

Under the Authority, Guidance and Inspiration of
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 Founder-Ācārya of the Krishna Consciousness Movement and
 Foremost Exponent of Krishna Consciousness in the Western World



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Mayapura Calendar-Jul & Aug 2024

Jul 1	Sri Srivasa Pandita -- Disappearance
Jul 2	Ekadasi (suitable for fasting) Fasting for Yogini Ekadasi
Jul 3	Dvadasi, Break fast 04:54 - 07:12
Jul 6	Gundica Marjana Srila Bhaktinoda Thakura -- Disappearance Sri Gadadhara Pandita -- Disappearance
Jul 7	Ratha Yatra Sri Svarupa Damodara Gosvami -- Disappearance Sri Sivananda Sena -- Disappearance
Jul 11	Hera Pancami (4 days after Ratha Yatra)
Jul 12	Sri Vakresvara Pandita -- Disappearance
Jul 15	Return Ratha (8 days after Ratha Yatra)
Jul 17	Ekadasi (suitable for fasting) Fasting for Sayana Ekadasi
Jul 18	Dvadasi, Break fast 05:00 - 09:28
Jul 21	Guru (Vyasa) Purnima Srila Sanatana Gosvami -- Disappearance First month of Caturmasya begins (green leafy vegetable fast for 1 month)
Jul 25	Srila Gopala Bhatta Gosvami -- Disappearance
Jul 28	Srila Lokanatha Gosvami -- Disappearance
Jul 29	The incorporation of ISKCON in New York
Jul 31	Ekadasi (suitable for fasting) Fasting for Kamika Ekadasi
Aug 1	Dvadasi, Break fast 05:06 - 09:30
Aug 8	Sri Vamsidasa Babaji -- Disappearance Sri Raghunandana Thakura -- Disappearance
Aug 16	Ekadasi (suitable for fasting) Fasting for Pavitraropana Ekadasi Radha Govinda Jhulana Yatra begins
Aug 17	Dvadasi, Break fast 05:13 - 08:07 Srila Rupa Gosvami -- Disappearance Sri Gauridasa Pandita -- Disappearance
Aug 18	Last day of the first Caturmasya month
Aug 19	Lord Balarama -- Appearance (Fast today) Jhulana Yatra ends Second month of Caturmasya begins (yogurt fast for one month)
Aug 20	Srila Prabhupada's departure for the USA
Aug 26	Sri Krsna Janmastami: Appearance of Lord Sri Krsna (Fast today)
Aug 27	Srila Prabhupada -- Appearance
Aug 29	Ekadasi (suitable for fasting) Fasting for Annada Ekadasi
Aug 30	Dvadasi, Break fast 07:51 - 09:30



Śrīla Prabhupāda Explains the Meaning of Ratha-yātrā

Compiled by Yaśodā nandana dāsa

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains the meaning of the mood of the gopīs of Vṛndāvana while visiting Kurukṣetra

*ei dhuyā-gāne nācena dvitīya prahara
kṛṣṇa lañā vraje yāi--e-bhāva antara*

SYNONYMS *ei dhuyā-gāne*—in the repetition of this song; *nācena*—He dances; *dvitīya prahara*—the second period of the day; *kṛṣṇa lañā*—taking Kṛṣṇa; *vraje yāi*—let Me go back to Vṛndāvana; *e-bhāva*—this ecstasy; *antara*—within.

TRANSLATION Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu used to sing this song [seita parāṇa-nātha] especially during the latter part of the day, and He would think, “Let Me take Kṛṣṇa and go back to Vṛndāvana.” This ecstasy was always filling His heart.

PURPORT Being always absorbed in the ecstasy of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu felt the same separation from Kṛṣṇa that Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī felt when Kṛṣṇa left Vṛndāvana and went to Mathurā. This ecstatic feeling is very helpful in attaining love of God in separation. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu has taught everyone that one should not be overly anxious to see the Lord, but should rather feel separation from Him in ecstasy. It is actually better to feel separation from Him than to desire to see Him face to face. When the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana, the residents of Gokula, met Kṛṣṇa at Kurukṣetra during the solar eclipse, they wanted to take Kṛṣṇa back to Vṛndāvana. Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu also felt the same ecstasy as soon as He saw Jagannātha in the temple or on the Ratha-

yātrā cart. The *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana did not like the opulence of Dvārakā. They wanted to take Kṛṣṇa to the village of Vṛndāvana and enjoy His company in the groves. This desire was also felt by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, and He danced in ecstasy before the Ratha-yātrā festival when Lord Jagannātha went to Guṇḍicā. [Cc. Madhya 1.56]

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains the history of Ratha-yātrā and Lord Caitanya’s feelings.

Srila Prabhupāda: This Ratha-yātrā is in memory of Kṛṣṇa’s coming there with His brother and sister during one eclipse, to take bath, coming from Dvārakā.

Devotee (7): And the *gopīs* also assembled there?

Srila Prabhupāda: The *gopīs* got the information that Kṛṣṇa is coming from Dvārakā, so from Vṛndāvana they went to see Him. And when Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī met, that Rādhārāṇī lamented that Kṛṣṇa—He was the same Kṛṣṇa and the same Rādhārāṇī—so “this is not a good meeting place. So, if You come to Vṛndāvana, then I shall be happy.” So, it is inviting Kṛṣṇa to Vṛndāvana. That is the feeling of Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Ratha-yātrā. He is inviting Kṛṣṇa to Vṛndāvana. So in Jagannātha Purī still the same feelings are there. Kṛṣṇa, Jagannātha, from the temple goes to Guṇḍicā. So, Lakṣmī is angry that “Kṛṣṇa is leaving me, He has gone to Vṛndāvana.” So she was, she is punishing. That is called *Herā-pāñcamī*. Punishing the servants of Kṛṣṇa. The maidservants of Lakṣmī chastising them, threatened them, “Why without permission?” So they, out of very fearful condition, offering their respect to Lakṣmī, “Mother, you don’t

be sorry (indistinct), we are (indistinct).” So this, this is the play performed, and Caitanya Mahāprabhu associates they saw, and they enjoyed very much when the maidservant of Lakṣmī was slapping the servant of Viṣṇu. That is mentioned *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. All the servants arrested, brought before Lakṣmī, and they are punished. But they came to invite Kṛṣṇa, Rādhārāṇī and other gopīs. And actually, they do not go at that time. But this Ratha-yātrā ceremony means Kṛṣṇa is coming from Dvārakā to Kurukṣetra. This is the history of Ratha-yātrā.

Devotee (5): Do they have any temples of Lord Jagannātha there? They have any temples of Lord Jagannātha in Kurukṣetra?

Srila Prabhupāda: No. Jagannātha, that is another history. King Indradyumna, he wanted to establish a temple of that incidence, and that the Deities while being carved would remain unfinished. So, he was very impatient to establish, so he established the unfinished Deity. That is Jagannātha.

Devotee (7): The nondevotees cannot understand...

Srila Prabhupāda: They are being carved, Kṛṣṇa’s wood form, but he was so impatient, he said “Whatever is done now, establish.” It is said that Viśvakarmā was enquiring. So the term was, Viśvakarmā said that “Unless I finish, don’t open the door.” So, this king, he went impatiently, and calling out whether he is finished. Then he forced, forcibly opened the door, and it was unfinished. So, he said “Never mind, (indistinct).” Unfinished Kṛṣṇa (indistinct). So Kṛṣṇa, finished or unfinished, is Kṛṣṇa. That is omnipotency. That is Jagannātha form, (indistinct) doesn’t matter finished or unfinished. (end)

[Room Conversation—Honolulu, May 20, 1976]

*sabā-saṅge ratha-yātrā kaila daraśana
ratha-agre nṛtya kari’ udyāne gamana*

SYNONYMS *sabā-saṅge*—with all of them; *ratha-yātrā*—the car festival; *kaila*—did; *daraśana*—seeing; *ratha-agre*—in front of the car; *nṛtya*—dancing; *kari’*—doing; *udyāne*—in the garden; *gamana*—going.

