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WAS SRI KRSNA CHEATING?

[A class on Srila Sanatana Gosvami's Brhat-bhagavatamrta]
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Devaki has great mamata (sense of "mine-ness) towards Lord Krsna, but she also has her own self-interest in mind. She thought to herself, "It doesn't matter that the gopas, gopis and cows will die in Vrndavana if Krsna does not go there. We can give anything to the Vrajavasis, but we cannot give Krsna."

After hearing the promise of Devaki to give the Vrajavasis a donation, Padmavati, the mother of Kamsa, became afraid. She thought, "Now there will be a big problem. Devaki may give the whole kingdom to Nanda and Yasoda." Therefore, in a clever way, she began to give many arguments.

Padmavati asked, "Why are you talking so much about what to give to the Vrajavasis? It is a very simple matter. Krsna was only 10 years and 8 months old when He left Vrndavana, so there is nothing to be confused about. We just have to make an account of how much He ate and how much buttermilk He drank in those years. Subtract four years because for the first four years of His life He only drank breastmilk from the breast of Yasoda, and there is no cost for that. We will calculate how much they owe Krsna for His cow-grazing, how much food He ate and how much chach (buttermilk) He drank, and whatever we owe we will give them double that amount. So there is nothing to be confused about. We can ask Gargamuni because He is an expert astrologer. His calculation will not be off by even one paisa.

"There are great quantities of buttermilk in Vrndavana – because no one drinks it. After taking the butter out of the milk, what is left is chach. It is so useless that the Vrajavasis throw it down the drain and it goes into one big buttermilk pond in Nandagaon; the price for it is nothing. So take away three or four years of only drinking breastmilk, and that means about eight years of drinking buttermilk which costs nothing."

Some people say that Krsna is in the stage of kaisora (teenage years – youth) up to 10 years and 8 months, and some people say that His kaisora-lila goes up to 15 years. Srila Sanatana Gosvami has reconciled this. Krsna has three ages – balya, pauganda and kaisora, and the junction between the three ages is called vayasandi. Each of these three ages also has three stages. When Akrura came to Vrndavana he saw Krsna as kaisora, and when Krsna went to Mathura to fight with Carana and Mustika, the Mathura-ramanis saw Him as the personification of Kamadeva which is His kaisora age.

One specialty of Lord Krsna, and also of Bhagavan Lord Ramacandra, is that when they appear in this world they never look beyond the age of kaisora. When Krsna was in Kuruksetra, for example, He was 125 years old, but He did not have a mustache or beard, and this is one specialty of bhagavata-tattva.

The Srimad-Bhagavatam describes that Krsna's kaisora-lila is performed up to his eleventh year. We can reconcile this by thinking that when He was in Vrndavana and eating a lot of butter He appeared like a 15 year-old. Also, He was the son of Nanda Baba who was a king, so also because of that He appeared as a 15 year-old – older than He actually was.

When Krsna came to Mathura He offered pranama to Mother Devaki, and at that time He told her, "O Mother Devaki, We are your sons." As soon as she heard this, aisvaryabhava manifested in her heart and she became fearful. Krsna continued, "Unfortunately, after our birth we were taken to Vrndavana, and therefore you could not see our pastimes in our balya, pauganda, and kaisora; ages. You were cheated because you could not see My pastimes." Immense opulence is displayed in Mathura. Jarasandha came seventeen times to fight with Krsna. Sometimes Krsna manifests His four armed form and carries His wheel, club, lotus and conch shell there.

The symptoms of His kaisora age are described in Sri Ujjvala-nilamani, but this is such a confidential subject that it is very rare to find someone who can and will explain it and someone who can understand it.

When Rohini devi and the Dvarkavasis heard the comments of Padmavati – that they should work out how much they owe Nanda Baba and pay him, they simply ignored her, thinking her ignorant.

