

## 2 The Lord's Sweeper



Famous amongst the Vaishnava kings of Orissa is Gajapati Raja Purshottama Dev (1470-1497). At the time of their reign, Orissa extended from the Ganges river in present day Bengal, to the Godavari river in Andhra Pradesh in the south.

Once, while Maharaja Purushottama Dev was leading his army on a campaign to conquer the land South of Orissa, he came to Kanchi.

( Court of King of Kanchi, Selva Narsingha )

Messenger

O King I bear terrible news.  
Purushottamdev and his army huge  
Stand ready for battle at the city gate.  
Now what will be our fate ?

Army Chief 1

Should we prepare our army too?  
Order King what will you have us do?

King Selva Narsingha  
(slowly and  
thoughtfully)

Wait-a-minute, Hmmm.... King Purshottamdev  
The bravest of the brave  
For his goodness he is known all around

A devotee of great renown  
Now I will befriend the King  
Let's invite the King Bring him, go bring

(King Selva Narsingha is seen pacing up and down)

Announcer                      we welcome King Purshottamdev,  
The bravest of the brave

King Selva                      Welcome O King ! How gracious you are  
Giving up all thoughts of war.  
You accepted our love and friendship  
Surely the beginning of a loving relationship.

(The Kings embrace)

King Selva                      On this most auspicious occasion  
I offer to you my dear most possession.  
The hand of my daughter Padmavati  
Accept her as your queen O! Gajapati

(King Purshottamdev smiles and bows down at the elderly  
King's feet and nods his consent)

Purshottamdev                So be it. It shall be as you say  
But I must take your leave today  
And return to Orissa as soon as possible  
To offer my services at the chariot festival  
I long to see the Lord of my heart  
The sweet Baladeva, Subhadra and Jagannatha  
I invite you to this festival of the King of Kings  
You must come, you must, O king.

(Rath yatra day, three chariots and the beautiful forms of Lord Jagannatha, Baladeva and Subhadra are seated in the raths. The devotees are chanting in different Kirtan parties)

Devotees                      Jaya Jagannatha  
                                    Jagannatha Swami Nayan Patha Gami  
                                    Bhava tume  
                                    Hare Krishna Hare Krishna, Krishna Krishna  
                                    Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama, Rama Rama  
                                    Hare Hare

(Purshottamdev enters bows down before the deities. He starts to sweep in front of the carts. He is singing blissfully)

Person 1                      King or pauper, whoever one may be  
                                    He must bow to the King of Kings you see

Person 2                      What a glorious sight to behold  
                                    Auspicious traditions he does uphold

Person 3                      A truly honorable position  
                                    A sweeper to the Lord, such devotion

Narrator                      King Selva Narsingha was unable to come to the Rath Yatra festival so he had sent his minister Chinnubhatta Godaraja. Chinnubhatta Godaraja walked here and there looking all around. He was very impressed with the arrangements. Suddenly he saw the King..... sweeping.

Chinnubhatta                      Alas! What is this I see?  
( to himself)                      Intolerable! It can't be  
                                    A king doing the work of a chandala

Certainly unfit for Padmavati's Varamala  
I must inform my beloved King  
The most honorable Selva Narsingha.

Narrator

After some time in King Purshottamdev 's court,  
the king is seen with a scroll in his hand. He is  
reading and his expression shows that he is  
very angry.

Purshottamdev

What impudence! I do say  
I'll teach the King a lesson today.  
He calls Lord Jagannatha's servant low class  
How very crude and crass  
Prepare the army. Let us go  
We'll show them we're a formidable foe.

Narrator

Maharaja Purshottamdev lost the battle and  
had to flee back to Puri. A very sad looking  
Purshottamdev , haunted by the bitter taste of  
defeat noticed a small ashrama along the way.  
There lived a great devotee of Lord Jagannatha.  
His name was Saikatacharya Purshottamdev  
narrated the whole incident to him.

Saikatacharya

All blessing to you, your highness  
I wish upon you all happiness  
I must ask you a question  
Did you seek Jagannatha's permission?

Purshottamdev

I thank you great sage, I realise my mistake  
I was fighting for the Lord's sake  
Blinded by anger, without bowing to my Lord  
I left armed with just a useless sword.