TRANSLATION After this, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and all the devotees saw the Ratha-yātrā, the car festival ceremony. Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself danced in front of the car, and after dancing He entered a garden.

[Cc. Madhya 1.134]

The Glories of the dancing of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu at the Ratha-yātrā festival

*jaya śrotā-gaṇa, śuna, kari’ eka mana
ratha-yātrāya nṛtya prabhura parama mohana*

SYNONYMS *jaya*—all glories; *śrotā-gaṇa*—to the listeners; *śuna*—please hear; *kari’*—keeping yourself; *eka mana*—in one attention; *ratha-yātrāya*—in the car festival; *nṛtya*—dancing; *prabhura*—of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; *parama*—extremely; *mohana*—enchanting.

TRANSLATION All glories to the listeners of Caitanya-caritāmṛta. Please hear the description of the dancing of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu at the Ratha-yātrā festival. His dancing is very enchanting. Please hear of it with great attention.

[Cc. Madhya 13.3]

Śrila Prabhupāda explains the role of the śabarās in the original worship of Lord Jagannātha – Nīla Mādhava

*baliṣṭha dayitā’ gaṇa-yena matta hātī
agannātha vijaya karāya kari’ hātāhātī*

SYNONYMS *baliṣṭha dayitā’ gaṇa*—very strong *dayitās*, or carriers of Jagannātha; *yena*—as if; *matta hātī*—drunken elephants; *agannātha*—of Lord Jagannātha; *vijaya*—departure; *karāya*—cause; *kari’*—performing; *hātāhātī*—hand to hand.

TRANSLATION The very strongly built *dayitās* [carriers of the Jagannātha Deity] were as powerful as drunken elephants. They manually carried Lord Jagannātha from the throne to the car.



PURPORT The word *dayitā* refers to one who has received the mercy of the Lord. Lord Jagannātha has a number of stalwart servants known as *dayitās*. These servants do not come from very high-caste families (*brāhmaṇas*, *kṣatriyas* or *vaiśyas*), but because they are engaged in the service of the Lord, they have been elevated to a respected position. Thus, they are known as *dayitās*. These servants of Lord Jagannātha take care of the Lord from the day of the Snāna-yātrā up to the time the Lord is carried from the throne to the Ratha car. In the *Kṣetra-māhātmya* these *dayitās* are said to come from the *śābaras*, a caste that keeps and sells pigs. However, among the *dayitās* there are also many who come from the *brāhmaṇa* caste. Those *dayitās* coming from the *brāhmaṇa* families are called *dayitā-patis*, or leaders of the *dayitās*. The *dayitā-patis* offer food such as sweetmeats to Lord Jagannātha during the *anavasara*, the resting period after Snāna-yātrā. They also make the early morning offering of sweetmeats daily. It is said that during the *anavasara* Lord Jagannātha suffers from fever and that the *dayitā-patis* offer Him an infusion of drugs represented by fruit juice. It is said that in the beginning Lord Jagannātha was worshiped by the *śābaras* and was known as the Deity Nīla Mādhava. Later, when the Deity was established in the temple, the Lord became known as Jagannātha. Because the Deities were taken from the *śābaras*, all the *śābara* devotees were elevated to the position of *dayitās*.

[Cc. Madhya 13.8]

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains the meaning of Śrī Caitanya dancing in seven saṅkīrtana parties

*bhakta-gaṇa anubhave, nāhi jāne āna
śrī-bhāgavata-śāstra tāhāte pramāṇa*

SYNONYMS *bhakta-gaṇa*—all devotees; *anubhave*—could perceive; *nāhi jāne*—do not know; *āna*—others; *śrī-bhāgavata-śāstra*—the revealed scripture *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; *tāhāte*—in that connection; *pramāṇa*—evidence.

TRANSLATION Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's dancing before the Ratha-yātrā car could be perceived only by pure devotees. Others could not understand. Descriptions of Lord Kṛṣṇa's uncommon dancing can be found in the revealed scripture *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

PURPORT Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa expanded Himself into many forms while engaged in the *rāsa-līlā* dance, and He also expanded Himself when He married 16,000 wives in Dvārakā. **The same process was adopted by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu when He expanded Himself into seven**

forms to dance in each and every group of the saṅkīrtana party. These expansions were appreciated by pure devotees, including King Pratāparudra. Although for reasons of external formality Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu refused to see King Pratāparudra because he was a king, King Pratāparudra became one of the Lord's most confidential devotees by the Lord's special mercy upon Him. The King could see Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu simultaneously present in all seven groups. As confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, one cannot see the expansions of the transcendental forms of the Lord unless one is a pure devotee of the Lord.

[Cc. Madhya 13.67]

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains the meaning of Ratha-yātrā

*ei-mata gaura-śyāme, donhe thelātheli
svarathe śyāmere rāke gaura mahā-balī*

SYNONYMS *ei-mata*—in this way; *gaura-śyāme*—Lord Jagannātha and Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; *donhe*—between both of Them; *thelātheli*—competition of pushing forward; *sva-rathe*—in His own car; *śyāmere*—Lord Jagannātha; *rāke*—keeps; *gaura*—Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu; *mahā-balī*—greatly powerful.

TRANSLATION Thus there was a sort of competition between Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Lord Jagannātha in seeing who would lead, but Caitanya Mahāprabhu was so strong that He made Lord Jagannātha wait in His car.

PURPORT After giving up the company of the *gopīs* in Vṛndāvana, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Mahārāja Nanda, engaged in His pastimes at Dvārakā. When Kṛṣṇa went to Kurukṣetra with His brother and sister and others from Dvārakā, He again met the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu is *rādhā-bhāva-dyuti-suvalita*, that is, Kṛṣṇa Himself assuming the part of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī in order to understand Kṛṣṇa. Lord Jagannātha-deva is Kṛṣṇa, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Caitanya Mahāprabhu's leading Lord Jagannātha toward Guṇḍicā temple corresponded to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's leading Kṛṣṇa toward Vṛndāvana. Śrī Kṣetra, Jagannātha Purī, was taken as the kingdom of Dvārakā, the place where Kṛṣṇa enjoys supreme opulence. However, He was being led by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to Vṛndāvana, the simple village where all the inhabitants are filled with ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa. Śrī Kṣetra is a place of *aiśvarya-līlā*, just as Vṛndāvana is the place of *mādhurya-līlā*. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's following at the rear of the *ratha* indicated that Lord Jagannātha, Kṛṣṇa, was forgetting the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana. Although

Kṛṣṇa neglected the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, He could not forget them. Thus in His opulent Ratha-yātrā, He was returning to Vṛndāvana. In the role of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was examining whether the Lord still remembered the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana.

When Caitanya Mahāprabhu fell behind the Ratha car, Jagannātha-deva, Kṛṣṇa Himself, understood the mind of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Therefore, Jagannātha sometimes fell behind the dancing Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to indicate to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī that He had not forgotten. Thus Lord Jagannātha would wait on the *ratha* for their forward march. In this way Lord Jagannātha agreed that without the ecstasy of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī He could not feel satisfied. While Jagannātha was thus waiting, Gaurasundara, Caitanya Mahāprabhu, in His ecstasy of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, immediately came forward to Kṛṣṇa. At such times, Lord Jagannātha would proceed ahead very slowly. These competitive exchanges were all part of the love affair between Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. In that competition between Lord Caitanya's ecstasy for Jagannātha and Jagannātha's ecstasy for Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, Caitanya Mahāprabhu emerged successful.

