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2001 Oct 2 morn – Jagannatha Puri – First Day of Parikrama

SRI PURUSOTTAMA-KSETRA PARIKRAMA BEGINS

Under the Guidance of Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja

Submitted by Jadurani dasi

Nilacala Gaudiya Matha, Sri Jagannatha Puri (Svargadvara)

October 1, 2001

[Dear Maharajas, Prabhus and Didis,

Dandavat pranams. Jaya Sri Sri Guru and Gauranga.

Just next door to the Samadhi Mandira of Namacarya Srila Haridasa Thakura, and just on the shore of the Bay of Bengal where Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu used to daily bathe in the ecstasy of separation from Krsna, is the Nilacala Gaudiya Matha. The Matha is one of the first temples established by Srila Bhaktiprajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja, the sannyasa-guru and most intimate god-brother of Srila Prabhupada Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja. For the pleasure of the presiding Deities, Sri Sri Radha-Vinodabihari and Caitanya Mahaprabhu, a pandal was set up for the two weeks of the parikrama, in the garden just outside the Matha.

On Monday morning, Oct. 2, along with other sannyasis and acaryas of the Gaudiya Vedanta Samhiti, Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja sat on the pandal stage and led over 500 devotees present from all over India and several other countries in chanting bhajanas glorifying Mahaprabhu, and then he began his talk. Due to the varied audience, Srila Maharaja alternated between Hindi, Bengali, and English, and the following is a transcription of the English parts.]

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja:

We are very fortunate to come to this holy land of Purusottama-ksetra, the kingdom of Purusottama Sri Jagannatha. If there were no fear of impending war, many more Western devotees from all over the world would be at this festival. Some may come a little later, but many devotees could not come at this time as many countries have restricted flights and some have even stopped them. Somehow we are very lucky to be here.

Have you heard of the word 'dayita'? The dayitas are mentioned in the Caitanya-caritamrta. You should know about them. They were serving Nila-Madhava. The name of the dayita-pati, the head of the dayitas, was Visvvasu. Visvvasu had a very beautiful young daughter named Lalita, and he gave her in marriage to Vidyapati, the Raja-puruhit, priest, of Indradyumna Maharaja. Vidyapati had two wives. His first wife was from Ujjain and his second wife was the daughter of Visvvasu, Lalita. This personality [who was now sitting next to Srila Maharaja on stage] has come from the dynasty of Vidyapati's second wife, and his name is Dayita-pati. During the Ratha-yatra festival he

will be the leader of the dayitas carrying Jagannatha-deva to His chariot. Jagannatha is very heavy. No one is actually able to carry Him because all the universes are resting in Him. We are very lucky to have Dayita-pati's association here. When he heard that we would be coming here, he told Singhaniyaji [a prominent businessman-disciple of Srila Maharaja who was also present in the pandal], and they both spontaneously came today. Now our Purusottama Vrata will be very successful.

[(We have included within brackets a more lengthy version of the story of dayita-pati Visvvasu from a lecture given by Srila Maharaja on July 1, 2000, in England.) Having heard that one can attain Vaikuntha by seeing the Deity of Nila-Madhava, King Indradyumna decided to somehow search for that Deity. He called his priest, or rather the son of his priest, Vidyapati, who was very intelligent. He also called all his officials and commanders, and ordered them each to go in a different direction. He said, "One will go to the east, another to the west, another south, another northeast, another southeast, and so on. In this way he sent them 'to all four corners', up and down, in all ten directions, and told them, "You should return within three months. To he who will really search, and who will tell me the whereabouts of the Deity, I will give so much wealth and position." He sent his priest's son, Vidyapati, who was very young and very beautiful, and possessing all good qualities, to the east. They all started from Madya Pradesh, and he would be going to the eastern side.

