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**THE PRAYERS OF AKRURA**  
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**Sukadeva Goswami said:** While Akrura was still offering prayers, the Supreme Lord Krishna withdrew His form that He had revealed in the water, just as an actor winds up his performance. When Akrura saw the vision disappear, he came out of the water and quickly finished his various ritual duties. He then returned to the chariot, astonished.

**[Lord Krishna asked Akrura:]** Have you seen something wonderful on the earth, in the sky or in the water? From your appearance, We think you have.

**[Sri Akrura said:]** Whatever wonderful things the earth, sky or water contain, all exist in You. Since You encompass everything, when I am seeing You, what have I not seen? And now that I am seeing You, O Supreme Absolute Truth, in whom reside all amazing things on the earth, in the sky and in the water, what amazing things could I see in this world? With these words, Akrura, the



son of Gandini, began driving the chariot onward. At the end of the day he arrived in Mathura with Lord Balarama and Lord Krishna. Wherever they passed along the road, O King, the village people came forward and looked upon the two sons of Vasudeva with great pleasure. In fact, the villagers could not withdraw their eyes from Them. Nanda Maharaja and the other residents of Vrindavana, having reached Mathura ahead of the chariot, had stopped at a garden on the outskirts of the city to wait for Krishna and Balarama. After joining Nanda and the others, the Supreme Lord Krishna, the controller of the universe, took humble Akrura's hand in His own and, smiling, spoke as follows.

[**Lord Krishna said:**] Take the chariot and enter the city ahead of us. Then go home. After resting here a while, we will go to see the city.

[**Sri Akrura said:**] O master, without the two of You I shall not enter Mathura. I am Your devotee, O Lord, so it is not fair for You to abandon me, since You are always affectionate to Your devotees. Come, let us go to my house with Your elder brother, the cowherd men and Your companions. O best of friends, O transcendental Lord, in this way please grace my house with its master. I am simply an ordinary householder attached to ritual sacrifices, so please purify my home with the dust of Your lotus feet. By that act of purification, my forefathers, the sacrificial fires and the demigods will all become satisfied. By bathing Your feet, the exalted Bali Maharaja attained not only glorious fame and unequalled power but also the final destination of pure devotees. The water of the river Ganges has purified the three worlds, having become transcendental by bathing Your feet. Lord Shiva accepted that water on his head, and by that water's grace the sons of King Sagara attained to heaven. O Lord of lords, master of the universe, O You whose glories it is most pious to hear and chant! O best of the Yadus, O You whose fame is recounted in excellent poetry! O Supreme Lord Narayana, I offer You my obeisances.

[**The Supreme Lord said:**] I will come to Your house with My elder brother, but first I must satisfy My friends and well-wishers by killing the enemy of the Yadu clan.

**Sukadeva Gosvami said:** Thus addressed by the Lord, Akrura entered the city with a heavy heart. He informed King Kamsa of the success of his mis-

sion and then went home. Lord Krishna desired to see Mathura, so toward evening He took Lord Balarama and the cowherd boys with Him and entered the city. The Lord saw Mathura, with its tall gates and household entrances made of crystal, its immense archways and main doors of gold, its granaries and other storehouses of copper and brass, and its impregnable moats. Beautifying the city were pleasant gardens and parks.

The main intersections were fashioned of gold, and there were mansions with private pleasure gardens, along with guildhalls and many other buildings. Mathura resounded with the calls of peacocks and pet turtledoves, who sat in the small openings of the lattice windows and on the gem-studded floors, and also on the columned balconies and on the ornate rafters in front of the houses. These balconies and rafters were adorned with *vaidūrya* stones, diamonds, crystal quartz, sapphires, coral, pearls and emeralds. All the royal avenues and commercial streets were sprinkled with water, as were the side roads and courtyards, and flower garlands, newly grown sprouts, parched grains and rice had been scattered about everywhere. Gracing the houses' doorways were elaborately decorated pots filled with water, which were bedecked with mango leaves, smeared with yogurt and sandalwood paste, and encircled by flower petals and ribbons. Near the pots were flags, rows of lamps, bunches of flowers and the trunks of banana and betelnut trees.

