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THE ESSENCE OF SRIMAD BHAGAWATAM

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As he promised in his previous night's class, Srila Narayana Maharaja began his present theme—Bhakti-rasayana. Because Sri Nabadwipa dhama parikrama would be starting in a short time, many devotees had already come from around the world—Brazil, Australia, Russia, and so on. Seeing so many visiting devotees, he said, "I think the foreign devotees are more in number. If the Mathuravasis are not more in number, I will have to speak in English." As it turned out he did not speak in English, but at the end of every few paragraphs he had Pujapada Visnu dasa Adhikari give the translation. The following are notes taken from the translation:

Srila Maharaja explained that after Maharaja Pariksit had completed his hearing of Srimad Bhagawatam from Sri Sukadeva Goswami, and before he was bitten by the snake-bird—just in between that time—he spoke, 'Bhakti-rasayana' to his mother, Uttara. His mangalacarana (auspicious invocation) was:

jayati jana-nivaso devaki-janma-vado
yadu-vara-pariñat svair dorbhir asyann adharmam
sthira-cara-vrjina-ghnah su-smita-sri-mukhena
vraja-pura-vanitanam vardhayan kama-devam
(SB.10.90.48)

Lord Sri Krsna is He who is known as jana-nivaso, the ultimate resort of all living entities, and who is also known as Devakinandana or Yasodā-nandana, the son of Devaki and Yasodā. He is the guide of the Yadu dynasty, and with His mighty arms He kills everything inauspicious, as well as every man who is impious. By His presence He destroys all things inauspicious for all living entities, moving and inert. His blissful smiling face always increases the lusty desires of the gopis of Vrndavana. May He be all glorious and happy!

'Jayati jana-nivaso devaki janma-vado' was also one of the final verses of the entire Srimad Bhagawatam. This verse is the essence of the Bhagawatam. The ordinary meaning is, 'Let there be all victory to Krsna, all victory to Sri Krsna, all victory to Sri Krsna'. That Krsna is the shelter of all living entities, He lives in the hearts of all and, although He is the shelter of all living entities, He appeared from the womb of Srimati Devaki'.

This is a fact from an ordinary point of view, but the real fact is something else. The general meaning is that His family members were the Yadavas. With their help, and with the help of the Pandavas, He killed many demons and eradicated the miseries of the living entities by His smiling face, which gives pleasure to all.

In his tika, commentary to this verse, Srila Sanatana Goswami explains that although the general meaning of 'jana' is all living entities, and Bhagavan Sri Krsna relieved their miseries, there is a deeper meaning. 'Jana' means those who are residents of Brajabhumi—like Yasodamayi, Nanda Baba, cowherd boys such as Sridama and Subala, and especially the gopis. This verse is especially glorifying them. There is much evidence to this fact. At different times the wives of the Yadavas, as well as the queens of Dwaraka, sang the glories of the gopis. Sri Uddhava glorified them. One famous verse is 'Asamahocarana renu...', and there are many others. The queens glorify that Krsna whose lotus feet are meditated on by Lord Brahma and Lord Siva, although they cannot capture those feet in their trance. Even Laxmi tries by great endeavor to attain those feet—without success. Those very lotus feet are worshiped by the

gopis as the ornaments of their chests, and they also message those feet. Even the trees, creepers and blades of grass in Vrajabhumi have intimate connection with those lotus feet, and are worthy of glorification. The Jamuna and all others in Vrndavan are glorious. The gopis themselves glorify all the Vraja residents. In Venu-gita they say, “When we die, we want to take birth as ordinary blades of grass in Vrndavan.”

Now, all this glorification in Srimad Bhagawatam is appearing as a mangalacarana. After explaining the 10th canto, Sukadeva Goswami gave the essence of all the pastimes. Following in his footsteps, his disciple, Maharaja Pariksit, gives a mangalacaran to the Bhakti-rasayana with this same sloka. So it is very important.

At the end of his 10th canto commentary, Srila Sanatana Goswami addresses Lord Siva as Bhagavan Sankara, because he knows all tattvas and enlivens all living entities. Although he is sometimes called Bhagavan Siva, he is not Visnu. He is a bhagavata-bhakta. As Lord Siva drank the ocean, Srila Sanatana Goswami drank the endless ocean of Krsna’s pastimes and relished all of them in one sip—in the form of this sloka.

So Maharaja Pariksit says, “All glories to Krsna”. In the previous verse he told of Krsna’s pastimes, and the word ‘krsnasya’ is used, but in this sloka Krsna’s name is not directly mentioned. ‘Jana-nivaso’ means ‘Whose associates are the Yadavas, and who with the help of the Pandavas, removed the burden of the earth the miseries of all living entities; and by whose sweet smile, He increased the kama, lusty desires, of the gopis’. Indirectly, this verse is only referring to that Krsna.

Sri Sanatana Goswami explains the purport of the first word. There are many different meanings, and they each are progressively deeper and more advanced. ‘Jana’ means all living entities, both moving and non-moving. One who is the shelter of all living entities is jana-nivaso. Krsna is the nivaso, the basis or foundation of all. He is the pran swarupa, the very life, of the bhajanias, those who do bhajana. Those who are without His shelter fall into maya. The second meaning is, ‘He who resides in the hearts of all’. The third meaning is, ‘He in whom all living entities reside’. All living entities are in one pore of Karanadakasayi Visnu, and Karanadakasayi Visnu is within Lord Balarama, and Balarama is within Krsna. Therefore all exist within Krsna.

