

Bhakti Caru Swami

Recently one of our god-brothers, Nityananda das adhikari, wrote a book called, "Someone has Poisoned Me" and alleged that the cause of Srila Prabhupada's disappearance from this planet is arsenic poisoning, and the ones who were serving His Divine Grace at that time administered him that poison. Since I was one of Srila Prabhupada's personal servants at that time, taking care of his food and medicines, according to that book, I am naturally a suspect. When I first heard about this allegation I considered it to be so absurd that I did not think it deserved any response. I could not even imagine that anyone with a rational mind would give any credence to such an allegation. However, yesterday I received a COM message from Hari Sauri prabhu, one of Srila Prabhupada's personal servants and the author of "The Transcendental Diary", saying, " The (poison) issue must be dealt with directly. That must include direct statements from yourself (Tamal Krishna Goswami), Bhakti Caru, Bhavananda, Jayapataka et. al. When the persons that were there present their experiences collectively it makes a very powerful statement. I want to repeat, it MUST be done." Therefore, I felt somewhat compelled to write this statement.

Just in case you do not know me and wondering why Hari Sauri Prabhu is asking me to address this issue, I will give a brief introduction about myself - I am one of the last disciples of Srila Prabhupada. I met His Divine Grace in January of 1977. In March, during the Gaura-Purnima Festival, in Mayapur, he gave me first and second initiations. He personally appointed me as his secretary for Indian affairs. Once he instructed me not to get involved with any woman and offer this life completely to Krsna, and soon after that, in May, he gave me sannyasa in Sridham Vrindavan. I had the good fortune to serve His Divine Grace's transcendental body until his disappearance pastime from this planet.

From Srila Prabhupada we learned that a vaisnava does not defend himself. Therefore, in this response to Nityananda dasa's allegation I will not try to defend myself, however I feel it is my solemn duty to defend those who are innocent, with my honest testimony.

The author of the book is accusing Tamal Krishna Goswami as the main suspect. I do not know how well Nityananda dasa knows Tamal Krsna Maharaj and how closely he associated with him, but while serving Srila Prabhupada I had the opportunity to associate with him very closely and lived with him in the same room for about seven months. During those days I saw what a deep love and respect he had for Srila Prabhupada, and I also saw what a deep confidence His Divine Grace had in him. Tamal Krsna Maharaj has a very heavy side but one should not judge him only from that point of view. He has a very soft side as well. Anyone who knows him knows well how aggressive and demanding he can be and to live with him for seven months was not always easy for me, to say the least. Yet I will honestly admit that I have seen his other side also and I have many sweet memories of my days with him. I have received elder brotherly affection and care from him that created a deep bond between us. Although from time to time we experienced our differences yet our relationship remained intact. I decided to mention about this perception of mine because I have seen many a times some devotees carry an inaccurate image of other devotees that obscure their perception.

It is quite interesting to note that although Nityananda dasa wrote one whole book based on some whispers and an incorrect and dubious analysis of some hairs, he was nowhere near Srila Prabhupada in those days in Vrindavan. If he was then he would have seen how absurd his suspicion and accusation is. If he was present then he would have seen, what to speak of poisoning Srila Prabhupada, the devotees around Srila Prabhupada were praying to Krsna to let Srila Prabhupada stay on this planet in exchange of their lives. It is extremely unfortunate that Nityananda dasa is so obsessed with some whispers, but he is not listening to the exchanges that are so loud and clear. If he was present there then he would have seen that just a couple of days before Srila Prabhupada

left this planet he told his very intimate god-brother, Srila Krsnadasa Babaji Maharaj, with tears rolling down from his eyes, "See, how much they love me!" If he were attending Srila Prabhupada in the early hours in Vrindavan, he would have heard Srila Prabhupada as soon as his Divine Grace woke up, "Where is Tamal? Ask him to come to me." And then he would have seen a very sweet loving exchange between them. Srila Prabhupada talking to him about the affairs of the movement, his various concerns about the future of this movement and what should be done to protect this movement.

