

# Lord treated equally the poorest Kolavecha Sridhara and the richest King Prataprudra

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Katha Day 4

Venue: Theur, Pune

Hare Krishna!

We could sing that prayer again. Every time we recite Gauranga, Gauranga's pastimes or karuna avatar, Gaura Bhagavan's pastimes, or whatever qualities pastimes in the beginning we do sing this prayer. You could sing with me or after me.

**jaya jaya sri caitanya jay nityananda  
jay advaita-candra jaya gaura bhakta vrnda**

"All glories to Sri Caitanya, Nityananda, Advaita as well as the Gaura bhaktas, devotees of Gauranga!"

So, I think this is our fourth talk in this series. Gauranga is kind, karuna avatar and He's equally kind to all His devotees. Maybe He's more kinder towards His devotees than the non-devotees, special mercy towards the devotees. But, even amongst the devotees, some devotees are poor; some devotees are rich in worldly sense. In fact, poor devotees or rich devotee, they're equally enriched with love of Godhead.

I thought I would talk to you about one devotee, Kolavecha Sridhara and then King Prataparudra. One is from Navadvipa Mayapur – Kolavecha Sridhara and King Prataprudra is a king of Orissa, king of Puri. Of course, we're talking about both of these devotees 500 years ago, at the time of Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu or they were devotees of Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. So, Lord was equally kind, magnanimous, merciful towards both of these devotees.

**samo 'ham sarva-bhutesu  
na me dvesyo 'sti na priyah [BG 9.29]**

Translation: I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all.

Lord has declared in Bhagavad Gita, samo aham, "I am equal to all." So, that is exhibited here by the Lord in this case of these two prabhus, two devotees, Kolavecha Sridhara and King Prataprudra.

Kolavecha Sridhara. "Kola" is banana. The inside, inner stuff of the trunk of the banana tree. "vecha" means one who sells kola. Of course, he was also specialist in selling banana products. Also bananas or banana flowers, banana leaves, banana cups. He was making some money and maintaining his household affairs with that income but he was a great devotee of Gauranga.

He always chanted, "Haribol! Haribol! Haribol!" Or, he chanted day and night,

**Hare Krsna Hare Krsna krsna Krsna Hare Hare**

**Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare**

Even all night long he would chant out loud. Neighbors would feel troubled and would complained and they would say, "Look at this poor Kolavecha! He must be hungry that's why he's

crying.” His chanting, singing was like crying. He was crying for the Lord. So, they considered that was a crying and they thought that the crying was because he’s hungry. They were angry because of his singing in the middle of the night also.

Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu used to visit Kolavecha Sridhara. There’s a sridhara angan for those of you who wish to know the whereabouts of Kolavecha Sridhara. In Mayapur, there’s Rajapur, where ISKCON has Jagannatha mandir. Not far from ISKCON Jagannatha mandir, there is Sridhara angan. He had a little farm and he stayed there. That’s where he came from.

Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, without fail every day, He visited the shop of Kolavecha Sridhara. Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had a very special relationship with him. The humorous dealings of Gauranga or even teasing Kolavecha Sridhara are very famous or very palatable to hear. Sri Krsna Chaitanya, Gauranga, Nimai, Vishvambhar, so many names, He would go there to do shopping and He would ask, “What is the cost of this banana? What is the cost of this kola? What is the cost of this banana flowers?” And Sridhara would quote a price and Gaura, “No, no, no, you said this is 80 paisa. I will give you 40 paisa!”

Sridhar was very honest. A small businessman, shopkeeper, but very honest. Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu would just argue with him and try to get a discount, as bigger discount as possible and Gauranga would say, “I’ll just give you this much, take this!” He would take the products He had selected and try to leave and Kolavecha Sridhara would try to catch up with Him and take that products back. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu would say, “You must be making a lot of money! You have been selling these banana products for a very long time. You must have a lot of wealth. Why don’t you give a little discount?” And Chaitanya Mahaprabhu also would say, “You worship Ganga with 50% of your income.” Yes, Sridhara was also known for spending 50% of his income for Krsna consciousness, for God consciousness, worshipping Ganga, Har Har Gange! “You are

spending 50% of your income for worshipping Ganga. I am the father of Ganga!" And hearing this, Kolavecha Sridhara would be like, "What? Vishnu! Vishnu! How could you make such a claim, that you are the father of Ganga?" Chaitanya Mahaprabhu would say, "Please, give Me this product charge with less money." Sridhar would say, "You could check the next door, shop if it's cheaper there, please purchase from there. Why are you insisting getting products from me if you think they're costlier?"

