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Saranagati, by Thakur Bhaktivinode

- the first English translation,
published in The Harmonist during the 1930's

I

1. Sree Krishna Chaitanya, the Supreme Lord,
out of Divine Pity for jiva,
With His Own Associates and His Own Abode descending
2. The Love of God that can only be obtained with the utmost
difficulty to give freely away,
Teaches to take refuge in Him; resignation that is the very
life of the devotee.
3. Lowliness is the spirit, dedication of self, loving
acceptance of Him as Protector,
Cherishing faith that Krishna will surely protect,
4. Assenting to only acts that are conducive to devotion,
Promising to renounce conduct that is adverse to it -
5. In these sixfold ways, whoever takes refuge in Him,
His prayer reaches the ears of the Gracious Child
of Nanda.
6. At the feet of Rupa and Sanatana, holding the straw
between the teeth,
Falls Bhaktivinode clasping both the feet with his hands,
7. Crying all the while as he says: 'I am the vilest I do realise,
Teach thou me resignation and make me the worthiest.'

II

1. Forgetting thyself, coming into this world,
Having suffered manifold pain,
At Thy Feet have I come,
Thee I shall tell my sorrows:
2. In mother's womb while I lay
in the deadly fetters of bondage,
For once, Oh Lord, showing Thyself to me
Didst Thou abandon Thy poor servant,
3. Then thought I: "after I have birth,
I shall worship Thee,"
I was born but fallen into the meshes of Maya
There was not a particle of knowledge.
4. A fondled child in the lap of kindred,
Laughingly I passed the time.
The affection of the father and other made me forget,
This world did taste sweet.

5. By slow degrees day by day, growing up as a boy
With the other boys did I play.
In a few more days the power of understanding
was aroused,
I conned my lessons night and day.
6. In the pride of learning I journeyed to many a place,
Earning wealth,
Supporting Kindred with all my heart,
Hari, Thee I forgot.
7. Now in old age Bhaktivinode,
Crying feels so sad,
Not worshipping Thee the days passed in vain,
What help is there now ?

III

1. In pleasures of learning I spent the time
in highest confidence;
I never served Thy Feet;
Thou art the Refuge now.
2. As intently my studies I pursued Hope increased;
Knowledge was the path, I thought.
The hope was unfulfilled The Knowledge proved weak
That knowledge was ignorance, I now know.
3. All worldly knowledge Is treasure of Maya.
Thy service it obstructs;
Breeding attachment for this transitory world
It makes an ass of jiva.
4. Turned such an ass, The load of the world
On my back I carried long;
In old age, For want of power to enjoy;
Nothing now pleases me.
5. Life is become Misery now;
The knowledge has proved untrue;
The torment of untruth Has grown intolerable;
The learning is now the pointed shaft.
6. Except Thy Feet there is no other treasure
in the world;
Bhaktivinode, Quitting his hold of worldly knowledge
Now only values Thy Feet.

IV

1. When in youth for earning money
I felt a bound-less ambition,
By rites of religion my help-mate's hand
I did espouse;

2. Setting up a home in her company
My time long I spent,
Many a son and daughter were born,
My spirit was broken utterly.

3. The burden of family increased day by day;
Under its weight I was forced to halt.
Old age arriving beleagured me,
My mind was always disturbed;

4. Worried by disease, racked by cares,
My heart scared by every want,
Seeing no way in utter darkness
I am now oppressed with fear.

5. The world's strong current does not abate,
The terror of death is nigh:
After finishing worldly duties I shall worship Thee.
That hope is in vain.

6. "Now herken, Oh Lord, I am utterly helpless",
Bhaktivinode says,
"Without Thy mercy all is despair,
I now crave the shelter of Thy feet".

V

1. My life
Is ever given to sin,
In it there is not a particle of good;
Torment to others
Much have I caused;
I have pained all jivas.

2. For my own pleasure
I was never afraid of sinning,
Selfish and devoid of pity as I am.
Dejected by happiness of others,
Always untruthful,
The misery of others has been my delight.

3. Endless are the selfish desires
That fill my breast
To anger and insolence I am so prone,
Ever drunk with vanity,
Bewitched by worldliness,
I wear malice and pride as cherished ornaments.

