Kṛṣṇa
the Lord of Sweetness

śrī śrī guru-gaurāṅgau jayataḥ

ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD
BHAKTIVEDĀNTA NĀRĀYAṆA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA

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ŚRĪ ŚRĪMAD BHAKTISIDDHĀNTA SARASVATĪ PRABHUPĀDA

Editors' Preface

In 1998, in Malaysia, Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja gave a series of lectures about the wondrous pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the ultimate Divine Person. These lectures were originally presented in 1999 by the late Śrīpād Hṛṣīkeśa Mahārāja and the devotees of Malaysia, in a book entitled *Dāmodara-līlā-madhurī*.

In these lectures, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja first gives the history of the scripture on which he is about to speak: *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This is presented in Chapter One of this book.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is written in Sanskrit and is divided into twelve cantos. It is regarded throughout India as the most authentic literature on the Supreme Lord. Its Tenth Canto describes the loftiest conception of Godhead: a God who relishes such sweet and loving relationships with His devotees that both He and they lose all awareness that He is God. It is this Tenth Canto on which Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja speaks in this book, *Kṛṣṇa – the Lord of Sweetness*.

In Chapter Two, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja explains who Kṛṣṇa is, and in Chapters Three to Seven, he narrates some of Kṛṣṇa's charming childhood pastimes.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's native language, Hindi, is erudite and refined, and he uses many Sanskrit words to specifically convey the elevated philosophy he is so well known for presenting. In his English lectures also, he employs Sanskrit words for this reason, because often he is speaking to people who are familiar with them.

In our presentation of this particular series of lectures, however, we have for the most part translated these terms into English, just as we sometimes do when translating Śrīla

Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's Hindi books. In cross-referencing the respective sound files, one may note that a few words may be required to adequately cover the specificity of a Sanskrit term.

In summary, the book you hold in your hands contains a rare and elevated conception of the Absolute Truth, presented simply, so that anyone can understand it and begin their journey of becoming blissfully immersed in the Lord's all-loving pastimes, thus transcending all material difficulties.

ŚRĪLA NĀRĀYAṆA GOSVĀMĪ MAHĀRĀJA[1]

On February 7, 1921, the new moon day of the month of Māgha, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja took his divine birth in a highly educated and respected *brāhmaṇa* family in the village of Tiwārīpura, in the Buxar district of Bihar, India. In February, 1946, he met his *gurudeva*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and his life of complete and exemplary dedication to the path of *kṛṣṇa-bhakti* began.

From 1946 onward, he traveled throughout India to spread the message of *bhakti-yoga*, or establishing a connection with the Supreme Lord through devotional service. In the mid 1980's, the first Western devotees came to receive his guidance, and in 1996, upon repeated requests, he went to Europe and America. During the next fourteen years, he circled the globe more than thirty times.

His *gurudeva* had instructed him to translate the writings of prominent Vaiṣṇavas into Hindi, a task he assiduously assumed throughout his entire life and which resulted in the publication

1 This section is taken from "A Glimpse of the Life of Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja," *Rays of The Harmonist* magazine, Vyāsapūjā Edition, 2011.

of nearly fifty Hindi texts. These invaluable masterpieces are currently being translated into the major languages of the world.

Since his heart brimmed with the most profound realizations of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, which automatically include the essence of all transcendental truths, it was radiant with the deepest affection. Those who heard his discourses felt supreme protection from the onslaught of material miseries and experienced a deeper commitment to the path of *bhakti*. When he uttered the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* at the time of initiation, it bore the same effect. He is famous for how he transformed people's hearts in these ways.

A most endearing hallmark of his telling others about Kṛṣṇa was the heart-stealing affection he showed to all. As a topmost devotee of the Lord, he was able to enter the deepest recesses of the heart to give the unmistakable reassurance that he is one's eternal well-wisher. The depth of his affection is a tangible reality for all who have experienced it, and this in itself bears subjective testimony to the fact that he was a true emissary of the Supreme Lord. As thousands of devotees will affirm, his genuine interest in the spiritual well-being of all souls was evident in his equal love and affection for all. He cared not if a person were his disciple, the disciple of another, or of another philosophical school altogether. His divine affection knew no bounds.

OTHER SPEAKERS

During his lectures, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja often asked others to speak about a given topic. These speakers have extensively heard the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and the philosophy of *bhakti-yoga* from him, and simply reiterate what they have heard. In this book, it is seen that he sometimes interacts with or corrects them, which helps us focus more clearly on the point being made. Their respective names precede their talk.

Where there is an exchange between Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja and the speaker, we have inserted the name before each speaker. All other text is a transcription of Śrīla Mahārāja's lecture.

Two of the speakers have received new names befitting changes in their spiritual social status (*āśrama*): Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī is now Śrīpād Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja, and Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī is now Śrīpād Bhaktivedānta Āśrama Mahārāja. We have noted this the first time their respective names appear in this presentation.

OUR EDITING PROCESS

We have edited these lectures with certain goals in mind. Our first and foremost goal was to properly represent Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja. We also wanted a person reading *bhakti-yoga* literature for the first time to understand it with ease, although you will note the occasional irreplaceable Sanskrit word. And we wanted a person familiar with hearing the lectures of Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja to hear his 'voice.'

Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja has explained that in relation to presenting the lectures of one's *guru* to the public, the higher class disciple sees what the *guru* wants from him. When English is his *guru's* second language, such a disciple corrects the English so as to best represent him.[2] We concede that we are far from high-class disciples, yet in an attempt to follow Śrīla Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja's guidelines, we have made certain editorial decisions in pursuit of trying to nicely represent our *guru*, Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja.

2 This is a summary of Śrīla Bhakti Rakṣaka Śrīdhara Gosvāmī Mahārāja's discussion with devotees in March 1978. A transcription can be found in *Walking with a Saint*, 2007, in the section "Why We Edit the Way We Do."

We tried to the best of our ability to present these lectures in accordance with Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's wording, but sometimes we had to insert a few words to convey a gesture, edit to make a concept clear in English or to express implied and unfinished wording, or adjust sentence structure. All such edits were made to ensure that his spoken word and expressed concepts were clearly conveyed in written format.

Sometimes, an editorial insertion was necessary to clarify a philosophical point or to insert an intended phrase or sentence from a story. Such insertions appear in brackets.

We have only presented those lectures for which we had a video file. In three instances, where there is an interruption in a video file, we have replaced that part of the story with a relevant excerpt from Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's books or classes. In one instance, we have replaced missing text from a *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* verse translation by Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedānta Swami Prabhupāda.

APPENDIX – URLs FOR THE VIDEO FILES OF THE CLASSES

In the book's Appendix, we have presented the date each lecture, or chapter, was spoken and the relevant video's file name, so that anyone can watch Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja deliver these priceless lectures. The reader is welcome to communicate to us any shortcomings in our presentation of these classes.

GLOSSARY

Generally, but not always, definitions of Sanskrit words have been included directly after the first few instances of a term's

use. In this book, we have tried to minimize Sanskrit terms as much as possible, and have, in most cases, favored conveying the meaning of a term over its direct use. Nevertheless, some Sanskrit terminology was found to be indispensable, and therefore a brief glossary of Sanskrit names and terms has been included at the back of the book.

DIACRITIC PRONUNCIATION

Throughout this book, the diacritic markings used to indicate the pronunciation of Sanskrit words are pronounced as follows: **ā** as in father, **ī** as in see, **ū** as in boot, **ṛ** as the ri in rip, **ṭ** as in train, **ḍ** as in drain, **ṅ** as in ink, **ś** and **ṣ** as the sh in ship, and **c** as in chip.

Although a series of checks was in place to ensure accuracy in our presentation of these lectures, we are aware that there still may be discrepancies. We beg forgiveness from our respected readers if they find the text inadequate in any way.

Due to Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's blissful absorption in the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of sweetness, his narration of these pastimes is not only charming but potent. We hope those new to the path of *bhakti-yoga*, as well as those who have walked the path for many years, are nourished at heart by this book.

Aspiring to serve Śrī Guru and the Vaiṣṇavas,
The Publication Team

Śrī Viśvarūpa-mahotsava
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We would like to thank Śrīpād Hṛṣīkeśa Mahārāja and the devotees from Malaysia for envisioning that if presented in book form, these lectures would be invaluable to all spiritual aspirants.

MAHĀRĀJA PARĪKṢIT PLACING THE SNAKE AROUND THE NECK OF ŚAMĪKA ṚṢI

Advent of the Immaculate Purāṇa

He is full of all powers. All opulence is within Him, and He is always so merciful. He desires that all suffering persons come to Him, serve Him, chant His names, and remember Him. He wants that they should be happy forever.

------ ------

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE SOUL

jīvera 'svarūpa' haya—kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa'
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Madhya-līlā* 20.108)

By constitution, all souls are eternal servants of Godhead. Nowadays, in different parts of the world, there are so many conceptions of God, but God is one without a second. The people of one place may not believe in God, while the people of another place do. But whether they believe or not, there is certainly a person or a power that controls all. No human can control everything. No human can create this world and control the whole universe.

In this world, whether one accepts God or not, no one can deny the truth of death. Whether one is an atheist or a theist, all will accept that death is true. Furthermore, all will accept without any doubt that in this world, there is birth, death, sorrow, and suffering. No one is satisfied. All fear death. At any time, suffering may come.

In this world, sometimes a man feels happiness in the company of a lady, and a lady feels happiness in the company of a man. Sometimes, we take something [for our enjoyment] and taste it. Sometimes, we have and support many children, and by this, a little happiness comes. But this happiness is always coming and going; there is no permanent happiness in this world.

The *ṛṣis* and *munis* (saints and sages) have researched the following questions: From whom does the world come? From whom does support and nourishment come? In whom does the world again enter? That very person or power is God. G. O. D. –

Generator, Operator, and Destroyer. If we are not faithful to Him and if we are not serving Him, we cannot be happy.

He is full of all powers. All opulence is within Him, and He is always so very merciful. He desires that all suffering persons come to Him, serve Him, chant His names, remember Him, and be happy forever. He wants that they know, "This body is not my self; it is not the soul. This mind, also, is not the soul. They are temporary. Our soul is present, but it is covered by these two outer bodies (the body and mind). As a result, we have forgotten God."

God, also, is a person. He is an ocean of *rasa* (transcendental loving relationships) and very powerful, and so we should try to know and serve Him. Then we can come out of [the cycle of repeated] birth, death, sorrow, and suffering, and be eternally happy. Without doing this, there is no way we can be happy.

In this world, there may be so many different styles of living, but everywhere, the nature of the soul is the same. All are eternal – in China, Russia, America, or anywhere. Souls are the same, in the same category [in that each soul is an eternal servant of God, Śrī Kṛṣṇa], but due to lack of good association, people have forgotten Kṛṣṇa, and they are forgetting Him more and more.

In India, Vedic culture and knowledge are so developed that they have 'discovered' the soul, and they have 'discovered' the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the variety of relationships the soul can have with Him. We cannot see and realize God with these material eyes or with material knowledge. Never.

Transcendental knowledge is given by the unbroken disciplic succession of bona fide spiritual masters, starting with Kṛṣṇa Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. From Him, the disciplic succession came. He imparted this transcendental knowledge to Lord Brahmā, and Brahmā gave it to Nārada Ṛṣi. Nārada Ṛṣi gave it to Vyāsadeva, and Vyāsadeva gave it to Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Thus it descended. We should trust this disciplic succession and try to follow it.

What are the qualities of God? How is He so merciful? What relationship do we have with Him, and how can we realize and serve Him eternally? This is explained in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In my classes here, I want to explain something from the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. It will be very tasteful to hear and also very helpful in your practice of *bhakti-yoga*.

Without *bhakti-yoga*, we cannot realize the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is so merciful that He sometimes descends to this world. Why? To bestow His mercy upon the living entities here. He manifests in so many ways, in so many incarnations. For instance, He comes in the form of Matsya (a fish), Kūrma (a tortoise), Varāha (a boar), Nṛsiṁhadeva (half man, half lion), Vāmana (a dwarf), Paraśurāma (a warrior), Rāma (a great king), Baladeva (the elder brother of Śrī Kṛṣṇa), Buddha (a teacher of non-violence), and then Kalki (the destroyer of the universes). But the root of all ten forms is Śrī Kṛṣṇa. He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

He comes – descends to this world – and attracts all. What to speak of attracting human beings, He also attracts the deer, birds, and other animals, as well as the creepers and trees – everything. You should know that trees possess a soul, as do the creepers. A soul is present in hogs, fish, eggs – everything – and in demigods also. If you practice *bhakti-yoga*, you can see and realize this fact, and gradually, you will attain *bhakti*.

What is *bhakti*?

Two things are eternal: the soul and the Supersoul. The Supersoul is Kṛṣṇa, and there are unlimited souls. The pure soul and Kṛṣṇa meet together only through the medium of love and affection. Meeting with God through pure love and affection is called *bhakti-yoga*. This love and affection (*prema*) has so many categories.

Those souls who are in the purest stage – those in the spiritual realms of Goloka, Vṛndāvana, and Vaikuṇṭha – serve Kṛṣṇa eterally.

Those souls who are in material bondage, however, are covered by the deluding material potency and have a gross and subtle body. They are called conditioned souls. Conditioned souls are always unhappy, suffering in the cyclic chain of birth and death. How can they attain the eternal, transcendental stage? They can attain it by practicing *bhakti-yoga* from the beginning – from faith, to firm faith, then a taste for devotional service, attachment, the awakening of pure spiritual emotion, and finally, extremely condensed love for God (*prema*).

I want to explain some of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, because people generally do not want to hear high-class conclusive philosophical truths. You will find it very interesting if we explain the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* – how Kṛṣṇa descends to this world, how He kills the demons and protects saintly persons, and how He plays when He is here.

THE STORY OF PARĪKṢIT MAHĀRĀJA

Śukadeva Gosvāmī spoke *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to Parīkṣit Mahārāja. Do you know Parīkṣit Mahārāja?

About five thousand years ago, there was a king named Parīkṣit. He was the son of Abhimanyu and his wife Uttarā. Abhimanyu was the son of Arjuna and was connected with Kṛṣṇa. [Arjuna's wife, Subhadrā, was the sister of Kṛṣṇa.] It was in this dynasty that Parīkṣit Mahārāja appeared. He was a very learned and powerful king.

Once, Parīkṣit Mahārāja went out to conquer the whole world. When he was returning, he was so hungry and thirsty that he went to the hermitage of the saint Śamīka Ṛṣi, whose son's name was Śṛṅgi Ṛṣi. At that time, Śamīka Ṛṣi was meditating on Kṛṣṇa, and had gone into such a trance that he forgot his body and

became completely unaware of his surroundings. He was totally absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. In the meantime, King Parīkṣit approached him and said, "I am so thirsty; please give me water." But the *ṛṣi* did not hear him. The king asked two or three times, and then he remembered that he was the king of that place. He thought, "Upon my coming here, this *ṛṣi* has seen me and closed his eyes. He is not actually in trance. A saintly person, a Vaiṣṇava, should be very humble and merciful. I am asking for water, but he is not giving it. He is remaining totally silent." Parīkṣit Mahārāja became somewhat angry.

[As a child,] King Parīkṣit had played on the lap of Kṛṣṇa. He was a very religious-minded person and was very learned; he knew all philosophical conclusions about the Absolute Truth. How then did this illusion, by which he became angry, come about? The material illusory potency of the Lord (*māyā*) cannot touch him, but the spiritual illusory potency (*yogamāyā*) can. *Yogamāyā* desired for *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to somehow manifest in this world, and that is why she put the king in illusion. Otherwise, Parīkṣit Mahārāja, being so learned, remained far away from that material illusory potency, which normally could not cover his knowledge. Yet, by the wish of Kṛṣṇa, it happened. The king thought, "You are not honoring me, so I must give you some punishment. I cannot beat you or abuse you, because you are a *brāhmaṇa* (of the priestly order), but I will give you a garland – a snake garland."

In that place, there was a dead snake lying on the ground. Parīkṣit Mahārāja took the serpent and wrapped it threefold around the *ṛṣi's* neck like a garland, and then left that place. On his way, he thought, "What have I just done? Have I offended that *ṛṣi*? If he was really in trance and meditating on Kṛṣṇa, then I have done wrong and have committed an offence. But I don't know if he was really in trance or not. If he was, then, by his curse,

I may be destroyed; my life may be destroyed. What should I do?" Thinking like this, he proceeded toward his kingdom.

As he was nearing his kingdom, two students of Śamīka Ṛṣi arrived. They offered him obeisance, and said, "When you put the dead serpent on the neck of Śamīka Ṛṣi, his five-year-old son was playing with other boys nearby. When he heard that someone had put a dead snake around his father's neck, he became furious. He took some water from the river Kauśika (Ganges), and spoke the following curse: 'Whoever placed that dead snake on my father's neck will be bitten by a snake-bird and die in just seven days. No one will be able to save him.' He then took water and sprinkled it [signifying the affirmation of a curse]."

Śṛṅgi Ṛṣi then went to his father, climbed on his lap, and began to weep loudly. After some time, his father came to his external senses and asked his son, "Why are you weeping?"

"O Father, have you not seen this dead serpent on your neck?"

Śamīka Ṛṣi understood that it was Parīkṣit Mahārāja who had done this. How did he know? He knew past, present, and future. Anyone who does real internal worship and service of the Lord (*bhajana*) becomes so powerful that he can know past, present, and future. You, also, can know past, present, and future by performing *bhajana*. All of our spiritual predecessors are qualified to have this knowledge. Like Kṛṣṇa, they are so powerful that whatever they say comes true.

The sage rebuked his son: "Oh, you are very ignorant. This has been done by King Parīkṣit. He is so learned and religious-minded. He is the nephew of Kṛṣṇa and the grandson of Arjuna. If he dies, the whole world will be thrown into chaos and destroyed. A *brāhmaṇa* should be tolerant and forgiving. Why did you become so angry? A *brahmacārī*, especially, should be very tolerant, yet you became angry. You know that tolerance is the most important quality of a Vaiṣṇava or anyone."

tṛṇād api sunīcena, taror api sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena, kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ

Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka (3)

[Thinking oneself to be even lower and more worthless than the insignificant grass that has been trampled beneath everyone's feet, being more tolerant than a tree, being devoid of pride, and offering respect to all others according to their respective positions, one should continuously chant the holy name of Śrī Hari.]

"You are a *brāhmaṇa*, but you do not have the quality of tolerance. What will happen if Parīkṣit Mahārāja dies? He will die; I know." In trance, Śamīka Ṛṣi saw that by this incident, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* would manifest in this world, and so he became silent, and said nothing more.

Śamīka Ṛṣi could see everything – that Parīkṣit Mahārāja would hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* from Śukadeva Gosvāmī and that Parīkṣit Mahārāja would thus be liberated – but he also knew that Parīkṣit was already a liberated soul, and that this was like a drama. He realized that Kṛṣṇa was doing all this. Śamīka Ṛṣi told one of his students, "Go to Parīkṣit Mahārāja and tell him, 'In seven days a serpent will bite you and you will die, so do whatever you want to do.' "

That student went to Parīkṣit Mahārāja and related everything to him. Mahārāja Parīkṣit became happy and told the student that this was not a curse but a benediction. "For a long time I have wanted to give up all these worldly things – kingdom, reputation, son, wife, and so forth – and practice *bhakti-yoga* in a solitary place in the forest, but I was too involved in all this to be able to do so. I therefore think this is not a curse. Rather, Kṛṣṇa has given me an opportunity. It is the blessing of Kṛṣṇa Himself. I must give up everything worldly, and chant, remember,

and hear the very sweet and powerful pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. This is the only way."

Parīkṣit Mahārāja did not go back to his kingdom. Leaving his royal dress, bow and arrows, crown, and everything, and wearing only a simple cloth, he sat on the bank of the Ganges, facing the river.

In the meantime, all the great realized *ṛṣis*, *maharṣis*, and Vaiṣṇavas, like Nārada, Vyāsa, Agastya, Vaśiṣṭha, Atri, Parāśara, Viśvāmitra, and Paraśurāma, arrived. There was no computer system or microphone – nothing. But in a moment they came. How did they know to come? Do you know the Caspian Sea? That is where Kaśyapa Ṛṣi came from. Vaśiṣṭha also came from such a far distance – Mongolia. Many *ṛṣis*, about eighty-eight thousand, came from different parts of the world in a moment. We cannot imagine how it occurred. Many sages who were steeped in transcendental knowledge, fruitive workers, empiric philosophers, those who perform severe austerities, and *yogīs* also came there and were talking with each other.

Parīkṣit Mahārāja humbly asked them, "I want to know something: If a man is on his deathbed, what should he do? If a man is not dying today or immediately, then he will die tomorrow, or the day after, or in one year, two years, four years, twenty years, fifty years, one hundred years, five hundred years, or even after one hundred thousand, five hundred thousand, or millions of years. He must [eventually] die."

Some of us may live for one hundred years, some may live for even one hundred twenty years, but it is very rare [for a human being] to live longer than that. Still, we hear that Indra, the king of heaven, and others lived for many thousands of years, or hundreds of thousands of years, and that Brahmā, the secondary creator of this universe, lives even longer, for so many millennia. Lord Brahmā has such a long life-span: 4,320,000,000 years constitute the twelve hours of his day, and the same constitutes

the twelve hours of his night. There are three hundred sixty days in his year, and he lives for one hundred such years. But even so, he too will die. We, also, will surely die. How can we escape death? How can we be liberated, and how can we be happy?"

Some of the *ṛṣis* and *munis* (sages and great thinkers) instructed Parīkṣit to meditate on the featureless aspect of the Absolute Truth. Some recommended that he perform austerities. Others urged him to give hundreds of thousands of cows to the *brāhmaṇas*. Someone else said, "You should take bath in the Ganges." In this way, the *ṛṣis* who had gathered there advocated many different courses of action.

Then a young boy of sixteen years, naked, tall, and very beautiful, but covered with dust, approached from a distant place. Some ladies noticed him and took him to be a madman. They scooped up handfuls of dirt and threw it at him. Some naughty boys clapped and exclaimed, "He is a mad person," and threw stones at him. But like an elephant, he continued on his way, being unaffected. He took no revenge and exhibited no anger; he was completely carefree. He came near Parīkṣit Mahārāja.

Parīkṣit Mahārāja and the whole council of sages saw him, and folding their hands, immediately stood up. Vyāsadeva, Nārada Muni, and the *ṛṣis* Parāśara and Vaśiṣṭa blessed him, saying, "May auspiciousness be upon you." Others also folded their hands like Parīkṣit Mahārāja. Parīkṣit Mahārāja came forward and welcomed Śukadeva Gosvāmī. He took him and gave him a high sitting place like this [touching his raised seat]. This is called a *vyāsāsana*.

THE TRUE MEANING OF 'VYĀSĀSANA'

That *vyāsāsana* was not like this [slightly lifts up the bolsters of his *vyāsāsana*]. What was it like? It was perhaps an elevated, a high earthen place, or it was constructed of wood. Nowadays,

this large opulent seat is called a *vyāsāsana*. But what is this? I do not think this is actually a *vyāsāsana*. What is a *vyāsāsana*? It is a seat on which a man like Vyāsadeva sits, and upon doing so, all the qualities of Vyāsadeva enter him. This is a *vyāsāsana*. Such a person can explain essential truths about Kṛṣṇa, the living entity, the deluding material potency, etc., and thus he can give Kṛṣṇa to others. Suppose there is a characterless person who is attached to money and the three W's – wine, women, and wealth – who is quite ignorant of all philosophical conclusions, who [for external show] wears big, big sacred clay markings (*tilaka*) and holy neck beads of *tulasī*, brilliant saffron-colored cloth, and carries a big *daṇḍa* (staff of a renunciant). If such a person sits on a golden throne, is not a *vyāsāsana*. Really it is not. The *vyāsāsana* represents the qualities of a Vaiṣṇava, a realized soul like Vyāsa, who comes to preach about Kṛṣṇa everywhere and place Him in the heart of all souls.

[By placing an unqualified person on this raised seat,] we make some offense to the *vyāsāsana*. We should not do that. I want that those sitting on the *vyāsāsana* think, "I should have the quality of Vyāsa." What is that? *Bhakti*, pure *bhakti*, with realization of the essential truths about Kṛṣṇa, the living entity, the deluding material potency, and pure devotion, and with knowledge of all of the literature that manifests the real meaning of the Vedas, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavata*m, and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. In fact, the *vyāsāsana* is only for such a person; one who cannot fall from his spiritual position. We see that those who use the *vyāsāsana* without having such qualification fall down after some days – head down and feet up. There is no one to save them. The *vyāsāsana* is such a thing that one who rightfully sits on it will never fall down. He will always serve the Divine Couple, Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Parīkṣit Mahārāja gave an elevated seat to Śukadeva Gosvāmī, and with honor and humility, he asked two questions. Actually, he

asked many questions, seven or eight, but they were all included in these two:

"If a man is dying just now, like me…" Actually, Parīkṣit Mahārāja had seven days left, but he is asking about a man who is dying immediately, in only one minute's time or no time at all. "What should he do? Should he hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*?"

If he has no time, then he can chant the *mahā-mantra*, or the holy names of Kṛṣṇa – *hare kṛṣṇa hare kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa hare hare, hare rāma hare rāma rāma rāma hare hare*. If he has no time for the full *mahā-mantra*, then 'O Kṛṣṇa' will do. But Kṛṣṇa's name is somewhat crooked[1]: Kṛ-ṣ-ṇa. If he cannot chant 'Kṛṣṇa,' he should then chant 'Rāma' or 'Rādhe.' 'Rādhe' is superior. By hearing this, the servants of Yamarāja, the god of death, will not come to take him to the lower realms, and that is why he said in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā
mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ
tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena
yajeta puruṣaṁ param
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.3.10)

[Whether one is free from desires, full of desires, or desirous of liberation, one should, having attained a higher intelligence, worship Bhagavān, the Supreme Person, with intense devotion.]

etan nirvidyamānānām
icchatām akuto-bhayam
yogināṁ nṛpa nirṇītaṁ
harer nāmānukīrtanam
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.1.11)

1 Kṛṣṇa's dear devotees sometimes refer to Him as 'crooked' or 'tricky' because of His playful, elusive nature. Since His name is non-different from Him, such descriptions apply to His name, also.

[O King, it is the opinion of all scriptures and all previous spiritual predecessors that whether one is an unalloyed devotee, detached from material existence on account of direct experience of the misery of material life, whether one is desirous of elevation to the heavenly planets or liberation, or whether one is a self-satisfied *yogī*, one should chant the holy name of the Lord with great love.]

At the end of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Śrī Vedavyāsa has glorified the chanting of the Lord's holy names:

nāma-saṅkīrtanaṁ yasya
sarva-pāpa praṇāśanam
praṇāmo duḥkha-śamanas
taṁ namāmi hariṁ param
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (12.13.23)

[All sins are completely destroyed by the chanting of the Supreme Lord's names, and all kinds of miseries are relieved by complete surrender to His lotus feet and by always bowing down to Him. I offer my respectful obeisance to that Absolute Truth, Śrī Hari.]

If a person has only two or three days left to live, then he should hear Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. In this way, he will attain a high destination. If he hears the name of Kṛṣṇa and Rāma at that time, then, when he again comes to this world, he will have the chance to hear conclusive truths about Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and he will chant His holy names. Knowing that Goloka Vṛndāvana, the highest planet in the spiritual sky, is the supreme destination, he will achieve love for Kṛṣṇa like that of the residents of Vraja. Like Ajāmila[2], anyone can

2 Ajāmila had been a sober *brāhmaṇa*, but due to circumstance, he fell to depravity. As he was dying, he called out to his son, whose name was Nārāyaṇa (a name of God), and because of the holy potency of that name, he was delivered to the spiritual abode.

conquer death by hearing Kṛṣṇa's name. He may return to this world and get a bona fide *guru*, gradually progress through the stages of attaining faith, firm faith, a taste for devotional service, attachment, the awakening of pure spiritual emotion, and finally, condensed love for God (*prema*). Thereafter, he will go to Goloka Vṛndāvana.

After Parīkṣit Mahārāja asked his questions, Śukadeva Gosvāmī began to recite *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. You should also know who Śukadeva Gosvāmī is. [To Puṇḍarīka dāsa] Can you explain?

THE HISTORY OF ŚRĪLA ŚUKADEVA GOSVĀMĪ

Puṇḍarīka dāsa: Śrīla Gurudeva has explained the history of Parīkṣit Mahārāja and the pastime of Śukadeva Gosvāmī's meeting with him.

We have heard that five thousand years ago, when Śrī Kṛṣṇa was performing His pastimes in this material world, Śukadeva Gosvāmī was present in the form of a parrot who was very dear to Śrīmatī Rādhikā. He used to stay with Her, and She loved this parrot, because he would always chant, "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa," in such a sweet voice that Śrīmatī Rādhikā would feel very happy. She would get him to sit on Her hand, and She would caress him with love and affection. She would tell him to say the name 'Kṛṣṇa,' and the parrot would say, "Kṛṣṇa."

Śrīmatī Rādhikā would give the parrot pomegranate seeds, beautiful sweets, and other things to eat, and the parrot became very satisfied. One day, for some reason, the parrot flew from Śrīmatī Rādhikā's palace in Varṣāṇā to Nandagāon, where Kṛṣṇa was playing. He sat on a tree where Kṛṣṇa was performing His pastimes and began singing, "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa." He chanted that

name, because this is what he was trained to do. Hearing this sweet sound, Kṛṣṇa was attracted. He called the parrot in such an affectionate way that he came and sat on His hand. Kṛṣṇa began teaching the parrot to say 'Rādhe.'

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: No. Kṛṣṇa did not teach the parrot to say 'Rādhe' here.

[To Prema-prayojana dāsa] Do you remember? You should speak.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Śrīmatī Rādhikā was very affectionate to Her parrot, and as Śrīpād Puṇḍarīka dāsa explained, one day the parrot flew to Nandagāon from Varṣāṇā. When he got there, the parrot cried, "Oh, why was I so restless to have left Varṣāṇā?"

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: The parrot was calling, "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa" in the same tune that Śrīmatī Rādhikā would usually sing. Kṛṣṇa thought, "Where is Rādhikā?" He was searching, but he could not see Her. He saw a parrot in a *tamāla* tree, saying, "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa." Then the parrot began to say, "I am so unfortunate. I was always in Rādhikā's hands, playing, and She was caressing me and giving me pomegranate seeds and sometimes rice in milk. She was always nourishing me. But I am so unfortunate. I left this loving Śrīmatī Rādhikā, because my nature as a bird, as an animal, is to go here and there. Now I am here." And again he uttered, "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa."

Kṛṣṇa thought, "It seems that he is very near and dear to Rādhikā." Kṛṣṇa told him, "You should again utter, 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa.' "

Then, very sweetly, in the tune sung by Rādhikā, the parrot uttered, "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa." He again said, "I am so unfortunate. I flew from the hands of Rādhikā and came here. I am ungrateful."

Kṛṣṇa called to him, "Come, come." He flew into the hand of Kṛṣṇa, and Kṛṣṇa told him to say 'Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa.'

In the meantime, two *sakhīs* (girlfriends) of Śrīmatī Rādhikā – Lalitā and Viśākhā – came there and said, "O Kṛṣṇa, this parrot belongs to our *sakhī*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Please return him to Her."

"If he belongs to your *sakhī*, you can call him," Kṛṣṇa replied. "He can go. I have nothing to do with this parrot."

Lalitā and Viśākhā called, "*Śuka*, *śuka*," but the parrot did not come to them.

"How can I make him go back?" Kṛṣṇa asked. "If he belongs to your *sakhī*, then She can come and take him, or you can take him to Her, but I cannot make him go by force."

Kṛṣṇa and Madhumaṅgala continued to play with the parrot and hear him chant, "Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa."

Lalitā and Viśākhā went to Yaśodā, the mother of Kṛṣṇa, and pleaded with her, "Śrīmatī Rādhikā is so worried. She may give up Her life. Please take this parrot from Kṛṣṇa so that we can return him to Her."

Yaśodā said, "Don't worry. Sit down and wait here. I am coming." Yaśodā went to Kṛṣṇa and took His hands in hers. "You are a very naughty boy," she said, "always playing with birds and animals. Come with me. Your father, Nanda Bābā, is waiting for You to take *mahā-prasādam*[3], but You are playing here and there." She took the bird and began to drag Kṛṣṇa by His hands.

Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but He could not think of what to do! He became speechless like an ignorant person, like a child. He was dumbfounded.

Mother Yaśodā dragged Kṛṣṇa there and then said, "O *sakhīs*, Kṛṣṇa must now take bath." She gave them the bird, saying, "Please go quickly. I don't want Kṛṣṇa to be always playing with birds, dogs, monkeys, and all these animals."

In this way, the parrot was returned to Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

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3 The remnants of food offered to the Supreme Lord.

When Kṛṣṇa's manifest pastimes were coming to a close, Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhikā instructed the parrot, "You should stay in this world. We are going to return to Our pastimes in the spiritual realm, but if you are not in this world, it will be destroyed. You should stay here and distribute *bhakti*. Later, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will manifest through you."

[Hearing that Śrī Rādhā and Śrī Kṛṣṇa would soon return to Goloka Vṛndāvana,] the parrot became so worried, but he could not disobey Their order to remain in this world. Later, when Kṛṣṇa's pastimes became unmanifest and He returned to His transcendental abode, Vṛndāvana Gokula, this parrot began to fly here and there, searching for a place to hear narrations of Kṛṣṇa, but he could not find any such place.

By and by, he came to Mount Kailāśa, where he heard Śaṅkara (Lord Śiva) reciting that same *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* [as presented in the history of Parīkṣit Mahārāja] to his wife, Pārvatī-devī. The parrot sat in a tree that had very green leaves. In the meantime, Śaṅkara was speaking the First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth Cantos. Pārvatī-devī had no interest in conclusive philosophical truths (*siddhānta*).[4] Those who have no interest in *siddhānta* will sleep or play. They will have no interest in it at all. Pārvatī-devī slept, but the parrot had so much interest in hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that he imitated Pārvatī-devī's voice and encouraged Śaṅkara to continue: "Go on, very good, very interesting. What happened after this? What happened after that?"

