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Sukadeva Gosvami said: The demon Keshi, sent by Kamsa, appeared in Vraja as a great horse. Running with the speed of the mind, he tore up the earth with his hooves. The hairs of his mane scattered the clouds and the demigods' airplanes throughout the sky, and he terrified everyone present with his loud neighing. Seeing the Lord standing before him, Keshi ran toward Him in extreme rage, his mouth gaping as if to swallow up

the sky. Rushing with furious speed, the unconquerable and unapproachable horse demon tried to strike the lotus-eyed Lord with his two front legs. But the transcendental Lord dodged Keshi's blow and then with His arms angrily seized the demon by the legs, whirled him around in the air and contemptuously threw him the distance of one hundred bow-lengths, just as Garuda might throw a snake. Lord Krishna then stood there.

Upon regaining consciousness Keshi angrily got up, opened his mouth wide and again rushed to attack Lord Krishna. But the Lord just smiled and thrust His left arm into the horse's mouth

as easily as one would make a snake enter a hole in the ground. Keshi's teeth immediately fell out when they touched the Supreme Lord's arm, which to the demon felt as hot as molten iron. Within Keshi's body the Supreme Personality's arm then expanded greatly, like a diseased stomach swelling because of neglect. As Lord Krishna's expanding arm completely blocked Keshi's breathing, his legs kicked convulsively, his body became covered with sweat, and his eyes rolled around. The demon then passed stool and fell on the ground, dead. The mighty-armed Krishna withdrew His arm from Keshi's body, which now appeared like a long karkatika fruit. Without the least display of pride at having so effortlessly killed His enemy, the Lord accepted the demigods' worship in the form of flowers rained down from above. My dear King, thereafter Lord Krishna was approached in a solitary place by the great sage among the demigods, Narada Muni. That most exalted devotee spoke as follows to the Lord, who effortlessly performs His pastimes.

[Narada Muni said:] O Krishna, Krishna, unlimited Lord, source of all mystic power, Lord of the universe! O Vasudeva, shelter of all beings and best of the Yadus! O master, You are the Supreme Soul of all created beings, sitting unseen within the cave of the heart like the fire dormant within kindling wood. You are the witness within everyone, the Supreme Personality and the ultimate controlling Deity. You are the shelter of all souls, and being the supreme controller, You fulfill Your desires simply by Your will. By Your personal creative potency You manifested in the beginning the primal modes of material nature, and through their agency You create, maintain and then destroy this universe. You, that very same creator, have now descended to the earth to annihilate the Daitya, Pramatha and Rakshasa demons who are posing as kings, and also to protect the godly. The horse demon was so terrifying that his neighing frightened the demigods into leaving their heavenly kingdom. But by our good fortune You have enjoyed the sport of killing him.

In just two days, O almighty Lord, I will see the deaths of Chanura, Mushtika and other wrestlers, along with those of the elephant Kuvalayapida and King Kamsa all by Your hand. Then I will see You kill Kalayavana, Mura, Naraka and the conch demon, and I will also see You steal the parijata

flower and defeat Indra. I will then see You marry many daughters of heroic kings after paying for them with Your valor. Then, O Lord of the universe, in Dvaraka You will deliver King Nriga from a curse and take for Yourself the Syamantaka jewel, together with another wife. You will bring back a *brāhmaṇa*'s dead son from the abode of Your servant Yamaraja, and thereafter You will kill Paundraka, burn down the city of Krishna and slay Dantavakra, and You will also put an end to the King of Cedi during the great Rajasuya sacrifice. I shall see all these heroic pastimes, along with many others You will perform during Your residence in Dvaraka. These pastimes are glorified on this earth in the songs of transcendental poets.

Subsequently I will see You appear as time personified, serving as Arjuna's chariot driver and destroying entire armies of soldiers to rid the earth of her burden. Let us approach You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for shelter. You are full of perfectly pure spiritual awareness and are always situated in Your original identity. Since Your will is never thwarted, You have already achieved all possible desirable things, and by the power of Your spiritual energy You remain eternally aloof from the flow of the qualities of illusion. I bow down to You, the supreme controller, who are dependent only on Yourself. By Your potency You have constructed the unlimited particular arrangements of this universe. Now you have appeared as the greatest hero among the Yadus, Vrishnis and Satvatas and have chosen to participate in human warfare.

