

BALADEVA-TATTVA
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Srila Gurudeva ordered me to speak a few words on Sri Baladeva-Tattva. So taking the dust from his lotus feet on my head, I will try to delineate how Sri Baladeva Prabhu has been glorified by our Guru-vargas. Srila Krsnadasa Kaviraja Gosvampada wrote:

radha-krsna aiche sada eka-i svarupa
lila-rasa asvadite dhare dui-rupa
(CC Adi 4.98)

By svarupa Radha and Krsna are one, yet to relish the taste, the mellows, of pastimes, They have assumed two forms. Similarly, as Radha and Krsna are non-different from each other, Sri Baladeva Prabhu is non-different from Krsna. Krsna Himself has become Baladeva Prabhu to relish so many ecstatic loving moods. “Kesava! Dhrtā-haladhara-rupa! Jaya jagadisa! Hare.” Kesava—Krsna Himself, Sri Brajendra-nandana Syamasundara, Gopinatha, Radha-Ramana, Radha-Kanta—has become Sri Baladeva Prabhu.

In Vrndavana Sri Krsna’s original form is called svayam-rupa, and it has its svayam-prakasa manifestations. These svayam-prakasa manifestations are of two types: prabhava prakasa and vaibhava prakasa. When Krsna is performing rasa-lila, standing next to Srimati Radhika, He is svayam-rupa. And the Krsna who dances with so many other gopis is svayam-prakasa. When Krsna manifests Himself in so many forms which are all identical to Him in mood and in appearance, that is called the prabhava prakasa aspect of svayam prakasa. But when Krsna manifests His own form with a slight variation in complexion or in mood, that manifestation is called vaibhava-prakasa aspect of svayam prakasa. This is the identity of Sri Baladeva Prabhu. The vaibhava-prakasa of Krsna is not different from Krsna, but has some speciality in complexion and mood. What is the speciality in complexion? Krsna is syama color and Baladeva Prabhu has a fair complexion. Sri Krsna has sevya abhimana—He is visaya vighraha—and Baladeva Prabhu has sevaka abhimana in relation to Sri Krsna. He wants to serve Krsna in all ways.

When we examine the mood of Baladeva Prabhu, we see that He has sankula rati. There are many different types of rati, or stayi-bhava. They are sri-krsna-visayini-rati—Krsna is the object of that rati: santa-rati, dasya-rati, sakhya-rati, vatsalya-rati and madhurya-rati. This rati has many types, such as mukhya-rati, gauna-rati, parārtha-rati, svartha-rati. One kind is called sankula-rati. Sankula-rati is congested rati, meaning that more than one type of mukhya-rati is manifested at the same time. So the stayibhava of Sri Baladeva Prabhu is sankula-rati, because in His heart His prominent mood toward Krsna has a

combination of dasya, sakhya and also vatsalya mood because He is the older brother of Krsna.

So Baladeva Prabhu has manifested in many ways in order to serve Krsna. In Braja He is Rohini-nandana Baladeva, but in Mathura and Dvaraka He is Sankarsana, that is, Vasudeva-nandana or Devaki-nandana Baladeva. There He is called Mula Sankarsana, and from this Mula Sankarsana comes Maha Sankarsana, and from Maha Sankarsana comes Maha Visnu, and from Maha Visnu comes Sesha. So in all of these ways Baladeva is serving. He is so eager to serve that He will serve in santa-rasa in the form of the dhama and the paraphernalia of all of Sesayi-tattva in the various realms of Braja, Mathura, Dvaraka and Vaikuntha. He is serving in dasya-rasa, sakhya-rasa and vatsalya-rasa, and even in madhurya-rasa He serves as Ananga Manjari. Baladeva Prabhu is so eager to serve Krsna in all ways that He even becomes His paraphernalia and ornaments. In the form of the earrings on Krsna's ears He is always affectionately kissing the cheeks of Krsna. There is no end to Baladeva Prabhu's desire to render service to Krsna.

Baladeva Prabhu has performed many pastimes, but one pastime is extremely difficult to understand. What is that? When Krsna left Vrndavana and was staying in Dvaraka, Baladeva Prabhu came from Dvaraka to Braja-mandala on a mission to pacify the separation feelings of the residents of Vrndavana. At that time Baladeva Prabhu went to Rama Ghata where He performed rasa-lila. Srila Gurudeva has asked me to tell why He did this. I will attempt to explain what I have heard from the lotus mouth of Srila Gurudeva. In addition Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura has written a very extensive commentary on this subject in his tika on Sri Caitanya Bhagavat.

