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## CONQUERED BY HIS DEVOTEE

*His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta  
Swami Prabhupada*



Although Krishna is not conquerable, he likes to be conquered by his devotee. That is his position. Just like he willingly allowed himself to be conquered by Mother Yasoda, to be conquered by Radharani, to be conquered by his friends. Krishna became defeated and he has to take his friend on his shoulder. Sometimes we see that a king keeps a joker amongst his associates. Sometimes that joker insults the king, and the king enjoys it. In Bengal there was a famous joker named Gopal Bon. One day the king asked him, "Gopal, what is the difference between you and an ass?" He immediately measured the distance from the king to himself and said, "The difference is only three feet." Everyone began to laugh. And the king enjoyed that insult. Because sometimes it is required.

Similarly, everyone praises Krishna's exalted position. Krishna is the Supreme Lord. In Vaikuntha, there is only praising. But in Vrindavan, Krishna is free to accept insults from his devotees. People do not know what is Vrindavan life; the devotees there are so exalted. Radharani orders, "Don't allow Krishna to come here!" And Krishna cannot come in. He flatters the other *gopīs*, "Please allow me to go there." "No, no. There is no order. You cannot go." So Krishna likes that. ❀

— Nectar of Devotion lecture, Calcutta. 30 January 1973.

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## THE BIRTH OF SRI KRISHNA

*Sri Sajjana Toshani  
Vol. XXIX, September 1931*

No author's name was given to this article. Since Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Saraswati Thakur was the editor for Sajjana Toshani in September of 1931, it was either written directly by him or it was written under his supervision.

By the testimony of the holy scriptures, Sri Krishna manifested the divine *līlā* of his most auspicious birth in this phenomenal world about five thousand years ago. The Supreme Personality of Godhead was born in the holy city Mathura.

Based on the above scriptural references (testimony), the worship of Sri Krishna has been confounded, by some, with the worship of an historical hero. This is because it has been gratuitously assumed, even by writers who call themselves believers in the divinity of Jesus Christ, that Sri Krishna has been conclusively proven human by the admitted fact of his being born of human parents.

The abnormal term "incarnation", or "incarceration in the flesh", has been invented by so-called theologians to denote the miracle of Christ's nativity. Christ has been described as having put on the mortal coil in order to experience, and by that experiencing to deliver the human race from the sufferings which the flesh is heir to. It is out of deference to the divine nature of Christ that these theologians regard this condescension on his part as a miracle. If Christ were to be admitted as having been born as a mortal, he then becomes an ordinary historical

personage, to the great relief of all persons who aspire to understand the nature of divinity by means of their own muddy intelligence. Further, if this admission is made, such writers are no longer obliged to acknowledge the absurdity of a doctrine of an historical incarnation who is not bound to the laws of human society.

It is necessary to get rid of the idea of 'historical incarnation' in the above sense to understand the nature of Sri Krishna's birth. Sri Krishna's own divine form became visible to mortal eyes under the figure of a human baby born in the usual way. But the event itself was a true manifestation of the eternal transcendental birth of the divinity. This transcendental nature was not and can never be perceived by any conditioned soul. The supreme chose to disclose itself in the figure of a human child, an event which has correspondence to the divine event. However, the nature of this correspondence itself is wholly inconceivable to the limited understanding of conditioned souls. By these criteria, the birth of Sri Krishna is prevented by the narrators of the scriptures from imbibing any of the unwholesomeness of a mortal birth or an historical event.

The son-hood of Godhead, in the eternal transcendental sense, is unreservedly admitted by the doctrine of divine descent (*avatāra*). This doctrine has been wrongly termed 'incarnation' because the process of descent does not refer to the divinity's assumption of the mortal coil for rendering 'service' to humanity by undergoing mortal suffering. The doctrine of divine descent implies, on the contrary, that Godhead can never be subject to any limitation in the mundane sense. Or, in other words, there is eternal and irreconcilable distinction between the mundane and the purely spiritual, of which the latter is the proper nature of the substantive reality — the realm of activities of the divinity. The mundane realm eternally dogs the absolute as its shadow, or rather its reflected image (a distorted and unwholesome one at that). The divine realm is full of spiritual activity, dimly and inconceivably reflected in the events of this world as viewed through the limited mind of the conditioned soul.

