

Tridandisvami Sri Srimad Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja
PASTIMES IN THIS MONTH OF KARTIKA

(Part 2 of the lecture entitled, "A Phoned Glorification of Kartika Month")

Mathura, India: Oct. 28, 2002

[In describing the many important pastimes that took place in this holy month of Kartika, which in turn establish the glory of Kartika, Paramaradhya Srila Narayana Maharaja discussed several verses from Srimad-Bhagavatam:]

dhanyah sma mudha-gatayo 'pi harinya eta
ya nanda-nandanam upatta-vicitra-vesam
akarnya venu-ranitam saha-krsna-sarah
pujam dadhur viracitam pranayavalokaih
(S.B. 10.21.11)

In this month, feeling separation from Krsna, the gopis lamented, "We are not fortunate like the deer in this forest. People say they are foolish, but they are not so. We are foolish, because we don't know how to love Krsna like these deer. When prema is very high, it breaks all boundaries. These deer, although by nature very shy, have broken all boundaries by their intense love for Krsna. They gave up their shyness, they approached Him, and they are exchanging their hearts feelings with Him through their loving glances. We cannot do this, and therefore we are unfortunate. We will be lucky if we can die and take birth as deer in our next life. In that way we can see Krsna and approach Him when He is cow-grazing."

In this month the gopis remembered that when Krsna plays on His flute in the forest, the cows become stunned. With eyes of transcendental emotions the gopis see both Krsna and the cows, and further lament in separation. They see that although it is the nature of animals to spend their time in eating, when Krsna plays His flute these cows forget to eat and instead pick up their ears to hear. Humans have very small ears, but cows have large ears – like cups. Through the cups of their ears these cows drink the nectar of Krsna's flute playing, and when they taste it they forget everything else. They have grass in their mouths, but they forget to chew. Even the calves, who were drinking the milk from the utter of their mothers, are like this. The milk is coming into their mouths, but they have forgotten to swallow. They simply stand with tears gliding down from their eyes, and they embrace Krsna in the core of their hearts.

The love of the cows is not as high as that of the gopis, but due to the nature of their own prema, the gopis think the cows are greater. Those who are maha-bhagavatas, and what to say of maha-maha-bhagavatas like the gopis, see their own love and their own mood in all others. Yet, they think, "I am unfortunate; I have no love."

In this month, Sri Radhika lamented in separation:

purnah pulindya urugaya-padabja-raga
sri-kunkumena dayita-stana-manditena

tad-darsana-smara-rujas trna-rusitena
limpantya anana-kucesu jahus tad-adhim
(Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.21.16)

["The aborigine women of the Vrndavana area become disturbed by lust when they see the grass marked with reddish kunkuma powder. Endowed with the color of Krsna's lotus feet, this powder originally decorated the breasts of His beloveds, and when the aborigine women smear it on their faces and breasts, they feel fully satisfied and give up all their anxiety."]

This is an example of Radhika's madanakhya-mahabhava (the highest ecstatic love for Krsna). Here She glorifies the aborigine girls who live in the forest, and She says that they are lucky whereas She is not. In the morning time, when they walk around Giriraja Govardhana, they see some red kunkuma powder on the grass and go to pick it up. This kunkuma came from the lotus feet of Krsnacandra when He was returning home in the early morning on the damp grass, and it originally came from the breasts of His beloved. The Pulindi girls think themselves very fortunate to obtain this kunkuma. Simply by their smelling the fragrance, Krsna appears in their hearts, and then they smear that kunkuma paste all over their bodies and faces and thus meet with Krsna in their hearts. There He fulfills all their desires.

Radhika is thinking that these Pulindi girls are fortunate, but more fortunate is the grass because it was directly touched by Krsna's feet; and more fortunate is that beloved gopi from whose breasts this kunkuma has come. That gopi is Radhika Herself, but because of Her madanakhya-mahabhava she forgets this and instead glorifies others.

Govardhana-puja also took place in this month. All the Vrajavasis worshiped Giriraja Govardhana and performed Annakuta Mahotsava. Seeing this, Indra became very angry, created torrential rain, and Krsna cut his pride. In this month, Indra came and worshiped Krsna after his pride was cut, all the demigods performed kirtana, and Krsna received the name Govinda.

