

KARTIK INSPIRATIONS 2021



SRILA PRABHUPADA,
“SO, HAVE YOU UNDERSTOOD
OUR PHILOSOPHY?... FIRST OF ALL,
YOU HAVE TO UNDERSTAND
THAT LIFE IS ETERNAL.”

REMEMBERING SRILA PRABHUPADA

Today is Srila Prabhupada's Disappearance Day.

One becomes happy when one becomes mindful of a great soul who is dear to Krishna, even if this great personality has left the planet. I was so fortunate to be in Srila Prabhupada's electrical presence. I say “*electrical*” purposefully because everyone who was in contact with him became deeply touched. And this still goes on today when people read his books, watch videos, listen to lectures, and hear discussions about him. They become deeply touched and inspired to move forward in Krishna consciousness.

There are two memories which I would like to share today: one was our first meeting and the second, our last.

When Prabhupada arrived at Heathrow airport, we all had waited for his arrival, but it was late, past midnight. But all of our tiredness went when finally, those doors opened and he came towards us. In all traditions, saints are depicted with a halo. Prabhupada's effulgence was 500 meters big—at least it seemed that way to me. I was so overwhelmed when I saw this mass of light around him that I just threw myself on the ground. Prabhupada stopped at that time. He stopped for me. He looked into my eyes so kindly and so lovingly as if saying, “*Welcome back!*”

The last meeting I would like to share with you took place only months before his departure. Srila Prabhupada had made one last journey to the West to inspire his disciples, and he received a small group of us German devotees in his darshan

room at the Bhaktivedanta Manor in London. When we sat before him, we were shocked because he was emaciated. He sat on a rocking chair. He had on big sunglasses to avoid irritation from light, and his gaze went over every one of us, stopping for some time at each one of his disciples. Finally, from deep within, we could hear his voice, “*So, have you understood our philosophy?*” At that time, we tried to give many answers like we always did, but he was not satisfied, and finally he answered his own question by saying, “*First of all, you have to understand that life is eternal.*”

One of Srila Prabhupada's first disciples, Gurudas, remembered another question which Prabhupada asked his disciples and then answered himself. The question was, “*What is the proof that Krishna is God?*” When he didn't get a satisfying answer from any of the devotees present, he answered, “*When you chant Krishna's name and when you serve Him, you feel His presence. This ecstasy is the proof that Krishna is God.*”

Srila Prabhupada did not teach a theoretical version of the Vedic scriptures. No, like a true guru he led each one of us to a practical experience of Krishna, of ourselves. In this way, he is really a very, very powerful and merciful spiritual master.

Srila Prabhupada ki jai!

Please all go into a prayerful mood, sit, become mindful of Srila Prabhupada, address him in your own words, and just be in his presence.

Śācīnandana Prāsāda

ŚACĪNANDANA SWAMI