

Vyasa Puja 2020

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Today's day, Ashadi Ekadashi Mahotsav is the biggest day in the year for Lord Vitthala, Lord Panduranga. Panduranga! Panduranga! Why is it the biggest day? Today devotees of the Lord come in large numbers to see the Lord. It doesn't sound right to call them devotees of the Lord. Vithu maza lekur wala sangi gopalanacha mela – this is a good relationship – vithu maza lekur wala, (my Vithoba is the father of many and He is in the association of the cowherd boys).

Who comes to see Lord Vitthala? Those who had forgotten before now come to see the Lord. The souls are bodily limbs of the Lord. They are parts and parcels of the Lord. Therefore they are very dear to the Lord. Such dear-most devotees could be His friends, cowherd boys, or parents. When such devotees come again to see the Lord, then what to say about the happiness of the Lord. This is the happiest day, biggest day for Lord Vitthala and also for His devotees. The Lord facilitated my birth on such a day. The Lord is happy, devotees are happy, hence I am also happy. You do not have to say, "Happy Birthday". I know it is a happy day – happy for Lord Vitthala and also for the devotees of Vitthala, devotees of Krsna. Today's day is the happiest day, anandi ananda gade jikade tikade chohikade (there is happiness every where). In the middle of the day when the happiness is spread all over, I was born. That's why I want to celebrate my birthday, Vyasa Puja, in Pandharpur.

July 5, 1949, was a Tuesday. However today is Wednesday. Wednesday is Lord Vitthala's day. This year's Ashadi Ekadasi is being celebrated on Wednesday. Lord Sri Krsna was born on a Wednesday and Lord Rama was born on a Tuesday. I was also born on a Tuesday and I think that possibly my family members remembered this and that's why they named me Raghunath. By the

way I was called Raghya.

You have learnt that our true birth is the day when Guru gives us initiation, mantra, when the acaryas or Gurus connect us with the parampara. That day is our real birthday. It is the no more births, no more deaths day! From that point of view, Srila Prabhupada gave me my true birth. I was born in Vrindavan, in the courtyard of Radha Damodar in the month of Kartik. It was also the appearance day of Radha-kunda.

For the last few days as well as today I am listening to your glorifications. It is said, 'vachane ka daridrata', if we have to speak then why to be miserly in our speech, speak to your heart's content, speak wholeheartedly, 'vachane ka daridrata'. You were saying things which even I am not aware of. Am I really like this? You seem to know me better than I know myself. I was thinking I do not know myself, you know more than I do. Exaggeration is obvious as per the principle of vachane ka daridrata. I was thinking that you want to see me like this. Our Guru should be like this. He should have such qualities. You were saying that our Guru is like this, but I was thinking that you are expecting these qualities in me. I know that all these qualities are not in me, but you have big hearts and keep on saying, 'Maharaja is like this and that'. In one sense, this is your greatness!

I was also thinking I have not manufactured all these qualities and I have not created these qualities in any factory or in my brain. These are only my qualities. No one has them and no one will have them. This is my property. This is mine, my creation. Only a fool claims this. All acaryas, all pure devotees have these qualities. Yet these qualities do not belong to them. The ultimate source of all these qualities is the Lord. It is said, 'Like father, like son'. If the son has these qualities, then where do these qualities in him come from? They are in the father, that's why the son has these qualities. These qualities of the son are not his own qualities. The Lord is the source of all these qualities. Not

even a single quality belongs to me; I couldn't label it with a stamp stating, "This is my quality." I was also thinking all of you also have all these qualities. All these qualities are present in all of you. Every devotee has a specialty, one special quality. One may have lesser qualities and another may have more qualities. But every devotee has qualities. Devotee means soul. Every soul has qualities. Every soul is qualified. And why not?

Mamai vamso jiva loke jiva bhutah sanatanah

This is acintya-bhed-abheda. There are similarities as well as differences between us and the Lord. The Lord's 50 qualities are present in the living entities. We were giving a presentation on the 'Super Excellence of Gaudiya Vaisnavism'. At that time we showed you a chart where the living entities have 50 qualities of the Lord's 64 qualities. This is the similarity, abheda. What is the difference, bheda? The Lord's 50 qualities are in the living entities, but in a lower percentage.

Discover yourself! Know yourself! There is discovery and invention. What is the meaning of discover? There is something, some element, some tattva and one has to uncover it! It is covered and you have to only uncover it. When we discover, find ourselves, then we all will also know that these qualities are present in us also. We also have these qualities.

