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When the time was mature for the appearance of the Lord, the constellations became very auspicious. The astrological influence of the constellation known as Rohini was also predominant because this constellation is considered very auspicious. Rohini is under the direct supervision of Brahma, who is born of Vishnu, and it appears at the birth of Lord Vishnu, who in fact is birthless. According to the astrological conclusion, besides the proper situation of the stars, there are auspicious and inauspicious moments due to the different situations of the different planetary systems. At the time of Krishna's birth, the planetary systems were automatically adjusted so that everything became auspicious.

At that time, in all directions, east, west, south, north, everywhere, there was an atmosphere of peace and prosperity. Auspicious stars were visible in the sky, and on the surface in all towns and villages or pasturing grounds and within the mind of everyone there were signs of good fortune. The rivers were flowing full of water, and the lakes were beautifully decorated with lotus flowers. The forests were full with beautiful birds and peacocks. All the birds within the forests began to sing with sweet voices, and the peacocks began to dance with their consorts. The wind blew very pleasantly, carrying the aroma of different flowers, and the sensation of bodily touch was very pleasing. At home, the *brāhmaṇas*, who were accustomed to offer sacrifices in the fire, found their homes very pleasant for offerings. Because of disturbances created by the demoniac kings, the sacrificial fire had been almost stopped in the houses of *brāhmaṇas*, but now they could find the opportunity to start the fire peacefully. Being forbidden to offer sacrifices, the *brāhmaṇas* were very distressed in mind, intelligence and activities. But just on the point of Krishna's appearance, automatically their minds became full of joy because they could hear loud vibrations in the sky of transcendental sounds proclaiming the appearance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

On the occasion of Lord Krishna's birth, seasonal changes took place throughout the entire universe. Krishna was born during the month of September, yet it appeared like springtime. The atmosphere, however, was very cool, although not chilly, and the rivers and reservoirs appeared just as they would in *śarat*, the fall. Lotuses and lilies blossom during the day, but although Krishna appeared at

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

twelve o'clock midnight, the lilies and lotuses were in bloom, and thus the wind blowing at that time was full of fragrance. Because of Kamsa's disturbances, the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies had almost stopped. The *brāhmaṇas* and saintly persons could not execute the Vedic rituals with peaceful minds. But now the *brāhmaṇas* were very pleased to perform their daily ritualistic ceremonies undisturbed. The business of the *āsuras* is to disturb the *suras*, the devotees and *brāhmaṇas*, but at the time of Krishna's appearance these devotees and *brāhmaṇas* were undisturbed.

—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāna) » Canto 10: The Summit Bonum » Chapter 3: The Birth of Lord Kṛṣṇa » Verses: 5, Purport by His Divine Grace A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada* ❀

THE CAUSE OF BIRTH OF LORD KRISHNA

Srila Bhakti Siddhanta Saraswati Thakur

A little over five thousand years have elapsed since the advent of Lord Sri Krishna in this world. The Lord appeared in the region of Mathura at the conjunction of the *Dvāpara* and *Kali* ages as son of Vasudeva-Devaki. The process of the Lord's birth is thus described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Sri Krishna having willed to be manifest in the world first appeared in the heart of Vasudeva and from his heart passed to the pure heart of Devaki. Nursed by her love in the form of maternal affection, like the waxing moon, Sri Krishna underwent gradual growth in the heart of Devaki. Subsequently, on the eighth lunar day of the dark fortnight of the month of *Bhadra*, on Wednesday, while the moon was in the constellation of Rohini, in the depth of night, from out of the heart of Devaki the Lord passed to her conch in the lying-in-chamber of Kamsa's prison. Sri Krishna was born four-armed, holding the conch, disc, club and lotus, adorned with crest, pendant and other ornaments, wearing a great profusion of curls and clad in yellow robe.

