

Śaraṇāgati

by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Introductory Song

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya prabhu jīve doyā kori’
sva-pārṣada svīya dhāma saha avatari’*

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Prabhu descended from the eternal spiritual world along with His personal associates and divine abode, incarnating in this temporary material world out of compassion for the fallen souls.

*atyanta durlabha prema koribāre dāna
śikhāya śaraṇāgati bhakatera prāṇa*

In order to freely distribute the gift of ecstatic love of God, which is very difficult to obtain, He taught the path of *śaraṇāgati*, devotional surrender to the Supreme Lord. This *śaraṇāgati* is the very life of the true devotees.

*dainya, ātma-nivedana, gopṭṛtve varāṇa
‘avaśya rakṣibe kṛṣṇa’-viśvāsa, pālana
bhakti-anukūla-mātra kāryera svīkara
bhakti-pratikūla-bhāva varjanāṅgikāra*

The six ways of surrender through *śaraṇāgati* are (1) *dainya* — humility, (2) *ātma-nivedana* — dedication of the self, (3) *gopṭṛtve varāṇa* — acceptance of the Lord as one’s only maintainer, (4) the consciousness of ‘*avaśya rakṣibe kṛṣṇa*’ — ‘Kṛṣṇa will surely protect me’ — which is *viśvāsa* (faith) in Kṛṣṇa’s *pālana* (protection), (5) *bhakti-anukūla-mātra kāryera svīkara* — execution of only those acts favorable to pure devotion, and (6) *bhakti-pratikūla-bhāva varjanāṅgikāra* — renunciation of conduct adverse to pure devotion.

*ṣaḍ-aṅga śaraṇāgati hoibe jāhāra
tāhāra prārthanā śune śrī-nanda-kumāra*

Śrī Nanda-Kumāra, the youthful son of Nanda Mahārāja, hears the prayers of anyone who takes refuge in Him by this six-fold practice of surrender.

*rūpa-sanātana-pade dante tṛṇa kori’
bhaktivinoda poḍe duhuṅ pada dhorī’*

Bhaktivinoda prostrates himself at the feet of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana Goswāmī, places a straw between his teeth, and clasps their lotus feet with his hands.

*kāndiyā kāndiyā bole āmi to’ adhama
śikhāye śaraṇāgati koro he uttama*

Weeping and weeping, he tells them, “I am certainly the lowest of men! Oh please make me the worthiest by teaching me the ways of *śaraṇāgati*!”

First Principle of Surrender: Dainya

Song 1

*bhuliyā tomāre, saṁsāre āsiyā,
peye nānā-vidha byathā
tomāra carañe, āsiyāchi āmi,
bolibo duḥkhera kathā*

O Lord, I forgot You and came to this material world, where I have experienced a host of pains and sorrows. Now I approach Your lotus feet and submit my tale of woe.

*jananī-jāṭhare, chilāma jakhona,
biṣama bandhana-pāse
eka-bāra prabhu! dekhā diyā more,
vañcile e dīna dāse*

While still bound up tightly in the unbearable confines of my mother's womb, O Lord, You once revealed Yourself before me. Appearing only briefly, You then abandoned this poor servant of Yours.

*takhona bhāvinu, janama pāiyā,
koribo bhajana tava
janama hoilo, poḍi' māyā-jāle,
nā hoilo jñāna-lava*

At that moment I thought, "After my birth, I will worship You." But alas, after taking birth I fell into the entangling network of worldly illusions; thus I possessed not even a drop of true knowledge.

*ādarera chele, sva-janera kole,
hāsiyā kāṭānu kāla
janaka-jananī-snehete bhuliyā,
saṁsāra lāgilo bhālo*

As a dear son fondled in the laps of relatives, I passed my time smiling and laughing. The affection of my father and mother helped me to forget You still more, and I began to think that the material world was a very nice place.

*krame dina dina, bālaka hoiyā,
khelinu bālaka-saha
āra kichu dine, jñāna upajilo,
pāṭha poḍi ahar-ahar*

Day by day I gradually grew into a young boy and began playing with other boys. Soon my powers of understanding emerged, so I diligently read and studied my school lessons every day.

