

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Gosvami Maharaja

PURIFYING ALACHUA AND MIAMI



Srila Narayana Maharaja held a one-week hari-katha festival in Alachua, Florida from April 28-May 4. He stayed in the home of Lokaguru dasa and Lalita-sakhi dasi. Over 500 devotees attended the festival which was held at the rustic Florida Bible Camp. Srila Maharaja spoke for six nights about the pastimes of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. He discussed the reasons for the Lord's advent, as well as His advent, baby pastimes, youth pastimes, His taking of sannyasa, His moving from Navadvipa to Jagannatha Puri, His defeating the mayavada scholar, Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya, and finally His conversation with Sri Ramananda Raya.



Darsan in the yard of Mukunda dasa and Mohini dasi.



Srila Narayana Maharaja always encourages his young and old, male and female, healthy and invalid, scholarly and simple, devotees to become preachers and teachers of Mahaprabhu's mission. To encourage new speakers, one evening after class, three devotees were called on to speak for five minutes about the glories of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu. After they spoke, Srila Narayana Maharaja called upon the Sannyasi council to determine the winning speaker. They chose Mahalaksmi dasi as the winner.



Just after Srila Maharaja's class on the evening of May 3rd, there was a drama directed by Caru Candrika dasi about Mahaprabhu's associate, Gauridasa Pandita, and the Pandita's Deities of Gaura-Nitai. After the play Srila Narayana Maharaja expressed his appreciation:

“Very good drama play. Sri Narahari Cakravarti has explained this pastime in his Sri Bhakti Ratnatkara.. By this sweet pastime, we should know that the Deities of Sri Jagannath, Baladeva, Subhadra-devi, Sri Gopinathji, Govindaji and Madana-Mohanaji are not only Deities coming from Jaipur and carved by someone. They are actually directly Krsna Himself. They are not mere statues. They are Vrajendra-nandana, They are Gaura-Nityananda, They are Jagannatha, Baladeva, and Subhadra. We should not think that the Deity is made from clay, sand, or stone, or that anyone has made Them. The Deities are always transcendental, and They are controlled by the love and affection of Their devotees. Madana-Mohana used to talk with Srila Sanatana Gosvami and Govindaji would talk with Srila Rupa Gosvami.

“Jagannatha-deva showed Himself to King Prataparudra's father. When Purusottama Jana was about 24 years old, he was very beautiful and strong, and he had an agreement with the King of Vidyanagara in South India that he would marry the King's daughter. He had been communicating with the King of Vidyanagara through messengers and the King informed him that he would come to meet him in person, but he did not specify when. Later, the King went unannounced to see with his own eyes how beautiful, wealthy, and qualified Purusottama Jana actually was. He went along with his whole family, to see if they would agree with the marriage proposal. At that time, fortunately or unfortunately, it was the first day of the Chariot Festival, and King Purusottama Jana was dressed as a sweeper, sweeping the road before Jagannatha-deva. Seeing this, the King of Vidyanagara became quite upset and felt some disgust toward him. He appreciated that Purusottama Jana was very youthful and beautiful, but he considered him to be a mere sweeper. He thought, ‘He is supposed to be so wealthy and qualified, but he is sweeping?’

I wanted to give my daughter to him, but now I see that he is not qualified. He is sweeping like a street-cleaner. I cannot give my daughter to this sweeper.’ Thinking like this, he returned home and cancelled the marriage. A few days after the festival was over, Purusottama Jana remembered the agreement and wondered what had happened.

“He asked his counsellors, ‘That king wanted to give his daughter to me in marriage, but there has been no recent indication at all. Why not?’ The counsellors informed him, ‘He saw you sweeping on the day of the Ratha-yatra Festival and thought you were a mere sweeper. He doesn’t want to give his daughter to a common sweeper.’