**bhoktaram yajna-tapasam
sarva-loka-mahesvaram
suhrdam sarva-bhutanam
jnatva mam santim rcchati (BG 5.29)**

Prabhupada called it the 'Peace formula!' How is the Lord? suhrdam sarva-bhutanam – suhrdam, means friend. Whose friend is He? Sarva bhutanam, Lord is the friend of all living entities. This is Bhagavad Gita and when we see Bhagavatam,

there it is said, suhrdah sarva dehinam. Sadhavaḥ sadhubhūṣaṇaḥ – it is all about the devotees. Sadhus are like this. What should one do immediately? Take a selfie or something! They are beautified with the qualities,

**trṇad api sunicena
taror api sahisnuna
amanina manadena
kīrtaniyāḥ sādā hariḥ**

These are the ornaments, the jewellery. This is the beauty of a devotee, of a soul. In the Bhagavad Gita it is said that the Lord is the friend of all the souls. In the Bhagavatam it is said, the devotee, sadhu is the friend of all the souls. Suhrdam sarva bhūtaṇāṃ, suhrdam sarva dehināṃ, you say bhūtaṇāṃ or dehināṃ, it is the same thing. What is common? Suhrdam, they are both suhrdam, friend of all living entities. This is one example. Being friendly is one of the 26 qualities of the Vaiṣṇava. The soul has this quality. Here we consider someone as our friend and someone as our enemy. This is the effect of the three modes of material nature, specially the mode of passion. The effect of the mode of ignorance is feeling sleepy. When there is the effect of Rājoguna, then we start fighting.

**yadrcchā-lābha-santusto
dvandvatīto vimatsarah
samāḥ siddhāv asiddhau ca
kṛtvapi na nibadhyate**

Lord says this. What should one do? One should cross over the dvandva, duality – this is a friend and this is an enemy. This comes only when we are in bondage, in lock down. Who is responsible for this lockdown? The three modes of material nature, the powerful bondage, the shackles, they make us think like this, due to lust, anger and greed.

Devotees, disciples, friends, brothers and sisters, understand

yourself. Ke ami? Such was Sanatana Goswami's question. When he met Caitanya Mahaprabhu the first time, he asked, 'Ke ami? Kene amar jare tapa-traya? Who am I and why are these miseries of the world giving me trouble? Please tell me.' Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu explained everything. Sanatan Goswami asked this question on our behalf. For us Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu answered the question. It is for us only that Lord Krsna had dialogues with Arjuna and therefore there is this parampara.

evam parampara-praptam imam rajarsayo viduh

Sri Krsna is Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu with whom the parampara proceeds further. He is the Acarya of the Gaudiya Vaisnava parampara, and this is the arrangement of the Lord. In this way we can understand who we are. We should come to know that we are not from here. We are not from this world. We belong to Krsna. Right now we have our relatives, our family, husband, wife, bride, groom. They get married and then children take birth. They call it the family tree. We are in the centre – andha kupam. We are hanging in the dark well, and whoever is around us, is ours. But the real situation is different. That's why the Lord comes to this world from time to time.

We have forgotten the Lord, but the Lord has not forgotten us. Grown up sons forget their parents. Daughters do not forget their parents as much as the sons do. So it is shown. But do parents forget their children? I was thinking, how I can talk like this as I am not a mother and father. But I am also a father. 'Ham do aur hamare do'-we two (husband and wife) and our two kids! But when one becomes a Guru, a spiritual master, then even though he is a sannayasi, he becomes the father of 200 disciples, 2000 disciples. Our Jayapataka Maharaja has 40,000 disciples. For the disciples the Guru is mother and father. Maybe disciples can forget the spiritual master by becoming guru bhogi, tyagi or drohi, but the Guru can never forget, just like a mother and father can never forget. The

mother and father are grihasta, family. They are a smaller unit. The Guru is also small compared to the Lord. The Lord is the father, aham bija pradah pitah; when the material mother and father do not forget. The Gurus who play a role of mother and father, do not forget, then the Lord who is the original father, the original mother, can He forget? No, He never forgets. That is why the Lord comes to this world. He comes to remind us, 'I am yours. You are mine. You are not this body. You are the soul'. The Lord comes and leaves after making all the arrangements. Dialogues of Gita become the Granth, scripture of Gita. He performs many lilas. We get the Ramayana. Lord Rama came. His name, form, qualities, pastimes get glorified in Ramayana. Then there is Bhagavatam, Mahabharat, ante ca madhye ca harih sarvatra giyate

When the Lord appeared 5000 years ago, He came to Pandharpur from Dvaraka. This is History, fact. The Lord heard the prayer of His devotee. Pundalika who offered special prayers to the Lord. 'Lord, You stay here.' The Lord Dvarakadhish is staying in Pandharpur. He is Vitthala, He is Panduranga. Panduranga! Panduranga! Panduranga! Panduranga!

