

Memories of Srila Prabhupada at Hare Krsna Land

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Occasion: 42 nd anniversary of Sri Sri Radha Rasabihari

ISKCON Juhu

January 2020 [30:54]

So, welcome all the assembled devotees, great souls! Prabhupada disciples are also present. We welcome them, haribol. I wasn't sure whether to say Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya, so it's normally sung at katha. I wasn't sure but I thought for sure I will talk about Radha Rasabihari Ki Jai! And we have to talk about Srila Prabhupada and he is a Mahabhagavat. So, it's a katha, Bhagavat katha. So why not sing Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya? That was appropriate? You think also?

Haribol.

So, it is a big occasion today for Radha Rasabihari Temple Juhu Hare Krishna land, Srila Prabhupada's office. As this is the day, forty two years ago when I was there. Some of you anyone else attended? Its 42nd is now and there will be 100 th anniversary and there'll be always a celebration of this occasion, or the anniversary festival of Radha Rasa Bihari Temple opening ki Jai

I did say I was there. Many others were there. Of course, Gopal Krishna Maharaja was there, Giriraj Maharaja more over Sridhar Maharaja was there, Mukunda Maharaja was there. Big international media was invited to cover the event. The Chief Minister of Maharashtra Vasant Dada Patil. He did the opening. And we had some central ministers and it was a big gathering so many were invited. And we were badly missing physical presence of one person. And that was, what do you think that we're missing? Devotees: Srila Prabhupada As yesterday I said

at another gathering I was addressing and I said, we were missing Srila Prabhupada's presence. Srila Prabhupada ki Jai or he was conspicuous by his absence, being conspicuous by someone's presence and being conspicuous by someone's absence so Srila Prabhupada was conspicuous by his absence.

The idea was that temple would be opened by Srila Prabhupada in his presence and Prabhupada had even come to Bombay from London because his health was not good. But instead of going to America, to Gita Nagari, he had to return. Srila Prabhupada attended Janmashtami at Bhaktivedanta manor and next day his Vyas Puja also was celebrated there at London. And then "Bring me back, let's go back, Back home".

Where is Prabhupada's home? Vrindavan. Vrindavan is my home. Mayapur is my place of pilgrimage, place of worship and Bombay is my office. So, he wanted to go to Vrindavan. And month of September 77 Srila Prabhupada was very much here, up there. The fifth floor, which tower is that? Prabhupada tower. Srila Prabhupada ki Jai. This is Prabhupada's tower, whole thing is Prabhupada's of course. Temples also and that tower was one other one also.

One tower is named after Prabhupada. So Prabhupada was at that floor. Prabhupada was not well. During this visit a lot of things that are different for first time kind of we had different experience. There were no more morning walks. So, walking and talking. Japa. Walk Japa talk Japa with Dr. Patel and company, debating and so that was not happening. And 77 September, every morning after walk Srila Prabhupada returned. And we all eagerly awaiting Prabhupada's return, "Prabhupada is coming, Prabhupada is coming." So, always had this spirit, because this was his office.

Doesn't person spend more time in the office than any other place somebody spends time at the home and the other place where he spends a lot of time most of his time is the office. So Srila Prabhupada spent lot of time, lot of time in Bombay,

his office. So many trips. Those days he was spending half time overseas and other half time in India. So he was landing, "Prabhupada is coming, Prabhupada is coming" from Nairobi.

Gopal Krishna Maharaja is coming from Nairobi today I heard. Jayapataka Maharaja is also coming from London today. So, those days, "Prabhupada is coming from his came from yours came from this country, that country that continent, Prabhupada is coming." And then we would be preparing to receive Prabhupada and anticipate to associate with Prabhupada. And morning walks with Srila Prabhupada.

And then Prabhupada returning to the temple after morning was such a great anticipation. So, we were so much conscious of Prabhupada consciousness was very wide spread and very thick in the air, "Prabhupada consciousness." So, as he returned from the morning walk, we used to greet Radha Rasa Bihari and this was all happening during Prabhupada days. Prabhupada tower is underneath. That old temple just cement sheet roof and some poles were supporting and very tiny structure which was even attempted by municipality to demolish, so many things. Memories of Srila Prabhupada! This had become Kurukshetra also. Hare Krishna land was also battlefield land [Laughter] guarding all night long with a gun, literally there were guns.

