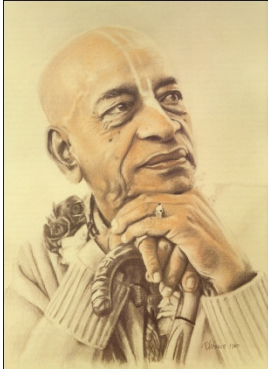


International Society for Kåñëa Consciousness
Founder-Acarya His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada



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1. Lord Ramachandra is playing the pastimes like a drama played on a stage

Who is Lord Ramachandra? Lord Ramachandra is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Supreme Personality of Godhead Krishna, He appears and descends in different incarnations and Lord Ramachandra is one of His incarnations. As it has been described in Brahma Samhita, *rāmādi-mūrtiṅṅ kalā-niyamena tiñōhan*

nānāvātāram akarod bhuvaneṅṅ kintu kāñēaṅṅ svayaā samabhavat paramaṅṅ pumān yo govindam ādi-puruṅṅāā tam ahaā bhajāmi

Incarnations like Lord Ramachandra are the expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He expands.. The Lord has two types of expansions *svamsa* and *vibhinnamsa* and *vibhinnamsa* means expansions of His parts and parcels like we are also expansions of the Lord but we are His minute parts and parcels but His incarnations have been exemplified. Just consider we see one sun in the sky and the one sun becomes two suns and three suns , twenty and hundred suns maintaining sun itself in totality. The sun itself expanding so incarnations are like that. The Lord expands Himself and the rays are coming out from the sun, the rays are very minute parts of the sun and we are like those rays and the incarnations are like the expansions of the sun. Now the question is why does the Lord expand?

↓ Why does the Lord expand?

The Lord expands Himself as Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita *yadā yadā hi dharmasya glānir bhavati bhārata* when there is a decline in religious principles. Dharma means the laws given by the Lord. When we abide by the laws given by the Lord then there is peace and prosperity everywhere. A decline of that law and order, when people don't abide by the law and order and start to act independently and whimsically then what happens to the society? The total breakage of law and order is called anarchy. Adharma is something like anarchy, no law and order not abiding by the laws given by the Lord, rather they create their own law, here Krishna is saying I descend, I come down to re-establish the dharma or law and order. Then Krishna is saying *paritrāēāya sādḅūnāā vināçāya ca duñkātām* in order to save the saintly persons sadhus, law abiding individuals. Sadhus are those who are obedient and abide by Krishna's law and order. Those who don't abide by the laws and order of the Lord, they are miscreants. In our society see also the government gives the laws and those who follow live peacefully and happily and those who don't what happens? Police

comes catches them and they are judged in the court and then they are punished so Krishna does that in order to deliver the sadhus and annihilate or destroy the miscreants.

↓ Krishna doesn't have to come to deliver them In this aspect Prabhupada is saying to punish the miscreants Krishna does not have to come material nature herself can take of this Durga, Kali can take of this and that is what they are doing. We see Kali chopping the heads, who are those people? They are the miscreants. So Krishna doesn't really have to come to annihilate the demons because that can be done by His agents but Krishna comes to deliver the sadhus. Prabhupada is saying not to deliver because the sadhus are delivered. The Vishnuduttas are patrolling all over as we saw Ajamila as he chanted the name of the Lord, also unconsciously and immediately he got protected so those who are devotees of Krishna Vishnu is always protecting them. Krishna doesn't have to come to deliver them He comes to have a loving exchange with them and that is the real purpose of Krishna coming. Those who are devotees Krishna gives them an opportunity to directly associate with Him and by doing that Krishna Himself derives pleasure and those devotees also derive pleasure out of that exchange. Do you'll remember when Brahma went to the milk ocean and prayed to the Lord to come and take care the precarious condition of the earth? What did the Lord say? Tell the demi-gods I am coming and they should take birth in the Yadhu and Vrishni dynasties. Why? Because the Lord was going to appear in the Yadhu dynasty and as His relatives they could associate. Similarly before Lord Ramachandra appeared He also instructed that you also appear as monkeys and as monkeys they had the association of the Lord. As monkeys they got the opportunity to serve the Lord in a most wonderful way and also Lord descends in the family of His devotees.

↓ Why does the Lord take birth?