Like this, Mahaprabhu and Kolavecha Sridhara, would be arguing and go on for hours, striking the deal. Finally, Sridhar would let Mahaprabhu take anything and everything from his shop for whatever price that He would want to pay. So, this is Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu and His loving dealings with Kolavecha Sridhara, who was kind of poorest of the poor. But Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was very kind, very affectionate towards Kolavecha Sridhara and He was so much pleased with Kolavecha Sridhara .

Hari Hari! I was just thinking that it is not that how much wealth you have, what quantity of whatever, the goods or what big offerings you are making to the Lord or big funds you are giving. That is not what really counts, the quantity doesn't count. What counts is love, devotion, dedication, surrender, whole hearted surrender unto the Lord. The Lord is pleased.

I was just thinking, in pastimes of Lord Sri Rama, when that bridge was being built from Rameshwar to Sri Lanka and Hanuman and company, construction company, were building, some monkeys were building, some bears also, they were throwing big big boulders and trees and hills and what not. So, while Hanuman and his company's associates were doing a big job of throwing big, big objects, rocks into the ocean, there was a squirrel, gilahari, she was also doing her part. What was she doing? She would go to the beach, roll in the sand, pick up some sand in her hairy body, and gently walk onto those

rocks and then she would shake her body and all the sand particles would get downloaded or dropped in between the rocks. The sand was working like a cement so that the bridge would be strong.

So, Hanuman was watching the act of squirrel. He said, "Come on! What good is your few grams of sand? Get out! You may get crushed under the feet of my associates. Big, big monkeys here are doing big, big jobs. You are just little and these few grains of sand. Please, go, save yourself." Rama was overhearing this. That wasn't so much of a conversation. It was a one way traffic only. Hanuman was talking or threatening or warning that squirrel, "Go away!" And Rama noticed that. He called Hanuman over, "Come here! I say, Come Here!" And as Hanuman was close to Rama, He rebuked Hanuman saying, who do you think you are? Whatever the strength I have invested in you, you are offering all of that in My service. Whatever energy or strength I have invested in the body of the squirrel, the squirrel is giving 100% back to Me in my service!"

She was building the bridges in service of Sri Rama. So, like this Sri Rama pointed out the faulty thought and his pride was crushed. So, the point is atmanivedanam.

**manasa deha geha jo kichu mora arpilu tuwa pade,nanda kisor**

Whatever we have, offer that manasa, your mind. Better offer your mind. Deha-your body. Geha- your home, and jo kichu, whatever you have, dedicate that in service of the Lord, is advice of the sages and the sastras, scriptures. Although we described Kolavecha Sridhara as a pauper or the poorest of the poor, no, he was the richest. He had all the wealth. he was the wealthiest person around. What was the wealth? Well, he was satisfied, he had peace of mind. He wasn't greedy trying to grab more and more. He never thought, "I lack something, there's some shortage in my life and I must run around and make more and more money and buy this and shop

that." He was self satisfied. This self satisfaction, satisfaction of the self and that meant satisfaction of the soul. That is the goal, to satisfy the soul. Not just to satisfy the senses or to gratify the senses, to satisfy them or to try to satisfy the mind by entertainment and satisfy the body. No, go deeper. Within the body is our real self seated in the heart, along with self is super soul. So satisfying the soul is the goal.

So, this Kolavecha Sridhara was fully satisfied. He was atmarama. So, he was happy, more than happy. Lord Gauranga was making him happy. Giving him all the ananda, all the joy and he was enjoying his life. And of course, he was chanting the holy names of the Lord and that was satisfying the soul. This is the gift of Gauranga Mahaprabhu, that karuna avatar. We are talking about karuna avatar, Gauranga. So, kindly, He has given the holy name to Sridhara. Kolavecha Sridhara had that wealth, wealth of the holy name.

### **golokera premadhana harinama sankirtana**

This harinama sankirtana is the wealth. So, Sridhara was wealthy. Hence, he was happy. In order to be happy, he had to be wealthy. But the trouble is we do not understand what's the real wealth and who do we have to really make happy. Not the senses, not the mind, not the body. We have to try to make ourselves, real self happy. Those who have received this gift of the holy name, as Gauranga Mahaprabhu is handing out this gift, then their souls are satisfied.