*vidyāra gaurave, bhrami' deśe deśe,
dhana uparjana kori
sva-jana pālana, kori eka-mane,
bhulinu tomāre, hari!*

Proud of my accomplished education, later I traveled from place to place and earned much wealth. Thereby maintaining my family with undivided attention, I forgot You, O Lord Hari!

*bārdhakeyē khona, bhaktivinoda,
kāndiyā kātara ati
nā bhajiyā tore, dina brthā gelo,
ekhona ki habe gati?*

Now in old age, this Bhaktivinoda very sadly weeps. I failed to worship You, O Lord, and instead passed my days in vain. What will be my fate now?

Song 2

*vidyāra vilāse, kātāinu kāla,
parama sāhase āmi
tomāra caraṇa, nā bhajinu kabhu,
ekhona śaraṇa tumi*

With great enthusiasm I spent my time in the pleasures of mundane learning and never worshiped Your lotus feet, O Lord. Now You are my only shelter.

*poḍite poḍite, bharasā bārilo,
jñāne gati habe māni'
se āśā biphala, se jñāna durbala,
se jñāna ajñāna jāni*

Reading on and on, my hopes grew and grew, for I considered the acquisition of material knowledge to be life's true goal. How fruitless those hopes turned out to be, for all my knowledge proved feeble. Now I know that all such erudition is actually pure ignorance.

*jaḍa-vidyā jata, māyāra vaibhava,
tomāra bhajane bādhā
moha janamiyā, anitya saṁsāre,
jīvake koraye gādhā*

All the so-called knowledge of this world is born of the flickering potency of Your illusory energy (māyā). It is an impediment to the execution of devotional service to You. Indulgence in mundane knowledge verily makes an ass of the eternal soul by encouraging his infatuation with this temporary world.

*sei gādhā ho'ye, sāmsārera bojhā,
bahinu aneka kāla
bārdhakye ekhona, śaktira abhāve,
kichu nāhi lāge bhālo*

Here is one person who has been turned into such an ass, who for so long has carried on his back the useless burden of material existence. Now in my old age, for want of the power to enjoy, I find that nothing at all pleases me.

*jīvana jātānā, hoilo ekhona,
se vidyā avidyā bhelo
avidyāra jvālā, ghaṭilo biṣama,
se vidyā hoilo śelo*

Life has now become agony, for my so-called erudite knowledge has proven itself to be worthless ignorance. Material knowledge has now become a pointed shaft and has pierced my heart with the intolerable, burning pain of ignorance.

*tomāra caraṇa, binā kichu dhana,
sāmsāre nā āche āra
bhaktivinoda, jaḍa-vidyā chāḍi,
tuwā pada kore sāra*

O Lord, there is no treasure worth seeking in this world other than Your lotus feet. Bhaktivinoda abandons all his mundane knowledge and makes Your lotus feet the sum and substance of his life.

Song 3

*jauvane jakhona, dhana-upārjane,
hoinu vipula kāmī
dharama smariyā, ḡhinīra kara,
dhorinu takhona āmi*

When I was young, I felt a boundless ambition for earning money. At that time, bearing in mind the codes of religion, I accepted the hand of a wife.

*sāmsāra pātā'ye, tāhāra sahita,
kāla-khoy koinu koto
bahu suta-sutā, janama lobhilo,
marame hoinu hatō*

Along with her I set up a household and therein wasted so much of my time. Many sons and daughters were born, and my spirit was totally crushed.

*sāmsārera bhāra, bāḍe dine dine,
acala hoilo gati
bārdhakya āsiyā, gherilo āmāre,
asthira hoilo mati*

The burden of family life increased day by day, and under its weight I felt my personal progress in life forcibly come to a halt. Old age came and beleaguered me on all sides, making my mind incessantly disturbed.

*pīḍāya asthira, cintāya jvarita,
abhāve jvalita cita
upāya nā dekhi, andhakāra-moya,
ekhona ho'yechi bhīta*

Diseases trouble me, constant anxiety has made me feverish, and my heart burns with every want. I see no way out of this predicament, for all is darkness. Now I am very much afraid.

