

Wisdom Nectar from Srila Prabhupada Disciple

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ISKCON Calgary

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Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Ram, Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

Thank you Sacipran Gauranga Prabhu, all the way from Calgary Canada, remembering us and inviting us to this forum where you have been discussing experiences, remembrances of Srila Prabhupada and I am sure there are other topics also. And this is organized by ISKCON Calgary. I remember visiting Calgary long ago, in the early 80s, I did visit Calgary and I am visiting again today – I am in Calgary right now. So remembering Srila Prabhupada.

Srila Prabhupada ki jay!

I am sure you knew this, this year is 125th birth anniversary of Srila Prabhupada. Prabhupada was born in 1896, this is the 125th anniversary. And the whole world is having lots of celebrations and part of the celebrations is remembering Srila Prabhupada. So I suppose, what we are doing right now, right here is celebrating the 125th anniversary of Srila Prabhupada as we talk about remembering Srila Prabhupada.

And as I was here in my introduction, I thought it was too long. Mataji went on and on and on. So one item she did read was that I met Srila Prabhupada in 1971 and this is 2021, so how many years ago is that? 50 years ago.

So not just that, I first ever meeting of mine Srila Prabhupada happened 3days – 50years ago and 3days ago, 25th

March I met Srila Prabhupada. Today is 27th and we are having a celebration in fact, every day at six o'clock. We are celebrating my meeting with Srila Prabhupada – it's very special for me. How I joined Srila Prabhupada, Hare Krishna festival Cross Maidan Mumbai and the first thing I saw there was kirtana. We are talking about kirtan standard.

So the first thing that impressed me was kirtan on the stage performed by his American sadhus, European sadhus. This is how the festival was advertised "Oh American sadhus are in town, in Bombay town." And I was just a college student and I was amazed to see; not just myself but this caught the imagination of all the folks of Bombay.

"American sadhus! Forget it! How can American be sadhus?"

So I had gone to check out whether that's reality fact or fiction and I realized in fact that they are genuine sadhus. Srila Prabhupada had transformed Americans or revolutionized their consciousness, their appearance, they just not only look like sadhus but they behaved talked like sadhus and especially they were performing kirtans like sadhus with all their heart, with all their strength, they were chanting and dancing on the stage and that is where I picked up this kirtan 50 years ago.

So that festival lasted for 11 days. Then I also started chanting and dancing from that time onward and to this day I am doing chanting and dancing. So I think that the mood of the chanter is also standard, so I picked up that the devotees were chanting with full absorption. They were not distracted although there were some reasons to be distracted, thousands around in the audience and other sounds there but they were in their own world. Chanting and dancing, so if there is a kirtan standard then that is the standard chant with attention, with meditation. That kind of mood, and of course we heard from Srila Prabhupada, he wanted us to chant like the crying of a baby. That is another standard, the mood crying like a baby. Like a baby cries for his mother, and a devotee chants for

Krishna, who is also mother and father of us. So only when you cry like a baby – When a baby cries, he wants his mother to come to him, pick him up, feed him, or give him some gifts or toys. So chant like a baby cries for the mother.

So, Srila Prabhupada gave me this mantra,

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare

Hare Ram, Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

And he did say, this was in Vrndavana during Kartik in 1972 in Radha Damodara temple, in between Rupa Goswami's bhajana kutir on one side and the Samadhi mandir on other side and so that is where I received this mantra from Srila Prabhupada. Chant 16 rounds. Once I asked Srila Prabhupada "Why 16 rounds Srila Prabhupada, what is the significance of the 16 rounds?" and Prabhupada was trying to explain why we have fixed this number? Srila Prabhupada answered why 16 you can chant 16,000 rounds. Who could stop you? Minimum 16 rounds" And busy as Srila Prabhupada was, it was the first time I was experiencing it, so what to do. He used to ask me from time to time "Are you chanting 16 rounds, are you completing your rounds" I don't know why, I was a good chanter but Srila Prabhupada he did care and he was making sure he was concerned if you were chanting 16 rounds.