Sukadeva Gosvami said: Having thus addressed Lord Krishna, the chief of the Yadu dynasty, Narada bowed down and offered Him obeisances. Then that great sage and most eminent devotee took his leave from the Lord and went away, feeling great joy at having directly seen Him.

After killing the demon Keshi in battle, the Supreme Personality of Godhead continued to tend the cows and other animals in the company of His joyful cowherd boyfriends. Thus He brought happiness to all the residents of Vrindavana acting out the roles of rival thieves and herders. In that game, O King, some acted as thieves, others as shepherds and others as sheep. They played their game happily, without fear of danger. A powerful magician named Vyoma, son of the demon Maya, then appeared on the scene in the guise of a cow-



herd boy. Pretending to join the game as a thief, he proceeded to steal most of the cowherd boys who were acting as sheep. Gradually the great demon abducted more and more of the cowherd boys and cast them into a mountain cave, which he sealed shut with a boulder. Finally only four or five boys acting as sheep remained in the game. Lord Krishna, who shelters all saintly devotees, understood perfectly well what Vyomasura was doing. Just as a lion grabs a wolf, Krishna forcefully seized the demon as he was taking away more cowherd boys. The demon changed into his original form, as big and powerful as a great mountain. But try as he might to free himself, he could not do so, having lost his strength from being held in the Lord's tight grip. Lord Acyuta

clutched Vyomasura between His arms and threw him to the ground. Then, while the demigods in heaven looked on, Krishna killed him in the same way that one kills a sacrificial animal.

Krishna then smashed the boulder blocking the cave's entrance and led the trapped cowherd boys to safety. Thereafter, as the demigods and cowherd boys sang His glories, He returned to His cowherd village, Gokula.

— Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 37 » Verses 1–33 » Translations by Disciples of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

KESHI, KAMSA AND KRISHNA
Sṛīla Jīva Gosvāmī

As before, I will again speak the morning-narration of pastimes. Without placing any words on his throat, Madhukantha thought these pure thoughts in his heart: Thinking, “Although the words spoken to Kamsa by *Devarṣi* Narada, who stays in our midst, who is a great devotee, and who even from our childhood showered upon us a great monsoon of the nectarean bliss of Śrī Krishna’s pastimes, are sublimely glorious and worthy of praise, and although Narada is very qualified to describe the pastimes of Śrī Krishna, and although he always acts for everyone’s benefit and never acts to harm anyone, still, foolish people mistakenly think his very glorious and appropriate actions are inglorious and inappropriate,” and also thinking, “The pastimes I am about to relate will not bring joy to the people of Vraja, who are all supremely learned in spiritual truth and who are filled with the glorious, peerless, and effulgent bliss born from their great love for Śrī Krishna,” I will not openly speak the name of a certain person mentioned in these pastimes.

Hiding that person’s name, Madhukantha then openly said: After Śrī Krishna had killed Arishta, one year passed in which morose and disappointed Kamsa did not send anyone to attack Śrī Krishna. A demon name Keshi entered Kamsa’s palace and told him, “Don’t abandon your struggle to kill Krishna.” Then Keshi returned to his own home.

Then, on the *kṛṣṇa-ekādaśī* of the month of Magha, a certain demigod glorious with all knowledge, a demigod pretending to be Kamsa’s friend although in truth he was Kamsa’s enemy, revealed to Kamsa the secret of King Vasudeva. He explained that Krishna and Balarama were both sons of Vasudeva. Unable to kill Devaki and Vasudeva because of the opposition of others, angry Kamsa immediately put Devaki and Vasudeva again into prison and shackled them with iron shackles. In this way Devaki and Vasudeva were imprisoned by hostile Kamsa.

After placing Devaki and Vasudeva in prison, evil-hearted Kamsa again called for the Keshi demon and commanded him to kill Krishna. Commanded by Kamsa, Keshi departed for Vraja. He entered Vraja in the morning. Thinking, “Krishna stays on Nandishvara Hill and He also stays in the place where Arishtasura was killed and in many other places here also,” Keshi stayed far away from all those places. Entering Vraja, tossing his great

mane in the air, and pounding and breaking the earth’s surface with his hard and sharp hooves, Keshi made the demigods, who feared his ferocious actions, hide in their airplanes, airplanes like a host of clouds scattered in the sky. The thunderous sounds of Keshi’s ferocious neighing made the demigods, who are never afflicted by old age, seem suddenly old and invalid.