Śaṅkara did not doubt that Pārvatī-devī was listening. He went on reciting *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and when the Tenth Canto [which narrates Kṛṣṇa's pastimes] was complete, he began the Eleventh Canto, which contains much *siddhānta*. At that time, Pārvatī-devī awoke. "Oh," she said, "I have not heard everything, I was sleeping. Please recite this again for me."

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4 Pārvatī-devī was fully versed in all philosophical truths, but for the sake of this pastime, she appeared to be disinterested in them.

ŚAṄKARA AND PĀRVATĪ-DEVĪ

Śaṅkara said, "If you were sleeping, then who was encouraging me to continue by saying 'Go on, go on, go on'?" He looked around, but he did not see any human being. He then peered very carefully at the green leaves of a *tamāla* tree, where he saw a parrot. No other birds or animals were there – only that one parrot. Śaṅkara exclaimed, "The parrot was imitating the voice of Pārvatī-devī! He is unqualified to hear *Bhāgavatam*, but he heard everything. I must kill him, because if an unqualified person hears *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, he will misuse that knowledge and make offense."

That is why Śaṅkara wanted to punish and kill him. He took his trident and chased him. This parrot was immortal, yet [fearing for his life,] he flew to the hermitage of Vyāsadeva. There, Vyāsadeva was speaking the same narration, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, to his wife, Vīṭikā. In wonder – "Oh, very good!" – her mouth opened. The parrot flew into her mouth and entered her womb.

Śaṅkara soon arrived at that place. "O Vyāsa," he asked, "has any parrot come here?"

Vyāsadeva began to smile. "Why are you searching for a parrot?"

Śaṅkara replied, "He has heard *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, although he is unqualified, and so I want to kill him."

"What is the result of hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*?" Vyāsadeva asked.

"Anyone who hears *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will become transcendental and immortal," Śaṅkara answered.

"If he has heard it and become immortal, then how will you kill him?"

Śaṅkara smiled and left that place.

Thus the parrot entered the womb of his mother, Vīṭikā, and remained there for the next sixteen years. Vyāsadeva petitioned him repeatedly: "Who are you, who have remained in the womb of your mother? Please come out. Don't give your mother pain."

Śukadeva replied, "I don't want to enter *māyā* (illusion). If you can remove this *māyā* for a moment, then I will come out."

"Very well. I am powerful enough to do this," Vyāsadeva replied. "You should come out."

"Who are you?" Śukadeva asked.

"I am Vyāsa."

"I have no faith in you."

"In whom do you have faith?"

"I have faith in Kṛṣṇa."

"All right. I shall call Kṛṣṇa." Vyāsadeva meditated on Kṛṣṇa and prayed to Him to appear there, to tell Śukadeva to come out.

Kṛṣṇa came immediately and said, "O boy, you should come out of the womb of your mother."

The boy replied, "I don't want to enter *māyā*. Who are you?"

"I am powerful enough to protect you. I am Kṛṣṇa Himself."

"Oh, You are Kṛṣṇa. Then You can do this."

Kṛṣṇa said, "You should come out right now."

If a mustard seed, very round and tiny, drops on to the edge of a razor, can it stay there? Whether it falls this side or that, it will fall. [In other words, "*Māyā* will touch you only for the amount of time a mustard seed can balance on the edge of a razor."]

In a moment, Kṛṣṇa removed *māyā*. Śukadeva came out and immediately ran into the deep, dense forest.

Vyāsadeva thought, "My son is a *brahma-jñānī* (one who has realized the impersonal feature of the Supreme Lord). I wanted him to hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In this world, there is no one qualified to hear it. I wanted to explain it to him, but he is running away." Vyāsa began to follow Śukadeva, calling out, "O my son, O my dear son!"

Śukadeva ignored his father's call and continued into the forest. The trees echoed in response to the call of Vyāsadeva, "Who is a son? Who is a father? Who is a mother? Who are sons and daughters? There is only illusion. There is no relationship with any father or mother in this world. Our only father, mother, and so forth is Kṛṣṇa. These material relationships are illusory. We are all souls."

Śukadeva Gosvāmī left all such illusory relationships behind.

There is no true relationship between any two people in this world, not between father and mother, wife and husband, nor between daughter and son with father and mother. The only permanent relationship is with Kṛṣṇa. All others last only for some time.

Śukadeva left that place. [Pointing to Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brāhmacārī] What happened after that?

ŚRĪLA ŚUKADEVA GOSVĀMĪ IS ATTRACTED TO ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

> [While Śrī Vyāsadeva was following his son, beautiful young damsels who were bathing naked covered their bodies with cloth, although Śrī Vyāsadeva himself was not naked. But they had not done so when his son had passed. The sage inquired about this, and the young ladies replied that his son was purified and when looking at them made no distinction between male and female, but the sage made such distinctions.*]
>
> *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.4.5)

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī (now known as Śrīpād Bhaktivedānta Mādhava Mahārāja): Vyāsadeva said to the girls, "My dear son went this way just now. Seeing him, you did not cover yourselves, and you weren't shy. Why, upon seeing me, did all of you become so shy?"

They replied, "Your son never asked us any question. You are asking, but he did not."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: "He looked upon us as if we were dry wood. He did not see male or female. But you are asking us questions."

ŚUKADEVA GOSVĀMĪ

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: "Śukadeva Gosvāmī does not care. He does not see the difference between us and dry wood. But you are asking us."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: "You see the difference between male and female."

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: Vyāsadeva tried his level best, but he could not find Śukadeva, and so he came back. In the meantime, some hunters came who would go to the forest every day to catch birds. They maintained their life by selling these birds, baby birds. Vyāsadeva said, "I shall give you a *mantra* by which you can catch more birds."

He then narrated a verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

barhāpīḍaṁ naṭa-vara-vapuḥ karṇayoḥ karṇikāraṁ
bibhrad vāsaḥ kanaka-kapiśaṁ vaijayantīṁ ca mālām
randhrān veṇor adhara-sudhayāpūrayan gopa-vṛndair
vṛndāraṇyaṁ sva-pada-ramaṇaṁ prāviśad gīta-kīrtiḥ

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.21.5)

[Śyāmasundara is entering the forest of Vṛndāvana accompanied by His cowherd boyfriends. In His turban there is a peacock feather; over His ears, a *karṇikāra* flower; on His body, His yellow garments glitter like gold; and around His neck, extending down to His knees, is a heart-stealing garland strung with five kinds of fragrant forest flowers. His beautiful dress is like that of an expert dancer on a stage, and the nectar of His lips flows through the holes of His flute. Singing His glories, the cowherd boys follow from behind. In this way, this Vṛndāvana-dhāma, which is more charming than Vaikuṇṭha, has become even more beautiful by the impressions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, which are marked with the conch, disc, and other symbols.]

There are so many verses in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, but this verse about the beauty of Kṛṣṇa's form is prominent.

When the hunters uttered this verse in the jungle, so many parrots came into their trap. One human, completely naked [Śukadeva Gosvāmī], came to them and asked, "O my dear friends, from where did you hear this verse?"

[Video file ends here. The completion of the story is taken from a lecture by Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja, spoken on July 8, 2007, Germany, as transcribed by the Harikathā team.]

Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī said, "Please ask whoever has taught you this verse to explain the qualities of the person described in this verse."

The next day, the hunters returned to Śrīla Vyāsadeva, and he gave them another verse:

aho bakī yaṁ stana-kāla-kūṭaṁ
jighāṁsayāpāyayad apy asādhvī
lebhe gatiṁ dhātry-ucitāṁ tato 'nyaṁ
kaṁ vā dayāluṁ śaraṇaṁ vrajema

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.2.23)

The witch Pūtanā went to Vṛndāvana to kill Kṛṣṇa, having put poison in her breast, but Kṛṣṇa is so merciful that after killing her, He gave her a destination like that of a mother. Who can be as merciful as Kṛṣṇa? Of whom can we take shelter besides Kṛṣṇa?

After hearing this verse, Śukadeva came to Śrīla Vedavyāsa, who then taught him the entire *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

MOTHER YAŚODĀ AND BABY KṚṢṆA

The Birth of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Gokula

Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, came from the womb of Yaśodā. On the basis of established truth (*tattva*), both Kṛṣṇa the son of Devakī and Vasudeva, and Kṛṣṇa the son of Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā, are the same, but from the perspective of transcendental mellows, and from the perspective of potency, Kṛṣṇa the son of Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā is superior.

.....

GLORIOUS VAIṢṆAVAS

First of all, I offer innumerable obeisances to my *gurudeva*, *nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa oṁ viṣṇupāda aṣṭottara-śata* Śrī Śrīmad Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, and again, innumerable obeisances unto the lotus feet of my *śikṣā-guru*, Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja.

You all know that Svāmījī[1] came to the Eastern and Western countries and within a very short time mercifully preached everywhere the glories of Kṛṣṇa's name and the glories of *bhakti.* We are struck with wonder at how quickly he did this, from one corner of the world to the other. Yet when he left this world and entered the Lord's pastimes in the spiritual realm, devotees all around the world and also in India became weak [in their practice of *bhakti*], because they had no advanced Vaiṣṇava association. Lacking this association, their *bhakti* began to dry up.

Svāmījī saw that some of his disciples were neophyte Vaiṣṇavas and that although they wanted to progress in *bhakti*, they were gradually drying up [without advanced Vaiṣṇava association]. I think that he mercifully inspired me to travel. He has sown the seeds of *bhakti* everywhere, and he has established a very good foundation. Otherwise, a person like me could not have done anything. You are hearing from me only by his mercy. He wrote

1 'Svāmījī' was Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's affectionate address for Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja, Śrīla Prabhupāda, who brought the Kṛṣṇa Consciousness movement to the Western world. 'Svāmījī' is based on his *sannyāsa* name, 'Svāmī'. Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja began to call him this in the 1950s, when Śrīla Bhaktivedānta Svāmī Mahārāja took *sannyāsa*.

many books, so that new devotees or anyone can understand what pure devotion (*bhakti*) is, who the Supreme Personality of Godhead is, and how we can be happy in this life and in future lives. I see that wherever I go, a good foundation has been constructed by Svāmījī.

I am also so indebted to Śrīla Gaura Govinda Mahārāja. He was a pure Vaiṣṇava. He followed [the instructions of] his *guru*, Svāmījī, but faced so much opposition. He desired to overcome these obstacles, but he met so many obstacles, on all sides; he was surrounded.

He was so bold. He strongly emphasized and impressed upon everyone the necessity of Vaiṣṇava association. That is why almost all of his disciples are now associating with us, with me. I am indebted to him, also. I know that such a Vaiṣṇava can never die. They have crossed the limitations of birth and death; they are present anywhere and everywhere. They are continuously serving their holy masters, Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Śrīman Mahāprabhu. When they see that we are preaching in the same mood, they will be very happy and will sprinkle their mercy upon us.

You should have very strong faith in *bhakti* and in our disciplic succession of bona fide spiritual masters (*guru-paramparā*). Do not be weak. If there is no Vaiṣṇava association, you can associate with the books left by the *gurus* in our disciplic succession, books such as *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, and *Bhagavad-gītā*. But when the living representative of the Supreme Lord is present, you should try to hear from him.

We are in Malaysia for a very short time. If this preaching party travels to the Philippines as planned, then we are only here for two or three more days – tomorrow and the day after. And if we do not travel to the Philippines, then we are in Malaysia for a few extra days.[2] You should listen to all these discourses

2 The Philippines tour was later cancelled, and Śrīla Narāyāṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja stayed in Malaysia for a total of seven days.

and then try to practice in the same manner as the *gurus* in our disciplic succession (*guru-paramparā*). Vyāsadeva heard from Nārada Ṛṣi, and Śukadeva Gosvāmī heard from Vyāsadeva, and then they practiced. Our whole disciplic succession of bona fide *gurus* did this. Svāmījī took initiation from Śrīla Prabhupāda Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī, and he totally followed him. We should follow our *guru-paramparā,* our *guru*. Don't have any doubt about this.

I was going to explain the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, but you should also know about the character of Dhruva, Prahlāda, Ajāmila, Bharata Mahārāja, and Citraketu Mahārāja [as described in the other nine cantos]. For a spiritual practitioner, the example of their character is very powerful.

Ajāmila was a wretched and characterless person. He took wine and even committed murder. There was no sin he did not commit. Yet, by uttering 'Nārāyaṇa,' a name of the Supreme Lord, he was purified and went to the spiritual realm, Vaikuṇṭha. There is no doubt that anyone who chants the names of the Lord – Rāma, Nārāyaṇa, Nṛsiṁha, and especially Kṛṣṇa – will develop *bhakti*. But he should chant these names with honor, from the very core of his heart and without any doubt. Of course, he will have to give up some things. He will have to follow four basic principles. What are they?

dyūtaṁ pānaṁ striyaḥ sūnā
yatrādharmaś catur-vidhaḥ
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.17.38)

Brajanātha dāsa: (1) No illicit association with the opposite sex, (2) no meat-eating, fish, or eggs, (3) no intoxicants like tobacco, wine, etc., and (4) no gambling.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: No kind of gambling. Four principles. However, if you do not practice *bhakti*, if you do not

chant and remember, then following these principles is of no use. [By associating with Vaiṣṇavas,] by and by you can give up these unfavorable activities. Vaiṣṇava association is very essential.

THE DEMIGODS APPEAL TO ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA

We witness so much mercy in the character of Kṛṣṇa. Once, the Earth goddess took the form of a cow, and weeping, she went to the demigods and goddesses. "I cannot tolerate the weight of all these bogus, sinful people," she said. "They are unaware of their eternal nature and are like demons. They do not know the religion of the soul and think, 'We are the monarchs of all.' "

Who were these sinful, bogus people? Jarāsandha, Duryodhana, Aghāsura, Bakāsura, Śiśupāla, Dantavakra, Pauṇḍraka Vāsudeva, Kālayavana, and especially Kaṁsa. They were always eating, drinking, and mating – nothing else. They had no spiritual goal and did anything to be happy. They took fish, meat, and wine and did any worldly act. As a result, they began to forget that they are the soul, part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa and His eternal servant. The general populace became influenced by these persons and also became like them.

Therefore, the Earth goddess approached the demigods, weeping. The demigods and demigoddesses could not think of any solution, so all of them, along with the Earth goddess, went to Lord Brahmā and Lord Śiva. They too could not give them any remedy. At last, Brahmā took them all to the Milk Ocean, and there he began to meditate on Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, an expansion of Kṛṣṇa.

After meditating for some time, Lord Brahmā heard something. Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu was telling him, "I know everything. My master, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, has ordered Me to give this message to you, which you should share with the other demigods: 'Very soon, Kṛṣṇa will come to Earth and

do what the Earth goddess wants done. All the bogus persons and demons who do not believe in God, in the Vedas, in the fundamental nature of the living entity, or in the principles of *bhakti* will soon be destroyed.

" 'Kṛṣṇa will soon appear in the Yadu dynasty. All you demigods should take birth in that dynasty also, either in Vraja or in Mathurā. Your wives should also take birth in the Yādava dynasty or they should take birth as the *gopīs* of Vraja and serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā.' " Lord Brahmā repeated what he had heard from Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu to all the demigods present, and then everyone returned to their respective abodes.

Jarāsandha, Kaṁsa, Rāvaṇa, Duryodhana, and all other demons only engaged their senses in worldly pursuits. They did not believe that they are a soul, part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa. They thought they could be happy solely by indulging in different forms of material pleasures, like associating with women, acquiring wealth and reputation, and by controlling others with their power.

Kṛṣṇa came to establish the process of self-realization for the age (*yuga-dharma*). Do you know about *yuga-dharma*? [Within the material creation,] there are four periods of time known as *yugas*: Satya-yuga, Tretā-yuga, Dvāpara-yuga, and Kali-yuga. [Each of these four *yugas* has a specific prescribed spiritual practice (*dharma*).] In Satya-yuga, all persons were very religious-minded and were always meditating on the Supreme Lord. There were also demons in Satya-yuga, such as Hiraṇyākṣa and Hiraṇyakaśipu, but they were rare. In Tretā-yuga, the *yuga-dharma* was to perform fire sacrifices, as Lord Rāmacandra did, for the welfare of the whole world. In Dvāpara-yuga, the *yuga-dharma* was to serve the deities in the temple. And in [the present *yuga*,] Kali-yuga, the *yuga-dharma* is the congregational chanting of the holy names of the Lord.

Kṛṣṇa came to the material world for many reasons, one of them being to establish the *yuga-dharma*. What was the *yuga-dharma* at the time of Kṛṣṇa's appearance in Dvāpara-yuga? It

was deity worship. But what is real *dharma*? Real *dharma* refers to the eternal nature, or occupation, of the soul. Kṛṣṇa established this by speaking *Bhagavad-gītā*.

Within *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, in chapters such as *Uddhava-saṁvāda*, Kṛṣṇa established that the living entities' intrinsic nature is to love God. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the gist of all the Vedas, Upaniṣads, Purāṇas, *Rāmāyaṇa*, and *Mahābhārata*. It is the essence of all scriptures. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, it is said that Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and our highest object of worship, and that Vṛndāvana, His holy abode, is non-different from Him. The method of worship of the milkmaids of Vraja, the *gopīs*, is the best of all methods of worship. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu Himself has accepted these conclusions.

ārādhyo bhagavān vrajeśa-tanayas tad-dhāma vṛndāvanaṁ
ramyā kācid upāsanā vraja-vadhū-vargeṇa yā kalpitā
śrīmad-bhāgavataṁ pramāṇam amalaṁ premā pum artho mahān
śrī-caitanya-mahāprabhor matam idaṁ tatrādaro naḥ paraḥ

Caitanya-mañjuṣā,
Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura

[Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of the king of Vraja, is our exclusive object of worship and love. In the same way that He is worshipful, so is His transcendental abode, Śrī Vṛndāvana-dhāma. The mood in which the young brides of Vraja [the *gopīs,* headed by Śrīmatī Rādhikā] worship Him is the highest and ultimate form of love of God. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* alone is the immaculate scriptural evidence of this. Pure love for Kṛṣṇa is the supreme objective of life [beyond mundane religiosity, economic development, sense gratification, and impersonal liberation]. This is the conception of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. We hold this conclusion in supreme regard [and have no inclination or respect for any other conclusion or cheating opinions].]

KṚṢṆA AND THE GOPĪS

Actually, Kṛṣṇa came to establish the religion of love for God, and He established it. Uddhava realized it by associating with the *gopīs*. Kṛṣṇa Himself said:

na pāraye 'haṁ niravadya-saṁyujāṁ
sva-sādhu-kṛtyaṁ vibudhāyuṣāpi vaḥ
yā mābhajan durjaya-geha-śṛṅkhalāḥ
saṁvṛścya tad vaḥ pratiyātu sādhunā
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.32.22)

[My darling *gopīs*, your meeting Me is innocent and immaculate in every respect, because it is devoid of even a single iota of desire for your own happiness. It is overflowing with supremely pure love. Although the bonds of affection for the members of one's own home are impossible to overcome, you have completely demolished them. Thus, for loving service to Me, you have transgressed the moral laws of this world. Even if I lived as long as the gods, I would be unable to requite even one drop of your love, sacrifice, and service. All of you may free Me from debt simply by your own gentle nature, but I am forever the debtor of your *prema*, and will always continue to be.]

"I can never repay the *gopīs*. Never." Kṛṣṇa feels He cannot possibly repay the *gopīs* for their selfless service, even if He were to have hundreds of thousands of births as Indra or others with extended longevity.[3] In actuality, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* speaks of the *gopīs*' – especially Śrīmatī Rādhikā's – intrinsic love for Kṛṣṇa. Although Śrīmatī Rādhikā's name is not directly mentioned within the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* Her name is there everywhere.

Now again comes the question: How did Kṛṣṇa come to the Earth planet?

3 When Kṛṣṇa enacts human-like pastimes, He forgets He is God, the creator of Indra and others who live for an extremely long time.

In India, the Yadu dynasty is still present today. Before Kṛṣṇa appeared in the Yadu dynasty, there was a king named Ajamīḍha. He had two wives. One was in a dynasty of those in the administrative, military class (*kṣatriyas*). The other wife was in the lineage of cowherd people (*gopas* and *gopīs*). From the *kṣatrayiṇī* lineage came Śūrasena, and from Śūrasena came Vasudeva Mahārāja [of Mathurā]. From the *gopī's* womb came Parjanya, and from Parjanya came Nanda Bābā [of Vraja]. So actually, Nanda Bābā and Vasudeva Mahārāja are brothers.[4] One is a *gopa* and one is a *kṣatriya*, but they are brothers.

Kaṁsa's father, King Ugrasena, had a brother named Devaka, and Devaka had a daughter named Devakī. When Devakī had attained maturity, her marriage ceremony was performed, in which she was married to Vasudeva Mahārāja. Kaṁsa was so happy that his sister[4] was going to be married. After the marriage ceremony, Kaṁsa gladly sat his sister and brother-in-law on a golden chariot, which he drove with his own hands.

Kaṁsa held the reins of the chariot in his left hand and a whip in his right, and he carried a sword in his belt. His sister and brother-in-law wore the beautiful dress and decoration of a bride and bridegroom. As the chariot proceeded toward the home of Vasudeva Mahārāja, suddenly, an aerial voice said, "O foolish Kaṁsa, you are ignorant. The eighth son of Devakī, whom you are now carrying on the chariot, will kill you."

Hearing this, Kaṁsa immediately jumped down from the chariot. Dropping the horses' reins and his whip, he took the sword from his belt. Taking the hair of Devakī in his left hand and raising his sword in his right, he cried, "I will kill you!" He was thinking, "If Devakī is killed, there will be no first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, or eighth son to kill me."

This is the symptom of one who is *nāstika*. What is the meaning of *nāstika*?

4 In Indian culture, a cousin is often referred to as one's brother or sister.

Devotees: Atheist.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Atheist, one who does not believe in God. Kaṁsa knew that what this aerial voice spoke would come true, but he thought, "I will make this prediction false by killing Devakī." He never thought, "If the aerial voice speaks the truth, then how can I stop it?" In fact, Kaṁsa was unable to kill her, but still he said, "I will make this prediction false!" and took up his sword.

An atheist thinks, "There is no God, no controller of this world. I am the controller of this world. I can do anything I wish." But really, he cannot.

In the meantime, Kṛṣṇa inspired Vasudeva to turn to Kaṁsa and say, "Oh, why do you want to kill her? You are very much a coward. You fear a lady? Only a coward can kill a woman. Any strong, noble personality would never do such a thing. Yet you want to kill not just any lady but your very dear, darling sister. You must not kill her."

"But her eighth son will come and kill me!" Kaṁsa said.

Vasudeva believed this, and he believed that Devakī would surely have an eighth son. He was unable to make a false statement to Kaṁsa. He had strong faith [that what the aerial voice spoke must come true]. He thought, "I should be an instrument. Surely, the eighth son will come."

Vasudeva said to Kaṁsa, "You know well that anyone who takes birth will eventually die. Even if Devakī lives for a hundred years or more, eventually she will die. Why kill her? You know that you also will die. Why are you fearing death? Also, I have decided to give you all my sons, not only the eighth. I will give you any son that is born to us, and you can put him to death. Why kill your sister?"

Kaṁsa trusted the words of Vasudeva Mahārāja, because he knew that he was a very religious person and would not fail to honor his word. Kaṁsa thus set Vasudeva and Devakī free, but he kept a close watch on them.

After some time, the first son was born. Vasudeva picked him up and gave him to Mahārāja Kaṁsa, who said, "I do not fear this son. There is no sense in my sinning unnecessarily," and set the child free.

But Vasudeva Mahārāja was not convinced. He knew that such persons can change their mind at any moment. Sometimes they become angry, and sometimes they take pity on others. Sometimes they laugh, and sometimes they are very fearful. Nothing is certain.

In the meantime, Nārada Ṛṣi came there and said, "My dear son Kaṁsa, you are a very foolish person. You know that the eighth son will be born and that the other seven sons will grow bigger and bigger and help the eighth son kill you. Viṣṇu knows much about politics and is very tricky. He may count in such a way that the seventh child will be the eighth. We cannot say which of Vasudeva's sons Viṣṇu will consider the first, second, third, and so on. Therefore, you should kill all of his sons."

Why did Nārada do this? Because it would take at least ten years for the eighth son to come, which is a very long time.[5] By then, Kaṁsa would have destroyed the whole world. Kaṁsa should be killed before that – very soon. Nārada desired that the sons of Devakī quickly take birth and perish, so that Kṛṣṇa would soon come and kill Kaṁsa.

Nārada also said to Kaṁsa, "I have heard in a meeting of the demigods that they are making a clique to oppose you. Actually, the entire Yādava dynasty are demigods, and the wives of the demigods have become wives of the Yādavas. All will help Him to kill you."

Kaṁsa became furious. He greatly trusted Nārada Ṛṣi. He considered him his *guru* and was certain he knew everything.

5 The pastimes of the Supreme Lord exist beyond the realm of material logic. "O Arjuna, My birth and activities are transcendental..." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 4.9).

Nārada Ṛṣi left, and Kaṁsa called for the return of Vasudeva Mahārāja's first son. He then killed him, smashing him onto a stone. When [the first] six sons of Vasudeva Mahārāja were killed, what happened?

[To Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī] You should speak something.

ŚRĪ KṚṢṆA IS BORN IN GOKULA

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: After the first six sons were killed by Kaṁsa, Devakī again became pregnant. Kṛṣṇa was to come as the eighth son of Devakī, but whenever the Supreme Lord descends to the Earth planet, His transcendental abode manifests. So first, Baladeva Prabhu, who embodies the reality of the Lord's transcendental realm, appeared in the womb of Mother Devakī-devī as her seventh child. Simultaneously, He entered the womb of Rohiṇī-devī, another wife of Vasudeva Mahārāja, in His original, complete form. The form of Baladeva in Devakī's womb was an expansion of that original form.

Vasudeva Mahārāja thought, "Kaṁsa is so wicked-minded. If Rohiṇī-devī remains in Mathurā and gives birth to her child here, then he could kill her offspring as well as Devakī's. It is better that I send her to Gokula, Vraja, where she can stay with Nanda and Yaśodā." Vasudeva Mahārāja therefore arranged to send her there.

Meanwhile, about six months into the pregnancy, Kṛṣṇa ordered the personification of His internal spiritual potency, Yogamāyā-devī, to transfer the baby in the womb of Devakī-devī to the womb of Rohiṇī. Baladeva, the son of Devakī, thus merged into His complete form in the womb of Rohiṇī. Thus, the two Baladevas combined and became one.

Similarly, Kṛṣṇa simultaneously entered the womb of Devakī-devī and the womb of Mother Yaśodā. Baladeva Prabhu took birth

[in Vraja, from Mother Rohiṇī's womb] eight days prior to Kṛṣṇa's birth. The day of Baladeva's birth is called Rakṣā-bandhana or Baladeva Pūrṇimā.

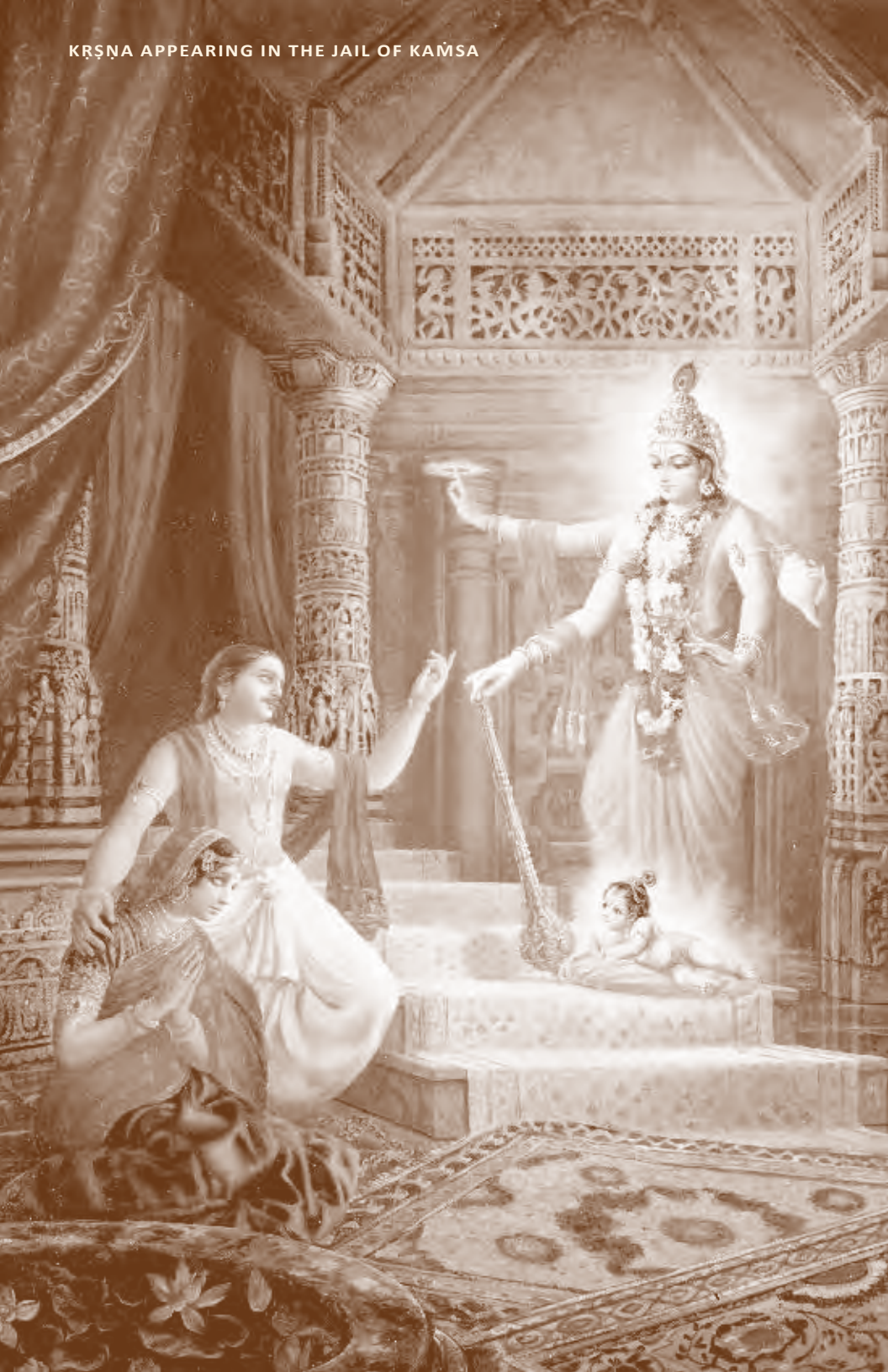
Eight days after Baladeva's birth in Vraja, Kṛṣṇa appeared in both Mathurā and Gokula Vraja. In Mathurā He appeared in a four-armed Nārāyaṇa form, sixteen years of age. He wore a crown on His head and was adorned with many ornaments. In His four hands, He held a conch-shell, the Sudarśana *cakra* (disc), a club, and a lotus flower, respectively. On that same day, in Gokula, Kṛṣṇa took birth from the womb of Mother Yaśodā in a two-armed form.

Kṛṣṇa never took birth in Mathurā from the womb of Devakī-devī. He manifested there. It is quite impossible for a baby to be sixteen years old when he comes from his mother's womb. When a normal baby takes birth, he is not wearing any ornaments and does not carry a club, conch-shell, lotus, or Sudarśana *cakra.* It is not possible to take birth from a mother's womb in this way. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa only appeared in Mathurā; He did not take birth. He manifested there in the form of four-armed Viṣṇu, or Nārāyaṇa.

On the same day in Vraja, however, Kṛṣṇa actually took birth from Mother Yaśodā's womb. A few minutes later, Yogamāyā-devī, the personification of His spiritual potency, also took birth from that same womb. Because Mother Yaśodā was tired [from the first birth], she did not know that she had given birth to two children.

Meanwhile, in the jail of Kaṁsa, Vasudeva Mahārāja and Devakī-devī were praying to Kṛṣṇa, with folded hands. Kṛṣṇa then gave them remembrance of their previous births, in which they were Kaśyapa and Aditi, who had performed severe austerities. And before that, they were Pṛśni and Sutapā, who had also performed much austerity. By all these austerities, they had satisfied Lord Viṣṇu, and He appeared before them. Viṣṇu told them to ask for a benediction, and they said, "We want a son exactly like You."

KṚṢṆA APPEARING IN THE JAIL OF KAṀSA



Viṣṇu replied, "It is mentioned in scripture:

na tasya kāryaṁ karaṇaṁ ca vidyate
na tat samaś cābhyadhikaś ca dṛśyate
parāsya śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate
svābhāvikī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca
Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.8)

[He does not have any mundane work to perform, nor does He possess material senses. There is no one like Him, and certainly no one is greater than Him. He has an eternal and natural superior energy that is manifested in various ways and is the source of knowledge, strength, and activity.]

"Because you have asked for the benediction of having a son exactly like Me, and because no one is equal to Me, I will have to personally come as your son."

Kṛṣṇa in His four-armed form thus appeared before Vasudeva and Devakī in Kaṁsa's jail in Mathurā. He summoned the influence of Yogamāyā, and at once, a parental mood came in the heart of Vasudeva and Devakī [overcoming their mood of awe and reverence]. They prayed to Him, "*babhūva prākṛtaḥ śiśuḥ* – please be like a worldly child so that we can protect You" (*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.3.46). [The Lord then withdrew His four-armed form and appeared before them with two arms, like an ordinary child.]

