

# PUNE ANNUAL KATHA DAY 4: My Prabhupada

All glories to the assembled devotees.

nama om vishnu-padaya krishna-preshthaya bhu-tale  
srimate bhaktivedanta-svamin iti namine  
namas te sarasvate deve gaura-vani-pracarine  
nirvisesha-sunyavadi-pascatya-desat-tarine

Hare Krsna, Hare Krsna, Krsna Krsna, Hare Hare/ Hare Rama,  
Hare Rama, Rama Rama, Hare Hare

The prayers Narottama Das Thakur are one of the most important prayers of Gaudiya parampara. This prayer is a prayer at the lotus feet of Panca Tattva.

sri -krsna-caitanya prabhu doua koro more  
toma bina ke doyalu jagat-samsare  
patita-pavana-hetu tava avatara  
mo sama patita prabhu na paibe ara

I welcome you all again and again to this **Bhagavat Katha Mahotsava** or **Srila Prabhupada Katha Mahotsava**. This is the 4th day today of the glorification of **Srila Prabhupada**. Glorification is a simple word used to describe **Srila Prabhupada**. He is Mahabhagvat. He is full of good qualities – his birth, his youth, how he met his Guru Maharaja and his life time of preparation and then going to New York. I always say that he was a “Devaduta on the Jaladuta”. When he reached there, he had no idea whether to turn to the right or the left.

This was the second part. How he started preaching from the store front and how the American boys and girls took vows to follow the 4 regulative principles. **ISKCON** was established. The preaching spread to London. How Albert Ford also became a

follower of Prabhupada and was duly initiated as **Ambarish Dasa**. All this we heard till yesterday and then Srila Prabhupada slowly went to other continents and finally he went all over the world.

The president of **India Pranab Mukherjee** writes in his glorification of the Golden Jubilee Anniversary that “**ISKCON** is a great society. There is no society like this. I respect the enthusiasm of the devotees of **ISKCON**. I heard there are more than 600 temples and 110 Govindas. “ Actually there are more. I was in Mauritius and in in that small island there are 115 Govindas. “There is the midday meals where prasada is distributed to 12 lakh people. The Gita is available in more than 70 languages, including Chinese. **ISKCON** has spread the knowledge of Lord Krsna all over the world. I wish them all best wishes for their preaching activities. And I wish in the coming years they keep spreading the holy name all over the world.”

We will also hear Prabhupada’s disciples speaking about **Srila Prabhupada**.

Lots of books are written on Prabhupada. I have written a book “My Prabhupada”. You can read it. So today we will discuss My Prabhupada.

Prabhupada captures us. We are sold out to his mission without any other interest in life. We, his disciples, don’t have any other mission. **Prabhupada’s mission** is only our goal of life.

**guru mukha padma vakya**

Prabhupada was not well. He was in Bombay. One devotee would sit near him on the floor and do kirtana. I was also in the kirtana schedule. Prabhupada felt kirtana is the only medicine. He never wanted to be taken to the hospital.

Towards the end of the kirtana on one particular day, I asked, “**Srila Prabhupada** is there anything we haven’t done yet which

could do to cure you. Please tell us.” Prabhupada said: “Just chanting of Hare Krsna.” He paused for a few minutes and then said – are na koriho mane asa.

It can be translated as – don’t desire anything else. The words that are uttered from the lotus mouth of Srila Prabhupada are embedded in our hearts and we do not desire anything other than what he says.

caksu-dana dila yei, janme janme prabhu sei: the guru gives spiritual insight to the disciple.

We are cent percent yours, **Prabhupada** and he is also cent percent ours. The relationship he has with his disciples is very intimate that every disciple feels he is **My Prabhupada**.

So everybody can say, **HH. Radhanatha Swami Maharaja** can say he is **My Prabhupada**. **HH. Jayapataka Swami Maharaja** can say he is **My Prabhupada**, **Mukunda Dutta Prabhu** can say he is My Prabhupada, but first of all he is My Prabhupada. He was always very busy with so many disciples, but he was concerned about me. He dealt perfectly with the soul.