Swiftly galloping, very proudly leaping over trees, and making everything and everyone tremble, the ferocious demon Keshi roared like a pack of lions. Leaping with great strides over the very tall wooden walls of their forest-like barn with huge, impassable, bolted-with-enormous-bolts doors, the cows frantically fled to the forest as Keshi roared. Contemptuously entering the outskirts of Vraja, the filled-with-hatred-for-the-demigods horse-demon Keshi galloped here and there looking for Śrī Krishna, the crusher of Arishtasura.

When the cows fled, the distraught cowherd men at once ran from their homes and eagerly pursued them. Running past the cowherd men and past Balarama also, Śrī Krishna, who always easily kills the demons, approached His enemy Keshi. Śrī Krishna was wonderfully glorious. Fearful of what might happen, the leaders of Vraja approached Śrī Krishna as He was approaching the demon.

They said: “This horse has a mane like thunderbolts. He defeats even King Indra. His neighing makes the demigods flee in all directions. O Krishna, You are like a baby tamala-tree growing up in a shady place. Please do not run towards this horse-demon.” As He was about to approach the demon, Śrī Krishna had the following conversation with His mother: “Son, where are You going? “Mother, I am going to that horse.” “Aha! That horse is a demon.” “That horse has no rider. What can a horse all alone do to us?” “O Krishna, please come home.” “Mother, do you think I have no common sense and I do not know what should and should not be done?”

Agitated Mother Yashoda abruptly said to Vraja’s King Nanda: “From my earliest youth I never made any demands on you, the master of the house. However, now I have a request. Please hear what I wish. Why do you and your friends not grab that boy at once? Why cannot someone other than my son go and meet this horse-demon?” Hearing these words, Śrī Krishna, who from

time without beginning has cut the demons into pieces, smiled and reassured His mother. Then Śrī Krishna, who gives bliss and shelter to all the worlds, cast a contempt-filled glance at Keshi and called him to come near. Called by Śrī Krishna, who was Putana's enemy, Keshi, who was already as good as defeated by Śrī Krishna's supreme power, and who, convinced of his own superior chivalrous prowess, did not tremble in fear, in order to show off his great powers slowly retreated to a place by the Yamuna's banks.

Then, from far away, he galloped to Krishna to attack Him. Breaking the ground as he galloped, and proudly roaring like a hundred thousand lions, Keshi, the enemy of the demigods, attacked His enemy, Śrī Krishna. Unwilling to tolerate anything more from Keshi, who seemed to be yearning to grab, possess, and devour all that existed, Śrī Krishna, whose form was ferocious like a lion, let out a lion's roar, and then effortlessly grabbed the ferocious demon. Distraught, the people of Vraja all came there. Seeing them, Keshi at once angrily attacked Krishna. Keshi leaped into the sky. With his mouth he seemed to chew up and swallow the sky. As He approached, Śrī Krishna struck him. He tried to kick Krishna. As a person plucks a bunch of blooming flowers, so Śrī Krishna grabbed Keshi's raised tail and hind-legs and, as the ocean's waves tosses tiny particles of foam, tossed Keshi a distance of a hundred bows.

Somehow regaining consciousness after that, Keshi got up, opened his mouth, and charged at Śrī Krishna. Śrī Krishna laughed and, as a giant frog jumps into the mouth of a snake, pushed His left arm into Keshi's wide-open mouth. Like a great glistening snake, Śrī Krishna's arm suddenly expanded within Keshi's mouth. Burning in flames of a great poison, Keshi's teeth at once fell out. Keshi's teeth fell out. His senses were in disarray. His body trembled. Old age suddenly appeared and stood, patiently waiting to place death upon Keshi. When Krishna's fist blocked his throat, all the parts of Keshi's body became ripped into shreds. Pushed by grief, the parts of Keshi's body all became choked in the same way his throat was choked. How, filled with the thought, "The great mace of Krishna's hand, which devours the life's breath of all the world, has entered my throat!", did Keshi's life-breath depart from Keshi's body? Thinking,

"The gateway of this throat is now blocked! I will now open another gateway and exit there", Keshi's life-breath found another exit and departed.

