances in mind also and cultivate a sense of detachment and understanding that everything belongs to the Lord. As for as offering obeisances with body we should make it as a practice when the body is fit. Because in old age we may not be able to offer obeisances as our body may not co-operate. As our beloved Guru Maharaj says, "***We must to bow down to the Lord voluntarily. Otherwise, when we grow old it will bend automatically because of old age.***" Bowing down to the Lord can be done by anyone regardless of the qualification and it is an easy way to attract the Lord's blessings.

Krishna willing, we will see in detail how different personalities attained the Lord's grace by offering obeisances by bowing down to the Lord.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Narahari Krishna das

Chennai.

## Offering Obeisances with Body - Part 2

**Date:** 2014-10-17

**Author:** Narahari Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my dandavat pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled "Offering Obeisances with Body". Let us continue to meditate further on this topic.

1. **Seeking forgiveness by offering obeisances:** One can offer obeisances to the Lord with his body by falling in front of the deity of the Lord. It is said that one should fall in front of the Lord, devatas, spiritual master and exalted personalities like a rod. When a rod is made to stand, it will just fall flat without considering time, place and situation. Offering obeisances like this is called '*Dandavat pranams*'. (*Danda-rod, vat-like*). Offering obeisance is also one of the ways to ask forgiveness for our offenses. We also see that when a person offends another person and realizes his mistake, sometimes the offender falls at the feet of the person whom he offended and asks for forgiveness. This is considered a very effective way of asking forgiveness.

In case of the relation between the Supreme Lord and us, our offenses to the Lord are unlimited. For many many life times we have turned away from Him and neglected Him. But however by the mercy of His devotees, we have received the seed of devotional service. Even after taking to bhakti, people like me do not realize the value of it and take devotional service for granted. We take the association and shelter of spiritual master as granted. When we chant the holy names we take the holy names for granted and this results in inattentiveness in chanting and commit lot of offenses. Same mentality extends to all forms of devotional service. The best way to seek forgiveness for all this is done by offering obeisance to the deity/picture and also pray for the sincerity so that we will not commit offenses. This attitude is shown by Arjuna when the Lord showed the universal form. Arjuna asked for forgiveness for taking the Lord for granted without knowing the Lord's glories and treated Him like an ordinary friend. He says in Bhagavad Gita verse 11.44,

*tasmāt praṇamya praṇidhāya kāyaṁ  
prasādaye tvām aham īśam īḍyam  
pīteva putrasya sakheva sakhyuḥ  
priyaḥ priyāyārhasi deva soḍhum*

**You are the Supreme Lord, to be worshiped by every living being. Thus I fall down to offer You my respectful obeisances and ask Your mercy. As a father tolerates the impudence of his son, or a friend tolerates the impertinence of a friend, or a wife tolerates the familiarity of her partner, please tolerate the wrongs I may have done You.**

Krishna willing we shall meditate further on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Narahari Krishna das

Chennai.

### Offering Obeisances with Body - Part 3

**Date:** 2014-10-18

**Author:** Narahari Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my dandavat pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Gurudeva.

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled "Offering Obeisances with Body". In our last offering, we discussed on how we can seek forgiveness by offering obeisances. Today we will continue to hear on this point.

1. **Seeking Forgiveness by Offering Obeisances:** In the Ramayana also we see an incident where a demon kakasura was saved by falling at the Lord's feet even though He committed a grievous offense against mother Sita. Once Lord Rama and Mother Sita were relaxing at the bank of a river during their forest life. At that time, a crow (It was actually Jayanta, the son of Indra who came in the form of a crow) flew to that place and started attacking mother Sita. She became angry and took a piece of stone and threw at the crow ; the crow flew away a little but again and again came near Sita to attack. Lord Rama started laughing at this incident. This made mother Sita upset and she cried and became tired. Eventually Lord Rama consoled her and made her rest on His lap. After sleeping for a while, it was Lord Rama's turn to rest and He slept on her lap. At that time, the crow which was hiding nearby came to mother Sita started attacking her again by pricking in between her breasts. This caused blood to flow and the drops of blood fell on the face of Lord Rama who was sleeping in her lap. Lord Rama woke up and saw mother Sita's injury caused by the crow. He became furious and asked, "Sita, who caused this harm to you?" and He saw the crow standing nearby. The Lord took small piece of grass and chanted the mantras for invoking brahmastra. The blade of grass then became brahmastra and started chasing the crow. The crow became very much scared of its life and started roaming all the worlds seeking for shelter. But it did not get shelter anywhere and *finally sought refuge under Lord Rama Himself*, by falling at His feet. This is stated in the Ramayana as follows:

