



ॐ अज्ञान तिमिरान्धस्य ज्ञानाञ्जन शलाकया ।
चक्षुर् उन्मीलितं येन तस्मै श्री गुरुवे नमः ॥

om ajñāna-timirāndhasya jñānāñjana-śalākayā |
caḥsur unmilitam yena tasmai śrī-gurave namaḥ ||

"I offer my respectful obeisances unto my spiritual master, who with the torchlight of knowledge has opened my eyes, which were blinded by the darkness of ignorance."

श्रीगुरु देवाष्टकम्

|| śrī-guru-devāṣṭakam ||

Eight Prayers in Glorification of the Spiritual Master

by Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura

samsāra-dāvānala-liḍha-loka-
trāṇāya kārūṇya-ghanāghanatvam |
prāptasya kalyāṇa-guṇārṇavasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam ||1||

samsāra—(of) material existence; *dāvā-anala*—(by) the forest fire; *liḍha*—afflicted; *loka*—the people; *trāṇāya*—to deliver; *kārūṇya*—of mercy; *ghanāghana-tvam*—the quality of a cloud; *prāptasya*—who has obtained; *kalyāṇa*—auspicious; *guṇa*—(of) qualities; *arṇavasya*—who is an ocean; *vande*—I offer obeisances; *guroḥ*—of my spiritual master; *śrī*—auspicious; *caraṇa-aravindam*—unto the lotus feet.

The spiritual master is receiving benediction from the ocean of mercy. Just as a cloud pours water on a forest fire to extinguish it, so the spiritual master delivers the materially afflicted world by extinguishing the blazing fire of material existence. I offer my respectful

obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is an ocean of auspicious qualities.

*mahāprabhoḥ kīrtana-nṛtya-gīta-
vāditra-madyan-manaso rasena |
romāñca-kampāśru-taraṅga-bhājo
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam ||2||*

mahāprabhoḥ—of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu; *kīrtana*—(by) chanting; *nṛtya*—dancing; *gīta*—singing; *vāditra*—playing musical instruments; *mādyat*—gladdened; *manasaḥ*—whose mind; *rasena*—due to the mellows of pure devotion; *roma-ñca*—standing of the hair; *kampa*—quivering of the body, *āśru-taraṅga*—torrents of tears; *bhājah*—who feels; *vande*—I offer obeisances; *guroḥ*—of my spiritual master; *śrī*—auspicious; *caraṇa-aravindam*—unto the lotus feet.

Chanting the holy name, dancing in ecstasy, singing, and playing musical instruments, the spiritual master is always gladdened by the saṅkīrtana movement of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Because he is relishing the mellows of pure devotion within his mind, sometimes his hair stands on end, he feels quivering in his body, and tears flow from his eyes like waves. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master.

*śrī-vigrahārādhana-nitya-nānā-
śṛṅgāra-tan-mandira-mārjanādau |
yuktasya bhaktāṁś ca niyuñjato 'pi
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam ||3||*

śrī-vigraha—(of) the arcā-vigraha (Deities), *ārādhana*—the worship; *nitya*—daily; *nānā*—(with) various; *śṛṅgāra*—clothing and ornaments; *tat*—of the Lord; *mandira*—(of) the temple; *mārjana-ādau*—in the cleaning, etc.; *yuktasya*—who is engaged; *bhaktān*—his disciples; *ca*—and; *niyuñjataḥ*—who engages; *api*—also; *vande*—I offer obeisances; *guroḥ*—of my spiritual master; *śrī*—auspicious; *caraṇa-aravindam*—unto the lotus feet.

The spiritual master is always engaged in the temple worship of Srī Srī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. He also engages his disciples in such worship. They dress the Deities in beautiful clothes and ornaments, clean Their temple, and perform other similar worship of the Lord. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master.

*catur-vidha-śrī-bhagavat-prasāda-
svādv-anna-tr̥ptān hari-bhakta-saṅghān |
kṛtvāiva tr̥ptim bhajataḥ sadaiva
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam ||4||*

catuḥ—four; *vidha*—kinds; *śrī*—holy, *bhagavat-prasāda*—which have been offered to Kṛṣṇa; *svādu*—palatable; *anna*—(by) foods; *tr̥ptān*—spiritually satisfied; *hari*—(of) Kṛṣṇa; *bhakta-saṅghān*—the devotees; *kṛtvā*—having made; *eva*—thus; *tr̥ptim*—satisfaction; *bhajataḥ*—who feels; *sada*—always; *eva*—certainly; *vande*—I offer obeisances; *guroḥ*—of my spiritual master; *śrī*—auspicious; *caraṇa-aravindam*—unto the lotus feet.

The spiritual master is always offering Kṛṣṇa four kinds of delicious food. When the spiritual master sees that the devotees are satisfied by eating bhagavat-prasāda, he is satisfied. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master.