4. Ruined by sleep and idleness,
Abstaining from all good works,
I am ever most zealous in evil deeds.
For the sake of worldly fame.
An adept in the practice of duplicity,
I covetous victim of greed am I.

5. Even a sinner,

Shunned by all the good,
And a constant offender, I am.
Void of all good work,
Always evilly disposed,
And poisoned with various misery.

6. Now in old age,
Bereft of all help,
Humbled and hoping naught,
Bhaktivinode
At the Feet of the Lord
Tells his grief.

VI

1. Hear, O Lord, the tale of my sorrows -
The poison of worldly enjoyment
I have sipped, pretending it was the nectar;
But now the sun is setting.
2. In the diversions of play my childhood,
My boyhood in studies I wasted;
There arose no consciousness of good in me.
For enjoying my youth,
I devised a home and settled down in it;
Children and friends did fast multiply.
3. Old age soon arrived,
All joys departed;
With disease I was smitten down.
The senses lost their vigour,
The body grew feeble,
The heart was sad lacking enjoyment.
4. Devoid of a particle of true knowledge,
Missing the elixir of devotion,
What help is there for me ?
Thou art the Friend of the fallen;
I am the worst of sinners;
In mercy lift me to Thy Feet,
5. Judging me
Thou wilt find no good;
Have pity, judge me not.
The nectar of Thy Lotus Feet
Make me taste;
Do Thou deliver Bhaktivinode.

VII

1. Lord, this is my prayer at Thy Feet;

The twigs of Thy Holy Feet
My desert mind not seeking
Was enamoured at stony worldliness.
2. The strength to rise again
I am unable to attain.
Mourning I pass my days.
Lord of the humble
Thou art called
Thy Feet I beseech.
3. Baseness such as mine
Nowhere else is to be found
Give me Thy grace.
In the company of Thy own,
In the pleasures of Thy talk,
I shall give up all evil.
4. In Thy abode,
Singing Thy Name,
To spend night and day is my hope.
For the shade of Thy Feet,
Most deliciously cool,
Prays Thy servant, Bhaktivinode.

VIII

1. With a mind so evil
In the midst of this world,
Forsaken I lay,
Thy own servant,
A superior person,
Thou didst send.
2. Pitying me,
Fallen as I was,
He came to me and said, -
'Thou seem'st humble,
Listen to Good words
That will cheer thy heart.'
3. To deliver Thee
Sri Krishna Chaitanya
Has appeared in Navadvipa;
Many another like myself
As humble and as base,
He has conducted safely
across the sea of the world.
4. 'The Promise of the Vedas
To fulfil,
The son of Brahman, of golden colour,
Bearing the name of Mahaprabhu

Fills with ecstasy Nadia
In the company of the super ascetic, His Brother.
5. 'The Supreme Lord Chaitanya,
Who is no other than the son of Nanda,
By the free gift of His Own Name,
Has wrought the deliverance of the World,
Go thou also
And receive thy salvation'.
6. 'Hearing those words
I have come O Lord,
For the shelter of Thy Feet'.
Bhaktivinode,
Crying out in grief,
Narrates the story of himself.

IX

1. I have done no good,
I have had no knowledge,
I have never worshipped Thy Feet;
Given to worldly pleasures,
Self-deceived,
I am now encompassed by darkness on every side.
2. Thou, O lord, art the Fountain of Mercy,
At Thy Lotus Feet
I surrender my soul,
May Thou afford to be kind.
3. This is Thy promise -
He who seeks Thy protection
No harm will know;
Sinner as I am,
Finding no other way,
I now beg for Thy favour.
4. Every other desire
Wholly discarding,
O, when shall I be Thine ?
Thou art the Eternal Master,
I am Thy eternal servant, -
This is the sum of Bhaktivinode's musings.

X

1. (Lord of my life) How tell Thee the story of my shame.
There is no sin
That I did not commit
Thousands of times and more, O Lord.
2. The fruit of those transgressions
Weighs me down in this life, -

Who is now to blame ?
At the time knowing well,
Deliberately I refused to consider the end, -
Yet now I want to be saved.
3. According to the offence
Punishment Thou wilt award,
And I shall be put into the bondage of this world:
Even so, through the cycle of those births,
In the company of Thy devotees,
May my mind ever repose at Thy feet.
4. This wise, cunning, desire of mine
I lay at Thy Feet;
The pride of my heart is gone;
Kindest to the humble,
Thy un-alloyed Mercy
Is now Bhaktivinode's only hope.