Prabhupada was in Australia, and he got the news on telephone, Srila Prabhupada was delighted, "Narsimha has killed him." The funeral ceremony they were taking his body to the cremation ground from this road. Ladies satsang was going on in the temple, Mrs. Single had been organizing weekly mahila satsanga, Hare Krishna mahila satsang. So, they were doing kirtana. When they found out who was it, they were all happy.

They were all delighted, there is a celebration. "paritranaya sadhunam vinasaya ca duskrtam Sure, who else Radha Rasa Bihari was behind all this. The battle of Hare Krishna land went on and on and on from 72 onward till literally opening up the

temple. Mr. Shetty was the contractor, he took up the task of building one additional floor to be added. On the top of all the buildings, tenants had occupied, when the construction was going on, one time Prabhupada was doing the inspection, he wanted to check the progress and personally. When he saw Shetty that he was doing this great service, creating accommodations or building accommodations. Then Prabhupada had also declared, "You are building accommodations for devotees and Lord has already made house for you in Vaikuntha." The temple was built and the deities stood mostly all the time till the opening they were they were there. So, Srila Prabhupada would return from morning walks and he greeted Radha Rasa Bihari with folded hands.

He would always bow down, bow down whenever he offered his obeisances to the deities. Even in his old days or ill health Srila Prabhupada he not with folded hands or doing panchang, but every time he did full dandavat. Approved by Srila Prabhupada, we started playing Govindam Adi Purusam recording in the Radha Rasa Bihari temple. Then we would do Guru puja, Srila Prabhupada's guru puja and there were times there was no Guru Puja. Prabhupada founded ISKCON in 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, to all these years there was no guru puja in any Iskcon temple. And one time, as Prabhupada arrived at Santa Cruz Mumbai and Dum, dum Kolkata.

Prabhupada was greeted and worshipped, some puja was offered to him. Aditya mataji something to do, she took some initiative or leadership for this idea and then others joined and we did offer Guru puja short one at the airport and from then we started, we did guru puja at Radha Rasa Bihari temple And the word got out and then whole world started doing guru puja. Others were saying, "Prabhupada accepted Guru puja at Radha Rasa Bihari temple, Bombay, his office" So, a lot of new things were also taking place happening here and there. Bombay's his office some new standards were being followed, whole world was following. Hari, Hari.

And we did kirtans during Guru Puja and very special kirtans, very ecstatic and excited kirtans. And Srila Prabhupada's presence in the presence of course of Radha Rasa Bihari and towards the end of Guru Puja kirtana and Guru puja, Srila Prabhupada used to take lots of flowers and he would throw that at us and then we used to jump to catch those flowers, this side and then that party is jumping and in the middle and that party is jumping to catch some of those flowers on this side. And then adding the further dimension to the excited and ecstatic kirtans. And then Jai Om Vishnu Pada Pramhamsa ki Jai, Ki Jai. And then Srila Prabhupada would begin, "Jaya Radha Madhava Kunja Bihari" Prabhupada playing kartals and Prabhupada, fully absorbed. Occasionally, opening his eyes are some side long, long glance at us sitting at his feet and occasionally we would notice some tears gliding down his cheeks.

As he was with Radha Rasa Bihari while chanting Jaya Radha Madhav. Almost in trance, Prabhupada would sing and then Bhagavatam class.

Then Prabhupada would return to his quarters.

Srila Prabhupada ki jai

Glories of Narottam Das Thakur

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10-10-2017

Vrindavan [40:32]

Narottam Das Thakur Disappearance day

All those great souls already departed. And he was one of the last ones from the batch left behind and then he wrote this song, feeling very intense separation from all those departed souls.

kaha mora swarup rupa kaha sanatan

He is remembering one by one, this one, that one, that one. Of course, he has mentioned just a few, yet all are on his mind.

kaha mora bhatta-juga kaha kaviraj

Where is that Bhatta juga- Gopal Bhatta and Raghunath Bhatta. Yuga means two, Bhatta juga – where are those two Bhattas? Where is Kaviraj Goswami?

eka-kale kotha gela gora nata-raj

– Where has Nataraj, the best of the dancers, Gauranga, gone?

pasane kutibo matha anale pashibo

– By not getting their association, feeling intense separation, I will rather smash my head against a rock or enter a fire.