The advent of the Lord did not in any way resemble the birth of a jiva. The birth of the supreme Lord, like all His manifestations, is eternal and transcendental. Sri Krishna ever manifests the *līlā* of His birth in the pure and unalloyed hearts of His devotees. The eternal and transcendental *līlā* of His birth became visible in mundane world towards the end of the *Dvāpara* age. The cause of His advent into the world is described in the following verse of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.2.15).

*sva-śānta-rūpeṣu itaraiḥ sva-rūpāir
abhyardyamāneṣu anukampitātmā
parāvareṣo mahad-aṁśa-yukto
hy ajo 'pi jāto bhagavān yathāgniḥ*



“His passionless nature, as represented by devotees like Vasudeva etc., being oppressed by opposed, perverted and terrible forms in the shape of *daityas* like Kamsa etc., like the kindling of fire by rubbing of two pieces of fire-wood, the Lord of mundane and transcendental worlds, the kind-hearted Lord Sri Krishna, although devoid of phenomenal birth, joining with the Lord Vaikuntha, the prime cause Purusha, His secondary incarnations and other differing forms comes down into this world from his own sphere.”

The main cause of the appearance of Sri Krishna in this world is His wish to gratify the yearnings of those loving devotees who happen to be placed in this world; as no one except Godhead Himself has the power of satisfying the longings of His devotees. In order to delight Srutadeva, Bahulasva and other bhaktas by the sight of Himself and for showing kindness to Vasudeva and others of His beloved ones by the destruction of the forces of *dānavas*, the supreme Lord was born in this world. This was the main cause. The prayer of Brahma and other gods for the relief of the world was a secondary cause of His birth.

The plenary incarnation is not manifest until the main cause is about to fructify. At the time of the

full incarnation separate and partial incarnations for relieving the earth become superfluous. Just as on the occasion when the suzerain emperor himself marches out to conquer the vassal kings of different regions follow him as a matter of course, so also when Sri Krishna Himself appears in the world, His manifestations i.e., the Lord of *paravyoma* (Vaikuntha), His *vyūha* (fourfold manifestation i.e. Vasudeva, Sankarshana etc.), His secondary incarnations such as Rama, Narsimha, Varaha, Vamana, Nara Narayana etc., also appear simultaneously on the earth with Sri Krishna. As thousands of sparks issuing out of a great fire are re-absorbed into it, in like manner all incarnations having issued out of Sri Krishna are on His advent into this world re-absorbed into their original source. Or again just as for the conflagration of villages and towns the power of lamps and of a great fire are identical, but the full happiness, in the form of relief from the discomforts due to cold, can be obtained only from the great fire,- in like manner, although the relief of the earth from oppressions may be effected equally by Purusha and secondary incarnations, the supreme happiness of loving devotees cannot be afforded by any one except Sri Krishna Himself.

The jiva is born as the result of his karma and his birth is brought about by the power of maya which is alien to the nature of the jiva. The God-head is born of His own will and by His own power which is eternally and inseparably joined with Himself. The power by which the Supreme Lord manifests His birth is eternal spiritual and full of transcendental bliss. Whereas the power by which the jiva is born is external to him and full of the triple misery. This difference has been described by the Lord Himself in the Gita (4.9).

*janma karma ca me divyam
evam yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

“My birth and actions are transcendental; those who know this truly are not born again on leaving the body; such persons attain to Me, O Arjuna.”

As the Lord is not born by entering into the vital fluid like jivas do also, He has no mundane parents. We learn from the previous history of Sri Vasudeva-Devaki that in expectation of the birth of Sri Krishna, in their third previous birth in the *manvantara* (period of manu) of Svayambhuva Manu, Vasudeva was a Prajapati by name Sutapa and Devaki was known as Prishni. Having been commanded by Brahma to pro-create offspring they devoutly practised *tapas* (austerities), controlling their senses, for the period

