

CHAPTER FORTY-FIVE

Kṛṣṇa Rescues His Teacher's Son

This chapter describes how Lord Kṛṣṇa consoled Devakī, Vasudeva and Nanda Mahārāja and installed Ugrasena as king. It also relates how Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma completed Their education, retrieved the dead son of Their guru and then returned home.

Noting that His parents — Vasudeva and Devakī — had realized His true position as God, Śrī Kṛṣṇa expanded His Yogamāyā to again make them think of Him as their dear child. Then, with Lord Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa approached them and said how unhappy He was that He and they had been unable to enjoy the mutual satisfaction of parents and children who live together. Then He stated, “Even in a lifetime of one hundred years, no son can ever repay the debt he owes his parents, from whom he receives his very body. Any capable son who fails to support his parents will be forced, in the hereafter, to eat his own flesh. Indeed, any person who does not maintain and nourish those under his care — children, wife, spiritual masters, brāhmaṇas, elderly parents, and so on — is simply a living corpse. It was out of fear of Kaṁsa that We could not serve you, so now please forgive Us.” Vasudeva and Devakī, overcome with emotion upon hearing these words of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's, embraced their two sons and in ecstasy shed a torrent of tears.

Having thus satisfied His mother and father, Lord Kṛṣṇa offered Kaṁsa's kingdom to His maternal grandfather, Ugrasena, and then arranged for all His family members who had fled in fear of Kaṁsa to return to their homes. Protected by the mighty arms of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the Yādavas began to enjoy supreme bliss.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma next approached Nanda Mahārāja and praised him for having cared so lovingly for Them, another's sons. Kṛṣṇa then said to Nanda, “Dear Father, please return to Vraja. Knowing how much you and Our other relatives are suffering in separation from Us, Balarāma and I will come to see you as soon as We have satisfied your friends here in Mathurā.” Kṛṣṇa then worshiped Nanda with various offerings, and Nanda felt overwhelmed with love for his sons. After tearfully embracing Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, he took the cowherd men and departed for Vraja. Next Vasudeva had his priests perform his sons' ritual of second birth. Kṛṣṇa

and Balarāma then went to Garga Muni to take the vow of brahmacarya, celibacy. Afterward, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, though omniscient, desired to reside at the school of a spiritual master, and thus They went to live with Sāndīpani Muni at Avantīpura.

To teach the proper way to respect one's guru, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma served Their spiritual master with great devotion, as They would a Deity of the Supreme Lord Himself. Sāndīpani Muni, pleased by Their service, imparted to Them detailed knowledge of all the Vedas, together with their six corollaries and the Upaniṣads. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma needed to hear each subject explained only once to assimilate it completely, and thus in sixty-four days They learned the sixty-four traditional arts.

Before taking leave of Their guru, the two Lords offered Sāndīpani Muni any gift he desired. The wise Sāndīpani, seeing Their amazing prowess, requested that They bring back his son, who had died in the ocean at Prabhāsa.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma mounted a chariot and went to Prabhāsa, where They approached the shore and were worshiped by the presiding deity of the ocean. Kṛṣṇa asked the ocean to return His spiritual master's son, and the lord of the ocean replied that a demon dwelling within the ocean named Pāñcajana had taken the boy away. Hearing this, Śrī Kṛṣṇa entered the ocean, killed that demon and took the shell that had grown from his body. But when Kṛṣṇa did not find His guru's son within the demon's belly, He went to the planet of Yamarāja, the lord of death. Yamarāja came forward when he heard Kṛṣṇa blow the Pāñcajanya conchshell and devotedly worshiped Him. Lord Kṛṣṇa then asked Yamarāja for Sāndīpani Muni's son, and Yamarāja immediately gave him to the two Lords.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma then returned to Their spiritual master and presented him with his son, requesting him to choose yet another favor. But Sāndīpani Muni replied that by having obtained disciples such as Them, all his desires were fulfilled. He thus instructed Them to return home.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma traveled to Their home by chariot, and upon Their arrival all the citizens became unlimitedly ecstatic to see Them, just like persons who have regained a lost treasure.

Text 1:

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Understanding that His parents were becoming aware of His transcendental opulences, the Supreme Personality of Godhead thought that this should not be allowed to happen. Thus He expanded His Yoga-māyā, which bewilders His devotees.

