

Sri Sri Guru Gaurangau Jayatah
Bhakti Vedanta Institute
Princeton University Harinama
Princeton, NJ
February 1, 2014

After a very long winter hiatus, our little Harinama group came back to the Bhakti Vedanta Institute (BVI) office at Princeton University. where, Rasaraja das Prabhu and I went out to the beautiful campus for Harinama, After Harinam, we came back to the office for sanga with Sripad Bhakti Madhava Puri Maharaj, Ph.D. (Sripad Puri Maharaj). Before opening sanga, Rasaraja das Prabhu lead kirtan with Śrī Guru Ārati^[1] *“jaya jaya gurudever ārati ujjoala, govardhana-pāda-pīthe bhuvana-maṅgala,”* the glorification of Śrīla Bhakti Sundar Govinda Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj, his Gurudev (spiritual teacher).



Rasaraja das Prabhu on kartals with Sripad Puri Maharaj during kirtan

Keeping in line with the “Super Bowl” fever here in the USA, Sripad Puri Maharaj opened sanga by reading about “The Super Subject” from the “Subjective Evolution of the Consciousness - The Play of the Sweet Absolute” written by Founder-Achārya of Sri Chaitanya Sāraswat Math Srila Bhakti Raksak Sridhar Dev-Goswāmī Mahārāj (Srila Sridhar Maharaj). “The Super Subject” chapter opened with the question: How can we apply proper discrimination and judgment in our search for knowledge of the Infinite? To which, Srila Sridhar Mahārāj responded that “Discrimination may take place in different planes, but it must have a connection with the higher plane. Judgment and discrimination should be in the right plane. Judgment and discrimination come from our side,

but our progress depends on the favor of the higher side. It must have that connection, so surrender is required.”

To further elaborate on that chapter, Sripad Puri Maharaj said, ““one man had asked Srila Sridhar Mahārāj, how can the finite come in touch with or approach the infinite, since it is so big? How can we understand something so big if we can’t have a grasp of it?” In response he said, “He can reveal Himself to us. He can come to us, that’s how we can know the infinite, not by our effort but by His grace. He can connect with us otherwise He would not be infinite.” Sobha Mandava asked if the Super Subject, Sri Krishna, can reach down to us. “He can reach down to us otherwise He would not be infinite. If there’s something He cannot do, then He is not infinite!” Sripad Puri Maharaj responded. “Only if He comes down to us, then we have some chance of understanding something of what that Super Subject is.” So how do we get Sri Krishna to come down to us? In response, he said, “We can only cry for His mercy. ‘Oh dear Lord, I have no chance of coming in Your connection, only if You bestow Your mercy upon me then, by Your Will it may be possible. I am not qualified. I am only doing the wrong things. I do not even know how to think properly so what chance do I have in knowing You unless we apply to Your Mercy Department.’”

Smilingly Sripad Puri Maharaj continued, “Srila Guru Maharaj used to say that there’s a Justice Department and a Mercy Department. According to the Justice Department, ‘I am a criminal!’ based on all I have done in my life. I have no hope with the Justice Department, so I am appealing to the Mercy Department. Mercy may come at any time for any person, regardless of their worth. If we can get the mercy of the Lord then we can have some chance, otherwise ‘I have no possibility.’ Very humbly and submissively we have to prostrate ourselves before the Lord. ‘Dear Lord, without You I am lost and with You, my life can be meaningful again. I am begging You for Your mercy.’”

In further explaining our submissive attitude towards the Lord, Sripad Puri Maharaj quoted the journey of Srila Prabhupada ^[2] on the Indian freighter-ship, Jaladuta, from India to New York in 1966, where he had suffered possibly two heart-attacks. “He was an old (69-years) man and not used to all that hardship but because his Gurudev told him to preach in English to the Western world, with a very humble, submissive attitude towards Sri Krishna he went,” Sripad Puri Maharaj said. “He suffered so much on that journey. There, while lying in bed, he said simply, ‘Oh Krishna I am your puppet. If You want to kill me or if you want to save me, I place myself totally in Your hands. You can do whatever You want with me but I am coming here (USA) on the order of Sarasvati Thakur^[3] and because he is very dear to You, then you will kindly allow me to serve him so I can make him happy for You,’” Sripad Puri Maharaj continued. “Krishna has difficulty pleasing His devotees because they do not want

anything. They don't want any reciprocation for their service. They just want to serve, not looking for some rewards like a businessman. 'I want to serve and remember You always. That is my happiness, my fulfillment.' So like that Srila Prabhupada was praying. Krishna bestowed so much mercy on him that he created the International Society for Krishna Consciousness with thousands of devotees and hundreds of Mandirs (temples) worldwide. "

"This is the process. Results are not based on our doing. Who can teach those people in *maya* (illusion) about Krishna consciousness? Who can convince them? They are so busy with their degrees, and so many other businesses, and their super bowls and what not, so who can convince them about Krishna consciousness? I don't think anyone feels they can do that, but if Krishna wants, and if we just pray to Him, 'dear Lord I want to serve You, I don't know if I may succeed, but if You desire that, then that is Your will. I can only be the obedient servant. I am Your servant in waiting,'" Sripad Puri Maharaj said, then asked, if we knew what does it mean to be a servant in waiting? In response he said, "Krishna may not want anything from us. He may ignore us, but still I don't stop being His servant. I am waiting upon His desire. When He gives that opportunity to me I will be very happy that I can do something."