The women of Mathura hurriedly assembled and went forth to see the two sons of Vasudeva as They entered the city on the King's road, surrounded by Their cowherd boyfriends. Some of the women, my dear King, eagerly climbed to the roofs of their houses to see Them. Some of the ladies put their clothes and ornaments on backwards, others forgot one of their earrings or ankle bells, and others applied makeup to one eye but not the other. Those who were taking their meals abandoned them, others went out without finishing their baths or massages, women who were sleeping at once rose when they heard the commotion, and mothers breast-feeding their infants simply put them aside. The lotus-eyed Lord, smiling as He recalled His bold pastimes, captivated those ladies' minds with His glances. He walked with the gait

of a lordly elephant in rut, creating a festival for their eyes with His transcendental body, which is the source of pleasure for the divine goddess of fortune. The ladies of Mathura had repeatedly heard about Krishna, and thus as soon as they saw Him their hearts melted. They felt honored that He was sprinkling upon them the nectar of His glances and broad smiles.

Taking Him into their hearts through their eyes, they embraced Him, the embodiment of all ecstasy, and as their bodily hairs stood on end, O subduer of enemies, they forgot the unlimited distress caused by His absence. Their lotus faces blooming with affection, the ladies who had climbed to the roofs of the mansions rained down showers of flowers upon Lord Balarama and Lord Krishna. Brahmanas standing along the way honored the two Lords with presentations of yogurt, unbroken barleycorns, pots full of water, garlands, fragrant substances such as sandalwood paste, and other items of worship.

[The women of Mathura exclaimed:] Oh, what severe austerities the gopis must have performed to be able to regularly see Krishna and Balarama, who are the greatest source of pleasure for all mankind!

Seeing a washerman approaching who had been dyeing some clothes, Krishna asked him for the finest laundered garments he had.

[Lord Krishna said:] Please give suitable garments to the two of Us, who certainly deserve them. If you grant this charity, you will undoubtedly receive the greatest benefit. Thus requested by the Supreme Lord, who is perfectly complete in all respects, that arrogant servant of the King became angry and replied insultingly.

[The washerman said:] You impudent boys! You're accustomed to roaming the mountains and forests, and yet You would dare put on such clothes as these! These are the King's possessions You're asking for! Fools, get out of here quickly! Don't beg like this if You want to stay alive. When someone is too bold, the King's men arrest him and kill him and take all his property.

As the washerman thus spoke brazenly, the son of Devaki became angry, and then merely with His fingertips He separated the man's head from his body. The washerman's assistants all dropped

their bundles of clothes and fled down the road, scattering in all directions. Lord Krishna then took the clothes. Krishna and Balarama put on pairs of garments that especially pleased Them, and then Krishna distributed the remaining clothes among the cowherd boys, leaving some scattered on the ground.

Thereupon a weaver came forward and, feeling affection for the Lords, nicely adorned Their attire with cloth ornaments of various colors. Krishna and Balarama looked resplendent, each in His own unique, wonderfully ornamented outfit. They resembled a pair of young elephants, one white and the other black, decorated for a festive occasion. Pleased with the weaver, the Supreme Lord Krishna blessed him that after death he would achieve the liberation of attaining a form like the Lord's, and that while in this world he would enjoy supreme opulence, physical strength, influence, memory and sensory vigor.

The two Lords then went to the house of the garlandmaker Sudama. When Sudama saw Them he at once stood up and then bowed down, placing his head on the ground. After offering Them seats and bathing Their feet, Sudama worshiped Them and Their companions with arghya, garlands, *pān*, sandalwood paste and other presentations.

[Sudama said:] O Lord, my birth is now sanctified and my family free of contamination. Now that You both have come here, my forefathers, the demigods and the great sages are certainly all satisfied with me. You two Lords are the ultimate cause of this entire universe. To bestow sustenance and prosperity upon this realm, You have descended with Your plenary expansions. Because You are the well-wishing friends and Supreme Soul of the whole universe, You regard all with unbiased vision. Therefore, although You reciprocate Your devotees' loving worship, You always remain equally disposed toward all living beings. Please order me, Your servant, to do whatever You wish. To be engaged by You in some service is certainly a great blessing for anyone.

Sukadeva Gosvami continued: O best of kings, having spoken these words, Sudama could understand what Krishna and Balarama wanted. Thus with great pleasure he presented Them with garlands of fresh, fragrant flowers.