Whether the Lord came 5000 years ago or not, is no question. Is there any proof that the Lord came to earth and performed many lilas? What is the proof? Yes! Vitthala Bhagavan is the full proof. For the fools, this is the proof. Not only did the Lord come, but we all know how He looks?

Sundar te dyan ubhe vite vari
Kar katavari theuniya

Makar kunddale talapate shravani
Kanthi kaustubh mani virajit

Tuka mhane maze hechi sarv sukh
pahina srimukha avadine.

Lord gives realizations to such acaryas. Even after looking at the Deities, we still have doubts. Is He the Lord? But some

devotees take darsana of these Deities,

Govinda govinda mala lagaliya chanda, maga govinda te kaya
bheda nahi deva taya,

This is not just recitation. Tukarama Maharaja wrote an
abhanga in such a way that we sing them. These are his
realizations, maga govinda de kaya bheda nahi deva taya. There
is no difference between the Deity of Govinda and Govinda. He
is Govinda and I am looking at Govinda. I don't know what is a
Deity? I am looking at the Lord.

All these arrangements are facilitated by the Lord. Then the
acaryas give the package of the parampara, all scriptures, all
mantras, vidhi vidhan, nishedh, etc, and give it the name
dharma. This is religion, the laws of the Lord. We follow
these rules and regulations and understand the philosophy,

**janma karma ca me divyam
evam yo vetti tattvata
then what happens,**

tyaktva deham punar janma – no rebirth
Then what happens?
naiti mam eti

Mam eti, eti means he goes, sa-eti, so where does he go? Mam,
he comes towards Me. Why does the Lord say this? Has He said
it in vain? Does it have any meaning or has the Lord just said
it without thinking? The Lord knows what He is talking about.
That is why He came here, Golokam ca parityajya lokanam trana-
karanat All the arrangements are done by the Lord so that we
can again return to our village, return to our home.

Leave the talks of settling down here. Who wants to settle in
this world? People say, "He is well settled." And then comes
corona and it is all finished. Forget about settling down in
this world. Who wants to settle down in this world? No one has
ever and no one ever will. Just when it looks like he will get
settled, then death comes. Sometimes he constructs a new home,

the house warming takes place and something happens. He died. During his entire life time he was thinking of getting settled and something happened. People think, "We are not able to settle down here, so let's go to the moon." Nowadays some fools are selling plots on the moon. Many are booking their plot. We could not settle here, so let's settle on the moon. There is no question of getting settled here. We have to come to this conclusion that no settlement is possible. As quickly as possible, let's go, amhi jato amuchya gava, back to Godhead.

There are some examples like this. Tukarama Maharaja showed the world. Can anyone really go to Vaikuntha? Yes, Tukarama Maharaja went. Ajamila also went. All the time the shuttle service between the earth and Goloka or Vaikuntha is going on, day and night. We cannot see it all the time, but sometimes the Lord shows through the example of Tukarama Maharaja and Dhruva Maharaja and many more. All this is done by the Lord which we call dharma, religion. The same arrangement is being done in ISKCON on behalf of Sri Krsna Caitanya Mahaprabhu. Our parampara acaryas were doing the preparations. A lifetime in preparation! Prabhupada was preparing his whole life for this.

Has Prabhupada started from scratch? No! Before Srila Prabhupada, so much preparation was done by Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur. And before him, hasn't Bhaktivinoda Thakur done anything? Like that, every Acarya of the parampara makes the necessary preparations. Then the next acarya takes it forward and then the next generation, devotees, acaryas, those who do yare dekho tare kaho krsna upadesa, take it forward. And finally it is for me and all of us assembled here, the humans present on the planet to take it forward. Lord made Srila Prabhupada an instrument, nimitta matram bhava savyasachin. Like this the Lord made perfect arrangements, not to settle here, but to go back. Let's go! Let's go!

We have become one part of this arrangement and our journey is still continuing. You are on the way back home, back to

Godhead. For such an arrangement we thank the Lord, thank the acaryas of our parampara and especially we thank Srila Prabhupada ki Jai! We will always be indebted to Srila Prabhupada. What he did for the world is matchless. Na bhute na bhavisyati, never happened before and will never happen again. Such are his arrangements. We are indebted, but we also need to get free from this debt. It is very difficult to get free from this debt. One time the disciples of Srila Prabhupada were asking Srila Prabhupada, 'How can we get rid of this debt?' Srila Prabhupada said, "No! No, you cannot get free from this debt." Then after thinking a while Prabhupada said, 'Yes! Yes, one thing can be done.' And what is that? 'You do as I did' This is a very famous statement of Srila Prabhupada. 'You do as I did.' In other words we can say, 'The work which I have started, you endeavour to take it forward by using your energy and intelligence'. We have to do that. I am trying my best to continue the work started by Srila Prabhupada, by following his lotus feet. Many of us are trying our best. It is a big team. In the beginning we were only 5000 disciples of Srila Prabhupada and at that time it was known as 'Prabhupada days'. We were 5000 disciples, and slowly slowly, day by day, the number is growing and growing and growing It is the request unto all of you