Kṛṣṇa ordered Vasudeva, "Take Me to Gokula, Vraja." Previously, Vasudeva Mahārāja had said to Kaṁsa, "I promise that I will give you all of my sons." But when Kṛṣṇa Himself appeared as his son and ordered Vasudeva to take Him to Gokula, Vasudeva Mahārāja did just that, thereby breaking his promise to Kaṁsa. We may ask, "Is such dishonest behavior religious?" Kṛṣṇa has said, "*man-nimittaṁ kṛtaṁ pāpaṁ api dharmāya kalpate*," (*Padma Purāṇa*). This means that if a person performs any

sinful activity, not for his own benefit but for Kṛṣṇa's or because Kṛṣṇa has ordered him to, then that is real religion. It is the best religion, because Kṛṣṇa is Truth. The demigods are praying to Kṛṣṇa:

satya-vrataṁ satya-paraṁ tri-satyaṁ
satyasya yoniṁ nihitaṁ ca satye
satyasya satyam ṛta-satya-netraṁ
satyātmakaṁ tvāṁ śaraṇaṁ prapannāḥ
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.2.26)

O Bhagavān, whatever You desire becomes reality. You are true to Your vow because You are responsible for manifesting Your own desires. Truthfulness is the means to attain You and therefore You are the Supreme Truth. You are unchanged during creation, maintenance, and destruction. You are Truth itself. You are the root cause of the five major ingredients of creation: earth, water, fire, air, and space. After these elements are again manifested during creation, You are present within them as the indwelling Supersoul, and after devastation, only You remain. You are the origin of both truthful speech and equal vision. Therefore, we are taking shelter of You, who are the original form of the Absolute Truth.

Therefore [when Kṛṣṇa was in the womb of Devakī], the demigods prayed to Him, "You are Truth, past, present, and future. You are the embodiment of Truth."

Obeying Kṛṣṇa's order, Vasudeva Mahārāja took Kṛṣṇa to Gokula. As he approached the river Yamunā, he saw that Yamunā was flooding. "How can I carry this boy across?" he thought. "It is not possible."

While he was considering what to do, Yogamāyā-devī appeared there in the form of a jackal and swam across the Yamunā River.

When Vasudeva saw this, he thought, "Oh, there is not so much water. If a jackal can effortlessly cross, then I can also."

Vasudeva Mahārāja picked up baby Kṛṣṇa and entered the Yamunā. Heavy rain continued to pour, and bright flashes of lightning lit up the night sky. Baladeva Prabhu, in the form of Anantadeva, the giant transcendental snake with thousands of hoods, covered Vasudeva Mahārāja and baby Kṛṣṇa with His hoods, protecting them from the torrential rainfall. Due to the influence of Yogamāyā-devī, Vasudeva Mahārāja was not aware of Anantadeva's protective presence above him.

As Vasudeva was crossing the river Yamunā, the water level rose higher and higher, because Yamunā-devī was very eager to touch the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. At first, Vasudeva Mahārāja carried Kṛṣṇa in his arms, but after some time, he placed Kṛṣṇa on his head. Just as Vasudeva Mahārāja was about to disappear under the water's surface, Kṛṣṇa thought, "Oh, this is very hard for My father," and He touched Yamunā-devī with His feet. Yamunā-devī became satisfied and her waters receded, allowing Vasudeva and Kṛṣṇa to easily cross. Upon reaching the other side of the river Yamunā, Vasudeva Mahārāja immediately took Kṛṣṇa to Gokula to stay.

Meanwhile in Gokula, two children had just been born from the womb of Mother Yaśodā: one boy (Kṛṣṇa) and one girl (Yogamāyā). But when Vasudeva Mahārāja arrived at the home of Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā in Gokula, he was unaware that Yaśodā had given birth to two children. By the influence of Yogamāyā, he saw only the baby girl. Following the order Kṛṣṇa had given him in Mathurā, Vasudeva placed his baby boy, Kṛṣṇa the son of Devakī, in the home of Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā in Gokula. He thought, "I am keeping my son here." As he left, he picked up the newborn baby girl, Yogamāyā, and returned with her to Kaṁsa's jail in Mathurā. Upon reaching Kaṁsa's prison, the locked jail door again opened automatically, as it had done when Vasudeva had left the jail.

KṚṢṆA, THE SON OF VASUDEVA, MERGES INTO
THE ORIGINAL KṚṢṆA, THE SON OF NANDA AND YAŚODĀ

Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva and Devakī, is an expansion of that Kṛṣṇa who took birth from the womb of Mother Yaśodā in Vraja. When Vasudeva brought his son to Gokula and placed Him in the house of Nanda Bābā, his son merged into that Kṛṣṇa who is the son of Nanda and Yaśodā, but no one could perceive this. Mother Yaśodā also did not know that Vasudeva Mahārāja had taken her newborn baby daughter, Yogamāyā, and left his own son with her. No one was conscious of this incident.

That morning in Mathurā, as baby Yogamāyā was crying, all the watchmen informed Kaṁsa that the eighth child of Vasudeva and Devakī had taken birth the night before. Kaṁsa was sleeping, but he immediately awoke and came there. Devakī-devī tried her level best to hide that baby girl, who was not her own daughter, and protect her from Kaṁsa.

She pleaded with Kaṁsa, "O brother! This is not a boy; it is a girl. The aerial voice said that it will be the eighth son who will kill you, so don't kill her. I have one suggestion: I can marry my daughter to your son, and then she will be your daughter-in-law, but don't kill this baby girl."

Kaṁsa had no compassion for Vasudeva and Devakī. With the desire to smash the baby girl against a rock, he tried to snatch her from Devakī's lap, but she somehow slipped from his grasp and flew into the sky, assuming an eight-armed form. "O you foolish Kaṁsa," she cried. "How can you kill me? Your killer has already taken birth elsewhere!"

Kaṁsa was astonished. He realized, "This baby girl, who just ascended into the sky, has revealed her true form. Indeed, she is my worshipable deity, Durgā-devī (the goddess of the material energy)." Kaṁsa strongly believed that his worshipful deity could never tell any lie, and thought, "Surely my killer has already taken birth somewhere else."

Kaṁsa immediately called an assembly and told those present the whole story. "My worshipable deity has declared that my

killer has already taken birth, so how can we kill my killer?" He arranged another meeting with Pūtanā, Aghāsura, Bakāsura, and all the other demons. They concluded that they would kill any babies who had taken birth in the last eight to ten days. Pūtanā made a special vow: "I shall take the main responsibility for this."

Hare Kṛṣṇa.

vāñchā-kalpa-tarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ

[I offer obeisance to the Vaiṣṇavas, who, just like desire trees, can fulfill the desires of everyone and who are full of compassion for conditioned souls.]

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: [To Prema-prayojana dāsa] Can you make this point clearer? Speak about Kṛṣṇa's appearance in the jail in Mathurā and His birth in Gokula.

[To the assembly of devotees] You should try to understand this. This subject is very important. We know that Kṛṣṇa has appeared in Mathurā, in the jail of Kaṁsa. In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* also, all these facts have been written, but it may not be clear.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: According to the general conception, people think that Kṛṣṇa was born in Mathurā. If we go to Mathurā, we will see many signs pointing to Kṛṣṇa's birth place. Everyone considers Mathurā to be Kṛṣṇa's birth place, and that Vasudeva carried Him to Gokula. But in the scriptures, there are many statements:

kṛṣṇo 'nyo yadu-sambhūto
yaḥ pūrṇaḥ so 'sty ataḥ paraḥ
vṛndāvanaṁ parityajya
sva kvacin naiva gacchati
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Antya-līlā* 1.67)

> [The Kṛṣṇa known as Yadu-kumāra is Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa. He is different from the Kṛṣṇa who is the son of Nanda Mahārāja. Yadu-kumāra Kṛṣṇa manifests His pastimes in the cities of Mathurā and Dvārakā, but Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāja, never at any time leaves Vṛndāvana.*]

Actually, Kṛṣṇa never takes one step outside of Vṛndāvana. But, if Kṛṣṇa is always in Vṛndāvana and never leaves, how can it be that He was born in Mathurā? *Kṛṣṇo 'nyo yadu-sambhūto*. We should know that the son of Vasudeva and Devakī and the son of Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā are not the same. The son of Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Supreme Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa in His original form.

The son of Vasudeva and Devakī is called Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, and He is an expansion of Yaśodā-nandana Kṛṣṇa (Kṛṣṇa, the son of Yaśodā), who is the original form of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, who appeared in Kaṁsa's prison cell to Vasudeva and Devakī, was the expansion of Kṛṣṇa the son of Yaśodā.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Is there any difference between an expansion of Kṛṣṇa and the root [original] Kṛṣṇa?

Prema-prayojana dāsa: In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is stated, "*advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam* – all forms of the Lord are one." By authentic philosophical conclusions, by established truths, They are all one. This is called *viṣṇu-tattva*.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: You should not say that Kṛṣṇa the son of Nanda and Yaśodā and Kṛṣṇa the son of Vasudeva and Devakī are different. If you say this, all will criticize you.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: It is not that They are different, They are one. "*Advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam* – all the unlimited forms of Viṣṇu are one." To use the word 'difference' is not right here, as Śrīla Gurudeva has corrected me. The actual word is *vaiśiṣṭya* (speciality). There is some speciality in each form.

siddhāntatas tv abhede 'pi
śrīśa-kṛṣṇa-svarūpayoḥ
rasenotkṛṣyate kṛṣṇa-
rūpam eṣā rasa-sthitiḥ
Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.59)

[According to transcendental realization, there is no difference between the forms of (four-armed) Nārāyaṇa and (two-armed) Kṛṣṇa. Yet in Kṛṣṇa there is a special transcendental attraction due to the conjugal mellow, and consequently He surpasses Nārāyaṇa. This is the conclusion of transcendental mellows.*]

According to established philosophical conclusions, all *viṣṇu-tattva*, plenary manifestations of the Supreme Lord, are one. But if one views each manifestation of Viṣṇu from the perspective of transcendental mellows, then one will see that Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara Kṛṣṇa (the beautiful, dark-complexioned son of the king of Vraja) is the full embodiment of all mellows of transcendental love. Each [form] has a speciality, but this Kṛṣṇa, who is the embodiment of all loving mellows, is known by such names as Vrajendra-nandana, Śyāmasundara, Rādhānātha, Gopīnātha, Gopījana-vallabha, and Rādhā-kānta.

According to the perspective of established conclusions, Kṛṣṇa's expansion is non-different from Him, but according to the consideration of transcendental mellows and relationships, Kṛṣṇa the son of Vasudeva and Devakī is not equal to Kṛṣṇa the son of Nanda and Yaśodā.

At exactly the same time that Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa appeared in the jail of Kaṁsa in Mathurā, Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa was born in a natural way from the womb of Mother Yaśodā in Gokula. Therefore, even though it is said by common people that Mathurā is the birthplace of Kṛṣṇa, He was not actually born there; He only appeared there, and His true birth place is Gokula.

Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa appeared in the prison cell, but [Yaśodā-nandana] Kṛṣṇa was born in Gokula. Another reason we know Kṛṣṇa was born in Gokula is because the next day, the ceremony in which the umbilical cord was cut took place there. This can only take place if there is natural childbirth. This is the real proof. Therefore, this is one of the specialities that differentiates Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara Kṛṣṇa from Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa.

In the pastimes of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, there is much *aiśvarya. Aiśvarya* is generally understood to mean 'opulence,' but the real meaning of *aiśvarya* is the Supreme Lord's performance of any activity that cannot be performed by a human being or demigod. If it surpasses the limitations of human beings and demigods, then that pastime is called an *aiśvarya* pastime. Kṛṣṇa in Vraja is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and His pastimes there are saturated in sweetness. [Even though Kṛṣṇa in Vraja possesses all *aiśvarya*, His pastimes in Vraja are not considered *aiśvarya* pastimes.] Instead, they are called *naravata-līlā*, or pastimes that resemble the activities of ordinary human beings.

When Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa appeared in the prison cell [in His four-armed, fully ornamented Nārāyaṇa form], Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara Kṛṣṇa was born from the womb of Mother Yaśodā in Gokula. After Kṛṣṇa's appearance in Mathurā, Vasudeva Mahārāja prayed to Him, and by the influence of Yogamāyā, a parental mood entered his heart: "Please become like an ordinary child so that we can protect You." That Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, who had appeared in a large Viṣṇu form, then became like a small baby. Vasudeva Mahārāja was overwhelmed, feeling, "O my son," and picked Him up. As soon as Vasudeva picked up his son, the shackles fell from around his wrists, the chains binding his legs released and fell to his feet, and all the prison doors opened.

There is a teaching in this. What is that teaching? If we approach the Supreme Lord with a certain mood, with relationship – "O my

son," "O my friend," or "O my beloved," – then, very quickly, all the bondage of material existence will fall away. Picking up baby Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, Vasudeva Mahārāja carried Him out of Kaṁsa's dungeon and headed toward the river Yamunā.

When Vasudeva arrived at Yamunā, it was flooded because of the very strong rainfall, making crossing dangerous. He did not know how to proceed or how he would cross. Still, he was determined to carry out the order of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, who had told him, "Please take Me to Gokula and exchange Me with the daughter of Mother Yaśodā."

At that time, a jackal appeared there and began to cross the river. Vasudeva thought, "Maybe I actually can cross."

There is a teaching in this, also: When we try to advance in our Kṛṣṇa consciousness, many, many obstacles will come, but if we are very determined to carry out the order of *guru* and Kṛṣṇa, then by their mercy, some guidance will manifest and help us cross beyond those obstacles.

As Vasudeva Mahārāja was crossing the river, Anantadeva came behind him with His many hoods and sheltered him. In the same way, if a person is determined to carry out the order of *guru* and Kṛṣṇa, we should know that *guru-tattva*, in the form of Anantadeva and that person's *gurudeva*, are with him at every moment, protecting him from many difficulties and obstacles.

When Vasudeva arrived in Gokula, he approached Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara and Yogamāyā, who had been born at the same time. It is understood that Mother Yaśodā had given birth to twins, one boy and one girl. The boy was the original Kṛṣṇa, and the girl was Yogamāyā-devī. Vasudeva Mahārāja did not see the original Kṛṣṇa. He merely came and placed his child, Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, on the bed, and this Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa merged into the body of the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, Yaśodā-nandana Kṛṣṇa. He then picked up the newborn baby girl, Yogamāyā-devī, and carried her back to Mathurā.

vāñchā-kalpa-tarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca
patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ

[I offer obeisance to the Vaiṣṇavas, who, just like desire trees, can fulfill the desires of everyone and who are full of compassion for conditioned souls.]

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: [To a nearby devotee] Can you say the name of the father and mother of Kṛṣṇa?

Devotee: Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Not Vasudeva?

Devotee: No…

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: This is wrong. You should reconcile this, because He was also the son of Vasudeva and Devakī. If you do not reconcile this, then *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* will be considered incorrect.

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī (now known as Śrīpād Bhaktivedānta Āśrama Mahārāja)**:** In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is stated that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Devakī. We accept this statement from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* as fact. But then how can we understand the statements of Prema-prayojana Prabhu and Navīna-kṛṣṇa Prabhu that Kṛṣṇa is actually the son of Mother Yaśodā? Actually He is the son of both Mother Yaśodā and Devakī-devī.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: The question arises whether or not Devakī had any pregnancy. Was there anyone in her womb?

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Yes.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Who was in her womb? Was it not Kṛṣṇa? Devakī had a child in her womb for eight months. How did that child get there? In this world, a child comes into the womb from husband to wife, but in this instance, there was

no such process. Vasudeva Mahārāja recited a *mantra*: *oṁ namo bhāgavate vāsudevāya.* By this *mantra*, Kṛṣṇa entered the womb of Devakī. Vasudeva spoke the *mantra* in the ear of Devakī, just as *gurudeva* gives *mantra* to his disciple, by which Kṛṣṇa comes in our 'womb,' our heart. In the same way, by Vasudeva Mahārāja speaking this *mantra*, Kṛṣṇa came as transcendental sound. Kṛṣṇa is the same as transcendental sound.

He entered the womb of Devakī. But who was He? He was *nārāyaṇa-tattva*. Lord Nārāyaṇa had given a benediction to Devakī and Vasudeva in their previous life as Kaśyapa and Aditi, and also in their prior births as Vṛṣṇi and Sutapā. Kaśyapa and Aditi had wanted a son like Him. Like whom? Like four-armed Nārāyaṇa. Nārāyaṇa came and said, "There is no one equal to Me, and so I, Myself, will have to enter your womb."

That very Nārāyaṇa, the expansion of Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vrajendra-nandana, entered the womb of Devakī-devī. That is why Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, four-armed Kṛṣṇa, appeared from her womb. Nārāyaṇa never comes from a womb; He always resides in the heart. From this womb, four-armed Kṛṣṇa appeared, and He is Vāsudeva, *nārāyaṇa-tattva*, the expansion of [Vrajendra-nandana] Kṛṣṇa. According to the perspective of established truth, They are the same. Yet, there are specialities in each of Them.

Who was in the womb of Mother Yaśodā? In their previous birth, Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā were Droṇa and Dharā. In that life, they performed many austerities and worshiped Brahmā [the creator of the material universe]. Brahmā is a devotee of Kṛṣṇa, and he knew that Kṛṣṇa is the eternal son of Nanda and Yaśodā. While in trance, Brahmā saw that very soon Kṛṣṇa would enter the womb of Yaśodā. Brahmā gave a benediction to Droṇa and Dharā: "You will possess so much [parental] love and affection for Kṛṣṇa that He will enter your womb as your son."

Therefore, Kṛṣṇa Himself, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who possesses all sweetness and all majesty and opulence, entered the womb of Mother Yaśodā. Kṛṣṇa appeared in Mathurā and took birth in Gokula on the same day, at the very same time – at midnight on the eighth day of the lunar cycle in the month of Bhādra (August-September). In Mathurā, He appeared in a four-armed form, as a sixteen-year-old boy, with four hands, holding Sudarśana *cakra*, a club, lotus, and conch, but in Gokula, He was born with two arms like an ordinary baby – no hair or ornaments, nothing.

When Vasudeva Mahārāja took his baby boy across the Yamunā to the house of Nanda Bābā, the boy merged into the two-armed Kṛṣṇa. When Kṛṣṇa appeared in the jail of Kaṁsa, there was no link, no umbilical cord connecting Devakī and her son, Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa. But there in Nanda Bābā's house in Vraja, there was a link between Kṛṣṇa and His mother (Yaśodā). In the morning, an expert lady came and cut the umbilical cord. Many *brāhmaṇa* priests came and began to recite *mantras.* A bath was given to Kṛṣṇa. So many things were done there in Vraja, just as when any lady gives birth to a child. All procedures were performed. But in Mathurā, nothing was done. Do you understand?

Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, came from the womb of Yaśodā. On the basis of established truth (*tattva*), both Kṛṣṇa the son of Devakī and Vasudeva, and Kṛṣṇa the son of Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā, are the same, but from the perspective of transcendental mellow, and from the perspective of potency, Kṛṣṇa the son of Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā is superior. How is He superior?

A son will sit on the lap of his mother, but when he becomes older, when he has matured, he is given in marriage to a woman and becomes her husband. He is still the same person, but when he was a little boy, he thought, "She is my mother and I am her

son." When he is married, what does he think? "I am the husband of this woman," and His wife thinks, "He is my beloved husband." She cannot think of him as her son.

When Kṛṣṇa is a little baby, He is like a son, and when He grows older, He is the object of all *rasas* (transcendental relationships) and reciprocates with devotees according to the various gradations of their love. Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa is the object of all *rasas*, but Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa can never be. He can only be the object of affection for those who relate to Him with moods of neutrality, servitude, partial parental affection, and partial friendship, but not for those with a mood of amorous affection. Therefore, Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa and Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa each have Their specialities. You should know that Kṛṣṇa is partly the son of Vasudeva and Devakī, but He is fully the son of Nanda and Yaśodā.

This is *naimittika-līlā.* Do you know the meaning of *naimittika-līlā*? *Naimittika* means 'occasional.'

Kṛṣṇa's eightfold daily pastimes, such as cowherding, his friendship with the cowherd boys, and *rāsa-līlā*, are all *nitya-līlā* (eternal pastimes).

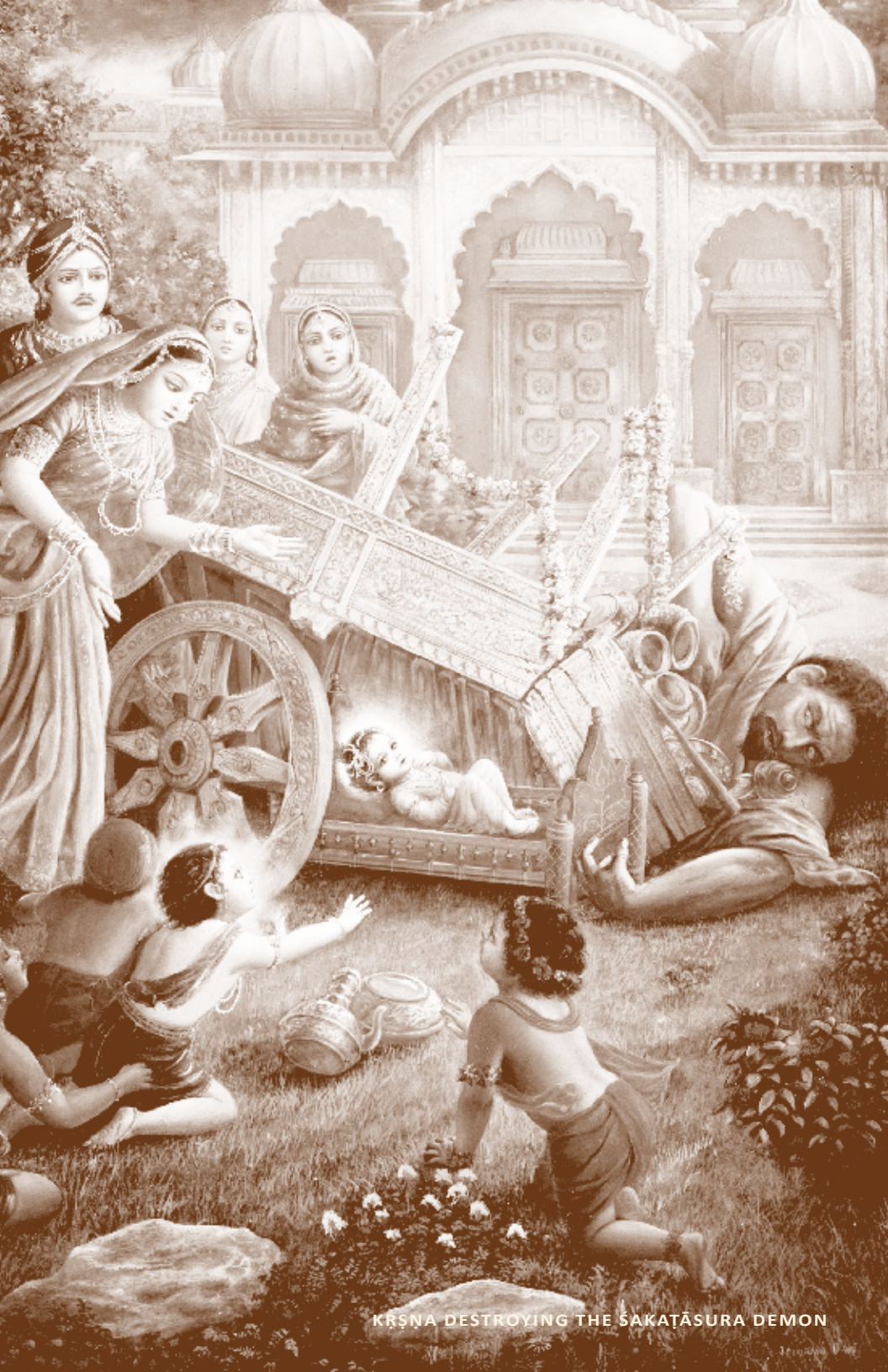
In Kṛṣṇa's eternal pastimes in the spiritual world, Kṛṣṇa never takes birth from the womb of Yaśodā, but all think that He has. But here in this world, Kṛṣṇa performs *naimittika-līlā*. The killing of Kaṁsa, Aghāsura, Bakāsura, and all these demons, is *naimittika-līlā*; they are not eternal pastimes. In Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in the spiritual world, there is a mood that these pastimes have taken place, that Kaṁsa is there, but the actual form of Kaṁsa is not there. Kaṁsa can never enter Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes in the spiritual world, but there may be a mood or conception that he is present.

All Vrajavāsīs think, "Kṛṣṇa has gone to Mathurā and killed Kaṁsa. Now He has returned from Mathurā." This is due to Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in this world. Kṛṣṇa's pastimes related to killing

Kaṁsa, His appearance before Devakī, and His birth from the womb of Yaśodā are seen only in His pastimes in this world, not in the spiritual world.

All the Vrajavāsīs understand that Kṛṣṇa has taken birth just one month ago, or two months, six years, or nine years ago. But the actual pastime did not take place.

When you do *bhajana* (real internal service and worship) and become mature in that, you will cross this infant stage of being a neophyte devotee and become an intermediate devotee. Then you will realize something of what we have spoken. And then, when you attain the stage of being a devotee on the topmost platform, you will realize more. Finally, when you totally give up this body and go to the transcendental world, you can realize all these things. Before this, you should know all philosophical conclusions and try to believe in them.



KṚṢṆA DESTROYING THE ŚAKAṬĀSURA DEMON

Kṛṣṇa's Early Childhood Pastimes

Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are of two kinds: (1) full of majesty and opulence (*aiśvarya-mayī*) and (2) full of sweetness (*mādhurya-mayī*). Vaikuṇṭha means the spiritual sky, where there is so much opulence. In Goloka (the topmost planet in Vaikuṇṭha), there is also great opulence, but Kṛṣṇa's sweetness and His sweet pastimes cover that opulence.

KṚṢṆA, THE SON OF NANDA AND YAŚODĀ

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: You should come with me to Goloka Vṛndāvana.

Devotees: *Gaura-premānande*! Hari Haribol!

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Yesterday, we heard that Kṛṣṇa took birth in Gokula, and that the Kṛṣṇa who appeared in Mathurā mixed with that Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara Kṛṣṇa upon reaching Gokula from Mathurā. We heard how [baby] Yogamāyā was taken by Vasudeva and placed in the hands of Kaṁsa. When she was in the hands of Vasudeva Mahārāja, she was Yogamāyā (the spiritual pastime potency), but when Kaṁsa took her in his hands, she at once disappeared, and in her place came her manifestation, Mahāmāyā – her shadow. Yogamāyā always helps souls serve Kṛṣṇa, but Mahāmāyā punishes living entities and throws them far away from Him. Kaṁsa did not know that this switch had happened.

Kaṁsa took this baby in his hands and threw her onto a stone. At once she flew into the sky and became Durgā-devī, or Mahāmāyā, the shadow of Yogamāyā. He saw that she was eight-armed and bore many weapons, and that she was sitting on a lion. He offered his obeisance to her, and she put her feet on his head. Merely by the touch of her toe, he fell down and began to roll on the Earth. He then began to pray.

Mahāmāyā-devī told him, "You cannot kill me or my Prabhu. The eighth child of Devakī has already appeared in another place."

What was happening in Gokula at that time? In the morning following Kṛṣṇa's birth, Nanda Mahārāja held a big festival. The umbilical cord connecting Yaśodā and her baby boy was cut. All the ladies saw this. They saw that Kṛṣṇa, a very beautiful baby, had come from the womb of Yaśodā, so no one in Vraja could ever believe that Kṛṣṇa took birth in Mathurā. They witnessed His birth in Gokula with their own eyes. But the residents of Mathurā never witnessed His birth; none of them ever saw that.

[Playfully] The residents of Mathurā may be liars [regarding Kṛṣṇa's birthplace], but not the residents of Vraja, the Vrajavāsīs. We should believe the Vrajavāsīs, not the Mathurāvāsīs. If Kṛṣṇa says He has taken birth in Mathurā, then He is also a liar. We cannot believe Mathureśa Kṛṣṇa. We should only believe Yaśodā and the *gopīs*, Nanda Bābā, and those who reside in Vraja. Kṛṣṇa is surely the son of Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā.

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* however, Śukadeva Gosvāmī has stated, "Kṛṣṇa is the son of Vasudeva. He took birth in Mathurā." Is it false? It is not false. Why not? Because Śukadeva Gosvāmī wanted to please Parīkṣit Mahārāja. Who was Parīkṣit Mahārāja? How was he connected with that Kṛṣṇa who appeared in Mathurā?

Arjuna was married to Subhadrā, the sister of Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa and the daughter of Vasudeva and Devakī. Mahārāja Parīkṣit, the grandson of Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, would have been happy to know that Kṛṣṇa was in his dynasty. In order to please Parīkṣit Mahārāja, Śukadeva spoke like this, but really, if Śukadeva had been speaking to Yaśodā, Nanda Bābā, or any Vrajavāsī, then what would he have said? He would have said that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā.

Though Śukadeva Gosvāmī spoke like this to please Parīkṣit Mahārāja, by chance, two things automatically came from his mouth. First, he expressed how happy Nanda Bābā felt when a son was born from the womb of Yaśodā:

nandas tv ātmaja utpanne
jātāhlādo mahā-manāḥ
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.5.1)

[Nanda Mahārāja was naturally very magnanimous, and when Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared as his son, he was overwhelmed by jubilation.*]

Secondly, he used the word *paśupaṅgajāya* when narrating Brahmā's prayers to Kṛṣṇa.

naumīḍya te 'bhra-vapuṣe taḍid-ambarāya
guñjāvataṁsa-paripiccha-lasan-mukhāya
vanya-sraje kavala-vetra-viṣāṇa-veṇu-
lakṣma-śriye mṛdu-pade paśupāṅgajāya
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.1)

[[Lord Brahmā said:] O Prince of Vraja, You are worshipful for the whole world. O You whose complexion is the color of a new, dark raincloud. Your yellow garment beautifies Your dark, fresh, raincloud-colored limbs like a steady streak of lightning. Your neck is decorated with a garland of *guñjā* berries, Your ears with ornaments, and Your head with a crown of peacock feathers. A garland of forest flowers and leaves adorns Your neck, a morsel of rice mixed with yogurt is in Your hand, Your eyes are shaped like lotus petals, and Your appearance with Your flute and buffalo horn is exquisitely beautiful. Your lotus feet, which are the shelter of Lakṣmī-devī, are very soft and full of affection for Your devotees. You are always moving here and there in the Vṛndāvana forest on Your soft lotus feet, to enjoy Your pleasure pastimes. All glories unto You, son of Nanda Mahārāja, who tend the cows. Please accept my obeisance.]

Brahmā is our *guru*. He cannot speak falsely. He is saying *paśupāṅgajāya*. "O Kṛṣṇa, You have come from the womb of Yaśodā." *Paśu* means *gopa* [or *gopī*]. Here, Nanda Bābā is the *gopa*, and Yaśodā is the *gopī*. [*Aṅga-jāya* means 'to his son, Kṛṣṇa.']

Jayati jana-nivāso devakī-janma-vādo[1]. This verse is the essence of the entire *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. It states *devakī-janma-vādo*. Some persons may say, "Kṛṣṇa is the son of Devakī," but this is only *vāda* (theory). *Vāda* means it is not true.

"Kṛṣṇa is the son of Yaśodā-devī." This is true. Ignorant persons, those who do not know transcendental truths, will speak differently. The truth has been written in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* many times.

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1 *jayati jana-nivāso devakī-janma-vādo*
yadu-vara-pariṣat svair dorbhir asyann adharmam
sthira-cara-vṛjina-ghnaḥ su-smita-śrī-mukhena
vraja-pura-vanitānāṁ vardhayan kāma-devam
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.90.48)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa resides in everyone's heart as the Supersoul. (Or: He lives among His own near and dear relatives, the *gopas* or Yādavas. Or: He is present in the heart of every living entity, and He is the shelter of all.) It is only a rumor that He was born from the womb of Devakī; actually He has no birth. He is served by the best of the Yadu dynasty. (Or: He is the honorable chairman in the assembly of the Yādavas.) Although He can accomplish anything simply by His desire, by the strength of His own arms (or: by the strength of His arms in the form of His associates like Bhīma and Arjuna), He destroys the demons who oppose the principles of religion. He takes away the pain of the endless chain of birth and death from all moving and non-moving living entities. (Or: He takes away the pain of separation that all moving and non-moving living entities in Vraja-purī feel in His absence.) He increases the transcendental desire of all the young *gopīs*, of Vraja-purī (or: of all the ladies of Mathurā-purī, Dvārakā-purī, and Vraja-purī) by His smiling lotus face. May that Śrī Kṛṣṇa be ever victorious.

When the *gopīs* are in an angry mood, they say to Kṛṣṇa, "You are not the son of Yaśodā, because You are mischievous. You must be the son of Devakī and Vasudeva."

[Speaking to the audience] Are you Vrajavāsīs or Mathurāvāsīs? Those who are Mathurāvāsīs or who want to be Mathurāvāsīs, should raise their hands. [No hands are raised.] Now, those who want to be Vrajavāsīs should raise their hands. [All raise their hands.] You should all know that Kṛṣṇa is son of Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā.

THE DEMONESS PŪTANĀ

Now you should again come with me to Gokula Mahāvana.

There, Kṛṣṇa was only two or three days old. He was so beautiful, so very attractive. Even His weeping was charming. Though He was naked, He was more beautiful than when He was decorated. His everything – His crying, His weeping, His laughing, His smiling – was so very charming. All Vrajavāsīs were charmed.

In the meantime, Kaṁsa again heard an aerial voice: "Your enemy has appeared in another place." He became very angry. He thought, "They conspired against me and have somehow sent this boy to another place." He declared to his associates, "O my dear friends…" Who were these friends? Aghāsura, Bakāsura, Pūtanā, Cāṇūra, Muṣṭika – all. "You should try to discover where this boy is, and you should kill Him by any means."

Meanwhile, Pūtanā arrived. She reminded him that he was her brother. Previously, when Kaṁsa was trying to conquer the whole world, Pūtanā was his enemy and they fought each other. Kaṁsa could not defeat her, and so he attempted to make peace. "You are my sister," he said, and Pūtanā told him, "You are my brother. We should help each other."

Now Pūtanā wanted to support Kaṁsa. She promised, "I will kill that boy wherever He is in this world. I will find Him, because I know many tricks and much magic. I will very quickly search out that boy and kill him."