[Cc. Madhya 13.119]

*śrīnātha miśra, śubhānanda, śrīrāma, īśāna
śrīnidhi, śrīgopikānta, miśra bhagavān*

SYNONYMS *śrīnātha miśra*—of the name Śrīnātha Miśra; *śubhānanda*—of the name Śubhānanda; *śrīrāma*—of the name Śrīrāma; *īśāna*—of the name Īśāna; *śrīnidhi*—of the name Śrīnidhi; *śrī-gopikānta*—of the name Śrī Gopikānta; *miśra bhagavān*—of the name Miśra Bhagavān.

TRANSLATION The fifty-fifth branch was Śrīnātha Miśra, the fifty-sixth was Śubhānanda, the fifty-seventh was Śrīrāma, the fifty-eighth was Īśāna, the fifty-ninth was Śrīnidhi, the sixtieth was Śrī Gopikānta, and the sixty-first was Miśra Bhagavān.

PURPORT Śubhānanda, who formerly lived in Vṛndāvana as Mālatī, was one of the *kīrtana* performers who danced in front of the Ratha-yātrā car during the Jagannātha festival. It is said that he ate the foam that came out of the mouth of the Lord while He danced before the Ratha-yātrā car. Īśāna was a personal servant of Śrīmatī Śacīdevī, who showered her great mercy upon him. He was also very dear to Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

[Cc. Ādi 10.110]

*govinda, mādhaba, vāsudeva--tina bhāi
yāñ-sabāra kīrtane nāce caitanya-nitāi*

SYNONYMS *govinda*—of the name Govinda; *mādhaba*—of the name Mādhava; *vāsudeva*—of the name Vāsudeva; *tina bhāi*—three brothers; *yāñ-sabāra*—all of whom; *kīrtane*—in the performance of *sañkīrtana*; *nāce*—dance; *caitanya-nitāi*—Lord Caitanya and Nityānanda Prabhu.

TRANSLATION The three brothers Govinda, Mādhava and Vāsudeva were the eighty-second, eighty-third and eighty-fourth branches of the tree. Lord Caitanya and Nityānanda used to dance in their *kīrtana* performances.

PURPORT The three brothers Govinda, Mādhava and Vāsudeva Ghoṣa all belonged to a *kāyastha* family. Govinda established the Gopīnātha temple in Agradvīpa, where he resided. Mādhava Ghoṣa was expert in performing *kīrtana*. No one within this world could compete with him. He was known as the singer of Vṛndāvana and was very dear to Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu. It is said that when the three brothers performed *sañkīrtana*, immediately Lord Caitanya and Nityānanda would dance in ecstasy. According to the *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* (188), the three brothers were formerly Kalāvati, Rasollāsā and Guṇatuṅgā, who recited the songs composed by Śrī Viśākhā-gopī. The three brothers were among one of the seven parties that performed *kīrtana* when Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu attended the Ratha-yātrā festival at Jagannātha Purī. Vakreśvara Paṇḍita was the chief dancer in their party. This is vividly described in the *Madhya-līlā*, Chapter Thirteen, verses 42 and 43.

[Cc. Ādi 10.115]

*tāñra putra--mahāśaya śrī-kānu ṭhākura
yāñra dehe rahe kṛṣṇa-premāmṛta-pūra*

SYNONYMS *tāñra putra*—his son; *mahāśaya*—a respectable gentleman; *śrī-kānu ṭhākura*—of the name Śrī Kānu Ṭhākura; *yāñra*—whose; *dehe*—in the body; *rahe*—remained; *kṛṣṇa-prema-amṛta-pūra*—the nectar of devotional service to Kṛṣṇa.

TRANSLATION Śrī Kānu Ṭhākura, a very respectable gentleman, was the son of Puruṣottama dāsa Ṭhākura. He was such a great devotee that Lord Kṛṣṇa always lived in his body.

PURPORT To go to the headquarters of Kānu Ṭhākura, one has to proceed by boat from the Jhikaragāchā-ghāṭa station to the river known as Kapotākṣa. Otherwise, if one goes about two or two and a half miles from the Jhikaragāchā-ghāṭa station, he can see Bodhakhānā, the headquarters of Kānu

Ṭhākura. The son of Sadāśiva was Puruṣottama Ṭhākura, and his son was Kānu Ṭhākura. The descendants of Kānu Ṭhākura know him as Nāgara Puruṣottama. He was the cowherd boy named Dāma during *kṛṣṇa-līlā*. It is said that just after the birth of Kānu Ṭhākura, his mother, Jāhnavā, died. When he was about twelve days old, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu took him to His home at Khaḍadaha. It is ascertained that Kānu Ṭhākura was born sometime in the Bengali year 942 (A.D. 1535). It is said that he took birth on the Ratha-yātrā day. Because he was a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa from the very beginning of his life, Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu gave him the name Śīśu Kṛṣṇadāsa. When he was five years old he went to Vṛndāvana with Jāhnavā-mātā, and upon seeing the ecstatic symptoms of Kānu Ṭhākura, the Gosvāmīs gave him the name Kānāi Ṭhākura.

In the family of Kānu Ṭhākura there is a Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deity known as Prāṇavallabha. It is said that his family worshiped this Deity long before the appearance of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. When there was a Maharashtrian invasion of Bengal, the family of Kānu Ṭhākura was scattered, and after the invasion one Hariṅkṛṣṇa Gosvāmī of that family came back to their original home, Bodhakhānā, and re-established the Prāṇavallabha Deity. The descendants of the family still engage in the service of Prāṇavallabha. Kānu Ṭhākura was present during the Kheṭari *utsava*, when Jāhnavā-devī and Vīrabhadra Gosvāmī were also present. One of Kānu Ṭhākura's family members, Mādhavācārya, married the daughter of Śrī Nityānanda Prabhu, who was named Gaṅgādevī. Both Puruṣottama Ṭhākura and Kānu Ṭhākura had many disciples from *brāhmaṇa* families. Most of the disciplic descendants of Kānu Ṭhākura now reside in the village named Gaḍabetā, by the river Śīlāvatī, in the Midnapore district.

[Cc. Ādi 11.40]

*ratha-yātrā dekhi' tāhān rahilā cāri-māsa
prabhu-saṅge nṛtya-gīta parama ullāsa*

SYNONYMS *ratha-yātrā*—the car festival; *dekhi'*—seeing; *tāhān*—there; *rahilā*—remained; *cāri-māsa*—four months; *prabhu-saṅge*—with the Lord; *nṛtya-gīta*—chanting and dancing; *parama*—greatest; *ullāsa*—pleasure.

TRANSLATION After attending the Ratha-yātrā ceremony at Jagannātha Purī, all the devotees remained there for four months, greatly enjoying the company of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu by performing kīrtana [chanting and dancing].

[Cc. Madhya 1.47]

*vidāya samaya prabhu kahilā sabāre
pratyabda āsibe sabe guṇḍicā dekhibāre*

SYNONYMS *vidāya*—departing; *samaya*—at the time; *prabhu*—the Lord; *kahilā*—said; *sabāre*—unto everyone; *pratyabda*—every year; *āsibe*—you should come; *sabe*—all; *guṇḍicā*—of the name Guṇḍicā; *dekhibāre*—to see.

TRANSLATION At the time of departure, the Lord requested all the devotees, “Please come here every year to see the Ratha-yātrā festival of Lord Jagannātha’s journey to the Guṇḍicā temple.”

PURPORT There is a temple named Guṇḍicā at Sundarācala. Lord Jagannātha, Baladeva and Subhadrā are pushed in their three carts from the temple in Purī to the Guṇḍicā temple in Sundarācala. In Orissa, this Ratha-yātrā festival is known as Jagannātha’s journey to Guṇḍicā. Whereas others speak of it as the Ratha-yātrā festival, the residents of Orissa refer to it as Guṇḍicā-yātrā.

