

Dear Maharaja's, Prabhus, and Didis,
Dandavat pranams. Jaya Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga.

Recently a report was sent to the harikatha mailing list regarding the grand Rathayatra festival in Birmingham England, where the chariots of their Lordships were pulled through the streets by some four hundred or more enthusiastic devotees, and where over ten thousand fortunate onlookers watched the sight in awe.

After the procession Srila Narayana Maharaja spoke to an assembly of one thousand in a large pandal erected in the heart of the town known as Victoria Square. Four city dignitaries spoke there in glorification of the festival, and they thanked Srila Maharaja for bringing this, "vital religious festival to the community of Birmingham."

On June 24, 2001, the morning after the Car Festival, Srila Maharaja came to the Sikh Temple in Birmingham that was donated for the use of all the devotees who would be hearing from him there daily. The following is a transcription of that morning class in which he blessed all the devotees for their participation.

Your aspiring servant, Premavati dasi

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja

I HAVE COME TO GIVE MANY THANKS

Birmingham, England: June 24th, 2001 (Morning)

Typist: Srimati Sulata devi dasi

I have not come to give class this morning, but to give so many thanks and hearty blessings to those who managed and organized yesterday's Jagannatha festival: to Pradyumna Misra prabhu, Mukunda prabhu, Sripad Asrama Maharaja, Sripad Tirtha Maharaja, Vidura prabhu, and all others. I became very happy, and I want that next year it will be still better. It was very beautiful and very successful. I came today, only to give my hearty blessings to you all.

I came to Birmingham after traveling through many places around the world, and now so many devotees are assembled here from Finland, Norway, Sweden, Italy, and especially all the devotees from Holland are here. Devotees are here from Russia, France, America, Australia, Canada, and Hawaii, and therefore I have only come here to meet with you all. I came especially to give honor to the senior devotees of my siksa-guru; to my godbrothers and sisters like Bhudara Prabhu, Anandini, Asta-sakhi, Bhogini, and others. I came to give thanks that they are here. I am very happy.

I want that you all help with my preaching, as you have helped your Gurudeva, your Srila Prabhupada. He wanted that everywhere preaching should again be inspired in devotees. All were dying without 'water', and I think that they are now again inspired. My purpose was this. It was not to make any disciples.

Some were telling me, "Why are you coming to our areas to preach? We have already preached here so much. You should go to other places where preaching has not been done."

In return I proposed to them, "Our preaching was going on in Navadvipa and Mayapur before you came there. Our preaching was going on in Vrndavana, in Jagannatha Puri, Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Delhi, and many other cities before you

came there. You should therefore not go there." They should give up my Caitanya Mahaprabhu, my Nityananda Prabhu, and my Radha-Krsna, because we are already worshipping them and preaching their glories before they began.

What authority do they have to forbid us to preach anywhere? I especially want that the disciples of Srila Swami Maharaja like Brahmananda, Kirtanananda, Bhavananda, and Hamsadhuta come and tell me, "Why are you coming?" They were also Iskcon, but where are they now?

I have not come alone. Rather, my devotees are all Srila Swami Maharaja's devotees, and they are eagerly inviting me to come. I can never disobey them because that would be an offense at the lotus feet of the Vaisnavas.

Somehow we have gone everywhere, and very successful preaching has been going on. I have therefore come to give thanks to you all.

Two days ago was Gundica Mandira Margina, and yesterday was the Jagannatha Car Festival. This festival reminded me of so many things. When I first attended the Car Festival in Jagannatha Puri with Gurudeva and about seven hundred devotees, I heard many sacred teachings about Ratha-Yatra from his mouth. I also read about these subjects in many scriptures like Utkalkanda, the Puranas, and Srimad Bhagavatam, and I remembered one history compiled by Srila Gour Govinda Maharaja. Gradually I want to discuss all these topics.

First, I want to ask you all, "How tasteful was Tirtha Maharaja's kichari yesterday? Perhaps it was not so much tasteful?"

Devotees: It was so tasty.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Perhaps the salt was somewhat insufficient?

Devotees: No it was perfect.

Srila Narayana Maharaja: I think that perhaps there was too little ghee?

Devotees: No

Srila Narayana Maharaja: Were the sweets very tasteful?

Devotees: It was all tasty.