of twelve thousand years of heavenly measure. The four-armed Sri Vishnu, thereupon, appeared in their hearts purified by devotion, and on expressing His willingness to confer any boon that was desired by them they prayed for a son like the Lord Himself; whereupon the Lord agreeing to be their son became known by the name of 'Prishnigarbha' born in the womb of Prishni. After this, in their second previous birth, when Sutapa and Prishni being reborn on the earth bore the names of Kashyapa and Aditi, then also Vishnu was born as their son Vamana, the younger brother of Indra and was known by the names of 'Upendra' and 'Vamana'. According to this account of the scriptures Vasudeva and Devaki would seem to have been mere jivas perfected by a course of spiritual efforts. But Vasudeva-Devaki the eternal parents of Sri Krishna can never be merely perfected jivas. Therefore, the efforts of Sri Vasudeva etc., as spiritual novices in their previous births were rendered possible by the will of God Himself for the edification of this world by the manifestations of Vasudeva etc., in the pure hearts of the devotees of Krishna. That is to say Vasudeva etc., are ever perfect and never practised any courses of spiritual endeavour. But their portions attaching themselves to certain jivas practised spiritual endeavours for the instruction of the world; and those portions were subsequently re-absorbed into the original. The accounts in the scriptures only express the fact that the original and its offshoots are identical in manifestation.

The above proves that the birth of the Supreme Lord Sri Krishna is transcendental. But from the history of His devotees in the scripture it seems at first sight that they were born and suffered various troubles and miseries like ordinary jivas. If they were not like ordinary jivas how could miseries befall them on their appearance in this world in the train of God Himself? What else are such occurrences as the incarceration of Devaki-Vasudeva in the prisons of Kamsa, the grief of the dwellers of Vraja at separation from Krishna, the devoted attachment of Nanda and Yasoda for their son resembling that of mundane parents, etc.? The satisfactory solution of such complaints is realized by the jiva only when he is established in his proper self. The attendants of God-head are the direct manifestations of His own power. Their births etc. are the sports of God's transcendental power. By the will of Sri Hari Himself they appear in this world as helpers of His *līlā*. Their exhibitions of suffering etc. are only subtle methods of tasting the elixir of His *līlā*. Those exhibitions are not the consequences of their selfish worldly enjoyments like the sufferings of this world. On the contrary, they add a variety to the enjoyment of the delicious sweetness of the service

of Krishna. The attachment of mundane parents for their short-lived son is merely the perverted reflection of the transcendental wholesome and all-absorbing attachment of His original parents imbued with spiritual love for their eternal son, Sri Krishna. The attachment of worldly parents for their ephemeral son being the selfish enjoyment of the fruits of karma, is altogether unwholesome and therefore, to be shunned. But the attachment of Nanda-Yashoda for their eternal son is perfectly wholesome and worthy of being emulated by those possessed of transcendental love.

— From the article of Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur published in "The Harmonist" October 1927, Volume: 25 ❧ .

LORD KRISHNA'S JOURNEY TO GOKULA

Sripad Vallabhacharya

After instructing His father and mother, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna, remained silent. In their presence, by His internal energy, He then transformed Himself into a small human child. [In other words, He transformed Himself into His original form: *[kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam]* Thereafter, exactly when Vasudeva, being inspired by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was about to take the newborn child from the delivery room, Yogamaya, the Lord's spiritual energy, took birth as the daughter of the wife of Maharaja Nanda.

By the influence of Yogamaya, all the doorkeepers fell fast asleep, their senses unable to work, and the other inhabitants of the house also fell deeply asleep. She cast a spell on the intelligence and the mental thought process of the guards. They now lost all external consciousness. Usually in the 'waking' and the 'dream' states, waves of thoughts due to past knowledge, present activities and those caused by doubts, arise - but infatuated by the power of Yogamaya, the guards became unconscious. The whole world was affected, in this manner, on the birth of Yogamaya. However the people in Gokula and mother Yashoda in turn became very happy. They were also slowly losing themselves into a state of deep sleep. Afterwards, the guards and watchmen at the prison and the citizens of Mathura, now gave themselves up to a state of deep sleep.

