

Past times of Lord Jagannath

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Place: New Jersey, USA

Date: 21 June'2020

Jai Jagannath and Hare Krsna to you all and we welcome all assembled devotees, assembled everywhere or assembled on zoom conference and I expect that there are lot of devotees from New Jersey today, as this is their festival and they have invited me to talk and I am sure that others also are joining the talk Jagannath Rath Yatra Talk. Although Rath Yatra Festival is in two days to come. However I think conveniently devotees in the west, devotees in New Jersey they are celebrating Rath Yatra, of course on this weekend. Yesterday was Rath Yatra and today is a Jagannath Rath Yatra Katha.

Hari Hari

Now such Rath Yatra's are being held all over the planet, there was a time, Rath Yatra mostly was held in Jagannath Puri and there may be few more towns in India, Ahmadabad and few other places, but now Lord Jagannath kindly is making his appearance everywhere, to begin with I was just remembering, Jagannath appeared in San Francisco in 1967 and there is little story I think some of you have I am confident, you have heard this. Our Malati mata ji goes for shopping and there she founds, or she found one doll, looked very strange but was attracting here attention. So as she did here shopping, she also managed to get that doll. I don't think she purchased it , she must have just grabbed it and upon returning to the temple, she presented that doll to Srila Prabhupad and Srila Prabhupad knew this was not a, just another doll but, this is Jagannath(haribol) and Srila Prabhupad said oh, where did you find this.

Oh of course I found this in a shop, then Srila Prabhupad said

there must be two more dolls, go back and try to find the remaining two dolls and so Malati mata ji that is what she did and to her surprise, there were two more dolls and she was very happy to find them and then she rush back and offered those two dolls to Srila Prabhupad and now he was holding, keeping those three dolls in front of him and Srila Prabhupad was offering prayers to those dolls and he was in different mood, well devotional mood. Srila Prabhupad devotion aroused and he was meditating on those dolls, of course to Srila Prabhupad they were not doll they were deities, small deities of Jagannath, Baladev and Subhadra and then Srila Prabhupad revealed the fact, that these dolls are Supreme Personality of Godhead. This is Krsna, and this one is Baladev and this is their sister Subhadra. For first time Srila Prabhupad introduced Jagannath, Baladev, Subhadra to the devotees, they were just now becoming devotees in San Francisco and then Srila Prabhupad had idea of holding Jagannath Rath Yatra. He know Malati mata ji's husband, Shyam Sundar, he knew carpentry. So Srila Prabhupad gave that task, take these three dolls, deities, keep them in front of you and make bigger size deities replica just like they should be looking just like this three deities or dolls.

So that's what Shyam Sunder Prabhu did and once the, those deities were carved, so Shyam Sunder became like Vishwakarma and whole plan of organising first ever Rath Yatra of Iskcon in western world. Western world or Eastern world there was no eastern world that time. Iskcon was only in the western world. So lorry they have ordered, Lorry flat bed truck the sides hand down two sides, back side, the flat platform. So deities were placed there and in Golden Gate park America's or California's most famous park are called Golden Gate park. Rath Yatra was held and this lorry was the Rath. Lorry was the chariot and the big surprise of the , of Srila Prabhupad and all well as all the devotees, there was a large gathering. Srila Prabhupad and his followers had never ever seen such big crowds turning up for Hare Krsna Festival. Here Jagannath Rath

Yatra Festival. 10,000 American ladies and gentlemen participated in Rath Yatra and it was a amazing event, Kirtan throughout and Srila Prabhupad was dancing in the Kirtan, the famous photographs of Srila Prabhupad in San Francisco rath yatra and towards the end there was a big prasadam distribution, Jagannath Prasad distribution and Srila Prabhupad was so much pleased, over whelmed in fact and he said, we should rename this town and from today onwards San Francisco will be known as "New Jagannath Puri" and that is what it has become now known as "New Jagannath Puri". So that's was Iskcon's first ever Jagannath Rath yatra, and then in some more towns in America, Canada, Rath yatra's were held and in London, then here, then there then everywhere and now over 700 cities Jagannath Rath yatra is being held and what do you think in future probably every town, every village, wherever the holy name goes, preaches, Jagannath is gone to follow and Rath yatras would be held everywhere.

Jai Jagannath

So this Jagannath Rath Yatra festival is a favourite festival of the Gaudiya Vaishnav's and that is obviously for the reason that Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu took keen interest in Jagannath and Jagannath Rath Yatra Festival. Of course, Caitanya Mahaprabhu choose to reside in Jagannath Puri for 18 years. He could have stayed in any other holy dham. He could have stayed in Hardwar or Panderpur or here there, but no he choose to spend 18 years in Jagannath Puri. As a result Jagannath Puri has become most famous dham and there were times that two Purroshotam were residing in Jagannath Puri, at the same time lila Purroshotam Jagannath and Prem Purroshotam Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu stayed for 18 years together. This has enhanced the glory of Jagannath Puri Dham. So as Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu had just now returned from South India tour on time, to participate in Snan Yatra, that was first snan yatra that Caitanya Mahaprabhu was attending and his joy know no bounds. Jagannath was not well, he was sick, bed rest,