Srila Maharaja: Tirtha Maharaja will be most happy if you will tell him, "Ten thousand, or twenty thousand devotees are here and you have to cook." He will give up arcana, he will give up hari-katha, and he will go there and cook for the devotees. He is very expert. Some years ago, twenty to fifty thousand devotees had come to attend our Navadvipa parikrama. However, on the first day our cook was engaged somewhere else and he could not reach there in time. We were all very disturbed and we thought, "What shall we do?"

My children, my boys, jumped up to serve, and Tirtha Maharaja was prominent. Ready for hard work, he tied his gamsha in a special way and began cooking over the big pots. Do you know how big those pots were? Each pot can hold thirty mounds of rice

(one mound is equivalent to forty kilos) and forty mounds of subji. Headed by Tirtha Maharaja the devotees began to cook, everything was very easily done, and I gave so many thanks to them.

I think that my children, my brahmacaris and sannyasis, are very expert in all things. They can repair shoes, they can worship the Deities, and they are very learned. Even a small boy like Van Maharaja is also very expert in cooking, in preaching, in worshipping the Deities, and in knowing so much siddhanta.

Many devotees were thinking. "In Maharaja's group, only Aranya Maharaja can give such elevated classes." Now, however, they are seeing that those who are with me, even small children, can give an elevated class of hari-katha. In India, young Krsna das enthuses more than twenty thousand persons at a time in jumping, singing and dancing. He is a very qualified boy, as are so many of my boys. If he were there at the Ratha-yatra festival yesterday, he would have made so many thousands of people dance.

Our Guru Maharaja created so many devotees for this purpose. I am proud of them, and I want to be proud of you all. I want that none of the devotees fall down. You should have very strong characters and know perfectly all siddhantas. I want good boys like those Srila Swami Maharaja collected, and I want to give them saffron cloth. The girls should also be like that. They should preach, in a proper way, the mission of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Sri Nityananda Prabhu, the mission of Srila Rupa Gosvami, and in that line the mission of Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura, Srila Prabhupada, my Gurudeva, and Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja.

Many devotees are now dying for lack of water. Take water, plenty of water, and water them so that they will have inspiration to preach. You should never destroy this human life for lust and sense gratification. Sense gratification is easily achieved, even for the hogs and pigs. Why are you worried so much about that? In this human life you should try to be very strong and preach the mission of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu throughout this world by the medium of nama-sankirtana: Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna, Krsna, Hare, Hare, Hare Rama, Hare Rama, Rama, Rama, Hare, Hare.

[Srila Maharaja then requests Syamarani to speak about one of the deep meanings behind the Ratha-yatra Festival. Because she quoted from a lecture given by Srila Maharaja in Holland, 1999, we are putting here his original words spoken at that time.]

In Dvaraka, Krsna became unconscious by thinking, "Radhika, Radhika!" It had now become a very big problem, and therefore Narada, Uddhava, and others who were there with Krsna began discussing how to bring Him back to consciousness.

Baladeva Prabhu also arrived there, and it was settled that Narada should play on his vina and glorify Vraja, Mother Yasoda, the gopis, and all the other Vrajavis. Narada muni bajaya vina radhika-ramana name.

Narada objected, "Do you know what will happen if Krsna awakens? He will at once go to Vrndavana and no one will be able to stop Him. He will remain there with the gopis and He will never return. You can therefore decide what to do."

Now in a dilemma, they again began thinking, and then they decided, "Uddhava will go to Vraja and tell the gopas and gopis, Mother Yasoda, and Nanda Maharaja that Krsna is coming. He will tell them, 'You should try to welcome Him.' In what state the Vrajabasis are now, no one can know. Some are even lying unconscious somewhere.

When they will hear that Krsna is coming, they will return to consciousness and welcome Him. Somehow, by a trick, Uddhava will then bring Krsna again to Dvaraka. There will be no problem. Uddhava must go there. Krsna had sent him previously, and therefore he should go now and tell them that Krsna is coming."

Uddhava very unhappily replied to them, "Listen to me. If I go to Vrndavana and say that Krsna is coming, they will not believe me because I bluffed them before. I told them, 'I am going, and very soon I will bring Krsna here. I will definitely bring Him.' After that I requested Krsna many times, but He never listens and He gives all kinds of excuses. So what should I do? They will not believe me, and therefore I cannot go. They will say, 'Oh, the liar has come. The cheater has come!' Especially Mother Yasoda will say this."

