



Nityam Bhagavata-sevaya
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THE SON OF TWO MOTHERS?*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*

Maharaja Parikshit said: The Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krishna, the cause of the cosmic manifestation, appeared in the dynasty of Yadu. Please tell me elaborately about His glorious activities and character, from the beginning to the end of His life. Glorification of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is performed in the parampara system; that is, it is conveyed from spiritual master to disciple. Such glorification is relished by those no longer interested in the false, temporary glorification of this cosmic manifestation. Descriptions of the Lord are the right medicine for the conditioned soul undergoing repeated birth and death. Therefore, who will cease hearing such glorification of the Lord except a butcher or one who is killing his own self?

Taking the boat of Krishna's lotus feet, my grandfather Arjuna and others crossed the ocean of the Battlefield of Kurukshetra, in which such commanders as Bhishmadeva resembled great fish that could very easily have swallowed them. By the mercy of Lord Krishna, my grandfathers crossed this ocean, which was very difficult to cross, as easily as one steps over the hoofprint of a calf. Because my mother surrendered unto Lord Krishna's lotus feet, the Lord with Sudarshana-chakra in hand, entered her womb and saved my body, the body of the last remaining descendant of the Kurus and the Pandavas, which was almost destroyed by the fiery weapon of Ashvatthama. Lord Sri Krishna, appearing within and outside of all materially embodied living beings by His own potency in the forms of eternal time—that is, as Paramatma and as virat-rupa-gave liberation to everyone, either as cruel death or as life. Kindly enlighten me by describing His transcendental characteristics.

My dear Sukadeva Goswami, Sankarshana, who belongs to the second quadruple, appeared as the son of Rohini named Balarama. If Balarama was not transferred from one body to another, how is it possible that He was first in the womb of Devaki and then in the womb of Rohini? Kindly explain this to me.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » SB 10.1: The Advent of Lord Krishna » Verses: 3–8*

THE ANCESTRY OF THE SUPREME LORD*Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur*

Shortly before the appearance of Sri Krishna, King Shurasena ruled and resided in Mathura. Under him



Narada informing Kamsa about the appearance of demigods in Yadu Dyansty

Mathura became the capital of the Yadus. Vasudeva, father of Krishna, belonged to the family of King Shurasena. Vasudeva married Devaki, daughter of Devaka, of the clan of the Yadus. Kamsa was then on the throne of the Yadus. Kamsa was the son of Ugrasena. The father of Devaki was the uterine brother of Ugrasena. At the time of Devaki's marriage Ugrasena was still living but was incarcerated by the order of Kamsa. Kamsa was the son of Padmavati, queen of Ugrasena, by the King of the Saubhas. Kamsa was not the legitimate heir to the throne. The real heir to the throne of the Yadus was the son of Devaki. The King of the Gopas, Nanda, was cousin of Vasudeva born of a marriage of a step-brother of the father of Vasudeva with a Vaishya girl. Rohini, who was one of the consorts of Vasudeva, was then living in the home of Nanda for fear of Kamsa.

As Kamsa was in the act of accompanying the bridegroom and bride acting as their charioteer in the marriage procession of Devaki and Vasudeva on the way to the home of the bridegroom, he heard a voice, that did not proceed from any visible person which made the announcement that Kamsa was to meet his death at the hands of the eighth issue, a son, born of the womb of Devaki. Kamsa was dissuaded from killing Devaki on the spot by the tactful appeal of Vasudeva who promised to make over to him every child born of Devaki to be dealt with at his discretion. But being apprised of the birth of Sri Krishna by the celestial sage Narada and of the fact that all the Gopas obeying Nanda and living under him in Vraja, male and female, all the Vrshnis led by Vasudeva, ladies of the Yadus such as Rohini, and others, - all these were devas born on the earth in anticipation of the coming of his enemy who is no other than Vishnu Himself, prepared to cooperate

with many of His own adherents in bringing about his destruction and on being fully convinced of the truth of this, Kamsa threw Vasudeva and Devaki into prison and began to kill every issue of Devaki as soon as it was born. It is this which led Rohini to seek an asylum with chief Nanda in Vraja. Kamsa killed one after another six sons that were successively born to Devaki, one every year. The seventh issue was transferred to the womb of Rohini by the baffling power of Krishna and was born as the son of the latter, the elder brother of Sri Krishna. Kamsa was given to understand that the seventh issue of Devaki had miscarried in the womb.