and no visitors, means no darshan and Caitanya Mahaprabhu was more disappointed, more than he was satisfied the day before during Snan Yarta. So what to do, where to find Jagannath, where to see Jagannath, where to see Jagannath, so kindly there is arrangement in Jagannath Puri, Jagannath give darshan in "Alarnath", So Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu literally he ran to Alarnath, for darshan of Alarnath, who gave darshan of Alarnath, who give darshan as Jagannath and then, he was, there was no point of his returning to Jagannath Puri, why return to Jagannath Puri, Jagannath is not giving darshan, there is no darshan of Jagannath. So Mahaprabhu stayed on in "Alarnath", but then Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya and Nityanand prabhu they have come to Alarnath to inform Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu that so many from Navadvipa have arrived in Jagannath Puri and my dear Lord, they would like to see you because they also couldn't see Jagannath. So they could at least see you, so please return. So Caitanya Mahaprabhu returns to Jagannath Puri and devotees from Navadvipa also from Shantipur, also from Khanda, also from gram, which gram "Kulin gram" very good from Kulin gram. So devotees were of course fully satisfied seeing Caitanya Mahaprabhu and they met, they met and they saw and have darshan of Caitanya Mahaprabhu. They didn't miss Jagannath, because Caitanya Mahaprabhu is Jagannath. So then that day, two weeks past after Snan Yatra and then day before Jagannath Rath Yatra, it is a "Netroutsav day " and also it is Gundicha Marjan day. So Caitanya Mahaprabhu had once again a feast, feast for eyes, it is called netro- utsav, feast for eyes, feast for tongue that everyone knows,

Maha prasade gonvinde...

But eyes also enjoys the feast, seeing, taking darshan of Jagannath. So Mahaprabhu who was missing Jagannath so much , ya Caitanya Mahaprabhu for 18 years, he kept missing Jagannath, feeling separation from Jagannath and then missing and then meeting, miss and meet, he would miss Jagannath, then they would, he would go for darshan and meet, had darshan of

Jagnath and Jagnath also was missing, who else Jagnath missing, ya he was missing Caitanya Mahaprabhu, but Caitanya Mahaprabhu is not only, well he is "Sri Krsna Caitanya, Radha Krsna nahi anya"

Caitanya Mahaprabhu is Radha and Krsna combined, so who is Jagnath missing, who is he missing Radha Rani. He is missing Radha Rani, Jagnath is missing Radha Rani and Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu is missing Sri Krsna, ya that is why technically in technical terms, it is said, "Radhe Virah Vidur Jagnath", Radha Virah Vidur Jagnath" and "Krsna virah vidur Caitanya" and of course Jagnath is Krsna and Caitanya Mahaprabhu is also Krsna, but Caitanya Mahaprabhu is Radha and Krsna, so one is missing Krsna, one is missing Radha and in Jagnath Puri, they find each other. So Jagnath Puri is the place, this is the place, most appropriate Dham for Caitanya Mahaprabhu to reside in Jagnath Puri and find missing Krsna, in the form of Jagnath.

So during Rath yatra festival time, ok first of all we should briefly mention that Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu is having darshan of Jagnath, Krsna, Caitanya Mahaprabhu is taking darshan means who is taking darshan of Krsna, Krsna is Jagnath, Radha Rani is taking darshan of Krsna, Krsna is Jagnath and Jagnath is Krsna, he is taking darshan, he is meeting Radha Rani. So that happen say on "Netro- utsav" day and on the same day Caitanya Mahaprabhu does the Gundicha Marjan, cleansing of Gundicha temple in as a devotee as of course. Here Radha Rani is best of all the devotees, she is leader of the devotees, so she is leading this cleansing Gundicha Temple, cleansing Gundicha temple service and with this so much devotion Caitanya Mahaprabhu was sweeping and moping and, the temple with the tears, he was using his tears as a water for cleansing, there was also, water was available but then another source, natural source of water was his tears coming down. Not äshru bindu but ashru dhara" you know that when Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu would shed tears not just

drops would lie down the cheeks but like a hose pipe, when you are watering the plants in the garden, so like that, they would reach like a 100 metres and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu is doing Kirtan and then he is making round and what would happen, all those devotees around him would get drainage, soaking wet in the tears or there is abhishek, all the devotees abhishek happening , Snan yatra would take place as Caitanya Mahaprabhu would chant and dance and go round and round like that Maharaj prabhu makes round and round, like Caitanya Mahaprabhu making rounds and then we haven't seen the tears yet at least we can see the rounds. So this Gundicha Marjan is quite a festival, Gundicha Marjan in Vrindavan and next day Krsna, Jagannath, Baldev, Subhadra they are gone to be arriving in Gundicha temple, and they are gone to stay there for about week, nine days.