Narada Muni then said, "Baladeva Prabhu can go. He can pacify all the gopis and gopas."

Baladeva Prabhu gave the same reply, "I told Krsna so many times to go there, but He never went. He always answered, 'Yes, I will go', but He never went. Finally I went alone and I pacified them by saying, 'I promise that I will go to Dvaraka and bring Krsna.' This stone-hearted, cruel Krsna never wants to go there, however, and I don't know why. He used to be very soft and very sweet, but now He has turned into a stone-hearted person. What can I say? If I go, the Vrajabasis will say, 'Oh, this cheater and liar has come!' They will not believe Me, and therefore I cannot go. Without Krsna's presence, they cannot be consoled. Krsna Himself should go."

While they were discussing what to do, Krsna's sister Subhadra had come in and heard everything. She then said, "Don't worry. I'm going. I will go to Vrndavana and take darsana of Mother Yasoda. I will first sit in her lap, and then, caressing her I will tell her, 'Mother, Krsna is coming. He was coming with Me, but on the way many kings surrounded Him and began performing arcana to Him, praying to Him, and offering Him many presentations. I have therefore arrived here first. Krsna will be a bit late, but He is coming. It may be some hours, or one or two days, but He is coming.' I will go door-to-door to the gopis' homes. I will console them and tell them, 'Oh, now be happy. Don't feel separation. Krsna is coming!'"

"They will become happy and I will then tell them, 'You should all be ready to welcome Krsna.' Later, by trick I will tell My brother, 'Your mother, Devaki, father, Vasudeva, and Your queens are living there; and You are sitting here?' By some trick I will bring Him to Dvaraka. So don't worry. Let me first bring a good chariot, after that Narada should sing the glory of Vraja on his vina, then Krsna will return to consciousness, and then He will come to Vrndavana and everything will be ready there."

A chariot was brought and Subhadra was ready to go. Baladeva then said, "If My brother and sister are going, I must go. I want to meet with my mother and father, Yasoda and Nanda Baba, and with all my friends and gopis. I cannot remain here. I must go."

Subhadra said, "Yes, we should go together. Baladeva Prabhu should go forward, and I will follow Him."

Another chariot was thus brought, and in this way the ratha of Baladeva was in front, and then the ratha of Subhadra. As they were about to leave, Daruka was told by Baladeva Prabhu, "Bring your chariot there and be ready. When Krsna returns to consciousness take the chariot and fly to Vrndavana."

Narada Muni was then told, "Now you should glorify Vraja on your vina." He began to sing very beautifully: "Narada muni bajaya bina radhika-ramana name. Narada muni bajaya bina radhika-ramana name."

As Krsna regained His consciousness, Narada was glorifying Vraja in a variety of ways, and his sweet words entered His ears. He thought, "It is morning and I am in Vraja." He therefore asked, "Where is My sweet vamsi? Where is My peacock feather? Where, where? Oh, I know. The gopis are very tricky and they have stolen them. I'll give them a good lesson." He then stood in a beautiful three-bending form, as He did previously in Vraja, and He created a scene which no one in Dvaraka had seen before.

He began searching and saying, "Oh, Lalita has taken it! If not Lalita, then Radhika Herself, with the help of Visakha, has stolen it. He acted as though He was searching them to see where they had kept His flute."

In the meantime Krsna saw Uddhava and asked, "Uddhava, why are you in Vrndavana?" He then saw Narada and asked, "Oh, you are also in Vrndavana? From where have you come?"

Narada replied, "O my Lord, You are not in Vrndavana. You are in Dvaraka. This is not the Jamuna. It is the ocean in Dvaraka-Puri. Please remember where You are."

Krsna was so absorbed that He forgot Uddhava and Narada and everyone else, and He was ready to run away to Vrndavana to quickly meet the gopas and gopis.

Uddhava told Him, "Prabhu, we knew that You would do this and therefore Your chariot is ready. You can come and get on the chariot and immediately go to Vrndavana."

Krsna wanted to ascend the chariot, but He was so mad in radha-prema that He could not walk alone. Many persons then began to help Him walk by holding Him and helping Him from the front, back, and two sides. He was like a mad person, lost in Radha's love and affection. Somehow He was taken to the chariot, raised upon it, and Daruka at once drove off with great speed towards Vrndavana. Balarama and Subhadra were ahead, and Krsna followed behind Them.