**brahmada bhramite kona bhagyavan jiva**  
**guru-krsna-prasade paya bhakti-lata-bija**

According to their karma, all living entities are wandering throughout the entire universe. Some of them are being elevated to the upper planetary systems, and some are going down into the lower planetary systems. Out of many millions of wandering living entities, one who is very fortunate gets an opportunity to associate with a bona fide spiritual master by the grace of Krsna. By the mercy of both Krsna and the spiritual master, such a person receives the seed of the creeper of devotional service.

So the Lord sends that fortunate Jiva to Guru and then Guru in turn sends him to the Lord. I was studying in Sangli and then I thought, “ Why not go to Bombay for graduation. It was 1971.

After successfully preaching in the West Prabhupada was coming back to India. He came with many of his foreign devotees. There was a pandal program on Azad Maidan grounds. I saw the advertisement which said: 'American sadhus are in town.' That was a surprise for everyone. We have heard about American scientists, but never had we heard of American Sadhus.

So I met **Prabhupada** there. Then I understood that coming to Bombay was not my decision to study there, but it was the Lord's arrangement so that I could meet Prabhupada in Bombay.

So I got Guru Krsna Prasada at that Hare Krsna program. Since childhood my desire was to serve. At that time I wanted to serve society and humanity. When I was hearing Prabhupada's lecture, Prabhupada said one very special thing which I thought was especially for me.

**yatha taror mula-nisecanena trpyanti tat-skandha-bhujopasakhah  
pranopaharac ca yathendriyanam tathaiva sarvarhanam acyutejya  
(SB 4.31.14)**

By giving water to the root of a tree one satisfies its branches, twigs and leaves, and by supplying food to the stomach one satisfies all the senses of the body. Similarly, by engaging in the transcendental service of the Supreme Lord one automatically satisfies all the demigods and all other living entities." Therefore, after reading Bhagavad-Gita one should promptly come to the conclusion of Bhagavad-Gita: one should give up all other engagements and adopt the service of the **Supreme Lord, Krsna**, the Personality of Godhead. If one is convinced of this philosophy of life, that is faith.

If you serve the Lord, then you serve everyone. When I heard this, I got a clue, as I wanted to serve. He was explaining to everyone, but I was convinced. And I decided that I would serve as Prabhupada wants me to serve. And soon I got converted and became Prabhupada's.

Then again I went to one of the pandal programs in 1972. I

joined **ISKCON** after this program. Then I went to Vrndavana for initiation. There were 15 of us as we went to his room in Radha Damodar temple. That room was full. Have you seen that room?

Then, as we were sitting around, Prabhupada was talking to us and looking at all of us. When he looked at me, he would stop. He was moving his vision like a radar . As he looked at me, he would stop. I was thinking: "Why I am getting his attention." Then he said: "Stop it!" And I stopped it forever. Full stop. I had a bad habit of shaking my right thigh while concentrating. Now I only do it to demonstrate while I tell this incident in class. Prabhupada named me Lokanath. I thought I will get a name like **Radha Raman** starting with R, but Prabhupada just removed Raghu and replaced it with Lok and kept the nath part as it is.

Prabhupada came to Bombay many times as he said, "Bombay is my office". I was a brahmachari at Juhu temple. I was at the right place at right time. And there I got a lot of Prabhupada's association and service to Radha Rasa Bihari as pujari.

**Prabhupada** had promised Radha Rasa Bihari: 'I will build palace for You' and a promise is a promise. He really liked Radha Rasa Bihari a lot and always carried Their picture with him. I learnt a little Deity worship and did lots of service. His Deity worship standards were very high. Thinking that Lord is there, we are actually worshipping the Lord.

Morning walks meant we could ask questions. One morning I asked: "Should we chant in the mind?" **Prabhupada** said: "No! The tongue should vibrate. In Kaliyuga it's not possible to chant in the mind. It is restless. So to attract the mind, we should chant loudly and hear the mantra."