All their intelligence and mental thought process were affected fully, by the power of Yogamaya and they slept, in such a manner, that, for a long time, they could not know or feel, about the happenings outside. They all went into a state of very deep sleep. The gates of the prison opened by themselves and this was not caused by the power of Yogamaya - as it was the power of the Lord, which made the gates of the prison



open themselves. The doors were fully secured with big locks and metal chains - and it was very difficult to open them but they got opened automatically. Even though the gates and doors, were so very difficult to open, on the advent and coming near of The Lord, they opened automatically. The door's strength was shattered, and it divided itself into two portions, automatically. This description of the doors is made with a view to convey, that the Lord is the compassionate bestower of the benefit of liberation to the souls, who are bound to this world.

As the rains were very heavy, the flooding of the Yamuna river got very fearsome - but due to the presence and Grace of the Lord, Sri Vasudeva did not encounter any difficulty. Although, all the rain-bearing clouds had gone away, at the time of the Holy birth of The Lord, all these clouds came back when Yogamaya was born in full form and strength and Lord Indra, inspired by Yogamaya, now made the clouds pour and shower rain for a long time. If Indra had not intervened to inspire the clouds to shower heavy rains (as he himself was prompted to do this by Yogamaya), the clouds themselves would have not dared to cause any delay in The Lord's journey to Gokula. But these clouds were prompted by Lord Indra to shower heavily as he

was inspired by Yogamaya.

Now river Yamuna, was seen as fearsome, due to huge waves and immense flooding and, very rightly, she is referred to as the sister of lord Yama, God of Death, *yamāmujā* - indicating that, being Lord Yama's sister. Yamuna river also exhibited a streak of cruelty and fearsome nature - and this streak enabled and suited the description of the fearsome nature of Yamuna river, now it is being described in this verse. The river was very deep, full of foam and waves, and presented an awful spectacle of an obstacle to Sri Vasudeva. The river presented herself with huge rising waves, foaming on all the sides. In this description of river Yamuna three blemishes are outlined. As she was flowing very fast - this speed indicated the *rajasic* nature of active dynamism. The foam and dark colour indicated the *tamasic* nature of ignorance. Her stupendous huge flow of water indicated her harmonious nature of magnificence, *gāmbhīryam*. She was also having the blemish of countless, fearsome and dangerous whirlpools - Hence her flow was not even, and the waters flowed with huge waves and deep lows. The river Yamuna was very unhappy and upset, due to all these dangerous waves and whirlpools and she was expressing her fear. The whirlpools represented *tamasic* blemish, ignorance;

her unhappiness and fear represented *rajasic* blemish, dynamic action; and not flowing evenly represented the blemish of *sattva*, Harmony.

In spite of her own inherent blemish and those caused by outside forces, river Yamuna gave the way of passage to the Lord. She never caused any difficulty for this safe passage. All rivers are considered as the wives of the ocean. During the Lord's incarnation as Sri Rama, the ocean, didn't give way of passage to the Lord, in the first instance, and hence the Lord had made the ocean dry up by aiming an arrow at the ocean. River Yamuna now thought, that she is only a wife of the ocean, and when the Lord could cause an ocean to dry up on being denied the way of passage, she thought it prudent and wise, to give way to the Lord immediately, and not behave like the ocean. River Yamuna also thought that the Lord will enjoy water *līlā* s with the Gopis of Vrindavan (considered by the river as representing Goddess Sri Lakshmi) and she will also participate in that - as the water *līlā* s of Lord Krishna will be done on the river Yamuna - and she considered this as a great luck for her! Hence, the river Yamuna gave way immediately with great joy - like the father-in-law ocean gives way to his son-in-law Lord Vishnu, the husband of Goddess Lakshmi, when the son-in-law visits his home! River Yamuna thought that if Sri Rama, desirous of rescuing Sita from Sri Lanka, can cause the drying up of the ocean, Sri Krishna, whose beloved Gopis were in Gokula, would have definitely dried up the river Yamuna, if she had not given the way of passage. Hence she gave the way out of fear of the Lord.