The Lord is so kind and forgiving  
I'll return to Kanchi with an armour of blessing

Narrator The Raja returned to Puri and went to Lord Jagannatha's temple He prayed with tears in his eyes.

Purshottamdev Bereft of all good sense  
The king committed a grave offense  
By insulting Your servant he insulted You  
I pray to go on Your behalf. Bless me please do.  
My Lord forgive me I pray  
Without Your blessings, I went away  
Nothing can be a success without Your sanction  
Forgive me, Forgive me for my thoughtless action

Narrator The doors closed. Purshottamdev stayed in the temple praying and crying to the Lord. Late in the night, he heard a voice.

Lord Jagannatha It is a matter small. Give up all worry  
Organise your soldiers, now hurry  
We two brothers will accompany you again  
Your effort will not go in vain  
Leave on Sri Panchami, an auspicious day  
We will lead you to battle all the way.

Narrator The news spread quickly. Everyone old and young wanted to join the battle.

Purshottamdev The auspicious day has arrived. Let us set out.  
Will They come? I must not doubt.  
Are They really going to fight ?



But They seem nowhere in sight !

Narrator                    The army moved on. In a small village near Chilika lake, a lady named Manika stopped the king by waving to him.

Manika                      I sell yogurt for a living  
Two of your warriors, O king!  
One on a black horse, one on white  
Magnificently dressed, it was a glorious sight  
They ate yogurt to Their hearts content  
And left this ring in lieu of payment  
They said that you'd pay instead  
So please fulfill what They said.

Purshottamdev            The Ratnamudrika ring of Lord Jagannatha  
Glories, glories! O Lord of my heart  
You kept the promise You made to me  
O ! Bhakta Vatsala, lover of Your devotee.

Narrator                    The king held the ring lovingly to his heart and started weeping

Purshottamdev            O Manika you are so fortunate  
I offer you an entire village in payment.

Narrator                    That village came to be called Manikapatna after the name of the Lord's devotee. King Purushottamdev beckoned to his army.

Purshottamdev            With the Lord on our side, victory is sure  
We have already won this war





## Activity Time

### Discussion:

The original, Ratha Yatra, took place three hundred miles south of Calcutta at Jagannatha Puri. Three wooden chariots forty-five feet high were pulled by the devotees along the two-mile parade route. Now Ratha Yatra is held in cities all over India, attended each year by millions of pilgrims.

When Shрила Prabhupada was a little boy, his name was Abhay. Abhay had heard how Lord Chaitanya, four hundred years before had danced and chanted at the Ratha Yatra festival. Abhay would sometimes look at the railway timetable or ask about the fare to Vrindavana and Puri, thinking how he would collect the money and go there.



Abhay wanted to have his own chariot to perform the Ratha Yatra festival. He turned to his father, Gaur Mohan for help. But there were some difficulties because Gaur Mohan could not afford to have a chariot made. Abhay started crying, but an old Bengali woman offered a cart which she had. The cart looked old, but it was the right size, about three feet high and operable. Gaur Mohan purchased it.



Both Gaur Mohan and Abhay together constructed sixteen supporting columns and placed a canopy on top resembling the original carts at Puri. They also attached the traditional wooden horse and driver to the front of the cart. They painted the cart in bright colours.

Abhay organised the festival with great enthusiasm. He engaged his playmates and his sister Bavatarini in helping him. The mothers in the neighbourhood agreed to cook prasadam.

Like the festival at Puri, Abhay's Ratha Yatra ran for eight consecutive days. His family members and the neighbourhood children joined in the procession, pulling the cart, playing drums and karatalas and chanting. Abhay led the children in chanting and in singing bhajans.

Abhay copied whatever he had seen at adult religious functions, including dressing the deities, offering the deities food, offering arati with a ghee lamp and incense, and bowing down to them. The eight-day festival brought so much joy to all the children, that each successive year brought a new festival, which Abhay would observe in the same way.

Jagannatha Swami nayana patha gami,  
nayana patha gami bhava Tume.

'Jagannatha Swami please be ever manifest before my eyes.'

On Ratha Yatra day Lord Jagannatha gives special mercy. He comes out of the temple to bless all those who do not have an opportunity to visit the temple. All glories to the most merciful Lord Jagannatha.

