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When Brahma Returns

*Conversation between
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When Lord Brahma returned after a moment of his time, he saw that although by human measurement a complete year had passed, Lord Krishna, was still playing with the boys and calves just as before. These were of course His own expansions. Lord Brahma thought: I have left the boys and calves that were in Gokula sleeping under the spell of my mystic potency, and to this very day they have not risen. Yet a similar number of boys and calves seem to have been playing with Krishna for an entire year. They are certainly different from the ones enspelled by my mystic potency. Who are they? Where did they come from?

Thus Lord Brahma thought long and hard, trying to distinguish between the two sets of boys, who were separately existing. He tried to understand who was real and who was not real, but he could not understand at all.

Thus, because Lord Brahma wanted to mystify the all-pervading Lord Krishna, who can never be mystified, but who, on the contrary, mystifies the entire universe, Brahma himself was

mystified.

As the darkness of snow on a dark night and the light of a glowworm in the daytime have no value, the mystic power of an inferior person who tries to use it against a person with far greater power is unable to accomplish anything; instead, the power of that inferior person is diminished.

Suddenly, while Lord Brahma looked on, all the calves and the boys tending them appeared with complexions the color of bluish rainclouds and were dressed in yellow silken garments. All those personalities had four arms, and were holding a conchshell, disc, mace and lotus flower in Their hands. They wore helmets on Their heads, earrings on Their ears and garlands of forest flowers around Their necks. On the upper portion of the right side of Their chests was the emblem of the goddess of fortune. Furthermore, They wore armlets on Their arms, the *kaustubha* gem around Their necks - which were marked with three lines like a conchshell - and bracelets on Their wrists. With bangles on Their ankles, ornaments on Their feet, and sacred belts around Their waists, They all appeared very handsome. Every part of Their bodies - from Their feet to the top of Their heads - was well decorated with fresh, tender



garlands of tulasi leaves offered by devotees engaged in worshiping the Lord by the greatest pious activities, of hearing and chanting. Those Vishnu forms, by Their pure smiling, which resembled the increasing light of the waxing moon, and by the sidelong glances of Their reddish eyes, created and protected the desires of Their own devotees, as if by the modes of passion and goodness. All beings, both moving and nonmoving, from the four-headed Lord Brahma down to the most insignificant living entity, had taken forms and were differently worshiping those *viṣṇu-mūrtis*, according to their respective capacities, with various means of worship, such as dancing and singing. All the *viṣṇu-mūrtis* were surrounded by the personified mystic perfections, headed by *animā-siddhi*; by the personified mystic potencies, headed by *Ajā*; and by the personified twenty-four elements of the material world, headed by the *mahat-tattva*. Then Lord Brahma saw that time itself (*kāla*), associated nature (*svabhāva*), purificatory rituals (*samskāra*), desire (*kāma*), fruitive activity (*karma*) and the three modes of material nature (*guṇa*), their independence being completely subordinate to the potency of the Lord, had all taken forms and were also worshiping those *viṣṇu-mūrtis*. The *viṣṇu-mūrtis* all had eternal, unlimited forms, full of knowledge and bliss and existing beyond the influence of time. Their greatness was well beyond the scope of the *jnānīs* engaged in studying the *Upaniṣads*. Lord Brahma saw the Supreme Brahman, by whose energy this entire universe, with its moving and nonmoving living beings, is manifested. He also saw at the same time all the calves and boys as the Lord's expansions.

Then, by the power of the effulgence of those *viṣṇu-mūrtis*, Lord Brahma, his eleven senses jolted by astonishment and stunned by transcendental bliss, became silent, just like a child's clay doll in the presence of the village deity. The Supreme Brahman is beyond mental speculation, He is self-manifest, existing in His own bliss, and He is beyond the material energy. He is known by the crest jewels of the Vedas by refutation of irrelevant knowledge. Thus in relation to that Supreme Brahman, the Personality of Godhead, whose glory had been shown by the manifestation of all the four-armed forms of Vishnu, Lord Brahma, the lord of Sarasvati, was mystified. "What is this?" he thought, as he was not able to see anything within his comprehension. Lord Krishna, understanding Brahma's position, at once removed the curtain of His *yogamaya*. Lord Brahma's external consciousness revived, he stood up, like a dead man coming back to life. Opening his eyes with great difficulty, he saw the