He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, He doesn't have to take birth but sometimes some devotees want to have the Lord as their child as their son, therefore the Lord fulfils their desires. One of the qualities of the Lord is Bhaktavatsal, He is very fond of His devotees and whatever the devotees want the Lord fulfils everything. So the devotees said I want You to be our son and the Lord said fine and so the Lord appeared as their son. Here the Lord appeared in a very special dynasty, in this incarnation as Lord Ramachandra He appeared as a kñatriya, which means the warrior class, the royalty. There are two original royal dynasties one hailing from Sun God and the other from Moon God. Like from the Sun God Himself the line started just as in Bhagavad Gita Krishna begins in fourth chapter *imaā vivasvate yoga proktavān aham avyayam vivasvān*

Who is vivasvān? He is the Sun God. *Vivasvān manave prāha*. *Vivasvān* imparted this knowledge to his son Manu and that is Vaivasvata Manu. In a day of Brahma there are fourteen Manus the present Manu is Vaivasvata Manu. Manu's son is Iksaku so this line

started the Sun dynasty. These are the original kñatriya families. In that respect you can consider the royal family in Japan is considered to be the Sun dynasty, they still maintaining that heritage coming from Sun God and is known as the land of Sun. Krishna appeared in the Moon dynasty soma-vaàça, Chandra-vaàça but Lord Ramachandra appeared in the Sun dynasty. Lord Ramachandra appeared in the Iksaku dynasty and their capital was Ayodhya and that city is still there today. The land is known as Kaushal and the capital is Ayodhya and that Ayodhya was established by Vaivasvata Manu for his son Iksaku and he became the ruler of the entire earth planet. In this line there are very illustrious personalities like Aja, Raghu and Raghu's son was Daçaratha. Lord Ramachandra is also known as Raghuveer, the hero of the Raghu dynasty. Daçaratha also ruled the entire earth planet.

↓ Only one king

In those days one king ruled the entire planet, one head, one king, one ruler and he had his subordinate rulers, there were many kings but above all there was only one and he was considered as the ruler of the entire earth planet including the ocean and that system was prevalent until 5000 years ago. As Kaliyuga started the whole structure became divided, the earth planet became divided and now there is no ruler and we have democracy, demon crazy democracy. This is how by the influence of Kali it became degenerated. The real structure was one king above all the other kings as a ruler of the earth planet. We have seen all the other planets have one ruler like Sun planet one person ruling, Moon planet one person, Jupiter planet Brihaspati one person, Venus Sukracharya and in this way we can see different personalities ruling over the different planets and same was the case with earth planet only one ruler and Daçaratha was the ruler at the time and although he was the ruler of the planet he did not have any children, no sons so he consulted with his ministers and they were not elected by popular vote, those ministers were selected by the King according to their merits and they were all brahmanas.

↓ Ministers are all Brahmanas

Ministers are all Brahmanas, advisors and they used to guide the King for example these ministers were expert in astrology and if the King had to go to war with another king they would make astrological calculations and tell the King don't attack him now rather at such and such time and when the stars and planets will be in your favour then victory will be yours. This is how the King used to be guided by the ministers. They all were Brahmanas, exalted realized souls and Prabhupada also wanted that. Prabhupada once had a meeting with Indira Gandhi and Prabhupada went there with a proposal that the ministers should be Brahmanas not just by birth but by qualification and who are the qualified brahmanas of today? ISKCON devotees. Prabhupada, himself said that there are no brahmanas in India and that is why Prabhupada was importing the brahmanas from America. Trained individuals with proper knowledge and understanding can guide the kings or the rulers properly. Prabhupada proposed that

educated brahmanas, one of the qualifications of a brahmana is that they don't take a salary no money and that state and householders will take care of him. Real brahmanas will not take salary, only sudras take salary, does a businessman take salary? Does a warrior take salary? Mercenaries take salary. That is another thing that Prabhupada pointed out, somebody told Prabhupada that the military people are ksatriyas, Prabhupada said no at the most they are mercenaries. What is the difference between a ksatriya and mercenary? Ksatriya won't fight for money whereas the mercenaries fight for money. All these American soldiers if the American government stop paying them will they fight for America? So that shows where they are but the warrior won't take any money he will be independent so much so that he will go and approach a king and say I like your kingdom give it to me and if he refuses then its fine and whoever wins he will get it and that is a Ksatriya. The brahmanas will give advice and education and teach but in return will not take any salary they will take dakshin donations given to them as recognition of their mercy but they won't take any salary.