**bharat bhumi te hoila manushya janma jar janam saarthak kari  
kara para upkaar**

**Caitanya Mahaprabhu** said that those who are born in India should do the welfare work for the whole world. One who has taken birth in India should preach. Prabhupada used to say that to me.

If we can call someone Bharatratna, then it can only be Prabhupada. He is "Bharat Ratna". He understood the real India and he spread the culture of India all over the world. When people go to the West, they beg for something like a job or money. India was not known as a good country. In 1978 when I went to the West, people would ask where I have come from? And when I replied that I had come from India, the reaction would be "Oh! That poor country of beggars." But Prabhupada went to give them the ultimate wealth – the holy name and sastras. Once Prabhupada was asked by a reporter why he had come to their country? This could be one answer, "Oh! You had also come to my country." I don't know whether **Prabhupada** answered like this. But he did say, "Your viceroys came to our country and they took all that was the wealth of India like the Kohinoor. It is in the London museum, but they forgot the important wealth. I have come here to do a hand delivery." What's that wealth? It's the culture of India. So the real wealth is that which makes us happy. Harinama can only make our soul happy. The Lord is our wealth. Lord is Laxmipati and has hundreds and thousands of Laxmis serving Him. If we get Krsna then nothing is left to achieve. So Prabhupada distributed this wealth of harinam ke hire moti (the diamonds and pearls of Harinama) all over the world.

In Delhi at the Ram Lila pandal program, I was given the opportunity to introduce **Prabhupada**. I said that Prabhupada exported Bhagavad-Gita and harinama and imported American and African sadhus. **Prabhupada** appreciated and liked this introduction.

In the courtyard of the **Krishna-Balarama Mandir Prabhupada** would sit near the Tamal tree. We sat around him. Prabhupada encouraged each one of us to say something. Locals called the

Vrndavana temple angreji mandir and Mayapur temple sahiber mandir. It's one and the same thing. So I said, "You call it angrej ka mandir. But there is no Deity of an angrezi there in the temple. There is the Deity of Krsna Balaram." I told them that they see only foreigners here, but if more Indians joined then maybe that name will not be used.

Then once our German travelling bus party's visa expired. In 1976, at **Radha Parthasarthi Mandir Prabhupada** ordered me to preach using a bullock cart. I was preaching in the German buses with all the comforts and Prabhupada ordered me : "You preach in bullock cart."

Initially it was known as the Bullock Cart Sankirtana Party and later it was called the "All India Padayatra". That name still stands today. Prabhupada knew that I came from a village. So once the Bullock Cart Sankirtana Party reached Aravade – my village.

My family had a dream that I will come back to the village with a fatfati (bullet bike). I returned with a bullock cart and it broke their dream. This was Prabhupada's krpa (mercy).

Now the padayatris have travelled 250,000 kms and this year is the 40th anniversary of "All India Padayatra".

'We can introduce millions of such carts all over the world'. On the 6 March 1977, Srila Prabhupada wrote a letter to Nityanada Dasa, the head of the New Talavan farm community in the US. While talking about self-sufficiency, he brought up the topic of oxen and Padayatra, "And oxen can be used for driving carts and preaching village to village."

In 1977, **Prabhupada** was not well. This was just 7 days before Prabhupada left this planet. We had come to **Vrndavana from Badrinatha** to see **Srila Prabhupada**. He had asked which book is being distributed the most? He liked book distribution. "Till my books are being distributed, I will never die. As I had come from Badrinatha I said to Prabhupada 'I showed your Gita

to Vyasadev'. We had gone to Vyaasdev's cave. We could not see Vyasadev but Vyasdev must certainly have seen us and Prabhupada's books. So Prabhupada was very happy to hear this and he laughed.

Prabhupada also wanted to go for Govardhan Parikrama from the temple in the bullock cart. I was sent to prepare for this Parikrama. The bullock cart was ready and it was parked in front of the Krishna-Balaram temple. It's a very long story. I am just showering few drops.

Now you will hear from different **Srila Prabhupada Disciples** sharing their experiences with their own **"My Prabhupada."**