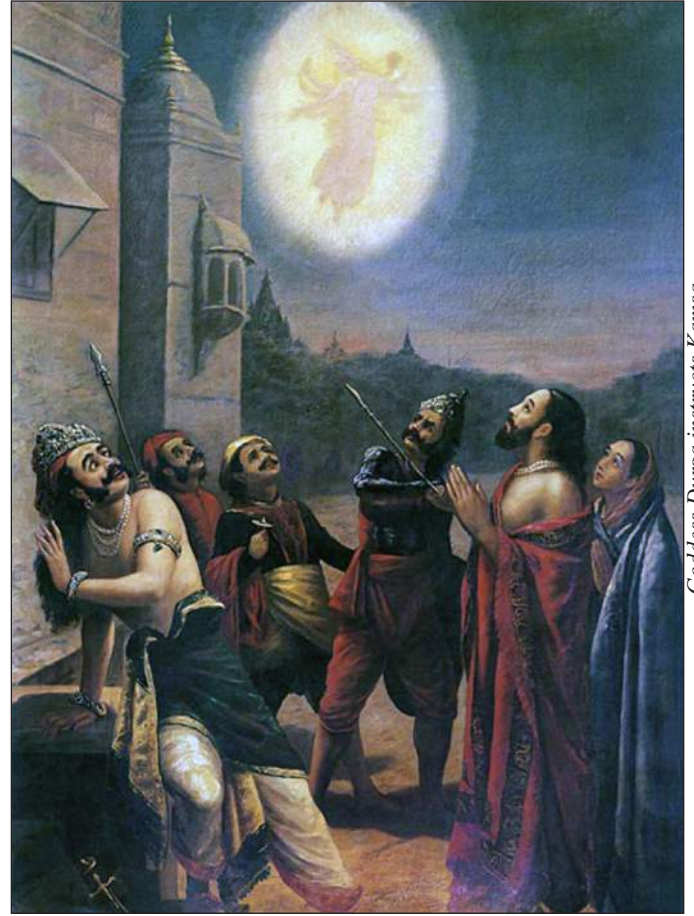
— From Sri Subodhini, Sripad Vallabhacharyas commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāna) » Chapter 3: The Birth of Lord Kṛṣṇa » Verses: 48, Translation by Sri Ramanan

GODDESS DURGA INSTRUCTS KAMSA

Sukadeva Goswami

When Vasudeva reached the house of Nanda Maharaja, he saw that all the cowherd men were fast asleep. Thus he placed his own son on the bed of Yashoda, picked up her daughter, an expansion of Yogamaya, and then returned to his residence, the prison house of Kamsa. Vasudeva placed the female child on the bed of Devaki, bound his legs with the iron shackles, and thus remained there as before. Exhausted by the labor of childbirth, Yashoda was overwhelmed with sleep and unable to understand what kind of child had been born to her.

The doors inside and outside the house closed as before. Thereafter, the inhabitants of the house, especially the watchmen, heard the crying of the newborn child and thus awakened from their beds. Thereafter, all the



Goddess Durga instructs Kamsa

watchmen very quickly approached King Kamsa, the ruler of the Bhoja dynasty, and submitted the news of the birth of Devaki's child. Kamsa, who had awaited this news very anxiously, immediately took action. Kamsa immediately got up from bed, thinking, "Here is *kāla*, the supreme time factor, which has taken birth to kill me!" Thus overwhelmed, Kamsa, his hair scattered on his head, at once approached the place where the child had been born. Devaki helplessly, piteously appealed to Kamsa: My dear brother, all good fortune unto you. Don't kill this girl. She will be your daughter-in-law. Indeed, it is unworthy of you to kill a woman. My dear brother, by the influence of destiny you have already killed many babies, each of them as bright and beautiful as fire. But kindly spare this daughter. Give her to me as your gift. My lord, my brother, I am very poor, being bereft of all my children, but still I am your younger sister, and therefore it would be worthy of you to give me this last child as a gift.