[Cc. Madhya 1.48]

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains the history of performing Ratha-yātrā as a child

Letter to Ravindra Svarupa
Paris
10 June, 1974

74-06-10

Philadelphia

My dear Ravindra Svarupa,

Please accept my blessings. I am in due receipt of your letter dated June 5, and I have carefully noted the contents.

I am glad to hear you have immediately stopped political campaigning on receipt of my letter. I have written a number of letters to the persons involved explaining how we cannot spend money and manpower on this project in competition with the big politicians. Therefore, I have asked that it be stopped.

I want to thank you a hundred times for the excellent way you are worshiping the Deity there as I can see from the color photographs you have sent. From my very childhood I was also worshiping Lord Jagannātha. When I was six years old my father gave me a ratha and I was performing the Ratha yatra in my neighborhood. And now in the western world you are worshiping Lord Jagannātha so gorgeously and it pleases me very, very much. Thank you again for the way you are

conducting the deity worship in the Philadelphia temple. As for the Ratha ceremony, you go on with it, I shall attend there next year. But you go on holding a splendid ceremony for the people of the city. I am sure it will be a success.

Your ever well-wisher,
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

ACBS/sdg

Letter to Bhakta dasa
New Delhi
October 11, 1973

73-11-10

San Diego

My Dear Bhakta dasa:

Please accept my blessings. I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated October 17, 1973 and have noted the contents. I thank you very much for your invitation for your Govardhana celebration. I would have come, but I received your letter late, but I hope anyway that you have enjoyed Govardhana-Puja. The photos are very nice, and Radharani looks very satisfied, as I see in the features of Her face in the photo. If She is pleased, then Krsna is pleased, and all living entities are pleased.

I thank you very much for installing Radha-Giridhari. From my childhood I was very much fond of Radha-Krsna, and now my good disciples are helping me to open so many Radha-Krsna temples all over the world. It gives me so much pleasure. Now introduce Ratha Yatra. That was my childhood activity. I want to see my disciples all over the world introduce two items, opening Radha-Krsna temples and Ratha-yatra festivals. Do this under the protection of Guru-Gauranga.

Please do everything cooperatively for [you] will be happy, your countrymen will be happy, and all living entities will be happy. If one waters the root, then all the branches, twigs, and leaves are automatically nourished. That is the philosophy of Krsna consciousness.

Yes, I may meet with the Pope when returning to USA from Africa.

I hope this meets you in good health.

Your ever well-wisher,
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

Letter to: Shyamsundar Mallik
London
13 July, 1972

72-07-13

Shyamsundar Mallik
155/A Mahatma Gandhi Road
Calcutta-7, India

My dear Brother Shyamsundar,

Please accept my blessings. I am in due receipt of your kind letter dated 7/7/72 in Bengali, and you will excuse I am writing in English because I am in London. I hope you are making the Ratha-yatra Festival very successful, along with my disciples headed by Bhavananda and Acyutananda Swami. In my childhood I used to take my ratha with my little friends, about 60 years ago. Again, I am reviving the same attempt with my young disciples. I have become old, and you are also old, although not so old as I am. We may pass away, but my disciples will carry on this festival yearly, and so it will be remembered forever our eternal relationship with Sri Sri Jagannathaji and Sri Sri Radha-Govindaji. Ask your sons also to cooperate so that in future this festival will be continued for good.

I am presently engaged here in London for celebrating the Ratha-yatra Festival also. A huge festival will begin at Marble Arch and proceed to Trafalgar Square, where I shall speak to at least 10,000 persons. Similarly, my disciples are holding Ratha-yatra festival at San Francisco, Philadelphia, New York, Tokyo, Melbourne (Australia), Calcutta, and other places. So, what was my childhood play 65 years ago is now a worldwide event. The same Radha-Govindaji worship and Jagannatha worship is going on all over the world.

Hoping this will meet you in the best of health.

Yours affectionately,
A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami

Śrīla Prabhupāda used to save money to go to the Ratha-yātrā in Jagannātha Purī

Srila Prabhupāda: Sometimes I become surprised how I have written this. Although I am the writer, still sometimes I am surprised how these things have come. Such vivid description. Where is such literature throughout the whole world? It is all Kṛṣṇa's mercy. Every line is perfect.

Devotee: The purports are as nice as the ślokas.

Srila Prabhupāda: It is explained in this way.

Devotee: Śrīla Prabhupāda, it's 7:30 now. [break]

Srila Prabhupāda: I have not done it, but I have seen it.

Devotee: You learned everything by seeing. You said that you learned how to cook by watching your mother.

Srila Prabhupāda: Sometimes I used to cook.

Devotee: Oh, for your family?

Srila Prabhupāda: Our family men. I asked my mother, "I'll do this, that." They'll allow, "All right."

Devotee: You said that sometimes you would be walking in the footpath, and you would watch those men cook their...

Srila Prabhupāda: Not cook. Somebody's doing some artistic work. I'll stand. I'll see how they are doing.

Devotee: Artistic?

Srila Prabhupāda: Just like knitting. So, I'll learning knitting by standing before. They're making some flower of wool, so I'll learn it, and it will come out. That was my hobby. And similarly, I learned how to worship Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Devotee: By watching. You watched your father?

Srila Prabhupāda: Father and the Mullik's Thakurbhari. "I'll do." I'll ask my father, "Give me Deity. I shall worship." "Yes, take Deity."

Devotee: How old were you when you got your Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Deity?

Srila Prabhupāda: About six, seven years old.

Devotee: Oh. Was it very elaborate worship?

Srila Prabhupāda: Not elaborate. But I'll decorate. I'll keep it in a place. Whatever I eat, I offered. I imitate, ghee lamp, āratī.

Devotee: Putting to rest.

Srila Prabhupāda: There was engagement in a small corner of the room.

Devotee: Then Ratha-yātrā. Sounds like a very pleasant childhood.

Srila Prabhupāda: Yes. My father's friends, the Mulliks, they used to criticize my..., "Oh, you are holding Ratha-yātrā festival, and you are not inviting us."

Devotee: You didn't invite them?

Srila Prabhupāda: It is childish play. Where is invitation? So, my father, the children, they were playing. "Oh, by the name of children you are avoiding us." It was like that. But the festival was going on. We called the professional kīrtanīyas. They performed kīrtana. There will be procession of my small children friends.

Devotee: Miniature Ratha-yātrā.

Srila Prabhupāda: Hm. A small ratha the father give. The height, about this, made of nice, strong wood.

Devotee: All the boys would pull it?

Srila Prabhupāda: Everything small scale.

Devotee: Small pullers also.

Srila Prabhupāda: Eight days, eight kind of varieties of prasādam, my mother will prepare.

Devotee: She would take part by preparing.

Srila Prabhupāda: Yes. And now... Whether the... Make very nice bannerjee(?). Formerly people were engaged in these things. There was another Mullik family, Rajen..., Raja Rajendra. He was distributing jagannātha-prasāda, daily, two thousand portions.

Devotee: Which Mullik?

Srila Prabhupāda: Raja Rajendranath Mullik. He was also holding very big festival, Ratha-yātrā. So, we had the opportunity of seeing once.

Devotee: You must have been dreaming about Purī Ratha-yātrā.

Srila Prabhupāda: Yes. Whenever I would find some time, I would consult timetable, "How to go to Purī and Vṛndāvana? What is the fare?" At that time carriage(?) was three rupees. I think it was four rupees, one anna. And Vṛndāvana was six rupees.

Devotee: You had some money saved up?

Srila Prabhupāda: Yes, with my father.

Devotee: You said that your grandmother would give you one gold coin each year.

Srila Prabhupāda: Not gold coin. This copper coin, looking like gold.