When Keshi's life-breath left his body, Śrī Krishna's arm, like a guest departing from the host's house, came out from Keshi's mouth. Like a house now absent of its master, Keshi's body collapsed. Pushed by destiny, it perished. Emerging from Keshi's throat, Śrī Krishna's arm now stood at Krishna's side. Krishna's arm was like a mystic divine arrow that, after slaying its adversary, returns to its master's quiver. At the end Keshi was freed of all material contamination. This is perfectly appropriate, for Lord Krishna's powerful mercy grants liberation to demons like him.

The sages say Keshi's body was torn into two pieces. Some say it was divided like Jarasandha. Others say it was divided as a cucumber is divided. Even though his material body was broken in two, Keshi attained the oneness of impersonal liberation. The wise demigods then showered jasmine flowers. Aware of Śrī Krishna's desires, the demigods spoke the following words as if they were Śrī Krishna Himself: "Wishing to swallow My body whole, you came before Me with your mouth open. To see if you could actually do that, I placed My arm in your mouth. When I did that, Your life-breath suddenly collapsed. O proud demon-horse, why did you act so rashly?"

Making a sweet tumult like gentle thunder, the people of Vraja surrounded eternal Krishna. They wept tears like a monsoon rain or like a swiftly-moving mountain-stream, tears that flooded the ground. Thirsty with love, surrounding Krishna, each in his heart bearing his own kind of love for Krishna, each thinking that Keshi had been killed and split in two somehow or other, but not by Krishna, and each of them gloriously fortunate, the people of Vraja hugged Krishna and praised Him. They all manifested various symptoms of the ecstasy of love for Krishna.

Returning, after some moments, to external consciousness, the people, accompanied by Krishna, all bathed at a ghata by the Yamuna. That most sacred ghata is even today known by the name Keshi-ghata. A little distance from this ghata, around a bend in the Yamuna, is a grove of trees by another ghata. There the people of Vraja rested. This second ghata was formerly called Chena-gha-



ta. In the language of Mathura District, the word “chena” means “pleasant rest”.

After resting and after joyfully understanding that the death of Keshi was an oracle predicting the eventual death of Kamsa, their happiness doubled. Accompanied by hosts of singers and poets, the people of Vraja surrounded Śrī Krishna. Then, following Vraja’s King Nanda, the people of Vraja gathered together all their cows. Accompanied by Krishna, the people of Vraja called their cows by shouting, “Hī! Hī!” These shouts were like the sound of incessant rainfall, or like the deep sound of thunderclouds. The cowherd people, headed by Vraja’s Prince Krishna, who is the slayer of His enemies, and also headed by Vraja’s King Nanda, followed their cows until they came to the village of Vraja.

Hearing of Keshi’s death, Kamsa became despondent at heart. Feeling like a person with a broken nose, Kamsa would not come out from his palace. Madhukantha then spoke the following concluding words: O Nanda, O King of Vraja, your son, who fulfills all your desires, thus sent the demon Keshi to the abode of Yamaraja.

— Śrī Gopāla-Campū of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī » Translation by Kushakratha Dasa.

SYMBOL OF ANARTHA
Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Thakura

Which symbol of anartha is Keshi demon?

“The mentality: “I am a great devotee or an acarya”, as well as mundane false ego and opulence are destroyed by the killing of the demon Keshi.” (*Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta* 6.6)

Which symbol of anartha is Vyomasura?

“The killing of Vyomasura illustrates the abandonment of the association of the thieves and the hypocrites.” (*Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta* 6.6)

What kind of anartha is the lack of determination? What harm does this anartha cause?

“Let me indulge in sense gratification today, tomorrow I will give it up’, such a weakness of heart can never bring out any auspiciousness. Whatever one’s feels to be obstacles on the path of devotional service, one should immediately give it up by the strength of Caitanya Mahāprabhu’s mercy. Determination is the root of sadhana. In the absence of determination even a stop in the path of Spiritual life will not be advanced.” (*Sajjana Toṣaṇī* 11.5)

Is hypocrisy an anartha?

“One should never hear the advice of the hypocrites who are fond of sense gratification.” (*Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta* 7.1)

—Bhaktivinoda Vānī Vaibhāva » Published by Ishvara Dasa.

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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