

Shandilya Muni Describes Vrajabhumi to Vajranabh.

Shri Vyasadeva said: In order to relish the mellows of devotional service, we continually offer our obeisances unto Lord Shri Krishna, whose eternal form is full of knowledge and bliss. He is supremely enchanting and the essence of all that is beautiful. He always showers unlimited happiness on the living entities by attracting them with the qualities of His beauty and sweetness. He is the cause of the creation, maintenance, and annihilation of innumerable universes.

The sages of Naimisharanya headed by Shaunaka, who are expert in relishing the nectarean topics of Shrimad-Bhagavatam, offered obeisances and asked the following question to Shri Suta Gosvami, who possesses all knowledge.

Shaunaka said: O best of the sages, after the great King Yudhishtira installed Shri Vajranabha (the grandson of Pradyumna) at Mathura, and Parikshit (his own grandson) at Hastinapura and then left to go back to Godhead, what did King Vajranabha and Maharaja Parikshit do?

Shrila Suta Gosvami said: Before reciting this Shrimad-Bhagavatam, which is the very means of conquest, one should offer respectful obeisances unto the Personality of Godhead, Narayana, unto Nara-narayana Rishi, the supermost human being, unto mother Sarasvati, the goddess of learning, and unto Shrila Vyasadeva, the author.

O great sages headed by Shaunaka, after Yudhishtira went back to Godhead, Maharaja Parikshit, desiring to see Vajranabha, went to Mathura one day.

Vajranabha's heart was filled with affection when he heard that Maharaja Parikshit, who was equal to his own father, was coming to see him. He went out of the city, fell at Maharaja Parikshit's feet, and then brought him to his palace.

The great hero Maharaja Parikshit, who was always absorbed in thoughts of Lord Krishna, lovingly embraced Vajranabha. They entered the inner palace and offered obeisances to Rohini, the chief of Lord Krishna's one hundred and eight wives.

The wives welcomed the King according to custom. Maharaja Parikshit then happily sat on a comfortable seat, and after resting a while he spoke to Vajranabha.

Maharaja Parikshit said: Dear Vajranabha! Your father and grandfather saved my father

and grandfather from great dangers. I was also fully protected by your great-grandfather, Lord Krishna. Even if I wanted to repay their kindness, I would never be able to. Therefore I humbly request you to happily engage your subordinates in the affairs of the state. You should never worry about protecting your treasury, expanding your army, or subduing your enemies. Simply engage yourself in the service of your mothers.

Please tell me what is the cause of your distress and rest assured that I will dispel all your troubles.

Hearing Maharaja Parikshit's words, Vajranabha was greatly pleased and he replied:

Maharaja! Whatever you have told me is quite proper. Your father has greatly obliged me by instructing me in the science of archery. Therefore I have not even the slightest worry. By his mercy I have become expert in the military science of the kshatriyas. I have only one problem. Please consider it.

Although I've been installed as the King of Mathura, I feel like I am living in a secluded forest. The happiness of a kingdom is due to the people that live there, and I have no idea where the residents of this place have gone.

Hearing Vajranabha's words, Maharaja Parikshit called for Shandilya Rishi in order to clear Vajranabha's doubts. Shandilya Rishi had previously acted as the priest for Nanda Maharaja and the cowherd men. When Shandilya Rishi received the message from Parikshit Maharaja, he left his ashrama and came before the kings. Vajranabha welcomed the best of sages with the proper ceremonies and had sit him on an elevated seat. Parikshit Maharaja told Shandilya Rishi everything that Vajranabha had just said. The sage affectionately comforted them with the following words.

Shandilya Rishi said: Dear Parikshit and Vajranabha! I will tell you the secret of Vrajabhumi. Listen carefully. The meaning of the word "Vraja" is all-pervasive. According to ancient opinions, this land is named Vraja because it is all-pervasive. This land is an all-pervasive spiritual manifestation, situated beyond the three modes of material nature. Therefore this is called Vraja. This land is ever-blissful, effulgent, indestructible, and the abode of liberated souls. Dear kings, in this land of Vraja the self-realized souls and devotees, who relish love of God, constantly experience Krishna, whose form is sac-cid-ananda. Shrimati Radhika, the daughter of Maharaja Vrishabhanu, is like the atma of Lord Shri Krishna, the son of Nanda Maharaja. She eternally enjoys pastimes with Krishna, and therefore the devotees expert in enjoying transcendental mellows call Krishna atmarama. The meaning of the word kama is desire. In Vraja, Krishna's only desire is to engage in pastimes with the cows, and the cowherd boys and girls. Because He always achieves the fulfillment of this desire, He is called aptakama. These pastimes of the Lord are beyond material nature. Whenever the Lord enjoys His pastimes in this world, even ordinary people