In Gita Govinda Jayadeva Gosvamipada has glorified Baladeva Prabhu:

vahasi vapusi visade vasanam jaladabham
hala-hati-bhiti-milita-yamunabham
kesava! dhrta-haladhara-rupa! jaya jagadisa! hare

When Baladeva Prabhu performed rasa-lila in Braja, He took His plough and summoned Yamuna, but she would not come. Baladeva Prabhu became angry and, taking His plough, began to drag Yamuna. You can see a big curve in the flow of Kalindi at that place called Rama Ghata. Srila Gurudeva, in his tika on Gita Govinda, has explained that in this pastime Baladeva Prabhu is in the mood of dhira-lalita-nayaka. Why? Dhira-lalita-nayaka has some qualities:

vidagdho nava-tarunyah
parihasa-visaradah
niscinto dhira-lalithah
syat prayah preyasi-vasah
(Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu 2.1.230)

Especially syat prayah preyasi-vasah—He is controlled by the love of His beloveds. In the incarnation of Lord Ramacandra He has tolerated great separation and many problems for Himself and His beloved Sita, because He is in the mood of dhirodatta-nayaka. But here Baladeva Prabhu is in the mood of dhira-lalita-nayaka. He is controlled by the mood of His beloveds; therefore He cannot tolerate even the slightest fatigue that they feel. In glorifying Baladeva Prabhu, Jayadeva Gosvami has expressed that Baladeva Prabhu wants to bring the whole Yamuna so that they will be refreshed and their fatigue will go away, because He cannot tolerate even the appearance of perspiration on the brow of His beloveds.

So why has Baladeva Prabhu performed this rasa-lila? Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura has explained the identity of the gopis with whom Baladeva Prabhu was dancing. This is a point of great controversy. I will try to explain the vicaras, the deliberations on the subject, one after another, and in the end present the visesa vicara, the special conclusion, of Srila Gurudeva. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura mentioned that at the time of Sankacudabadha, holi lila was going on at Govardhana. During that pastime some gopis were standing very far away and were looking at Baladeva Prabhu. Krsna Himself glanced at Baladeva Prabhu to indicate to Him that those gopis had some special attachment for Baladeva. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura commented that Baladeva Prabhu performed rasa-lila with those gopis who were looking at Him. Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura has given another explanation. When Krsna left Vrndavana for Mathura, there were many gopis in Braja who were not old enough to meet with Krsna in rasa-lila. Later, when Baladeva Prabhu returned to Vrndavana, He did rasa-lila with them, fulfilling their desire now that they were old enough to take part in such a lila.

These explanations have been give for loka-sangraha, for the general people who are in ignorance of rasa-tattva. They cannot understand what is rasa-lila and how Baladeva Prabhu can also perform rasa-lila with Krsna's gopis. Why does Baladeva Prabhu perform rasa-lila with Krsna's gopis? This is His service. Ordinarily in this world when the prakrt nayaka and nayika—the mundane hero and heroine—meet together, they do so for their own happiness and their own pleasure. But who is Baladeva Prabhu? He is Krsna Himself. He is abhinna-prakasa, non-different from Krsna, but with sevaka abhimana. He is composed entirely of sevaka abhimana, the identification that He is Krsna's servant. Therefore everything that He does is for the service of Krsna. So if Baladeva Prabhu has performed rasa-lila with Krsna's gopis, the idea should never enter into the mind that Baladeva Prabhu has any bhoga-vrtti, any enjoying tendency. He has done this for the sake of Krsna's service in order to pacify the gopis' separation.

There is another visesa vicara, special deliberation. In this world if male and female will meet together and enjoy lusty activities, which are actually the cause of unlimited suffering, then this will be a great sin and they will have to go to hell. But we see that in the heavenly planets, the residents of Svarga—male and female—freely meet together to enjoy amorous pastimes, but they do not incur any sin. Why not? Because they do not have a gross body. Those who have a gross body will become entangled in sin by engaging in amorous affairs with many partners. But in Svarga-loka there is no restriction because the people have a different constitution. So in Svarga there is no sin in this. Then what to speak of the higher planets—Maha-loka, Jana-loka, Tapa-loka and Satya-loka. And what to speak of beyond that—Ayodhya, Dvaraka, Mathura. And what to speak of Vraja! There cannot be any inebriety, any impurity, in Baladeva Prabhu’s meeting with Krsna’s gopis.