In the meantime, Radhika was feeling unbearable separation and She was in the last stage of Her life. She was on Her deathbed, just about to die. There was neither svasa nor prasvasa, inhalation nor exhalation, and all the Vrajavasis were very worried. They thought, "She is going to give up Her body!" Everyone became extremely unhappy because they lost faith that She would remain alive. They all thought, "She will certainly die! We cannot save Her!" Lalita and Visakha were trying hard to revive Her, but there were no signs of revival.

While this was going on, Abhimanyu arrived with Jatila and Kutila. Candravali and all other sakhis also assembled there, and they were also worried. Somehow Radhika said in a very low voice, "If I am going to die, My dead body should be hung around a tamala tree, and the air in My body should be mixed in the air of Nandagaon where Krsna takes His breaths. The fire in My body should be mixed in the sun-rays at Nanda Baba's house so that it will shine there and I will touch Krsna. My body's earth should mix in the courtyard of Nanda-bhavana so that Krsna can walk on Me and I can touch Him." As She lamented in this way, She again became unconscious.

At once Abhimanyu came forward and prayed, "O Devi, I have heard today from Yogamaya that You are not an ordinary girl. You are not my wife. You are hladini-sakti, You are non-different from Krsna, and You have appeared in this way for Your lila-

vilasa. By the arrangement of Yogamaya I was thinking that You are my wife and I am Your husband, but this is really not the fact. Now I am repenting. 'Why did I do so? Why did I think that You are my wife?' Now excuse me for this, because You are going. This is the last darsana, so be merciful to me."

Jatila and Kutila then quickly came forward and said, "We have also heard the same thing from Yogamaya, that You are hladini-sakti, and I have also realized this. It was on that very day when Krsna had fainted due to having been attacked by sickness. At that time Purnamasi said that He could be saved only if a chaste lady would bring water from Yamuna in a thousand-holed pot. Everyone called me because they were thinking that my mother and I are the most chaste ladies. That water pot was given to us, and when we dipped it in the Jamuna all the water poured out through the holes.

"We wondered how we could show our faces to the Vrajavasis. We had always criticized You, and now we wondered how we could save ourselves from embarrassment. We therefore immediately left. You were then requested by Yogamaya and Yasoda Maya and others, and although you refused at first, for Krsna's welfare You took the same pot and went to the Jamuna. No water poured out; the pot remained full. That pot, full with water, was then brought to Krsna, He was bathed with it, and He thus became consciousness.

"Therefore, on that day we realized that You are very chaste — more so than us. Now You are going so please forgive us; otherwise we will go to hell. We have so much faith in the words of Yogamaya."

Candravali also came forward and repented, "You are hladini-sakti. Yogamaya has said that we are all Your kayavyuha, bodily manifestations. She said that by hearing about Your sweet vilasa, pastimes with Krsna, all the devotees of the world will be liberated and have krsna-prema. O, please excuse me."

In the meantime three chariots arrived in Vraja, the chariots of Subhadra and Baladeva being forward and Krsna's behind. As soon as Krsna reached there, He heard that Radhika is going to die, and She will not remain alive for even one more moment. He very quickly ran to that spot where Radhika was giving up Her body, and when He saw Her He began to cry bitterly.

Krsna gradually became so absorbed in radha-prema that His hands began melting and the lower part of His body was also melting. His face was also melting and only two large round eyes remained. Baladeva Prabhu and Subhadra, who had also just arrived and saw this scene, could not control Themselves, and they also became like Krsna.

In the meantime Lalita spoke repeatedly in the ear of Radhika, "Radhe, Radhe! Krsna has come. Krsna has come to meet You! Don't die." Visakha was saying In the other ear, "O, Krsna has come to meet You!" Gradually Radhika regained Her external consciousness, opened Her eyes, and thought, "Oh, beautiful Krsna has come!" She thus became further absorbed in the ecstasy of love and affection. Krsna's love also increased and He became unconscious. In that same state He began rolling on the earth.

Radhika told Visakha, "Please help Krsna; otherwise He may die. You know the mantra to revive Him. Say in His ear, 'Radhe, Radhe!'" Hearing this sweet injection of the powerful mantra from the lips of Visakha, "Radhe, Radhe, Radhe, Radhe!" Krsna opened His eyes and He again became so happy. Gradually He became revived and they both met, and all became happy.