This is like Jagannath is coming, Jagannath is coming, my Jagannath is coming like for us during Srila Prabhupad days, there is to be Prabhupad is coming, Prabhupad is coming. Then we make ready Hare Krsna Land and Prabhupad quarter's and we do thoroughly Maha clean up and this and that, everyone is thinking, on everyone's mind Prabhupad is coming, Prabhupad is coming. So certainly for Jagannath is coming. Jagannath is gone to be in Gundicha Mandir tomorrow. Is everything ready? So main thing to be done is cleansing before, all year long temple is not used. Visitors come take darshan of tourists coming, but Jagannath is not there, Krsna is not there, after one year he is arriving, so there is a great excitement getting Gundicha temple ready to welcome, Grand reception of Jagannath next day. So then the next day arrives, the day of rath yatra and then the carts are ready. Jagannath, Baladev and Subhadra carts, and you know they, Jagannath Puri they make cart every year new cart, they don't use Maha Cart, Maha meant the used before and use it again and again and again, as we do in Iskcon. Even one temple's cart goes to another and to another temple, another temple, maha, maha, maha rath, In Jagannath Puri, rath the chariot is only used only one time,

then it is abandoned, next year, new cart, the new cart, new canopy, new, new, everything new and Jagannath is also kind of new, after snan yatra, he recuperates, he regains his health and he is looking fresh and healthy, they also paint his body, his form and he becomes known as "Nav-yovna".

In fact on "Netro-utsav" day, day before rath yatra, when devotees take darshan, they take darshan of Nav-yovna Jagannath. So Jagannath is kind of new Jagannath and of course every 12 years there is "Nav Kalevra", Nav is new and Kalevra is form, New deity, that also we are not doing in Iskcon, we have some deities there, they are 40 years old, of course they are new, Lord is ever new, Lord never becomes old, that understanding is also there. In Jagannath Puri there is different tradition and every 12 years there is a new deity and there is a whole ritual they follow to find the right tree and whole thing and transporting of that tree to Jagannath Puri and then lots of things, lots of whole science and process and mantra's and tantra involved in identifying the right tree and in carving deities from that wood. So on the day of rath yatra, there is a "Pahandi festival". A Pahandi, that is bringing Lord from his signhasan, rattan vedi, the alter in the temple to the chariot and that is a festival in itself. I have witnessed that festival several times and few years ago there was "Nav Kalevra" and I was in Jagannath Puri that day and not only in Jagannath Puri but I along with some other devotees. I don't know who else, Dharamraj, you were there.

We managed to get inside the temple and when the Panda's were, during that "Pahandi Festival, the rope's around his waist and lift again and place him on some kind of cushion and lift again and so they have brought Jagannath from the alter through the Darshan man dap and Jagannath was about to come outside through the front entrance and I was appropriately situated or stationed, when they are bringing Jagannath and as Jagannath looked outside, I was the first one to look at Jagannath, I felt like that ah! Jagannath looked at me, Jagannath looked at

me. I was very strategically located Lord's glance fell upon me and as Panda's have brought him few steps forward , Jagnath outside the entrance, the some devotees manage to bring me forward and Panda's also, well I think, he was helping out and I was pushed near Jagnath and I, they managed to, so much struggle, push and pull, so finally I touched my head to Jagnath's Nav-Kalevra, the new form. so some memory to relish forever. So then finally as Jagnath, Baladev Subhadra they are seated on their respective chariots. This is 500 years ago Caitanya Mahaprabhu use to come and offering his dandavat pranams to all the three deities, as he would come in front of Jagnath falling flat in front of Jagnath falling flat in front of Jagnath then he would stand with folded hands and pray offer prayers and praise to Jagnath and one of the prayer/praise is

**Jayati jayati devo Devaki nandano sau
Jayati jayati ko vrsni vamsa pradipah
Jayati jayati megha syamalah komalango
Jayati jayati prthvi bhara naso mukundah
(CC Madhya lila 13.78)**

So jai ho, jai ho , Jai Jagnath, Jai Jagnath, Jai Jagnath. You are vrsni vamsai, and then syamalah komalango, your form is syamalah, bluish black form and Komal, very soft to touch and you are Devaki Nandan, You are son of Devaki and Prithvi bhara naso mukundah, thank you lord Jagnath for giving relief to Prithavi Bharo, mother earth was burdened by the sin of the sinners, but you appeared and you relieved the earth burden, oh Mukundah, oh giver of the liberation and then the rath yatra would/procession would begin and Caitanya Mahaprabhu, so the first the king has to be there and he use to be there. King Pratap Rudra, cleaning of Gundicha Marjan has happened but now, In front of Jagnath chariot, the street cleaning. "Swach Bharat". So King was personally sweeping the streets specially that street, that road, grand trunk road ya rath yatra marg, with his own hand and big kind big authority.

Everyone is at his disposal, he could order, hey sweepers come, thousands of sweepers could line up but he would prefer to sweep himself. So Mahaprabhu had taken note of this the humility, this is "trnad api sunicena, taror api sahisnuna" this trnad api sunicena, and as soon as soon as there is humility then what happens. Lord is pleased, if that person could do his devotional service with no interruption and that candidate deserves association and darshan of the Lord.