Text 2:

Lord Kṛṣṇa, the greatest of the Sātvatas, approached His parents with His elder brother. Humbly bowing His head and gratifying them by respectfully addressing them as “My dear mother” and “My dear father,” Kṛṣṇa spoke as follows.

Text 3:

[Lord Kṛṣṇa said:] Dear Father, because of Us, your two sons, you and mother Devakī always remained in anxiety and could never enjoy Our childhood, boyhood or youth.

Text 4:

Deprived by fate, We could not live with you and enjoy the pampered happiness most children enjoy in their parents’ home.

Text 5:

With one’s body one can acquire all goals of life, and it is one’s parents who give the body birth and sustenance. Therefore no mortal man can repay his debt to his parents, even if he serves them for a full lifetime of a hundred years.

Text 6:

A son who, though able to do so, fails to provide for his parents with his physical resources and wealth is forced after his death to eat his own flesh.

Text 7:

A man who, though able to do so, fails to support his elderly parents, chaste wife, young child or spiritual master, or who neglects a brāhmaṇa or anyone who comes to him for shelter, is considered dead, though breathing.

Text 8:

Thus We have wasted all these days, unable as We were to properly honor you because Our minds were always disturbed by fear of Kaṁsa.

Text 9:

Dear Father and Mother, please forgive Us for not serving you. We are not independent and have been greatly frustrated by cruel Kaṁsa.

Text 10:

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus beguiled by the words of Lord Hari, the Supreme Soul of the universe, who by His internal illusory potency appeared to be a human, His parents joyfully raised Him up on their laps and embraced Him.

Text 11:

Pouring out a shower of tears upon the Lord, His parents, who were bound up by the rope of affection, could not speak. They were overwhelmed, O King, and their throats choked up with tears.

Text 12:

Thus having comforted His mother and father, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appearing as the son of Devakī, installed His maternal grandfather, Ugrasena, as King of the Yadus.

Text 13:

The Lord told him: O mighty King, We are your subjects, so please command Us. Indeed, because of the curse of Yayāti, no Yadu may sit on the royal throne.

Text 14:

Since I am present in your entourage as your personal attendant, all the demigods and other exalted personalities will come with heads bowed to offer you tribute. What, then, to speak of the rulers of men?

Texts 15-16:

The Lord then brought all His close family members and other relatives back from the various places to which they had fled in fear of Kaṁsa. He received the Yadus, Vṛṣṇis, Andhakas, Madhus, Dāśārhas, Kukuras and other clans with due honor, and He also consoled them, for they were weary of living in foreign lands. Then Lord Kṛṣṇa, the creator of the

universe, resettled them in their homes and gratified them with valuable gifts.

Texts 17-18:

The members of these clans, protected by the arms of Lord Kṛṣṇa and Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, felt that all their desires were fulfilled. Thus they enjoyed perfect happiness while living at home with their families. Because of the presence of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, they no longer suffered from the fever of material existence. Every day these loving devotees could see Mukunda's ever-cheerful lotus face, which was decorated with beautiful, merciful smiling glances.

Text 19:

Even the most elderly inhabitants of the city appeared youthful, full of strength and vitality, for with their eyes they constantly drank the elixir of Lord Mukunda's lotus face.

Text 20:

Then, O exalted Parīkṣit, the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Devakī, along with Lord Balarāma, approached Nanda Mahārāja. The two Lords embraced him and then addressed him as follows.

Text 21:

[Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma said:] O Father, you and mother Yaśodā have affectionately maintained Us and cared for Us so much! Indeed, parents love their children more than their own lives.

Text 22:

They are the real father and mother who care for, as they would their own sons, children abandoned by relatives unable to maintain and protect them.

Text 23:

Now you should all return to Vraja, dear Father. We shall come to see you, Our dear relatives who suffer in separation from Us, as soon as We have given some happiness to your well-wishing friends.

Text 24:

Thus consoling Nanda Mahārāja and the other men of Vraja, the infallible Supreme Lord respectfully honored them with gifts of clothing, jewelry, household utensils and so on.

Text 25:

Nanda Mahārāja was overwhelmed with affection upon hearing Kṛṣṇa's words, and his eyes brimmed with tears as he embraced the two Lords. Then he went back to Vraja with the cowherd men.

Text 26:

My dear King, then Vasudeva, the son of Śūrasena, arranged for a priest and other brāhmaṇas to perform his two sons' second-birth initiation.

Text 27:

Vasudeva honored these brāhmaṇas by worshiping them and giving them fine ornaments and well-ornamented cows with their calves. All these cows wore gold necklaces and linen wreaths.