↓ The yagna was performed and...

So Daçaratha went to his ministers and who were they his gurus. Vashist one of the greatest sages the world has ever seen. They advised him to perform a sacrifice for the sake of getting a child so the yagna was performed and from the sacrificial fire the Lord appeared and in this way assured them and then came a personality with a pot of sweet rice and he announced that he was the representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, an agent of the Lord, Vishnudutta and gave the pot. King Daçaratha had three wives so he gave one half to the first wife Kausalyā, one forth to his second wife Kaikeyé and gave one eighth to his third wife Sumitrā and as a result of that Kausalyā gave birth to Lord Ramachandra, Sumitra gave birth to Lakṛman and Kaikeyé gave birth to Bharata and Satrugan. Vāsudeva appeared as Lord Ramachandra, Sankarshan appeared as Laksman, Bharat and Satrugan were Pradyumna and Anirudha.

↓ King Daçaratha wanted to coronate Lord Ramachandra as the crown prince

In course of time King Daçaratha wanted to coronate Lord Ramachandra as the crown prince, the successor to the throne so the entire city was in ecstasy except only one person Kaikeyé's maidservant Manthara. She was not only crooked in her mind but she was also crooked in her body, she had a hunch-back. Kaikeyé was excited, she was very very happy that Rama was coronated because she treated Rama as her own son but Manthara came and started to chastise her, "you are feeling happy do you know what will happen to you?" In this way she started to vitiate her mind and said actually Bharat should be king not Rama. Some background. Daçaratha had no children from the first and second wife he didn't get the child so then he got married to the third wife Kaikeyé and one of her conditions was that her son become King because there was no other son so naturally her son would

become king but she didn't take that so seriously after she got her son Bharata but because her mind became vitiated her mind started to wonder how can she have Bharata as a king because Rama as the eldest brother is the natural successor to the throne. Kaikeyé was reminded that when Daçaratha was fighting the demons on behalf of the demi-gods then he got fatally injured and you treated and cured him so he became very pleased with you and asked you to take two boons to ask anything and at that time you refused to take anything because you have given me everything so what is there I can desire? Daçaratha at the time told her if ever you want something from me please let me know I will fulfill it and she said this is the time now to get those two boons. What are those two boons? First boon is that Bharata should become the King and the second one is Rama will be banished to the forest for fourteen years. That is what happened and it was totally unexpected and as a result of that when Rama was leaving for the forest Daçaratha left his body due to the intense separation from Lord Rama. He was running after Rama's chariot and finally Rama requested him to go back and when he went back then the next morning they found out that he had left his body. He died from intense separation from Lord Rama. Then for fourteen years Rama stayed in the forest.

↓ Another side of the story...

There is a character called Ravana. Who is Ravana? The Lord had to gate keepers Jaya and Vijaya and they desired to give the mellow of chivalry to the Supreme Personality of Godhead because in Vaikuntha this mellow the Lord cannot experience. In Vaikuntha can you fight with the Lord? In reality who can fight with the Lord? But because they desired that, that desire was fulfilled in the form of a curse and the curse was that they will take birth in the earth planet in three yugas as three demons and the Lord would appear to kill them. These two gatekeepers Jaya and Vijaya became Hiranyakashipu and Hiranyakash in Satyayuga; in Tretrayuga and Ravana and Kumbakaran and in Dwaparyuga Sisupal and Dantabakra. These two devotees of the Lord being cursed appeared as Ravana and Kumbakaran. Ravana became invincible due to the blessings of Lord Shiva, when he was asking for a boon he thought a human being is so insignificant he decided not to mention human being, he mentioned everything except human being. This is how the Lord plays His pastimes in such a wonderful arrangement and therefore the Lord appeared as a human form. What did Ravana do? He stole Sitadevi Lord Ramachandra's eternal consort when they were in the forest. On the thirteenth year, the last year, Ravan kidnapped Sita and took her to his capital to Sri Lanka, a city of gold. It was one hundred yogenas away from the Southern tip of India. One yogena is 800 miles so it was 800 miles away. There was a celestial bird called Sampati and he could see 800 miles away and could see that Sita was in captivity. Lord Ramachandra wanted to confirm that Sita was really there and in order to confirm that Hanuman jumped 800 miles away and then he found out Sita was there. Not only had he found out Sita,

single handedly he plundered the capital of Ravana. He killed three generals including Ravana's son and these three sections of the army was destroyed just by Hanuman.