Since 1977, Srila Prabhupada wasn't well and in Bombay, in the guesthouse (one of those towers) on the fifth floor, Srila Prabhupada's quarters are there. That is when Srila Prabhupada first time ever, moved into that new residential quarter of Srila prabhupada. But he was not well. He had returned from London and he meant to go all the way to Gita Nagari farm from Vrndavana – that's the whole history, whole life and teachings of Srila Prabhupada.

But from London he returned because he was not getting better and in Bombay he was in bed and I used to chant for Srila Prabhupada by myself, which we took turns. With a little

kartala, we sat on the floor and next to him, we were chanting, getting tired, falling asleep, waking up and chanting.

During my turn to chant, sing for Srila Prabhupada, I asked "Srila prabhupada, is anything that we have not done or that we should now do so that you could be cured and be healthier. What have we neglected something or not gone out of our way?" His brief and simple response was "chant Hare Krishna."

"What could we do more so that you could be cured?"

Prabhupada said "chant Hare Krishna"

In Vrndavana also, during the last days of Srila Prabhupada, whenever I used to enter Prabhupada's quarter, Tamal Krishna Maharaj used to say "Prabhupada! Prabhupada! Lokanatha swami is here, you would like him to chant for you?" Then Prabhupada would say, "Hmm yes". Then I would chant, sing for Srila Prabhupada.

I think it was Srila Bhakti Sidhhanta Saraswati Thakura's disappearance or appearance, I don't remember which one, but Prabhupada wasn't in Mumbai and celebrating that occasion, bhoga, arati and kirtan. So, I was assigned to sing that day. So I started singing, –

"Samsara-davanala-lidha-loka
tranaya karunya-ghanaghanatvam"

So like that I went on singing that Guruastaka, and then we did our first ever parikrama in late 80's. That's like 30 years ago. And then we had been every year, 30 day parikrama, with big number 1000, 2000, thousands of devotees of 30 days of camping out.

So after, I think 20 years of that parikrama, I decided to write my experience of Vraj-mandal Parikrama. So parikrama takes place for 30 days, so I have 30 days, 30 chapters. And those days, from beginning to finish, all the places that we

visit and all the pastimes Lord has performed and we hear during that day, it is all there packed in Vraja-mandal. As you read the new kind of, hear the sounds and you smell Vraja and hear Vraja and you get some being there as you read this experience.

So we encourage you to actually have a copy of this book and the devotees who do not manage to come to Vrindavan to do parikrama, what they had been doing was, they sit back relax and read the chapter that keeps the maya away. And next day. So we follow our schedule and they find out where is parikrama today. Today we are at Radhakunda. So they open that Radhakunda chapter or Govardhan chapter or we are in Kamyavana, we are in Bhadravana. So they read that chapter. And then thus connected and this how they celebrate kartik vrata. So it's available on amazon. So those interested. You can buy that. 10, 20 dollars or something.

Do nagar kirtans, do street kirtans public chanting, conduct festivals like rathayatra. Festivals, people like festivals, culture, events. So that mean, we have to bring Krishna to them, Hare Krishna to them or bring prasadam to them. They may not come to where Krishna is, where Hare Krishna's are. And ofcourse book distribution, that means you are going out and distributing books. Performing kirtans, distributing prasadam, holding rathayatra festivals and other programmes. Govinda's visitors in restaurants. So this way, we get their attention.

Remember Srila Prabhupada. Remember Srila Prabhupada's sacrifices. New generation could remember what Prabhupada has done for us. Krishna is kind of being home delivered by Srila Prabhupada's Hare Krishna movement. So much grateful we should be for such contribution. Remain grateful, we are indebted to Srila Prabhupada. One time some disciples were talking to Prabhupada, said, "Prabhupada we are indebted to you, you have done so much us. Is there any way we could become free from such debt". Prabhupada said, " No, no. You can't be free from this debt". Then there was a pause and then said, " yes, yes.

You could do one thing". What is that Srila Prabhupada? Prabhupada said, "You do as I did. Doesn't mean imitate me, but follow in the footsteps. And that way you will become somewhat, to some degrees free from that debt".

So younger generation, Prabhupada has so much faith and expectation from young generation, or second generation or third generation. And you know what the world is going through. So world needs Krishna. Youngsters need Krishna and Hare Krishna. Okay.