“When Purusottama Jana heard this, he became angry and said, ‘I must invade his kingdom!’ In his mind, he told that king, ‘You don’t know the glory of my Jagannatha-deva!’ He collected all his soldiers and generals, declared war on that king, and a ferocious battle took place in the state of that other king. The King of Vidyanagara worshiped the demigod Ganesa, who was therefore somewhat favorable towards him. Ganesa fought against Purusottama Jana’s party and defeated them. Thus, extremely disturbed, they returned to Puri empty-handed. Weeping, Purusottama Jana went to the temple and told Lord Jagannatha, ‘O Lord, I am your servant. That very mighty King told me, “You are only a sweeper of Jagannatha,” and he refused to give me his daughter in marriage. Please help me. I was sweeping for You. I thought You would help me at all times, but he defeated me. I’m serving You, and yet You didn’t help me. I was defeated because Ganesa helped him. I remembered You, but You did not help me. Now everyone in the world will think, “Jagannatha has no power, and that is why His devotee has no power. Jagannatha is very weak and insignificant.” This is so shameful; I will die here. I will not eat or drink anything, and I will die here in front of You, in Your temple.’

“Later that night, King Purusottama Jana had a dream in which Jagannatha-deva told him, ‘Try again. Last time you went straight to war without calling Me and therefore I did not help you. But now I will help you. March again with all your soldiers and generals. Don’t be afraid, and don’t worry. Go and invade that king’s territory again. Baladeva and I will go there personally, and somehow you will be aware of this. You will defeat that king, along with Ganesa, and everyone else on his side.’ Purusottama Jana became very happy and made arrangements to again invade the kingdom. The next day he called for more soldiers and generals, and they started on their way and marched quickly towards Vidyanagara.

“Meanwhile, Jagannatha and Baladeva got up on very strong and beautiful horses. Baladeva’s horse was white, and Krsna Himself rode a red one. They were both sixteen years of age, one blackish and the other white, and both were very powerful, strong, and beautiful. They wanted Purusottama Jana to have faith that they were going to fight for him, so they went some miles ahead of him. Many miles from Puri, they reached a village near Chilka, Alalanatha, near a very large and beautiful lake. There, Krsna and Baladeva came upon an old village gvalini (milk-lady) carrying a large pot of buttermilk on her head. It was a hot summer day, and Jagannatha and Baladeva said to her, ‘Mother, can you give us some buttermilk? We are very thirsty.’ ‘Can you pay me?’ the gvalini asked them. ‘I will give you some buttermilk if you pay me.’ Krsna and Baladeva replied, ‘We

cannot pay you. We are soldiers of the King, and we are on the way to battle. Our King is coming and he will pay you when he reaches here. You can tell him, ‘Your two soldiers were going this way. One was blackish and the other white. They were riding on their horses with their swords and other weapons.’” She asked, “How will he be able to recognize that you are his soldiers? How will he know that it is his own soldiers who have taken this buttermilk?” They replied, “We will give you some proof to show the King, and then he will pay you.” The village lady gave them her whole pot of buttermilk, and they drank it all and felt satisfied. Then they gave her their very beautiful rings and told her, “Give these rings to the King and tell him, ‘The owners of these rings have gone before you, and they said that you will pay for their buttermilk.’” The boys then went happily onwards.

“The milk seller waited and waited, and finally the King arrived there with his entire army of hundreds of thousands of soldiers. When the army arrived, the old lady began to search for him, asking, ‘Where is the King? Where is the King?’ The soldiers told her, ‘The King is there,’ and she walked up to him and said, ‘Your two soldiers have gone ahead. They were young, beautiful, and very energetic, and they were riding on horses. They drank my entire pot of buttermilk, and they told me, ‘Our King will pay.’ So you should pay for my buttermilk.’

“The King told the old lady, ‘None of my soldiers have gone before us.’ She replied, ‘Yes, they have. I’ve seen them and I’ve given them my buttermilk.’ The King told her, ‘How can I believe they are my soldiers? All my soldiers are with me. No one has gone ahead. We are the first to come.’ Then he asked her, ‘Do you have any proof?’ ‘Yes,’ she said, ‘I have proof.’ The milk-lady showed the two rings to the King, and on the rings he saw the names Jagannatha Simha and Baladeva Simha (Simha means ‘lion’). He became happy and inspired, and he thought, ‘These are the two rings I had made by the goldsmith. They are the same rings that I presented to Jagannatha and Baladeva! Jagannatha and Baladeva have done this for me so that I would know they are with me. This time I will surely conquer that King.’ He then donated some of his kingdom to that old village woman. He offered her a large estate, telling her, ‘Take this land and nourish many generations of your family with it.’