So, we could also be happy like Kolavecha Sridhara was happy. Okay, he was poor but he was happy and so was king Prataprudra. He was a king and he was also happy. Not because of all the luxuries he had at his disposal. Or, the palace or the chariot or whatever the costly clothes or the big position post. That was not the cause of his happiness. Whatever was the cause of happiness of Kolavecha Sridhara, same thing. Why I say same thing? Same one, Gauranga, Sri Krsna Chaitanya was

the cause of happiness of Kolavecha Sridhara and so was Gauranga, Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, the cause of happiness of king Prataprudra. Lord is sarva karana karanama, He is the cause of all causes. Especially, cause of happiness, joy. Lord is the cause.

King Prataprudra ruled the Kingdom of Orissa. Jagannatha Puri was his capital. Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, we were talking yesterday, after 24 years in Navadvipa, He took sannyasa and His mother, Sacimata, appealed to her son, "Why don't You stay in Jagannatha Puri? Mahaprabhu wanted to go to Vrndavana. "Oh, Vrndavana is very far. I will never ever get to see You. Jagannatha Puri is closer from Navadvipa, Bengal. So, please stay in Jagannatha Puri." "Tathastu mother. So be it!" And then Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, after of course, travelling, there is Madhya Lila, for six years, Mahaprabhu made Jagannatha Puri as His home base and He spent next 18 years in Jagannatha Puri. Every day, He was performing pastimes. Or, His whole life is full of pastimes. Not every act of Mahaprabhu, every minute, all that He does is lilas, His pastimes. Unlimited pastimes He performed.

Amongst those was Sri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's participation in Jagannatha ratha yatra festival. Lord was there and He performed His pastimes in Puri for 18 years and, for sure, all those eighteen ratha yatras, one per year, He attended. Not only attended, He was the very center of that festival. Well, Him and Jagannatha were the center. Because Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is Jagannatha.

sei gaura, sei krsna, sei jagannatha. One who is Gauranga, He is Krsna, He is Jagannatha.

As Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu would participate in ratha yatra festival, He would be in front of the chariot. As He would come, although He is Jagannatha himself, He is playing the role of a devotee. He is in the mood of Radharani. As Chaitanya Mahaprabhu would come on the site or in front of the

chariot of Jagannatha, He would offer His full dandavats, prostrated. Then, He would stand in front of Jagannatha with folded hands in awe and reverence; He would offer prayers unto Jagannatha.

**jayati jayati devo devakinandano sau**  
**jayati jayati vrsni vamsa pradipaha**  
**jayati jayati meghashyamala komalango**  
**jayati jayati prithvi bhara nasho mukundah**

Like this He would pray. He was saying the prayer with full understanding. What is He saying? jayati jayati devo. "All glories to You, Jagannatha! All glories to You." Who are You, Jagannatha? Who are You? Devakinandanaso. "You are Devakinandana. Krsna, you are Devakinandana!" Lots of times, when people see the form of Jagannatha, they are kind of bewildered. They do not know what to make out of that darsana. "Who's this?" They do not know lot of times, that He is Krsna in that form, Jagannatha form, He Krsna Himself.

So, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is praying, devakinandanaso vrsni vamsa pradipa. "You are the lamp, deepak of vrsni vamsha, vrsni dynasty." jayati jayati meghashyamala komalango. "You are shyamala, bluish-blackish complexion. When I'm looking at You, You are shyamala. If I was to touch You, then you are komala. Your form is very, very soft. So, shyamala komalango. Your anga, your form is shymala and komala." Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is praying like that.

**jayati jayati prithvi bhara nasho mukunda**

"You are minimizing the burden of the earth." By doing what? Vinasaya ca duskrtam By killing, destroying the miscreants, the demons. That is why mother earth is feeling burdened. Anyway that's another story. Earth had approached the demigods, "Could you please help? There are so many demons around, demoniac nature around and miscreants around. I'm feeling burdened. They are harassing and what not."