Saradiya rasa-lila was also performed in this month. As stated in Srimad Bhagavatam:

sri-badarayanir uvaca
bhagavan api ta ratrih
saradotphulla-mallikah
viksya rantum manas cakre
yoga-mayam upasritah

["Sri Badarayani said: Sri Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, full in all opulences, yet upon seeing those autumn nights scented with blossoming jasmine flowers, He turned His mind toward loving affairs. To fulfill His purposes He employed His internal potency." (Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.29.1)]

Although, Krsna is Bhagavan, although He is atmarama (taking pleasure within) and aptakam (fully satisfied), in this month He became inspired by the beauty of the Vrndavana forest. There, in the middle of the night, He left his home and took shelter of Yogamaya:

drstva kumudvantam akhanda- mandalam
ramananabham nava-kunkumarunam
vanam ca tat-komala- gobhi ranjitam
jagau kalam vama-drsam manoharam

["Lord Krsna saw the unbroken disk of the full moon glowing with the red effulgence of newly applied vermilion, as if it were the face of the goddess of fortune. He also saw the kumuda lotuses opening in response to the moon's presence and the forest gently illumined by its rays. Thus the Lord began to play sweetly on His flute, attracting the minds of the beautiful-eyed gopis."(Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.29.3)]

He began to play on His flute, and the flute sound entered the hearts of the Vraja gopis. They became mugdha, completely bewildered and, forgetting everything else, they ran into the forest to meet with Him.

In this month, the gopis who were locked inside their homes were brought to Krsna by a very strong viraha-tap, fire of separation from Krsna. By this viraha-tap, any imperfection in the moods of those who did not yet have sufficient association with the nitya-siddha gopis was completely burned away. By deeply meditating in intense separation they at once met with Krsna in their hearts and embraced Him. These sweet pastimes took place in this month.

In this month the gopis saw the footprints of Radhika and said,

anayaradhito nunam
bhagavan harir isvarah
yan no vihaya govindah
prito yam anayad rahah

["Certainly this particular gopi has perfectly worshiped the all-powerful Personality of Godhead, Govinda, since He was so pleased with Her that He abandoned the rest of us and brought Her to a secluded place."(Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.30.28)]

"This gopi, whom Krsna has taken alone into the forest, leaving all the rest of us, is most fortunate." In this way, all the Vraja gopis give honor to Srimati Radhika in this month. When Krsna disappeared from rasa-lila, the gopis cried and sang in separation the verses from Gopi-gita. One example is as follows:

tava kathamrtam tapta-jivanam
kavibhir iditam kalmasapaham
sravana-mangalam srimad atatam

bhuvi grnanti ye bhuri-da janah

["The nectar of Your words and the descriptions of Your activities are the life and soul of those suffering in this material world. These narrations, transmitted by learned sages, eradicate one's sinful reactions and bestow good fortune upon whoever hears them. These narrations are broadcast all over the world and are filled with spiritual power. Certainly those who spread the message of Godhead are most munificent."(Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.31.9).]

This verse is so sweet and powerful that when Sri Caitanya Mahaprabhu heard it from the lotus mouth of Maharaja Prataparudra, He told him, "You have given me so many valuable jewels. I have nothing to give you in return; I have only have my self, so I am embracing you." When Mahaprabhu embraced Prataparudra Maharaja, the bhavas and sweet meanings of the verses of Gopi-gita manifested in his heart.

In this month Krsna told the gopis of Vrndavana,

na paraye 'ham niravadya-samyujam
sva-sadhu-krtyam vibudhayusapi vah
ya mabhajan durjara-geha-srnkhalah
samvrscya tad vah pratiyatu sadhuna

["I am not able to repay My debt for your spotless service, even within a lifetime of Brahma. Your connection with Me is beyond reproach. You have worshiped Me, cutting off all domestic ties, which are difficult to break. Therefore please let your own glorious deeds be your compensation."]