entire universe, along with himself. Then, looking in all directions, Lord Brahma immediately saw Vrindavana before him, filled with trees, which were the means of livelihood for the inhabitants and which were equally pleasing in all seasons. Vrindavana is the transcendental abode of the Lord, where there is no hunger, anger or thirst. Though naturally inimical, both human beings and fierce animals live there together in transcendental friendship. Then Lord Brahma saw the Absolute Truth who is one without a second, who possesses full knowledge and who is unlimited. He saw Him assuming the role of a child in a family of cowherd men and standing alone, just as before, with a morsel of food in His hand, searching everywhere for the calves and His cowherd friends. Seeing this, Lord Brahma hastily got down from his swan carrier, fell to the ground like a golden rod and touched the lotus feet of Lord Krishna with the tips of the four crowns on his heads. Offering his obeisance, he bathed the feet of Krishna with the water of his tears of joy. Rising and falling again and again at the lotus feet of Lord Krishna for a long time, Lord Brahma repeatedly remembered the Lord's greatness he had just seen. Then, rising very slowly and wiping his eyes, Lord Brahma looked up at Mukunda (Krishna). Lord Brahma, his head bent low, his mind concentrated and his body trembling, very humbly began, with faltering words, to offer praises to Lord Krishna.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter Thirteen: The Stealing of the Boys and Calves by Brahma » Verses: 40-64.*

AFTER THE DISAPPEARANCE OF YOGAMAYA'S INFLUENCE

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

Seeing that Brahma could not realize the sweet glory He had shown him, and that Brahma was not qualified to view any more of His endless unprecedented glories, Krishna didn't show any more of His opulence. Even though Brahma was highly learned and also the husband of the goddess of learning Sarasvati, he said, "Oh, what an amazing thing I have seen." Then being mystified, he could no longer see those forms. Seeing this and knowing Brahma's lack of qualification to understand His powers, Krishna immediately withdrew the curtain of *yogamaya* (*ajā javanikām*) to make them disappear.

In other words, by the agency of *yogamaya*, Krishna covered the cowherd boys, the grazing calves and Himself looking for the calves. Then Krishna showed new forms of them produced from within Himself, each having four arms.



Then He made that yogamaya disappear. Yogamaya is the potency by which Krishna is sometimes manifest and sometimes not manifest. Mahamaya, on the other hand, is the potency which covers the actual reality and displays something unreal. Therefore, in this verse the word ajā refers to yogamaya.

Krishna is beyond logic (*atarkye*), self-manifest and blissful (*sva-pramīṭike*). If Krishna does not personally reveal Himself, there is absolutely no means - not even by scriptural knowledge - to realize Him. Therefore Krishna is beyond logic or argument. He is also beyond the material energy (*paratra ajāta*).

*tato 'nujñāpya bhagavān
sva-bhuvanāṁ prāg avasthitān
vatsān pulinam āninye
yathā-pūrva-sakhaṁ svakam*

“Krishna brought the calves (*āninye*), who were absorbed in eating grass (*avasthitān*), back to the same place (*prāg*) on the bank of the river (*pulinam*), where the cowherd boys were sitting in the exactly their same positions (*svakam*) taking lunch. In that place sat the original cowherd boys (*yathā-pūrva-sakhaṁ*), who were different from the expansion cowherd boys who performed pastimes for one year with Krishna.”

Editorial comments: When Lord removed the curtain of yogamaya, the *viṣṇu-mūrtis* disappeared from the vision of Brahma and he was able to see the original cowherd boys and calves. At the same time, the boys created by Mahamaya, who were under the spell of Brahma's mystic power also disappeared. According to Srila Sanatana Goswami, the calves and boys remained in the forest and on the riverbank respectively, for one full year. But the boys did not realize it; for them it was only a moment. Lord Brahma now got down from his swan and after offering his respectful obeisance he glorified Lord Krishna by various prayers.