Beautifully adorned with these garlands, Krishna and Balarama were delighted, and so were Their companions. The two Lords then offered the surrendered Sudama, who was bowing down before Them, whatever benedictions he desired. Sudama chose unshakable devotion for Krishna, the Supreme Soul of all existence; friendship with His devotees; and transcendental compassion for all living beings.

Not only did Lord Krishna grant Sudama these benedictions, but He also awarded him strength, long life, fame, beauty and ever-increasing prosperity for his family. Then Krishna and His elder brother took Their leave.

—Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 41 » Verses 1–52 » Translations by Disciples of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

### THE TWO AIMS OF KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS MOVEMENT

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Avataras, or incarnations, are expansions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead—Krishna, Govinda.

*advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam  
ādyam purāṇa-puruṣam nava-yauvanam ca  
vedeṣu durlabham adurlabham ātma-bhaktau  
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

"I worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Govinda, who is the original person—nondual, infallible, and without beginning. Although He expands into unlimited forms, He is still the original, and although He is the oldest person, He always appears as a fresh youth. Such eternal, blissful and all-knowing forms of the Lord cannot be understood by the academic wisdom of the Vedas, but they are always manifest to pure, unalloyed devotees." (Brahma-saṁhitā 5.33)

The *Brahma-saṁhitā* describes the avataras. Indeed, all the avataras are described in the authentic scriptures. No one can become an *avatāra*, or incarnation, although this has become fashionable in the Age of Kali. The avataras are described in the authentic scriptures (shastras), and therefore be-

fore one risks accepting a pretender as an *avatāra*, one should refer to the shastras. The shastras say everywhere that Krishna is the original Personality of Godhead and that He has innumerable avataras, or incarnations. Elsewhere in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is said, *rāmādi-mūrtiṣu kalā-niyamena tiṣṭhan*: [Brahma-saṁhitā 5.39] Rama, Nrsimha, Vāraha and many others are consecutive expansions of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. After Krishna comes Balarama, after Balarama is Sankarshana, then Aniruddha, Pradyumna, Narayana and then the *puruṣa*-avataras—Ma-ha-Vishnu, Garbhodakashayi Vishnu and Kshirodakashayi Vishnu. All of them are avataras. One must hear about the avataras. Narrations about such avataras are called *avatāra-kathā*, the narrations of Krishna's expansions. Hearing and chanting these narrations is completely pious.

*Sṁvatām sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ* [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.17]. One who hears and chants can become *puṇya*, purified of material contamination. Whenever there are references to the avataras, religious principles are established, and demons who are against Krishna are killed. The Krishna consciousness movement is spreading all over the world with two aims—to establish Krishna as the Supreme Personality of Godhead and to kill all the pretenders who falsely present themselves as avataras. The preachers of the Krishna consciousness movement must carry this conviction very carefully within their hearts and kill the demons who in many tactful ways vilify the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krishna.

—Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 7: The Science of God » Chapter 10 » Prahlada, the Best Among Exalted Devotees » Purport By His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

### THE SWEETNESS OF MATHURA

Srila Jiva Goswami

Krishna and His entourage entered Mathura City from the south at the place named Devikhara, which was so named because it had once been the residence of many asses. In that place Krishna and the cowherd men stayed. Even today all who do parikrama of Mathura pass by that place in the south. Touch-





ing that place, they all feel wonderful bliss. Seeing a beautiful garden there, a garden that delighted everyone, Lord Krishna personally descended from His chariot. Leaving their carts, the cowherd men again approached Akrura. Akrura, who is like a jewel among all who know what is their own true self-interest, invited Krishna to stay at his home.

Krishna said to him: “At another time I will certainly visit your home.” Krishna then sent Akrura back to his home. Then, accompanied by His cowherd friends, and placing Balarama in front, Lord Krishna, who is always intent on protecting His saintly devotees, as evening approached, entered the wonderful city of Mathura, which was filled with celestial music. Then Lord Krishna saw the gates of Mathura City before Him, gates set with crystal that seemed to form a great smile. Above the gates were 100,000 great windows that seemed to be a host of eyes, unblinking eyes wide with wonder. Above the windows was a great jewel-mosaic roof that seemed to be a forehead above the eyes. The graceful and large topmost portion of the roof was like a great crown, a crown that was a festival of bliss for the eyes. The 100 arches that formed the gateway were like a series of gracefully raised eyebrows. A gentle breeze made everything tremble.