Vinyane yati patrata

From humility comes eligibility, you become eligible to serve Krsna or eventually seen Krsna, if there is humility among other things, humility has to be there. So when Caitanya Mahaprabhu noted that humbleness, humility of Raja Pratap Rudra, immediately Caitanya Mahaprabhu, why not I must see, I must meet this person. So anyway this is a long story, we have no time. So Caitanya Mahaprabhu was not willing to meet this king thinking he is a kind, he is attached to power.

Kissa kursi ka

And other things, So but when he saw that he is very humble king, his humility, Mahaprabhu changed his mind. I would like to see him and during that Rath Yatra then Lord's, Lord just desired when they saw he has to do and then everything else is done by other shakti's other energies, lila Shakti, this Shakti that Shakti. So that day, first of all when there was a, so as Rath yatra started, pulling the chariot and there was four kirtan parties in front of Jagannath chariot, two parties on either side of Jagannath chariot and one party behind the chariot, so that's total seven parties and Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu was dancing simultaneously in all those seven kirtan parties.

Hari Hari

This is nothing for him, when there is a dance with, Rasa dance with three crore gopies, then Krsna become three crore

Krsna's here he is becoming only seven Krsna's. So big deal as they say and then Lord arranged, I think it was only, King Pratap Rudra was able to realise what was happening, otherwise each party was thinking that oh he is dancing only with us. Hey, our party ki jai, our party is special party, just see he is dancing with our party, or other party Murdabad or our party Jindabad, but that was not the case, Caitanya Mahaprabhu was dancing in all seven parties simultaneously and by Lord's arrangement, Caitanya Mahaprabhu is always in full control, he arranged only King Pratap Rudra to visualise or realise or have a vision, darshan of Caitanya Mahaprabhu dancing in all the parties at the same time. No one else was understanding, not realising but by Caitanya Mahaprabhu's special benediction upon this very humble soul. King Pratap Rudra, he had the special darshan and then

Hari hari

The procession, they are all heading towards Gundicha temple and Gundicha is Vrindavan, Jagannath Puri temple is Dwarika and those who are pulling the chariot, bringing Jagannath, Baladev, Subhadra they are all devotees from Vrindavan headed by Radha Rani. Radha Rani is in the fore front or in the centre and so during the procession there is a whole lila, dealings, reciprocation going on between Krsna in the chariot and Radha Rani in the front of the chariot and that Radha Rani is Caitanya Mahaprabhu and that Krsna is Jagannath. So pulling the chariot, they are six times a day, so it's time for honouring prasadam. Today you ate only one time and you are not Jagannath, so it's okay and only Jagannath could manage eating six times, we will die if we ate six times and what to speak of amount of Bhoga that he relishes. So during Uppal bhoaga Caitanya Mahaprabhu goes into the garden adjoining garden called Jagannath Vallabh garden and while he was resting, it was recommended by Sarvabhauma Bhattacharya and others. This is the time King, put on you vaishnav clothes so he was given dhoti and Kurta and then King goes forward, obscines and he

begins massaging transcendental form, Sac-Cid-Ananda vighraha of Caitanya Mahaprabhu and while massaging, he is chanting, he is reciting Gopi Geet.

jayati te dhikam janmana vrajah

Like that, so reciting and reciting , he comes to the line/ stanza

**tava kathamrtam tapta jivnam
kavibhir iditam kalmasapaham
sravana mangalam Srimad atatam
bhuvigrnanti ye bhuri da janah
(gopi geet satanza 9)**

When Caitanya Mahaprabhu heard this “bhuri da janah” which gopies and Radha Rani also had uttered or recited that prayer and that prayer, “bhuri da janah” the Caitanya Mahaprabhu started, you are that bhuri da janah, bhuri da means charitable, magnanimous because you are sharing this gopi geet with me, you are so kind to me, so because you had shared this gift, I am very grateful to you and Lord is still lying down, his eyes are closed, he has no clue who this person, who is massaging and reciting Gopi Geet, but Mahaprabhu is talking, Bhuri da, you are that bhuri da and you did so much for me, what could I, I must do something in return for you but what could I do, I am just tri-dandi not tri dandi, ek dandi, bhikshuk, sannyasi. I have nothing, I am empty pocket, I have no pocket, not even pocket. So saying, so Mahaprabhu was now getting up, and he says okay, I mean I have nothing to really offer to you in return but if you don't mind, may you accept my embrace and Mahaprabhu hold King Pratap Rudra in his long arms and hold him tight and then, so did then King Pratap Rudra, so they were embracing each other and that was the perfection of king Pratap Rudra and that is also perfect timing for us to stop our Katha. So then the chariot proceeds and soon they arrive at Gundicha temple, which is Vrindavan dham ki Jai..