“Gaura-Nityananda Deities were singing and dancing and playing with Gauridasa Pandit. Gauridasa Pandit controlled Them by his love. We should not think that the Deities are idols or statutes. They are Radha-Krsna and Mahaprabhu Themselves. Serve them like Gauridasa Pandit and then they will talk with you and play with you. It is for this reason that Sri Narahari Cakravarti has told this pastime.

At the end Srila Narayana Maharaja blessed the players by saying, “My blessings to you all that you must have prema-bhakti like Gauridasa Pandita.”

May 17, 2008: Miami, Florida
Morning Walk

After the Alachua festival, Srila Maharaja went to Miami before flying to Houston. He gave one class, on the appearance day of Lord Nrsimghadeva, and also gave his audience during his daily morning walks. The following is an excerpt from the morning walk on May 17:

[Raghunatha dasa:] “Srila Gurudeva, when you are here with us – when we have the good fortune of your physical association – by your causeless mercy we feel so much strength. But when you travel all around the world, preaching and making new disciples and giving mercy in other places, we feel weak again. When you are far away, how can we maintain the strength we feel in your personal association?”

[Srila Narayana Gosvami Maharaja:] “You should think that I am always with you in the form of my books, and in the form of my lectures and classes. Know that I am always guiding you. If you do this, you will not be weak, and you will also be able to make others very strong.”

[Savitri dasi:] “Srila Gurudeva, when we preach, we tell people that God, Krsna, has a personal form. We tell them He is a Person with a beautiful, attractive form. When we tell this to people, especially impersonalists, they argue that if we say God has a form, we are limiting Him. They are thinking that God is Absolute and impersonal, and when they think of Him as a Person it is limiting Him. How do we explain that this is not the truth?”

[Srila Narayana Gosvami Maharaja:] “I am always explaining this – wherever I go.”

[Sripad Madhava Maharaja:] “Gurudeva has told this so many times. He has explained that the Bible says that God created man after His own image. In the Koran, Mohammedan says inalah kalakah mein suratih.

[Savitri dasi:] “Even when I tell this to people – that His form is not material; it is a transcendental form – still they...”

[Srila Narayana Gosvami Maharaja:] “You should try to grasp my arguments in this regard. That is why I speak about this. Try to satisfy them as I do. There is fire everywhere. There is no place where fire is not present. We cannot generally see this fire, but we can see it by following the process to do so. When we use matches and apply a small flame to any dry substance, this will take a very, very big form of fire, and this fire will not be extinguished even by great amounts of water. It will only be extinguished by the arrangement of Krsna – by heavy rain. In America we see that forest fires cannot be extinguished by any machines or human endeavor. It is only extinguished by rain.”

“Similarly, by following a certain process, we can even see the very beautiful form of Krsna. We can also see Him in His Universal Form. He is very beautiful. He is everywhere, and if you are not seeing Him, He is still everywhere. But by the practice of bhakti-yoga you can see Him.”

[Devotee:] “Srila Gurudeva, I am talking about my personal experience. I have been

chanting Hare Krsna for so many years and I am getting the mercy and association of Vaisnavas, especially your mercy. But I still have material desires in my heart. Is this because I am committing offences to the Vaisnavas? Does it mean that my bhakti is leaking out, as you mention in your classes? What do you think may be the reason that I still have material desires in my heart?"

[Srla Narayana Gosvami Maharaja:] "Now you are somewhat realizing, "Some defect is in me, and that is why I have no taste in hearing from Vaisnavas. It may be that I am offending a Vaisnava and that is why I am not developing taste.

"Others, those in this world who are always totally engaged – one hundred percent and more than one hundred percent – in sense gratification, don't realize this. They take wine, they gamble, smoke, and eat meat, beef, and other things. Now you are understanding something. So gradually, by chanting the holy name in the association of high-class Vaisnavas, you will improve. All unwanted things will go and you will be always happy.

"So you are in the right path. You are inviting me with my traveling group and bearing our expenses. Moreover you are helping in my projects. You should know that by this process, you will very soon give up all your unwanted habits and mentalities (anarthas). Any offenses to Vaisnavas will go away, and all kinds of problems will go away. So we should be strong by chanting and remembering."

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Note: In typing Srla Narayana Maharaja's discussion about King Purusottama-jana and Lord Jagannatha after the drama, we remembered that he said the same thing in his book "Origin of Ratha-yatra." So, in order to save time in re-editing the same speech, we received his permission to substitute and put in the excerpt from the Ratha-yatra book.