It was as if, by seeing Lord Krishna, everything was trembling in the ecstasy of pure love for Him. The very splendid, beautiful, and artisti-

cally-fashioned-by-the architect golden doors in those gates were like a graceful row of teeth. When the doors opened, it seemed that opened so that the gate’s mouth could recite many prayers glorifying Lord Krishna’s handsomeness. The decorated-with-gold-and-sapphires crossroads and houses past the gates were like many heart-cakras all splendid with the handsome and effulgent presence of Lord Krishna. Those heart-*cakra* crossroads and houses seemed to be filled with bliss and splendor by the people’s always gazing on Lord Krishna. The made-of-celestial-jewels roofs of the houses were like wonderful ornaments adorning that city. The charming cooing of the peacocks and doves was like the pleasing jingling of gracefully-moving ankle-bells. Built of a variety of building materials, the fences and the walls of the houses, which filled the creator Brahma with wonder, were like a great variety of exquisite garments. Made of many effulgent colors, the walls of the houses glistened like silk garments. The effulgent gardens placed everywhere were like a great host of glistening bracelets and armlets. Those gardens always seemed to be offering great hosts of fruits and flowers to please Lord Krishna.

Lined with many beletnut trees, fruit-filled banana trees, and auspicious fill waterpots, every road seemed to be filled with ecstasy, the hairs of its body now standing erect. Now we will describe the response of the goddess like ladies of Mathura, who had never seen Lord



Krishna's Vrindavana-pastimes, when Lord Krishna, who is Vrindavana's king, entered Mathura City. Look! Although they had always stayed in the inner rooms of their homes, and although in this way the sun did not get even the slightest glimpse of them, when the great festival of gazing at Lord Krishna was celebrated, they became ferocious like the fierce midday sun that burns the foreheads of all. Any person that tried then to prevent those ladies from gazing on Krishna was greeted with ferocious resistance and a great host of harsh words.

Krishna and Balarama wonderfully glistened like white and black moons as They walked on the pathways of Mathura City. In the palaces above them a great lotus-forest of Mathuras girls and ladies blossomed with bliss. As Krishna and Balarama, who had enjoyed many pastimes in the forest, now walked in the city, the goddess-like women of Mathura all gazed and gazed on Them. In this way the great wonder that is Krishna and Balarama was gloriously manifested before them. "Look, O my friends! By the touch of Krishna's sweetness Mathura has now become a city flooded with honey!" The beautiful-faced women of Mathura spoke these words. Standing in the topmost rooms of their palaces, they looked like a great host of glistening moons.

One had only one ear adorned by an earring. Another has placed black *añjana* around one eye only. Another had anointed only one foot with red lac. Another had covered only one breast with her garments. In this condition the women of Mathura all ran to see Krishna. Please do not be surprised. Hearing that Krishna

had come, the women hurriedly ran to see Him. 18. Pulling their bodies out from their half-completed baths, abandoning their half-eaten meals, rejecting all shyness in their hearts, and wearing their garments in the wrong ways, the wise women of Mathura all ran, ran from their houses or from wherever they were, to see Krishna. Lotus-eyed Lord Krishna attracted the hearts of the women of Mathura. Lord Krishna, who is graceful and playful like the king of elephants, and powerful like a ferocious lion, and who brings great bliss to the goddess of fortune, brought a great festival of pleasure to the women of Mathura.

The heart-enchancing sight of Krishna, a sight they had only heard of before, now walked on the pathway of their eyes. Sri Krishna, who was like a glistening festival of handsomeness, began to sprinkle the women of Mathura with the nectar of His glance. With the ropes of His glance Sri Krishna drew the women of Mathura to Him. Gazing at the effulgent handsomeness of Krishna, who was now present in the caves of their hearts, the women of Mathura could not believe that He was actually far away from them. Their faces like blooming lotus flowers and their lotuslike forms moving quickly, the women of Mathura climbed to the roofs of their palaces to serve Lord Krishna. Whatever path Lord Krishna took, the women on the roofs showered a rain of jasmine flowers on Him. Wherever He went, the saintly-hearted women of Mathura became filled with bliss.

— Śrī Gopāla-Campū of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī » Translation by Kṣhākrathā Das.

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

**ISKCON**

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