Lord Krsna had a desire to go to Vrndavana, but at the same time He considered, "If I go to Vrndavana, what will happen to Vasudeva, Devaki and all the other Dvarkavasis if they know I want to leave? They will die if they know I want to leave." Uddhava previously went to Vrndavana for three months, and he somewhat knows the heart of Sri Krsna and the Vrajavasis. Krsna therefore cleverly asked him in front of all the others present, "You know what the Vrajavasis want. You know what I can do for them and what I can give them." Krsna considered. "If I myself say that I want to go to Vrndavana, everyone would blame Me, but if Uddhava says I should go there, then nobody will blame Me. They will all blame Uddhava." He therefore very cleverly asked Uddhava this question, and He also began to cry.

Hearing Krsna's words Uddhava became astonished and said, "What is this? I went to Vrndavana and promised all the Vrajavasis that I would bring Krsna back by hook or by crook. He is Bhagavan and He is sarvajna (all-knowing), so why is He asking me what the Vrajavasis want? They do not want any type of opulence

or payment, and they are not interested in anything material or spiritual in the three worlds. They only want that "my Krsna", "my son", "my beloved" should put His lotus feet here in Vrndavana."

Uddhava became disturbed thinking, "Krsna is very crooked, and clever. He knows everything but still he is asking me if He should go to Vrndavana .This means that He does not really want to go there. He is simply cheating everyone by asking me."

In whatever position Krsna is situated, whether He is in Vrndavana, Mathura, Dvaraka or anywhere else, He is always sarvajna – He knows everything. In Mathura He is fully situated with His aisvarya-sakti and He manifests His mood of knowing everything. In Vrndavana, however, He is simultaneously mugdha, like an ignorant child and not knowing anything, and He is sarvajna meaning He knows everything. Both exist at one and the same time. For example, when Krsna is performing rasa-lila with the gopis and playing on His flute, Draupadi is in Hastinapura calling out to Him, "Dusasana is trying to disrobe me. Oh Krsna, save me, save me!" Does Krsna know this? Yes, He knows even in His situation of being in rasa, because it was He who put Draupadi in Her situation of attempted derobement.

Thinking in this way, Uddhava considered, "Krsna is very cruel-hearted. He is a cheater. His behavior is very poor, otherwise why would He ask me that question?"

When Akrura went to Vrndavana his heart did not melt, When Uddhava went there, however, his heart melted somewhat and he somewhat understood the moods of the Vrajavasis. By the mercy of the gopis he offered many prayers to their lotus feet, and by their mercy realization came in his heart.

All the Vrajavasis have no self-interest, and of all the Vrajavasis the gopis are the topmost. They are the unique examples of the complete definition of pure bhakti as stated in Bhakti-rasamrta-sindhu (1.1.11):

anyabhilasita-sunyam
jnana-karmady-anavrtam
anukulyena krsnanu-
silanam bhaktir uttama

["The cultivation of activities which are meant exclusively for the pleasure of Sri Krsna, or in other words the uninterrupted flow of service to Sri Krsna, performed through all endeavors of the body, mind and speech, and through the expressions of various spiritual sentiments (bhavas), which is not covered by jnana (knowledge aimed at impersonal liberation) and karma (reward-seeking activity), and which is devoid of all desires than the aspiration to bring happiness to Sri Krsna, is called uttama-bhakti, pure devotional service."]

The Vrajavasis perform continuous service to Lord Krsna. They are not interested in any type of material opulence from Svarga (heaven) or from anywhere else. This is the difference between the Vrajavasis and the Dvarakavasis. For example, in the previous class we heard how Satyabhama wanted the parijata flower from heaven. So even the Dvarakavasis have some type of desire and want something from Svarga (the heavenly planets). On the other hand the Vrajavasis are not interested in anything material or spiritual. They are only interested in seeing the lotus feet of Krsna again and serving Him.

In the mood of the most exalted gopi, Srimati Radhika, prays,

aslisya va pada-ratam pinastu mam
adarsanan marma-hatam karotu va
yatha tatha va vidadhatu lampato
mat-prana-nathas tu sa eva naparah

["Let Krsna tightly embrace this maidservant who has fallen at His lotus feet, or let Him trample Me or break My heart by never being visible to Me. He is a debauchee, after all, and can do whatever He likes, but He is still no one other than the worshipable Lord of My heart." (Sri Siksastakam Verse, 8)]

The gopis' goal is Sri Krsna's happiness. They think "If Krsna is happy in Mathura and Dvaraka, we do not want to force Him to return to Vrndavana. Let Him happily stay there."