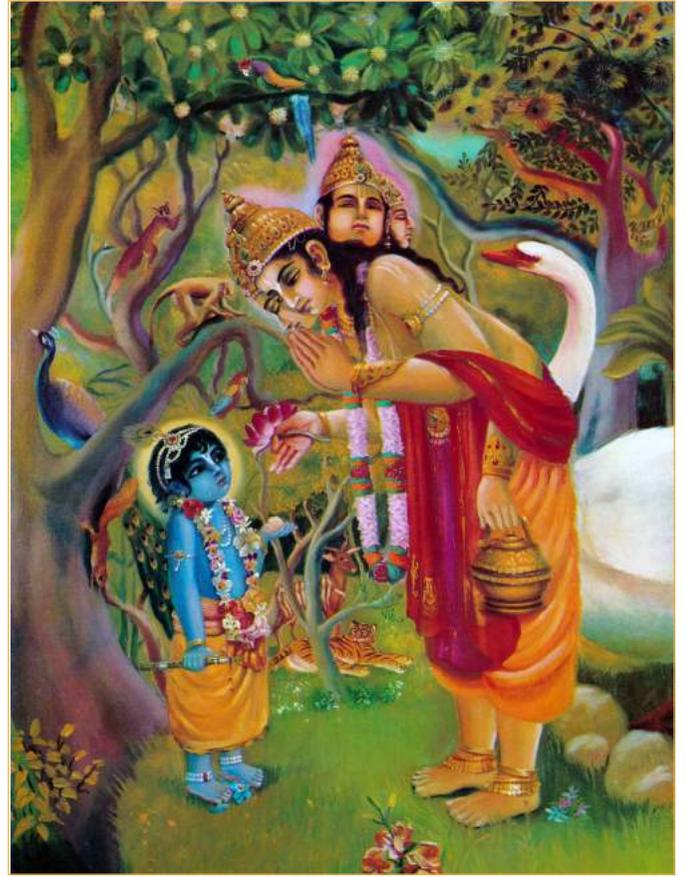
— *Sārārtha-darśini commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam by Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakur » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter.13: The Stealing of the Boys and Calves by Brahma » Verse:57 and Chapter 14. Brahma's Prayers to Lord Kṛṣṇa » Verse 42 » Translation by Bhanu Swami. Edited by Mahamidhi Swami.*

BRAHMA'S PRAYERS TO THE SUPREME LORD

His Divine Grace

A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

The difference between the devotees of Vrindavana and devotees in other places is that the residents of Vrindavana have no other



desire other than to associate with Krishna. Being very kind to His devotees, Krishna fulfills their desire. Because they always want Krishna's association, the Lord is always prepared to grant it. The devotees of Vrindavana are also spontaneously in love with Krishna. They do not need to strictly follow regulative principles because they are already naturally developed in transcendental love for Krishna. Regulative principles are required for persons who have not achieved such a position of spontaneous love. Brahma is a devotee of the Lord, but he is an ordinary devotee subject to following regulative principles. He prays to Krishna to give him the chance to take birth in Vrindavana so that he might be elevated to the platform of spontaneous love.

Lord Brahma said: “My Lord, sometimes I am puzzled as to how Your Lordship will be able to repay, in gratitude, the devotional service of these residents of Vrindavana. Although I know that You are the supreme source of all benediction, I am puzzled to know how You will be able to reciprocate all the service that You are receiving from these residents of Vrindavana. I meditate on how You are so kind, so magnanimous, that even Putana - who came to cheat You by disguising herself as an affectionate mother - was awarded liberation and the actual position of a mother. And other demons belonging to the same



family, such as Aghasura and Bakasura, were also favored with liberation and achieved You. Thinking of this, I am puzzled. These residents of Vrindavana have given You everything—their bodies, their minds, their love, their homes, their possessions. Everything is being utilized for Your purpose. So how will You be able to repay Your debt to them? You have already given Yourself to Putana! I surmise that You shall ever remain a debtor to the residents of Vrindavana, being unable to repay their loving service.”

“My Lord, I can understand that the incomparable and unexcelled service rendered by the residents of Vrindavana is due to their spontaneously engaging all natural instincts in lovingly serving You. It is said that attachment for material objects and home is due to illusion, which makes a living entity bound to the material world. However, this is only the case for persons who are not conscious of You. For the residents of Vrindavana, obstacles such as attachment to hearth and home are non-existent. Because their attachment has been directed unto You their homes have been converted into temples by Your constant presence there. Since they have forgotten everything for Your sake, there is no impediment due to material involvement. For a Krishna conscious person, there is no such thing as impediments due to attachment for hearth and home. Nor is there any illusion.”