Piteously embracing her daughter and crying, Devaki begged Kamsa for the child, but he was so cruel that he chastised her and forcibly snatched the child from her hands. Having uprooted all relationships with his sister because of intense selfishness, Kamsa, who was sitting on his knees, grasped the newborn child by the legs and tried to dash her against the surface of a stone. The child, Yogamaya-devi, the younger sister of

Lord Vishnu, slipped upward from Kamsa's hands and appeared in the sky as Devi, the goddess Durga, with eight arms, completely equipped with weapons. The goddess Durga was decorated with flower garlands, smeared with sandalwood pulp and dressed with excellent garments and ornaments made of valuable jewels. Holding in her hands a bow, a trident, arrows, a shield, a sword, a conchshell, a disc and a club, and being praised by celestial beings like Apsaras, Kinnaras, Uragas, Siddhas, Caranas and Gandharvas, who worshiped her with all kinds of presentations, she spoke as follows. "O Kamsa, you fool, what will be the use of killing me? The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has been your enemy from the very beginning and who will certainly kill you, has already taken His birth somewhere else. Therefore, do not unnecessarily kill other children."

After speaking to Kamsa in this way, the goddess Durga, Yogamaya, appeared in different places, such as Varanasi, and became celebrated by different names, such as Annapurna, Durga, Kali and Bhadra. After hearing the words of the goddess Durga, Kamsa was struck with wonder. Thus he approached his sister Devaki and brother-in-law Vasudeva, released them immediately from their shackles.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 3: The Birth of Lord Kṛṣṇa » Verses: 51—53 and Chapter 4: The Atrocities of King Kamsa » Verses: 1-14* ❧

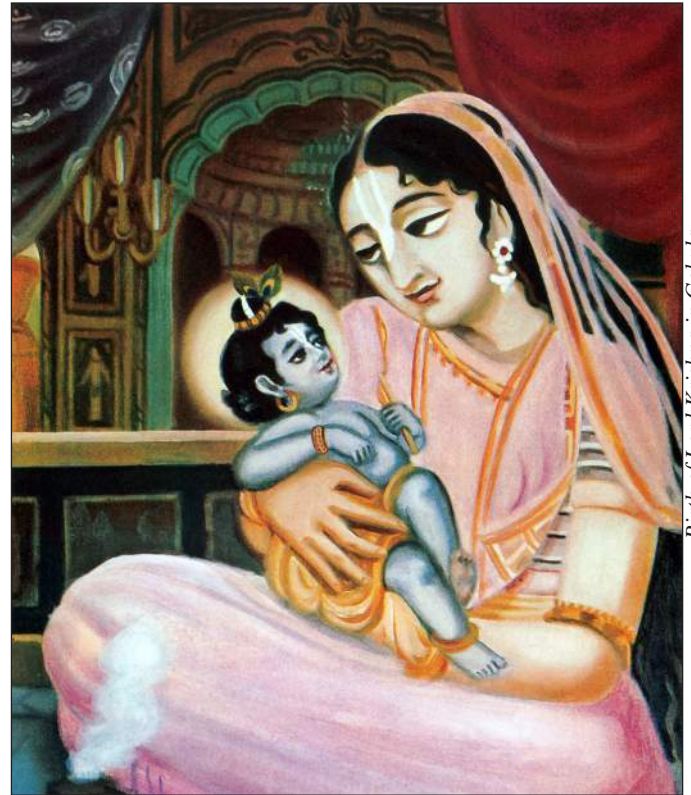
THE MYSTERY OF LORD KRISHNA'S BIRTH IN GOKULA?

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur

Vasudeva was instructed by Lord Sri Krishna, "If you are afraid, then take Me to Gokula and bring the child of Yashoda, Yogamaya, back here."