— An Excerpt from the article of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur published in "The Harmonist" July 1931 ❀ .

YOGMAYA SERVES BALARAMA

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Srila Sukadeva Goswami said: Under the protection of Magadharaja, Jarasandha, the powerful Kamsa began persecuting the kings of the Yadu dynasty. In this he had the cooperation of demons like Pralamba, Baka, Canura, Trinavarta, Aghasura, Mushtika, Arista, Dvividya, Putana, Kesi, Dhenuka, Banasura, Narakasura and many other demoniac kings on the surface of the earth. Persecuted by the demoniac kings, the Yadavas left their own kingdom and entered various others, like those of the Kurus, Panchalas, Kekayas, Salvas, Vidarbhas, Nishadhas, Videhas and Kosalas. Some of their relatives, however, began to follow Kamsa's principles and act in his service. After Kamsa, the son of Ugrasena, killed the six sons of Devaki, a plenary portion of Krishna entered her womb as her seventh child, arousing her pleasure and her lamentation. That plenary portion is celebrated by great sages as Ananta, who belongs to Krishna's second quadruple expansion.

To protect the Yadus, His personal devotees, from Kamsa's attack, the Personality of Godhead, Vishvatma, the Supreme Soul of everyone, ordered Yogamaya as follows: O My potency, who are worshipable for the entire world and whose nature is to bestow good fortune upon all living entities, go to Vraja, where there live many cowherd men and their wives. In that very beautiful land, where many cows reside, Rohini, the wife of Vasudeva, is living at the home of Nanda Maharaja. Other wives of Vasudeva are also living there incognito because of fear of Kamsa. Please go there. Within the womb of Devaki is My partial plenary expansion known as Sankarshana or Shesha. Without difficulty, transfer Him into the womb of Rohini. O all-auspicious Yogamaya, I shall then appear with My full six opulences as the son of Devaki, and you will appear as the daughter of mother Yashoda, the



Lord Krishna orders Yogamaya to transfer Sankarshana to the womb of Rohini

queen of Maharaja Nanda.

By sacrifices of animals, ordinary human beings will worship you gorgeously, with various paraphernalia, because you are supreme in fulfilling the material desires of everyone. Lord Krishna blessed Mayadevi by saying: In different places on the surface of the earth, people will give you different names, such as Durga, Bhadrakali, Vijaya, Vaishnavi, Kumuda, Chandika, Krishna, Madhavi, Kanyaka, Maya, Narayani, Ishani, Sharada and Ambika. The son of Rohini will also be celebrated as Sankarshana because of being sent from the womb of Devaki to the womb of Rohini. He will be called Rama because of His ability to please all the inhabitants of Gokula, and He will be known as Balabhadra because of His extensive physical strength. Thus instructed by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Yogamaya immediately agreed. With the Vedic mantra *om*, she confirmed that she would do what He asked. Thus having accepted the order of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, she circumambulated Him and started for the place on earth known as Nanda-Gokula. There she did everything just as she had been told.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāna) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » SB 10.2: Prayers by the Demigods for Lord Krishna in the Womb » Verses: 6– 14 ❀*



Sripad Vallabhacharya

BALARAMA COULD HAVE KILLED KAMSA

Sripad Vallabhacharya

With a view to manifest Himself quickly, Lord Krishna, instructed His Yogamaya to take away and establish the seventh child at another place. If Lord Krishna had not given such an instruction to Yogamaya, then the seventh child would have taken birth in the prison only, and, Kamsa would have tried to kill this seventh child and for this purpose, when he touches this child, Kamsa would have been destroyed instantaneously.

Lord Krishna thought, that if the events take place in this manner, then the Lord will not be given an opportunity to take revenge on Kamsa and this, also, will delay Lord's manifestation. Hence, He gave the order to His Yogamaya.

The entire world came to know, the result of the task undertaken by Yogamaya, on the instructions of Lord Krishna viz. the secret establishment of the foetus in mother Rohini after being lifted from mother Devaki. The entire city was kept, by Yogamaya, in such a stupor and sleep, that none knew about this secret operation. Hence, when they heard about this, the people were surprised. The people thought that mother Devaki's pregnancy was aborted. The pregnancy, at that time was about 5 to 6 months' duration, when Yogamaya had completed the task of this transfer. The people, when they came to know about the abortion, thought that this heinous act, was perpetrated by the demoniac followers of Kamsa.