Pūtanā had no son. She was ugly and impure, because she was always taking the blood and flesh of brand new baby boys. She changed her ugly feature in order to appear as a beautiful young mother, and after putting poison in her breasts, she immediately went here and there in the villages, looking for new baby boys, those whose age was between birth and ten days. Using magic, she took those new babies and consumed their blood, flesh, and everything. Finally, when all new baby boys were murdered, she came to Gokula.

Now, you may ask, "There are so many great personalities who practice spiritual life, but they cannot become free from the deluding material potency and they cannot reach Gokula in Goloka. How, then, could Pūtanā come to Gokula?" Even perfected personalities such as Sanaka, Sanandana, and Sanātana, who are no longer under the control of the deluding material potency, cannot go to Gokula. But if a person performs internal worship and service of the Lord (*bhajana*) under the guidance of the residents of Vṛndāvana – the friends, father, mother, or *gopī* beloveds of Kṛṣṇa, especially a *gopī* – he can go to Gokula, otherwise not.

How did this demoness Pūtanā enter Gokula? Yogamāyā attracted her, otherwise, she could not have gone there. Only exalted, liberated personalities who have developed great love and affection for Kṛṣṇa in their previous births can gain entrance. Demons cannot go, but Yogamāyā attracted Pūtanā. Why? She did so in order for the love and affection [of the Vrajavāsīs for Kṛṣṇa] to be renewed. If there is no current in one's love and affection, if it remains the same, then it stagnates and becomes like snow. That love becomes frozen and somewhat sickly and feeble. It cannot please Kṛṣṇa or make Him happy.

Yogamāyā attracted Pūtanā in order to renew the love and affection of Yaśodā and all the residents of Vraja. They saw that a boy – Kṛṣṇa – came from the womb of Yaśodā. After just two days, Kṛṣṇa was crying and Yaśodā had gone somewhat far away from Him. She had thought to do something and was late in attending to her son. Her transcendental love had become somewhat weak, and for this reason, Yogamāyā attracted Pūtanā.

But there was also another reason Pūtanā came.

When Vāmanadeva [an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa] went to the home of Bali Mahārāja, He came in a very small form. Although He was short in stature, He was very beautiful. When Vāmanadeva went there, He begged three steps of land from Bali Mahārāja. Bali Mahārāja's daughter, Ratnamālā, saw Him and thought, "This boy is very beautiful. I have no child. I want Him to be my child."

Vāmanadeva knew of her desire and said, "Yes, I will become your son." But later, Ratnamālā saw that Vāmanadeva had become so tall. He took [with His first two steps] all of Bali's kingdom – as well as all the heavenly planets, the abode of Lord Matsya, the abode of Lord Brahmā, and other places – and with His third step He took the body of Bali Mahārāja. Finally, He bound him. Bali fell down to the ground and began to cry. Seeing this, Ratnamālā said, "This Vāmanadeva is very dangerous. If He were to become my son, I would give Him poison."

Kṛṣṇa [the source of Vāmanadeva and all other Viṣṇu expansions] satisfied the desire of Ratnamālā in her later birth as Pūtanā. She came to Vraja disguised as a mother, but because she had no son, her breasts did not give milk. If there is no baby, there is no breast milk. Ladies who have no children naturally have no breast milk. If a lady has a child, milk is produced from her breasts while the child is young. When the child grows up, the mother's milk dries up. There was no milk in Pūtanā's breasts, but by using magic, she put a very strong poison in them.

If a person touches poison, he will die, but Pūtanā put poison in her breasts and placed Kṛṣṇa on her lap. After some time, she realized that Kṛṣṇa had closed His eyes and was not drinking. If Kṛṣṇa did not take her 'milk,' how would He die? She pumped the poison into Kṛṣṇa's mouth and held the back of His head to crush it, but she could not. Kṛṣṇa sucked out the poison, along with her life and soul. He is so powerful that He can turn poison into nectar. He sucked the poison from the breast of Pūtanā, and He also sucked out her life airs. She began to call out, "Leave me! Leave me! Leave me!"

Even though Pūtanā had the power of ten thousand elephants, she could not break Kṛṣṇa's grasp. She tried her best to push Him away, but baby Kṛṣṇa continued sucking the breast of Pūtanā, holding onto her breast with His two small hands. She could not get rid of Him. She cried, "I have used all of my power and I cannot get rid of this Kṛṣṇa. Maybe my brother Kaṁsa can help me."

Pūtanā held Kṛṣṇa to her chest and flew into the sky. She was not thinking of Kṛṣṇa, but of Kaṁsa. Kṛṣṇa was thinking, "I will not give you up. You have come to Me as a mother. Why should I give you up?" [Unable to free herself from Kṛṣṇa's grasp,] Pūtanā fell from the sky onto the garden of Kaṁsa, which became fully smashed; everything in Kaṁsa's garden was destroyed. Pūtanā's body became twelve miles long. The name of the village where her hands fell became known as Hāthrās. *Hātha* means 'hand.' Each place the different parts of Pūtanā's body landed became towns named after her. Where her head fell became known as Musāna. *Musāna* means 'head.' Meanwhile, Kaṁsa had not heard the news that Pūtanā had been killed. He was waiting for her to return to Mathurā.

At that time, Nanda Mahārāja was not present, having gone to Mathurā. He was so happy because a child had come into his house in his older years. What age was Nanda Bābā when Kṛṣṇa

took birth? He was not yet in old age, but in middle age. A mixture of white and black hair was on his head. There was almost no chance that he would have a child, but luckily, this boy had come.

Previously, Nanda Mahārāja had no interest in worldly affairs. He was like one in the renounced order. But when Kṛṣṇa came, he thought, "How can I nourish Him?" Attachment came for Kṛṣṇa. Without such attachment, our *bhajana* (internal service and worship) is nothing. In our *bhajana*, there should be the feeling "Kṛṣṇa is mine, and I am Kṛṣṇa's." Either of these should come. If a spiritual practitioner has no attachment to Kṛṣṇa, no relationship with Him, then his *bhajana* is inadequate; something is lacking. Nanda Bābā had some attachment to Kṛṣṇa, and he wanted to nourish Him. But he wondered, "If I do not pay taxes to Kaṁsa, what will happen?" Previously, Kaṁsa was subordinate to Ugrasena Mahārāja, who was now in jail, but Kaṁsa was king. Nanda Bābā went to Mathurā to pay taxes and offer Kaṁsa respects.

If Kaṁsa proved to be helpful [and favorable to Nanda Mahārāja], then Nanda Mahārāja's child would be safe. Otherwise, Nanda Mahārāja reasoned that if Kaṁsa were unhappy with him, then Kaṁsa could put him and Yaśodā in prison, as he had done to Vasudeva and Devakī. Kṛṣṇa could then be taken and destroyed. Thinking in this way, Nanda Mahārāja went to Mathurā to pay some tax to Kaṁsa.

When he arrived in Mathurā, Nanda Bābā first met with Vasudeva Mahārāja. Upon seeing Nanda Bābā, Vasudeva Mahārāja said, "You have come! You should leave at once, otherwise some harm may come to you. Anything can happen. You should not stay here."

Hearing this, Nanda Bābā considered, "Vasudeva, my younger brother, is more intelligent than I am, because I am a *gopa*. I must follow him." He told Vasudeva, "You are so lucky to have a son at your age."

Vasudeva was clever. He was thinking, "I have left Kṛṣṇa in Gokula, but Nanda Bābā does not know this." He asked, "How is my son?"

Nanda Bābā replied, "Your son, Rāma, is well. I consider him to be like my own son."

"And what about your son?"

"He is also quite well."

"You should protect, save, nourish, and support these two children," Vasudeva said. He considered that his two sons, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva, were there in Vraja, and Nanda Bābā considered that Kṛṣṇa was his own son, and that Baladeva was the son of Vasudeva.

Nanda Bābā thus began his return to Gokula. On the way, he perceived a very beautiful fragrance. "From where is this fragrance coming?" he wondered.

Then he saw a very long *rākṣasī* (demoness) lying on the ground. The villagers and *gopas* told him, "In your absence, a *rākṣasī* came and wanted to kill your son, Kṛṣṇa, but luckily He was saved. Nārāyaṇa saved Him, because you have served Nārāyaṇa so much. Anyhow, she was killed, and now we are cutting up her body and throwing it into the fire."

"Why has her body become so fragrant?" Nanda Bābā asked.

"We don't know," they replied.

The body of Pūtanā had become fragrant because Kṛṣṇa had taken all defects and foul things from it. Thus she became fragrant inside and out. Kṛṣṇa gave her a motherly position in Goloka Vṛndāvana, not directly as His mother, but like a mother. Sometimes she has the great fortune of giving her breast milk to Kṛṣṇa in Goloka, but not in Gokula[2].

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2 Goloka refers to Kṛṣṇa's abode in the spiritual sky. Gokula often refers to the place of Kṛṣṇa's early childhood pastimes in Goloka, but in this instance, it refers to His abode as it appears in the material universe.

There is a difference between Gokula and Goloka. Sometimes. [in my explanation] I may separate them, but they are inconceivably one and different. Gokula is the life and soul of Goloka.

In this way, Kṛṣṇa was performing very sweet pastimes there.

THE ŚAKAṬĀSURA DEMON

Once, Kṛṣṇa was sleeping in a cradle under a cart while Mother Yaśodā busied herself with His birthday ceremony. Just then, an invisible demon who was sent by Kaṁsa entered that cart and began to press it down with the intention of crushing and killing Kṛṣṇa.

Excerpt from Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's
Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala Parikramā

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: The wheel of the cart fell on the earth, but what did Kṛṣṇa do before it could crash down on Him?

Puṇḍarīka dāsa: Kṛṣṇa was not bothered at all. He was simply playing like a small child, sometimes throwing His feet in the air, sometimes His hands…

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Sometimes like this with His feet, His toe here [imitates baby Kṛṣṇa's movements] just like a small boy, sometimes weeping, sometimes laughing.

Puṇḍarīka dāsa: As one of His legs came up, His toe touched the cart and blew it into pieces, causing a big noise. Everybody was astonished to hear that noise. They all came running and saw that this cart had been broken. All were scared. The boys playing nearby were saying, "Kṛṣṇa kicked this. Kṛṣṇa broke it." But others were unable to believe it.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: All the pots full of curd, milk, and everything were overturned, and there was a big sound. Yaśodā had been engaged in churning butter. Some women heard the noise, saw the smashed cart, and quickly informed Yaśodā. All the Vrajavāsīs – Nanda Bābā and all – came in fear. They were looking at the cart and wondering how it could have been possible, when they saw a demon there and that he had been killed. They began to search for the cause. Nanda Bābā was looking here and there. The small boys said [in broken language], "Bā-, Bā-, Bā-, Bā-, Bābā-, Ki-, Ki-, Ki-, Kṛṣṇa has ki-, ki-, ki-, kicked this cart, and this demon was killed."

But neither Nanda Bābā, Yaśodā, nor anyone else could believe it. The *brāhmaṇas* were called to that place and saw what had happened. They had already been invited to take part in the festival Yaśodā explained to them, "A demon came. Will you do something to protect my boy?"

The *brāhmaṇas* told her, "Bring a very black cow." A black cow was brought, and its cow dung and urine were mixed and made into a liquid paste. They chanted a *mantra* to offer protective prayers for Kṛṣṇa. What *mantra*? *Lalāṭe keśavaṁ rakṣet*. They said the *mantras* that devotees recite when putting on *tilaka*, then *rakṣet* ('should protect') was added to each name of Viṣṇu. In *lalāṭe* (the forehead), Keśava should sit; here [touching the stomach], Nārāyaṇa should sit; here [touching the heart], Mādhava; Here [touching the throat]…

Devotees: Govinda.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahāraja: Here [touching the right side of belly]…

Devotees: Viṣṇu.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Here [touching the right arm]…

Devotees: Madhusūdana.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Here [touching the right shoulder]…

Devotees: Trivikrama.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Here [touching the left side of the belly]…

Devotees: Vāmana.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Here [touching the left arm]…

Devotees: Śrīdhara.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Here [touching the left shoulder]…

Devotees: Hṛṣīkeśa.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Here [touching the upper back]…

Devotees: Padmanābha.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Here [touching the lower back]…

Devotees: Dāmodara.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Here [touching the top of head]…

Devotees: Vāsudeva.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Thousands of *brāhmaṇas* began to recite Vedic *mantras.* They made a bath for Kṛṣṇa with cow urine and cow dung. They used the tail of the black cow and began circling it around His head while chanting *mantras* – *nārāyaṇa rakṣet, viṣṇu rakṣet*, *śrīdhara rakṣet*. Kṛṣṇa then began to smile. Everyone was so happy that the ghost had gone.

Thereafter, hundreds of thousands of white cows were given to the *brāhmaṇas,* and the *brāhmaṇas* became so very happy. A great amount of gold was also distributed to them.

By such pastimes, Kṛṣṇa renewed His devotees' charge of love and affection for Him.

TṚṆĀVARTA, THE WHIRLWIND DEMON

Kṛṣṇa is now ninety days old. Sometimes Yaśodā would affectionately hold Him, but sometimes she wanted Him to sleep, and so she would sing a lullaby: "You should sleep, You should sleep, my boy, You should sleep."

[To one of the ladies present] Do you know a lullaby? Yaśodā would sing her boy to sleep just as any mother would. When He was asleep, she would churn butter for Him. Sometimes, doing this would lead her to be some distance from Him. At other times, she would think He should play, and so she would give toys to Kṛṣṇa. But then he would drop his toys and cry, "Mother! Mother!"

One day, when He was about ninety days old, what happened? [Pointing to Prema-prayojana dāsa] You should speak about Tṛṇāvarta.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: When Kṛṣṇa was ninety days old, it happened that one day He was looking skyward.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Kaṁsa had said to the demons, "Until now, none of you have crushed and killed that little baby." He was rebuking and chastising them. Then, a demon named Tṛṇāvarta came to him and said, "O my dear friend Kaṁsa, I promise that today I will smash that boy and kill Him. I will not return without killing Kṛṣṇa."

Kaṁsa embraced him and said, "You should go to Vraja and come back soon." Tṛṇāvarta went there, because Yogamāyā attracted him to Vraja.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Ordinarily, no demon or materialistic person can enter Vṛndāvana, but as Gurudeva explained, Yogamāyā attracted Tṛṇāvarta. Why? Kṛṣṇa was looking at the sky and saw some birds flying there. Kṛṣṇa was inspired to also fly in the sky like that. In order to fulfill Kṛṣṇa's desire, Yogamāyā attracted Tṛṇāvarta, who came to Vṛndāvana and assumed the form of a whirlwind.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Not Vṛndāvana, Gokula.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: When he came there, the whole sky became black, because so much dust had been raised in the air. No one could see anything anywhere because of this dust storm.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: How did it manifest?

Prema-prayojana dāsa: By the mystic power of Tṛṇāvarta.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Yes. He became like wind, taking everything and uprooting trees, like a cyclone. He came in the shape of a cyclone. All the trees were uprooted and scattered here and there.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Gokula was being devastated by the power of this mystic *yogī*, Tṛṇāvarta.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: What did he want?

Prema-prayojana dāsa: He wanted to catch Kṛṣṇa, take Him up into the sky, and kill Him.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: But He was in the lap of Yaśodā.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: But Kṛṣṇa was in the lap of Mother Yaśodā. By the influence of Yogamāyā, He became extremely heavy.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Kṛṣṇa thought, "If I do not separate Myself from Mother, then this demon will also kill her. I should somehow separate Myself from her." He called Yogamāyā, and Yogamāyā came. Kṛṣṇa at once became heavy, more heavy than iron. Yaśodā placed Kṛṣṇa to the side, and thus He became separated from her. Tṛṇāvarta came at once, lifted Kṛṣṇa, and took Him away from Mother Yaśodā.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Tṛṇāvarta took Kṛṣṇa up into the sky, and Mother Yaśodā was crying and trying to see Him. "O my son! Where are You?" But not seeing anything, she fell to the ground, weeping.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: All the *gopīs* were in their houses, and they were in the same condition [as Yaśodā]. They could therefore not come and help Yaśodā, who was weeping.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Tṛṇāvarta carried Kṛṣṇa up into the sky, and in this way, Kṛṣṇa had His desire to fly fulfilled. After He had flown for some time, He became satisfied with His flying experience and He began to hold tightly to Tṛṇāvarta's neck. If you pick up a child, they will naturally hold on to you. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa, like an ordinary baby, began to hold onto the neck of Tṛṇāvarta, but His grip became so strong and He became so heavy that even though Tṛṇāvarta was quite powerful, he could not withstand the grip of Kṛṣṇa. Eventually, Tṛṇāvarta's two eyes popped out like *rasagullās* (a large, round Indian sweet), and he came crashing down to the earth. Kṛṣṇa was quite surprised. He thought, "I just wanted to play with you and fly here and there in the sky. I was only embracing you, but somehow or other, your eyes have popped out like *rasagullās*. I don't know why. What can I do? It was not my fault."

Then the storm abated and all was peaceful again.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Tṛṇāvarta fell from the sky onto a stone. He was totally crushed, but Kṛṣṇa was not injured

THE TṚṆĀVARTA DEMON

at all. Is there any teaching in this? All of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes have very deep teachings.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Tṛṇāvarta is a demon. He represents an *anartha* (a tendency that obstructs one's progress in spiritual life) that is in the heart of all conditioned souls: the tendency for speculation and gaining material knowledge. By this, the living entity thinks, "I am so elevated." His attachment to material knowledge and speculation makes him blind.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Vedic knowledge about the impersonal, featureless aspect of the Absolute Truth is not favorable for *bhakti*. Some want to prove the following by scriptural argument: "Kṛṣṇa has no shape, no attributes, and He is not powerful. We are also like this – bodiless. We are also Supreme Spirit and without shape. Now we are called a *jīva*, a living entity, but when we leave this body, we will again be Supreme Spirit."

They want to prove this by logic and citing the Vedas. These arguments and logic are like the wind. They want to cover the personality of Kṛṣṇa and the personality of the living entity, but they cannot. The demon Tṛṇāvarta wanted to cover Kṛṣṇa, thinking, "Kṛṣṇa has no shape, no attributes, no qualities." He wanted to do as Śaṅkarācārya and the *māyāvādīs* have done.[3] But Kṛṣṇa killed that demon very easily.

You should know that Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are of two kinds: (1) full of majesty and opulence (*aiśvarya-mayī*) and (2) full of sweetness, (*mādhurya-mayī*). Vaikuṇṭha means the spiritual sky, where there is so much opulence. In Goloka (the topmost planet in Vaikuṇṭha), there is also great opulence, but Kṛṣṇa's sweetness and His sweet pastimes cover that opulence.

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3 Śaṅkarācārya actively propagated the idea that the Supreme Lord is impersonal and devoid of attributes. Those who follow this same line of thought are known as *māyāvādīs*. They believe that the Lord's form is a product of the deluding material potency.

He is the creator of all the creations. He supports and nourishes them, and He has six qualities: wealth, strength, fame, beauty, knowledge, and renunciation. Among these qualities, one is the source of all the other qualities, and that is beauty (*śrī*). Wealth, strength, and fame are part of Him, while knowledge and renunciation are parts of parts; they are not qualities.[4] Anyhow, we should know that there are six categories of opulence in Kṛṣṇa, but in Vraja, all of them are covered by a charming sweetness.[5] All opulences are in Kṛṣṇa, wherever He is, whether in Vrajabhūmi or anywhere else. But Kṛṣṇa's sweet pastimes are so powerful that they cover those opulences. There, Kṛṣṇa is like a baby boy, a servant, serving Nanda Bābā, taking his shoes here and there, and carrying out the orders of all the residents of Vraja.

His killing of Tṛṇāvarta in the sky shows a lot of opulence and majesty. But Kṛṣṇa never became four-armed or big like Vāmana did. He never used a weapon, like His disc or anything else. When He was just a little boy, naked, of only ninety days, He embraced Tṛṇāvarta like a baby monkey catching hold of its mother. Kṛṣṇa was thinking, "If you are dying, what can I do? I was embracing you and playing with you, but your eyes became like *rasagullās*, and now you are dying. What can I do?"

Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā saw Him smash that demon, Tṛṇāvarta, but they were thinking, "Kṛṣṇa cannot do this. Impossible!"

Who did they think did it? Nārāyaṇa. They thought Kṛṣṇa could only have been able to do this because Gargācārya announced in His name-giving ceremony, "He is powerful like Nārāyaṇa."

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4 Knowledge and renunciation are only attributes of a quality; they are not original qualities in their own right (*Jaiva-dharma*, Chapter 13).

5 Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda and Yaśodā, is the source of all His expansions, such as Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa, four-armed Lord Nārāyaṇa in Vaikuṇṭha, and all His other Vaikuṇṭha expansions, in which He enjoys pastimes of great opulence and majesty. The beauty that is one of His six opulences and which is covered by sweetness refers to the beauty of those expansions, not to Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda and Yaśodā.

Nanda and Yaśodā concluded, "Nārāyaṇa is so merciful to this boy. He has given Him some power, and that is why He killed Tṛṇāvarta. Otherwise, Kṛṣṇa could not have done so."

Nanda and Mother Yaśodā again invited many *brāhmaṇas* to come to their home. A black cow was again brought, a paste of cow dung and urine was again made, and they again recited *mantras* – *keśava rakṣet, nārāyaṇa rakṣet* – while waving the black tail of the cow. And again, hundreds of thousands of cows were given [in charity].

As Kṛṣṇa grew older, He was sometimes weeping and sometimes playing here and there. Now, He could move His body by crawling. Sometimes, He would play with Baladeva.

Previously Gargācārya had come from Mathurā, having been sent by Vasudeva, who requested him, "Go and give names to my two sons, but do not say that Kṛṣṇa is my son, otherwise, Kaṁsa will come to know and will try to kill Him." He requested Gargācārya to perform this ceremony in a secluded place. When Gargācārya arrived in Vṛndāvana, what happened? [To Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī] Can you tell this pastime?

THE NAME-GIVING CEREMONY

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: When Vasudeva Mahārāja sent Gargācārya to Vraja, Nanda Mahārāja asked Yaśodā Mā and Rohiṇī Mā to take their babies to the cowshed, because Nanda Bābā did not want to hold a big festival.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: No, Gargācārya advised him to not do so. Nanda Bābā wanted to give many cows and hold a big festival.

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: Gargācārya stopped him from doing anything, and advised him, "If you hold a festival, then Kaṁsa may

KṚṢṆA AND BALARĀMA'S NAME-GIVING CEREMONY

question, 'Why is Nanda holding a festival with Gargācārya, the priest of Vasudeva Mahārāja?' Kaṁsa might harm your babies, so do not hold a big festival. Don't do anything openly." Nanda Mahārāja went to the cowshed with Yaśodā Mā, Rohiṇī Mā, and Gargācārya for the name-giving ceremony. Nobody else was there, only these four persons.

Gargācārya said, "Balarāma, the son of Rohiṇī, is very strong (*bala*), and He is very beautiful and attractive (*rāma*). His names will therefore be 'Baladeva' and 'Balarāma.' Baladeva means 'He who is the predominating deity of all kinds of power and strength,' and Rāma means 'He who is beautiful and attractive.' "

Gargācārya kept the name 'Kṛṣṇa' for the younger son. Kṛṣṇa means 'He who can attract everyone.' Kṛṣṇa is incredibly beautiful, and He has many qualities. Everyone is easily attracted to Him. He can attract the whole world. For this reason, Gargācārya kept His name 'Kṛṣṇa.'

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: He also told that in each…

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: And he said, "He has come in every *yuga*, and His name is different in different *yugas.* Now, His name will be Kṛṣṇa."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Had he appeared in Kali-yuga before?

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: "He appeared in Satya-yuga in a white complexion, in Tretā-yuga in a red complexion, and in Kali-yuga in a golden complexion.

"Now [in Dvāpara-yuga] He is blackish, and His name is Kṛṣṇa [which also means 'black']. He takes birth in every *yuga*, and now He is Kṛṣṇa." Thus, he kept His name 'Kṛṣṇa.'

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: But Gargācārya narrated this in such a style that no one could understand [that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead]. Nanda Bābā, also, was

covered by Yogamāyā's influence and could not understand the deep meaning behind Gargācārya's words. He thought, "My son is so beautiful, and sometimes Nārāyaṇa mercifully enters Him. At that time, a miracle happens."

We will explain more of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes tomorrow. There are many hidden meanings within them. We should try to remember these pastimes and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa**,** and then *māyā* will go far from you, and you will be liberated. The mercy of Kṛṣṇa will be realized and our lives will be successful.

KṚṢṆA STEALING BUTTER

A Thief of Hearts

Kṛṣṇa never becomes hungry. He wants to taste the mood of *bhakti* through the offering of any preparation. He never tastes plantain, *rabaḍī*, milk, or anything. He only tastes the essence of those offerings, which is love and affection.

KṚṢṆA'S CHARMING NAUGHTINESS

With great honor, Parīkṣit Mahārāja was greedy to hear the sweet pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. As Śukadeva Gosvāmī observed the moods of Parīkṣit Mahārāja, he became so happy that from his heart, he automatically spoke narrations about the Supreme Lord, *hari-kathā*.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam describes how those who are really devotees have spontaneous love and affection for Kṛṣṇa. If they see a qualified devotee or disciple, an endless stream of *bhakti-rasa* (the mellow of transcendental devotion) automatically flows from their heart, in the form of their narrations of Kṛṣṇa's sweet pastimes. Those who are fortunate bathe in that *bhakti-rasa*, and their lives become successful. They forever forget their lust for eating, drinking, and making merry, and all their fears and *anarthas* (tendencies unfavorable for spiritual life) will go far away. Offenses will also go, and they will soon have pure *prema-bhakti* for the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.

[While narrating *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*,] Śukadeva Gosvāmī asked Parīkṣit Mahārāja, "Do you want to take water?"

"No, Gurudeva. I do not want to take. I am drinking the ocean of *rasa* flowing from your mouth. I do not need anything else. Go on speaking the sweet pastimes of Kṛṣṇa."

Anyone who hears these sweet pastimes of Kṛṣṇa will soon have pure love (*prema-bhakti*) for Him. This is certain. Their *anarthas* will go away and they will have nothing to worry about – neither death, suffering, nor sorrow.

PARĪKṢIT MAHĀRĀJA HEARING THE ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM FROM ŚUKADEVA GOSVĀMĪ

Śukadeva Gosvāmī again began to utter *hari-kathā*.

Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva are the Supreme Personalities of Godhead. Baladeva is non-different from Kṛṣṇa. We may see Them as two different forms, but actually They are one. In this incarnation, Kṛṣṇa has appeared in the body of Baladeva only to teach us how to serve Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, Baladeva Prabhu is actually the undivided principle of *śrī guru.* He teaches us how to serve Kṛṣṇa. He imparts all spiritual truths.

Now, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva are in Vraja, and are gradually approaching the age of one or two years. As we in this world grow, we go from childhood to boyhood, from boyhood to youth, and from youth to old age. However, these stages are not present in Kṛṣṇa. In His pastimes in the spiritual world of Goloka Vṛndāvana, He is the ever-fresh, eternally youthful embodiment of the most expert dancer. He is in His teenage years and is very beautiful. He is never old and never young. Yet, in His pastimes in this world, Kṛṣṇa is seen to grow through many different stages. He has manifested all these stages in order to increase the love and affection of the devotees.

As little children, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva, the Supreme Personalities of Godhead, now roam here and there, quite naked. Previously, They used to move about on Their knees, crawling. Sometimes, They would see a serpent and catch hold of it. Upon seeing this, Mother Yaśodā would become so worried. Sometimes, They would put Their hands in the mouth of dogs, very wild dogs, and the dogs would become calm and quiet and wag their tails back and forth. Sometimes Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva used to see big, ferocious bulls. They would catch hold of the bulls' horns and play with them, and the bulls would play with Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva.

Sometimes, when crawling about, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva would crawl to the front door of a *gopī's* house. If They saw anyone inside, They would remember Their mothers, and quickly, in fear,

turn back and run to the lap of Their mothers. And what would Their mothers do? They would wipe the dust from the bodies of their children with their veil, take Them on their lap, and caress Their hair. With tears in their eyes and a melting heart, they would put their breast in the mouth of Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva.

Sometimes, *gopīs* would come into the courtyard of Mother Yaśodā, who was engaged in churning butter and doing other jobs. What jobs? Preparing something for Kṛṣṇa. She has no other job. She is always engaged in serving Him. While doing any job, she was always remembering Him, singing, "Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhaveti, Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhaveti."

Mother Yaśodā was brooming. Why? Because Kṛṣṇa was now crawling. She was making the floor very neat and clean, and while doing so, she was singing, "Govinda Dāmodara Mādhaveti." Sometimes, she was grinding grains and singing, "Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhaveti." She used to give pomegranates to the she-parrots and tell them, "You should sing as I am: 'Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhaveti.' "

All the *vraja-gopīs* did this, not only Mother Yaśodā. In their homes, they always remembered Kṛṣṇa and did chores for Him, knowing that Kṛṣṇa would come and steal butter from their houses. Knowing that He would surely come, they would think, "How shall I, by any trick, catch hold of Kṛṣṇa?"

In this way, they passed their time. Sometimes in the morning at seven o'clock, the *gopīs* would come to the house of Yaśodā to see Kṛṣṇa. He was so beautiful. They all had their own sons, but they did not have as much love and affection for them as they had for Kṛṣṇa. They always thought, "We want Kṛṣṇa to be our son so that we can give Him our breast milk and serve Him with love and affection."

All the elder, motherly *gopīs* felt this way. Even the cows felt like this. Sometimes, the cows would come inside the house of Nanda Mahārāja and stand there. Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva lay under those

KṚṢṆA AND BALARĀMA

KṚṢṆA AND BALARĀMA STEALING BUTTER

cows, and milk would spontaneously flow from the cows' udders into Their mouth. The cows, also, thought, "If Kṛṣṇa were to become my son, then I could give my milk, love, and affection to Him."

The elder, motherly *gopīs* sometimes went to Nanda-bhavana (the house of Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā) to see Kṛṣṇa. They told Mother Yaśodā, "Now that your Kṛṣṇa has become bigger, He sometimes comes into our house, to where we keep butter. His friends – Sudāma, Śrīdāma, Subala, Madhumaṅgala, and all – are like monkeys. There are so many boys with Kṛṣṇa at all times. All are naked like Catuḥsana and Balākhalya Ṛṣi." In this way, the *gopīs* used to complain to Yaśodā.

The *gopīs* would speak among themselves: "Yaśodā is not fortunate like us. Kṛṣṇa comes to our homes to steal and play, but because He does not steal from His own house, she does not see all these sweet pastimes. We are so fortunate."

Though it seems that the *gopīs* are complaining, they just want Yaśodā to know how sweet her son is. "Your boy has become so naughty. He enters our house, steals butter, and distributes it to the monkeys and His friends."

Sometimes, Kṛṣṇa would tell one of His friends, "While we hide here in the shade of this tree, go and tell your mother that your calf has run away. Tell her that someone has untied the calf, and now that calf is taking the milk of his mother." When that *gopī* would hear this, she would immediately run out to try to stop the calf. In the meantime, Kṛṣṇa would enter her home to take butter and many other things.

Sometimes, a *gopī* would hide and wait for Kṛṣṇa, thinking that He will surely come to steal butter. When Kṛṣṇa came there and put His hand in the butter pot, she would at once catch hold of Him.

"Why have You done this?" she would ask Him.

"O Mother, I see this place as My home. I never thought that you were not My mother. I came here, never thinking that you

would catch hold of Me and beat Me." Saying this, He would begin to smile, and pulling His hand out of hers, would run away.

Sometimes, a *gopī* would tell Mother Yaśodā, "Today I caught Kṛṣṇa red-handed. I asked Him, 'Why have You come here? Did You come to steal butter?'

"He replied, 'No, Mother. Today I was playing with My calf. He ran away and jumped in this pot. I followed him. I was just searching for My calf.'

" 'So Your calf jumped in this pot?'

" 'Yes, Mother.'

"Kṛṣṇa put His hand in the pot and pulled out a toy marble calf. He and His friends began to laugh, and the next moment, He ran away from there."

Being the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa always wants to give pleasure to His devotees. Not all incarnations of Godhead are like Kṛṣṇa. Anyone can worship Kṛṣṇa, but Kṛṣṇa wants to worship and serve His devotees. If someone desires for Kṛṣṇa to come to his house and steal butter, then Kṛṣṇa will come; otherwise, He never comes to anyone's home.

Duryodhana was such a rich person. He served Kṛṣṇa water in a golden glass, and offered Him, in golden pots, preparations of many delicious foodstuffs, like *laḍḍū*, *peḍā*, *kacauḍī*, *puṛī*, *mākhana* – so many things. Then he said to Kṛṣṇa, "You should take."

Kṛṣṇa said, "I have no appetite. I cannot take."

If there is no appetite, we cannot eat, but [even if we have no appetite,] we can take anything offered with love and affection. In regard to Duryodhana, Kṛṣṇa thought, "But you have no love and affection for Me." Kṛṣṇa also told Duryodhana, "I have come to make a proposal. But since you have not complied with that proposal, how can I take what you offer? I am not a beggar; I am not hungry. How can I take?"

Shortly after this, Kṛṣṇa went to Vidura's house and pleaded to his wife, Vidurāṇī, "O Mother Vidurāṇī, I am so hungry. Please give

me something to eat." Vidurāṇī, being absorbed in her affection for Him, began to give Him bananas, but only the outer part, the peel. She was throwing away the inner part, the soft, sweet banana fruit, the main thing, yet Kṛṣṇa was accepting those peels with love and affection, relishing them more than He relished the preparations made by His queens Rukmiṇī and Satyabhāmā in Dvārakā. He was fully absorbed in taking that.

In the meantime, Vidura came home and saw this. He said to his wife, "O Vidurāṇī, what are you doing?"

Kṛṣṇa said, "Don't say anything. She is not in external consciousness. She is fully absorbed in transcendental love and affection."

But upon hearing her husband say, "What are you doing?" Vidurāṇī came to external consciousness. She began to give Kṛṣṇa the banana fruit and throw away the peel.