Sri Madhavendra Puri, in the line of disciplic succession from Sri Madhva and one generation earlier than Sri Chaitanya, is regarded as the first religious preacher to realize the nature of loving service to Sri Krishna as described in the tenth *skandha* of the *Bhāgavatam*. Subsequently, this was fully promulgated by the teachings and

practice of Sri Krishna Chaitanya as the highest, most perfect form of worship. The method of divine worship practiced by the milkmaids of Vraja is declared by Sri Chaitanya to be higher than all other forms. The worship of Sri Radhika, the premier milkmaid of Vraja, is proclaimed by the same authority as the highest of all, incorporating and surpassing the rest. Sri Krishna dwelt in Vraja until his eleventh year. Therefore, Sri Radhika's worship of adolescent Krishna by the method of amorous love is regarded by the followers of Sri Chaitanya as the complete form of service to Sri Krishna. This worship of Sri Krishna is of such supreme excellence that the Lord eternally prefers to clothe himself in the mood of his counter-whole Sri Radhika in order to taste the sweetness of her service to him. Sri Krishna clad in the mood and beauty of Sri Radhika is Sri Krishna Chaitanya — the ultimate source of complete service.

Neither the son-hood nor the adolescent consort-hood of Sri Krishna are events of the mundane plane. Those seriously disposed to know their real transcendental nature are enabled to do so by the causeless mercy of Sri Krishna Chaitanya. By the test of scripture, he is the only teacher of the world, being alone absolutely fit to practice what he teaches. Accordingly, the scriptures declare that the sincere willingness to serve Sri Krishna to the exclusion of all else is the only method of attaining his service. This can only be attained by the grace of the spiritual guide who wields the power of Sri Krishna Chaitanya.

Unless the whole scheme for the redemption of the conditioned soul is clearly kept in mind, the service of Godhead is apt to be confused with mundane affairs performed for the attainment of limited illusory results. From the mundane point of view there can be no meaning in the worship of Godhead. If there is to be any acceptable service of Godhead it should be absolutely free from all mundane unwholesomeness; rather, it should completely fulfill, in a never-ending order of progression, all aspirations of all aptitudes of the conditioned soul.

The most valued possession of the conditioned soul is his individual nature, his personality. He wants to be assured of the substantive continuance of his present personality by the method of fulfillment of his particular outlook and function in accordance with his individual outlook. In other words, by analysis, the true nature of the soul is essentially cognitive. This cognitive nature

wants to be assured of its complete fulfillment. It wants this consummation because of not being content with its present position. The scriptures say this nature is capable of being satisfied only with the sincere and impartial realization that anything offered by its present, limited outlook can never give what it really wants. Therefore, if the conditioned soul wants real satisfaction, a radical change of outlook and environment is imperative. With its present equipment, such a soul has no access (presently or in the future) to that plane. If the feasibility of attaining a state of complete fulfillment is admitted, it follows that such present equipment cannot be regarded as part and parcel of the self. After all, for the conditioned soul to regard its present equipment as not inherent but, rather, as an obstacle in the way of realizing what the real self requires, does not amount to self-destruction.

The problem for the conditioned soul is to carry its personality, unimpaired and fully expanded, to a sphere where it can properly exercise all its faculties in a perfectly satisfying way. The discoveries of the physical sciences succeed, somewhat, in persuading that the solution of this problem can be found on the mundane plane. But the physical sciences, in the pride of their earthly triumphs, have learnt to look askance at the very problem the soul has always been putting to itself. (At any rate, they have no mind to waste their time over what they suppose is no better than a form of hallucinative idleness of minds without sufficient mundane occupation.) Critics trained in this materialistic school of modern thought feel themselves square pegs in round holes when they find it necessary to investigate this problem of religion. Those among them who persist in this quest, which does not reward its participants with the discovery of any earthly good, find it necessary to seek the aid of physical science's conclusions for the purpose of finding the absolute. But one can never get blood out of stone.

Sri Krishna is the absolute — the conclusions of the physical sciences do not apply to him, for they lie off his proper plane altogether. In order to have access to the plane of the absolute, it is necessary to realize one's spiritual self. The external coverings of the physical and mental coils, which the conditioned soul mistakes for the self, have no means to approach the spiritual plane. It is open to the physical scientists to refuse to believe in the existence of the absolute, despite the consistent promptings of their own rational

natures. This is what the atheist actually does. He refuses to be rational in order to disbelieve the absolute. But all the ephemeral discoveries of the physical sciences will never succeed in stifling the eternal quests of the ignored soul.