↓ This is what happens when the devotee becomes empowered by the Lord

So this is what happens when the devotee becomes empowered by the Lord. Apparently it seems to be impossible but when the Lord empowers somebody then it becomes possible. He even burnt the city of Lanka. It was a golden city and the city burnt so there was a river of gold flowing because when the city was burning the gold was melting. Hanuman brought the news of Sita and he proposed that I will take you back but Sita refused for two reasons one is that I can't touch any other man besides my husband and the second reason is that if I leave like that this will be a disgrace for Ramachandra that He could not save His wife someone else had to do it. We can see how noble these personalities were.

↓ 800 mile long bridge

It was now confirmed that Sita was in Lanka 800 miles away so the consideration was how to cross the ocean and then it was decided that they would build a bridge, mind you an 800 mile long bridge. You know how long it took them to build the bridge? Only five days. The first day they built 14 miles, the second day 20 miles, third day 21 miles, fourth day 22 miles and the fifth day 23 miles and the bridge was built. Let's add it 100 and so the bridge was built and they went across it and the battle ensued. Ravana had the most sophisticated army with such sophisticated weapons that they could fight with the demi-gods. The monkeys were fighting with sticks and stones and there were only 7 human beings fighting on behalf Lord Ramachandra which was Ramachandra, Laksman, Vibishan (Ravana's brother who joined Ramachandra), and Vibishan had four associates who were Raksasas who assumed the form of human beings and the rest were monkeys. Who are these monkeys? They were demi-gods empowered by the Lord Himself and you know what happened at the end of the day? They naturally won. When the Lord is with His associates, the devotee's victory is bound to be there. They won but many monkeys died and after the battle was over they were celebrating Vibhisana who was coronated on the throne and Indra the demi-god the King of the demi-gods also came to take part along with the other demi-gods. Indra very humbly proposed to the Lord, "My Lord what can I do for you?" Lord Ramachandra said, "If you really want to do something for Me just revive all the monkeys those who are dead." Indra replied, "That is not within my ability but if you empower me I can do that because by Your mercy anything is possible." And so all the monkeys were brought back to life. So this is another thing when you fight for the Lord and lose your life don't worry, the Lord will revive you and give you the eternal. So this is how the Lord performed His pastimes. You see pastimes are like a drama it's not really real. Lord Ramachandra is playing the pastimes like a drama played on a stage, different actors and actresses those roles. So here that

is the case the Lord assumes a certain role and His associates play the same drama assuming different roles. The drama has two purposes one purpose of the drama is entertainment and the other is a message. A good drama must have a message. Drama has a conflict, the more the conflict the better the drama. The conflict is between the hero and the villain, the Lord is the hero and the demons are the villains. See what a wonderful drama the Lord has made, whatever He has made is perfect and did you get entertainment? Did you learn something? This is the purpose of the Lords pastimes. Thank you very much. All glories to Srila Prabhupada!

2. Srila Prabhupada appreciation

This is how the King used to be guided by the ministers. They all were Brahmanas, exalted realized souls and Prabhupada also wanted that. Prabhupada once had a meeting with Indira Gandhi and Prabhupada went there with a proposal that the ministers should be Brahmanas not just by birth but by qualification and who are the qualified brahmanas of today? ISKCON devotees. Prabhupada, himself said that there are no brahmanas in India and that is why Prabhupada was importing the brahmanas from America.

3. Guru Maharaja's Instructions

- ↓ So this is what happens when the devotee becomes empowered by the Lord. Apparently it seems to be impossible but when the Lord empowers somebody then it becomes possible; and
- ↓ So this is another thing when you fight for the Lord and lose your life don't worry, the Lord will revive you and give you the eternal;

(The content of this E-magazine was based on a lecture given by His Holiness Bhakti Charu Swami in ISKCON New Jersey on 28 March 2015)

(Compilation & editing by Hemavati Radhika dasi)