"This is not so tasty now," Kṛṣṇa said.

Kṛṣṇa never becomes hungry. He wants to taste the mood of *bhakti* through the offering of any preparation. He never tastes plantain, *rabaḍī*, milk, or anything. He only tastes the essence of those offerings, which is love and affection. If anything is given with love and affection, He will gladly take it. And if a person has love and affection but is witholding something from Him, then He will forcibly take it from that devotee. But if there is no love and affection, He will never take anything.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu used to [playfully] quarrel with Śrīdhara, a fruit and vegetable merchant, and would forcibly take his vegetables. Śrīdhara would say, "I will not give them to You. I am a very poor person. You should not take anything from me; You should go to others." Still [because Śrīdhara had so much love for Him] Śrīman Mahāprabhu used to take his banana flowers and other things. This is the nature of Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa is not a beggar. He is complete in all opulences, yet in Vraja, He serves and plays with all His associates.

Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva are now one-and-a-half years old and have begun walking a little. Though They can stand up, sometimes They fall down. Some motherly *gopīs* came to the house and divided into two parties. One party took the side of Baladeva, and the other took the side of Kṛṣṇa.

The *gopīs* in Kṛṣṇa's party announced, "Kṛṣṇa is so strong that He can defeat Baladeva."

The *gopīs* in the party of Baladeva Prabhu responded, "No, no. Baladeva is stronger than Kṛṣṇa." Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva began to understand something of what they were saying. The *gopīs* on Kṛṣṇa's side said, "If Kṛṣṇa defeats Baladeva, then we will give a *laḍḍū* to Kṛṣṇa." And the party of Baladeva Prabhu responded, "If Baladeva wins this battle, then we will give a *laḍḍū* to Baladeva."

In this way, the *gopīs* inspired Them to wrestle, and Baladeva and Kṛṣṇa began to do so. They were equally strong. Sometimes, Baladeva would overpower Kṛṣṇa, but, in the middle of Their fight, in just a turn, Kṛṣṇa would overpower Baladeva, and then Baladeva would overpower Kṛṣṇa again. All *gopīs* were clapping.

Now Kṛṣṇa is somewhat bigger. One day, Yaśodā told Kṛṣṇa, "Kṛṣṇa, today is Your birthday – *aṣṭamī* (the half-moon night). You should fetch a calf and worship the feet of that calf." Calf here means female calf. Kṛṣṇa became so happy. He was wearing only a tinkling golden chain around His waist. Kṛṣṇa wondered, "Where is this sound coming from?" He didn't know it was coming from own His waist, and so He looked here and there.

He went to a calf, a very beautiful she-calf that was white like snow, like a swan, and so stout, so healthy. Kṛṣṇa wanted to catch that calf, but it was jumping about. Somehow He caught hold of her. He wanted to bring her into the courtyard, but she resisted,

standing firmly on all four legs. There was a struggle between them. When Kṛṣṇa finally brought her into the courtyard, He saw that there was a pot hanging on a rope, and He understood that it must be a pot of sweet butter.

Kṛṣṇa forgot that He should bring the calf inside. He only wanted the butter. But how could He get it? It was hanging from the rafters. There was not a ladder or anything on which to climb. There were no friends that He could climb on, one by one. And there was no stick. How could He possibly do this? Only the calf was there. He thought, "If I stand on this calf, then very easily I will be able to reach it."

Kṛṣṇa tried to climb on that calf, but just as He was high enough to reach the pot, the calf jumped away. Kṛṣṇa had put His hand in the pot, but when the calf ran away, He was left hanging there. He fearfully called out, "O Mother! O Mother! O Mother!" and cried bitterly.

Mother Yaśodā was churning butter when she heard Kṛṣṇa weeping. She smiled and ran to help Him. Upon seeing Him, she exclaimed, "How did this happen? You should stay like that; I will not help You down. I will punish You for this."

Kṛṣṇa began to weep even more loudly than before, as He called, "Mother, Mother, Mother, Mother!" Yaśodā then lifted Him down and embraced Him.

He was very naughty in His boyhood, and that is why He received all of the *gopīs'* love and affection, especially His mother's.

One day, Yaśodā thought, "He has become so naughty, stealing butter in neighbors' houses. I must teach Him a good lesson."

One *gopī* told her, "In the early morning, Kṛṣṇa came to my house to steal. He saw that everything was kept very carefully, and there was nothing to take – no butter lying about here and there. My son, a very little boy, was sleeping. Kṛṣṇa went over to him and pinched him so hard that he awoke and began to cry.

He will do this if you do not keep butter in your house for Him. And sometimes, He breaks all of our pots."

One day, a *gopī* was in her home waiting for Kṛṣṇa and thinking, "When He comes, I will catch Him red-handed and take Him to Yaśodā, because she has no faith in our words [when we tell her that He steals from our houses]. Then she will see the naughtiness of her boy."

Very early the next morning, while it was dark, Kṛṣṇa came alone to that *gopī's* house to steal butter. Looking this way and that, He was thinking, "No one can catch Me."

But this *gopī* was prepared for Him. As Kṛṣṇa ate the butter, she came out from her hiding place and caught Him red-handed. She covered His head with a cloth and said, "I will take You to Mother Yaśodā. Now she may have some faith in us when we tell her that her boy is a great thief."

When she came to Nanda Bābā's house, she cried out, "O Yaśodā, come and see. I have caught your son red-handed. He has become a thief. You had no faith in our words before, but today you will have to believe us."

As Yaśodā walked through the house, she saw that Kṛṣṇa was sleeping on the bed. Puzzled, she inquired from the *gopī*, "Where is my son?" The *gopī* took the cloth from the face of Kṛṣṇa, only to see that it was her own son who was covered with it.

Kṛṣṇa came from the room, weeping, "O Mother, O Mother, just see how they are lying. I never go to that house. They are all liars. Now I will go and take butter."

Later, as Yaśodā was doing her many household chores, she began to think, "All the other *gopīs* prepare butter for Kṛṣṇa with their own hands, with love and affection, and therefore that butter is so sweet. But I do not prepare it with my own hands. My servants and maidservants do it. From today, I will personally milk the cows, put the milk on the fire, and make sweet yogurt

by adding something sour to the boiling milk. Then, I myself will churn that yogurt to make butter. That butter will be so sweet that Kṛṣṇa will happily take it and relish it with great pleasure."

MOTHER YAŚODĀ'S LOVE FOR KṚṢṆA

Do you know Dīpāvālī[1] day in India? On Dīpāvālī day, Yaśodā sent all her servants, maidservants, and even Mother Rohiṇī and Baladeva, to Upānanda's house. Upānanda is the eldest brother of Nanda Bābā. She sent them there because there was no one to help with the Dīpāvālī preparations at Upānanda's place.

In the early dawn, Yaśodā was therefore alone, churning. She was so beautiful. If she weren't, how could Kṛṣṇa be beautiful? If the mother is ugly, the son cannot be beautiful. Yaśodā was so beautiful. Her breasts were broad and her waist was thin. It was as if her body would break if she were to bend down, and she wore very fine silk cloth. In India, in those days, the art of making silk cloth was finely developed. *Sārī* makers at that time were so expert that they could weave ten yards of raw silk thread into a piece of cloth the width of a fingernail. Though Yaśodā was wearing such dense silken cloth for Dīpāvālī, her beauty shone through. She wore a golden chain around her neck and bangles on her wrists. She had twisted some silken ropes around a pillar, and was churning butter with her two hands. Kṛṣṇa was so attractive. If thousands of people were to watch any of His actions, He would attract them all.

While Yaśodā was churning, she was remembering Kṛṣṇa's sweet childhood pastimes and singing, "Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhaveti." She was partly absorbed in singing and partly absorbed in Kṛṣṇa.

1 The festival of lamps (*dīpa*) ushering in auspiciousness.

Her eyes were closed, tears were falling from them, and her heart was melting. A *mṛdaṅga* drum has two sides: a larger side that makes the sound *dhik*, and a smaller one that makes the sound *tān*. Mother Yaśodā's churning was making both these sounds, and she was singing along with the rhythm: '*dhik tān, dhik tān*.' Her bangles sounded like very sweet *karatālas* (hand cymbals). The sounds coming from her churning meant 'Fie on those who don't worship or remember Kṛṣṇa.' She was totally absorbed in this churning.

In the meantime, Kṛṣṇa awoke. He looked here and there for His mother. "Where is Mother?" His eyes were closed, and He was calling, "Mother, Mother!" But His mother was elsewhere, churning. He then began to weep so hard that He could not call, "O Mother!" He could only cry and rub His eyes, not with His palms, but with the back of His hands. At first there were no tears in His eyes, only *kājala*, black collyrium, was there. He has such big eyes. Yaśodā had applied long *kājala* that extended from His eyes to His ears. When He could not find His mother, He cried, "I am so hungry, and Mother has gone elsewhere." After some time, He realized that His mother could not hear Him. "Oh, she must be over there, churning and singing." He began to weep louder, but still His mother did not come.

He started to climb down from His cot, but the cot was so high, how could He climb down? He can jump across the whole ocean and the whole world, but He could not get down from His cot. Inching along on His stomach, with great labor, He got down and began to walk toward His mother.

There was still a semblance of sleepiness in Him, and He tottered as He walked. He was weeping also. Tears were in His eyes and in His nose as well. His tears mixed with the *kājala* around His eyes and began to flow like the Ganges and Yamunā. He was already black, and this black *kājala* made Him even

blacker. He was weeping louder and louder, but Yaśodā was so absorbed in singing and churning that she could not hear Him. At last He came over to her and caught hold of her churning stick with His left hand, and with His right, He caught hold of her veil. Yaśodā wondered, "Why has my churning stopped?"

She looked behind her and found Kṛṣṇa there, weeping. She left her churning at once and put Him on her lap. Wiping His eyes with her veil, she pacified Him. She began caressing Him, and placed her breast in His mouth. Kṛṣṇa had stopped weeping, but now, Yaśodā began to weep softly. She wept tears of love. All eight bodily transformations symptomatic of deep ecstasy appeared in her. She wept (*aśru*), the hair on her body stood on end (*romāñca*), and she trembled (*kampa*). Perspiration (*sveda*) appeared like pearls on her face, and all other symptoms manifested in her body, as did various profound emotions (*vyābhicārī-bhāvas*). In this way, while Kṛṣṇa suckled her breast milk, she was completely absorbed in her love for Him.

After drinking for some time, Kṛṣṇa was still not satisfied. Yaśodā then saw that the pot of milk on the nearby fire had boiled and was overflowing onto the fire. She knew that this milk was a personality. [In other words, it was not ordinary milk but was conscious.] The milk was thinking, "I am not serving Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa's stomach is so big the whole world can fit in it. Also, there is so much milk in the breasts of Mother Yaśodā, that they can hold hundreds of thousands of milk oceans. All the milk in the limitless Kṣīrodakaśāyī Ocean[2] is equal to very little of Yaśodā's milk. His stomach and appetite are so big, and Yaśodā has an endless ocean of milk. Even if Kṛṣṇa drinks her milk for a long, long time, for hundreds of thousands of years, it will not be depleted. Therefore, I will never have a chance to serve Him,

2 The ocean of milk in the upper portion of the universe, as described in the Vedic scriptures.

and so I should give up my life." [With this mood, the milk boiled over onto the fire.]

What is the symptom of a devotee? He feels separation from Kṛṣṇa in this way: "If my body, my mind, and all my senses are not engaged in serving Kṛṣṇa, then I should die. What is the use of living?"

We do not think like this. Because the desire to serve Kṛṣṇa is not within us, we cannot be considered good spiritual practitioners (*sādhakas*). When this desire comes, then Kṛṣṇa will at once appear and give us service to Him. If He does not come, then any devotee – like Yaśodā – will come to give us a chance to serve Him.

Yaśodā saw that the milk was falling into the fire with the desire to give up his life.

She said to the milk, "I will serve Kṛṣṇa later. First, I will engage you in service to Him."

A real devotee, a *guru*, is like this, engaging new devotees in service to Kṛṣṇa. What is the job of *gurudeva*? He will engage qualified souls – those who have an eagerness to serve Kṛṣṇa – in service to Him. But those who are not eager will not have this opportunity. Mother Yaśodā, like a *guru* of those who have parental affection for Kṛṣṇa, wanted to help that milk, and so she quickly put Kṛṣṇa down by her side and ran to save it. A *guru's* tendency and mood are like this – to help others serve Kṛṣṇa. It is the best duty.

We know that Pūtanā had the power of thousands of elephants, yet when Kṛṣṇa was suckling from her breast, she could not rid herself of His grasp. At that time, Kṛṣṇa was only six days old. Now He is much stronger. When He saw that Yaśodā wanted to leave Him, He caught hold of her like a monkey clings to its mother, with all four limbs. He wrapped His feet firmly around her body and suckled with great strength. All His senses were engaged. [He resolved,] "I will not leave Mother Yaśodā and her breast."

But Yaśodā told Him, "Sit here." Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and has so many opulences and so much power. He can defeat the whole world and all demons – Keśī, Agha, Baka, Pūtanā, Hiraṇyakaśipu, Rāvaṇa, and so forth – but He could not stop Mother Yaśodā from putting Him down. He was defeated by her. With just one hand, she very quickly and easily removed Him from her breast and said, "You should sit here." Kṛṣṇa was helpless.

This pastime contains a good lesson, for all. If anyone has such devotion to Kṛṣṇa, all of Kṛṣṇa's power goes away by the arrangement of Yogamāyā, and He becomes helpless, like a baby. He wanted to catch hold of His mother and drink her breast milk, but she quickly put Him down. He began to weep loudly and became somewhat angry. "Although she has not satisfied My hunger, she has put Me aside and has gone to save the milk."

In this pastime, we see that those who serve Kṛṣṇa also take care of the articles used to serve Him – the utensils, the clothes, the flute, the peacock feather – all of these things. Mother Yaśodā used to give more attention to these things than to Kṛṣṇa. Why? This is the nature of pure devotion (*bhakti*). We do not see this so much in this world, only sometimes. When Kṛṣṇa would make His clothes dirty, Yaśodā used to slap him. "You are so naughty. I have just washed Your clothes, and now You are making them dirty."

Kṛṣṇa is weeping and Yaśodā has put Him aside to save the milk. There are two considerations here: the milk and Kṛṣṇa. For whom does Mother Yaśodā have the greatest affection, Kṛṣṇa or the milk? The milk exists to satisfy Kṛṣṇa. We should give our whole attention to satisfying Him, but here we see the opposite in Yaśodā. She thought, "Kṛṣṇa is weeping, no harm," and put Him aside to run and save the milk. Why? Sometimes she gives Kṛṣṇa a slap for making His clothes dirty. These clothes are for the service of Kṛṣṇa. Why is she slapping Him for having dirty clothes?

This is the nature of pure devotion. This is why Kṛṣṇa does not have as much affection for those who serve Him directly as for

those who serve His devotees, or the servant of the servant of the devotee. Kṛṣṇa becomes so happy with them. Do you understand what I am saying?

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Are you saying that Kṛṣṇa will not be as pleased with those who serve Him directly as He will with those who serve others who are related to Him, specifically His devotees?

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: If one person is directly serving Kṛṣṇa and another is serving Rādhikā, with whom will Kṛṣṇa be more pleased?

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Whoever is serving Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Why?

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Because he is serving that person who is dearest to Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: And if someone is serving Rūpa Mañjarī, who is serving Śrīmatī Rādhikā, then with whom will Kṛṣṇa be more pleased?

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: With the servant of Rūpa Mañjarī.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Therefore, if anyone is serving Rūpa Mañjarī, Kṛṣṇa will say, "You are a servant of Rūpa Mañjarī? I shall give you everything. What do you want?"

This is the nature of *bhakti*, devotion. Yaśodā went to save the milk. That milk was for Kṛṣṇa. Yaśodā was thinking, "My breast milk alone will not be enough to satisfy Him. Sweet butter cannot be prepared from my milk, so it is essential to save that milk." And so she went to do that, even though Kṛṣṇa was weeping.

What is to be understood by Kṛṣṇa's weeping? Is He angry or not? Externally, it may seem that He is angry, but internally, He is very happy. Kṛṣṇa thought, "My mother has gone, having put Me

here without satisfying Me. I will teach her a lesson." He stood up and tried to upturn a vessel containing butter, but He was not strong enough; He saw that He could not do it. He had killed Pūtanā, but now He was so weak that He could not move this pot. He could not even shake it. He began to think, "What should I do?" He forgot all His majesty and opulence (*aiśvarya*). Where there is love, Kṛṣṇa can forget all His *aiśvarya*. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa forgot all His *aiśvarya*, became ignorant and weak, and wondered what to do.

In the meantime He saw a 'son of a stone.' What is a 'son of a stone'? In India, it is piece of flat stone used to grind many spices, *masālā*, and other things.

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: A grinding stone.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Yes. Now there are machines for this, But at that time, the householder's wife used to do it by hand, so beautifully. It was like an exercise. They did not go for walks or do various exercises. There was so much exercise in household work at that time, like grinding wheat on a wheel, pounding grains with a mortar and pestle, washing here and there, and so much other work.

There was a piece of stone laying nearby. Kṛṣṇa took the grinding stone in His hands and tried to break the pot at the top, yet because it was so thick, it did not break. But He was intelligent. He saw that the base of the pot was very thin and thought, "If I try to break this pot from the top, butter will not come out. I should make a hole in the bottom of the pot." He made a very little hole, and gradually all of the buttermilk began to pour out. He looked on very happily, clapping and saying, "How beautiful!"

He had forgotten about His opulence and majesty. He thought, "Mother will come and chastise Me, and she may beat Me with a cane, so what should I do? I should quickly run away from here and hide."

There were two doors, one leading to another room inside, and the other leading outside, to the main path. Kṛṣṇa went into the adjacent room and closed the door. Seeing pots of butter hanging from the ceiling, He climbed on top of the grinding mortar and began to eat some of that sweet butter. In the meantime, some monkeys and crows came. As Kṛṣṇa was taking the butter, they jumped over to Him and took it from His hand.

What happened next? [To Prema-prayojana dāsa] Can you speak something?

Prema-prayojana dāsa: As Kṛṣṇa was standing on the mortar and feeding butter to the crows and monkeys, He saw that they were so happy. He thought, "Yes, I must feed them." Why? Because in Kṛṣṇa's previous incarnation, He was Rāmacandra. At that time, many monkeys helped Him in His conquest of Laṅkā, to bring Sītā back to Ayodhyā. They worked hard, but Rāma had no decent food to give them. Therefore, Kṛṣṇa was thinking, "I will feed them nicely now, because they previously underwent many difficulties for Me." As He fed them, He saw how happy they were becoming. Kṛṣṇa also thought, "These crows have appeared in the dynasty of My very dear servant Kākabhuśuṇḍi, who helped Lord Rāmacandra in His pastimes."

Kṛṣṇa was joyfully feeding the crows and monkeys and looking here and there, being a little afraid that His mother may come. In the meantime, Mother Yaśodā came and saw the broken pot. She looked on the ground and saw many small footprints belonging to Kṛṣṇa, who had run through the buttermilk. Kṛṣṇa had thought, "I am so intelligent, I will run and hide," but He was not intelligent enough to realize that He was running through the buttermilk and leaving footprints that lead to where He was hiding.

Seeing these footprints, Mother Yaśodā followed them and came to the door. Kṛṣṇa had closed the door, so that no one could see Him. She opened it and peered in to see Kṛṣṇa taking butter and

feeding it to the monkeys, as He looked here and there in fear of her. Mother Yaśodā began to sneak up on Kṛṣṇa, holding a stick in her hand. A cat can walk with such soft steps that even if it treads on dry leaves, the leaves will not make any noise. Just like a cat, Mother Yaśodā began to sneak up on Kṛṣṇa. As she drew closer, the monkeys and crows saw her, and becoming afraid, they began to scatter and fly away in many different directions.

When Kṛṣṇa saw the birds and monkeys leaving, He thought, "Where are you going?" Then He realized, "Someone else is here." Just as Mother Yaśodā was about to catch Him, He saw her. He quickly jumped down from the grinding mortar and ran away as fast as He could.

Yaśodā ran after Him, shouting, "You friend of the monkeys, You come here!" Kṛṣṇa was running in a zig-zag way. Mother Yaśodā was a little plump, and so she could not run so fast.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: And she was quite aged.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: She was a little older as well, not so young. Therefore, it was difficult for her to run and catch Kṛṣṇa. He was so nimble. As Kṛṣṇa ran, sometimes Mother Yaśodā had to stop and catch her breath. She shouted, "Kṛṣṇa, come here! You are a thief."

Kṛṣṇa cheekily said, "Why are you saying I am a thief? There is no thief in My dynasty. In the dynasty of Nanda Bābā, there is no thief, but perhaps there is a thief in your dynasty." And then He quickly ran away. Why did He say this? Because He had heard Mother Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā talking previously about family matters. In the family of Mother Yaśodā, some generations before, there was a personality named Cora Ghoṣa. *Cora* means 'thief.' Therefore, Kṛṣṇa said to His mother, "I think that in My dynasty, the dynasty of Nanda Bābā, there is no *cora*, but there is definitely a Cora in your dynasty." After saying this, He ran away and Yaśodā chased after Him.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Kṛṣṇa asked, "Why are you chastising Me? What offense have I done?"

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Kṛṣṇa asked, "Why are you chastising me? What did I do? I have not done anything."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: "Who has broken this vessel?"

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Then Kṛṣṇa explained, "O Mother, when you were going to get the milk, your heavy ankle bells hit the pot and broke it."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: "I have not done it."

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Kṛṣṇa said to His mother, "You are a liar."

In this way, many sweet arguments were going on. Kṛṣṇa finally understood what to do. He thought, "I will not run around the room. I will go outside."

Why?

He knew that His mother would not run out onto the road, because in Vedic culture, ladies do not go outside alone in the street. He knew that if she ran outside, it would be very embarrassing for her. Kṛṣṇa therefore thought, "I will run outside, and she will not come after Me."

He ran outside, and Mother Yaśodā came to the door and thought, "What to do?" She looked left and right and saw that no one was watching, and then ran outside, chasing after Him. Finally, she caught Him. With her left hand, she grabbed hold of Kṛṣṇa's right hand, and in her right hand she held a stick. Kṛṣṇa was so afraid. He was going this way and that and running around her legs, trying to get away from the stick.

KṚṢṆA IS CONTROLLED BY LOVE AND AFFECTION

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Here there is a teaching. Kṛṣṇa is the goal (*sādhya*), and the devotee is the practitioner

(*sādhaka*) with the aim of attaining that goal. Kṛṣṇa, the *sādhya*, is the practitioner's object of love.

Kṛṣṇa is running, and Mother Yaśodā is running after Him to catch hold of Him. Yaśodā will have to run faster than Kṛṣṇa, otherwise she will be unable to catch Him. If a thief is running away and a policeman is following after him, the policeman cannot catch the thief if he is unable to run faster than him. Here, Kṛṣṇa is running and Yaśodā is running. Although no one can run faster than Kṛṣṇa, she must run faster, otherwise she will not be able to catch Him. Similarly, a devotee should practice *bhakti* in such a way that he has more love and affection for Kṛṣṇa than Kṛṣṇa has for him.

Kṛṣṇa has some affection for His devotees, and devotees have some affection for Kṛṣṇa, the object of their love. If the love between them is equal – that is, if Kṛṣṇa's love is equal to the devotee's love – then Kṛṣṇa will not be controlled. But if the devotee has more love and affection for Kṛṣṇa than Kṛṣṇa has for him, then what? Kṛṣṇa comes under the control of that devotee. Kṛṣṇa has so much love and affection for His mother, yet Mother Yaśodā's love and affection for Him is much more than His. That is why she was able to run faster than Kṛṣṇa. This is the hidden conclusion.

If anyone wants to conquer Kṛṣṇa by practicing *vaidhī-bhakti* (the path of devotion performed out of concern to not break scriptural regulations), Kṛṣṇa cannot be controlled by that. The conception 'Kṛṣṇa is superior and I am inferior' can never control Him. Kṛṣṇa does not have much love for a devotee who thinks like this. But when a devotee has great love and affection for Kṛṣṇa, more than Kṛṣṇa has for him, it is called either *rāgānugā-bhakti* or *rāgātmikā-bhakti*. The *gopīs* have much more love for Kṛṣṇa than Kṛṣṇa has for them, and that is why Kṛṣṇa is controlled by them and says, "I cannot repay you for this love, for I have no such love."

That is why He wants to serve them. He takes their foot dust and puts it on His head. That foot dust is also what Uddhava has asked for in his prayer:

āsām aho caraṇa-reṇu-juṣām ahaṁ syāṁ
vṛndāvane kim api gulma-latauṣadhīnām
yā dustyajaṁ sva-janam ārya-pathaṁ ca hitvā
bhejur mukunda-padavīṁ śrutibhir vimṛgyām
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.47.61)

[Aho! The *vraja-gopīs* have given up everything for Kṛṣṇa. They have abandoned the path of chastity, their families, and their children, which are all extremely difficult to give up. Now they have taken shelter of *prema-bhakti* for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. The personified scriptures (Śrutis) constantly search for that same *prema-bhakti*, but rarely attain it. Let me become a bush, a creeper, or a blade of grass in Vṛndāvana. Then I might attain the dust of the lotus feet of one of those *gopīs*.]

[Uddhava thought,] "I want to serve the dust of the *gopīs'* lotus feet. But how? I am not qualified to touch that dust. I should offer my obeisance to the direction of that dust." That is why Uddhava is also praying:

vande nanda-vraja-strīṇāṁ
pāda-reṇum abhīkṣṇaśaḥ
yāsāṁ hari-kathodgītāṁ
punāti bhuvana-trayam
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.47.63)

[I bow down to the dust of the feet of the *gopīs,* who reside in Nanda Bābā's Vraja. Whatever these *gopīs* have sung about Kṛṣṇa's pastimes always has and always will purify the entire world.]

"I pray at the lotus feet of the *gopīs* for one particle of dust." Which dust particle? A particle of foot dust from only one person. And who is that one person? Śrīmatī Rādhikā. "I pray, from very far away, for just one particle of the dust from Śrīmatī Rādhikā's lotus feet. That dust can immerse one in the ocean of *rasa*."

The foot dust of the *gopīs* is very powerful. Kṛṣṇa can only be controlled if someone has love and affection like that of His mother or the *gopīs*, not otherwise. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but in Vraja He becomes an ignorant baby. This love is the highest object of all. This object, the love the *gopīs* of Vraja have for Kṛṣṇa (*vraja-gopī-prema*), is most supreme. Tomorrow I will explain further.

MOTHER YAŚODĀ BINDING KṚṢṆA

The Binding of Naughty Kṛṣṇa

This is not just a story, or mythology; it is a real pastime. If a person hears the words of this story, these words will enter his heart. He will see that his heart has been changed, and that he has become blissful and happy.

MOTHER YAŚODĀ BINDS KṚṢṆA

Mother Yaśodā's mood was grave. "If I don't chastise Him," she thought, "He will become quite a trouble maker." With this in mind, she decided to bind Him. Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa started to cry, she did not let Him go. "I will keep Him tied up for a while," she thought, "and when I have finished churning the yogurt, I will untie Him and feed Him butter and breast milk, to calm Him down."

Mother Yaśodā considered, "Kṛṣṇa is a cunning and mischievous thief, and His accomplice is this grinding mortar. Both deserve to be punished. I will tie them together in such away that Kṛṣṇa cannot untie Himself from the mortar."

Thinking thus, she proceeded to bind Him.

tad dāma badhyamānasya
svārbhakasya kṛtāgasaḥ
dvy-aṅgulonam abhūt tena
sandadhe 'nyac ca gopikā

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.9.15)

When Mother Yaśodā tried to bind her mischievous child, the rope was two fingers too short, so she tied it to another rope.

She had removed the silk ribbon from her braid in order to bind Kṛṣṇa with it. Other than the gold chain

around His waist, Kṛṣṇa was quite naked. Although His tiny waist measured no more than twelve fingers, the ribbon could not be made to bind Him; it was two fingers too short. Mother Yaśodā asked her friend for another rope, but that was also too short. Time and again she gathered and added more rope, but it was always too short – and only two fingers too short – not more, not less.

There is an esoteric meaning in this. One finger represents the *sādhaka's* endeavors, and the other finger represents the Lord's mercy. Śrī Bhagavān becomes controlled by His devotee only when both of these elements are present together.

Excerpt from Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja's commentary on *Śrī Dāmodarāṣṭakam*

Now come with me to Gokula, where Mother Yaśodā has finally caught Kṛṣṇa and tied Him to the grinding mortar.

Yaśodā again returned to churning the butter, but her mind was not present. She was a little upset, always thinking about her son. "Why did I do that? I should not have done so. But actually, I was right to bind Him; otherwise, He will become naughtier."

"Then again," she thought, "I was not just. He is so soft and sweet, but I have given Him great pain. Actually, I have not given pain to Him; I have given pain to my own heart. What can I do? Now Kṛṣṇa is so angry that if I untie the rope, He will go somewhere else, and I will not be able to control that. Let Him remain tied there for some time." She kept a constant watch, to see what He was doing.

After some time, all the boys began to joke with Kṛṣṇa. All were clapping and laughing, and Kṛṣṇa began to laugh with them.

His tears that had mixed with black *kājala* began to dry on His face, making a diagonal line down the front of His body. Now He was somewhat happy and had forgotten what His mother had done. The boys said, "Let's untie the ropes, and then Kṛṣṇa can be free."

Kṛṣṇa was enthusiastic. "Yes, you can untie Me. Because My hands cannot reach the ropes, I cannot untie the knot. You should try." The boys tried one by one, but the knot was so tight that no one could untie it.

One boy would tell another, "You cannot untie it. I will try." Especially Madhumaṅgala. He waved them all away, saying, "You are bogus. You have no idea at all. I will untie it." He quickly went over to Kṛṣṇa and pushed all the others out of the way. He proceeded to try, but he, also, could not untie the knot. The boys began to laugh.

They thought, "If Baladeva were here, He could untie Kṛṣṇa in a moment, and this incident would not have gone on for so long."

In the meantime, Baladeva Prabhu was coming from the house of Upananda with His mother. When He entered the courtyard, He saw Kṛṣṇa fully tied to the grinding mortar and many boys playing with Him. Baladeva became furious. He thought, "Who has done this? I will punish him." He was so upset that His eyes became reddish and both His hands shook.

Subala said in his ear, "Brother, don't be upset. Mother Yaśodā has done this."

"Mother Yaśodā?" All of His anger went away at once. "If Mother has done this, then I cannot do anything. There must be some reason behind it." Then He also began to play with Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa is omniscient. He remembered a pastime that took place in the last *yuga*, in which His dear devotee Nārada had cursed Nalakūvera and Maṇigrīva, the sons of Kuvera, the treasurer of the demigods. Kuvera was a friend of Śaṅkara, and because

Śaṅkara is very near and dear to Kṛṣṇa, there was relationship between Śaṅkara and Kuvera. Nārada also was a friend of Kuvera.

Once, Nārada was on his way to meet Śaṅkara and Kuvera. Their houses were near each other. On the way, he saw that the two sons of Kuvera were quite naked and playing with many *apsarās* in a very beautiful pond. Do you know what *apsarās* are? They are the wives of the demigods. They are very beautiful, young teenage girls. All were naked, and they were playing hide-and-seek and various other games. The two brothers, having become mad from taking so much wine, lost all shame. When Nārada approached, the demigoddesses – the *apsarās* – immediately became shameful and came out of the pond. They took their clothes, and in shame, began to offer obeisance to Nārada Ṛṣi.

But these two boys were so shameless and mad on wine that they began to abuse Nārada and the girls. "This mad person knows nothing. Why did he come here? And you are so bogus that upon seeing him, your taste [for enjoyment] has gone away, and you have come out of the pond. Come back quickly, come quickly."

Nārada saw the boys were like dry trees, in that they had no shame, knowledge, or intelligence, and they did not know how to respect a saintly person, a superior. He thought, "They are very near and dear to Kuvera and Śaṅkara, and so I should give them a good lesson."

A person who does not know pain can very easily give pain to others. We think we can cut fish, goats, sheep, cows, and so on, only for the sake of consuming their flesh, their meat. But if we were to receive a big injection, we would hold up our hands and say, "Do not do this." And what would we do if someone were to cut our finger or half of our neck? Upon experiencing pain, one is able to realize the pain one has given to others. Bogus persons do not empathize with those they have given pain to.

What is the meaning of meat? I have explained it many times: M-E and E-A-T. Whoever I eat will return to eat me. Every action has a reaction. If you abuse anyone, you will be abused. If you give a slap, you will get a slap. Those whose flesh you are taking will get a human body and they will eat you, and so you should not do these things.

Nalakūvera and Maṇigrīva had taken birth in an aristocratic family and were highly cultured, educated, beautiful, and wealthy. Persons who have great opulence often don't believe in God. They don't have any desire to do *bhajana* of Kṛṣṇa and are always influenced by the false ego. They think, "I am so beautiful, I am so learned. I come from such an aristocratic family. I am a *brāhmaṇa*, I am so wealthy." Therefore, they can never do *bhajana* of Kṛṣṇa – never.

Nārada thought to give them a [spiritual] injection and told them, "Because you are acting just like a tree, you should at once turn into one. I, who am like your mother and father, your superior, have come here, but you do not care and you continue doing nonsense. You should at once become trees."

He was so powerful; his words were so powerful that in time Nalakūvera and Maṇigrīva began to turn into trees. They quickly realized the situation and fell down at the feet of Nārada Ṛṣi. "O Nārada Ṛṣi! We never knew that you were so powerful. We were immersed in our false ego. Now we realize that Kṛṣṇa has mercifully given us this human body to do *bhajana*, so that we can realize who we are and who Kṛṣṇa, God, is. We have misused all our time, always drinking and merry-making. Please be merciful to us. Now we are going to become trees? [We are shocked to hear this.] All of our senses have become inert."