What good is this life without the acaryas, my heros.

gauranga gunera nidhi kotha gele pabo – They were all embodiment of the qualities of Gauranga. Where have they gone?

se-saba sangira sange je koilo bilas

se-sanga na paiya kande narottama das

Narottam Das simply weeps. He is ending the song like that because he was not getting their association. We know that he is not only writing like this. I simply weep, but he was weeping all the time, missing them all the time. Anyways, we read, we sing, nothing much happens to us. Today is the

disappearance day of Narottam Das Thakur he left us. We were somewhere at that time but now we know who he was and that he left on this day.

It's a day for lamentation. Disappearance days are lamentation days. Also called shok sabha. The family gathers and that gathering is called shok sabha. Why have we gathered? For lamentation on the departure day, disappearance day. The gathering is called shok sabha.

Krsna comes, Krsna also goes. Prabhupada used to say. We not letting him go. In the month of kartik, forty years ago, we were making a humble appeal to Prabhupada. "Please stay on, please stay on." Then Prabhupada responded. "Krsna also comes and He also goes." Of course, we all cried on the day of departure. Some of us were here. Oh, what a day! Yes, so days like this, departure of previous acaryas are occasions for lamentation and it is also an occasion for harsha shok. Two terms are used. There is shok- lamentation and also harsha.

One thing is there, nithya lila pravishtha jay om Narottam Das Thakur ki.. Jaya!

On this day in the month of Kartik some five hundred years ago. This is Krsna paksha, the first fortnight and Panchami- the fifth day, he departed. Well, he went straight back to join Gauranga.

Gauranga! ... Gauranga!

He went back to Gauranga, what is the cause for lamentation? That is also harsha. Lamentation is also there. We are missing him but he went back to the Lord and he is happy. So, we could also be happy. Also, the cause for our happiness or joy is the whole caritra whole life and teaching of these acaryas, what they have left behind.

We could study their life and study their teachings. Anybody interested in self-realization here? Several are. Oh! Big

surprise. Gaur Kishor Das Babaji used to ask, "Are there any person interested in self-realisation?" and as they raised their hands then he used to say: "Do you have five annas?" 'Anna' is like thirty paisa. Hundred paisa – one rupee. So, if you have some thirty paisa then you could purchase Narottam Das Thakur's two poetries. The first one is prarthana and the second is Prem Bhakti Chandrika. You buy these two books with five annas. You read, recite, study and you will realize.

Srila Bhakti Siddanta Sarasvati Thakur also always encouraged his followers to sing and recite the songs of Narottam Das Thakur and Srila Prabhupada ki... Jaya.

Srila Prabhupada gave us in ISKCON, songs mostly of Narottam Das Thakur and Bhakti Vinod Thakur. Most of the songs that we sing globally are songs of,

sri guru charana padma kevala bhakthi sadma

Which song is this? In fact, this is the first song in the Prem Bhakti Chandrika, when you open that book and there are many other songs.

gauranga bolite habe pulaka sarira

These songs of Narottam Das Thakur are compared to the Vedas. It is Vedavani. He sends us Vedas in the form of a song. Then they become a little easier to understand. The Vedas are in Sanskrit and he complied them in Sanskrit or Bengali. Then it becomes accessible and you could sing also. Songs are easier to recite and also especially to remember. It is called Padya. Vedic literature is divided into two parts. One is Gadya, the other is Padya. Its poetry and prose. Most of Vedic literature is in poetry form. In the fifth Canto of Bhagavtam, Sukdev Goswami has some presented some Gadya there. It is even difficult to read the fifth Canto verse. We struggle to read and recite.

So, it's also a cause for joy that such a personality has left

wealth behind. Each acarya has contributed. And Narottam, he was 'uttam'. He was the best among the Naras. Amongst the humans, he was the best. He was also very beautiful to look at with his arms reaching his knees. Like Sukdev Goswami or Uddhav, there are some devotees. He was a very handsome person. So, he was born in Khechari gram on the banks of Padmavati, I think it is a branch of Ganga. It gets named Padmavati there. A few years ago, I had an opportunity. Has anyone been to Kheturi gram? I have also been there and visited the birthplace.