Krsna then told Yogamaya, "Again quickly cover Candravali, Abhimanyu, Kutila and Jatila. They should forget all these happenings, and all lila should continue as before." In the snap of a finger everything became as it was previously.

Narada had also arrived, and now he requested Krsna, "Prabhu, please manifest these three forms that You revealed when You were absorbed and melted. In that way everyone will see and realize these truths about You. Please manifest these forms somewhere in this world.

Krsna replied, "Tatha 'stu, Tatha 'stu. Evam bhavatu! So be it. I will always remain in this shape in Nilacala, which will be like Dvaraka, and anyone will be able to come and see Me there."

I have told this very beautiful pastime in brief. This lila is in the heart of pure devotees, and Gour Govinda Maharaja has also touched it. I have reconciled some points to clear any doubts or misunderstandings. [Thus ends the lecture of 1999]

You should know that in Vraja the groups of gopis are mainly divided into four parts: svapaksa, vipaksa, tatastha and suhrt. Without this, the pastimes of Krsna cannot take place. When Krsna disappears, however, or when He goes to Mathura or Dvaraka and a separation mood comes, then there are no parties. All parties become one for Krsna, and they help each other.

At that time Candravali may come, Bhadra may come, and all others will come and pacify Srimati Radhika — because Her separation is the highest. Their separation mood is not so high in comparison, and therefore they have so much sympathy for Her. They tell Her, "O Radhika, You should not weep. Krsna will come." Even Candravali, who has a great separation mood, will also come.

These interactions are very strange, and I want to give you these extraordinary very things; but first become qualified.

Try to follow regulated bhakti: "Sraavanam kirtanam visnoh smaranam"; otherwise you will not be able to maintain your spiritual life. You will be lusty, and after some time you will think that Krsna's pastimes and your pastimes of divorcing ladies are the same thing. I have not read scriptures like Govinda-lilamrta and others, but I know that most of you have copies of all these books. Those who read these have gone to hell. Therefore you should not read them at this time, nor should you give classes on these topics. Be very, very careful. Our objective is that, but you cannot jump. If you want to be situated on a tree, first you must try to climb up from the root, and from there you can go to the highest places. If you jump you will fall down.

I request that you read Upadesamrta, Manah-siksa, and all books like these. Try to chant more. Chanting only sixteen rounds will not suffice. Your Gurudeva has given sixteen and then one, sixteen and then one, sixteen and then one. There are four sets of sixteen. [These are twenty counter beads on the beadbag, and they are divided into two sections of sixteen and four. Whenever the devotee completes a set of sixteen rounds, he moves one of the four. In total he chants sixty-four rounds.] Has he given this without a purpose? If a man is very expert in speaking hari-katha and doing related services, but he does not chant and he does not have taste for chanting, it means he is a very weak devotee. After some time he may fall down:

tan-nama-rupa-caritadi-sukirtananu-
smrtyoh kramena rasana-manasi niyojya

tisthan vraje tad-anuragi jananugami
kalam nayed akhilaṁ ity upadesa-saram
(Nectar of Instruction, Verse 8)

["The essence of all advice is that one should utilize one's full time—twenty-four hours a day—in nicely chanting and remembering the Lord's divine name, transcendental form, qualities and eternal pastimes, thereby gradually engaging one's tongue and mind. In this way one should reside in Vraja [Goloka Vrṇḍavana dhama] and serve Kṛṣṇa under the guidance of devotees. One should follow in the footsteps of the Lord's beloved devotees, who are deeply attached to His devotional service."]

Be in Vrṇḍavana under the guidance of a rasika tattvajña-guru Vaiṣṇava, and always chant the name with meaning; knowing and remembering the pastimes. You will then become greatly qualified for this object of life

After my stay in Birmingham, I will return to India for some days, and then I will go to Russia. I think that many devotees will meet me in Moscow. After that I will go to Jagannatha Puri for Purusottama Vrata for fifteen days, from October 1st-14th. After that I want to invite all of you to come and join me in Vraja Mandala Parikrama, from November 1st-30th. Those who have no money problems should come, and everything will be managed. Come and perform parikrama with us. Here we will explain Jagannatha and Mahāprabhu and all their pastimes, and there in Vraja we will explain the pastimes of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa Conjugal which Caitanya Mahāprabhu is always remembering, and by remembering which He was fainting and sometimes rolling down on the earth.

Gaura Premanānde.