Sobha Mandava and Rasaraja das Prabhu listen as Sripad Puri Maharaj reads

"Everyone is in waiting I feel," Sobha ji said. "Yes, that's why we need association, *sadhu sanga*, the *sastras* (scriptures), the *vaisnavas*, the *sadhu*, and especially the Holy Names of Krishna and Guru. They all help us," Sripad Puri Maharaj responded. "If we have an affectionate attachment, Guru bhakti, then we have a very secure anchor deep within our heart to always remember Krishna

and Guru. When attachment to Guru comes into our heart, its love. That attachment will help us because we will not forget Gurudev and Krishna so easily. It's not just mental but heart-felt. That attachment to the transcendental personality is what is meant by the Super Subject - that which includes everything." After a brief pause Sripad Puri Maharaj asked what the super bowl means. "It is the match of the best of all the teams that were playing all year long, that's why they are the best players."

"Krishna is our friend, well-wisher and our salvation from the reactionary environment. He's the fulfillment of our lives. Everyone is searching for pleasure, beauty, and love. We just need to recognize the Super Subject, who is there within our heart. 'Heart within and God overhead' - we have our sincerity within our heart and God is also there in our heart. No matter what we are searching for, He will always be there and when we will turn our attention to Him, then we will find our satisfaction, the fulfillment of what we are searching for, because Sri Krishna, Reality the Beautiful, is what we are searching for," Sripad Puri Maharaj further explained.

"Krishna means pleasure. The reservoir of all *rasas* (pleasures)! All fulfillments you are seeking in different kinds of pleasure, you will find in Krishna to the highest degree. His form (*vigraha*) is *sat-cit-ananda* (eternal, fully conscious and blissful). So what else do we want? Is there anything greater you can achieve than eternity, bliss and complete knowledge? Can you think of anything more than that?" Sripad Puri Maharaj asked his audience. "Who is not looking for such a thing? If somebody came to you and said he wants to give you eternity, bliss and knowledge as a gift, will you say 'oh, no I am not interested? I want to go to the super bowl?" The audience roared in laughter at this comment. "When I heard the devotees saying you can get *sat-cit-ananda*, I said 'tell me how.' I would be foolish to say I don't want that, I am not interested.'" Sobha ji responded that she thinks only "foolish and ignorant people will say like this."

The Super Subject means the *Paramatma* (the Infinite). How do we get the attention of the infinite? Sripad Puri Maharaj asked then responded, "By chanting the Mahamantra (*Hare Kṛṣṇa Hare Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa Hare Hare / Hare Rāma Hare Rāma Rāma Rāma Hare Hare*). In the higher stage we are glorifying Krishna in self forgetfulness. When chanting, we may also be calling 'Krishna don't forget me. I am Your eternal servant drowning in this material world.' Hare Kṛṣṇa is a call, 'help me to always remember You, and to engage in Your service. Don't leave me here bereft of Your service,'" Sripad Puri Maharaj further clarified the significance of chanting the Mahamantra.



Rasaraja das Prabhu, guest: Sai Chandra Mandava with Sripad Puri Maharaj.

In closing, Sripad Puri Maharaj chanted the Pancha Tattva Mahamantra (*jaya sri-krishna-caitanya prabhu nityananda / sri-advaita gadadhara srivasadi-gaura-bhakta-vrinda*) followed by the Maha Mantra. Rasaraja das Prabhu accompanied on kartals.

Prasadam was served and honored by all.

All Glories to Sri Guru and Sri Sri Gauranga
Srila Bhakti Nirmal Acharya Maharaja ki jai
Sripad Bhakti Madhava Puri Maharaj ki jai

Your humble servant
Kushum devi dasi

[1] <http://scsmath.com/books/KirtanGuide7thEd-pdf-of-iPadApp-1203.pdf>

[2] His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada is the founder Acharya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)

[3] Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur Prabhupada, (Feb 6, 1874 – Dec 31, 1937), was a preacher of Gaudiya Vaishnavism throughout India in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bhaktisiddhanta_Sarasvati_Thakura

To continue our preaching programs, we are completely dependent on the mercy of the Lord through His devotees.

Donations

<https://ipn.intuit.com/pay/BhaktivedantaInstitute>