*saṁsāra-taṭani-srota nahe śeṣa,
maraṇa nikate ghora
saba samāpiyā, bhojibo tomāya,
e āśā biphala mora*

The current of this worldly river is strong and relentless; a frightening, gloomy death approaches. 'Finishing my worldly duties, I will worship You, O Lord'— that hope is now fruitless as well.

*ebe śuno prabhu! āmi gati-hīna,
bhaktivinoda koya
tava kṛpā binā, sakali nirāśā,
deho' more padāśroya*

Now please hear me, O Lord! I am utterly helpless. Bhaktivinoda says, "Without Your mercy, everything is lost. Please give me the shelter of Your lotus feet."

Song 4

*āmāra jīvana, sadā pāpe rata,
nāhiko puṇyera leṣa
parere udvega, diyāchi je koto,
diyāchi jīvere kleśa*

My life is ever given to sin; in it there is not a particle of good. I have caused others great anxiety, and have troubled all souls.*

*nija sukha lāgi', pāpe nāhi ḍori,
doyā-hīna svārtha-paro
para-sukhe duḥkhī, sadā mithya-bhāṣī,
para-duḥkha sukha-karo*

For the sake of my own enjoyment I have never hesitated to perform sinful acts. Devoid of all compassion, I am concerned only with my selfish interests. Perpetually speaking lies, I become dejected upon seeing others happy, whereas the misery of others is a source of great delight for me.

*aśeṣa kāmanā, hṛdi mājhe mora,
krodhī, dambha-parāyaṇa
mada-matta sadā, viśaye mohita,
himsā-garva vibhūṣana*

There are limitless material desires within the core of my heart. I am wrathful, fond of exhibiting arrogance, intoxicated by vanity, and bewildered by worldly affairs. I wear the cherished ornaments of envy and egotism.

*nidrālasya hata, sukārye virata,
akārye udyogī āmi
pratiṣṭha lāgiyā, śāṭhya-ācarāṇa,
lobha-hata sadā kāmī*

Ruined by laziness and sleep, I resist all pious deeds, yet am very enthusiastic to perform wicked acts. For the sake of worldly fame and reputation I engage in the practice of deceitfulness. I am victimized by my own greed, being always lustful.

*e heno durjana, saj-jana-varjita,
aparādhī nirantara
śubha-kārya-śūnya, sadānārtha-manāḥ,
nānā duḥkhe jara jara*

A vile, wicked man such as this, rejected by godly people, is a constant offender. Devoid of all good works, forever inclined toward evil, he is worn out and wasted by various miseries.

*bārdhakeyē ekhona, upāya-vihīna,
tā'te dīna akiñcana
bhaktivinoda, prabhura caraṇe,
kore duḥkha nivedana*

Now in old age, deprived of all means of relief, and thus humbled and poor, Bhaktivinoda submits his tale of grief at the feet of the Supreme Lord.

Song 5

*(prabhu he!) śuno mor duḥkher kāhinī
viśaya-halāhala, sudhā-bhāne piyaluṅ,
āb avasāna dinamāṇi*

O Lord! Please hear the story of my sadness. I drank the deadly poison of worldliness, pretending it was nectar, and now the sun is setting on the horizon of my life.

*khelā-rase śaiśava, poḍhaite kaiśora,
govāoluṅ, nā bhelo vivek
bhoga-baśe yauvane, ghara pāti' bosiluṅ,
suta-mita bādhalo anek*

I spent my childhood in play, my youth in academic pursuit, and in me there arose no sense of discrimination. In young manhood I set up a household and settled down to the spell of material enjoyment while my children and friends quickly multiplied.

*vṛddha-kāla āolo, saba sukha bhāgalo,
pīḍā-baṣe hoinu kātār
sarvendriya durbala, kṣīna kalevara,
bhogābhāve duḥkhita antar*

Old age soon arrived, and all joys consequently departed. Subjected to the torments of disease, I am troubled and weak. All my senses are feeble now, my body is racked and exhausted, and my spirits are downcast in the absence of former sense pleasures.