## Ratha Yatra

The Lords are going to Vrindavana, Vrindavana, Vrindavana  
Bright and shiny like the sun, Jaya Jagannatha.

Seated in raths on this wonderful day, wonderful day, wonderful day,  
Canopies high so colourful and gay, Jaya Jagannatha.

They have come out for all to see, all to see, all to see,  
Giving mercy to you and me, Jaya Jagannatha.

They glance at all with eyes so round, eyes so round, eyes so round,  
The three worlds with Their names resound, Jaya Jagannatha.

Look at the ropes so thick and strong, thick and strong, thick and strong  
For this chance we've waited long, Jaya Jagannatha.

Devotees pull with all their might, all their might, all their might,  
It is such a lovely sight, Jaya Jagannatha.

All the devotees dance and sing, dance and sing, dance and sing,  
Offerings for the Lord they bring, Jaya Jagannatha.

The wheels of the chariot go round and round,  
round and round, round and round  
The wheels of the chariot go round and round  
Jaya Jagannatha! Jaya Baladeva! Jaya Subhadra! Jaya Shrila Prabhupada !

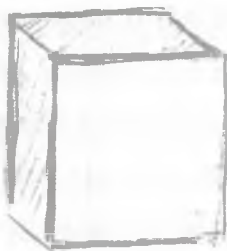
Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare,  
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare.

(To be sung to the tune of 'Here we go around  
the Mulberry bush or Wheels of the bus go round and round')

You have just read how little Abhay would celebrate Ratha Yatra in his childhood. You too can celebrate this wonderful festival! Prepare a list of things needed to make the Ratha Yatra a success.



Lord Jagannatha, Baladeva and Subhadra



Cover a match box with white paper for Lord Baladeva, yellow paper for Lady Subhadra, black paper for Lord Jagannatha. If you like you can pull up the inside tray to make them taller.

Cut out Their eyes, beautiful smiles, tilaka and so on with glazed paper.

You can make a dress with crepe paper.

Decorate with sequins and other ornaments.

Make paper rolls for arms.

### 3 Ambarisha Maharaja



Long long ago there lived a great king named Ambarisha. He ruled over the entire earth. He ruled very well and was also a great devotee of the Lord.

Maharaja Ambarisha engaged all his senses in devotional service. His mind was engaged in meditating on the lotus feet of Krishna. His words in describing the glories of the Lord. His hands were used in cleaning the Lord's temple and his ears in hearing Krishna katha. He engaged his eyes in seeing the deity of the Lord. He engaged his sense of smell in smelling the fragrance of tulasi offered to the Lord and his tongue in tasting the Lord's prasada. He used his legs only for visiting the temples and other holy places. His head was for bowing down before the Lord and all his desires in serving the Lord twenty four hours a day.

Maharaja Ambarisha performed many great sacrifices like the Ashwamedha yagya. During these sacrifices, under the guidance of great saintly persons, many things were given away in charity. Hence all the citizens were used to receiving charity and hearing about the activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Maharaja Ambarisha had once observed a vow of Ekadashi for one year.



At the end of the year he fasted without water for 3 days, bathed, performed deity worship and gave many cows in charity. The cows were decorated with silver and gold ornaments. He distributed prasada to everyone. When he was about to break the fast, the great sage Durvasa Muni came there as an uninvited guest. King Ambarisha welcomed him with great honour and requested him to eat. Durvasa Muni accepted the invitation but first wanted to bathe in the Yamuna.

In the meantime the auspicious time for breaking the fast was almost ending. Maharaja Ambarisha was wondering what he should do. He consulted the brahmanas. "O brahmanas, out of respect I must wait for Durvasa Muni and at the same time break the fast at the prescribed time. What should I do? May be I could drink water. This may be accepted as eating and also not eating." He drank a few drops of water.

Durvasa Muni returned from the Yamuna. By his mystic power he could understand that Ambarisha had drunk water without his permission. Durvasa Muni became very angry. He said, "O proud king, you have invited me as a guest but instead of feeding me, you yourself have eaten first. Now I shall punish you."

With an angry red face, Durvasa Muni uprooted a bunch of hair from his head and created a fiery demon with a trident in his hand. The demon charged towards Ambarisha but the king was not at all disturbed and meditated on the Supreme Personality of Godhead in his heart.



It is said that a fire in the forest immediately burns to ashes an angry