On the way Caitanya Mahaprabhu, in the mood of Radha Rani, he keep saying, “mor maan Vrindavan, Mor maan Vrindavan, my mind is Vrindavan, my mind is Vrindavan. Oh Lord please reside in Vrindavan. My mind is Vrindavan, stay in my mind, on my mind in my heart and then Lord down from the chariot and another Pahandi Mahaotsav, bringing deities from chariot to the alter in Gundicha temple. So Pahandi festival is two times, before the chariot and after the chariot yatra gets over and now Caitanya is gone to spent, Jagannath is gone to spent/Jagannath is gone to spending time with Baladev and Subhadra at Gundicha temple and they are very happy feeling at home. When Jagannath Krsna is in Vrindavan, he is at home. Your home is where your heart is, he says your home is where your heart is. So Krsna’s heart is in Vrindavan. So that is his home and that is perfect location, situation.

Jagannath Baladev Subhadra ki Jai.....

Jagannath Rath Yatra Mahaotsav ki jai

Jagannath Puri Dham ki Jai.....

Iskcon New Jersey ki Jai...

Iskcon New Jersey Bhakta Vrind Ki jai....

Nitai Gaur premanande Hari hari bol

Caitanya Mahaprabhu in Jagannath ratha yatra

Caitanya Mahaprabhu in Jagannath ratha yatra

0308 2019

Los Angeles

Occasion: Day before ratha yatra

You’ll are so serious. Relax! What is today? Don’t say it’s

Saturday! It is the day before

Jagannath ratha yatra. Jagannath ratha yatra mahotsav ki..jai!. Tomorrow is ratha yatra here. In Jagannath Puri, the day before ratha yatra there is darsana of Jagannath. Here we are getting darsana tomorrow. We have been praying and crying

“Jagannath svami nayana-patha-gami bhavatu me”

You are singing and praying: “Oh Jagannath! nayana patha- gami bhavatu me”.

Bhavatu – You become. Patha – path and nayana are eyes. Oh! Lord you become visible on the path of my eyes. I am looking here; this is the path of my eyes. Now this is the path, nayan pathi gami wherever my eyes go, eyesight goes to see, see something, oh Lord you be there, wherever I look.

yato yato yami tato Narsimha

Wherever I go O Lord Narsimha, you be there. That’s the idea. So, we have been praying. So here, we have to wait for another day. Could we manage? Could we survive another day? I am sure the Lord is also anxious to see the devotees. So, the day before ratha yatra in Jagannath Puri the Lord gives darsana. That day also has a name.

That day is also a festival, Netruitsava! Festival for the eyes or feast for the eyes. Netruitsava. The devotees have been fasting for a long time now. For two weeks they have been fasting

and they are very very eager to have darsana again of Jagannath and then Jagannath gives darsana on this day. Then that day becomes from fasting to feasting. Feast for eyes. And devotees see the Lord on that day to their hearts content.

I am remembering one such day. I was in Jagannath Puri for the first time ever. That was in 1977. I had never ever seen Jagannath. You can imagine how anxious I was to see Jagannath and it wasn’t just myself. We had a BBT travelling sankirtana

party. Rameshwara Prabhu reminds me of the BBT traveling party. We had gone to Jagannath Puri traveling and distributing Srila Prabhupada's books. We arrived the day before ratha yatra and we wanted to go in for darsana of Jagannath.

"Jay! Jagannath". We were shouting as we entered. I was kind of a brand-new sannyasi. We had some brahmacaris with me and we entered simhadwara. Have you heard that term? Lion Gate. There are different gates, four gates. So, this is the eastern gate and we had a few more gates to go through before we could get darsana. As we were trying to enter the next gate, we were stopped by the pandas. They stretched their arms out: "You can't go!." I said: "What! We can't go for darsana?" They had found out that this was an ISKCON team. And those days they didn't like ISKCON, even these days they don't like so much. I was the leader there, so I was asking: "Why can't I go?"

"You are born Christian and these ISKCON people have converted you. Now you have become Hindu. ISKCON converted you. "

I don't know if they had a dream or something. They found out. The tug of war continued. And we were kind of defeated. They were well-built pandas. We were tiny austere sannyasis and brahmacaris. So finally, they picked us up. Literally, they picked us up and placed us outside simha dwara. So, when we were there, looking around, one prabhu was missing. He was Riksharaj. If you know Riksharaj. He played sitar also. So, he also wanted to join our team. He was born Christian and he wanted darsana. He looked different. He was of a different complexion. Like Shesha Prabhu. So, it was easy for him to sneak in. While we were battling, he took a detour and he entered. Most of the pandas were battling with us therefore there was no one to guard the other temple gates. So, as we were looking around for Riksharaj, there he comes from inside the temple and he says:

"Maharaja, caran tulsi for you!" He managed to even get tulsi.

“Pujari gave tulsi for you.” Hari Hari! So, we took darsana of Riksharaj. Because he had taken darsana of Jagannath and we touched him. We embraced him because he had taken in Jagannath.

Jay! Jagannath! I thought that this was a lila of Jagannath. So that was my first encounter with Jagannath Puri and Jagannath on ratha yatra day. Then we had to wait for another day, like here we have to wait for another day. So, we must have the right mood for ratha yatra day.