“I can also understand that Your appearance as a small cowherd boy, a child of the cowherd men, is not even slightly a material affair. You are so much obliged by the affection of the Vrindavana cowherds that You came here to inspire them to more loving service by Your transcendental presence. In Vrindavana there is no distinction between material and spiritual because everything is dedicated to Your loving service. My dear Lord, Your Vrindavana pastimes are simply to inspire Your devotees. If someone takes those pastimes to be material, he is mistaken or misled.”

“My dear Lord Krishna, those who deride You, claiming that You have a material body like an ordinary man, are described in the *Bhagavad-gītā* as demoniac and less intelligent. You are always transcendental. The non-devotees are cheated because they consider You to be of the material creation. Actually, You have assumed this body, which exactly resembles that of an ordinary cowherd boy, only to increase the devotion and transcendental bliss of Your devotees.”

“My dear Lord, I have nothing to say about people who claim that they have realized God; or that by their realization they have themselves become God. As far as I am concerned, I frankly admit that for me it is not possible to realize You

by my body, mind or speech. What can I say about You? How can I realize You by my limited senses? I cannot even think of You perfectly with my mind, which is the master of the senses. Your qualities, Your activities and Your body cannot be conceived of by any person within this material world. Only by Your mercy can one understand, to some extent, what You are.”

“My dear Lord, although I sometimes think that I am the master of this universe, You are the actual Supreme Lord of all creation. I may be the master of this universe, but there are innumerable universes, and there are also innumerable Brahmas who preside over these universes; in actuality You are the master of them all. As the Supersoul in everyone’s heart, You know everything. Please, therefore, accept me as Your surrendered servant. I hope that You will excuse me for committing the great offense of disturbing You in Your pastimes with Your friends and calves. If You will kindly allow me, I will immediately leave so that, by my absence, You can continue to enjoy pastimes Your friends and calves.”

“My dear Lord Krishna, Your very name suggests that You are all-attractive. The attraction of the sun and the moon are all due to You. Through the capacity of the sun, You are beautifying the very existence of the Yadu dynasty. And with the actions of the moon, You are enhancing the potency of the land, the demigods, the *brāhmaṇas*, the cows and the oceans. By your enlightening power, demons like Kamsa and others are annihilated. Therefore it is my deliberate conclusion that You are the only venerable Deity within the creation. Accept my repeated obeisance until the annihilation of this material world. As long as there is sunshine within this material world, kindly accept my humble obeisance.”

In this way, after offering humble and respectful obeisance unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead and circumambulating Him three times, Brahma, the master of the universe prepared to return to his abode, known as Brahmāloka. By a gesture, the Supreme Personality of Godhead gave him permission to do so.

— KRISHNA, *The Supreme Personality of Godhead* Chapter 14: Prayers
Offered by Lord Brahma to Lord Krishna.

WHY KRISHNA DID NOT RESPOND TO BRAHMA’S PRAYERS Sri Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

Lord Krishna was playing exactly like an innocent young cowherd boy in Vrindavana. When the four-headed Brahma offered prayers



the Lord maintained His role as a young cowherd boy and thus remained silent before Brahma. Krishna's silence indicates the following thoughts: "Where did this four-headed Brahma come from? What is he doing? What are these words he keeps on speaking? I am busy looking for My calves. I am just a cowherd boy and do not understand all this." Lord Brahma had considered Lord Krishna an ordinary cowherd boy and had treated Him as such. After accepting Brahma's prayers, Krishna continued to play as a cowherd boy and thus did not answer the four-headed Brahma. Rather, Krishna was more interested in rejoining His cowherd boyfriends for the picnic lunch on the bank of the Yamuna river.

— *Sārārtha-darśinī* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by Śrīla Viṣṇvanātha Chakravartī Thakur » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 14. Brahma's Prayers to Lord Kṛṣṇa » Translation by Bhanu Swami. Edited by Mahanidhi Swami.