Sri Sanatana Goswami further explains a fourth meaning. ‘Jana’ means ‘nija-jana’--His own people, His own swajana, His near and dear associates. Krsna is causelessly merciful to all. Otherwise, no one in the world would be alive. There is no one more near and dear to the living entities than Krsna. He is our well-wisher and our prana-vallabha, more dear than our own life and soul. Swajana means devotees, or those who are near and dear. Therefore, He who is the shelter of all devotees is Jana-nivaso.

There are 5 kinds of devotees: the jnani bhakta, the suddha bhakta, the premi bhakta, the prematura bhakta, and the premapura bhakta. The premapura bhakta is the greatest, but Krsna’s associates in Vrndavan are even greater. Among all the residents of Vrndavan, the gopis are the best; among all the gopis Srimati Radhika and Srimati Candravali are the best. And between them, Srimati Radhika is the greatest of all. This is described in the opening verse of Sri Bhakti Rasamrta Sindhu. There Krsna is addressed as Radhika-priya, He who is the dearest of Srimati Radhika. May all glories be unto Him. One who worships this very Krsna by the gopal-mantra, in an offenceless manner, will have Him manifest in his heart. For others He manifests in a general way. According to the degree of one’s freedom from material desires, and according to one’s level of advancement in devotional service, he will understand this verse, ‘jayati jana-nivaso...’

After this, the next word is explained. That Paramatma, who is Parameswara and agatam gatam patiyasi sakti, (He whose inconceivable energies can make the impossible possible) came in the form of the son of Devaki. What a wonderful thing this is. So many universes are within Lord Visnu, Visnu is within Krsna, and that Krsna who is the source of all the material and spiritual worlds appeared in the womb of Devaki. What a wonderful thing! Krsna is smaller than the smallest. No one can catch the smallest, and yet He appeared in the womb of Devaki. The most well known idea is this—but there is something that is even more true.

In His four-armed form, Krsna explained to His parents about their former lives—how they appeared as Prsnigarbha and Sutapa, and how they perfected their sadhana. However, although they were now perfect, they still could not taste vatsalya-bhava. This could only be tasted in Gokula. After 4-armed Visnu turned into a baby form, Vasudeva Maharaja carried Him across the Jamuna. When He fell in the Jamuna, the original Krsna, who had taken birth from the womb of Yasodamayi appeared there, and Visnu merged in Him. Vasudeva actually brought the original Krsna to Gokula, or in other words, the original Krsna never left Gokula. Vasudeva then took the daughter born to Yasodamayi, and brought her to Mathura. All these pastimes are indicated and explained by the words, ‘devaki janma-vado’. Then, in Gokula, there were also so many pastimes. Krsna gave liberation to Putana, and elevated her to a position like a mother. She became a nurse in Goloka. After this He gave liberation to Putana’s two demoniac brothers, Aghasura and Bakasura. How merciful He is. Then came Damodara-lila, and then the story of the fruitseller. All these pastimes are manifest in the words ‘devaki janma-vado’. As stated in the Damodarastakam, all these pastimes immersed the inhabitants of Gokula in pools of ecstasy. In this way, there are so many pastimes hidden in each word.

Nanda Baba and Yasodamayi were never conditioned souls who had to perform sadhana. They are both eternally liberated associates of Krsna. Drona and Dhara were jivas who performed sadhana to reach the perfection of vatsalya-rasa. When they became perfect, by the mercy of Yogamaya, they entered the bodies of Nanda Baba and Yasodamayi during prakata lila. Then, after that, they went to Goloka Vrndavan and became an elderly gopa and gopi in vatsalya-rasa, and, under the guidance of Yasoda and Nandababa, eternally thought of Krsna like their son.

Tomorrow is Siva Caturdasi. Unbonafide smartas and other groups celebrate this today. But those who are actually followers of Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu will observe the fast tomorrow, March 5. You are not bound to follow in this way, but as for myself, I consider myself a follower of Srila Sanatana Goswami. In his Sri Hari Bhakti-vilas he writes that it should be observed tomorrow. Lord Siva is very dear to Krsna and, by his mercy, many were able to enter the Rasa dance. Because Siva is so dear, Sri Sanatana Goswami liked to live near him in Kamyavana, at Manasi Ganga, and other places.

Some people say that devotees of Krsna should not take darsana of Siva. But we are followers of Sanatana Goswami, and so we take his darsana. He even got the form of a gopi. So he is very dear to Krsna.

vrndavanavani-pate! jaya soma-maule
 sanaka-sanandana-naradedya
 gopisvara! vraja vilasi-yuganghri-padme
 prema prayaccha nirupadhi namo namaste

O gatekeeper of Vrndavana! O Soma, all glories to you! O you whose forehead is decorated with the moon, and who is worshipable for the sages headed by Sanaka, Sanandana and Narada! O Gopisvara! Desiring that you bestow upon me prema for the lotus feet of Sri Sri Radha-Madhava who perform joyous pastimes in Vraja-dhama, I offer pranamas unto you time and again.