— From Sri Subodhini, Verse: 10.2.5 and 10.2.16, Commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) by Sri Vallabhacharya, Translated in English by Shri T. Ramanan ❀

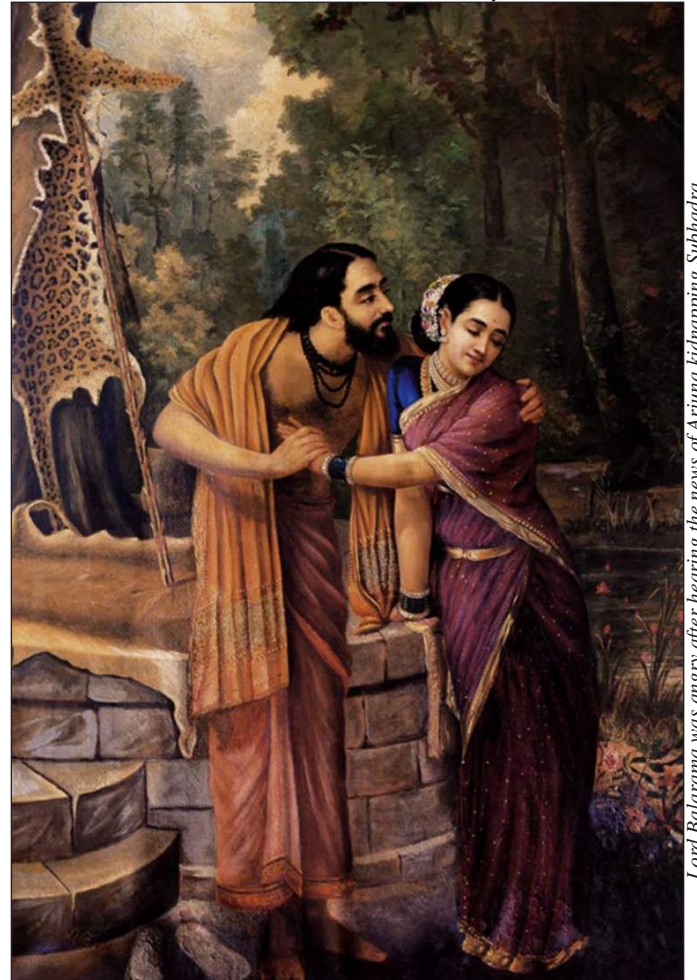
THE ORIGINAL SPIRITUAL MASTER

His Divine Grace

A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Baladeva is the divine son of Vasudeva by his wife Rohini. He is also known as Rohini-nandana, the beloved son of Rohini. He was also entrusted to Nanda Maharaja along with His mother, Rohini, when Vasudeva embraced imprisonment by mutual agreement with Kamsa. So Nanda Maharaja is also the foster father of Baladeva along with Lord Krishna. Lord Krishna and Lord Baladeva were constant companions from Their very childhood. He is the plenary manifestation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore He is as good and powerful as Lord Krishna. He belongs to the *viṣṇu-tattva* (the principle of Godhead). He attended the *svayamvara* ceremony of Draupadi along with Sri Krishna.

When Subhadra was kidnapped by Arjuna by the organized plan of Sri Krishna, Baladeva was very angry with Arjuna and wanted to kill him at once. Sri Krishna, for the sake of His dear friend, fell at the feet of Lord Baladeva and implored Him not to be so angry. Sri Baladeva was thus satisfied. Similarly, He was once



Lord Balarama was angry after hearing the news of Arjuna kidnapping Subhadra

very angry with the Kauravas, and He wanted to throw their whole city into the depths of the Yamuna. But the Kauravas satisfied Him by surrendering unto His divine lotus feet. He was actually the seventh son of Devaki prior to the birth of Lord Krishna, but by the will of the Lord He was transferred to the womb of Rohini to escape the wrath of Kamsa. His other name is therefore Sankarshana, who is also the plenary portion of Sri Baladeva. Because He is as powerful as Lord Krishna and can bestow spiritual power to the devotees, He is therefore known as Baladeva. In the Vedas also it is enjoined that no one can know the Supreme Lord without being favored by Baladeva.