Nārada said, "What I have said will surely come to pass. No one can make it not happen. But seeing that you now have some realization, and since you are the sons of my friend, I am minimizing my curse. You will surely become trees, but you

will be trees in Vṛndāvana. After some time, Kṛṣṇa will appear there, and in His boyhood, He will play there and touch you. At that time, you will be liberated – not only liberated, you will also obtain *bhakti*." Slowly they became pacified and Nārada left.

Kṛṣṇa remembered, "My dear Nārada has spoken this. I should fulfill My devotee's desire." Kṛṣṇa is so powerful that He can accomplish many tasks with one task.

Kṛṣṇa told His friends, "Push this grinding mortar while I pull it. Help Me get out of the house. We should play outside." The boys began to push and pull. They came to the main gate at the end of the house. Just outside the gate, there were two very big trees with long shadows and large branches. Thousands of birds took shelter in them. The two trees stood so close together that they seemed to come from one root, with very little space between them. Kṛṣṇa entered the narrow lane that ran between the two trees. As He moved forward through the trees, He dragged the grinding mortar, which the boys were pushing from behind. It turned on its side and became stuck between the two trees, which touched the mortar, but they did not touch Kṛṣṇa.

A current may come from one place to multiple other places. If I touch the last point of a current, the same current from the beginning point will come to me. Similarly, the rope that tied Kṛṣṇa's waist touched the mortar, and His power came through the rope to the mortar, and from the mortar to the two trees. The trees fell down at once, making a tremendous sound. All of Vraja began to tremble. The Vrajavāsīs ran from all over toward the great sound of the falling trees. Nanda Bābā was on his way to bathe in Brahmāṇḍa-ghāṭa, but he quickly ran toward the source of that sound.

Yaśodā Mā was restless. Her mind was not on what she was doing. She also heard the sound and became fearful. "From where is this sound coming? Is it coming from anywhere near Kṛṣṇa?" Her heart was beating rapidly, and immediately she ran to Kṛṣṇa

in fear. All the Vrajavāsīs came at once. The boys who had been happy and laughing as they played with Kṛṣṇa and pulled the grinding mortar became very fearful. They were so fortunate. Because the trees did not fall straight, they did not fall down on them. They fell to the left and right of Him, and so no one was harmed. Still, all were covering their ears and were fearful.

From a distance, Yaśodā saw that Kṛṣṇa was in the middle of the two trees, and that the trees had been uprooted. She wondered, "If the trees had fallen on Kṛṣṇa, what would have happened?" She could not bear to think this. Completely stunned, she became like a tree, with no sense at all, like dry wood. No tears fell from her eyes and she did not even breathe. She was stunned.

Nanda Bābā thought, "Kṛṣṇa is standing amidst the trees, and the trees have been uprooted. What has happened?" He quickly ran toward Kṛṣṇa and saw that He was bound to the grinding mortar. He, also, became dumbstruck.

In the meantime, the boys assembled. "Bābā! Bābā! Bābā! Kṛṣṇa touched the two trees and they were uprooted. Two very beautiful persons came out. They were like gods, like the sun – some rays were coming from their bodies. They circumambulated Kṛṣṇa and began to pray to Him. Kṛṣṇa said something to them, after which they offered their obeisance by falling flat on the ground and then went up into the sky."

Nanda Bābā thought, "These boys don't know anything. How could Kṛṣṇa uproot two big trees? I think that a demon instructed by Kaṁsa came and wanted to kill Kṛṣṇa."

Before all this, Kṛṣṇa had been playing with the boys, pulling and pushing. He had been so happy and was laughing, but when He saw His father coming, He began to weep loudly. Kṛṣṇa was taking long breaths, and many tears fell from His eyes.

When Nanda Bābā began to pacify Him, Kṛṣṇa wept even more. With his *cādara*, Nanda Bābā removed Kṛṣṇa's tears. He asked, "My dear son, who has bound You?" Kṛṣṇa did not say anything.

KRṢNA DELIVERING NALAKŪVARA AND MAṆIGRĪVA

He repeated, "Who has bound You? Tell me! I will punish those who have bound You." He asked again and again, as he untied the rope's knots.

Kṛṣṇa spoke into His father's ear, "Mother has bound Me."

"Your mother? I never knew she was so cruel-hearted! She bound You? I will punish her." Nanda Bābā began to raise his hand, but Kṛṣṇa caught it. Nanda Bābā gave Kṛṣṇa a *laḍḍū*. Kṛṣṇa took it but did not eat it. Now He was pacified a little, and His tears had almost stopped, but not fully. He was breathing quickly and deeply, as a child does when he stops crying. Nanda Bābā caressed Kṛṣṇa's head and body. He became grave and looked toward Mother Yaśodā with anger.

Mother Yaśodā was not externally conscious. The *sakhīs*, unhappy and worried, were taking care of her and reading her heart. They wanted Kṛṣṇa to come and sit on Yaśodā's lap. Meanwhile, Nanda Bābā took Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva on his shoulders – Baladeva on his right shoulder and Kṛṣṇa on his left – and went to Brahmāṇḍa-ghāṭa on the river Yamunā. He bathed his two sons, and after that, he also took bath. Again putting Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva on his shoulders, he returned home. At that time, it was past two o'clock in the afternoon. There was no cooking in Yaśodā's house that day. Who was there to do the cooking?

Rohiṇī saw Nanda Bābā coming with the two boys, and she quickly made a little *daliyā*, sweet porridge, which is cooked in water, milk, or buttermilk. When Nanda Bābā came, she gave it to him. First he gave it to Baladeva and then to Kṛṣṇa, alternately. When They were satisfied, he took some – very little. He was so grave. He then went outdoors to the drying room. In India, everyone's house, especially the houses of those who are middle-class and those who are very rich, has two parts. The inner part of the house is only for the ladies, and the kitchen is there. And the outer part is like a court, or meeting hall, for when many men gather. Nanda Bābā went to that part.

Evening soon came. It was about seven o'clock, and time to take something to eat. Nanda Bābā went to the cow shed, walked up to a very good cow, and began milking it directly into the mouths of Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva. He gave Them some sugar candy, which They ate till Their stomach was full. He then returned to his house. Now it was night.

All the friends of Yaśodā were worried, especially Rohiṇī and Upananda's wife. Many old ladies came with Baladeva to the house of Nanda Bābā and Yaśodā. Kṛṣṇa was with Nanda Bābā. The ladies told Baladeva, "Go and forcibly drag Kṛṣṇa here, and we will take Him to the lap of Mother Yaśodā."

Baladeva went to Kṛṣṇa to pull Him there, but Kṛṣṇa had become so strong that He pushed Baladeva away again and again, until Baladeva fell down. Mother Rohiṇī asked Kṛṣṇa, "Will You not go to Your mother?"

"No."

"Where will You pass Your night? With whom will You sleep?"

"With Father."

"Not with Mother?"

"No."

"What will You eat?"

"I will take milk from the udders of cows – Bābā will do it – and sugar candy."

"And with whom will You play?"

"I will play with My brother, Bala Dāū, and Nanda Bābā."

"You will never go to Mother?"

"No, I will never go."

Mother Rohiṇī said, "And if Your Mother…?" [Śrīla Mahārāja snaps his fingers above his head.] What does this mean? It means, "What if she passes away?"

Seeing this, Kṛṣṇa became very worried and began to weep, "O Mother, Mother!" and held out His arms to her.

Mother Rohiṇī quickly took Kṛṣṇa to Mother Yaśodā and placed Him on Yaśodā's lap. Until now, Mother Yaśodā had been like a statue, senseless. But when Mother Rohiṇī placed Kṛṣṇa on her lap, her heart melted and she began to cry, "My dear son, my dear son." She began to weep so loudly that Mother Rohiṇī and all others began to weep.

Kṛṣṇa cried, "Mother, Mother, Mother!" Yaśodā was weeping, Rohiṇī was weeping, and all those present were weeping.

After some time, when Yaśodā was somewhat pacified, she gave her breast milk to Kṛṣṇa, and in the meantime, some foodstuffs were prepared.

Nanda Bābā was called to take *prasādam.* Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva sat on his right and left side. Nanda Bābā said, "Kṛṣṇa, You should go and call Your mother. If she does not come, I will not take anything to eat."

Yaśodā was ashamed and so she did not come. Kṛṣṇa went over to her, caught hold of her veil, and dragged her to Nanda Bābā. Nanda Bābā ate something and also gave something to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. He left some remnants, which were taken away and distributed throughout the house. Kṛṣṇa now sat on the lap of Yaśodā, and that night, He slept soundly beside her.

Kṛṣṇa, being the Supreme Personality of Godhead, plays many sweet pastimes in order to renew the love and affection of those who are doing so much to serve Him.

KṚṢṆA CAN GIVE EVERYTHING

Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are not mortal. There is a great difference between the mortal and transcendental worlds. Someone may have just a little honor for and a little faith in transcendental words in the form of *hari-kathā* or Kṛṣṇa's name. Although that person

is covered with many tendencies that obstruct his progress in spiritual life (*anarthas*), as well as ignorance, these transcendental words will come through his ears and enter his heart. Actually, these words are not words. Kṛṣṇa Himself, in the form of transcendental words, enters the heart of any person who has a fraction of faith. He then cleans the whole heart of that person and gradually makes it pure. That person's faith then becomes thick, and *bhakti* enters his heart. Gradually, he becomes a devotee. All bad habits and *anarthas* go away, and he quickly develops his Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Fixed faith (*niṣṭhā*), transcendental relish (*ruci*), and attachment to Kṛṣṇa (*āsakti*) follow.

First a person takes initiation from *guru*, and then firm faith, transcendental relish, and a strong attachment to Kṛṣṇa develop. After this, a person realizes his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa (*bhāva-bhakti*), and then attains pure loving devotion (*prema-bhakti*). He gives up this body, mind, and everything, and becomes a pure soul, an eternal resident of Vraja, and goes to Vṛndāvana, where he remains happy forever. But those who do not hear *hari-kathā*, even though they have a good chance to do so, are killers of their own soul.

nivṛtta-tarṣair upagīyamānād
bhavauṣadhāc chrotra-mano-'bhirāmāt
ka uttamaśloka-guṇānuvādāt
pumān virajyeta vinā paśughnāt
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.1.4)

[Glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is performed in the *parampara* system; that is, it is conveyed from spiritual master to disciple. Such glorification is relished by those no longer interested in the false, temporary glorification of this cosmic manifestation. Descriptions of the Lord are the right medicine for the conditioned soul undergoing repeated birth and death. Therefore, who

will cease hearing such glorification of the Lord except a butcher or one who is killing his own self?*]

Only a self-killer will not hear. To kill any animal or himself is not actually killing. Those who are not hearing *hari-kathā* lose their [human] life for hundreds of thousands of births. We must hear and chant Kṛṣṇa's name in this life. It is so powerful. Very quickly it will make you pure, and pure *bhakti* will come. Don't neglect that. At once, from today, try to do *bhajana*. We may die tomorrow; no one knows what will happen tomorrow. Immediately, from this very evening, we should begin to chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and try to give up bad habits.

Suppose there is a very good *rasagullā* (Indian curd sweet, permeated with sugary syrup). Do you know what a *rasagullā* is?

Devotees: Yes.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Of all Indian sweets, it is the best; it is very good and very sweet. But suppose a person puts poison in it, and you, feeling very hungry, go to take it. If your mother knows this, she will say, "Don't take this; it has been poisoned. If you take it, you will die." Will you take it? Never. We are like mothers or doctors. Try to have faith in us. We cannot cheat you. You can have faith in me and in Vaiṣṇavas. They are more merciful than mothers and doctors. Have very strong faith in saintly persons and quickly try to give up all these bad things. There is no harm if you are in worldly life, in married life. You should do whatever work is required, but don't kill fish and animals and take eggs, meat, wine, or things like this.

This [having faith in saintly persons] is the essence of all *hari-kathā.* Why has this story of Kṛṣṇa being bound been told in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*? This is not just a story, or mythology; it is a real pastime. If a person hears the words of this story, these words will enter his heart. He will see that his heart has been changed, and that he has become blissful and happy.

Therefore, try to hear *hari-kathā*. When an advanced devotee hears *hari-kathā*, he tries to follow it. He thinks, "I want to be a mother of Kṛṣṇa, to serve Kṛṣṇa like Yaśodā," or "I want to be like Sudāma or Śrīdāma, who are always playing with Kṛṣṇa," or "I want to be like the *gopīs*; I want to serve Kṛṣṇa as the *gopīs* do."

Many cowherd boys are serving Kṛṣṇa. Mother Yaśodā is serving Him, many mothers and fathers are serving Him, and many *gopīs* are serving Him. Among them, who is serving the best, and with whom is Kṛṣṇa most pleased? Can you say?

Devotee: The *gopīs*.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Why? Why the *gopīs*? Why not the cowherd boys? Why not Mother Yaśodā and Nanda Bābā? Kṛṣṇa's father is also serving Him. Why not any of them? Because they cannot give everything – all their love and affection – to Kṛṣṇa. But the *gopīs* can give everything – their shame, their whole body, and all their senses. His father and mother cannot give that.

If a man has two sons, he will give half his love to one and half to the other. But the *gopīs* give all their love and affection wholesale to Kṛṣṇa, and so they are superior to all others who love Him. Upon hearing all these pastimes, some persons will develop a greed to follow the *gopīs*. That is why *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has appeared, as well as *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, especially, and the books of Rūpa Gosvāmī and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī.

You should try to read these books under the guidance of a bona fide Vaiṣṇava. You cannot explain or taste *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* without the assistance of a qualified devotee. You may be able to read it on your own, but you may have no taste for it. But if you hear it from a saintly person, many realizations come.

Suppose you are lacking something and want some wealth, and so you go to a very wealthy person and ask for his riches. Can he give you more than he has? And though he has something to

give and though you are begging, he still may not give you anything. Four *brahmacārīs* took initiation yesterday. Like beggars, they went to different persons to collect alms.[1] At the end of the day, they gave me what they had collected, but I saw that in their cloth (where their donations had been placed), they had been given either only one ringgit, two ringgit, or a half ringgit (Malaysian currency). Why were they given so little? If you are begging from someone who has no relation with you, he may only give two ringgit.

All in this world lack something. If anyone wants from you more than what you have, you cannot give it. If I want millions of dollars from any of you, can you give it? Even by selling your property you would not be able to give it. But if you really want something from Kṛṣṇa, and if you pray to Kṛṣṇa for anything or everything, He can give it. He has everything, and therefore He can give anything. He is so humble and generous that He will give you anything you want.

Others [incarnations of Godhead] cannot give everything – not even Nārāyaṇa. Can He give everything? If you want Him to give you *mādhurya-rasa* (a relationship with Him as His beloved), can He give it? It is not possible. You may ask Him, "I want You to make me the maidservant of Rādhikā," but He cannot give you that. Dvārakādiśa Kṛṣṇa – that Kṛṣṇa who reigns as the king of Dvārakā – also cannot give it. But Vrajendra-nandana Kṛṣṇa – that Kṛṣṇa who is the son of the king of Vraja, Nanda Mahārāja – can give you anything you want; He can give you even more than what you want. Therefore, you should pray *namāmi nanda-nandanam*, *namāmi nanda-nandanam*[2].

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1 At the time of taking initiation, it is a traditional practice to offer to one's *guru* alms acquired by begging.

2 This is a song of eight verses that offers obeisance to that Kṛṣṇa who is the son of Nanda and Yaśodā.

Kṛṣṇa will give everything, even if you do not pray for anything. And if you pray to Śrīmatī Rādhikā, She will give even more than Kṛṣṇa can. Her treasury is greater than Kṛṣṇa's. If Kṛṣṇa gives something, it is actually from the treasury of Śrīmatī Rādhikā. Therefore, if you pray to Rādhikā, Kṛṣṇa will give you anything, more than you expect. You must pray to Her, but for what? "I want to become Your maidservant. Sprinkle Your mercy upon me and give me the type of love for Kṛṣṇa that the Vrajavāsīs have, and not anything else."

Unlucky people will ask Kṛṣṇa, "I want salvation," "I want liberation," or, "I want wealth." He will give these things quickly and easily. Instead of praying for these things, you should pray and hear *hari-kathā* with a strong will and strong honor and faith.

THE FRUIT SELLER

Once in Mathurā, there was a lady from a low caste. She used to sell very sweet fruit. She would go to the countryside villages where there were many small children, and she would walk through the narrow lanes, calling out, "Mangoes! Oranges! Bananas! Guavas!" She had very beautiful ripened reddish and yellowish fruits. All the boys would come when they heard the call of that fruit seller lady.

Sweet boys began to gather around her and look at her fruit with greedy eyes. They would say, "Mother, I want to take that fruit."

This lady fruit seller had previously heard the name Nanda-nandana (Kṛṣṇa). She had heard that Yaśodā had recently given birth to a very beautiful boy, whose name was Kṛṣṇa, and that He was so attractive, so beautiful, that a person who goes to Gokula [and sees Him] cannot return with his mind. If he does return, it is without his mind and heart. The fruit seller wanted

to see that boy, Kṛṣṇa, and so one day, she filled her basket with fruit and crossed the river Yamunā in a makeshift boat. At that time, temporary boats were made from the branches of trees, including banana trees. Though it was somewhat troublesome for her, she crossed the river and went to Gokula. At that time, it was very easy to cross the Yamunā and travel from Mathurā to Gokula; it was only seven miles. We also used to go quite easily. [After crossing,] we used to go to Gokula by foot, but now we do not, because many taxis, cars, and other things have been invented.

When the fruit seller arrived in Gokula, she called out, "Bananas! Mangoes! Oranges! Guavas!" But because she was thinking of Kṛṣṇa, she began to call, "Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhaveti!" Her hands were not on her basket, in the same way that Indian ladies carry many pots full of water – one, two, three, four – on their head without holding them, and in their arms also. And without holding the pots on their head, they can move quickly. *Vraja-gopīs* are expert at this.

She was completely absorbed. She had given her heart fully, and from her heart she was crying, "Kṛṣṇa! Dāmodara!" For the whole day, she wandered around Nanda-bhavana, but Kṛṣṇa could not meet with her. She returned to her home, but continued to go to Nanda-bhavana for three days. [However, she did not get to see Him.] On the last day, she promised, "If Kṛṣṇa does not give me His *darśana* today, I will not return. I will give up my life." Because she had made this promise and because she was so absorbed in chanting, "Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhaveti!" Kṛṣṇa could not check Himself.

Kṛṣṇa was on the lap of Yaśodā, but hearing the fruit seller's chanting, He at once came outside. On the way, He saw a heap of wheat grains, and taking some in His little cupped hands, He ran out to the courtyard, calling, "I want fruits! Give Me fruits!"

This fruit seller was from a low caste, and so she did not enter the house or courtyard of Mother Yaśodā; she remained outside.

Kṛṣṇa had taken the grains [for bartering], but most of them slipped between His fingers. Only some grains – two, three, four – remained. Kṛṣṇa thought that His palms were full. The fruit seller then observed Kṛṣṇa. She became totally absorbed in looking at Him. Within a moment, she gave her heart to Him. Kṛṣṇa called out, "Give Me fruits, give Me fruits."

The fruit seller looked upon the face of Kṛṣṇa and said, "O boy, only if you call me 'Mother' and sit on my lap will I give You fruits, because now there are no grains left in Your hands." Kṛṣṇa looked into His hands to see that all the grains were gone.

He looked here and there to see if anyone was watching. He was thinking, "What will happen if My mother or anyone in Vraja sees Me sitting in the lap of this lady?" After seeing no one else there at that moment, He at once jumped up, sat on her lap, and said, "Mother!" Then He immediately jumped off. "Now you should give Me fruits."

That fruit seller was so very pleased. She gave Him some fruits, but even two mangoes and a banana were too much for Him to hold. She wanted to put all of her fruits in His hands, but His hands were too small. As He took the fruits from her, He held them to His chest and stomach, so that He could carry more. He wanted to take even more fruits, and so she gave Him more. Then, dancing like boys do when they are happy, He went to His mother and put all the fruits in her veil. Yaśodā began to distribute them and became extremely happy. The fruits were endless, and she gave some to all the *gopīs*. Though everyone present was given fruits, the supply never ran out – it only increased.

What became of that fruit seller? When Kṛṣṇa had come over to her, He captured her heart and mind, so she was without both. She sat outside of the gate for a long time. When people walked by, they asked, "Why are you just sitting here?" But she would not, could not, reply.

KRṢNA AND THE FRUIT SELLER

Eventually, she took her basket on her head and started for home. When she came to the banks of the Yamunā River, her basket felt heavy. "Why is it so heavy?" she wondered. She put the basket down and saw that it was full of jewels. Just one of those jewels was so costly that the whole treasury of Kaṁsa could not equal it. And there were many such jewels. She thought, "What is the use of these jewels?" She threw all of them into the Yamunā, and with her hands above her head, she began to sing like a madwoman, "Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhaveti!"

She had no veil; it had come off. She fell to the ground, having no outer sense. The only thing she could sense was that Kṛṣṇa was there. Tears flowed from her eyes and her heart melted. No one knew where she went after this; she never returned home. Who can say where she went?

Kṛṣṇa thought, "She would like to be My mother," so He quickly took her [soul] to Goloka. Her body lay on the banks of the Yamunā. Someone came and made a fire [to cremate it]. But she went to Goloka Vṛndāvana, where she became a very beautiful mother. If anyone wants to achieve the type of love the fruit seller possessed for Kṛṣṇa, then they will have to follow her.

Guru has come to give this. You cannot repay him with worldly wealth, reputation, or anything else. You have nothing with which to repay *guru*. You should think about and understand his glories. He wants to give you the same wealth that Kṛṣṇa gave to that fruit seller. Try to be like her; don't waste your time. Don't waste your human birth. You should immediately try to be like her, always singing, "Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhaveti!"

But you should not sing this like a song. Instead, pray to Kṛṣṇa full of heart, and then Kṛṣṇa will hear; otherwise, you are only singing a song, making music. Kṛṣṇa does not hear your music. He knows all music. So much music can come from His toenail alone. His inferior devotees [those who are devoted to Him but not imbued with selfless love for Him] can sing so much for Him.

Try to pray full of heart, and Kṛṣṇa will hear. Be absorbed in whatever *kīrtana* you sing. Kṛṣṇa will not be satisfied if you are simply making music; He will not hear. But if you are chanting and remembering like the fruit seller, then Kṛṣṇa will definitely hear. He will come at once and give you His wealth.

KṚṢṆA AND LORD BRAHMĀ

Lord Brahmā Steals the Cowherd Boys and Calves

O Vrajendra-nandana, You look like a new rain cloud, and adorned with a yellow garment that sparkles and shimmers like lightning, You look very elegant. With *guñjā* berry ornaments embellishing Your ears and a peacock feather on Your head, Your lotus face emits a brilliant luster.

LEAVING GOKULA FOR THE FOREST OF VṚNDĀVANA

For the last three days, I have spoken about *dāmodara-līlā*, the pastime of Kṛṣṇa being bound to a grinding mortar. After this pastime, all the Vrajavāsīs became worried as a result of the many disturbances that were occurring in Gokula. Many demons were coming and attacking Kṛṣṇa, wanting to kill Him. The Vrajavāsīs considered, "It is better to leave Gokula and go to a pleasant forest, where there is plenty of grass for the cows, plenty of water, a river, and a good forest in which Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva can play. Also, we should find a place where there is no disturbance or fear of demons. The forest should be pleasant, with cuckoo birds, peacocks, deer, and plenty of grass for the cows."

Upananda said, "Mahārāja Śāṇḍilya Ṛṣi is here. He knows every nook and corner of Vṛndāvana. I also have some experience, so we can go there. In Vṛndāvana, Govardhana is so pleasant. There are waterfalls, a river, plenty of grass, the most beautiful Mānasī-gaṅgā, and everything needed for Kṛṣṇa to play. Also, there are so many banyan trees, *pīpala* trees, forests of *kadamba* and *tamāla* trees, and many deer, and the water of Yamunā is very lovely. We should go there."

Having decided to go to Vṛndāvana, Nanda Bābā had his servants make an announcement on the drum: "Tomorrow, very early in the morning, about four or five o'clock, all of our cows will be directed toward Vṛndāvana, after crossing the nearby Yamunā River. All our wealth should be taken on bullock carts. The elderly

ON THE WAY TO CHAṬṬĪKARĀ

fathers, mothers, and others should sit on those carts, along with all young children. The rest will follow with the cows. All should 'quick march' from here."

[The following morning,] Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva sat on a big cart with Mother Rohiṇī and Mother Yaśodā. Other children, also, were with their mothers and elderly persons on bullock carts. The young cowherds marched with the cows. The number of cows was endless, like an ocean. There were streams of black cows and white cows. It was so beautiful.

They proceeded for miles and miles, in a pleasant way. They made many rafts by tightly binding together the branches of banyan trees, and hundreds of thousands of *gopas* and *gopīs* crossed on these boats. The bullocks walked across, pulling their carts behind them, and all the cows swam across. Even the little calves happily jumped in with their mothers and crossed the river. It was a very pleasant sight. Everyone took their morning breakfast on the bank of the Yamunā. After resting for some time, they quickly marched toward the village of Chaṭṭīkarā, which is situated on the west side of Vṛndāvana. Upon reaching there, hundreds of thousands of bullock carts formed a half-moon shape. Thorny briers were placed outside the carts, so that no one could easily enter. They made their huts there, under the bullock carts, and they also made a *gośālā,* a cowshed, on the outskirts of the village.

As Kṛṣṇa was coming from the bank of the Yamunā on the bullock cart, He asked Mother Yaśodā, "Mother, who is that I see standing and trembling in the distance?"

Mother Yaśodā said, "It is a *pīpala* tree. It is always trembling, and its leaves are always dancing."

"And who is that person with such a long black beard?" Kṛṣṇa asked.

Mother Yaśodā replied, "That is not a person; that is a tree, and his name is banyan tree."

"Look! I see two beautiful golden horns jumping here and there. Who is that?"

"That is a deer."

In this way, Mother Yaśodā was teaching Kṛṣṇa. Boys have the tendency to inquire, "What is this? What is that? How did this happen? How did that happen?" and so Yaśodā was teaching Kṛṣṇa, and He was learning.

Eventually, they arrived at their new village. Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva Prabhu were very happy to be there, nearby the Yamunā River and Govardhana Hill, where there were many ponds and a large and pleasant forest – Madhuvana – that had great amounts of honey (*madhu*). Kṛṣṇa began to play there.

KṚṢṆA'S PLAY WITH THE COWHERD BOYS

Kṛṣṇa left Gokula at the age of three-and-a-half and came to Madhuvana around the age of five. Because He took so much butter, ghee, and *rabaḍī* (a milk sweet), He was sportive and strong in His boyhood. Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva used to wrestle and play sportively, jumping here and there, and playing with monkeys. The monkeys would sit on the tree limbs with their tails hanging down, and Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva used to easily jump and catch hold of them. Then, when the monkeys would jump from one tree to another, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva would follow, doing the same. Sometimes They would play leap-frog, and sometimes They would dance like peacocks. They played in various ways.

Kṛṣṇa told His father and mother, "Now that I am strong, I want take to the cows out to graze."

Hearing this, Yaśodā became worried. She said, "No, no. You are a small boy. You cannot go."

KṚṢṆA PLAYING WITH HIS FRIENDS

"Mother, I should go, because this is our tradition." He was so obstinate. "I must go, Mother. I must go."

A priest was called, and an auspicious date was decided for His first day of cowherding. That day became known as Gopāṣṭamī. Nanda Bābā, Upānanda, and all the superior *gopas* decided that because Kṛṣṇa was so small, it would be better for Him to go out with other children. Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva could go to nearby places and graze small calves, but not the full-grown cows. Kṛṣṇa was happy with this, and Yaśodā, after decorating Him in an auspicious way, brought Him shoes to wear and an umbrella to use when taking the calves out.

On an auspicious day, the Vrajavāsīs worshiped Nārāyaṇa, Nṛsiṁhadeva, and Śālagrāma. Yaśodā Mā decorated Kṛṣṇa

elaborately. She never actually wanted Kṛṣṇa to go cowherding, and so she kept decorating and decorating Him. Meanwhile, the auspicious time for setting off was approaching, and the priest, who was thinking about the cows he would soon be receiving in donation for his services, wanted Kṛṣṇa to head out. "Quickly, quickly," he told Kṛṣṇa.

Yaśodā wanted to put the shoes on Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva and give Them the umbrellas, but Kṛṣṇa told her, "Mother, the cows are our superiors and are worshipful for us. You should try to give each cow an umbrella and four shoes. Only then will We accept these things for Ourselves."

Why did Kṛṣṇa say this? He wanted to touch the Earth with His feet so that it would become auspicious. The Earth wanted to take Kṛṣṇa's feet on her breasts. The breasts of the Earth are everywhere, in the form of mountains. She always wants Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet on her, and that is why Kṛṣṇa never took an umbrella or wore any shoes.

After giving many cows in donation, Kṛṣṇa began to move toward the forest with His many calves. The calves were beautiful. Some were small, some bigger, and some bigger still, but all were less than one year old. Both the she-calves and he-calves were there. [By this time,] Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva were with Their *gopa* friends – Śrīdāma, Sudāma, Subala, Madhumaṅgala, and so on – and all the Vrajavāsīs came out of the village of Chaṭṭīkarā, Vṛndāvana, to see them off.

Mother Yaśodā, however, was not in the mood to give Kṛṣṇa up. Because she wanted to keep Kṛṣṇa forever within her embrace, she did not return home, and so Kṛṣṇa told her, "Mother, you should go back." She reluctantly began to return, but when Kṛṣṇa took one or two steps forward, she again wept like a cow for her calf. This happened again and again. At last, Kṛṣṇa told her, "I vow that We will come back. Please return." Hearing this, Yaśodā stopped weeping.

Nanda Bābā and the other *gopas* were also following Kṛṣṇa, but Kṛṣṇa stopped them as well. There were many *gopīs* and friends of *gopīs*, aged three, four, and five. They were worshiping Kṛṣṇa with crooked glances, and Kṛṣṇa was accepting their worship with His eyes. They wanted to meet with Him. They sat on rooftops and balconies, in doorways and windows. Some came out of their house and stood in their courtyard. Kṛṣṇa was beautifully decorated with a peacock feather, the Kaustubha jewel, and His *vaṁśī* (flute).

kastūrī-tilakaṁ lalāṭa-paṭale vakṣaḥ-sthale kaustubhaṁ
nāsāgre vara-mauktikaṁ kara-tale veṇuḥ kare kaṅkaṇam
sarvāṅge hari-candanaṁ sulalitaṁ kaṇṭhe ca muktāvalī
gopa-strī-pariveṣṭito vijayate gopāla-cūḍā-maṇiḥ
Śrī Gopāla-sahasra-nāma-stotra (28)

[His forehead is decorated with musk *tilaka,* the Kaustubha jewel rests upon His broad chest, and an exquisite pearl hangs from the tip of His nose. The flute gracefully rests in His lotus hands, and bracelets adorn His wrists. His entire form is anointed with sandalwood paste, and a necklace of pearls graces His attractive neck. All glories to the crest jewel of the *gopas*, who is surrounded by all the young *vraja-gopīs*.]

One jewel, a diamond, was on Kṛṣṇa's nose, glittering brightly. His beautiful earrings were always kissing His cheeks, and His *tilaka* was beautiful. Sandalwood, *kuṁkum* (a powder made from turmeric or saffron), musk, and camphor were on His cheeks in patterns resembling spider webs, making Him look very beautiful. The fragrance they gave was cooling. [Upon seeing Kṛṣṇa so beautifully decorated,] no one wanted to turn back, especially the *gopīs.*

But Kṛṣṇa told them repeatedly, "You should now return. I am not going far away. I am very nearby and will return shortly."

The Vrajavāsīs nearly fainted. All stood there, weeping. At last, Kṛṣṇa entered the forest and could no longer be seen. They could only see the dust in the sky [raised by the calves' hooves]. When the dust settled, Nanda Bābā, Yaśodā, and others somehow returned back.

VATSĀSURA AND BAKĀSURA

For some days, Kṛṣṇa went to the nearby forests with Baladeva and others to take the calves out to graze. One day, a very strong demon came in the shape of a calf. A bad fragrance came from him, because he took opium, flesh, meat, eggs, wine, and other bad things. A bad smell was coming from his nose and mouth. It was very severe. He came among all the calves, wanting to mix with them. All the calves held their tails high, turning them around and jumping about, as they moved in fear toward Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva.

Kṛṣṇa looked toward Baladeva and thought, "What is happening today? I see that all the calves are fearful. I also see a beautiful, strong new calf."

Baladeva spoke with His eyes, not words: "There is something wrong. We should be careful."

That demon calf [Vatsāsura] wanted to gradually come closer and kill Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva, but Kṛṣṇa immediately caught hold of the demon's hind legs, swirled him around in the air, and threw him into the sky. The demon fell onto a tree. Kṛṣṇa ran, following him as he tried to escape. The forest where this happened is called Khadīravana. Do you know Khadīravana? We have gone there on Śrī Vraja-maṇḍala *parikramā*[1]. Kṛṣṇa followed the demon calf into Khadīravana and killed him.

1 Circumambulation of the sacred tract of land known as Vraja.

After some days, a large demon named Bakāsura came. *Baka* means 'crane.' His lower beak was on the earth and his upper beak touched the sky. He wanted to swallow Kṛṣṇa.

At first, the crane appeared to be in a trance, like a *yogī* standing on one leg near a pond or near the Yamunā. Wanting to swallow Kṛṣṇa, he quickly picked Him up in his beak, but Kṛṣṇa became like a hot iron rod. Being unable to keep Kṛṣṇa in his throat, he vomited, and Kṛṣṇa was thrown free. The crane again wanted to attack Kṛṣṇa, but Kṛṣṇa quickly placed one leg on the demon's lower beak, and with His hand, He raised the demon's upper beak. In this way, Bakāsura was divided in two and thus killed.

These two demons, Vatsāsura and Bakāsura, were the embodiments of duplicity and hypocrisy. Nowadays, there are so many Bakāsuras, duplicitous people. At the time of Kṛṣṇa there was only one, but nowadays we cannot count them.