XI

1. Mind, body, family, whatever is mine,
Youthful Son of Nanda, I tender at Thy Feet,
2. In weal and woe, in life and death,
I am relieved of all anxiety, preferring those feet of Thine.
3. Save me or slay me as Thou will'st,
Thou art the Master of Thy eternal servant.
4. If it be Thy will to cause me to be born
May I have birth in the home of Thy devotee.
5. In the dwelling of Thy servant may I be born a worm -
I have no desire to be born a Brahma averse to Thee.
6. I crave the boon of the society of Thy devotees
Who is without a particle of desire for enjoyment or
freedom from misery.
7. All I find in Thee, - father, mother, lover, son,
Lord, preceptor, husband.
8. "Hear, O Kan (Krishna)", says Bhaktivinode,
"Lord of Radha, Thou art my life".

XII

1. What-so-ever is meant by the words "I" and "Mine",
Merciful Lord, at Thy Feet I lay.
2. Lord, myself am no longer mine,
Even now I become solely Thine.
3. The jiva inhabiting this body with the word "I" gives up
all egotism,
And forthwith the pride of being Thine takes possession
of the heart.
4. My all - body, home and followers,

Brothers, friends, wife, son, chattels, way, house -
5. All these now are Thine and myself Thy servant,
I am now a mere occupant in Thy house.
6. Thou art the owner of the house, I obey Thy bidding.
Thy pleasure is now my only endeavour.
7. My virtues and defects of the gross and subtle body
Are now no longer mine, I am redeemed.
8. To Thy will my will is sub-joined;
Bhaktivinode from this day forgets himself.

XIII

1. Lord, there is now nothing left that may be called mine,
Thou alone art my father, friends, brother.
2. Friends, wife, sons, daughters, are now Thy servants:
My efforts for them are on Thy account.
3. Wealth, followers, house, way,- in as much as they
belong to Thee,
4. For Thy service, I earn riches,
And bear the expenses of Thy household.
5. I know neither evil nor good, I only serve,
A watchman set to guard the properties of Thy household.
6. My senses I exercise according to Thy direction
And desire to hear, see, smell and taste.
7. Nothing I do for my own pleasure,
"Thy pleasure is the essence" says Bhaktivinode.

XIV

1. In truth all things belong to Thee, the jiva is not their
master;
Wandering by reason of his error of 'I' and 'Mine'
he suffers sorrow and fear.
2. The vanity of 'I' and 'Mine' the bound jiva thinks in his
heart of hearts
To be the only treasure that is his own.
3. By reason of such vanity hurled into this wordly course
I suffer the pangs of a drowning man swimming about in
the ocean of the world.
4. Taking refuge at Thy Feet that save from all fear
This day I dedicated myself to Thee.
5. The vanity of 'I' and 'Mine' the bound jiva thinks in his
heart of hearts
To be the only treasure that is his own.
6. This strength alone, O Lord, on me bestow
That may enable me to keep at a distance all egoistic pride.
7. May the spirit of renunciation be firmly rooted in the heart
And not prove to be momentary like the cleanliness of

the elephant after bath.

8. Bhaktivinode at the Feet of Prabhu Nityananda
Begs for the Grace that delivers from all vanity.

XV

1. Lord, this I lay at Thy Feet:
I am fallen and most vile, this the three worlds know.
2. There is no sinner so base as myself in the whole world,
In the universe there is no one whose offense equals mine.
3. Those sins and offences as Thou know'st
I feel ashamed even to disown.
4. Whither shall I betake myself for shelter except to Thee ?
Thou art the Ruler of all the powers that be, Darling
of the Lord of Braja.
5. This world of Thine, Thou permeates all things,
Thou wear'st out the offense that is committed towards
Thyself.
6. Thou, indeed, art the Refugee of those whose steps have
gone astray.
What else is there beside Thyself ?
7. Even so all who offend against Thee
Will ever seek Thy refuge.
8. Bhaktivinode seeking the shelter of Thy Feet
At Thy Feet surrenders himself this day.