*śrī-rādhikā-mādhavayor apāra-
mādhurya-līlā-guṇa-rūpa-nāmnām |
pratikṣaṇāsvādana-lolupasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam ||5||*

śrī-rādhikā—(of) Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī; *mādhavayoḥ*—of Lord Mādhava (Kṛṣṇa); *apāra*—unlimited; *mādhurya*—conjugal; *līlā*—pastimes; *guṇa*—qualities; *rūpa*—forms; *nāmnām*—of the holy names; *pratikṣaṇa*—at every moment; *āsvādana*—relishing; *lolupasya*—who aspires after; *vande*—I offer obeisances; *guroḥ*—of my spiritual master; *śrī*—auspicious; *caraṇa-aravindam*—unto the lotus feet.

The spiritual master is always eager to hear and chant about the unlimited conjugal pastimes of Rādhikā and Mādhava, and Their qualities, names, and forms. The spiritual master aspires to relish these at every moment. I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master.

*nikuñja-yūno rati-keli-siddhyai
yā yālibhir yuktir apekṣaṇīyā |
tatrāti-dākṣyād ati-vallabhasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam ||6||*

nikuñja-yūnaḥ—of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa; *rati*—(of) conjugal love; *keli*—(of) pastimes; *siddhyai*—for the perfection; *yā yā*— whatever; *ālibhiḥ*—by the gopīs; *yuktiḥ*—arrangements; *apekṣaṇīyā*—desirable; *tatra*—in that connection; *ati-dākṣyāt*—because of being very expert; *ati-vallabhasya*—who is very dear; *vande*—I offer obeisances; *guroḥ*—of my spiritual master; *śrī*—auspicious; *caraṇa-aravindam*—unto the lotus feet.

The spiritual master is very dear, because he is expert in assisting the gopīs, who at different times make different tasteful arrangements for the perfection of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa’s conjugal loving affairs within the groves of Vṛndāvana. I offer my most humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master.

*sākṣād-dharitvena samasta-śāstrair
uktas tathā bhāvyata eva sadbhiḥ |
kinto prabhor yaḥ priya eva tasya
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam ||7||*

sākṣāt—directly; *hari-tvena*—with the quality of Hari; *samasta*— all; *śāstraiḥ*—by scriptures; *uktaḥ*—acknowledged; *tathā*—thus; *bhāvyate*—is considered; *eva*—also; *sadbhiḥ*—by great saintly persons; *kintu*—however; *prabhoḥ*—to the Lord; *yaḥ*—who; *priyaḥ*—dear; *eva*—certainly; *tasya*—of him (the guru); *vande*—I offer obeisances; *guroḥ*—of my spiritual master; *śrī*—auspicious; *caraṇa-aravindam*—unto the lotus feet.

The spiritual master is to be honored as much as the Supreme Lord, because he is the most confidential servitor of the Lord. This is acknowledged in all revealed scriptures and followed by all authorities. Therefore I offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of such a spiritual master, who is a bona fide representative of Srī Hari [Kṛṣṇa].

*yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo
yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi |
dhyāyan stuvanṁs tasya yaśas tri-sandhyam
vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam ||8||*

yasya—of whom (the spiritual master); *prasādāt*—by the grace; *bhagavat*—(of) Kṛṣṇa; *prasādah*—the mercy; *yasya*—of whom; *aprasādāt*—without the grace; *na*—not; *gatiḥ*—means of advancement; *kutaḥ api*—from anywhere; *dhyāyan*—meditating upon; *stuvan*—praising; *tasya*—of him (the spiritual master); *yaśaḥ*—the glory; *tri-sandhyam*—three times a day (sunrise, noon, and sunset); *vande*—I offer obeisances; *guroḥ*—of my spiritual master; *śrī*—auspicious; *caraṇa-aravindam*—unto the lotus feet.

By the mercy of the spiritual master one receives the benediction of Kṛṣṇa. Without the grace of the spiritual master, one cannot make any advancement. Therefore, I should always remember and praise the spiritual master. At least three times a day I should offer my respectful obeisances unto the lotus feet of my spiritual master.

फलश्रुति

- phala-śruti -

The result of chanting this stotra

śrīmad-guror aṣṭakam etad uccair
brāhme muhūrte paṭhati prayatnāt |
yas tena vṛndāvana-nātha sākṣāt
sevaiva labhyā juṣaṇo 'nta eva ||9||

śrīmat—adorned with grace and auspiciousness; *guroḥ*—of śrī guru; *aṣṭakam*—a glorification consisting of eight hymns; *etad*—this; *uccaiḥ*—loudly; *brāhme muhūrte*—in the auspicious time (one hour thirty-six minutes before sunrise); *paṭhati*—recites; *prayatnāt*—by rigid practice; *yaḥ*—anyone; *tena*—him; *vṛndāvana-nātha*—the Lord of Vṛndāvana; *sākṣāt*—direct; *sevā*—loving service; *eva*—certainly; *labhyā*—attains; *januḥ*—life; *anta*—at the end; *eva*—certainly.