[Talk About Varṇāśrama, S.B. 2.1.1-5—June 28, 1977, Vṛndāvana]

Srila Prabhupāda: Now how you have got a different types of... Just like the Bhagavad-gītā begins, *dharma-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre samavetā yuyutsavaḥ* [Bg. 1.1]. So *dharma-kṣetre kuru-kṣetre*, how you can interpret in a different way? Kurukṣetra is already there. But how you can interpret, “Kurukṣetra means this, Kurukṣetra means that?” You cannot interpret.

Guest: Yes, but who is decided what exactly the meaning...

Srila Prabhupāda: Exactly the meaning is there.

Guest: Literal, literally.

Srila Prabhupāda: Literally, yes. The thing is the interpretation is required when you cannot understand. If, if I say, “This is a stick,” everyone knows it is a stick. So, I say, “Here is a stick.” So, if you say, “No, I do not accept it is stick.” So, what is that interpretation? Everyone knows it is stick. Similarly, Kurukṣetra means that the place, still existing. And in the Vedic śāstra it is ordered, *kurukṣetre dharma yajayet*. You go...

From time immemorial it is a place of pilgrimage. Even Kṛṣṇa, during solar eclipse, Kṛṣṇa with His family, He came there, Jagannātha. **The ceremony is there, Ratha-yātrā. Because Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Subhadra came in the same chariot.** That is being performed. So Kurukṣetra, dharmakṣetra, at least five thousand years ago the system was that people used to come to Kurukṣetra as a place of pilgrimage, dharmakṣetra. And Kurukṣetra, the place is there. And the the two family members, the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas, they fought. The Battle of Kurukṣetra took place. These things are evident. Then why there is need of interpreting? That is the first point.

[Room Conversation—December 20, 1976, Bombay]

Jagannatha Ashtakam

*kadāchit-kāṇḍī taṭavipina saṅgītakaravō
mudābhīrī nārīvadana kamalāsvādamadhupah |
ramā śambhu brahmāmarapati gaṇēśārchita padō
jagannāthaḥ svāmī nayanapathagāmī bhavatu mē || 1 ||*

*bhujē savyē vēṇuṃ śīrasi śikhipiñCham kaṭitaṭē
dukūlaṃ nētrāntē sahacharakaṭākṣam vidadhatē |
sadā śrīmadvṛndāvanavasatilīlāparichayō
jagannāthaḥ svāmī nayanapathagāmī bhavatu nē || 2 ||*

*mahāmbhōdhēstīrē kanakaruchirē nīlāśikharē
vasan prāsādāntassahaja balabhadreṇa balinā |
subhadra madhyasthassakalasura sēvāvasaradō
jagannāthaḥ svāmī nayanapathagāmī bhavatu mē || 3 ||*

*kṛpā pārāvārāssajala jalada śrēṇiruchirō
ramāvāṇī rāmasphuradamala paṅkeruhamukhaḥ |
surēndrairārādhyah śrutigaṇaśikhā gīta charitō
jagannāthaḥ svāmī nayanapathagāmī bhavatu mē || 4 ||*

*rathārūḍhō gachChan pathi milita bhūdēvapaṭalaiḥ
stuti prādurbhāvaṃ pratipadamupākārṇya sadayaḥ |
dayāsindhurbandhussakala jagatā sindhusutayā
jagannāthaḥ svāmī nayanapathagāmī bhavatu mē || 5 ||*

*parabrahmāpīḍaḥ kuvalaya-dalōtphullanayanō
nivāsī nīlādrau nihita-charaṇō'nanta-śīrasi |
rasānandō rādhā-sarasa-vapurāliṅgana-sakhō
jagannāthaḥ svāmī nayanapathagāmī bhavatu mē || 6 ||*

*na vai yāchē rājyaṃ na cha kanaka māṇikyā vibhavaṃ
na yāchē'ham ramyāṃ nikhilajana-kāmyāṃ varavadhūm |
sadā kālē kālē pramatha-patinā gītacharitō
jagannāthaḥ svāmī nayanapathagāmī bhavatu mē || 7 ||*

*hara tvaṃ saṃsāraṃ drutataramasāraṃ surapatē
hara tvaṃ pāpānāṃ vitatimaparāṃ yādavapatē |
ahō dīnō'nāthē nihitacharaṇō nīśchitamidaṃ
jagannāthaḥ svāmī nayanapathagāmī bhavatu mē || 8 ||*

*jagannāthāṣṭakam punyaṃ yaḥ paṭhēt prayataḥ śuchiḥ |
sarvapāpa viśuddhātmā viṣṇulōkaṃ sa gachChati ||*

*iti śrīmad śaṅkarāchāryavirachitaṃ jagannāthāṣṭakam
sampūrṇam||*



Translation

1) Sometimes in great happiness Lord Jagannatha makes a loud concert with His flute in the groves on the banks of the Yamuna. He is like a bumblebee tasting the beautiful lotus like faces of the cowherd damsels of Vraja, and great personalities such as Laksmi, Siva, Brahma, Indra, and Ganesa worship His lotus feet. May that Jagannatha Svami be the object of my vision.

2) In His left hand Lord Jagannatha holds a flute, on His head He wears peacock feathers, and on His hips He wears fine yellow silken cloth. From the corners of His eyes He bestows sidelong glances upon His loving devotees, and He always reveals Himself through His pastimes in His divine abode of Vrndavana. May that Jagannatha Svami be the object of my vision.

3) On the shore of the great ocean, within a large palace atop the brilliant, golden Nilacala Hill, Lord Jagannatha resides with His powerful brother Balabhadra and His sister Subhadra, who sits between Them. May that Jagannatha Svami, who bestows the opportunity for devotional service upon all godly souls, be the object of my vision.

4) Lord Jagannatha is an ocean of mercy and as beautiful as a row of blackish rain clouds. He is the storehouse of bliss for Laksmi and Sarasvati, and His face resembles a spotless full-blown lotus. The best of demigods and sages worship Him, and the Upanisads sing His glories. May that Jagannatha Svami be the object of my vision.

5) When Lord Jagannatha moves along the road on His Rathayatra car, at every step large assemblies of brahmanas loudly chant prayers and sing songs for His pleasure. Hearing their hymns, Lord Jagannatha becomes very favorably disposed toward them. He is the ocean of mercy and the true friend of all the worlds. May that Jagannatha Svami, along with His consort Laksmi, who was born from the ocean of nectar, be the object of my vision.

6) Lord Jagannatha, whose eyes resemble full-blown lotus petals, is the ornament on Lord Brahma's head. He resides on Nilacala Hill with His lotus feet placed on the heads of Anantadeva. Overwhelmed by the mellows of love, He joyfully embraces Srimati Radharani's body, which is like a cool pond. May that Jagannatha Svami be the object of my vision.

7) I do not pray for a kingdom nor do I pray for gold, rubies, or wealth. I do not ask for a beautiful wife as desired by all men. I simply pray that Jagannatha Svami, whose glories Lord Siva always sings, may be the constant object of my vision.

8) O Lord of the demigods, please quickly remove this useless material existence I am undergoing. O Lord of the Yadus, please destroy this vast, shoreless ocean of sins. Alas, this is certain Lord Jagannatha bestows His lotus feet upon those who feel themselves fallen and have no shelter in this world but Him. May that Jagannatha Svami be the object of my vision.

9) The self-retrained, virtuous soul who recites these eight verses glorifying Lord Jagannatha becomes cleansed of all sins and duly proceeds to Lord Visnu's abode.

ALL GLORY TO THE DIVINE MASTER
AND
THE SUPREME LORD SREE KRISHNA-CHAITANYA



SREE
SAJJANA-TOSHANI
OR
THE HARMONIST

VOL. XXVI.

JULY, 1928, 442 Chaitanya-Era.

NO. 2.

The Temple of Jagannath at Puri

[By THAKUR BHAKTIVINODE ON September 15, 1871.]