So then, the demigods, by hearing there is a corona virus around. "Please, do something" and then the demigods said, "no, no! This is not our cup of tea. Sorry, we cannot help you." They said that to mother earth, who had gone there in the form of a cow, shape of a cow. Then the demigods decided to approach the Lord and, on behalf of all the demigods, Brahma did wireless communication with the Lord. Now this was happening in the milk ocean, Kshirsagar. Lord was reported of what is happening on the planet earth. Dharmasya glanira bhavati. There's so much decline in the religious principle. Abhyutanam adharmasya, irreligious is spreading like a wildfire everywhere. No one is there to check religiosity.

When Brahma communicated, reported what is happening on the earth. Lord said, "OK, I understand. So, if you, demigods, cannot handle them, then I'm the next, I'm the one. So, I will appear. I will make my appearance, sambhavami yuge yuge. Then Lord had appeared as Sri Krsna, this is 5000 years ago. Then He had done what? paritranaya sadhunam, protecting the devotees, vinasaya ca duskritam, annihilation of miscreants, demons, demonic nature and dharma samsthapanarthaya the Lord was establishing dharma.

Here Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, while praying to Jagannatha, He is taking note. Prithvi bhara nasho mukunda. "Oh Mukunda." He has also addressed Jagannatha as Mukunda. Mukunda means one who gives liberation. Earth was kind of relieved or liberated from this burden. Prithvi – planet bhara – the burden of the earth. "You relieved earth."

Hari Hari! So, after the prayer, it was time to begin the ratha yatra procession of pulling the cart. That time, Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu noticed that there was King Prataprudra. Although he had the attire of a King, had a sword there and a crown there, but he was holding a broom and he was sweeping the street in front of Jagannatha's cart. By seeing this act of humility, Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was impressed, He was pleased. His thought was, there is nothing

wrong in meeting this devotee, this King Prataprudra. Anyway this is a long pastime. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was avoiding meeting, having an audience, with King Prataprudra thinking he is a King and Kings are attached to their powers, attached to their wealth. They have isvara bhava, means controller.

Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu being sannyasi, in the renounced order of life, "I have nothing to do with the King. No, no! I won't see him." Devotees were appealing, "Please, meet or give audience to or interview to King Prataprudra."

Chaitanya Mahaprabhu had been avoiding for a long time. Finally, that ratha yatra day, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu noticed King Prataprudra with a broom sweeping, that was it. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu wanted to meet him. Well, that is enough, as soon as He wanted. He wished and His yogamaya, His spiritual potencies and energies, lila shaktis, they make all the arrangements. So, that day, there is going to be a meeting with King Prataprudra.

As the procession, "jai jagannatha! jai jagannatha! jai jagannatha!", the cart is rolling down on the road to Gundica Temple. During Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's times, He used to divide all the devotees into 7 different kirtana mandalis, 7 different groups, I think, 4 in the front, 2 on either side, something like that and one behind also.

Then as kirtana started, chanting and dancing started, it was noticed while those kirtaniyas were performing kirtana all around the chariot that Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was dancing, "Oh you know what, chanting with our group only." They were thinking like this. Each group was thinking. "Look! Look! We must be very special group! Just see, Mahaprabhu is chanting and dancing with our group!" But the mystery that He was chanting with all the 7 groups, simultaneously, was revealed by Gauranga. He was concealing that from all the groups, keeping it hidden, but He was revealing it only unto King

Prataprudra. Very special blessing, benediction upon King Prataprudra. King Prataprudra was the only one to take note that Mahaprabhu was dancing with all the 7 groups, simultaneously.

By this act, by this lila, Gauranga Mahaprabhu is also proving, He does not have to really prove, but we understand that He is Krsna Himself. Sri Krsna Chaitanya is Krsna Himself. Krsna has now become Sri Krsna Chaitanya. Sri Krsna, who is known for His rasa dance and while dancing in the rasa and expanding, becoming as many gopis are there, those many Krsnas. Here, as many groups are chanting, those many Gauranga Mahaprabhus. Krsna there in Vrndavana dancing in rasa dance and here chanting in sankirtana, also by expanding simultaneously with different groups.

So, the chariots rolled down, they are making progress. Half way through, the chariot stops, time for making offering to Jagannatha. Time for His meals. The chariot stopped, offering is being made, offering is being offered. Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu enters into the garden and He is lying down. He had been chanting and chanting and chanting, He is a little fatigued, tired. He is lying down, trying to relax.