The absolute possesses a specific personality of his own that is the source of all existence, both material and transcendental. The absolute person possesses a specific name and a specific body. In these respects, there is an inconceivable but realizable resemblance between the state of man and Sri Krishna. Sri Krishna is simultaneously unborn, in the earthly sense, and eternally born on the transcendental plane. The eternal birth of Sri Krishna is perceived only by those who have attained a very advanced state of spiritual realization. Sri Krishna manifests his eternal birth in the perfectly pure spiritual essence called Vasudev, in the language of the scriptures. This essence does not belong to the tiny soul of man but may make himself known to a pure soul. By the grace of Vasudev, the tiny soul is able to realize the divine event of Sri Krishna's birth, which is otherwise inaccessible to him. ❧

## FESTIVAL OF THE BIRTH OF THE LORD AND HIS ASSOCIATES

*Srila Baladev Vidyabhushana's  
Śrī Aīśvarya-kādambinī  
chapter five, verses 1-19*

Lotus-eyed Lord Krishna, the master of all transcendental opulence and glory, entered Maharaja Vasudev and appeared before Maharaja Nanda. Learned and exalted, Vasudev and Nanda gave Krishna to their wives, who both held Him as their son.

Because of Krishna's entrance in their wombs, the two friends Devaki and Yasoda became very beautiful. Appearing as splendid lightning, they delighted the pious devotees and pained the envious demons.

When Lord Mukunda, Krishna, appeared in this world, musical instruments sounded of their own accord, trees and flowers blossomed, and the minds and hearts of the *brāhmaṇas* and devotees also blossomed with happiness.

On the eighth night of the dark moon, at midnight, when the star Rohini was near the moon, the queen of Vraja easily gave birth to twins, Lord Hari and the goddess Durga, and at the same moment Devaki gave birth to a single child, Lord Hari. When Lord Hari appeared in this way, the pure-hearted devotees became filled with joy. ❧

Seeing his son and knowing Him to be the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Vasudev became filled with happiness and gave away millions of cows in charity within his mind. Because he was afraid of Kamsa, Vasudev quickly carried his unlimitedly powerful son to the home of his brother, the king of Vraja. Vasudev placed his own son in Nanda's home, took Yasoda's daughter, and gave her to King Kamsa. By Lord Krishna's inconceivable potency, the two Krishnas born separately from Devaki and Yasoda became one tiny child.

From his associates, the king of Vraja learned about the birth of his son, who was in truth the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Overcome with joy, the king dressed in costly garments and ornaments and had the best of *brāhmaṇas* perform the birth ceremony according to the rules of the *śruti-sāstra*. Nanda Maharaja was naturally generous and full of faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Overwhelmed with joy at the festive celebration of his son's birth, he gave two million nicely decorated cows along with their calves in charity to the *brāhmaṇas*. Nanda Maharaja gave to the *brāhmaṇas* seven hills of grain along with many jewels, golden ornaments, and costly garments. All the cows were carefully decorated for the occasion. Vraja became filled with wonder.

The *brāhmaṇas, sūtas* (professional reciters of the old histories), *māgadhas* (professional reciters of the histories of royal dynasties), and *vandīs*

(general singers of prayers) recited auspicious prayers. Musical instruments were sounded, and there was a great wonder of singing and dancing. Hearing about the auspicious transcendental qualities of Nanda Maharaja's son, the cowherd people became full of joy. Nicely dressed, wearing jeweled ornaments, and bearing valuable gifts in their hands, they eagerly went to the home of the king of Vraja. Dressed in wonderful colorful ornaments, beautiful jewelled earrings, ankle bells, and great necklaces, and carrying gifts in their hands, the women of the town of Vrajapura came to the king's palace, eager to see Lord Krishna. Their voices decorated with the shouts of jaya, the people of Vraja sprinkled ghee, yoghurt, and tumeric. As if mad with happiness, Brahma, Siva, Sanatkumara, and all the demigods danced in the king's courtyard. With a joyful heart, the king of Vraja welcomed his friends and relatives and gave them gifts of many priceless jeweled ornaments, costly garments, fragrant incense and perfume, fulfilling all their desires. Nanda Maharaja glowed with happiness at the celebration of his son's birth. He opened wide the doors of his treasury and gave charity without restriction. Drowning in a flood of happiness, the beggars loudly praised the king's charity that fulfilled all their desires.

At first the king of Vraja and his subjects experienced a happiness within measured limits, but when child Krishna, the Supreme Lord, arrived, everyone's happiness at once passed beyond all limits. Behind Krishna came Sri Balarama, Sridama, Ujjvala, and many other children. Shining with great lustre, these boys made Vraja appear like the peak of a mountain of jewels. Filled with transcendental glory and opulence, Govinda and the other boys filled with happiness the homes of the fortunate cowherd men headed by Maharaja Nanda in Vrajabhumi.

Even though Lord Krishna, the son of Maharaja Nanda, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ultimate goal of all living entities, he still considers that the supreme goal of his life is Sri Radha, who has fathomless beauty and numberless transcendental qualities, and who appeared in the holy abode of Vraja as the daughter of Kirtida-devi. ❀

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