*sa pitrā ca parityaktaḥ suraiḥ sarvair maharṣibhiḥ trīṃl lokān samparikramya tvām eva śaraṇaṃ gataḥ  
taṃ tvaṃ nipatitaṃ bhūmau śaraṇyaḥ śaraṇāgatam vadhārham api kākutstha kṛpayā paryapālayaḥ*

**Roaming the three worlds in search of a savior, that crow was abandoned by Indra; its own father, all the devatas and the sages. Finally, it sought refuge in the same Rama. That Lord Rama, who affords protection to those who surrendered to Him, was compassionate and protected that crow, which fell on the ground (offering obeisances) and sought for protection, even though it was apt to be killed.**

When it fell, its feet was pointing towards Lord Rama. *Mother Sita became compassionate on the crow* and she placed crow in such a way that its head was pointing the Lord's feet. Lord Rama then said to the crow, "*As you have surrendered at my feet, definitely I will not kill you. But this brahmastra cannot be wasted. So please tell me what to do now*". Then the crow said, "Please let Your arrow shoot my right eye". Then that brahmastra shot the right eye of the crow without harming its life. The crow then offered his obeisances again to the Lord ships Sri Sita Rama and flew away."

We can see that in the above story that the offense of the crow to mother Sita and Lord Rama was so grave that no one in the three worlds wanted to offer protection, when the crow approached them. All the sages, devatas and even Lord Indra who is the father of the crow abandoned it. They thought that the best punishment for the crow is death for its offense towards mother Sita. Even then, the Lord saved the crow. Later we see that Ravana also kidnapped mother Sita but he did not physically harm her. His offense towards Sita was lesser than the offense committed by the crow. But he was killed by the Lord. This is because the difference is that the crow surrendered and asked for forgiveness by offering obeisances with a repentant heart whereas Ravana did not offer his obeisances to the Lord or asked for forgiveness. And we also see that the Lord gave ample opportunities to both the crow and Ravana for surrender. The brahmastra could have killed the crow immediately. But it chased the crow to different places allowing it to seek shelter everywhere without killing so that the crow may realize its mistake and come back to Lord Rama for surrender. Same is the thing with Ravana. He did not kill Ravana immediately. He gave ample opportunities to correct himself and surrender and when it did not happen, the Lord killed him.

This incident proves the offering obeisances to the Lord with a repentant heart asking for forgiveness invokes His great compassion. But the purpose of offering obeisance does not end with asking for forgiveness only but is an expression of our love for the Lord which we will see in the next offering Krishna willing.

Yours in the service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,  
Narahari Krishna das  
Chennai.

## Offering Obeisances with Body - Part 4

**Date:** 2014-10-19

**Author:** Narahari Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my dandavat pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled "Offering Obeisances with Body". We have been meditating on seeking forgiveness by offering obeisances to the Lord and His devotees. Now we shall continue further.

2. **Offering obeisances is beginning of devotional service:** The Lord states in Bhagavad Gita (9.34) the one should offer obeisance to Him as follows.

*man-manā bhava mad-bhakto mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru  
mām evaiśyasi yuktvaivam ātmānaṁ mat-parāyaṇaḥ*

**Engage your mind always in thinking of Me, become My devotee, offer obeisances to Me and worship Me. Being completely absorbed in Me, surely you will come to Me.**

The same instruction is repeated in 18.65 again where the Lord states "*mām namaskuru*" to emphasize the importance. Srila Prabhupada explains in the commentary, "*There are hundreds of thousands of temples in India for the worship of Krishna, and devotional service is practiced there. When such practice is made, one has to offer obeisance to Krishna. One should lower his head before the Deity and engage his mind, his body, his activities — everything. That will make one fully absorbed in Krishna without deviation.*"

The following incident from the life of Srila Prabhupada explains how offering obeisances, ~~even unintentionally~~, pleases the Lord and we make a beginning in the path of devotional service.