Sri Baladeva was also a class friend of Lord Sri Krishna as a student of Sandipani Muni. In His childhood He killed many asuras along with Sri Krishna, and specifically He killed the Dhenukasura at Talavana. During the Kurukshetra battle, He remained neutral, and He tried His best not to bring about the fight. He was in favor of Duryodhana, but still He remained neutral. When there was a club-fight between Duryodhana and Bhimasena, He was present on the spot. He was angry at Bhimasena when the latter struck Duryodhana on the thigh or below the belt, and He wanted to retaliate the unfair action. Lord Sri Krishna saved Bhima from His wrath. But He left the place at once, being disgusted at Bhimasena, and after His departure Duryodhana fell to the ground to meet his death. The funeral ceremony of Abhimanyu, the son of Arjuna, was performed by Him, as He was the maternal uncle. It was impossible to be performed by any one of the Pandavas, who were all overwhelmed with grief. At the last stage, He departed from this world by producing a great white snake from His mouth, and thus He was carried by Sheshanaga in the shape of a serpent.

In the Upanishads it is stated, *nāyam ātmā bala-hīnena labhyaḥ*. The purport is that one cannot attain the supreme platform of self-realization without being sufficiently favored by Balarama. *Bala* does not mean physical strength. No one can attain spiritual perfection by physical strength. One must have the spiritual strength which is infused by Balarama, or Sankarshana. Ananta, or Sesha, is the power which sustains all the planets in their different positions. Materially this sustaining power is known as the law of gravitation, but actually it is a display of the potency of Sankarshana. Balarama, or Sankarshana, is spiritual power, or the original spiritual master. Therefore Lord Nityananda Prabhu, who is also the incarnation of Balarama, is the original spiritual master. And the spiritual master is the representative of Balarama, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who supplies spiritual strength. In the Chaitanya-caritamṛta it is confirmed that the spiritual



Lord Balarama departs for His abode

master is the manifestation of the mercy of Krishna.

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 1: Creation » Chapter 11: Lord Kṛṣṇa's Entrance into Dvārakā » Verses: 16–17 and Kṛṣṇa, The Supreme Personality of Godhead » Chapter Two: Prayers by the Demigods for Lord Kṛṣṇa in the Womb* ❀

MADHAI GLORIFIES NITYANANDA BALARAMA

Srila Vrindavan Das Thakur

See the characteristics of Gaurachandra! The Lord, who is not attained by the meditation of Shiva, Sukadeva, and Narada, is spending His days and nights with those who have no material possessions. In this way Lord Vishvambhara continually performed unlimited inconceivable pastimes in Navadvipa. In spite of such manifestations, some persons could not recognize Him, just as the fish in the ocean cannot see the moon. By the mercy of Lord Chaitanya, Jagai and Madhai lived in Nadia as highly religious persons. Every day in the early morning they would take bath in the Ganges and then sit in a solitary place to chant two hundred thousand names of Krishna. They continually condemned themselves and cried as they constantly chanted the name of Krishna. Having achieved a taste of Krishna's boundless mercy, they saw the entire world as intimately related to



Madhai cried remembering how he attacked Lord Nityananda

Krishna. They cried and fell to the ground unconscious as they remembered the violence that they previously committed. Remembering the Lord, they repeatedly cried and exclaimed, “O Gaurachandra, O dear deliverer of the fallen souls!” Due to love of Krishna they forgot to eat, and they would cry as they remembered the mercy of Lord Chaitanya. Vishvambhara and His associates continually solaced and bestowed mercy on the two. Even though the Lord personally came and fed them, they were not peaceful at heart. Particularly the brahmana Madhai cried repeatedly as he remembered how he attacked Nityananda. Even though Nityananda forgave all his offenses, Madhai's heart was not pacified. He would condemn himself while repeatedly saying, “I made the body of Nityananda bleed. I am so sinful that I hit the body in which Lord Chaitanya enjoys His pastimes.” Madhai practically lost consciousness while remembering this. He cried day and night and could not think of anything else. Day and night Lord Nityananda happily wandered about Nadia in the mood of a child. Lord Nityananda was by nature full of ecstasy and free of pride as He wandered throughout the city. Seeing Nityananda in a solitary place one day, Madhai fell down and grabbed His lotus feet. He washed the Lord's feet with tears of love.