are benefited. The creation, maintenance, and annihilation of the material world are carried out respectively by the qualities of passion, goodness, and ignorance. In this way, two types of pastimes of Govinda-transcendental and ordinary-are manifested. His transcendental pastimes are self-evident. This means that these pastimes are relished in Vraja by Shri Krishna, the topmost expert in loving exchanges. The ordinary pastimes consist of delivering the fallen souls and minimizing the burden of the earth in Vraja, Mathura, and Dvaraka. There cannot be ordinary pastimes without transcendental pastimes. Ordinary pastimes have no entrance into the transcendental pastimes. The pastimes experienced by the two of you are ordinary pastimes. The jurisdiction of the ordinary pastimes stretches from this planet up to the heavenly planets, and Mathura-mandala is situated within this planet. The famous Vrajabhumi is situated in this area, and the Lord's confidential pastimes are enacted here. Sometimes these pastimes are manifest to the devotees whose hearts are filled with devotion. At the end of the Dvapara-yuga in the twenty-eighth yuga cycle, when the Lord's associates who are qualified in the conjugal relationship assemble together, the Lord and His intimate associates descend, just as He recently enacted here. In this way the Lord incarnates who He desires to relish His pastimes with His intimate associates. At that time all the demigods and other devotees also incarnate with the Lord.

In these pastimes there were three kinds of devotees present. There is no doubt about it. Of these three kinds of devotees, the first are the Lord's intimate eternal associates, the second are those aspiring to become eternal associates, and the third are the demigods and their expansions whom the Lord has previously already sent to Dvaraka.

Now the demigods who had appeared as Yadavas have been sent by the Lord back to their duties in the heavenly planets through the brahmana's curse in the Lord's mausala-lila. And the Lord awarded spiritual forms to the devotees who aspired to become His eternal associates. The Lord then brought these devotees together with His intimate eternal associates of the vastavi, spiritual pastimes and they thus disappeared from the vision of the ordinary people.

Therefore, common people, who are situated in the vyavaharika pastimes, are unqualified to enter the Lord's eternal pastimes and see the eternal associates of the vastavi pastimes. That is why this place appears to be devoid of people.

Therefore Vajranabha, you should not worry in the least. By following my instructions and establishing many towns here, you will fulfill all your desires. Wherever Lord Krishna has performed His pastimes you should establish towns named after the particular pastime that was performed at that place. In this way you can render very nice service to the transcendental land of Vraja.

Establish your domain at Govardhana, Dirghapura (Deeg), Mathura, Mahavana, Nandagrama (Nandagaon), and Brihatsanu (Varshana). Reside in these pastime sites of Lord Krishna and engage in the service of the rivers, mountains, kundas, lakes, and kunjās of Vraja, for by doing so you will be happy and the citizens of your kingdom will prosper. This eternal, cognizant, blissful land of Vraja should be served by you by all efforts. By my blessings you will properly identify all of the places of Lord Krishna's pastimes. O Vajranabha, by continually serving Vraja in this way, one day you will meet Shri Uddhava. Then he will instruct you and your mothers in the mysteries of Vraja and the pastimes of the Lord.”

After instructing Vajranabha and Parikshit in this way, Shandilya, the best of the rishis, returned to his ashrama while remembering Lord Krishna. Parikshit and Vajranabha felt great ecstasy after hearing his instructions.

The sages said: O Suta Gosvami, please tell us what Maharaja Parikshit and King Vajranabha did after the best of the *munis*, Shandilya, returned to his *ashrama*.

Shrila Suta Gosvami said: Maharaja Parikshit brought thousands of prominent *brahmanas* and *kshatriyas* from Indraprastha and repopulated Mathura.

Maharaja Parikshit gave respect to the *brahmanas* and monkeys who were already residing there because he understood they are dear to the Lord. With the help of Maharaja Parikshit and by the mercy of Shandilya Rishi, Vajranabha gradually searched out the sites where Krishna had enjoyed pastimes with His beloved cowherd boyfriends and girlfriends. After properly ascertaining the pastime site, he named the site according to the pastime that was performed there. He thus established and named various towns, *kundas*, wells, *kunjās*, and gardens, and he established many Shiva temples. He established Deities of the Lord such as Govindadeva and Harideva, and his entire kingdom became blissful because devotion to Lord Krishna was preached everywhere. The citizens always engaged in glorifying Lord Krishna and thus merged in an ocean of bliss, they praised the rule of King Vajranabha.