He was a Prince. Krishnananda Datta was the king. His son was the prince of the country.

Kheturi gram is in Bangladesh. On the one bank is Bangladesh and you could swim across and reach India. Other side, there is no immigration, no passport controls. You could just swim across and enter India there.

So, as Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu was visiting Ramkeli one time, visiting Rupa, and Sanatana. Caitanya Mahaprabhu had gone to the Padmavati river and He was looking into the crystal clear water and then He just started shouting. Narottam, Narottam, Narottam. All those that were around him were surprised and were wondering what's going on and why is he saying Narottam.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu saw in advance that Narottam would be appearing there in Kheturi gram. Caitanya Mahaprabhu kind of predicted the appearance of Narottam. The year Caitanya Mahaprabhu departed 1534 in the same year maybe within one year of Caitanya Mahaprabhu's departure to His own abode, Narottam appeared.

That time he started addressing the river Padmavati. He said: "I am going to make some deposits of Krsna Prem. I will leave this treasure with you. You hand it to a great personality, a special personality." Padmavati: "Okay, how will I recognize

the great personality that you are talking about?" Mahaprabhu: "As soon as he enters your water, you will get flooded. Water will overflow. There will be no rain or anything of that sort. As soon as this person enters, your water will begin flooding and overflowing, then you will know, this is the person."

So Narottam was growing and growing. Many things were happening. Then when he was a teenager, Nityananda Prabhu appeared in the dream instructing Narottam Das Thakur to go and take a bath in the waters of river Padmavati and as Narottam did that and her water started flooding and Padmavati immediately realized that this is the person. Then she departed all the wealth, Krsna Prema that was left with her. As Narottam Das Thakur emerged from the celestial waters of Padmavati, he was transformed. From that time, he looked even more effulgent and beautiful, and his consciousness was fully aroused. He had practically become a madman. He started crying, feeling separation from the divine couple, Radha and Krsna. He was gone pagal, your son has become a madman.

He has no attraction for wealth or anything material. The parents were worried that he may just take off. So, he was kind of locked up, with guards around. He was under house arrest. His popularity was spreading all around. Even the governor of that state had heard the glories of Narottam. He was just a young man, teenager, yet glorious. He wanted to see, have an audience with the Governor. So, a meeting was set and Narottam took advantage of this and he left home. He went straight to Vrindavan dhama.

Vrindavan dhama ki.. jaya!

He wanted to meet Rupa and Sanatana. When he was reaching Mathura then he came to know that Rupa was no more and Sanatana was no more. Right there he was thinking of giving up his body. And then he wrote this song. What good is my life? He was thinking of committing suicide. Such is the affection of Narottam Das Thakur for all the acaryas, associated with

Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu and of course they also had so much affection for him. If we could take note of those loving dealings.

In Vrindavan or wherever or Mayapur or Jagannath Puri. Their dealings were priti lakshanam. A lot of priti was being expressed in their dealings, very friendly.

dadati pratigrhnati

guhyam akhyati prcchati

bhunkte bhojayate caiva

sad-vidham priti-laksanam [NOI verse 4]

They would do this all the time. Confidentially and sharing their thought and minds. As he was thinking of committing suicide then Rupa Goswami appeared in the dream and pacified him. Rupa Goswami was no more in Vrindavana, so he appeared in the dream.

So, Narottam Das Thakur enters Vrindavan and Srinivas Acarya somehow he was feeling very happy, and was wondering: "What is the cause of my happiness? What is making me so happy today." But in the middle of the night. I think again Rupa Goswami appeared in the dream and said. The cause of your happiness is that Narottam Das Thakur has arrived in Vrindavan, tomorrow you will have the good fortune to meet this soul. Immediately he got up and ran towards Jiva Goswami to share his dream. Jiva Goswami was delighted to know that Narottam Das Thakur is about to arrive.