Once Srila Prabhupada was translating books in his room in a temple abroad. At that time a person fully drunk entered the temple. He smelled obnoxious and could not even walk properly because of heavy drinking. Devotees in the temple were annoyed by this and they went to Srila Prabhupada and told him, "Prabhupada, a drunkard fully drunk has entered the temple. What shall we do?" Srila Prabhupada's eyes became bright and said, "Is it? Good!!!" The devotees were shocked at this reply. By this time, the person came inside and stood in front of the deity. One more devotee complained, "Prabhupada, that fellow is now standing in front of the deity". Srila Prabhupada said, "Oh it is very good. He is taking darshan also." The devotees were more shocked at this reply. By this time, that person fell down because of instability due to over-drinking. One more devotee came and complained to Prabhupada, "That person fell down in front of the deities." Srila Prabhupada became very happy and said, "Wonderful!!! that means he has offered obeisance also." Then the devotees asked, "Prabhupada, that person fell in front of the deities because he was unstable due to drinking and not for offering obeisances." Srila Prabhupada explained, "*Yes. But even though he fell down because of instability, Krishna will take it that he has offered obeisances and give His blessings for beginning his bhakti.*"

Krishna willing we shall continue to meditate more on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Narahari Krishna das

Chennai.

## Offering Obeisances with Body - Part 5

**Date:** 2014-10-20

**Author:** Narahari Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my dandavat pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled "**Offering Obeisances with Body**". We have been meditating on the below points.

1. Seeking forgiveness by offering obeisances.
2. Offering obeisances is beginning of devotional service.

Now let us continue further.

3. **Consequence of not offering obeisances:** While the scriptures glorify the act of bowing down to the Lord, they also equally condemn people who do not bow down to the Lord and explains the consequences of not bowing down to Him. In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 2.3.21, Sukadeva Goswami says as follows:

*bhāraḥ paraṁ paṭṭa-kirīṭa-juṣṭam apy uttamāṅgaṁ na namen mukundam  
śāvau karau no kurute saparyāṁ harer lasat-kāñcana-kañkaṇau vā*

**The upper portion of the body, though crowned with a silk turban, is only a heavy burden if not bowed down before the Personality of Godhead who can award mukti [freedom].**

Srila Prabhupada explains in the purport to the above verse, "*But the common man, who is expected to become at least a third-class devotee, is advised herein to visit the temple of the Lord and bow down before the Deity, even though he may be a very rich man or even a king with a silk turban or crown. The Lord is the Lord of everyone, including the great kings and emperors, and men who are rich in the estimation of mundane people must therefore make it a point to visit the temple of Lord Sri Krishna and regularly bow down before the Deity...The common man who is puffed up with his material position and does not bow down before the Deity of the Lord in the temple, or who defies temple worship without any knowledge of the science, must know that his so-called turban or crown will only succeed in further drowning him in the water of the ocean of material existence.*"

Also in the Bhagavata purana verse 6.3.29, Yamaraj tells his assistants to bring to him those sinful persons who do not bow down to the Lord even once. (*kṛṣṇāya no namati yac-chira ekadāpi*)

In Sri Prahlada school in Rajkot, all the school children come in queue and each one of them bow down to the deity and Srila Prabhupada before they go to the class. When our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj was physically present, they used to bow down before Maharaj and now they bow down to his picture. In this way, their daily studies very nicely start by offering obeisances to the Lord and His devotees.

Krishna willing we shall continue to meditate more on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Narahari Krishna das

Chennai.

## Offering Obeisances with Body - Part 6

**Date:** 2014-10-21

**Author:** Narahari Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my dandavat pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled "Offering Obeisances with Body". We have been meditating on the below points.

1. Seeking forgiveness by offering obeisances.
2. Offering obeisances is beginning of devotional service.
3. Consequence of not offering obeisances.

In this offering we will see how we can counter a bewildering situation by offering obeisances to the Lord.