THERE is not a Hindu who has not heard the name of this temple. The old and the young, the male and the female, the Rajah and the ryot, and the weak and the stout, all visit this temple out of a religious curiosity. Three hundred and one miles South-West of the Vice-Regal palace at Calcutta, stands this famous temple close to the seashore affording an object for a telescopic observation to the new-comer on board the ship bound for Bengal ! It stands on a platform measuring 20 cubits in height from the level of water. The platform itself is 375 cubits by 400 cubits made of huge stones cemented with a mortar composed of lime and sand. The temple itself is 92 cubits in height of a structure purely Indian. The pilgrim sees its towering head from the distance of 7 miles where the shrewed Panda takes a rupee from him by shewing him the holy *Chakra*. This temple was erected by Raja Ananga Bhimdeb about 800 years ago in place

of another one, then in a state of delapidation. In old accounts we find this temple styled *Niladri* or the *blue hill*. From this it appears that the former temple which was probably raised by the emigrating Rajah Indradyumna was a blue or dark coloured one. Otherwise we cannot account for the name *Nilachala* unless we take it for granted that the name was after the Nilgiri Hills, a small range which runs through this Province from one end to the other. The *Utkalakhanda* in the Puranas, the *Niladri Mahodadhi*, and the *Matla Punjee* (an account regularly kept by the temple officers) declare that Jagannath is a very ancient institution amongst the Hindus. Whatever may be the value of the authorities quoted, we are inclined to believe that Puri was considered sacred even at the time when the Puranas were written, because we find in Wilson's copy of the *Vishnu Purana* that one Kandu Rishi resorted to a place called Purushottama for the

purpose of divine contemplation. At all events Rajah Indradyumna, to whom the whole affair is generally ascribed, lived a long time before Rajah Vikramaditya, the cotemporary of Augustus Caesar of Rome. We are sure, that Puri is not so old as Benares and Gaya, of which repeated mention is made in all the Puranas and the Mahabharata, yet it is not a place of recent origin created after the commencement of the Christian Era. We cannot believe that the institution originated in pure stupidity of the religious sentiment ; for we can not but observe a great deal of wisdom in the man with whom the idea of Jagannath first originated. We do not profess to belong to any of the sects of religion under the sun, because we believe the absolute Faith, founded upon instinctive love of God natural in all human souls. There are two great sects of religion all over the world who fight with each other without any advantage whatever. One of them holds that it is absolutely necessary to believe that God is without any form whatever and believers in the form are but idolatrous. The other class maintains that God has out of kindness shewn His form to the pious in order to be worshipped by them. Both of them are *wrong*, because both of them fight on a purely material point. The most unsectarian view on the point is, that God is neither a form nor a formless object but is purely *spiritual*. Matter alone can embrace the idea of form ; consequently all positive and negative assertions with regard to it must naturally be material. Those who worship the form and those who describe God as *formless*, are both idolatrous and superstitious, and consequently can never form an idea of the spiritual Deity. Sectarious of the same class are expected to hate each other, but those, who have nothing in common with them, have no reason for hatred. We therefore can not like the fanatics of the formless class consider all idols as unsacred and hold the worship of a formless Deity

(identifying Him with something like space and eternity) to be the natural worship of God. We go so far as to maintain that the worshipper of the spiritual God *in* an idol is infinitely superior to a mere believer in a formless existence who considers that formlessness is one of the attributes of the Spirit. Spirit is not exactly the *opposite* of matter, but it is certainly something different from it. It is difficult indeed to decide what is the exact relation of the Spirit to matter, space and time, and it is not given to us to know. It would indeed be the height of error to conceive that all the opposite qualities of matter, space and time are in Spirit. Hence we must look to some other attributes for Spirit. Love and wisdom are certainly spiritual attributes which are not opposite qualities of matter. Man must be *wise* and *love* God. This is the religion of the soul. All debates about the essence of God (*e. g.* God is formless or with a form) are but sectarian. Now we allow men to love God *wisely i. e., spiritually* while their eyes are on an idol as well as while they are contemplating an Infinite thing like the space. When the soul worships, the mind also finds an employment. The mind can never conceive of anything that is not material. It is therefore exceedingly difficult for man in his present state to separate himself from idolatry. What man is obliged to do, is his *lot* and hence we must put off the meaning of idolatry to some other process. We therefore conclude that he that *worships the idol* as God (whether the idol be formlessness or form) is idolatrous, but he that worships the spirit in wise love (however near he may be to an idol of form or of no-form) is a worshipper of the Spirit. But we go further to tolerate all these classes if they be sincere. God accepts the worship of all those who worship their highest ideal, whether it be *form, formlessness* or spirit, and it is under some regular processes that the idea of God becomes purer and purer in

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THE TEMPLE OF JAGANNATH AT PURI

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every soul and not by fits and starts. That man has no heart for his brother and consequently for God also, who sneers at the highest ideal of another behind him as idolatrous. A war against the idol worshippers either in words or action is not a crusade but a fit of rash, loveless and ambitious fanaticism of a very unphilanthropic character. We therefore, with all our *due attempts* at the *spiritual* reformation of our erring brothers, tolerate all classes of idolatry from the worshippers of *formlessness* to the worshippers of man, or matter as God. We are opposed to the atheists alone who live and enjoy for themselves. Those who are anxious for the blessings of God are our brothers in faith, whatever error there may be in their ideas and forms of worship. Love of God, however misdirected it may be, does by force of its own natural strength, rise higher and higher in the scale of spiritual progress. Its want is the degradation of the soul alone. Those who do not love God has an opposite course from us and are objects of pity with all classes of theists. God, save them !

We were led to these remarks by a desire to shew that we are candid examiners of the institution of Jagannath without that hatred to the idolatrous (who are not prepared to understand the philosophy of *Purushottam Tatwa*) which is perceivable in the short sighted and rash reformers of our country. The system of Jagannath is viewed in two different ways. The superstitious and the ignorant take it a system of idolatry by worshipping the idols in the temple as God Almighty appearing in the shape of a carved wood for the salvation of the *Urias*. But the *Saragrahi Vaishnavas* find the idols as emblems of some eternal truth which has been explained in the Vedanta Sutras of Vyasa. Within the temple compound there are several smaller temples in which are to be found the idols of *Bimala*, *Shiva*, *Ganesha* and *Surya*. The big, towering temple of Jagannath

stands in the middle of the compound. Those who have examined the system of Hindu Theology with a philosophic eye, are well aware that there are five different forms of faith comprised therein. The first form of faith is Shaktism or the worship of *nature* as God. The second is the worship of *Surya* or the sun which is identified with heat ; the only active element in lifeless matter. The third teaches one to worship the Spirit in its most unsatisfactory form of development in the lower animals. In this form, the elephant-man or Ganesha is the object of worship. Man is the object of worship in the fourth stage of Hinduism. The soul, well developed as it is in the man, is worshipped in Shiva in whom the human soul is said to be observed after salvation. In the fifth stage alone, the Infinite God distinct from the human soul, is perceived and worshipped. Here commences Vaishnavism. In these five stages are shewn the whole history of Hindu Theology, nay, the whole history of Theology in general. All sorts of creeds that have come to existence since the creation of man, are included in these five stages. Name any system of faith that man has discovered and we will find no difficulty in classing it with any one of the five, *viz. Materialism, Elementarism, Fetichism, Man worship and God worship.*

This is summing up of all systems of faith philosophically and not instructing people to believe in any one of them except the last. The visitor of the temple of Jagannath will find a similar display of these systems in their proper places. Consequently we find the temple of Jagannath in the middle of the compound, and our remarks will now relate to Jagannath exclusively.

We have several times entered the shrine of Jagannath, and, approaching the sandal bolts, have observed in the middle room an elevated seat on which stand four different forms *viz.* Jagannath, Balaram, Subhadra and Sudarsana.