Though some people may have taken initiation and are chanting the holy name, wearing *tulasī* beads around their neck, applying *tilaka*, and displaying all other external signs of being a Vaiṣṇava, they remain very tricky – hypocritical and duplicitous. Outwardly, they seem friendly, but inwardly, they are like an enemy. Externally, they speak very sweet words, but inside, they hold a knife. Kṛṣṇa can recognize this and destroy them. We see that they fall down very quickly. If anyone is chanting the holy name, hearing *hari-kathā*, and remaining in good association, he should keep far away from such duplicity.

Duplicitousness is when one is chanting, remembering, and [appearing to be] a Vaiṣṇava, but is still overly attached to wealth, reputation, followers, wife, children, and so forth. Those who are deceitful and always criticizing and offending Vaiṣṇavas for petty reasons are offenders; they are not actually Vaiṣṇavas.

But to be [falsely] detached is also not good. We should make Kṛṣṇa the center of our life and relationships: "My wife is the

beloved of Kṛṣṇa," or "My husband is the beloved of Kṛṣṇa," or "My children are the servants of Kṛṣṇa." We should support and nourish this conception. [We should consider that] everyone is the servant of Kṛṣṇa, and thus associate with all the Vaiṣṇavas. Whatever we do, we should do for Kṛṣṇa.

The *gopīs* were married, as were many associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. The Pāṇḍavas were also householders, and they were not too attached. We should do all these things for Kṛṣṇa, because we are not qualified to be in the renounced order. But we can become qualified, gradually. When we come to the age of fifty or sixty, all these things should gradually be given up. Then, we can leave everything to our sons and our sons' wives. At that time, we will be known as *vānaprasthī* (one who is retiring from material life). As a *vānaprasthī*, you can live with your wife, no harm. But after some time, you should give your wife to your sons and be renounced in a proper way, doing *bhajana* like Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura.

Family life is not bad. In it, we can learn many things. This world is the perverted reflection of the spiritual world [where Kṛṣṇa is the center of one's activities]. It is like a ladder by which we can gradually go up. But when family life is not like a ladder, not like a school for training in spiritual life, then it is very bad. It should be like a training school where one learns how to love Kṛṣṇa. A married person should think, "I should love Kṛṣṇa like my son or like my husband – more than my husband – like a beloved, like a friend." This household life is like a training school. Those who have past impressions of married life, having fully tasted it in previous lives, do not take to household life.

Those who pretend to be *brahmacārīs* but are not actually *brahmacārīs* will fall down after some time. They may have taken *sannyāsa*, the renounced order, and are preaching all over the

world, but if they are internally attached to ladies and wealth, they were never qualified for this renounced order. They only pretended to be qualified for wealth and reputation. *Guru* should not give *sannyāsa* to such persons.

Those who are duplicitous in this way are like Bakāsura. We should try to be careful of this Bakāsura. You cannot kill him yourself. Who can kill him? Only Kṛṣṇa or Baladeva.

One day, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva were grazing the calves in Tālavana. All the boys were thirsty and hungry. What happened then? Govinda-bhakata should speak.

AGHĀSURA

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: I don't know the story so well.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: I have told it many times. [Playfully] If you don't remember, I will make you remember by twisting your ears. Then, very quickly you will remember.

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Shortly after Kṛṣṇa had killed Bakāsura, He and the cowherd boys were again taking care of the calves. They were not yet five years old. The demons Pūtanā and Bakāsura had a younger brother.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Pūtanā had two brothers: Bakāsura and Aghāsura. One of them, Bakāsura, was killed. Now Aghāsura became furious.

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Aghāsura was angry that his elder brother and sister had been killed. Kaṁsa incited him to take action.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: He promised Kaṁsa, "I will take revenge and I will surely kill Kṛṣṇa today."

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Under the influence of Yogamāyā, Aghāsura was able to enter Vṛndāvana. He was a great mystic *yogī*, and he came in the form of a serpent, but not just any ordinary serpent. He took the form of a python and expanded his body to become eight miles long, and then he lay on the forest path. Just as Bakāsura had previously opened his mouth with his upper beak touching the sky, Aghāsura opened his mouth in such a way that his upper jaw was in the clouds. The cowherd boys were playing. As he opened his mouth, a very foul, fishy smell emanated from within, from his intestines.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: All the cowherd boys said, "What is this?"

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Then the cowherd boys, seeing this big structure, looked at each other and said, "What is this?"

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: "This is like a mountain."

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: At first they thought, "This looks like a huge mountain going up into the sky." On closer examination, they thought, "No, this is not a mountain; it is a huge cave."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: The cave of that mountain…

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: The look of the entrance gave them the impression it was a cave. On closer examination, they saw that actually, it was a big snake.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: No, no. They saw that the tongue was like a big red carpet.

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: [Laughing] There was a big red carpet.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: They thought, "We should go in, whether it is a serpent, mountain, or cave – no harm. Kṛṣṇa is here. He is coming right behind us. He will save us if anything happens."

THE COWHERD BOYS ENTERING THE MOUTH OF AGHĀSURA

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: They quickly and confidently proceeded into the mouth of Aghāsura, because they had the confidence that Kṛṣṇa was with them and that whatever would happen, He would protect them.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: And what was Kṛṣṇa doing?

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: He was scratching His head wondering what was going on here.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: He was in the last row…

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Yes. He was behind the others, but He did not go in with them. He stayed outside and was looking on.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: "Where are they going? I cannot save them, and they have walked inside." He was scratching His head, wondering what to do.

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: It is explained that even though the cowherd boys had walked into the mouth of the demon, Kṛṣṇa looked on in amazement, thinking, "How could Mahāmāyā, the material illusory energy, manifest such a wonderful thing as this big snake."

The cowherd boys had walked in, but Aghāsura was not satisfied, because he actually wanted Kṛṣṇa. Finally, Kṛṣṇa followed the cowherd boys and walked into the serpent's mouth. The serpent, being satisfied that Kṛṣṇa was within, closed his jaws.

In the mouth of that serpent, the cowherd boys fainted.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: All the calves also went in.

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: All the young calves that the cowherd boys had been taking care of also went into the mouth of Aghāsura and fainted. Now that Kṛṣṇa, the cowherd boys, and the calves were within his mouth, Aghāsura wanted to devour them all, but Kṛṣṇa suddenly became very, very hot.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Where?

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Within the demon's jaw.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: No. [Points to throat.]

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: [Laughing] That is what I meant. Within his throat.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: He could not breathe, also.

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Aghāsura could not breathe. He was choking.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: What was he doing? He was struggling for his life.

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Aghāsura was fighting for his life and moving his head left and right, trying to get Kṛṣṇa out. He wanted to vomit Him out, just as Bakāsura had previously done. But this time, Kṛṣṇa did not allow that. Kṛṣṇa got hotter and hotter and hotter, and the heat increased within the head of Aghāsura. His head was about to burst. His eyes, which were like big *rasagullās*, popped out of his head.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: He began to roll down…

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Aghāsura, the big serpent, began to roll, squiggling all over the place. Finally, the life air of Aghāsura could no longer take the intense pain and heat, and it burst out through a hole in the top of his skull.

Aghāsura's soul, or *ātmā*, came out and hovered in the sky. Meanwhile, all the demigods above were looking upon the whole scene and wondering what was going on. When Kṛṣṇa had gone into the serpent's mouth, they thought, "Alas, Kṛṣṇa will be killed! What a calamity! What tragedy!" As they saw Aghāsura's soul floating in the air, they wondered what was going to happen next.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Then Kṛṣṇa opened Aghāsura's mouth and they all came out.

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: Kṛṣṇa opened the mouth of Aghāsura. He revived the cowherd boys and the calves, and they all walked out. Kṛṣṇa came out, and Aghāsura's soul, which was seen hovering in the sky, merged into the body of Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: No, into His feet.

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: He merged into His feet. [Laughing] It is explained how fortunate this Aghāsura was that, though he was a demon, he still attained *brahma* (the impersonal, non-dual effulgence emanating from Kṛṣṇa's form). His soul merged into Kṛṣṇa's foot.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: [To Prema-prayojana dāsa] Can you say something about this? Do you know some prayers by Brahmā? Try to remember something more.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Kṛṣṇa came out of the mouth of Aghāsura, and Aghāsura was relieved of all his false ego. Some say that Kṛṣṇa killed him, but this is not true. Kṛṣṇa destroyed all his false ego and his sinful body, and liberated his soul. Seeing this, all the demigods became overjoyed. They began to beat drums and dance. They chanted and showered flowers on Kṛṣṇa.

At that time, Brahmā, the creator of this universe, the highest of all demigods, was traveling in the sky on his swan carrier. He wondered, "What is going on? What is all this celebration about?" When he came closer, he saw the soul of Aghāsura enter into the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. He was very astonished.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: [To Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī] What became of Aghāsura's soul? You should explain.

Govinda-bhakata Brahmacārī: But he (Prema-prayojana dāsa) knows all the prayers. We are waiting for that.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: He should know the essence and the conclusive truths. You can only learn this in the association

of high class Vaiṣṇavas, realized souls, otherwise not. We can remember the verses and so many things, but some things are understood only in the association of Vaiṣṇavas.

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: Bakāsura attained liberation. There are five kinds of *mukti* (liberation): *sārūpya*, *sālokya*, *sārṣṭi*, *sāmīpya*, and *sāyujya.* Among these five, devotees don't like *sāyujya* liberation.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: What is *sāyujya*?

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: *Sāyujya* means 'to merge with *brahma* (the impersonal effulgence emanating from Kṛṣṇa's form).'

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: What happens there?

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: A person undergoing an operation has no sense of anything; he doesn't know what is going on. Similarly, in *sāyujya-mukti,* the soul cannot understand if he is even existing or not. He is just like stone. He does not realize he is a soul; his soul performs no activity. Kṛṣṇa did not give Aghāsura this type of liberation; He gave him *sārūpya-mukti.*

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: What is *sārūpya-mukti?*

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: *Sārūpya* means attaining a form like that of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: A form like Nārāyaṇa's – four-armed. Not a two-armed form like Kṛṣṇa's, although some similarities will be there. And what is *sāmīpya*?

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: *Sāmīpya* means 'near to.'

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Anyone who is liberated and receives *sāmīpya-mukti* goes to a planet in Vaikuṇṭha that is near Kṛṣṇa's planet. And there is also *sārṣṭi*.

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: *Sārṣṭi* means having the same opulence as Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Opulence like Kṛṣṇa's, but not exactly the same, not as much. What kind of liberation does the Supreme Lord – as Kṛṣṇa or Rāmacandra – give to the enemies He kills?

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: *Sāyujya*.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: At first, some devotees, like Śukadeva Gosvāmī [and the four Kumāras], had some attraction to this type of [impersonal] liberation. This is also high-class. But Vaiṣṇavas don't accept this *sāyujya-mukti*, and [Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, the followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu] do not want *sāmīpya, sārūpya…*

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: *…sālokya, sārṣṭi.*

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Kṛṣṇa mercifully gave Aghāsura *sārūpya-mukti*, and he received a form like Nārāyaṇa's, near one of His spiritual planets. But [Gauḍīya] Vaiṣṇavas do not want this.

Lord Brahmā was thinking, "This liberation is quite rare. Millions of *brahmavādīs* (those who have realized the impersonal aspect of the Absolute Truth) do not receive liberation, but upon being killed by Kṛṣṇa, Aghāsura has easily attained it." He realized, "Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is not a demigod or anything else. I want to see some…"

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: "…more pastimes." Some say that Brahmā wanted to test Kṛṣṇa, but this is not so. Brahmā is an *ācārya* (great spiritual master who instructs all by his own example). He could not even think to test Him.

Brahmā wanted to make an effort to see more of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Why? Because Yogamāyā inspired him to do so. In Vraja, Kṛṣṇa would go out in the evening to milk the cows, and at that time, all the cows would think, "If Kṛṣṇa were my calf, then I could give Him my milk."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: "If He were my son…"

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: Also, all the friends of Mother Yaśodā thought, "If Kṛṣṇa were to become my son, it would be my very good fortune." [They desired this because often,] on the way back from cow-grazing, all Yaśodā's friends, one after another, would take Kṛṣṇa on their lap.

After this, Mother Yaśodā took Kṛṣṇa to her own residence. The other motherly *gopīs* thought, "If only I could have Kṛṣṇa as my son, even for a moment. Mother Yaśodā is so fortunate. She sleeps with Kṛṣṇa and nourishes Him always. If Kṛṣṇa were to become my son, then I could nourish Him as Yaśodā does. This would be my good fortune."

LORD BRAHMĀ STEALS THE COWHERD BOYS AND CALVES

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: All of the young *vraja-gopīs* are little girls. They think, "Kṛṣṇa will be my husband."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: "Kṛṣṇa is so sweet and beautiful."

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: "He is so sweet and attractive."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: "He is so strong. We want Kṛṣṇa to be our husband." Kṛṣṇa knew all those young *gopīs* who were not yet married.

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: This refers to those *gopīs* who were Kṛṣṇa's same age, from five to ten years old.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: In India, little children take pots full of water and go to Śaṅkara, Lord Śiva. They then perform a sacred bathing ceremony of him and pray, "We want a

very beautiful husband." Though they are not yet mature, still they pray for this.

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: Kṛṣṇa can accomplish many tasks with one action. He gave an order to Yogamāyā, then Yogamāyā…

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: No, not ordered. He desired it, and…

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: He desired.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: And Yogamāyā at once came.

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: She came and wanted to fulfill Kṛṣṇa's desire. Then Brahmā came.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Yogamāyā inspired Brahmā.

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: Yogamāyā inspired Brahmā, and then Brahmā stole all Kṛṣṇa's calves. At first, Kṛṣṇa and His friends were taking their meal under a tree, as the calves grazed nearby. Brahmā stole away all the calves and hid them near Tapovana, near the banks of the Yamunā. All the cowherd boys were wondering, "Where are our calves?" They could not find them.

Kṛṣṇa said, "I shall find out where they are. If I cannot, then I shall play My flute; then all the calves will come."

The cowherd boys said, "No, You can sit here. We will go." They left Kṛṣṇa and went there to search for their calves. Then Brahmā…

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: No. They remained sitting there. Kṛṣṇa told them, "You cannot search. I will quickly look for them. You stay here and take milk. I will come back very shortly."

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: When Kṛṣṇa went in search of the calves, Brahmā came and quickly took away all the cowherd boys and hid them in the same place [he had hidden the calves,

near Tapovana]. Kṛṣṇa came back, but He could not understand what happened. He was thinking, "What happened? There are no calves or cowherd boys."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: He was searching.

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: He thought, "When I go back home, how shall I explain?" On that day, it was the birth star, or birth constellation (birthday), of Baladeva Prabhu, and so He was not with Kṛṣṇa and the cowherd boys and calves. Kṛṣṇa was thinking, "All the cowherd boys' mothers will ask Me, 'O Kanhaiyā, You came alone. Where is my son?' What shall I say to them?" Due to His performing *nara-līlā* (human-like pastimes) at that time, He became so confused that His face became dry. In His hand there were some foodstuffs – some rice and yogurt – but because He was searching here and there, He forgot to eat it. With the help of Yogamāyā, He came to understand that Brahmā had stolen all the calves and cowherd boys, and keeping them in a cave by the banks of Yamunā, had gone to his abode, Brahmaloka.

Kṛṣṇa changed His form to look like Brahmā, and went to Brahmaloka. He said to Brahmā's servants, "Somebody wants to cheat Me."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: "He wants to cheat you all."

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: "He wants to cheat you all. He is coming here in a four-headed form that looks like my own. Be careful. Don't be cheated by him."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: "Don't let him come here."

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: "He is an imposter, so don't let him come here."

Later, Brahmā himself came. Since he was entering his own residence, he had no need to ask anyone for permission, yet his watchman said, "Do not enter! Who are you?"

Brahmā asked, "Are you mad?"

"No, we are not mad. You are mad. If you advance any further, we shall break your leg."

Brahmā wondered, "What is happening here? Any other day, they never insult me, but now they even want to beat me." Surprised, Brahmā came back and meditated on this. In his meditation, he saw that Kṛṣṇa Himself was the cause of this incident. He became very sorry for his behavior and returned to Vraja, where he saw Kṛṣṇa grazing the calves.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: With all the calves!

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: And with all the cowherd boys.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: He was wandering here and there with them, playing.

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: Kṛṣṇa was playing as if nothing had happened. Brahmā rubbed his eyes and saw that all those calves and cowherd boys had become four-armed. Why? The worshipful deity of Brahmā is Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, who is four-armed. Kṛṣṇa wanted to show Brahmā, "What to speak of Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, even My calves and cowherd boys, as well as their sticks and clothes, are not less than Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. They all are transcendental." Brahmā paid his obeisance again and again to Kṛṣṇa and offered Him prayers.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: But then he again saw Kṛṣṇa alone…

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: …searching for His calves and cowherd friends.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Feeling very sad, Brahmā began to pray, "You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I could not understand You."

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī:

naumīḍya te 'bhra-vapuṣe taḍid-ambarāya
guñjāvataṁsa-paripiccha-lasan-mukhāya
vanya-sraje kavala-vetra-viṣāṇa-veṇu-
lakṣma-śriye mṛdu-pade-paśupāṅgajāya
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.1)

[O Lord, You are the only person in the whole creation worthy of our prayers. O Vrajendra-nandana, You look like a new rain cloud, and adorned with a yellow garment that sparkles and shimmers like lightning, You look very elegant. With a garland of *guñjā* berries around your neck, ornaments embellishing Your ears, and a peacock feather on Your head, Your lotus face emits a brilliant luster. The garland of many colored forest flowers and leaves around Your neck, the cow-herding stick and forest bugle under Your arm, and Your *veṇu* flute tucked into Your cummerbund look splendid. In Your soft lotus hands are morsels of rice and yogurt. Appearing in this sweet attire of a cowherd boy, You attract everyone. Your delicate lotus feet, softer than lotus flowers, are marked with auspicious symbols. To these lotus feet alone, I am offering prostrated obeisance again and again.]

Brahmā is praying, "O Paśupāṅgajāya." Here, Brahmā is confirming that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Nanda Bābā. How? *Paśupa* means 'he who takes care of the cows,' and that person who has taken birth from him is *paśupāṅgajāya*. This 'person who takes care of the cows' is Nanda Bābā, and He who came from Nanda Bābā is Kṛṣṇa.

Here, Brahmā is saying, "I fall down at His lotus feet." Whose feet? "*Naumīḍya te 'bhra-vapuṣe* – He whose body is like a new cloud." Then *taḍid-ambarāya*. Just as there is lightning in a cloud,

His yellow garment is like lightning on His body. His body is like a new cloud, and His yellow garment is like lightning.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: His *cādara* (shawl).

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: What is His ornamentation? *Guñjāvataṁsa* – one kind of fruit.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: *Guñjā* is one thing, and *avataṁsa* is another thing; they are not the same. *Guñjā* beads are made into a garland and are placed on His neck. *Avataṁsa* means 'earrings' – so beautiful. They are made from flowers.

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: On His head, there is a *paripiccha,* a peacock feather. *Vanya-sraje*. He is decorated – His whole body, from top to bottom – with wild flowers from the jungle. *Kavala-vetra-viṣāṇa-veṇu*. In His hands are some foodstuffs and a stick for cow-grazing, and He keeps a flute in His waist.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: What is *lakṣma-śriye*?

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: *Lakṣma-śriye* means there are many auspicious symbols on the soles of His feet.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: What are they?

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: Thunderbolt, chariot, lotus, fish, and many others. When Kṛṣṇa walks around, all these marks are impressed upon the Earth.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: *Mṛdu-pade.*

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: *Mṛdu-pade* means 'moving very slowly.'

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Slowly, like a young elephant – very beautifully.

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: Kṛṣṇa is carefree. He is walking freely and slowly.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Smiling…

Navīna-kṛṣṇa Brahmacārī: Smilingly. Brahmā prays, "I bow down at Your lotus feet."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: [To Prema-prayojana dāsa] Do you know any verse in this regard? *Jñāne prayāsam udapāsya nāmanta eva*.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Brahmā climbed down from his swan carrier and fell again and again, offering his obeisance to Kṛṣṇa. In a faltering voice, with his hair standing on end, and with tears flowing from his eight eyes, he began to offer many prayers, like this beautiful prayer Śrīla Gurudeva has just now quoted.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: What did he see? Was Kṛṣṇa eating something?

AN EXPLANATION OF A VERSE FROM ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Prema-prayojana dāsa: He saw how Kṛṣṇa was standing like an ordinary boy, holding food in His left hand – some yogurt and rice. It was dripping through His fingers. Brahmā began to offer a prayer:

jñāne prayāsam udapāsya namanta eva
jīvanti san-mukharitāṁ bhavadīya-vārtām
sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatāṁ tanu-vāṅ-manobhir
ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.3)

[Those who, even while remaining situated in their established social positions, throw away the process of speculative knowledge, and with their body, words, and mind offer all respects to descriptions of Your personality and

activities, dedicating their lives to these narrations, which are vibrated by You personally and by Your pure devotees, certainly conquer Your Lordship, although You are otherwise unconquerable by anyone within the three worlds.*]

Brahmā said, "The endeavor for knowledge should be given up. Rather, one should simply pay one's obeisance to Kṛṣṇa."

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: What is *jñāne-prayāsam*?

Prema-prayojana dāsa: *Jñāne-prayāsam* means 'the endeavor to acquire knowledge about Kṛṣṇa, the Absolute Truth.' Furthermore, the knowledge of Kṛṣṇa's opulence is an obstacle, a stumbling block, for those who want to enter into the sweetness of Vṛndāvana. Kṛṣṇa has said:

aiśvarya-jñānete saba jagat miśrita
aiśvarya-śithila-preme nāhi mora prīta
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (*Ādi-līlā* 4.17)

[In this whole universe everyone has knowledge of Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. But love that is made feeble by this reverential knowledge is not satisfying to Me.]

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Can we explain *nirviśeṣa-jñāna*?

Prema-prayojana dāsa: *Nirviśeṣa-jñāna* is to think that Absolute Truth is formless, impersonal, with no qualities, no pastimes, no abode, no associates, and no activities. This should be rejected.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: That is not told here. Here, *jñāne prayāsam* means devotional service mixed with speculative knowledge. This means thinking that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, that He is Nārāyaṇa. This should also be stopped [if one wants to enter the eternal realm of Vraja, where Kṛṣṇa performs charming human-like pastimes].

Prema-prayojana dāsa: One might say, "If we give up this knowledge of the opulence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then how will we understand anything?" Therefore, Brahmā is giving the actual suggestion. What is that? "*Jīvanti san-mukharitāṁ bhavadīya-vārtām* – one should hear the descriptions of Kṛṣṇa's sweet pastimes." From where? From the lips of a pure devotee. That means not from any tape, not from any book, not from any video, folio, internet, or database. That will not do.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: These other things will not do.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Brahmā then said *sthāne-sthitāḥ*. This has different meanings. One meaning is 'to stay where you are.' There is no need to make any external arrangements or change anything. If you are a *brahmacārī* (celibate student), then remain a *brahmacārī.* If you are a *gṛhastha* (a householder), then stay a *gṛhastha*. If you are a *vānaprastha* (one who has retired from family life) or a *sannyāsī* (one in the renounced order), then stay in that position. There is no need to make any external arrangements. Just subject yourself to the flow of nectar coming from the mouth of any pure Vaiṣṇava.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: The second meaning?

Prema-prayojana dāsa: The other meaning is 'stay in that place where there is a pure devotee speaking the sweet pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, and never leave.' Always constantly hear *hari-kathā* from the lips of a pure Vaiṣṇava.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: What would a person do there?

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Not hear for enjoyment, but actually completely surrender one's body, mind, and words to that pure Vaiṣṇava. Then that *hari-kathā* will truly enter one's heart.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: No. Offering *praṇāma* (humble obeisance) to that place, to the person who is giving

hari-kathā, to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, from which he is reading, and to those who have arranged for *hari-kathā* to take place. Those who make such arrangements think, "The Vaiṣṇavas should come to take part in this," and thus they invite all Vaiṣṇavas.

We should also offer *praṇāma* to those who arranged *prasādam*, to those who have arranged for places to sit, and to anyone who has broomed. Offer *praṇāma* to them with your whole body.

What do we do with our mind? We think, "How lucky I am that I am hearing *hari-kathā*." Do *praṇāma* by heart and by mind, also. Give respect to all, especially to those who are speaking *hari-kathā*. Such as who? Baladeva Prabhu, one's *guru*, or Parīkṣit Mahārāja. Parīkṣit Mahārāja had great faith, honor, and trust in Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: A question may come in one's mind, "If I give up the endeavor for *jñāna*, then how will I control the mind?"

One should not fear this. Brahmā is saying *ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām*. Many sages and *yogīs* make great endeavor to control their mind and senses, but…

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: They don't want to control their mind; the mind is insignificent. They want to control Kṛṣṇa. But Kṛṣṇa is never controlled by any of them. For those who hear *hari-kathā*, Kṛṣṇa is very soon controlled by them. And gradually, *sādhana-bhakti*, *bhāva-bhakti*, and *prema-bhakti* come, and their life becomes successful. Anything more?

Prema-prayojana dāsa: What to speak of controlling our mind, simply by hearing *hari-kathā*, Kṛṣṇa easily comes under control.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Don't have so much faith in reading. Everything [in the scriptures] is locked and concealed. "*Jahā, bhāgavata paḍa vaiṣṇavera sthāne* – if you want to understand *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* you must approach a self-realized Vaiṣṇava and hear from him" (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya-līlā* 5.131).

We may think, "I will read by myself and I will become a topmost Vaiṣṇava." But in truth, you cannot understand even a word of the scriptures on your own. If the Vaiṣṇava, the *guru*, is bona fide and knows *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, then he has the key to unlock it, and you will know and realize these things; otherwise, by your own mind, by your own intelligence, by your reading, and so forth, you cannot know them and you will fall down. You should hear from Vaiṣṇavas. Then?

Prema-prayojana dāsa: By hearing *hari-kathā*, Kṛṣṇa…

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: What will happen? If a person hears in this way, Kṛṣṇa will come into his heart in the form of words, *hari-kathā*, and He will clear all kinds of doubts, all kinds of *anarthas* and offenses, and his heart will become pure and smooth. Kṛṣṇa will make him realize everything about *bhakti-yoga.* This is the process. You should try to hear from a qualified Vaiṣṇava. If that is not possible, then you can read. But when that Vaiṣṇava again comes, you should hear from him.

You may have read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* many times, but you have never heard it the way we are explaining it.

After hundreds of thousands of births [of independent endeavor], you will not become qualified to know all these things. We first heard from our *gurudeva* and many Vaiṣṇavas – Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, and others – and then we attained something, very little, like a stone on the shore of an endless ocean.

Try to hear and keep what we hear in our heart. When we leave here, try to remember what I have spoken and what Vaiṣṇavas have spoken. As you go to sleep, try to remember all this, and in your sleep, thoughts of what you have heard and remembered will come to you. If you are not doing this, and if you go from here and leave all you have heard behind, only remembering worldly things, then it will be of no value to you at all.

KṚṢṆA KILLING DHENUKĀSURA

Invaluable Instructions

Three Pastimes

Try to serve Kṛṣṇa. He can give you anything. He will give wealth, and after some time, He may give you pure *bhakti*. He gave that to Sudāmā Vipra. You should not fear worshiping Kṛṣṇa. From today, try to serve Kṛṣṇa, chant His names, and remember Him.

DHENUKĀSURA

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: We have been explaining the sweet pastimes of Kṛṣṇa from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* Tomorrow we leave Malaysia. I have not been able to explain so much, but when we next come, we will begin from where we leave off. Now I want to speak something in brief.

Once, Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva, along with many cowherd boys, were near Madhuvana (a forest of Vṛndāvana), and were feeling very hungry. They perceived the sweet scent of ripened palm fruits. The cowherd boys told Kṛṣṇa, "Today we were attacked by a very severe demon. There was no one to save us but You. Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva, You are so powerful. You can save anyone. If You had not saved us, we surely would have died."

Who was that demon?

Devotees: Tṛṇāvarta.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Kṛṣṇa said, "Let us see what Baladeva Prabhu is doing." [To Prema-prayojana dāsa] In brief, you should speak about what happened after that.

Prema-prayojana dāsa: A sweet fragrance was coming from the forest called Tālavana. In this forest, there were many *tāla* (palmyra) trees, which were being guarded by a demon named Dhenukāsura – the ass demon – and his many donkey associates. They protected this forest of sweet *tāla* fruits. They would taste

some fruit themselves and then offer the rest to Kaṁsa, for his pleasure. They were Kaṁsa's associates.

Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, and all of Their friends made their way to that forest, being attracted by the sweet fragrance of the *tāla* fruits. Upon their arrival, they found that there was no Dhenukāsura or other ass demons in sight. Baladeva approached one tree and, being extremely powerful, began to shake it. Very large *tāla* fruits fell to the ground. Upon hearing this sound, Dhenukāsura and all his associates came running and saw Baladeva shaking the tree. "Just see! Some boys have come to steal what is meant for our master, Kaṁsa."

Dhenukāsura became angry, and he ran toward the boys while making a terrible sound. As he came closer, he turned around to kick them and kill them with his hind legs. Baladeva, being very strong and heroic, ran forward to meet the demon's charge. He caught Dhenukāsura by the hind legs and swung him around and around so quickly that the demon gave up his life, merely by the centrifugal force. Baladeva threw the demon into the air, and the demon landed on the top of a tree. He was so heavy that when he hit the tree, it came crashing down. The trees grew close together, so the tree on which Dhenukāsura fell hit another, and that one hit another, and then another, and so forth. Many trees fell one after another, like dominoes.

Seeing this, the associates of Dhenukāsura became even angrier. They charged, one after another. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma grabbed them one by one by their hind legs, swung them around in the air, and threw them into the treetops. In this way, they demolished all the trees in the forest. When the boys saw this, they clapped, happy to see the fun. But a problem arose. With all the demons lying dead here and there, the trees smashed, and blood everywhere, the boys realized, "These fruits are contaminated. We cannot eat them," and so they did not take any of them.

In this pastime, there are some very deep meanings. What teachings have our *ācāryas* revealed from this pastime?

Dhenukāsura is an ass demon. The ass has many peculiar characteristics. He is a symbol of ignorance. Why? There are many reasons.

First, in the summer season, when it is hot, the ground becomes dry and all the grass dies. During that time, the ass eats a little grass here and there. He moves quickly, because what little grass is left is scattered. After eating for some time, he looks around and considers, "All the grass is gone. I must have eaten so much." Simply by thinking he has eaten all the grass, his belly feels full and he becomes fat.

Later, the rainy season comes and grass is everywhere. He eats and eats, moving from one grassy patch to the next. After many hours, he looks back. "I've only come a short way and still there is grass everywhere. I have not eaten anything." Actually, in the rainy season, the donkey has eaten much more than in the summer season, but because he sees that there is still grass everywhere, he thinks, "I have not eaten anything," and thus becomes skinny.

The ass is like the materialist in this world. Due to nature, grass is both growing and disappearing, but Dhenukāsura is thinking, "It is I who am doing everything."

> *prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ*
> *ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā kartāham iti manyate*
>
> *Bhagavad-gītā* (3.27)

Here, Kṛṣṇa says, "All activities in this world are performed by nature, but the conditioned soul, being covered by the ignorance of false ego, thinks, 'I am doing everything.' When he achieves anything in his life, he becomes satisfied, thinking it has been achieved solely by his actions."

Actually, he has done nothing, but still he thinks, "I have done so much." He thus becomes happy, just like the donkey. In this way, the donkey is the symbol of ignorance.

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Is there something more?

Prema-prayojana dāsa: Also, we see in India how the donkey is used as a beast of burden. He is most often seen carrying a heavy load upon his back; a load so heavy that the donkey's small legs shake. Yet, even though he is carrying a heavy load, he never has the opportunity to enjoy the contents of that load. He is like the washer-man, who carries many clothes but never once wears those clothes himself. The donkey may carry many sweets and lots of sugar, but he never gets to taste them. Similarly, an ignorant person works very hard, but he never gets any pleasure. Another example is a person who does much *sādhana* and *bhajana*, but not under the shelter of a bona fide *guru*. He can therefore not taste any *rasa*; no realization will come from his *sādhana* and *bhajana*.

The donkey has another peculiar quality. He is always chasing after the she-donkey. And the she-donkey has a peculiar quality, as well, in that when she is chased by the male donkey, she always kicks him in the face. In this world, those who are always running after the opposite sex are like donkeys. Even though they are repeatedly kicked in the face, they never give up; they never lose their enthusiasm. In this way, they are exactly like donkeys.

There is another very clear example of the mentality of the donkey that can be conveyed in a story.

Once upon a time, there was a man who earned his livelihood by using donkeys to take pilgrims up the Himalayan Mountains to have *darśana* of the deity of Kedāranātha (Lord Śiva). He would place all of the pilgrims' possessions on the donkeys, and they would walk up the mountain. It would usually take a few days.

They would stop at guest houses for the night, and then carry on with their journey the next morning.

One day they set out, and in the evening arrived at a guest house. The pilgrims went inside to take rest. It was then that the owner of the donkeys noticed he had forgotten something. Every night he would bind the donkeys by the legs, so that they would not walk away, and the donkeys would still be there when he would awaken in the morning. On this day, however, he left the ropes down at the bottom of the mountain. Upon remembering this, he thought, "What will I do now? My donkeys may wander off in the night." He was lamenting bitterly. "What to do?"

Just then, he saw a saintly person who was also on pilgrimage there. He thought, "Saints are kind and merciful. Perhaps he can give me some good advice."

He went to the saint and said, "O Mahātmājī (great soul), can you please help me? I am in a very tricky situation. I have left the ropes I use to tie up my donkeys at night at the bottom of the mountain. How can I keep them from running away at night?"

The saintly person said, "This is not a problem. All you need to do is bring your donkeys near a tree, as you usually do every evening. Then, lift the leg of the donkey, and with one hand, mimic the tying of a rope around his leg. If you do this with all the donkeys, you will not have any problem."