*jñāna-lava-hīna, bhakti-rase vañchita,
āra mora ki habe upāy
patita-bandhu, tuhuñ, patitādhama hāma,
krpāya uṭhāo tava pāy*

Devoid of even a particle of enlightenment, cheated of the mellows of devotion—what help is there for me now? O Lord, You are the friend of the fallen. I am certainly fallen, the lowest of men. Please, therefore, in mercy lift me to Your lotus feet.

*vicārite ābahi, guna nāhi pāobi,
krpā koro, choḍato vicār
tava pada-paṅkaja-sīdhu pibāoto,
bhakativinoda karo pār*

Were You to judge me now, You would find no good qualities. Have mercy and judge me not. Cause me to drink the honey of Your lotus feet and thereby deliver this Bhaktivinoda.

Song 6

*(prabhu he!) tuwā pade e minati mor
tuwā pada-pallava, tyajato maru-mana,
viṣama viṣaye bhelo bhor*

O Lord! I offer this humble prayer at Your feet. I gave up the shelter of Your feet, which are soft as newly-grown leaves, and now my mind has become dried up like a desert, being scorched by the fire of absorption in horrible worldliness.

*uṭhayite tākata, puna nāhi milo-i,
anudina korohuñ hutās
dīna-jana-nātha, tuhuñ kahāyasi,
tumāri caraṇa mama āś*

I find no strength to rise again, and thus I spend my days bitterly lamenting. O Lord who is called the master of the meek and humble! Your lotus feet are my only hope.

*aichana dīna-jana, kōhi nāhi milo-i,
tuhūñ more koro parasād
tuwā jana-saṅge, tuwā kathā-raṅge,
chāḍahuñ sakala paramād*

There has never been a soul as forlorn as me. Please be merciful and award me the association of Your devotees, for by tasting the pleasure of hearing discussions of Your pastimes I shall give up all evils.

*tuwā dhāma-māhe, tuwā nāma gāoto,
govāyabuñ divā-niśi āś
tuwā pada-chāyā, parama suśītala,
māge bhaktivinoda dās*

One hope animates my soul: To spend day and night singing Your holy name while living in Your divine abode. Your servant Bhaktivinoda begs a place in the supremely cooling shade of Your lotus feet.

Song 7

*(prabhu he!)
emona durmati, saṁsāra bhitore,
poḍiyā āchinu āmi
tava nija-jana, kono mahājane,
pāṭhāiyā dile tumi*

O Lord! With such a wicked mind as this I have fallen into the material world, but You have sent one of Your pure and elevated devotees to rescue me.

*doyā kori' more, patita dekhiyā,
kohilo āmāre giyā
ohe dīna-jana, śuno bhālo kathā,
ullasita ha'be hiyā*

He saw me so fallen and wretched, took pity, and came to me saying, "O humbled soul, please listen to this good tidings, for it will gladden your heart.

*tomāre tārīte, śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya,
navadvīpe avatār
tomā heno koto, dīna hīna jane,
korilena bhava-pār*

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya has appeared in the land of Navadvīpa in order to deliver you. He has safely conducted many miserable souls such as you across the sea of worldly existence.

*vedera pratijñā, rākhibāra tare,
rukma-varṇa vipra-suta
mahāprabhu nāme, nadiyā mātāya,
saṅge bhāi avadhūta*

“To fulfill the promise of the Vedas, the son of a *brāhmaṇa*, of golden complexion and bearing the name of Mahāprabhu, has descended along with His brother, the *avadhūta*. Together They have overwhelmed all of Nadiyā with divine ecstasy.

*nanda-suta jini, caitanya gosāi,
nija-nāma kori' dān
tārilo jagat, tumi-o jāiyā,
loho nija-paritrāṇ*

“Śrī Caitanya Gosāi, who is Kṛṣṇa Himself, the son of Nanda, has saved the world by freely distributing the gift of His own holy name. Go to Him also and receive your deliverance.”

*se kathā śuniyā, āsiyāchi, nātha!
tomāra caraṇa-tale
bhaktivinoda, kāṇḍiyā kāṇḍiyā,
āpana-kāhinī bole*

Hearing those words, O Lord, Bhaktivinoda has come weeping and weeping to the soles of Your lotus feet and tells the story of his life.