Text 28:

The magnanimous Vasudeva then remembered the cows he had mentally given away on the occasion of Kṛṣṇa's and Balarāma's birth. Kāmsa had stolen those cows, and Vasudeva now recovered them and gave them away in charity also.

Text 29:

After attaining twice-born status through initiation, the Lords, sincere in Their vows, took the further vow of celibacy from Garga Muni, the spiritual master of the Yadus.

Texts 30-31:

Concealing Their innately perfect knowledge by Their humanlike activities, those two omniscient Lords of the universe, Themselves the origin of all branches of knowledge, next desired to reside at the school of a spiritual master. Thus They approached Sāndīpani Muni, a native of Kāśī living in the city of Avantī.

Text 32:

Sāndīpani thought very highly of these two self-controlled disciples, whom he had obtained so fortuitously. By serving him as devotedly as one

would serve the Supreme Lord Himself, They showed others an irreproachable example of how to worship the spiritual master.

Text 33:

That best of brāhmaṇas, the spiritual master Sāṇdīpani, was satisfied with Their submissive behavior, and thus he taught Them the entire Vedas, together with their six corollaries and the Upaniṣads.

Text 34:

He also taught Them the Dhanur-veda, with its most confidential secrets; the standard books of law; the methods of logical reasoning and philosophical debate; and the sixfold science of politics.

Texts 35-36:

O King, those best of persons, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, being Themselves the original promulgators of all varieties of knowledge, could immediately assimilate each and every subject after hearing it explained just once. Thus with fixed concentration They learned the sixty-four arts and skills in as many days and nights. Thereafter, O King, They satisfied Their spiritual master by offering him guru-dakṣiṇā.

Text 37:

O King, the learned brāhmaṇa Sāṇdīpani carefully considered the two Lords' glorious and amazing qualities and Their superhuman intelligence. Then, after consulting with his wife, he chose as his remuneration the return of his young son, who had died in the ocean at Prabhāsa.

Text 38:

“So be it,” replied those two great chariot warriors of limitless might, and They at once mounted Their chariot and set off for Prabhāsa. When They reached that place, They walked up to the shore and sat down. In a moment the deity of the ocean, recognizing Them to be the Supreme Lords, approached Them with offerings of tribute.

Text 39:

The Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa addressed the lord of the ocean: Let the son of My guru be presented at once — the one you seized here with your mighty waves.

Text 40:

The ocean replied: O Lord Kṛṣṇa, it was not I who abducted him, but a demonic descendant of Diti named Pañcajana, who travels in the water in the form of a conch.

Text 41:

“Indeed,” the ocean said, “that demon has taken him away.” Hearing this, Lord Kṛṣṇa entered the ocean, found Pañcajana and killed him. But the Lord did not find the boy within the demon’s belly.

Texts 42-44:

Lord Janārdana took the conchshell that had grown around the demon’s body and went back to the chariot. Then He proceeded to Saṁyamanī, the beloved capital of Yamarāja, the lord of death. Upon arriving there with Lord Balarāma, He loudly blew His conchshell, and Yamarāja, who keeps the conditioned souls in check, came as soon as he heard the resounding vibration. Yamarāja elaborately worshiped the two Lords with great devotion, and then he addressed Lord Kṛṣṇa, who lives in everyone’s heart: “O Supreme Lord Viṣṇu, what shall I do for You and Lord Balarāma, who are playing the part of ordinary humans?”

Text 45:

The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Suffering the bondage of his past activity, My spiritual master’s son was brought here to you. O great King, obey My command and bring this boy to Me without delay.

Text 46:

Yamarāja said, “So be it,” and brought forth the guru’s son. Then those two most exalted Yadus presented the boy to Their spiritual master and said to him, “Please select another boon.”

Text 47:

The spiritual master said: My dear boys, You two have completely fulfilled the disciple’s obligation to reward his spiritual master. Indeed, with disciples like You, what further desires could a guru have?

Text 48:

O heroes, now please return home. May Your fame sanctify the world, and may the Vedic hymns be ever fresh in Your minds, both in this life and the next.

Text 49:

Thus receiving Their guru's permission to leave, the two Lords returned to Their city on Their chariot, which moved as swiftly as the wind and resounded like a cloud.

Text 50:

All the citizens rejoiced upon seeing Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, whom they had not seen for many days. The people felt just like those who have lost their wealth and then regained it.