I have been asked to read from Caitanya Caritamrita. Today is the climax and what we are asked to read is the pastime on the actual ratha yatra day.

Jaganath ratha yatra mahotsava ki..Jay!

Just to set the scene before we read Caitanya Caritamrita Madhya 14.

So, on ratha yatra day, In Jagannath Puri, Jagannath walks out of His residence, His temple. Their walking out pastime is called Pandu Vijay. Remember, we kind of see the pandas. They tie ropes around the waist of Jagannath. With 10, 20 or 50 of them on one side and they lift Him and place Him forward, lift Him and place Him forward. They do not just lift Him and place Him on the chariot. No, that doesn't happen. They let the Lord walk. The idea is that Lord is walking. He is walking and climbing and getting on the chariot. It is a very beautiful scene. Then on ratha yatra day in 1977, and many more occasions we were there to witness. There is a big crowd and what do you end up seeing? I was strategically placed at the right location at the right time. A few years ago, when there was navakalevara. Nava – new. Kalevara- body or form. The Lord's daru brahma. Daru is wood. The wood He is made up of is Brahma, Daru Brahma. He gets a new form, new body every twelve years. So that happened a few years ago and I was in the courtyard. I managed to enter the courtyard. I was there and I think as soon as the Lord was stepping out of the temple, His

glance fell upon me and I saw Jagannath. The meeting of eyes. I hope it was a meeting of hearts also. I want to think like that. A nice darsana, Jagannath Swami ki... Jay!! So that's Pandu Vijay. The Lord walks out of the temple, onto the street and onto the chariot then He takes His seat onto the throne.

Sri Krsna Caitanyaa Mahaprabhu ki...Jay!! He used to be there. Not that He is not there now. During his prakat lila, the Lord attended ratha yatra. Eighteen times Lord Caitanya attended ratha yatra mahotsava and as the Lord would take His seat on the chariot, Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu would arrive, offering His full dandavats to Jagannath Swami. Then He would stand in front of the deity and He would offer prayers to Jagannath.

**jayati jayati devo devaki-nandano 'sau
jayati jayati ko vrsni-vamSa-pradipah
jayati jayati megha-Syamalah komalango
jayati jayati prthvi-bhara-naSo mukundah**

(CC. Madhya 13.78)

This is one of the many prayers the Lord will offer which are listed in Caitanya Caritamrita. So, this is very special. All glories to Jagannath! All glories!

jayati jayati devo – You are Dev. Jagannath Dev. devaki-nandano 'sau – You are none other than Devaki Nandana.
vrsni-vamSa-pradipah – You are Krsna, appeared in Vrsni dynasty. You are deepa, you are lamp.

All glories to You, Jagannath!

jayati jayati – All glories to Jagannath

megha-Syamalah komalango- What kind of Jagannath are you? Megha shyamala. You are Shyamaal, Your complexion is of the monsoon clouds. And to touch You – You are very soft.

prthvi-bhara-naSo mukundah- You destroyed the extra burden of the earth and hence You are Mukundah – Liberator. You

liberated Prithvi.

Then different devotees arrived from everywhere to Jagannath Puri. From west Bengal from east Bengal, from Kuling-gram, from Shantipur. Right? All of you have come from somewhere. Next door, next block, from Alachua and so on. So, in Caitanya Mahaprabhu's days, they would get divided into several kirtana parties. Kirtana mandalis- kirtana parties "And you will be leading in this group, And you Vishvambar, you are leading this group, and you will dance in that group and Vaisheshika prabhu will be the lead dancer in this group and Rameshwar Prabhu you will dance in another group." The kirtana was out of this world. When these parties were arriving, entering Jagannath Puri, King Prataprudra was reminded. He had climbed up on the rooftop of his palace and Sarvabhaum Bhattacharya was with him and Gopinath Acarya, I think, was also there. All these kirtana parties were new to King Prataprudra.

"Oh, who is that there, with the beard? Oh! Advaitacarya!"

"And that with the blue dhothi, who is that one? Oh, that is Nityananda."

King Prataprudra said: "You know, I have heard many kirtans, so many times in the past. Same mantra, same mridanga and kartals. This kirtana is different. What is this kirtana?"

And he was told this is prem nama. This kirtana is Prem nama. Its offence-less chanting. It is pure chanting. That is how King Prataprudra was introduced to this kirtana. So kirtans are on. Seven parties are chanting and dancing and Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu had seen Prataprudra.

Today what we are supposed to be reading is about Prataprudra. He is the hero of today's theme or topic. We are just setting the scene. Hari Hari!

So, Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu had seen King Prataprudra with a broom in his hand and sweeping the street in front of Jagannath's cart. And that had amazed Sri Krsna Caitanya

Mahaprabhu and He was pleased also, highly pleased and He made up His mind. There is nothing wrong with meeting King Prataprudra.

Caitanya Mahaprabhu did not want to meet at first. It went on for several months or years that Mahaprabhu was not going to meet the King.