So, this is the time, Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya and some other devotees inspired, encouraged King Prataprudra, "go and massage the lotus feet and full body massage of Gauranga. And he was asked to put on vaisnava clothes instead of his kingly robes or attire. As Caitanya Mahaprabhu is lying down with His eyes closed King Prataprudra approaches Mahaprabhu, offers his obeisance's and begins massaging the body, transcendental form of Gauranga He was also told, "While massaging, you should sing gopi geet . This will nourish Mahaprabhu's emotions. The gopi bhava, Radha bhava." Mahaprabhu, during ratha yatra, is exhibiting his Radha bhava. He is Radha, radha krsna nahi anya. "If you recite gopigeet, Mahaprabhu would be relaxed, relieved and very, very happy. So King Prataprudra started reciting gopi geet. While singing he

reached that very famous stanza:

**tava kathamrtam tapta-jivanam  
kavibhir iditam kalmasapaham  
sravana-mangalam srimad atatam  
bhuvi grnanti ye bhuri-da-janah**

The last, end part attracted Mahaprabhu's attention. Bhuvi grnanti ye bhuri-da-janah. The meaning of that particular stanza is, those who recite kathamrita, propagate kathamrita or Krsna kathamrita, Gauranga kathamrita, Rama kathamrita, share that with others, broadcast it far and wide, those personalities are bhuri da janah, they are charitable. They're magnanimous people, bhuri da janah. Of course, gopis have spoken this, this is gopi geet, that those who recite, kathamrita, Krsna kathamrita and share that with others, they are bhuri da, they are magnanimous persons.

So, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu as He had heard this word bhuri da janah, Mahaprabhu started calling, "you are that bhuri da! You are that bhuri da." He did not even know who that person was, who was massaging and who was singing that Gopi geet because, He was lying with His eyes closed.

He said, "You are reciting, you are feeding Me this kathamrita, so, you're bhurida. You have done great service to Me. You have given great charity to Me. So, I consider you to be very, very magnanimous. And I am very grateful for this gift, for this kathamrita. You have done so much for Me. I wish to do something in return for you."

Saying so, Sri Krsna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu said, "What could I give you? I am just a mendicant in renounced order. I do not own anything. Oh, what could I offer you?" Mahaprabhu was saying this and then He was kind of getting up and then saying, "But, could I offer you My embrace?" He said this and then He gave a deep embrace to King Prataprudra. "This is all that I could do!" Well, Lord gave Himself to King Prataprudra

. What more, there's nothing more to give. Nothing remains, He's purnam. Lord Himself gave to King Prataprudra in exchange of what? This tava kathamritam. King Prataprudra gave kathamrita, he recited kathamrita and that was karnamrita for Gauranga Mahaprabhu. In return, Mahaprabhu gave Himself to King Prataprudra.

So, we see how Lord treated equally the poorest of the poor, Kolavecha Sridhara of Navadvipa and the richest, wealthiest King Prataprudra of Jagannatha Puri, Orissa. This kathamrita is glorified.

I was just thinking, that the founder acarya of International Society of Krsna Consciousness, His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada has given so much kathamrita to the whole world. He has given some 70 books packed with kathamrita. He gave Hare Krishna mantra kathamrita, namamrita, to the whole world. He gave so many, so many talks globally as he travelled. He sang himself also, bhajans and Hare Krishna kirtans. He wrote so many letters with nectarian instructions, sikshamrita, and he gave ocean of amrita to the whole world.

So, the Lord was pleased with King Prataprudra as King Prataprudra gave kathamrita to the Lord or he recited kathamrita. And our Srila Prabhupada was confident that Mahaprabhu must be giving His deep embrace to our spiritual master Srila Prabhupada also. So please accept this kathamrita on behalf of Srila Prabhupada that we're trying to share with all those who are willing to listen and take advantage.

Of course, I am not the only one, there are so many around the world. Especially, these days, trouble times, to give the relief to the suffering humanity. We are sharing this nectar of the holy name, namamrita, sharing the nectar of kathamrita or Bhagvatamrita or Ramayana amrita. There are many forums where this amrita being made available. Just look around, explore, and search, you will find more and more kathamrita by

very many devotees, leaders of this Hare Krsna movement. Okay, we thank all our listeners for joining us. Of course, this stays on, I think, on Facebook, YouTube. Those who could not listen while we were talking, they can listen to this whenever it is convenient for you. Anyway, very thankful for your attention, Hare Krishna!