After being instructed, Vasudeva saw that his chains automatically loosened. When Vasudeva was about to leave the prison, Yogamaya took birth in Gokula as the daughter of Yashoda. The *Hari-vaniśa* says that in the eighth month of pregnancy, before full term, Devaki and Yashoda gave birth at the same time to their children. But the *Bhāgavatam* states that Yashoda gave birth after Devaki.

How to correlate these contradictory statements? Exactly when Devaki gave birth to Krishna in Mathura, Yashoda also gave birth to Krishna in Gokula. After that, Yashoda gave birth to Yogamaya. Thus two children appeared from Yashoda at different times. This is confirmed in *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam* (10.4.9), which describes Yogamaya as *ānujā*, the younger sister of Krishna. But when Krishna appeared from Yashoda



Birth of Lord Krishna in Gokula

it is not stated that He had four hands. Therefore, it is understood that Krishna appeared from Yashoda with two hands because she worshiped Krishna without understanding His Godhood. But Vasudeva and Devaki worshiped their son as Vishnu.

The fact that Krishna was also born to Yashoda is not very well known. Because Yashoda and Devaki were friends, Yashoda gave her fame to Devaki and allowed Devaki to become famous as the mother of Krishna. The name Yashoda means to give (*dadāti*) fame (*yaśo*). However, the name Devaki is also another name of mother Yashoda. As stated in the *Bṛhad-Vishnu Purāṇa*:

*dve nāmnī nanda-bhāryāyā, yaśodā devakīti ca,
ataḥ sakhyam abhūt tasya, devakyā śāuri-jāyayā,*

"The wife of Nanda had two names, Yashoda and also Devaki. Therefore it was natural that she [the wife of Nanda] developed friendship with Devaki, the wife of Śāuri [Vasudeva]." This is also in accordance with *Vaiṣṇava Tosani, Ananda Vṛndāvana Campu* and *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*.

— From 'Sarartha darshini, Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur's commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 3: The Birth of Lord Kṛṣṇa » Verses: 47 and 55 . Translated by Srila Bhanu Swami ❧

BIRTH OF THE UNBORN

Srila Rupa Goswami

Just as Sri Krishna is the primeval Lord, or unborn,



His pastimes of appearance and disappearance are beginningless. By His own supreme will, Lord Mukunda repeatedly manifests His pastimes of appearance and disappearance in this world. He is *aja*, or unborn, yet He takes birth. One may ask how a person who is unborn can take birth; it appears completely contradictory. In order to reconcile this contradiction, one may reply that the Supreme Lord is inconceivable, full of opulences, and completely spiritual. Since there is no tinge of transformation in the Supreme Lord and His devotees, they are both unborn; and though their birth is not due to sexual intercourse, they appear in a pure heart as the sun appears in the east and are therefore also born. As the fire present in the form of heat within jewels and wood manifests due to a particular cause, Lord Krishna manifests His wonderful pastimes of appearance and disappearance at a particular time due to a particular cause. The principle cause of His manifesting pastimes of appearance and disappearance is His desire to bless His devotees and spread the glories of His famous pastimes. Another principle cause for His appearance is to exhibit mercy on His dear devotees like Vasudeva, who are constantly being tortured by formidable demons. Brahma and other demigods' prayers to the Lord for diminishing the burden of the earth, even today, are secondary causes for the Lord's appearance. If His dear devotees are eager to see Him, then Lord

Krishna, who is an ocean of mercy, immediately exhibits His pastimes to them. Even today some most fortunate devotees who are overwhelmed with love and devotion happily see the sporting pastimes of Krishna in Vrindavan. Therefore the fully independent Supreme Lord manifests before one's eyes by His own sweet will; but since He is not the object of material vision, He is not seen by material eyes."

— Original verses from *Sri Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* of Sri Rūpa Goswami, Pūrva 363, 385, 392, and 421. An excerpt taken from *Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata* of Śrīla Vṛndāvana dāsa Ṭhākura, With Translation of *Śrī Śrīmad Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja*, English Translation by Bhumiṇpati Dāsa

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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