After three months all returned except Vidyapati. The king was worried; no one could find out his whereabouts. What was Vidyapati doing? He was travelling continually, up to the ocean, on the east side. One day while he was searching Nila-Madhava, he saw a very beautiful village on the bank of the ocean, and a mountain with many flowers and trees. The persons there were very high-class. It was now approaching night, and he wanted to stay in that village. He went to someone and said, "Tonight I want to rest somewhere." That person told him, "The commander of this village, Visvvasu, though a sudra, is very qualified. You can go to his house. Whenever any traveller or guest comes, he goes to his house. He is very humble and very liberal. You must go there."

When Vidyapati arrived there, he saw that the owner was not at home. Only his very beautiful 16 year-old daughter was there. She opened the door and said, "You can wait for my father. He is not here. He has gone out. He will come, and then he will arrange everything. So you should wait outside." After some time, after two, three, or four hours, the father of the girl arrived. A very sweet fragrance was coming from his body, and he was wearing very beautiful and fragrant tilaka. When he saw his guest he became ashamed and told him, "Oh, excuse me; I am late. Now you can come." His daughter also came. They both took that guest inside and said, "All arrangements are made for your bath and everything else you require."

He took his meal and rested there, but he was thinking, "Where did that beautiful fragrance come from? I have never smelled anything like that in my whole life. And that girl is also so beautiful."

Vidyapati was also a very beautiful young man, and the girl became attached to him. Her father therefore told her, "You should take care of this young boy. He is very attractive, intelligent, and qualified, and he is a brahmana by caste. So you should take care of him."

The next morning her father again went out to the same place. He told his daughter, "Do not tell anyone where I go. Keep it very, very secret." In the evening he again returned, very fresh and very fragrant.

After some time, Vidyapati began to have a great deal of love for that girl. He was married, but still he had so much affection for her. He was so attached that he requested her father, "I want to marry this girl." The father agreed to marry his daughter to him, and now he became his son-in-law. One day Vidyapati secretly told his wife, "O, I want to know where your father goes daily, and from where this fragrance is coming. Tell me." "That I cannot tell." "You cannot tell me? You are one with me; you are non-different from me. You must tell me. I am your husband." "Then you must promise that you will not tell anyone" "A wife should not speak like this. I know you are a very chaste wife, so you must tell me." Then he was silent. "I will tell you," She said, "He is going to worship a Deity." "Which Deity?" "I promised not to tell, but yet I will tell you because you are my husband. He is going to Nila-Madhava."

Hearing this name Vidyapati became very happy, and he began to show his love and affection to his wife in such a way that she told him everything: "My father goes in the morning, comes in the evening, and again goes." Then he asked, "Can you tell me where he goes? Request your father, 'You should take your son-in-law with you.'"

That night, when her father returned, she requested him: "Father; O father. I want that you take my husband with you to Nila-Madhava. He wants only to take darsana." When he was not willing, she said, "I will take poison. I will die in front of you if you do not take him with you. This means that I am not your loving daughter." She became ready to take the poison. These are the most powerful weapons of ladies: "I will die. I will take poison. I will commit suicide." What, then, will a husband or father say? "Oh, you can take my everything." This is most powerful.

Her father said, "No; I do not want you to die. I will take him with me, but there is some condition: I will bind his eyes with black cloth." She told him, "Yes, you can do so." When Vidyapati was seated on a bullock cart, Visvasu put on the black cloth and took his son-in-law with him. Vidyapati's wife was very clever and intelligent. She had given him some mustard seeds and said, "Keep this in your pocket. Now it is the rainy season. If you will drop one-one-one-one, one after another, the whole way, after some time the plants of those mustard seeds will blossom into bright yellow flowers and you will very easily be able to go there yourself. You will not have to ask your father."

Vidyapati took the mustard seeds, one by one began to drop them on the ground, and his father never knew.