Anyone who, during the auspicious time of brāhma-muhūrta, loudly and attentively recites these eight prayers glorifying the spiritual master, will at the end of this life, attain direct service to the Lord of Vṛndavāna.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, who appeared in the latter half of the 17th Century, is a great spiritual master in the Kṛṣṇa conscious chain of gurus and disciples. He says that one should loudly chant the following eight prayers, with care and attention, during *brahma-muhurta*, the auspicious time an hour and a half before sunrise when devotional practices are especially potent. Anyone who thus chants these eight beautiful prayers glorifying the spiritual master will certainly get a chance to render direct service to Krishna, the lord of Vṛndavana, after the demise of his body.

...This song is offering obeisances particularly to the spiritual master, and the symptoms of the spiritual master are described in this prayer. The spiritual master has two kind of symptoms in his activities. One kind is called constant, and other kind is called temporary. So the first verse says that the constant symptom of the spiritual master is that he can deliver his disciples from the blazing fire of this material existence. That is the eternal qualification of spiritual master. (From purport by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada)

Samsara Davanala Lidha Loka (Sri Gurvastakam)
Purport by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami
January 2, 1969 Los Angeles, CA, USA

This song is offering obeisances particularly to the spiritual master, and the symptoms of the spiritual master are described in this prayer. The spiritual master has two kind of symptoms in his activities. One kind is called constant, and other kind is called temporary. So the first verse says that the constant symptom of the spiritual master is that he can deliver his disciples from the blazing fire of this material existence. That is the eternal qualification of spiritual master. Trāṇāya means for deliverance, and *kāruṇya* means compassionate, very merciful. The spiritual

master comes to the deliverance of the fallen souls out of his causeless mercy. Nobody has any business for the sufferings of others. The best example is Lord Jesus Christ, that he suffered for others. And it is the principle in the Bible that he accepted all the sins of others. This is the sign of spiritual master, that he voluntarily accepts the sinful activities of others and delivers them. That is the qualification of spiritual master. How it is? Just like *ghanāghanatvam*. *Ghanāghanatvam* means dense cloud in the sky. The first example has been said, that this material existence is just like forest blazing fire. Now, to extinguish the forest blazing fire, there is no use of sending fire brigade. The fire brigade cannot approach the forest fire; neither any man can go there to extinguish the fire. One has to depend completely on the mercy of nature. That means one has to completely depend on the cloud in the sky. Otherwise, there is no question of pouring water on that blazing fire. So the example is very appropriate. As man-made engine or fire brigade is unable to extinguish the forest blazing fire, similarly, the material existential blazing fire cannot be extinguished by any man-made method.

They are planning to be very comfortable in this material existence, but they are still more being confused and failure. That peace movement, that United Nation movement, everything is failure. Why? These miseries of this material existence cannot be stopped by any material means. One has to take shelter of spiritual means. Just like the blazing fire in the forest has to wait for the cloud in the sky, similarly, one has to wait for the merciful cloud as the spiritual master. That is described. *Trāṇāya kārūṇya-ghanāghanatvam, prāptasya kalyāṇa-guṇārṇavasya* **. So the spiritual master is not self-made. It is not that if anyone comes before you and bluffs you that “I have attained spiritual perfection, and I have realized something by some method.” No. The spiritual master, bona fide spiritual, means he has to receive the power from authority. Otherwise it is useless. **No It is not that one can become spiritual master overnight.** He has to take the power from his spiritual master. Therefore it is called *prāptasya*. *Prāptasya* means one who has obtained, one who has got the merciful blessings of his spiritual master.

We should always remember that the spiritual master is in the disciplic succession. The original spiritual master is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He blesses his next disciple, just like Brahmā. Brahmā blesses his next disciple, just like Nārada. Nārada blesses his next disciple, just like Vyāsa. Vyāsa blesses his next disciple, Mādhvācārya. Similarly, the blessing is coming. Just like royal succession—the throne is inherited by disciplic or hereditary succession—similarly, this power from the Supreme Personality of Godhead has to receive. Nobody can preach, nobody can become a spiritual master, without obtaining power from the right source. Therefore the very word, it is stated here, *prāptasya*. *Prāptasya* means “one who has obtained.” *Prāptasya kalyāṇa*. What he has obtained? *Kalyāṇa*. *Kalyāṇa* means auspicious. He has received something which is auspicious for all the human kind. *Prāptasya kalyāṇa-guṇārṇavasya*. Here is another example. *Guṇārṇava*. *Arṇava* means ocean, and *guṇa* means spiritual qualities. Just like the same example is going on. It is very nice poetry. There is nice rhethorics and metaphor. The example is set, blazing fire, and it is to be extinguished with the cloud. And wherefrom the cloud comes? Similarly, wherefrom the spiritual master receives the mercy? The cloud receives his potency from the ocean. Therefore the spiritual master also receives his power from the ocean of spiritual quality, that is, from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. So *prāptasya kalyāṇa-guṇārṇavasya*. Such kind of spiritual master, one has to accept, and *vande guroḥ śrī-caraṇāravindam*, and one has to offer his respectful obeisances to such authorized spiritual master.