Srimati Radharani prayed, "I don't want My own happiness. Krsna can do anything He likes. He can make Me happy by embracing Me or He can crush My heart underneath His feet. Even though He is a debauchee and full of bad qualities, He is my only beloved."

When Uddhava was in Vrndavana and heard the prayers of the gopis and the Vrajavasis, he considered, "Maybe the gopis want to give a return message to Krsna." So he asked them three times, "Is there anything you want to say to Krsna?" Srimati Radhika said, "There is no need to give Him any message. In fact, you should not mention that we are suffering in separation from Him in any way. Tell Him that we are very happily residing here in Vrndavana. His heart is very soft, more so than butter. If He hears that we are suffering in His separation, then perhaps He will also experience great suffering – and He may die."

Uddhava now replied to Krsna, "I can give you advice, but I do not know if my advice is good or bad. You can decide for Yourself."

After Krsna killed Kamsa and Carana and Mustika and their friends, Nanda Baba was waiting on his bullock cart just outside Mathura. He waited throughout the night, but Krsna didn't return. The next day Krsna and Balarama somehow

managed to meet with him. Krsna was thinking, "What should I do? Should I stay in Mathura or should I return to Vrndavana with Nanda Baba? He said, "O Nanda Baba. Vasudeva and Devaki are your friends. They have lost six sons. Devaki has no sons and no one to comfort her. What should we do?"

Baladeva is the son of Vasudeva, so Nanda Baba suggested, "Balarama can stay in Mathura for a few days."

Balarama said, "That is not possible. I cannot be separated from Krsna."

They finally agreed that Krsna and Balarama would stay in Mathura for a few days, and then they would both return to Vrndavana.

Krsna had become prince and Devaki had given Him many ornaments such as necklaces and armbands. As a token of His affection Krsna gave all this jewelry to Nanda Baba, and Nanda Baba went back to Vrndavana empty-handed – except for the jewelry.

Nanda Baba promised Mother Yasoda and all the Vrajavasis, "Don't fear. I promise to bring Krsna and Balarama back to Vrndavana." When Nanda Baba came back, however, all he had was one pile of jewelry. All the Vrajavasis became griefstricken and began to accuse Nanda Baba. They said, "What have you done? Have you sold Krsna and Balarama for this jewelry? Nanda Baba was also overwhelmed with grief. He said, "No, my son Krsna is satyavaka – whatever He says must come true. This jewelry is simply His token of affection for you. When He returns to Vrndavana, as He said He would, and sees that you are not wearing these decorations and ornaments, He will be very unhappy. Therefore, in order to fulfill His desire, please wear these ornaments."

If one is a saranagata-bhakta, fully surrendered, Krsna hears his prayers.

sad-anga saranagati hoibe jahara
tahara prarthana sune sri nanda-kumara

["The prayers of one who submits unconditionally to this sixfold surrender are heard by Sri Nanda-kumara." (Sad-Anga Saranagati verse 5)]

If Lord Krsna is totally absorbed in Vrndavana in rasa-lila, day and night serving Srimati Radhika, and if someone like Draupadi, Gajendra or any saranagata bhakta prays to him from the core of his heart, who will hear him? After all, Krsna is totally absorbed there in Vrndavana. Someone may say that the manifestation of Krsna known as Paramatma will hear. But that devotee is not praying to Paramatma, Ksirodakasayi Visnu, or Lord Narayana. He is praying to Sri Krsna, to Nanda-Kumara; so Krsna is bound to hear. He is mugdha in Vrndavana, forgetful of everything except His loving relationships there, but at the same time He is sarvajna. Yogamaya serves Him there; she always searches

for any occasion to serve. Although Krsna may not be aware of all the happenings outside His intimate surroundings, she is aware. This is all inconceivable

When Nanda Baba returned alone with the jewels that Krsna had given him, the gopis and all Vrajavasis were thinking, "Fie on us. This is how little Krsna appreciates our love for Him. He is giving us these jewels as a payment – so we are the most unfortunate."