“No no no no! King Prataprudra and I have to meet. I have made up my mind. I said no! Forget it. And if you appeal to Me one more time, I will leave the town. I will go away.” So, the Lord had warned all those. Sarvabhaum and others. But today He saw King Prataprudra with broom in hand and He changed His mind towards King Prataprudra, and later on, He would be seeing him, touching him and embracing him. But before that, the topic for us is the meeting which is going to take place in Jagannath Vallabha garden on the way to Gundica temple.

So, before that happens Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu started giving darsana to King Prataprudra. Exclusively to King Prataprudra. What was that darsana? When King Prataprudra was looking around, he saw Caitanya Mahaprabhu in all the kirtana mandalis.

Yet, the kirtanias in the different parties were thinking:

“He is only with us. We must be very special. He is in our party. He is in our party!” That was not the case. Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu was dancing in all the parties. Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu bestowed very special mercy upon King Prataprudra and he was able to see Caitanya Mahaprabhu dancing in ALL the parties. Ok then, down the road as kirtana is happening, Caitanya Mahaprabhu is chanting and dancing in front of Jagannath also. Jagannath is Krsna and Caitanya Mahaprabhu is there as Radha Rani. Radha rani in Him, is in action. Krsna is also in Him. They are two in one, right? Krsna takes back seat, and Radha Rani is in the forefront and interfacing with Jagannath as,

radha-bhava-dyuti-suvalitam naumi krsna-svarupam [CC adi 1.5]

The Svarupa of Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu is radha-bhava-dyuti-suvalitam radha-bhava- Radhas emotions Dyuti – the complexion like Radha Rani also. So, that Sri Krsna Caitanya Radha Krsna nahi anya. Now He is Radha rani and They are having pastimes during ratha yatra. Hari Hari! And you know ratha yatra festival is a festival of Vraja vasis. Vrndavan vasis. Those that are pulling the chariot, they are residents of Vrndavan, or they are in the mood of Vrajavasis. They are meeting after a very long time.

Vraja vasis had met Dwarkavasis in Kuruksetra and Vrajavasis had gone to meet and see Krsna in Kuruksetra. He had come from Dwarka and they had a plan. “This time as we see Him. We will bring Him back to Vrndavan. We will drag Him back to Vrndavan! He may be seated on the chariot. We will pull the chariot. We will get rid of the horses. You, horses, get out! We will become the horses! We will pull the chariot and bring the Lord back to Vrindavana. “

So Jagannath ratha yatra, this is what is happening. Jagannath Puri temple is like Dwarka or even Kuruksetra and Gundica temple is Vrndavan. All those that is pulling the chariot are residents of Vrndavan. And they are bringing Krsna back to Vrndavan.

Lord Caitanya is talking, praying. “mora mana Vrndavan. My mind is Vrndavan. Oh Jagannath! Please, make your residence in my mind. You were away from my mind or my heart. I invite you back into your home, my minds home, into my heart.” mora mana Vrndavan.

So Caitanya Mahaprabhu was chanting and dancing and dancing and dancing. It was very special. There is a description of the dance as uddanda nrtya [CC Madhya 13.82]

The Lord will fly high into the sky, and then He will crash, fall. And Nityananda prabhu is keeping watch. Before the crash

He must be there to catch or to support. Caitanya Mahaprabhu and Nityananda moving like lightning. Caitanya Mahaprabhu sometimes goes moving round and round. The tears from his eyes, not just drops, but what? Shower! All around will get drenched or wet with the showers of Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu. So then, time for uphala bhoga. On the way to Gundica, and it is time for the Lords offering. He is a big eater, Jagannath. The pujari doesn't give a little plate. Tons of food is offered. This we have seen. So, time for uphala bhoga of Lord Jagannath. Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu has entered the garden. He is lying down with his eyes closed. You remember? The Lord had made up His mind to do what? To see, give darsana. Meet King Prataprudra.

That's all that the Lord had to do. Just desire! Then He has His Shakti's. Lila shaktis, jnana shaktis, all the shaktis, they get into desire. We also call her yoga maya. So, preparations were made for that meeting to take place. Caitanya Mahaprabhu was lying down and everyone told King Prataprudra. "This is the time. This is the time. Go, go go!"

So, he had taken out his crown and his sword. He put on vaisnava robes and he approached Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu.

**sarvabhauma-upadeSe chadi' raja-veSa
ekala vaisnava-veSe karila praveSa**

[CC Madhya 14.5]

chadi raja-veSa. He gave up raja vesa – Kings royal dress. With vaisnava vesa he does pravesa. With vaisnava attire, he enters the garden.

**saba-bhaktera ajna nila yoda-hata hana
prabhu-pada dhari' pade sahasa kariya**

Maharaja Prataprudra was so humble that with folded hands he first took permission from all the devotees. Then, with great

courage, he fell down and touched the lotus feet of the Lord.