And finally, Jiva Goswami met Narottam Das Thakur in Vrindavan. Oh! What a glorious day. Jiva Goswami brought Narottam Das Thakur to the Radha Raman temple and introduced Narottam to Gopal Bhatt Goswami. And then he brought him to Madan Mohan temple. He took him to the Samadhi of Sanatana Goswami and then Narottam couldn't stand it. He was dreaming to meet Sanatana, but he is no more. Then he was brought to Lokanath Goswami and introduced to Lokanath Gosswami. And it

was a wish of Narottam Das Thakur to take initiation from him.

Lokanath lokera jivan

So that song sri guru caran, so his Guru Maharaja-lokanath lokera jivan. My Lokanath Goswami is life and soul of people. That's how he was glorifying his spiritual master. He had not yet become his spiritual master. We know how Narottam was serving. How he was hiding and serving. When Lokanath would perform his morning duties and then Narottam would arrive and would cleaned the place, then Lokanath would wonder what's happening.

He was very menial servant. Then Caitanya Mahaprabhu had to instruct Lokanath in a dream because he didn't want many disciples, well he didn't want any. He was reluctant to accept anyone. Caitanya Mahaprabhu instructed: "You initiate Narottam!" Finally, initiation took place and of course Jiva Goswami was the instructing spiritual master. He was the teacher of Narottam, Shyamananda Pandit and Srinivas Acarya. Jiva Goswami was the teacher/ Siksha Guru and after Rupa and Sanatana had left, he was care taker or protector of our Gaudiya Vaishnavism. He was a big scholar, author, and teacher.

One day the class was going on and it was the wish of Jiva Goswami that his students would go on a tour in Vrindavan and right in the middle of their lesson, Raghava Goswami was passing by. He is another great personality. He had a cave in Govardhan. He was saying: "I am going to Vraj mandal.

Vraj mandal parikrama ki... Jaya!"

Then Jiva Goswami said to his student: "Please go." Or maybe he requested to Raghava Goswami: "Please bring my students along with you."

Then as Raghava Goswami gave a tour of Vraja Mandal to Narottam Das Thakur, which is described in a whole scripture

which we use as guide book in Vraj Mandal parikrama.

And then three of them were dispatched for Bengal. Narottam, Shyamananda and Srinivas in a bullock cart loaded with the scriptures. Jiva Goswami had asked them to go. Srila Prabhupada also asked us to go from Mayapur to Bengal. So, I thought this was very similar in the parampara.

Then those books were stolen on the way and Srivas acarya stayed behind to look for the books and he sent Shyamanand to Orrisa and Narottam back to his hometown and he was preaching all over, making disciples. Even big Kings were becoming his followers.

The first Gaur Purnima festival was organized by Narottam Das Thakur in his hometown Kheturi. That was a grand festival and all the Gaudiya Vaishnavs were invited. Janava was leading the show those days she was personally there. Six sets of deities were installed during that Gaur Purnima festival. Narottam Das Thakur was the sponsor, organizer and caretaker and fundraiser and what not. So many elaborate arrangements were made.

Then on Gaur Purnima day something happened. Narottam Das Thakur took the microphone, and as he started singing. You could very easily say amongst other songs he was singing,

**Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare**

I was going to say, he sang like this. No, no. He certainly did not sing like this. Where the glories of the Lord are chanted, the Lord appears there and that's precisely what happened that day.

All the members of Pancha tattva made their appearance. They had already disappeared, returned to their eternal abode. Yet when Narottam sang on that day, by hearing the calling for the Lord. The Lord could not resist the temptation.

And there was Nityananda and Srivas Acarya and Gadadhar Pandit.". Haribol! He sang like that and attracted the members of the Pancha Tattva.

And then finally. When he wanted to leave this planet. He asked his associates to accompany him to the river Padmavati. So, he said. "Would you please pour water on me? Bath me with the water from the Padmavati river." As they poured the water on him, his body started melting and was transforming in milk, and as they kept pouring more and more water, gradually different parts of his body/ personality was melting and turning into milk. Then finally, there was no more form of Narottam. He had disappeared. Then his followers had collected some of that milk and made a Samadhi. That samadhi became Dugda Samadhi.

Which means milk. There was no body to put into Samadi. So that happened on this day.

Thirobhava titi ki... Jaya