According to the *Vedanta* God is one without a second but He has infinite energies and attributes which are not fully known to man.* But then man perceives only three energies in God, because he has no other corresponding sides to understand the other powers. From one of the energies proceeds matter in all its different forms and properties and this energy is styled *Maya Shakti* of God. From the second energy, proceeds all spiritual creation, in all its relations and phases. This power is entitled the *Jiva Shakti* of God. The third energy perceivable by man is the energy of Will, which is called *Chit Shakti*. God moving in creation is what is meant by this infinite energy. Jagannath is the emblem of God having no other form than the eyes and the hands. They mean to shew that God sees and knows and creates. Balarama is source of *Jiva Shakti* of God ; Shubhadra, the *Maya Shakti*, and Sudarsana is the energy of Will. We cannot form any idea of God separated that the from all ideas of these energies and hence it is worship of Jagannath depends upon the collection of these four forms on the same platform. Here we see God analyzed in the shape of forms for the sake of those who want to conceive of Him. It is the same thing to see Jagannath as to study the *Vedanta* in all its branches. The temple and its institution appear to me to be a book for those who can read it, to the foolish the institution is certainly useless except as a means of reminding the Deity who created the world.

There is one more thing in the temple which explains the philosophical superiority of Jagannath over all other Hindu institutions. We mean the *Mahaprasad* system. Rice dedicated to Jagannath is sold in Bazar to all pilgrims. Brahmins and the Khettries, Vaishnavas and the Shaktas, the *Sanyasis* and the *Grihastas* all accept it without any hesitation whatever. Brahminical aristocracy has no rule in the

temple. This shows that when people get wise, they need not obey the foolish dictates of the Brahmins which are mainly intended for those who are unable to chalk out ways for themselves. When man admits the superiority of love to God to all other systems of rule and ethics, he is not bound to work according to the *Shastras* intended for a lower order of men. The common bonds of the inferior *Dharma Shastras* of Manu and *Jagnyabalkya* have no influence on the free Vaishnavas who are God's own soldiers in the crusade against evil. The system of *Mahaprasada* is not only emblematic of the superior life of the Vaishnavas, but it is a part of worships which ordinary theists cannot fully understand. The ordinary men are too much inclined to preserve the superiority of the Reason over the intuitive feelings of man to the God of Love. We must now proceed to show with healthy arguments that our intuitive feelings want us to offer everything we eat to the God of our heart,

We must first examine the arguments of the antagonist. The Rationalist holds that God is infinite and without wants, and consequently it is foolish to offer eatables to such a Being. It is sacrilege to offer created things to the creator and thereby to degrade the Divinity of God into humanity. These are reasonable arguments indeed, and one who has heard them will be certainly inclined to declare to others "*down with the Mahaprasada.*" These conclusions, however reasonable, are dry and destructive. They tend to separate us from all connections with God in the form of worship. When you say, that the Infinite wants nothing, you forbid all contemplation and prayer. The Infinite does not want your grateful expressions or, in other words, flattery. Utter a word to the Unconditioned and you are sure to degrade Him into a conditioned Being. Hymns, prayers and sermons are all over ! Shut the temple door and the church gates, because our Rationalist

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has advised you to do so ! Believe a creating principle and you have done your duty ! Oh ! What a shame ! What a dreadful fall ! Theists, beware of these degrading principles !

Now the Rationalist appears in another shape and admits prayers, sermons, psalms and church goings, saying that these things are wanted for the improvement of the soul, but God does not want them at all. We are glad that the Rationalist has come towards us and will make further approaches in course of time. Yes, the progressive Rationalist has admitted a very broad principle in Theology *i. e.*, whatever we do towards God is for our own benefit and not for the benefit of God, Who is not in want of any such thing. But the Rationalist is a Rationalist still and will continue to be so, as long as he will seek self interest. We know for certain that Religion promises to give eternal felicity to man and it is impossible to conceive of any Religion which has not at its bottom self-interest. This view, however, smells of *Utilitarianism* and can never claim to be Theistic. We must love God for *God's sake* however unreasonable our action may be. Our love must be without any object whatever that concerns ourselves. This love must be a natural emotion to the Deity as our Lover without *inference* or *experience*. Salvation, dear as it is, should not be the object of this love ; what then about other shapes of felicity ? "Love to God" is its own reward. Salvation as a concomitant consequence, must be a hand-maid of Love, but we must not look on it as its main object. If the Rationalist be prepared to believe this, he becomes a Theist of the *Vaishnava* class ; but the mere assuming of the name is of no consequence. Though we are fully aware that the unconditioned has no conditions whatever, yet our holy and sweet principle of love takes a quite different view of the matter. Reason says one thing but love prescribes its contrary. *Reason* tells me that God has no

sorrow, but the *Love* sees God in tears for those of His sons that are misled to evil. Reason tells me that the strict laws of God reward and punish me in a cold manner but Love reveals that God slackens His laws to the Repentent and loving Soul ! Reason tells me that with all his improvements, man will never touch the absolute God ; but Love preaches that on the conversion of the soul into a state of spiritual womanhood, God, unconditioned as He is, accepts an eternal marriage with the conditioned soul of man ! Reason tells me that God is in Infinite space and time, but Love describes that the all beautiful God is sitting before us like a respected relative and enjoying all the pleasures of society. As a father in his amusements with his young children, God is spreading all sorts of delicious food all over the earth and expecting that His sons would gather them for their own benefit ; but the loving children out of their holy and unmixed love, gather all the scattered blessings and, without the exercise of reason in consequence of a strong feeling of love, offer all the blessings to the father whom they love more than their lives. The Father again, in reply to their kind feelings, gives back the blessings to the children and tells them these kindlier words. "O ! My children ! These are blessings intended for thee ! Out of your natural love you bring them to me for my enjoyment ; but I have naturally no wants to supply. But then I have accepted that part of your offering which corresponds with me *viz.* your *unmixed love* and *disinterested affections* for which alone I am exceedingly anxious. Take back these sweet things and enjoy them !" This process of disinterested love, which dry reason can never brook, sanctifies the food we take, and leaves us to harmless enjoyment for all the days of our natural life ! This is a system of sincere worship which Theists of a higher class alone can act upon. We can not express the joy we

often felt when we took the holy *Mahaprasada* in the temple! The holiness we attach to it is its sweetness and often pray that all men may enjoy it.

To the *Saragrahi Vaishnava*, the temple has such thrilling charms which the ordinary Rationalist can never understand! We do not mean to say that Reason is a foolish principle. On the contrary we do not find better admirers of Reason than our humble selves. We hold that man's superiority amongst all created beings consists in man's possessing the noble gift of Reason. What we maintain is this, that independent of this noble principle there is another higher gift in man which goes by the name of Love. Reason helps Love to maintain its proper bounds in the Spiritual world. Love often tends to degrade itself by exercising its functions on objects other than God and converts itself into lust for woman, wine, meat and gold. Here Reason advises her to rise higher till she reaches her proper sphere above. Thus we find that the object of Reason is to help Love and not to create it. Reason may be properly styled as the servant of Love and must always be subject to her in all her hopes, aspirations and holy work. The Rationalist on the contrary considers Reason as all in all! This is a degradation of humanity! The progressive Rationalist, on the other hand, believes in the principle of love, but attempts to make her the maid-servant of Reason! This is another error! He makes spiritual love sometimes a prisoner in the Jails of Reason! Love wants to soar on her spiritual wings to a realm where the Jailor (Reason) cannot go and the latter is sure to tie up her wings for fear lest she goes to an unworthy place! Love utters sounds of a spiritual character peculiar to herself, but Reason, having no previous experience of it, mistakes it for a disease and administers medicines for her cure!! Thus it is that the natural strength of the Queen of our Soul is