**4. Counter bewildering situations by offering obeisances:** We can learn this from the following pastime of Mother Yashoda with Lord Krishna. Once Lord Krishna swallowed dirt and Balaram and other friends complained to Mother Yashoda about this. Mother Yashoda chastised the Lord and the Lord replied, "I did not eat dirt and my friends complaining against me are liars." Mother Yashoda then asked Him to open His mouth so that she can examine whether He has eaten dirt. When the Lord opened His mouth, Yashoda could see in His mouth, the entire cosmic manifestation with moving and non-moving entities, actions and reactions of karma and the modes of nature etc. She also could see the Vrindavana Dhama and herself also Lord Krishna within His mouth. She became fearful and doubtful of her son's nature on seeing this unbelievable sight.

She thought whether the vision is a dream, or an illusory creation by the external energy created by devatas or hallucination created by her own intelligence. She analyzed each of these possibilities and ruled them out and finally concluded that it might be due to some mystic power of Her son which she could not understand. Then she decided to surrender unto the Lord as follows. In Srimad Bhagavatam verse 10.8.41 she says,

*atho yathāvan na vitarka-gocaram ceto-manaḥ-karma-vacobhir añjasā  
yad-āśrayam yena yataḥ pratīyate sudurvibhāvyaṁ praṇatāsmi tat-padam*

**Therefore let me surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead and offer my obeisances unto Him, who is beyond the conception of human speculation, the mind, activities, words and arguments, who is the original cause of this cosmic manifestation, by whom the entire cosmos is maintained, and by whom we can conceive of its existence. Let me simply offer my obeisances, for He is beyond my contemplation, speculation and meditation. He is beyond all of my material activities.**

Here mother Yashoda teaches us by her own example how to encounter a bewildering situation. Srila Prabhupada explains in his purport to the above verse, "*Mother Yashoda, being a simple woman, could not find out the real cause of the vision; therefore, out of maternal affection, she simply offered obeisances unto the Supreme Lord to protect her child. She could do nothing but offer obeisances to the Lord. It is said, acintyāḥ khalu ye bhāvā na tāms tarkeṇa yojayet (Mahabharata, Bhishma parva 5.22). One should not try to understand the supreme cause by argument or reasoning.*"

Krishna willing we shall continue to meditate more on this topic in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Narahari Krishna das

Chennai.

## Offering Obeisances with Body - Part 7

**Date:** 2014-10-22

**Author:** Narahari Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my dandavat pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled "Offering Obeisances with Body". We have been meditating on the below points.

1. Seeking forgivance by offering obeisances.
2. Offering obeisances is beginning of devotional service.
3. Consequence of not offering obeisances.
4. Counter bewildering situations by offering obeisances.

In this offering we shall continue to meditate on the above point.

**4. Counter bewildering situations by offering obeisances:** As aspiring devotees, both in material and spiritual lives, we come across bewildering situation and suffering. We use our intelligence as far as possible to analyze the cause of that suffering. This analysis may give some intellectual satisfaction. But ultimately, this analysis will not solve our anxiety. In that case we can try to take the example of Yashoda and offer obeisances to the Lord.

Srila Prabhupada further writes in his purport to Srimad Bhagavatam verse 10.8.41, "**When we are beset by some problem for which we can find no reason, there is no alternative than to surrender to the Supreme Lord and offer Him our respectful obeisances. Then our position will be secure.** This was the means adopted in this instance also by Mother Yashoda. Whatever happens, the original cause is the Supreme Personality of Godhead (sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam). When the immediate cause cannot be ascertained, let us simply offer our obeisances at the lotus feet of the Lord. Mother Yashoda concluded that the wonderful things she saw within the mouth of her child were due to Him, although she could not clearly ascertain the cause."

Once when I discussed with our beloved spiritual master HH Mahavishnu Goswami Maharaj about the problems faced by one of our God brothers and some situations in my life I asked, "Maharaj, why such things happen? How our destiny affects/controls our life?" Maharaj answered, "*For whatever happens, if you do not come to the conclusion that Krishna is the cause of all causes, you will always be in anxiety.*" So as advised by Srila Prabhupada if we try to offer obeisances to the Lord, the suffering may not immediately go away, but we will be blessed with the strength to face that fearlessly. The famous shloka from Mahabharata (12.47.28) confirms this.