Krsna said, "O My dear gopis, you have left all other obligations, including your families, and all other dharmas for me. This is very difficult to give up, but you have left all this for my happiness only. Therefore, even if I have a lifetime as long as Brahma, and even if I will serve you for many such lifetimes, still I would not be able to repay you. I would always be indebted to you for the love you have given me."

After describing these pastimes of Rasa-lila and Gopi-gita, Srila Sukadeva Gosvami-pada stated:

vikriditam vraja-vadhubhir idam ca visnoh
sraddhanvito 'nusrnuyad atha varnayed yah
bhaktim param bhagavati pratilabhya kamam
hrd-rogam asv apahinoty acirena dhirah

["Anyone who faithfully hears or describes the Lord's playful affairs with the young gopis of Vrndavana will attain the Lord's pure devotional service. Thus he will quickly become sober and conquer lust, the disease of the heart."(Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.33.39)]

Bhagavan Sri Krsna is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He is transcendental and His katha (descriptions of His glories and pastimes) is very powerful. Of all types of such katha, the katha of His servants is more powerful, the katha of his friends is more powerful, the katha of his parents in vatsalya-bhava is still more powerful, and the katha of His sporting with the young brides of Vraja is the highest and most powerful katha. It is so powerful that if even a fallen or sinful person hears it with faith, it can purify him. If one understands this and hears this katha, gopi-prema must enter into that person's heart, kick away all anarthas, and turn him into a parama-bhagavata, topmost devotee.

In this month, Krsna killed the demon Sankasura and cut the jewel from his forehead. He then entered the company of all the gopis, who were all wondering to whom He would give that jewel. Krsna was thinking, "If I give the jewel to one, the others will be upset." Therefore, to avoid an argument among the gopis, Krsna gave the jewel to Baladeva Prabhu, who gave it to Madhumangala, who gave it to Srimati Radhika.

In this month Krsna killed Aristasura, and as a result of that killing Radha Kunda and Syama Kunda were manifest. That pastime took place today, (Oct 28) and this holy day is called Bahulastami.

In this month, Krsna killed the demons Kesi and Vyomasura, and in this month Akrura came to Vraja and took Krsna and Balarama to Mathura. Krsna also killed Kamsa in this month.

In this month Krsna and Balarama performed the upanaya sanskara (sacred thread ceremony). Because they had been brought up in Vraja, they have the mood that, "I am a cowherd boy and Mother Yasoda and Nanda Baba are My parents." However, Vasudeva and Devaki think, "We are the real parents of Krsna. It is part of the Vedic tradition that parents arrange for the upanaya sanskara, of their child, so if we arrange this function for Krsna, the impression will come in his heart that, "Vasudeva and Devaki are My parents." They tried to do this, but they failed. Krsna had already received the Radha mantra from Bhaguri Rsi. He received this mantra when He was in Vraja, but at that time He had no upanaya sanskara. His upanaya sanskara was performed in Mathura according to the duties of ksatriyas.

Gargacarya gave Krsna the brahma-gayatri mantra, and when Krsna heard this mantra He fainted. Why? Radhika is the predominating deity of gayatri. Then, after His fire yajna, Krsna was looking for his mother and called out, "O Mother, where are you?" Devaki was standing near Him, but Krsna did not approach her; He was looking for Mother Yasoda. In this way, although the Mathuravasis made the plan to give Krsna the sanskana that He is the son of Vasudeva and Devaki, it failed. This pastime took place in this month.

Sri Narada Rsi received the benediction from Krsna that those who will hear His sweet lila-katha in the places of His pastimes, especially during this Kartika month, will surely attain krsna-prema very soon. We should therefore have confidence; we need never become hopeless. We should know that by performing all these simple activities –

offering a ghee lamp every day, attending mangal-arati, performing kirtana, singing Sri Damodarastakam, doing parikrama, offering maha-prasada, observing Annukuta Mahotsava, hearing hari-katha in all the lila-sthalis (pastime places), there is no doubt about success. It is only a question of time, and that time will not be very long. We will attain Krsna-prema and thus serve Radha-Krsna Yugala.

Translator: Sripad Aranya Maharaja

Transcriber: Acyuta-priya dasi

Editor: Syamarani dasi

Typist: Anita dasi