Furthermore, Srila Jiva Gosvami has given a very special deliberation on this subject. He explained that there are three types of prema: viveka-sunya prema, visrambha prema and utkantha-mayi prema. Viveka-sunya prema means that love which is devoid of discrimination. This is seen in the trees and the cows of Vrndavana. When Krsna left to go to Mathura and Dvaraka, the cows and trees have no conception how long He had been gone. They do not know what day of the week it is, or whether Krsna has been gone for one month, two months, three months, five years. They cannot discriminate. Furthermore, even when Krsna was in Vrndavana, the trees did not see Him every day. One day He would go to Talavan, another day to Kamyavan, then to Vrndavana or Bandhirvana. They would only see Krsna from time to time. Those who have no discrimination cannot understand where Krsna is going or when they will see Him again. So they may feel some separation but not so high.

The next type is called visrambha prema. This is found in the hearts of those who have sakhya rasa. The sakhya feel great separation from Krsna, and in that separation they even have sphurti, vipralambha visphurti, and they see Krsna. Yet those in sakhya rasa will be satisfied by this sphurti and will think, “Oh, Krsna is here today. I have gone cow-grazing with Him.” And they become so much satisfied with this sphurti. In Sri Gopala Campu Srila Jiva Gosvamipada explained that Krsna sent a message from Dvaraka to the residents of Vrndavana saying, “I am going to Kuruksetra. Those of you who are not satisfied with My sphurti should come and meet Me there. The others should stay behind.” So the husbands of the gopis stayed behind and took care of Vraja along with the cowherd boys who had sraddha in Krsna’s sphurti-maya milana, that is, confidence in meeting with Krsna in a vision.

The cowherd boys can be consoled somewhat, but those who have utkanthamayi prema—those situated in vatsalya-rasa and especially madhurya-rasa—are full of eagerness. They cannot be pacified by anything at all. So when Baladeva Prabhu came to Vrndavana, He did rasa-lila with Krsna's gopis in order to pacify their separation. What is this rasa-lila? It is not anything bad or immoral. Rasa-lila includes singing, dancing, playing musical instruments, van vihara (wandering in the forest), jala krida (playing in the water), hindola-lila (swing pastimes), and other such activities. These are the pastimes that Baladeva Prabhu performed with Krsna's gopis, thus trying to pacify their separation. For a moment their separation was pacified, but then immediately afterwards their separation increased more and more. The flames of separation went higher than ever before, and all gopis were weeping in separation: ha natha ramana prestha kvasi kvasi maha-bhuja. "O Krsna, where are You?"

When Baladeva saw that He was completely unable to appease the gopis' sorrow, He Himself became overwhelmed in separation. He began to weep bitter tears and called out, "O Krsna! O Krsna! Why did You leave Vrndavana?" When Baladeva Prabhu was completely absorbed in separation from Krsna, His complexion turned blackish. This is why here in Vraja Mandala there are famous deities of Baladeva Prabhu—in Dauji, Mahavan, Madhuvan—that are black—to remind us of this very pastime.

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura had explained that Baladeva manifested millions of forms upon seeing the very high separation of the gopis. In each form He took one gopi to a kunj, and then He cried out for Krsna, "O Krsna, please come to Vrndavana." Then immediately, Krsna manifested millions of forms and took the hand of each gopi and entered each kunj where He fulfilled their hearts' desires to serve Him.

In this way we see that when the gopis' separation was so high, Baladeva Prabhu called Krsna, who appeared there at once. Therefore this is an example of how Baladeva Prabhu is akhanda guru-tattva. Why? Because when the disciple is doing sadhana-bhajana and serving His Gurudeva for a long time, his heart becomes purified and sambandha-jnana is awakening. Then he becomes full of eagerness and in a desperate mood of separation he prays:

vaisnavera avedane krsna doyamoya
e heno pamara prati ha'bena sadoya

Seeing the intense desire of his disciple, Sri Gurudeva prays to Radha and Krsna. Then he invites the very sweet sri vigraha of Radha-Krsna Yugala to

manifest in the heart of the disciple. Yasya prasada bhagavat-prasado yasyaprasadan na gatih kuto'pi. There is no other method for success in spiritual life.

In this way we offer our sraddha puspanjali at the lotus feet of Sri Baladeva Prabhu and pray to Him to sprinkle His mercy. Without the strength coming from Sri Baladeva Prabhu in the form of His manifestation, Sri Gurudeva, one can never become strong enough to get free from the clutches of maya and become fully determined in the service of the lotus feet of Sri Radha and Krsna. Hena nitai vine bhai, radha-krsna paite nai.

Gaura premanande!

After Sripad Aranya Maharaja spoke, Srila Gurudeva expressed his appreciation of how well these subtle tattvas were so clearly explained. Srila Gurudeva said that he wanted this told everywhere so that all the devotees could know these tattvas.