*atasee pushpa sa'nkaasam peeta-vaasasam acyutam  
ye namasyanti govindam na tesham vidyate bhayam*

**There is no fear for those who bow down before Govinda, whose color resembles that of the atasee flower, who is clad in yellow peetambaram, and who never lets His devotees fall.**

Krishna willing, we will see more on the glories of offering obeisances in the subsequent offering.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Narahari Krishna das

Chennai.

## Offering Obeisances with Body - Part 8

**Date:** 2014-10-24

**Author:** Narahari Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my dandavat pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

This is in continuation of the previous offering titled "Offering Obeisances with Body". We have been meditating on the glories of offering obeisances to the Lord and His devotees. Now let us continue further.

**5. Offering obeisances is the method of surrender:** This is the method advised by all great authorities such as devotees and sages for all living entities. In previous offering, we saw that one should surrender to the Lord by offering obeisances when we encounter a bewildering situation /suffering. But is very easily said than done. This is because when we are bewildered or suffering, sometimes we tend to go away from the Lord and we tend to think that only bhakti is causing all the problems in life. Or sometimes we wrongly think that the Lord is testing us and that is why we are suffering and hence become angry with Him. And sometimes our rebellious mind tells us that we can put an end to all suffering by leaving spiritual life. With all these thoughts we will not be able to offer obeisance to the Lord on our own, as we are not elevated like Mother Yashoda. In these circumstances, great devotees show that the association of devotees helps a lot and their guidance inspire us to offer obeisance to the Lord even in the most trying circumstances. This is because the devotees always practice bhakti by glorifying the Lord and offering obeisances as stated below in Bhagavad Gita and they can guide us in doing the same.

BG 9.14

*satataṁ kirtayanto mām yatantaś ca dṛḍha-vratāḥ  
namasyantaś ca mām bhaktyā nitya-yuktā upāsate*

**Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, bowing down before Me, these great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion.**

When we associate with them, they will guide and inspire us in difficult situations to continue bhakti. This can be seen in the lives of Pandavas. When their kingdom and property was taken away and they were sent to forest, Maharaja Yudhishtira met many saintly persons and Rshis in the forest. To every single one of them he asked the question, "I am following the path of dharma and I am suffering and Duryodhana and his allies are following adharmā and they are living in prosperity. This frustrates and bewilders me. What should I do now?" Each of the sages gave a different explanation for Pandava's sufferings such as destiny, time etc. But when they were asked, "What I should do now?", they all gave a single answer which is surrender to the Lord. Finally they met sage Markandeya and all the sages advised the Pandavas to take his advice. The great sage also gave his explanation of why Pandavas suffered and he also explained in great detail the Lord's greatness and concluded his speech by stating,

Mahabharata, Aranya Parva, 161-55

*sarveshaameva lokaanaam / pitaa maataa ca maadhavah  
gacchadhvameenam sharanam sharanyam purusharshabhaah*

**Madhava is both the father and the mother of all the worlds. Oh, the best of men, seek refuge under that Saviour by surrendering to Him.**

As sincere devotees, all the Pandavas immediately executed that advice by bowing down to the Lord as stated below:

Mahabharata Aranya Parva, 161-56

*evamuktaashrayah paarthaa / yamau ca bharatarshabha  
draupadyaa sahaatah sarve / namashcakruh janaardanam*

**When Markandeya gave them this advice, the three sons of Kunti and the twins, Oh the best of the Bharatas, immediately offered obeisances to Janardana along with Draupadi.**

So if we have the association of devotees who can understand our problems and who are concerned about us, then by the strength of their mercy we can continue our bhakti and offer obeisances in all circumstances.

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Narahari Krishna das

Chennai.

## Offering Obeisances with Body - Part 9

**Date:** 2014-10-25

**Author:** Narahari Krishna das

Hare Krishna Prabhujis and Matajis,

Please accept my dandavat pranams. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva.