[CC Madhya 14.6]

**ankhi mudī' prabhu preme bhumite Sayana
nrpati naipunye kare pada-samvahana**

As Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu lay on the raised platform with His eyes closed in ecstatic love and emotion, the King very expertly began to massage His legs.

[CC Madhya 14.7]

**rasa-lilāra śloka paḍī' kareṇa stavāna
"Jayati te 'dhikam" adhyaya kareṇa paḥana**

The King began to recite verses about the rasa-līla from Srimad-Bhagavatam. He recited the chapter beginning with the words "Jayati te 'dhikam."

[CC Madhya 14.8]

So, this is Gopi gita King Prataprudra starts recitation of Gopi gita This is the gita for the occasion. Corresponding the emotion of Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu this is a befitting song or gita. Gopi gita. To nourish, to arouse and nourish His feelings, emotions of Radha bhava, Gopi bhava, the Gopis have expressed their bhava, their emotion, in that gita and through ratha yatra Caitanya Mahaprabhu is in that mood. So, King Prataprudra is reciting that Gopi gita.

**Sunite Sunite prabhura santosa apara
'bala, bala' bali' prabhu bale bara bara**

[CC Madhya 14.9]

When Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu heard these verses, he was pleased beyond limits and he said again and again "Go on reciting, go on reciting".

"tava kathamrtam" śloka raja ye paḍila

u?hi' premaveSe prabhu alingana kaila

As soon as the King recited the verse beginning with the words "tava kathamrtam," the Lord arose in ecstatic love and embraced him.

[CC Madhya 14.10]

Hari Hari! Are you seeing? Watch the scene. Audio has to become video.

Upon hearing the verses recited by the King, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu said, "You have given Me invaluable gems, but I have nothing to give you in return. Therefore, I am simply embracing you."

– CC Madhya 14.11

Simply embracing! Not enough? The Lord is feeling grateful for what this reciter of Gopi gita has done. He doesn't even have a clue, of who this person is. No idea. Mahaprabhu had His eyes closed. And this person had come and started massaging and reciting Gopi gita. And the Lord is satisfied and feeling grateful. Just taking and taking is not a good policy, you also

have to give in return. Then Mahaprabhu is thinking,

"I should also give something in return to this person who is singing." Then Mahaprabhu started thinking "I am just a bikshuka, ek dandi bikshuka. I have nothing to give in return. I have empty pockets; I don't even have pockets. The kind of garments I wear, I don't even have pockets. What could I give?" So, thinking like this, he started getting up with his arms stretched. He said: "You know, I have nothing to give. But if you don't mind, could you accept my embrace? If you don't mind. Is it ok?" Saying so, the Lord gave a deep embrace to King Prataprudra. King Prataprudra Ki...Jay!! Is that enough? If the Lord was to embrace you, would you like it? Would you say that's all? For all that I have done for you, only

embrace?

Sri Rama had also offered his embrace to Hanuman when Hanuman had just returned from Lanka with good news of Sita. When Rama heard that news, Rama was so pleased and He wanted to reward Hanuman for what Hanuman had done. Then Rama was thinking "I am just a vanvasi. I am just a forest dweller. If I was in Ayodhya I could have given him a big gift, big reward. Yet, this is not the case. I am in the forest." So, then the Lord asked: "Could I embrace you?" saying so, the Lord embraced Hanuman. "Well done! Well done Hanuman!" Have u seen that photograph of Rama embracing Hanuman? No! How come? You missed it! Quite a famous photograph, taken with a selfie! [Laughs]

**eta bali' sei Sloka pade bara bara
dui-janara ange kampa, netre jala-dhara**

After saying this, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu began to recite the same verse again and again. Both the King and Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu were trembling, and tears were flowing from their eyes.

CC Madhya 14.12

Then they were reciting which verse again and again?

**tava kathamrtam tapta-jivanam
kavibhir iditam kalmasapaham
Sravana-mangalam Srimad-atatam
bhuvigrnanti ye bhurida janah**

My Lord, the nectar of Your words and the descriptions of Your activities are the life and soul of those who are always aggrieved in this material world. These narrations are transmitted by exalted personalities, and they eradicate all sinful reactions. Whoever hears these narrations attains all good fortune. These narrations are broadcast all over the world and are filled with spiritual power. Those who spread the message of Godhead are certainly the most munificent welfare workers.

[CC Madhya 14.13]

**'bhurida' 'bhurida' bali' kare alingana
inho nahi jane, – ihon haya kon jana**

After reciting this verse, Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu immediately embraced the King and cried, "You are the most munificent! You are the most munificent!" At this point Sri Caitanyaa Mahaprabhu did not know who the King was.

[CC Madhya 14.14]

**purva-seva dekhi' tanre krpa upajila
anusandhana vina krpa-prasada karila**

Shri Caitanyaa Mahaprabhu's mercy was aroused because of the King's previous service therefore, without even asking who he was, the Lord immediately bestowed his mercy upon him.

[CC Madhya 14.15]

I think we will stop here.
Jagannath swami Ki.. Jay!
Caitanya Caritamrita Ki .. Jay!