Taking a straw between his teeth, he began to offer prayers to the Lord. “O Lord, You maintain everyone in Your form of Vishnu. You hold innumerable universes on Your hoods. You are the embodiment of pure devotional service. Parvati and Shankara meditate on You. You distribute Your devotional service. There is no one more dear to Lord Chaitanya than You. By Your mercy the powerful Garuda happily carries Krishna in His pastimes. You sing the glories of Krishna with innumerable mouths, and You teach everyone devotional service, the topmost religious system. Narada Muni sings Your glories, for Your only asset is Lord Chaitanya. You are known as the chastiser of Kalindi. By serving You, Janaka achieved transcendental knowledge. You are the primeval Lord and the personification of all religious principles. You are addressed by the Vedas as Adideva. You are the father of the universe and the master of mystic yoga. You are Lakshmana, the great archer. You are the destroyer of the atheists, the enjoyer of transcendental mellows, and the teacher by example. You know all of Lord Chaitanya's pastimes. Mahamaya became worshipable by serving You. Innumerable universes desire the shelter of Your lotus feet. You are the devotee of Lord Chaitanya and the personification of pure devotional service. You possess all the potencies of Lord Chaitanya. You are Lord Chaitanya's bed, throne, couch, and umbrella, and You are His life and wealth. There is no one more dear to Krishna than You. You are the source of all Gaurachandra's incarnations. O Lord, You deliver the fallen souls and You kill all the atheists. You protect all Vaishnavas and You teach the principles of Vaishnava-dharma.

By Your mercy the demigod Brahma creates. You are served by Revati, Varuni, and Kanti. Maharudra incarnated from Your anger. Through Him You annihilate the entire creation. Rudra, who is nondifferent from Sankarshana, appeared from the face of Sankarshana and devours the three worlds (through the fire of time). Even though You do everything, You do not do anything. You hold the Lord of innumerable universes within Your heart. Krishna enjoys sleeping on Your extremely soft and pleasing form. I attacked such a transcendental body, so there is no one more sinful than me. Throughout his life, Shiva worships this form with Parvati and one hundred million ladies.

By remembering this form one is freed from all bondage, yet I made such a form bleed. “Maharaja Citraketu became the topmost Vaishnava and enjoyed great happiness by serving this form. Unlimited universes meditate on this form, yet I am so sinful that I attacked this form. By serving this form, sages headed by Sanaka became free from bondage at Naimisaranya.”

*ye aṅga laṅghiyā indrajita gela kṣaya
ye aṅga laṅghiyā dvividera nāśa haya*

“Indrajit and Dvividā were both vanquished because they attacked this form.”

*ye aṅga laṅghiyā jarāsandha nāśa gela
āra mora kuśala nāhi, se aṅga laṅghila*

“Jarāsandha was destroyed because he attacked this form. How can I have any auspiciousness after attacking such a form?”

*laṅghanera ki dāya, yāhāra apamāne
kṣṇera śyālaka rukmī tyajila jīvane*

“What to speak of attacking this form, simply by insulting it, Rukmi, the brother of Krishna's wife, lost his life.”

*dīrgha āyu brahmāsama pāiyā o sūta
tomā' dekhi' nā uṭhila, haila bhasmībhūta*

“Even though Romaharshana Suta received a duration of life as long as that of Lord Brahma, he was burned to ashes because he did not rise on seeing You.”

*yānra apamāna kari' rājā duryodhana
savamśete prāṇa gela, nahila rakṣaṇa
daiva-yoge chila tathā mahā-bhakta-gaṇa
tān'rā saba jānilena tomāra kāraṇa
kuntī, bhīṣma, yudhiṣṭhira, vidura, arjuna
tān'-sabāra vākya pura pāilena punaḥ*

“King Duryodhana and his dynasty were almost destroyed for insulting You. By the arrangement of providence great devotees like Kuntī, Bhīṣma, Yudhiṣṭhira, Vidura, and Arjuna, who all understood Your desire, were present there. The city of Hastinapura was saved by their words of solace.”

“By insulting You one's life is finished, so where will a most sinful person like me go?” While offering prayers in this way, Madhai floated in an ocean of love. He fell down and took the Lord's feet to his chest. “One will never be destroyed if he takes shelter of These lotus feet, which manifest to deliver the fallen souls. Dear Lord, please deliver this surrendered soul. You are Madhai's life, wealth, and soul. All glories to the son of Padmavati! All glories to Nityananda, the wealth of all Vaiṣnavas! All glories to the blissful Lord, who is free from anger. It is proper for You to forgive the offenses

of the surrendered souls. I am the most sinful chandala, like an ungrateful ass or cow. O Lord, please excuse all my offenses.”