This is in conclusion of the previous offering titled "Offering Obeisances with Body". We have been meditating on the glories of offering obeisances to the Lord and His devotees in various circumstances. In this concluding offering, we will see that offering obeisances to the Lord is the activity done by all elevated personalities and perfected devotees to express their love and surrender when they see the Lord in person in His different manifestations. By this act, they also proclaim to the world, that the Lord is worshipable by all. So offering obeisances is not an activity done during practice of devotional service alone. It is done when we become perfect in devotion and see the Lord and also serve Him in the spiritual world. It is an eternal activity for all living entities. Also the Lord says in Bhagavad Gita that the goal of all Vedas is understand and love Him and surrender to Him. Bowing down to the Lord is an expression of our surrender. And the pranava (Om) is the essence of all the Vedas. The meaning of pravana is nicely stated in (Atharva Sikha up) as follows:

*sarvān prāṇān paramātmāni pranamayati etasmād praṇavaḥ*

**Om is called Pranava because instructs and makes all the living entities to bow down before the Supreme Lord (Paramatma)**

So the essence of all Vedas is to offer obeisances to the Lord by bowing down before Him and great devotees have demonstrated this. In Bhagavad Gita, we see that when the Lord displayed His universal form to Arjuna, Arjuna saw the all perfected beings, sages and devatas were bowing down to the Lord. He offered His obeisances and said, "*sarve namasyanti ca siddha-saṅghāḥ*" - "**All perfected beings are offering homage to you**". He also states, "**O great one, greater even than Brahma, You are the original creator. Why then should they not offer their respectful obeisances unto You?**"(11.37)

Srila Prabhupada explains in the purport, "*By this offering of obeisances, Arjuna indicates that Krishna is worshipable by everyone.... Arjuna also thought that it was fitting that all the perfect living entities and powerful demigods offer their respectful obeisances unto Him, because no one is greater than Him...Therefore Brahma and Lord Shiva, who is born of Brahma, and all other demigods must offer their respectful obeisances.*" From Bhagavata purana we learn that the first thing done by all devotees when they see Him in person is to offer all obeisances. In this regard, it is said about Dhruva Maharaja, "*When Dhruva Maharaja saw his Lord just in front of him, he was greatly agitated and offered Him obeisances and respect. He fell flat before Him like a rod and became absorbed in love of Godhead.*(4.9.3)"

Another example was the great devotee Prahlada Maharaj. After Bhagavan Narasimha appeared and killed Hiranyakashipu, all different personalities offered their prayers and still the Lord's anger did not subside. Finally they asked Prahalad Maharaj to pacify the Lord. The first act done by Prahlada was to fall at the Lord's feet and this greatly pleased Bhagavan Narasimha and He blessed Prahlad by placing His hand on his head. The Bhagavata purana verse 7.9.4 and 5 states this as follows:

*tatheti śanakai rājan mahā-bhāgavato 'rbhakaḥ  
upetya bhuvī kāyena nanāma vidhṛtāñjaliḥ*

*sva-pāda-mūle patitaṁ tam arbhakaṁ  
vilokya devaḥ kṛpayā pariplutaḥ  
utthāpya tac-chīrṣṇy adadhāt karāmbujam  
kālahi-vitrasta-dhiyām kṛtābhayam*

**Narada Muni continued, O King, although the exalted devotee Prahlada Maharaja was only a little boy, he accepted Lord Brahma's words. He gradually proceeded toward Lord Nrsimhadeva and fell down to offer his respectful obeisances with folded hands. When Lord Nrsimhadeva saw the small boy Prahlada Maharaja prostrated at the soles of His lotus feet, He became most ecstatic in affection toward His devotee.**

So let us all follow in the steps of all these great devotees and bow down to the Lord and His devotees in submission. When we do this regularly when our body is fit, the Lord is very pleased and guides us to make our surrender perfect and takes us out of this material world as confirmed in the following sloka. (Ahibudhnya Samhita).

*namaskaaraatmakam yasmai vidyaatma nivedanam  
tyakta dhukokilaan kaamaan aashnu te tam namaamyaham*

**I bow to the Lord Nrsimha to whom, having surrendered his self which is expressed by bowing down with all humility, a man gets rid of all his suffering and enjoys all his spiritual desires.**

Thank you very much.

Yours in service of Srila Prabhupada and Srila Gurudeva,

Narahari Krishna das

Chennai.