BRAHMA LEAVES FOR HIS OWN ABODE

Śrīla Vaiyaṣakī

Having thus offered his prayers, Brahma three times circumambulated his worshipful Lord, the unlimited Personality of Godhead, and then bowed at His lotus feet. The appointed creator of the universe then returned to his own residence. After granting His son Brahma permission to leave, the Supreme Personality of Godhead took

the calves, who were still where they had been a year earlier, and brought them to the riverbank, where He had been taking His meal and where His cowherd boyfriends remained just as before. O King, although the boys had passed an entire year they considered that year merely half a moment. What indeed is not forgotten by those whose minds are bewildered by the Lord's illusory potency? By that power of Maya, this entire universe remains in perpetual bewilderment, and in this atmosphere of forgetfulness no one can understand even his own identity.

The cowherd boyfriends said to Lord Krishna: You have returned so quickly! We have not eaten even one morsel in Your absence. Please come here and take Your meal without distraction. Then Lord Hrishikeshā, smiling, finished His lunch in the company of His cowherd friends. While they were returning from the forest to their homes in Vraja, Lord Krishna showed the cowherd boys the skin of the dead serpent Aghasura.

Lord Krishna's transcendental body was decorated with peacock feathers and flowers and painted with forest minerals, and He played His bamboo flute loudly and festively. As He called out to His calves by name, His cowherd boyfriends purified the whole world by chanting His glories. Thus Lord Krishna entered the cow grazing pasture of His father Nanda Mahārāja, and the sight of His beauty at once produced a great festival for the eyes of all the cowherd women. As the cowherd boys reached the village of Vraja, they sang, "Today Krishna saved us by killing a great serpent!" Some of the boys described Krishna as the son of Yashoda, and others as the son of Nanda Maharaja.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum
» Chapter 14. Brahma's Prayers to Lord Krishna » Verses: 41-48.

PRAYER TO YOGAMAYA

Śrīla Bhaktivinoḍa Thakura

*āmāra samāna hīna nāhi e soṁsāre
asthira ha'yechi poḍi' bhāba pārābāre*

The likes of such a lowly soul as me is not to be found anywhere in this world. Thus I have become most agitated due to falling into this vast ocean of material existence.

*kuladebī jogamāyā more kṛpā kori'
ābaraṇa sambaribe kabe biśwodarī*

Oh Yogamaya! When will you show mercy to me by lifting up the curtain of illusion with



which you shroud the universe in your external form of Mahamaya? You are known as Kuladevi, the traditional worshipable Goddess of all the Vaishnavas dynasties.

*śunechi āgame bede mahimā tomāra
śrī-kṛṣṇa-bimukhe bāndhi karāo soṁsāra*

I have heard of your glories and activities from the Vedic literatures. You take all those souls who are averse to Krishna and bind them within the material world.

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-sāmmukhya jā'ra bhāgya-krame hoyā
tā're mukti diyā koro' aśoka abhoyā*

To that person whose good fortune gradually dawns, allowing him to again become favorably disposed to Krishna, you award liberation and make him free from all grief and fear.

*e dāse janani kori' akaitaba doyā
bṛndābane deha' sthāna tumi jogamāyā*

Oh my dear Mother! Showing your causeless mercy to this servant, give me a place in Vrindavana, for you are Yogamaya Herself (the

internal energy of yoga, or union).

*tomāke laṅghiyā kothā jibe kṛṣṇa pāya
kṛṣṇa-rasa prakāṣiṭo tomāra kṛpāya*

Without complying with you, no soul at any time can get Krishna, for the manifestation of Krishna's pastimes is all enacted only by your mercy.

*ttumi kṛṣṇa-sahacarī jagata-jananī
tumi dekhāile more kṛṣṇa-cintāmaṇi*

You are the devoted follower of Lord Krishna, and you are the Mother of the universe. You have shown me the transcendental touchstone of Krishna consciousness.

*nīṣkapāta ho'ye mātā cāo mora pāne
baiṣṇaba biśwāsa bṛddhi ha'ka prati-khaṇe*

My dear Mother, I sincerely wish that you will let my faith in the Vaisnavas increase at every moment.

*baiṣṇaba-carāṇa binā bhāba-parābāra
bhakatibinoda nāre hoibāre pāra*

Without the lotus feet of the devotees of the Lord, Bhaktivinoda is not able to cross to the other side of this ocean of material existence.

—Adapted from the book Śrī Śrī Kalyāṇa Kalpa-taru - The Desire Tree of Auspiciousness by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura.

!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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