Suppose someone goes to a foreign country and sends money every month to his family – will the family be happy? No, because this is only one type of self-interest on the part of that family member. The gopis were lamenting, "This is how little Krsna values our love. We are the most unfortunate. Fie on us and fie on Nanda Baba."

The only reason the gopis and Vrajavasis did not die was because Krsna had promised that He would return the "day after tomorrow." The priya, lover, is very fortunate because she lives only for the happiness of the priyatam, beloved, and the priyatam is most fortunate because he lives only for the happiness of his priya. Both only live for the happiness of each other. This principle of lover and beloved is described in Sri Caitanya-caritamṛta Cc Madhya-lila ch. 13), a most wonderful and astonishing book.

Srimati Radharani puts a flower in the hand of Lalita and, weeping, told her, "O Lalita, when I die you can give this flower to Krsna. I planted a creeper of malati flowers and I will not be able to nourish it after I die, so you can tell Krsna that I died thinking of Him – and give Him this flower."

When Yasoda devi was waiting for Nanda Baba to return to Vrndavana, she had some hope that Krsna would surely return. When she saw him coming with a bag of jewels, however, her last hope was destroyed. She gave up eating, sleeping and all other bodily activities, and simply wept day and night. This was the condition of Yasoda Maiya, so what to speak of the condition of the gopis.

Uddhava now considered, "What can I do? I cannot go there again, because I promised the gopis that I would return and definitely bring Krsna. Nanda Baba was weeping and crying for three days and his life airs had come up to his throat, but he did not die. Just before someone dies their life airs come up to their mouth. Nanda Baba was thinking, 'If Krsna comes back to Vrndavana and we have all died, He will experience great suffering and pain. So we should live – for Krsna's happiness. My son always tells the truth, so we must have faith in His words. When He says He will return, He will certainly return.' With this hope, therefore, the Vrajavasis are maintaining their lives."

Krsna had sent a message with Uddhava saying, "O Nanda Baba, don't worry. I stay here with the Yadus and all your friends like Vasudeva and Devaki – only because they are related to you. I stay with them to give them some happiness."

When Nanda Baba saw this message he told all the Vrajavasis, "My son is truthful, He will surely return just as He said." Krsna had written, "Nanda Baba, you are the life of My life. I must come to see you again." Nanda Baba used many types of logic to help all the Vrajavasis understand that, "Krsna has a few duties there, like killing Jarasandha and a few other demons, but when He is finished He will return. This jewelry is not a sign of neglect; it is a sign of His prema for us. When He sees us wearing this jewelry He will become very happy because we fulfilled His desire. All the Vrajavasis complained about the words of Nanda Baba. Uddhava considered that the Vrajavasis were very simple but that Krsna was very crooked – because even after hearing this He did not return to Vrndavana.

Uddhava said, "I went to Vrndavana to try to pacify the Vrajavasis but their separation increased – more and more. O Krsna, don't you know that the Vrajavasis have unlimited love towards You? Their love is like an ocean, and still You neglect them. What is this?!" Uddhava remembered that Krsna had sent a message to the gopis which told them to meditate on Him: "Be in samadhi. Just as the earth is everywhere, so I am everywhere and nothing is separate from Me. This universe is made of earth, air, fire, water, ether, mind, intelligence and false ego – which all comes from Me. You, and everything in this world, are nothing but Me, the Supersoul; I am all-pervading. You can therefore meditate, and you can see Me in your meditation." This was all jnana (knowledge of God's opulence). The Vrajavasis put that jnana in a cloth, threw it in the Yamuna, and it flowed down to Varanasi (a place of studying jnana).

Krsna later gave the same message to the gopis at Kuruksetra, and hearing it they became angry. The gopis are always in a natural samadhi. They always think of Krsna in walking, eating and everything they do. They replied to Krsna's words, "Don't tell us to meditate. We don't want to think of You. We try to forget You and to think of our household affairs, but we cannot. Your instructions for us to perform bhakti, to take us out of the material world, is not very instructive to us.

Srimati Radharani continued, "My mind and Vrndavana are one. You tell Me to think of You in My mind, but My mind and Vrndavana are the same. So therefore, if You put Your lotus feet on the land of Vrndavana, this will be true meditation."

Gaura Premanande.

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