The donkey owner was inspired to try. He took his donkeys to a tree, tied their legs with a pretend rope, as he was instructed, and then went to take rest. In the morning, just as the saintly person had predicted, all the donkeys were still there. The owner of the donkeys was overjoyed. "This great soul has given me such good advice."

When the pilgrims came out and loaded all of their luggage onto the donkeys, the owner yelled, "Let's go!" But the donkeys would not move. He pushed them, slapped them, and hit them,

but they wouldn't move. "What to do now?" he thought. "I will go back to that saint. He is very intelligent." He went back to the saint and said, "Please help me. Now my donkeys won't move."

The saint said, "Don't you know why?"

"No. Can you tell me?"

"Yes. You should go to your donkeys and again take hold of their legs. Move your hand in the opposite direction, to mimic untying the ropes you 'tied' last night, and then say 'Move!' and they will go."

The guide returned to the donkeys and made an untying motion around their legs. Then he said "Move!" and they all proceeded toward Kedāranātha.

What is the purport of this story? The donkey is greatly ignorant. Those donkeys were never actually bound; only their minds were bound. Similarly, for the living entities in this world, the mind is the cause of bondage. But the mind is also the cause of liberation. Understanding this, we should approach a bona fide *guru* and Vaiṣṇavas, and by following their good instructions, our mind will become detached from all material identifications and bondage. What kind of bondage? What is it that makes us bound just like the donkey? In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* the psychology of a donkey has been described:

yasyātma-buddhiḥ kuṇape tri-dhātuke
sva-dhīḥ kalatrādiṣu bhauma ijya-dhīḥ
yat-tīrtha-buddhiḥ salile na karhicij
janeṣv abhijñeṣu sa eva go-kharaḥ

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.84.13)

[One who identifies his self as the inert body composed of mucus, bile, and air, who assumes his wife and family are permanently his own, who thinks an earthen image or the land of his birth is worshipable, or who sees a place

of pilgrimage as merely the water there, but who never identifies himself with, feels kinship with, worships or even visits those who are wise in spiritual truth – such a person is no better than a cow or an ass.*]

A donkey is not an animal with four legs and long ears that says 'Hee-haw.' Rather, it is psychology, consciousness, that determines whether one is a donkey or not. A donkey may therefore have two legs. *Yasyātma-buddhiḥ*. Anyone who thinks, "I am this body," which is composed of three elements – mucus, bile, and air – is a donkey. Such a person takes the body to be the self. Anyone who has the tendency to become completely absorbed in the intimate relations of family life – wife, home, children, and so forth – has a consciousness like that of a donkey. Anyone who thinks that the material elements in this world are worshipful, or that the land of his birth is worshipful, and thinks "Yes, I am British, and Britain is great and worshipful," or, "I am American," or, "I am Malaysian," is like a two-legged donkey.

Someone may think, "I will make progress in my spiritual life by going to the holy places and taking bath in the sacred rivers." If he goes to the holy places and takes bath, but does not avail himself of the association of the saintly persons, the pure Vaiṣṇavas, who live in those places and who can give him good spiritual instructions, he is like an ass. All these varieties of ignorance are personified in Dhenukāsura.

There is another teaching in this pastime. When Dhenukāsura came to kill the boys, it was Baladeva who came forth and killed him. What is the significance of this? Baladeva is the first expansion of Kṛṣṇa, and He is the original *guru*. He serves Kṛṣṇa in every capacity. Baladeva is the original, undivided essential truth of *guru*. The fact that Baladeva killed this demon means that we have this *anartha* (unwanted tendency) of ignorance, just as Dhenukāsura did.

We cannot remove this *anartha* by our own efforts. We will have to approach a bona fide *guru.* Only by the merciful instructions of a bona fide *guru* – by his kindness, by his glance, by his words, and by his heartfelt blessings – can this ignorance be removed. Without the shelter and without the mercy of a bona fide *guru*, we cannot come off the donkey platform and come to the human platform, nor can we come to the platform of knowledge: pure love for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

> *vāñchā-kalpa-tarubhyaś ca kṛpā-sindhubhya eva ca*
> *patitānāṁ pāvanebhyo vaiṣṇavebhyo namo namaḥ*

> [I offer *praṇāma* again and again to the Vaiṣṇavas, who are the saviors of the fallen, who are just like wish-fulfilling desire-trees, and who are oceans of mercy.]

ROMAHARṢAṆA SŪTA

Śrīla Nārāyaṇa Gosvāmī Mahārāja: Once, Baladeva Prabhu went from Kurukṣetra to Naimiṣāraṇya. There He saw that Romaharṣaṇa Sūta was giving classes on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other Purāṇas to many great sages. They were about eighty-eight thousand in number. He was sitting on the *vyāsāsana*, just as I am here, giving classes to all. Everyone present was hearing attentively from him. When Baladeva Prabhu arrived, all the sages present stood up and offered Him their obeisance. But Romaharṣaṇa Sūta, who was on the *vyāsāsana*, thought, "Baladeva Prabhu is a *gopa*, from a lower caste. Why should I offer my respects to Him? I am such a realized soul. I know all the Vedas and Purāṇas. All are praising me and giving me honor." Such was his false ego. In this way, he was sitting and giving class.

Baladeva Prabhu saw this. Being the first expansion of Kṛṣṇa, He is non-different from Kṛṣṇa Himself, and He is the personified principle of *śrī guru* (*guru-tattva*). He knew that Romaharṣaṇa Sūta was not qualified to give class on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, and so He said, "You have not properly realized what you have heard from your *guru*. If you are not honoring and giving respect to other Vaiṣṇavas, then you are not a qualified Vaiṣṇava and are unqualified to give class on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* or the Purāṇas. You should know that I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If you are not showing honor to Me, how can you honor other Vaiṣṇavas? You cannot, and you are therefore unqualified to speak."

Baladeva Prabhu thought, "I should act to clearly establish the correct principle." He then cut off the head of Romaharṣaṇa Sūta, killing him. All the sages prayed to Baladeva Prabhu. "Now he is dead. You have killed the person from whom we were hearing *hari-kathā*. This is not good. What should we do?" They were lamenting.

Baladeva Prabhu asked them, "Do you want Me to give life back to this wicked, unqualified person?"

They answered, "No, we don't want that. But we do want to hear *hari-kathā* from a realized person." Baladeva quickly called Romaharṣaṇa's son, a boy of only five years. He placed His feet on the boy's head, and in this way greatly blessed him. That boy was so inspired that he began to recite all the Vedas – the Upaniṣads, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *Bhagavad-gītā*, Vedānta, and everything. Baladeva Prabhu seated that boy on the *vyāsāsana*, and there, the boy began to recite these truths. Baladeva Prabhu is *guru*. A real, qualified, fully realized *guru* preaches the glories of Kṛṣṇa and pure *bhakti,* the truth of the living entity, the truth of *māyā* (the deluding potency), and the truth of devotion. Such a *guru* is a manifestation of Baladeva Prabhu.

Those who do not have these qualities and instead possess the false ego 'I am *guru*' will memorize some verses of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, but without realization, and they will not practice *bhakti-yoga*. Such persons are not even devotees of intermediate qualification (*madhyama-adhikāra*). They have elementary qualification (*kaniṣṭha-adhikāra*) only. They have no *bhakti*. How then can they sow the seeds of *bhakti* in the heart of others? They cannot. They only have a false ego, and so they can only give false *bhakti*. With this false *bhakti*, a person can collect money and honor, and thus both *guru* and disciple will go to hell.

In *Jaiva-dharma*, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes a person who, at the time of taking initiation from [an unqualified] *guru*, had no idea of the essential truth about who a genuine *guru* is, took initiation ignorantly. Since there is no action [no potency] as a result of taking *dīkṣā* from an unqualified *guru*, that person should at once give him up and receive initiation from a realized Vaiṣṇava *guru*. Without doing so, he will have no realization of *bhakti* at all; *bhakti* will not come. This has been described throughout the scriptures. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has given

this understanding. We should try to follow Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura and Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. If someone does not have real *bhakti*, how can he give the seed of *bhakti* to others?

At the time of receiving initiation from a *guru*, a person may have been ignorant of the essential truth about who a real *guru* is. In time, he comes to understand, "I have taken initiation from my *guru*. He chants the holy name and is sincere, but he has no actual realization and is not even at the stage of a devotee on the intermediate platform (a *madhyama-adhikārī*). What should I do?" He will go directly to his *guru* with this request: "Gurudeva, please order me to associate with another *guru* – one who is very elevated."

If that *guru* says, "I am so happy to hear this. You should go to that *guru*, and I will also go," then he is really a *guru* and he should not be given up. He should be honored as a *guru* who shows the path of *bhakti*. Such a *guru* should be given honor, but the disciple should surely associate with that other, elevated *guru*.

Sometimes, a very elevated instructing spiritual master (*śikṣā-guru*) is obtained – a topmost devotee like Jīva Gosvāmī. This happened in the case of Śyāmānanda Prabhu. His *gurudeva*, Hṛdaya-caitanya, instructed him as follows: "I chant and I remember, and I am satisfied. But if you want to have more knowledge and more realization, and if you want to enter pure *bhakti*, you should go to Jīva Gosvāmī in Vṛndāvana. I don't know all that he knows."

Śyāmānanda Prabhu went to Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, along with Narottama Ṭhākura and Śrīnivāsa Ācārya. They were very inspired by Jīva Gosvāmī, a topmost devotee, and under his guidance, they studied all the scriptures on *bhakti*. Their initiating *gurus* were very pleased by this. This is the system or etiquette followed by Vaiṣṇavas, and we should also try to follow it.

So, Baladeva Prabhu killed that Romaharṣaṇa.

Now we are coming to the conclusion of our *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* classes. Because now our time here is practically

over, in the short time remaining, I wish to narrate a little of the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa.

Some beginner devotees (*kaniṣṭha-adhikārīs*) want to gain entrance into Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and do *bhajana*, but they think, "If we perform *bhajana* of Kṛṣṇa, He will take away all our possessions, and we will become paupers, beggars. But if we worship Durgā, Kālī, Śiva, or Gaṇeśa, with his very long trunk and enormous stomach, they will easily give us everything – so much wealth, a beautiful wife or husband, and many good, qualified children. If we serve Kṛṣṇa and perform *bhajana* of Him, it may be that we will become street beggars with no wealth."

Kṛṣṇa can do this. It has been stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

> *yasyāham anugṛhṇāmi hariṣye tad-dhanaṁ śanaiḥ*
> *tato dhanaṁ tyajanty asya svajanā duḥkha-duḥkhitam*
> *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.88.8)

This means that those to whom Kṛṣṇa shows special favor or gives His pure mercy quickly become street beggars, and are always weeping here and there, crying, "O Kṛṣṇa! O Kṛṣṇa!" They have no tendency to accumulate wealth or assets. Some people are fearful of this [attaining Kṛṣṇa's favor and losing everything].

[In relation to this verse,] Svāmījī, Bhaktivedānta Svāmī, told me a story in order to warn me. He said, "I was fearful of this *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* verse, but I never stopped chanting Kṛṣṇa's names or remembering Him, and I continued reading the *Bhāgavatam*. Previously, I was eagerly performing so much labor to make money and be happy with my family. But after some time, my medicine factory was unsuccessful. I then made a medical shop, which became very well-known. Indian Prime Ministers used to come to this shop, but unluckily, it also failed. I then started a medical agency, making many medical preparations to sell, but that also failed."

His wife told him that he could not make money and could not support them. After that, his children turned against him. He traveled to Mathurā, where he told me, "I could not realize that all that happened was the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Now I am a beggar."

I told him, "You have not come for all those silly things – bad things. Kṛṣṇa wants to perform many miracles through you. You should take the renounced order." Happily, on the order of my *gurudeva*, Śrīla Bhakti Prajñāna Keśava Gosvāmī Mahārāja, he took initiation into the renounced order. As you well know, he preached Kṛṣṇa consciousness, pure *bhakti*, throughout the whole world shortly after this. My purpose in telling you this is to say that there is no need to fear.

SUDĀMĀ VIPRA

Kṛṣṇa had a friend named Sudāmā Vipra, who lived in Dvārakā. He was very poor. Why was he poor? Because he never made any endeavor to collect money. He was always found chanting, remembering, reading *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other such books, and worshiping Kṛṣṇa, and he therefore had no time to make any money. Sometimes, he went out to beg after noticing that his wife was very worried there was nothing to eat. Occasionally, someone would put something in his begging bag, and sometimes he would return to his home without having collected anything.

His wife was a very high-class devotee. She used to think, "Anything that comes as a result of my husband's begging I will first offer to God. Only then will I give all that *prasādam* to my husband."

But Sudāmā was merciful. He always thought, "Although young, my wife appears old." He took one or two morsels of *prasādam* and kept the rest for her.

And what did his wife think? "He has left this for me!" She was worried for him. One day, she told him, "I have heard that Dvārakādīśa – Kṛṣṇa, the emperor of Dvārakā – has great opulence and wealth, and being very merciful, He takes pity on the unfortunate. He is your friend. I know that He has so much respect for *brāhmaṇas*. He even personally gives in charity to them. He supports and nourishes both cows and *brāhmaṇas*. You should go to Him."

Sudāmā said, "I may go, but I cannot beg anything from Him."

"Just go there. He will see that you are a *brāhmaṇa* and His friend," she said. "He will surely give you something."

His wife requested him repeatedly. Why? Did she want anything for herself? No, for her husband. She was thinking, "If some wealth were to come, I would be able to easily serve my husband, and both of us would be happy." Thinking this way, she repeatedly requested him to go.

Sudāmā replied, "You insist that I go there, but I don't want to go to beg anything from Him. Since I may have a chance to see the lotus feet of my friend Kṛṣṇa, I will go, but I will not go empty-handed. You must give me something to take to Him."

She looked around her home to see if there was anything to send Kṛṣṇa. She searched high and low, but could not find anything. She went to her neighbor and asked, "Can you give me something that my husband can take to Kṛṣṇa?" The neighbor gave her a very small amount of hard old chipped rice. She wrapped it in a very dirty cloth and brought it back to her home. They had no clean cloth, what to speak of new cloth. She securely tied the chipped rice in that old, torn cloth and gave it to her husband. He took it and began to chant the holy names of Kṛṣṇa:

kṛṣṇa govinda govinda gopāla nanda-lālā
girivara-dhārī madana-gopāla

girivara-dhārī nanda-dulāla
kṛṣṇa govinda govinda gopāla nanda-lālā

Although he was quite young, he appeared old, and he was lean and thin. His skin color was dark, he had no good clothing to wear, and there were many cracks in his feet, because he had no shoes. But he also had no concern for all this. He cared only for *kṛṣṇa-bhajana* and nothing else.

The cracks in his feet were so big that he was unable to walk much. He soon became tired, but he knew he had to go on. Somehow or other, he got to Dvārakā and asked someone, "Can you direct me to the palace of Kṛṣṇa?"

Everyone there was acquainted with Kṛṣṇa's palace, and they told him, "Go this way." Thus, in a short time, he came to the door of the palace where Kṛṣṇa lived with Rukmiṇī, His principle queen. Kṛṣṇa would often stay in Rukmiṇī's room, and she would fan Him with a yak tail fan and offer Him many preparations. She was always in a serving mood. The doorkeepers, armed with many weapons, saw this *brāhmaṇa* enter.

The *brāhmaṇa* asked, "Can you show me to where Kṛṣṇa is?"

The doorkeepers said, "Kṛṣṇa has ordered us to never stop any *brāhmaṇa* from entering, and we see that you are *brāhmaṇa.* Come quickly." They took Sudāmā directly into Rukmiṇī's house.

From a distance, Kṛṣṇa saw that poor *brāhmaṇa* from the palace windows. "My classmate Sudāmā is coming!" He ran toward him, weeping. Giving up the throne in Rukmiṇī's home and leaving everything, He cried, "My dear friend Sudāmā!"

He quickly ran up to Sudāmā Vipra and embraced him. He brought him into the palace and sat him on Rukmiṇī's bed, upon which Kṛṣṇa Himself would sit.

He told all of His 16,108 wives, "Bring very nice water." What kind of water? Fragrant, lukewarm water mixed with camphor and other substances. With that water, Kṛṣṇa personally began

KṚṢṆA BATHING THE FEET OF
HIS DEAR FRIEND SUDĀMĀ

to wash Sudāmā's feet. Rukmiṇī, Satyabhāmā, and other queens were supplying the water, and some queens were fanning Sudāmā with a yak tail fan.

All present were able to witness such a wonderful thing: Kṛṣṇa was not only washing Sudāmā's feet with water, but with His own tears, also – so gently, and in such a pleasant mood. After that, Sudāmā was given something to eat, and then he lay down to rest. Kṛṣṇa thought, "It may be that Sudāmā wonders if I recognize him. He may think that I am respecting him solely because I respect all *brāhmaṇas*, and not because I remember our friendship."

Kṛṣṇa said to Sudāmā, "O friend, do you remember that the wife of our *gurudeva* once said, 'Today it is raining. We have no dry wood with which to cook. Quickly go to the forest and bring some dry wood'? I took you with Me to the forest. In the meantime, it started to rain heavily, and it became dark, as if it were night. The rainfall was like elephant trunks or great pillars. Everywhere quickly became flooded. The narrow lanes were deep with water, and water in the wider lanes was shallow. When night came, we stood under the sky in the heavy rain, piling a heap of wood upon our heads so we would not become wetter.

"We stayed like that the whole night, and in the morning, Gurujī came, calling, 'O Kṛṣṇa! O Sudāmā! Where are you?'

" 'We are here!' we replied. Gurujī at once came with a light and saved us, and then took us home.

"Upon our arrival home, Gurudeva said, 'There is no need for you to read or study anything. By my mercy, all scriptures – the Vedas, Upaniṣads, and so forth – as well as the sixty-four arts, will at once manifest in your heart.' Soon after, we actually realized all this. Do you remember?"

Sudāmā Vipra replied, "I remember. But I doubted You would see that I am a poor *brāhmaṇa* related to you by friendship. I wondered if Your receiving me as You did was only part of

Your courtesy to any simple *brāhmaṇa*. I now realize that this was not so."

While Kṛṣṇa and Sudāmā churned all these topics, morning gradually came. Sudāmā Vipra said, "My dear friend, I now want to go back to my family. Brāhmaṇī (my wife) hasn't taken anything to eat yet, and so I should go."

Kṛṣṇa told him, "Yes, now you can go." Kṛṣṇa never gave him anything, not even some new cloth, a coin, or any fruit. He took him to the border of Dvārakā, where He offered obeisance to Sudāmā Vipra and embraced him. In a sad mood, He returned to Dvārakā.

One thing I forgot to mention. When Kṛṣṇa and Sudāmā stayed up talking that night, Kṛṣṇa asked, "My friend, have you brought Me anything from My sister-in-law? She must have sent something. She could not have sent you empty-handed."

Sudāmā was thinking, "Kṛṣṇa is so sweet and soft. If I give Him this old chipped rice and He eats it, His stomach may become upset. He is accustomed to taking butter, milk, *rasagullā*, and *mālpuā*. How can I give Him this? It is not proper."

But Kṛṣṇa somehow knew that Sudāmā had hidden the bag of chipped rice under his tightly closed arm. Sudāmā was lean and thin, and was therefore unable to properly conceal the bag. Kṛṣṇa forcibly snatched the packet and said, "What a very sweet thing My sister-in-law has sent Me." Opening the bag, He took a palmful of chipped rice and ate it.

Kṛṣṇa was going to take more, when His wife Rukmiṇī stopped Him. She said, "You have given everything to this *brāhmaṇa*. Now, what will You give all of us queens?"

As Sudāmā was leaving Dvārakā, He thought, "Kṛṣṇa is so merciful. If He had given me many gifts, I would become wealthy and might have forgotten Him. He is so merciful that He has not given me anything." Thinking in this way, he gradually came closer to his home. He arrived the following day. When he got there, he

had to search for his hut. "Where is my home?" he wondered. He was unable to find it, because there was no longer any hut there.

Sudāmā had one cow. Like his wife, the cow was lean and thin and appeared old, even though she was young. The cow had no milk in her udders, because she had no calf. "Where is my cow?" he wondered. "Where is my hut? Where is my wife?"

In the meantime, he saw some heavenly damsels coming from the royal palace. In their midst was a very beautiful, young, teenaged princess. They walked toward Sudāmā Vipra, holding lamps and all the ceremonial paraphernalia for welcoming him in the Vedic tradition.

He wondered, "Why are they coming to me? Who are they?"

The women were smiling and singing beautiful songs, and they surrounded Sudāmā Vipra. That beautiful teenaged princess came over to Sudāmā Vipra and touched him, and he also became very young, like a prince.

It was then that Sudāmā realized, "All this has come from Kṛṣṇa's mercy. This princess is actually my wife. Kṛṣṇa did not make me a prince before I came, because if I had arrived home bearing great opulence and with health and beauty, my wife would never have recognized me.

"Kṛṣṇa has done this because when I came to see Him, He thought, 'Sudāmā Vipra had nothing at home to give Me and has borrowed something from his neighbor. Although I have so much opulence, I cannot repay him. Whether I were to give him all or only part of My wealth, it would not equal the rice that this *brāhmaṇa* has given Me [out of love]. How can I repay him?' "

Sudāmā was thinking, "Kṛṣṇa is so merciful. That is why He did not directly give anything to me in my presence. Rather, He gave me something during the night." A farmer also receives all of his blessings indirectly, at night. He ploughs the land and cultivates it. If there is no rain, he becomes worried, because he can do nothing about his plight. Kṛṣṇa is so merciful that He

waters fields in the night, not in the day. The following morning, the farmer is happy to discover this, and he thinks, "All the fields are covered with water!"

In the same way, Kṛṣṇa never gives anything directly to any of His devotees. Rather, He gives in this way: "I am so indebted to you. I cannot repay you." And if He gives wealth, like He gave to Sudāmā Vipra, then He laments, "In truth, I have not given anything. What I have given to Sudāmā does not compare with what he brought Me, even though he had to borrow it. What I gave is very insignificant."

Kṛṣṇa is so merciful. If you serve Him, He will give you wealth, reputation, and everything, to a greater degree than what Durgā, Kālī, Gaṇeśa, or any demigod can give. You should not fear. Try to serve Kṛṣṇa. He can give you anything. He will give wealth, and after some time, He may give you pure *bhakti*. He gave that to Sudāmā Vipra. You should not fear worshiping Kṛṣṇa. From today, try to serve Kṛṣṇa, chant His names, and remember Him.

Glossary

- A -

aiśvarya – majesty and opulence.

anarthas – literally, *an-artha*, meaning 'non-value'; unwanted desires, activities, or habits that impede one's advancement in *bhakti*.

- B -

Bala Dāū – the elder brother of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, known as Bala (Balarāma or Baladeva Prabhu).

Baladeva Prabhu – elder brother of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Balakalya Ṛṣi – an ascetic from South India.

Bhagavad-gītā – literally, 'the song of God.' Śrī Kṛṣṇa's immortal instructions to Arjuna, His friend and disciple.

bhajana – internal meditation and worship.

bhakti – devotion to God.

bhakti-rasa – the relish of devotional service.

Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu – a treatise on devotion by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī; literally, 'the nectarean ocean of devotional humors.'

Bhakti-sandarbha – a treatise on devotion by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura – an exalted Vaiṣṇava in the lineage of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu who wrote hundreds of books and songs about devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

bhakti-yoga – loving devotional service to God.

bhāva-bhakti – stage of *bhakti* at which the first rays of *prema*, or pure love of God, make their appearance, and at which

the heart is softened by various inclinations toward performing *bhakti*.

Brahmā – the secondary creator of this particular material universe.

brahmacārī – a male who, having dedicated himself to achieving perfection in spiritual life, has renounced his home and family, and remains celibate.

brāhmaṇa – a person in the priestly order, who cultivates qualities of tolerance, compassion, forgiveness, etc.

Brahmāṇḍa-ghāṭa – a bathing place in Gokula.

Brahma-saṁhitā – prayers of Lord Brahmā, spoken upon the creation of the world.

- C -

cādara – shawl.

Catuḥsana – child saints known as the four Kumāras.

- D -

Durgā – wife of Lord Śiva; she presides over the material energy.

Duryodhana – son of Dhṛtarāṣṭra and the vowed enemy of the Pāṇḍavas, the dear devotees of Kṛṣṇa.

- G -

Gaṇeśa – demigod in charge of material opulence and freedom from misfortune; he has the head of an elephant.

Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu – second Viṣṇu expansion, who enters each universe. From His navel a lotus flower appears, from which Brahmā, the secondary creator of the material universe, takes birth.

Gargācārya – the priest of the Yadu dynasty.

Gokula – the place of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's birth and early pastimes.

Goloka – Kṛṣṇa's abode in the spiritual realm where He enjoys human-like pastimes.

gopa – cowherd boy/man.

gopī – cowherd girl/woman.

guru-paramparā – unbroken succession of bona fide spiritual masters.

guru-tattva – absolute principles regarding the genuine spiritual master.

- H -

Hari – a name of the Supreme Lord.

hari-kathā – narrations about the Supreme Lord, Hari.

- J -

Jīva Gosvāmī – one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, the foremost followers of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, famous for his irrefutable treatises on the Absolute Truth.

- K -

kadamba – tree of light-colored bark; in Vraja, it represents Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

kājala – a preparation of lampblack used to darken the edges of the eyelids; collyrium.

Kali – wife of Lord Śiva.

Kaṁsa – demoniac king of Mathurā and avowed enemy of Kṛṣṇa.

Kaśyapa Ṛṣi – one of the first progenitors of the universe; performed austerities to get the Lord as his son.

Kaustubha – jewel worn by Kṛṣṇa on His chest.

Kṛṣṇa – [pronounced Krishna] literally, 'all attractive one'; the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

- L -

Lakṣmī-devī – the goddess of fortune and eternal consort of Śrī Viṣṇu.

- M -

mālpuā – shallow-fried sweet pancakes made from refined flour and milk.

mādhurya – sweetness, charm.

maharṣi – great sage.

mantra – literally, 'mind delivering'; a spiritual sound vibration that delivers the mind from its material conditioning and illusion when repeated over and over; a Vedic hymn, prayer, or chant.

Mathurā – the city where Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared as the son of Vasudeva and Devakī in the prison of His maternal uncle, Kaṁsa; the realm just outside Vraja, where Kṛṣṇa performs human-like pastimes.

Mathurāvāsīs – residents of the city of Mathurā.

māyā – the material, deluding potency of the Supreme Lord; His external energy.

Milk Ocean – abode of the first Viṣṇu expansion.

Mother Yaśodā – mother of Kṛṣṇa.

muni – sage, saint.

- N -

Nanda Bābā – father of Kṛṣṇa.

Nandagāon – village of Nanda Bābā.

Nārada Ṛṣi – a great sage among the demigods who travels throughout the universe broadcasting the glories of Kṛṣṇa.

Nārāyaṇa – the opulent four-armed Lord of Vaikuṇṭha, the spiritual realm.

nārāyaṇa-tattva – four-armed expansions of Lord Nārāyaṇa.
nitya-līlā-praviṣṭa oṁ viṣnupāda aṣṭottara-śata – that exalted personality who sits at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord and now has entered the Lord's eternal pastimes.

- P -

Padma Purāṇa – a sacred text put into writing approximately five thousand years ago.
Parīkṣit – the king to whom Śukadeva Gosvāmī recited *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.
prema-bhakti – devotion performed with pure love for God.
Prabhu – Lord, master.
praṇāma – obeisance.
prema – pure love of God.
Purāṇas – eighteen historical supplements to the Vedas.

- R -

rabaḍī – milky sweet.
Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī – one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, known for his intense yearning to serve Śrīmatī Rādhikā.
Rāmacandra – an expansion of Kṛṣṇa who appeared in Treta-yuga.
Rāmāyaṇa – the history of Lord Rāmacandra.
rasa – transcendental loving relationships.
rasagullās – large, round Indian sweet, dripping with a syrupy sugar mixture.
rāsa-līlā – Kṛṣṇa's immaculate dance with the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana.
Rohiṇī – mother of Baladeva Prabhu.
ṛṣi – saint.
Rukmiṇī – principle queen of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā.
Rūpa Mañjarī – the most dear maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

- S -

sādhaka – spiritual practitioner.

sādhana – spiritual practice performed with the aim of attaining a particular goal.

sādhana-bhakti – the practice of devotional service.

sakhī – female friend.

Satyabhāmā – favorite queen of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā.

sālokya-mukti – the liberation of attaining the same planet as Lord Nārāyaṇa or His expansions.

śikṣā-guru – the spiritual master who imparts divine instructions on *bhakti*.

Śiva – a qualitative expansion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa who supervises the material mode of ignorance and who annihilates the material cosmos.

Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta – the transcendental biography of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, written by Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu – Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, appearing as His own devotee.

śrī guru – a genuine representative of the Supreme Lord.

Śrīdāma – a dear cowherd friend of Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīmatī Rādhikā – the eternal consort of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Sudāma – a dear cowherd friend of Kṛṣṇa.

śuka – parrot.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī – son of Vyāsadeva and speaker of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* to Mahārāja Parikṣit. In Goloka-dhāma, Kṛṣṇa's eternal abode in the spiritual world, he is the parrot of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Supersoul – the Lord who resides in the heart of all living entities.

Śyāmānanda Prabhu – an exalted devotee who lived in Vṛndāvana after the time of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

- T -

tamāla – a tree with bark that, in the rainy season, resembles the color of Kṛṣṇa.

tilaka – sacred clay used to mark the forehead and other parts of the body to indicate that one is a devotee or an aspiring devotee of the Supreme Lord.

- U -

Uddhava – Kṛṣṇa's advisor, minister, and close friend in Mathurā and Dvārakā.

Upānanda – elder brother of Nanda Mahārāja.

Upaniṣads – one hundred eight Sanskrit treatises that embody the philosophy of the Vedas.

- V -

Vaikuṇṭha – the majestic and all-opulent realm of the spiritual world, which is the abode of Lord Nārāyaṇa and His various expansions; all the residents of Vaikuṇṭha have spiritual bodies and possess four arms.

Vaiṣṇava – devotee of the Supreme Lord.

Varṣāṇā – the location of the parental home of Śrīmatī Rādhikā.

Vaśiṣṭha – great sage, *guru* of Lord Rāmacandra.

Vāsudeva Kṛṣṇa – that Kṛṣṇa who appeared as the son of Vasudeva and Devakī.

Vedas – literally, 'knowledge'; the four primary books of knowledge organized and put into writing by Śrīla Vyāsadeva.

Vedic – an era in which the instructions, principles, codes of conduct, and so forth, of the Vedas were implemented in one's everyday life.

Vidura – son of Vyāsadeva and great devotee of Kṛṣṇa.

vipra – priest, *brāhmaṇa*.

Viṣṇu – *viṣ* – pervading; *nu* – person; all-pervasive one; the Supreme Lord.

viṣṇu-tattva – the existential truths about Lord Viṣṇu.

Vraja – name for the spiritual realm where Kṛṣṇa performs human-like pastimes; Vraja encompasses Vṛndāvana, Gokula, Chaṭṭīkarā, Nandagāon, Varṣāṇā, etc.

Vrajavāsīs – residents of Vraja.

Vrajendra-nandana Śyāmasundara Kṛṣṇa – the beautiful, dark complexioned son of Nanda, the king of Vraja.

Vṛndāvana – the topmost pastime place of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Literally, 'the forest of Vṛndā.'

Vyāsadeva or Vyāsa – the great sage who recited the entirety of Vedic literature.

vyāsāsana – an elevated seat (*āsana*) upon which a person such as Vyāsa, who represents the Supreme Lord, sits to deliver discourses on the Absolute.

- Y -

Yadu dynasty – the dynasty in which Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared.

Yamunā – holy river that flows through Vraja.

Yaśodānandana Kṛṣṇa – Kṛṣṇa the son of Yaśodā; refers to Kṛṣṇa in His human-like feature.

yogamāyā – spiritual illusory potency of the Supreme Lord; His internal energy.

yogī – one who practices the *yoga* system with the goal of realizing the Supersoul or merging into the Lord's body.

yuga-dharma – prescribed spiritual practice for the age.

Appendix

CLASS DATES AND AUDIO/VIDEO FILE URLs

https://soundcloud.com/srila-bv-narayan-maharaja/sets/1998-kl

CHAPTER ONE – 3 DECEMBER 1998

AUDIO: 19981203KL Class And Bhajans PM - Advent of the Immaculate Purana

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CHAPTER TWO – 4 DECEMBER 1998

AUDIO: 19981204KL_Pm - The Birth of Sri Krsna in Gokula

MOVIE: 19981204KL_pm

CHAPTER THREE – 5 DECEMBER 1998

AUDIO: 19981205KL CLASS PM HINDI AND ENGLISH - Krsna's Early Childhood Pastimes

MOVIE: 19981205KL CLASS PM HINDI AND ENGLISH

CHAPTER FOUR – 6 DECEMBER 1998

AUDIO: 19981206DAMODAR LILA PM - A Thief of Hearts

MOVIE: 19981206KL CLASS AND BHAJANS TAPE 5C

CHAPTER FIVE – 8 DECEMBER 1998

AUDIO: 19981208 DAMODAR LILA - The Binding of Naughty Krsna

MOVIE: 19981208 DAMODAR LILA

CHAPTER SIX – 9 DECEMBER 1998

AUDIO: 19981209 MORE DAMODAR LILA - Lord Brahma Steals the Cowherd Boys and Calves

MOVIE: 19981209 MORE DAMODAR LILA **and** 19981209_KL Class Tape 8A

CHAPTER SEVEN – 10 DECEMBER 1998

AUDIO: 19981210KL CLASS TAPE 8B P2b - Invaluable Instructions – Three Pastimes

MOVIE: 19981210KL CLASS TAPE 8B P2b

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Beyond Nīrvāṇa
Bhagavad-gītā
Bhajana-rahasya
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Bhakti-rasāyana
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Our Lasting Relationship
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Rāga-vartma-candrikā
Rāya Rāmānanda Saṁvāda
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To Be Controlled by Love
True Conception of Guru-tattva
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