When they arrived at the foot of the mountain, the bullock cart was kept there. Visvasu took Vidyapati by the hands and brought him to the top of the hill. When they went inside the temple he took off his black cloth and saw the very beautiful Nila-Madhava. Nila-Madhava was four-handed and carried sankha, cakra, gada and padma. He was very beautiful but, unlike Nanda-nandana, He had no flute and no peacock feather. Nila Madhava is like Narayana. Narayana is not less beautiful. He is very beautiful, but Krsna is supermost. In this way Vidyapati saw him, became extremely happy, and began to weep. His father-in-law told him, "Wait; I am coming. I am going to pick some flowers and get other paraphernalia. You should wait here."

While he waited, he noticed a very beautiful lake with lotus flowers, humming bees, and some sweetly singing birds. The branches of a mango tree were hanging over the lake, and a crow was sleeping on the branch of that tree. While sleeping, the crow fell down in the lake, and at once he left his body and became four-handed. Then Garuda quickly came, took him on his back, and they both went to Vaikuntha.

Vidyapati began to think, "Oh! Then why should I remain here?" He wanted to also climb a tree, jump in the lake, and thus become four-handed and go to Vaikuntha. When he began to do so, an aerial voice came and said, "Do not do this. No. You will have to do so many important things for the benefit of the world; so do not do this!" Thakurji also told Vidyapati, "O, don't commit suicide for becoming liberated and going to Vaikuntha. You should be patient. Everything will be done." In the meantime, Vidyapati's father returned with many flowers and other paraphernalia, and he also said, "Why you are doing this? You should not do this!"

Visvasu made candana and other unguents and paraphernalia for the Deity, and throughout the entire day he was worshipping, offering prayers, and engaging so many other devotional activities.

Visvasu was known a dayita-pati, and all the residents of that village were known as dayitas. Dayita means those who are very near and dear to Krsna. Visvasu was dayita-pati, master of all those who are near and dear. Although he was a sudra, still he was serving in this way, fully surrendered and always calling out, "Nila Madhava!"

When his services were completed, he again put the black cloth on the eyes of Vidyapati, who was now very much charmed with the glories of Nila-Madhava, and they both left. Visvasu then practically arrested him in his house. He could not go anywhere, and thus it was as though he was in jail. He told his wife: "You must help me. I want to return very soon. I have promised my king. He wants to come with his whole family to serve Nila-Madhava. Please help me. You are my wife; my half." She gave permission and said, "You can go. I will help you." She somehow made a plan, and he thus came out of his jail and proceeded towards the place from which he had come...]

During this Caturmasya, one of the months is Purusottama, and we will observe niyama-seva, the rules and regulations to be followed in this month, beginning tomorrow. This is called Purusottama Vrata.

Beginning from tomorrow morning we will perform kirtan after mangala arati, then hold class, and after that we will go to various places in Jagannatha Puri and outside of Jagannatha Puri, like Alanatha, Konarka, Bhuvanesvara, and other important places of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu's pastimes. During the time of Mahaprabhu, when Gaudiya bhaktas used to come to Jagannatha Puri, they never went first to Jagannatha Temple. They first went to take darsana of Mahaprabhu in Gambira, and then they went to the place of Srila Haridasa Thakura called Siddha Bakula. Because we are following in the line of Sri Rupa Gosvami, Sri Sanatana Gosvami, and those bhaktas in their line, we will also go to those places first. After that we will go to Sveta Ganga, the place of Gangamata Gosvamini, the house of Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya, Jagannatha Temple, and then return.

I want to say something, especially to you Western devotees. Don't worry about not being allowed to enter the Jagannatha Temple. Don't think, "Why are they not allowing us entrance?" If Jagannatha-deva is very merciful, He will somehow come to you. He is Patita-Pavana, and therefore He is always welcoming bhaktas. He may come out of the temple. He is bound to come out of the temple if we are greatly eager. Why should Srimati Radhika go to Krsna? He should come to Her. Follow Sri Rupa and Sanatana Gosvami and Srila Haridasa Thakura. Be humble. Caitanya Mahaprabhu very humbly stood behind the Garuda-stambha and saw Jagannatha from there.

Gaurapremanande