After hearing Madhai's sincere prayers of love, Lord Nityananda smiled and spoke as follows. “Get up, Madhai! You are My servant. I have now manifested in your body. Does a father feel unhappy if his little child hits him? I accepted your hitting My body in the same way. *Tumi ye karilā stuti, ihā yei śune seho bhakta haibeka amāra carame* — Anyone who hears your prayers will certainly become devoted to My lotus feet. Since you are the recipient of My Lord's mercy, there is not a trace of fault in you. One who worships Lord Chaitanya is My life and soul. I protect such a person forever.”

After speaking in this way, the Lord happily embraced Madhai, who thus became freed from all distress.

— *Madhya-khaṇḍa Chapter 15: Descriptions of Mādhavānanda's Realization. Verses: 053-055, Sri Chaitanya-bhāgavata by Srila Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura, With English Translation of the Gauḍīya-bhāṣya Commentary of Sri Srinad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Goswami Maharaja Translated by Bhumipati Dāsa ©2008 Edited and Published by Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi dāsa, Vrajraj Press*

LORD BALADEVA AND THE BRAHMANA

Srila Narahari Cakravarti Thakura

Sri Raghava Goswami said: “O Srinivasa, there was a rich brahmana everyone knew who lived near Govardhana. He was always overwhelmed in love for Balarama, and his mind was always absorbed in thoughts of His character. He was certain that one day Baladeva would kindly grant him darshana, and for that reason he always wandered around Govardhana. One cannot describe the fortune of that brahmana who one day received information that Baladeva would grant him darshana. In order to fulfill this devotee's desire, Nityananda Rama at that time went to Govardhana on pilgrimage. Nityananda remained in a lonely place, but whoever saw Him was bewildered by His celestial body, which bewilders even Cupid.

When that brahmana saw Nityananda Prabhu in the distance, he wondered where this *avadhūta* had come from. Seeing the Lord's effulgence, he could understand that the Lord was not an ordinary person. The brahmana brought various items like yogurt, milk, cheese, and butter. He came before Nityananda, offered obeisances, and said, ‘O *Avadhūta*, please accept these gifts. I pray that you please show Your mercy to me so I may have darshana of Rohinī-nandana.’

Hearing these words, Nityananda smiled and in



Sri Nityananda Balarama

great fun accepted the offerings made by the brahmana. The brahmana then received the Lord's remnants and returned to his own place, where he honored the *mahā-prasāda* and became agitated in love.

The brahmana was unable to return to meet Nityananda, and as evening arrived he fell asleep. At night, Lord Nityananda appeared to that fortunate brahmana in a dream. Seeing Nityānanda, the brahmana was very pleased. The next moment Nityananda revealed His form as Baladeva, and the brahmana fell at His feet.

What a wonderful form Baladeva exhibited—enchanting to the entire world! His limbs were glittering, being decorated with various ornaments. After blessing the brahmana, the Lord disappeared. On the Lord's disappearance, the brahmana's sleep broke. He became restless and started to return to where he had met Nityananda Prabhu. At that moment he heard a voice telling him to remain patient and wait till the morning. He considered that his desire was at last fulfilled. 'Now I have achieved the Lord, I will not leave Him. I will fall down and surrender everything at His feet. When the night is over I will have a goldsmith make ornaments to offer to the Lord.' As he thought in this way sleep again came.

Again in the brahmana's dream Nityananda

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

appeared to him. Seeing the Lord decorated in wonderful ornaments, that best of the brahmanas offered many prayers. As before, upon the disappearance of the Lord, the brahmana's sleep broke.

Morning soon came and the brahmana came before Nityananda Prabhu and explained the previous night's dream. The Lord smiled slightly and holding the brahmana's hand instructed the brahmana in all truths. The brahmana inquired from the Lord, 'Who has made those ornaments I saw in my dream?' The Lord, who is controlled by His devotees' desires, replied, 'One day I will be decorated as you have seen. For now take this govardhana-*śilā* and cover it in gold. I will then wear it on My neck.'

The brahmana executed the order as given by the Lord. The best of the *avadhūtas* then took the *śilā* and wore it on His neck. Even for Lord Brahma, such pastimes are very rare. Nityananda forbid the brahmana to disclose this incident to anyone. However, out of His affection to His devotee, the Lord remained there (at Govardhana) for some days."

— An excerpt from *Sri Bhakti-ratnākara* by Śrīla Narahari Cakravartī Thākura, Published by Puṇḍarīka Vidyānidhi dāsa ॐ



!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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