If Nityananda dasa was present there then he would have also seen that there were hundreds of devotees whose hearts were so full with their love for Srila Prabhupada that they were prepared to do anything for him. There were personalities like Gurukripa, who used to attend Srila Prabhupada everyday from 12 midnight to 2 in the morning. If Srila Prabhupada really suspected that someone had poisoned him, then all he had to do is just tell Gurukripa. Anyone who knows Gurukripa knows what would have happened then. And it is not only Gurukripa, Srila Prabhupada had to just tell any one of the few hundred devotees that were there, and one can only imagine what the reaction would have been like.

Those who are suspecting that Srila Prabhupada has been poisoned by some of his disciples, I will request them to go deep within their hearts and ask whether it is at all possible for a Vaisnava, who does not even kill an ant, to murder his spiritual master. One evening I was with Tamal Krishna Maharaj in our room in Vrindavan. A mosquito was sucking his blood sitting on his leg. It had become quite bloated with the blood that it sucked from his body. A sudden pain from the bite made Tamal Krishna Maharaj aware of that mosquito. His hand rose in a natural reflex to strike that little creature, but stopped all of a sudden, and then it came down slowly and flicked the mosquito away from his leg. The person who would not even kill the mosquito that was sucking his blood, how can anyone think that he gave poison to his spiritual master.

Srila Prabhupada went to Vrindavan in May from Hrisikesa to leave his body. Everyone present there was aware of that. The conspiracy to eliminate him was not the reality rather the reality was intense prayer to Krsna not to let Srila Prabhupada go away from their midst.

I personally learned a wonderful lesson from this allegation. I must have developed some pride due to my good fortune in serving Srila Prabhupada those days. Now Krsna, the destroyer of pride, is mercifully taking care of that. While I, due to my false ego, was feeling proud that I served Krsna's pure devotee, the world is seeing me as the one who gave him poison. It is indeed Krsna's causeless mercy. I used to feel very impressed by one statement of Srila Prabodhananda Saraswati, a very intimate

associate of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and the uncle of Srila Gopal Bhatta Goswami, "If the whole world glorifies me but Krsna does not recognize me then what is the use of that glorification. If the whole world spits at me but Krsna recognises me then who cares about that spitting."

Very mercifully Krsna is giving me the opportunity to apply this wonderful instruction in my own life. This allegation is making me aware about the futility of mundane adoration and importance of Krsna's recognition. No matter what the world thinks, Krsna knows everything. Therefore what is the use of worrying about my image in this world? After all, sitting in my heart Krsna knows about all that do and I think. The conditioned souls of this material world may make mistakes in their judgement, but Krsna will never make any mistake. I have taken shelter of Him and surrendered myself unto Him; now let Him decide what I deserve.

To this world I will declare clear and loudly, "IT IS AN ABSOLUTELY ABSURD ALLEGATION THAT SRILA PRABHUPADA HAS BEEN POISONED BY HIS DISCIPLES. IF ANYONE INTENTIONALLY POISONED SRILA PRABHUPADA, THEN IT MUST BE ME BECAUSE THOSE DAYS I WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO USED TO GIVE PRASAD AND MEDICINE TO HIS DIVINE GRACE. WHATEVER HE ATE AND DRANK WENT THROUGH MY HAND."

Let the omniscient, omnipotent Supreme Personality of Godhead judge me. If I committed such a heinous crime towards the dearest devotee of the Lord, to whom I owe everything, including my very existence, then let me suffer eternally in the darkest region of the hell.

If any of Srila Prabhupada's disciples, whose heart is steeped with his love for Srila Prabhupada, wants to take the law in his hand and judge me, I will welcome that also. I give him full freedom to judge and do whatever he wants to do with me. I can assure him that I will accept that judgment without any protest. If someone wants to take me to the mundane court also, he can do so. There also I will give the same testimony, "IT IS AN ABSOLUTELY ABSURD ALLEGATION THAT SRILA PRABHUPADA HAS BEEN POISONED BY HIS DISCIPLES. IF ANYONE INTENTIONALLY POISONED SRILA PRABHUPADA, THEN IT MUST BE ME BECAUSE THOSE DAYS I WAS THE ONLY ONE WHO USED TO GIVE PRASAD AND MEDICINE TO HIS DIVINE GRACE. WHATEVER HE ATE AND DRANK WENT THROUGH MY HAND."

Waiting to receive your judgment and aspiring to remain a servant of the Vaisnavas,

Bhakti Caru Swami.

P.S. If you have any question, please feel free to write to me.

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