crippled by artificial administrations of the dry principle of Reason and she rests in us as if a bird taken in a cage! Oh! What a havoc doth Reason commit by abuse of his power! Oh! Shame to the Rationalist! God, help the man!! Theists take care of those amongst you who mix with you only by assuming the name of Theist but are in fact Rationalists of a very dry character. They are divisible into two classes *viz.* the designing and the dupe. The designing Theist is he who is in fact a Rationalist but by assuming the name of a Theist wants to degrade the sincere by his bad influence. He that calls himself a Theist in order to get rid of the name of a Rationalist but still holds Love in subjection to Reason is a dupe because he is unable to find out his own position. The sincere Theist should however take care of both of them and preserve the sovereignty of Love over Reason and his comrades. We will now show that others, who have allowed their Love to degrade without caring for the proper instructions of Reason on the other hand, have gone down to gross idolatry and superstition. The Temple of Jagannath is under the superintendence of the local Rajah of Puri whom the foolish men worship as an incarnation of the Deity. Under his superintendence there are 36 classes of servants attached to the temple who are styled the *Chhatrisha Niyoga*. There are about 60 families of *Pandas* who make the Pujas. There are seven hundred families of *Chheridars* or orderlies of the temple. There are six hundred families of *Suurs* (Soopakars) or cooks in the temple. It is needless here to enumerate all these classes of servants. Several *Pandas*, *Pariharis*, *Pashupals* and *Suurs* send their servants to different parts of India to collect pilgrims to the temple. These agents or Gomasthas (as they are called) visit the gentlemen of the places they go to and give some *sweetmeat* *Mahaprasad* proposing that they are ready to take pilgrims to Puri under their care. By this means, the

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agents collect a large number of souls (amongst whom the greatest number are women of an advanced age) and march on with the sound of *Haribol*. We must admit that the Pandas and their Gomasthas (generally of the Kayestha class) take a great deal of trouble for the sake of their pilgrims and sometimes advance money for their expenses on the road. The Bengal *Jatris* generally visit Puri at the *Snana Jatra* and the *Ratha Jatra* festivals but the up-country men come to Puri at all times in the year. When the pilgrims arrive at Puri the Panda, whose agent brought them, visits them with some *Mahaprasada* near the Narendra Tank at the approach of the town. The pilgrims see Jagannath on the very day that they arrive and perform the ceremony of *Pancha Tirtha* on the following day or day after that. By *Pancha Tirtha* is meant the business of bathing in the Tanks of *Markandeya* and *Indradyumna* and in the sea and, after performing *Sradha* in those three places, seeing the emblems of Jagannath and Balarama in the temple. The Panda all along keeps silent, but on the last day he is sure to take every thing that the pilgrim has and sometimes to take a bond for an amount according to the circumstances of the pilgrim. That day the Panda with all his usual gravity takes the pilgrim to an elevated roof in the northern part of

the temple called Koili Baikoontha and there utters his *Mahabakya* and *Shufala* in order to persuade the pilgrim to pay whatever he or she has with him or her. Thus the pilgrim returns to his native place without anything but a *palara* of sweetmeat *Mahaprosada* and a few slips of Jagannath's likeness in rude paintings !

In fact the temple servants, one, and all, are not a bit better than Brahminical priests who deal with the next world as a means of gain. They are rude in the extreme and quite ignorant of Hindu Theology. They never attempt to teach or learn, but often rove in quest of money. Most of them are fond of drinking a liquor prepared from Bhang and hence they have (nearly all of them) a swelling of their legs sometimes coming up to the stage of the disease called elephantiasis. With all their gains, the temple-servants can never store wealth, because they are very careless. Besides the temple they generally keep a place called an *Akhra* where they meet together for the purpose of drinking *Bhang* and seeing the dance of young boys clad in the dress of females ! We will try to give you an account of all the *Akhras* in Puri in my next paper, and as this paper has become much longer than we at first intended, we take leave of you for the present.

The Self-less Workers of the Sri Gaudiya Math of Calcutta.

(By Sj. BISWESWAR DAS, B. A., HEAD MASTER SANTIPUR)

WELL has it been said that "we live in deeds, not years, in thoughts, not breaths." But as length of years is no proper test of the length of life, so the mere numerical strength of deeds or the varied possession of thoughts does not constitute true life. Deeds

and thoughts, to be worth the names, should be such as would benefit the world at large and leave their marks "on the sands of time." It therefore follows that our so-called, vaunted good deeds, however high-sounding and far-reaching they may be, are little better than

The Amazing Power of a Pure Devotee

By Śrīla Prabhupāda

A powerful devotee of the Lord is, by the grace of the Lord, more than the Lord Himself

Mahārāja Parīkṣit admitted in the previous verse that the Lord is inconceivable even for the greatest learned scholars. Why then should he again request Śukadeva Gosvāmī to clarify his insufficient knowledge about the Lord? The reason is clear. Not only was Śukadeva Gosvāmī vastly learned in the Vedic literatures, but he was also a great self-realized soul and a powerful devotee of the Lord. A powerful devotee of the Lord is, by the grace of the Lord, more than the Lord Himself. The Personality of Godhead Śrī Rāmacandra attempted to bridge the Indian Ocean to reach the island of Laṅkā, but Śrī Hanumānjī, the unalloyed devotee of the Personality of Godhead, could cross the ocean simply by jumping over it. The Lord is so merciful upon His pure devotee that He presents His beloved devotee as more powerful than Himself. The Lord expressed Himself to be unable to save Durvāsā Muni, although the Muni was so powerful that he could reach the Lord directly under material conditions. But Durvāsā Muni was saved by Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, a devotee of the Lord. Therefore, not only is a devotee of the Lord more powerful than the Lord, but also worship of the devotee is considered more effective than direct worship of the Lord (*mad-bhakta-pūjābhyadhikā* [SB 11.19.21]).

The conclusion is, therefore, that a serious devotee must first approach a spiritual master who not only is well versed in the Vedic literatures but is also a great devotee with factual realization of the Lord and His different energies. Without the help of such a devotee spiritual master, one cannot make progress in the transcendental science of the Lord. And a bona fide spiritual master like Śukadeva Gosvāmī does not speak about the Lord only in the matter of His internal potencies, but also explains how He associates with His external potencies.

The Lord's pastimes in the internal potency are displayed in His activities in Vṛndāvana, but His external potential works are directed in His features of Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Viṣṇu, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu and Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī offers his good counsel to the interested Vaiṣṇavas when he says that they should not be interested

in hearing only about the Lord's activities (like *rāsa-līlā*), but must be keenly interested in His pastimes in His features of the *puruṣāvatāras* in connection with *śṛṣṭi-tattva*, creational functions, following the examples of Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the ideal disciple, and Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the ideal spiritual master.

[SB 2.4.10 Purport]



Yes. Then a pure devotee is not in *māyā*. Do you agree to that?

Vīrabhadra: You said in your lecture that everybody... I think that's what you said, that everybody in the material world is... in *māyā*. But *you* can't be in *māyā*.

Prabhupāda: How do you think?

Vīrabhadra: You're spiritual, so you can't be in *māyā*. So how does that work?

Prabhupāda: How do you think that I am not in *māyā*?

Vīrabhadra: Because you're a pure devotee. You see Kṛṣṇa in everybody.

Prabhupāda: (laughs) Yes. Then a pure devotee is not in *māyā*. Do you agree to that?

Vīrabhadra: Uh huh.

Prabhupāda: So are you going to be a pure devotee?

Vīrabhadra: Me?

Prabhupāda: Yes.

Vīrabhadra: I'm not a pure devotee.

Prabhupāda: But you are going to be, trying to be.

Vīrabhadra: I try to be.

Prabhupāda: That's all right. That's all right. That's all right.

[Bhagavad-gītā 2.20-25—Seattle, October 14, 1968]

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