**utsahan niscayad dhairyat
tat-tat-karma-pravartanat
sanga-tyagat sato vrtteh
sadbhir bhaktih prasidhyati**

There are six principles favorable to the execution of pure devotional service: (1) being enthusiastic, (2) endeavoring with confidence, (3) being patient, (4) acting according to regulative principles [such as sravanam, kirtana, visnoh smaranam [SB 7.5.23]—hearing, chanting and remembering Krsna], (5) abandoning the association of nondevotees, and (6) following in the footsteps of the previous acaryas. These six principles undoubtedly assure the complete success of pure

devotional service. (NOI 3)

May you get such bhakti. We are expecting support from you. Srila Prabhupada also has expectations from you and we are expressing our desire on behalf of Srila Prabhupada that you will give your full support and contributions. Will there be any benefit in such contributions? It will be the best welfare. What will be that welfare? Krsna prapti hoya jaha hoite, What will you gain? Krsna prapti – you will get Krsna. Till now we were running behind Maya prapti, to get maya, aham mama. Due to our foolishness we were running behind that only. Now we are coming on the right track, becoming well organised. In his last days Srila Prabhupada said, 'If you love me...' Do you love Srila Prabhupada? It is easy to say. It is called lip service. We say, "Yes! Yes! I love you." But Prabhupada said, 'I want to see your love for me, not only hear it.' How will you show it? How you cooperate with each other, co – operation means together – if you will work by cooperating with each other, then you love me.'

I could also say this. For the past few days there was a disciples' sammelan and you were expressing your love. We have heard that love and now we want to see it.

On this Vyasa puja day, we are requesting you all, we are expecting, desiring that all of you will cooperate with each other and will give and take support. Srila Prabhupada said, 'How will you keep this institution together after I am gone? Protect this institution after I am gone?' How can it be protected? How will it become strong? In Srila Prabhupada's movement there are many different activities of Prabhupada's disciples and even of grand-disciples. They have their own areas of operation. There are movements within the movement. Note that it should not clash with other movements which are within the international movement established by Srila Prabhupada. Our karya-kshetra or my karya-kshetra (area of operation) is as per the orders of Srila Prabhupada only. Prabhupada gave personal instructions to everyone. Sometimes

he gave orders through letters. Some services are done before asking, some services are done after asking and some devotees don't do the service even after asking. It may be possible that we could not follow some orders. That is a possibility. But we are trying to follow all the orders.

These padayatra projects are part of that only – padayatras, parikramas. You saw the letter from Prabhupada. Prabhupada is saying, 'This is the land of Tukarama and the politicians are spoiling it. Awake the Krsna consciousness in Maharashtra.' Regarding padayatras, Srila Prabhupada said, '... millions of carts all over the world'. Such is the desire expressed by Prabhupada.

How many bullock-carts should be there? Millions of carts! Prabhupada is known for this. Prabhupada could have said dozens of carts or hundreds of carts, but what did Prabhupada say? Millions of carts! For how many lifetimes do we have to be engaged? I don't know. He gave the order, but to follow the order, needs lots of time and energy and power; Prabhupada gives an order and with that He gave the facilities also. Krsna gives the facilities as Prabhupada has desired.

Most of my books are about this service only – Vraja-mandala darsana or Bombay Is My Office. I received Srila Prabhupada's association and it is related to that. The experiences with Prabhupada during 'The Mayapur Vrindavan Festivals' is another book. We had many meetings or conversations with Srila Prabhupada, so there is one book like that – In Conversation with Srila Prabhupada. The first ever Padayatras are captured in Volume One Padayatra: On the Road with Lord Caitanya. Volumes 2 and 3 are also going to come. Srila Prabhupada gave me some instructions regarding chanting, so chanting is also going on. Then there was a book on this subject. Prabhupada was expecting that disciples will write books. This is also service for present and future generations. Prabhupada was thinking about a Worldwide International Society. I am expecting your contribution in my zone which is within Srila

Prabhupada's worldwide society. And if you give such support and contributions then I will understand that, 'You love me'.

Srila Prabhupada ki jai! Sri Vitthala Rukmini ki jai! ISKCON Pandharpur ki jai! Radha Pandharinath ki jai! Radha Parthasarathi ki jai! Radha Rasabihari ki jai! Radha Madhava ki jai! Nitai Gaurasundar ki jai! Jagannath Baladeva Subhadra ki jai!

These are some special of the special Deities I have served as pujari, so I am remembering Them on this day. Hari Haribol!