

Prabhupada Pastimes cont'd

even though my Hindi was not so good. I just pushed it. Prabhupada then said, "Ok, so you take some dictation".

Prabhupada liked the way I answered those letters and he gave me another pile of Hindi and Bengali letters to reply. Prabhupada would give me the points to reply, I would write them out by hand and Prabhupada would sign them.

One day Prabhupada was on the roof having a massage and I took some letters to him. Prabhupada was sitting in the sun and Hari Sauri Prabhu was giving him a massage. I said to Prabhupada, "Srila Prabhupada, I brought the replies to the letters." Prabhupada asked me to read them and when I finished, he signed them.

Prabhupada was sitting on a wooden plank and I was sitting on the floor just watching him have his massage. All of a sudden Prabhupada started speaking to me. "Many many lifetimes you have been trying to enjoy and you can see that you are still not satisfied, so offer this life to Krsna. It is only one lifetime you are offering to Krsna and even if nothing is accomplished, it is only one lifetime out of so many, so what is the loss? You just offer this life to Krsna."

He then said, "Don't get entangled with any woman. This material nature is a prison house of sex desire. This is a *maithunagara*. Everyone here is tied down by this desire for sex life. Sex life is the chain and you have to overcome this desire to get out of material nature. As long as you have this desire, you are bound by the laws of material nature. So, if you want to get out of this material nature, you have to overcome this desire."

Prabhupada continued to explain, "Sex life is like a camel eating thorns. The camel eats the thorns which cuts his mouth and tongue to pieces and it starts to bleed. The camel then tastes his own blood and thinks, "How delicious these thorns are. They taste so nice." Prabhupada continued, "Sex life is like that. He is losing his life's vitality, the very essence of his body, and he thinks, "Oh, how relishable this sex life is, how enjoyable it is.""

Prabhupada spoke to me in this way for about forty-five minutes giving me many analogies one after another. When I left and was walking down the stairs, I realized Prabhupada wanted me to become a sannyasi. He wanted me to surrender to Krsna completely. I was not even initiated at that time but I could understand Prabhupada wanted me to surrender to him completely.

Prabhupada gave me initiation during the Gaurapurnima festival and he very mercifully gave me first and second initiation together.

That evening all the devotees who had received initiation came to see Prabhupada to give him the dakshina they had collected. I was feeling very bad because I had not collected any dakshina for Prabhupada. I had been busy all day serving Prabhupada and did not have any time to go out and collect.

When everyone left Prabhupada's room, I said to him, "Srila Prabhupada, I feel very bad. I do not have any dakshina for you." Prabhupada looked at me and said with a smile, "That's all right. You just offer this life as your dakshina." I was very happy and thought to myself, "Yes Srila Prabhupada, I am offering this life to you, I am offering my entire self to you."

Prabhupada also made me his secretary. He told me, "So from now on you will be my Secretary for Indian Affairs and you can move into the next room." Srila Prabhupada's servants used to stay in the rooms next to Prabhupada. Hari Sauri Prabhu was Prabhupada's personal servant and Pradyumna Prabhu was his sanskrit editor, so they stayed in the room next to Prabhupada and Prabhupada's secretary had the room after that.

Tamal Krishna Maharaja was Prabhupada's secretary. Prabhupada called him and told him that he had asked me to be his secretary and he wanted me to stay with him. Tamal Krishna Maharaja was very happy to have me and was extremely kind to me. He took me under his wings and trained me up. Tamal Krishna Maharaja used to be quite heavy in those days. I remember one morning I was feeling very tired and was lying on my bed. It was after mangal arati around 6.00-6.30am. Tamal Krishna Maharaja came into the room and saw me sleeping. He woke me up and started chastising me for sleeping in the morning.

I tried to explain to him that I was feeling very tired but the more I tried, the heavier he became. Finally I gave up and said, "All right, from now on I will not sleep in the morning." Tamal Krishna Maharaja then said, "Yes, that's the right spirit. You have to learn to be submissive."

NEXT ISSUE: Cooking for Prabhupada and serving Prabhupada in Bombay

Guru-maharaja Ki Jaya !

Spiritual Connections is a private publication for the disciples and well-wishers of His Divine Grace Bhakti Charu Swami Maharaj, a disciple of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, founder-acarya of the INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS. Spiritual Connections address is: PO Box 16146, Calcutta 700 017

Spiritual Connections

A newsletter for the disciples and well-wishers of
His Divine Grace Bhakti Charu Swami Maharaja
*nama om viṣṇu pādāya kṛṣṇa preṣṭhāya bhū-tale
śrimate bhakti cāru svāmin iti nāmine*



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Guru-maharaja's

Personal Message:

"Srila Prabhupada's ISKCON is your family"

Srila Prabhupada established ISKCON to fulfil Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's plan to spread Krsna consciousness all over the world. By Srila Prabhupada's divine mercy, you are here today at the shade of his lotus feet, a member of his ISKCON. Always remember that ISKCON is a spiritual family where everyone is related to each other with Srila Prabhupada in the centre.

Srila Prabhupada attracted you to his beautiful house of ISKCON and as long as you remain in this house, you will be safe. As your spiritual master, I will take care that you are properly situated in Srila Prabhupada's house.

To be Krsna consciousness means to be broad minded. Therefore, never allow any narrow mindedness to affect your consciousness. Whenever any kind of narrow minded thinking creeps in, know for certain it is an attack of maya.

How can you develop this broad mindedness? Develop the vision to see everything in light of Srila Prabhupada's interest and teachings. See how all the devotees in ISKCON are your spiritual relations and how they are related to Srila Prabhupada.

Look up to senior Prabhupada disciples in ISKCON as your spiritual masters. Try to please them by your service and receive their mercy. Also look at initiated disciples of other gurus in ISKCON as your spiritual cousins. Relate to them with respect and friendship and develop a strong bond of love with them.

This is the age of Kali, the age when irreligiosity prevails through quarrel and hypocrisy. Therefore, to protect your spiritual life, always remain very vigilant to counter these onslaughts of narrow mindedness created by your greatest enemy, Kali.

Srila Prabhupada emphatically announced, "Your love for me will be shown by how you cooperate with each other." He knew how Kali would try to create dissension amongst the devotees. Therefore, it is

essential to create a friendly atmosphere amongst all the members of Srila Prabhupada's family of ISKCON.

Always remember that your spiritual life solely depends upon your connection with ISKCON. If ISKCON is strong, then as a part, no matter how weak or insignificant you may be, you will also be strong in your Krsna consciousness. But if ISKCON falls apart, then what will happen to your spiritual life?

Srila Prabhupada struggled so much to build ISKCON and secure your spiritual life. Therefore, you must try your very best to repay this debt by making his ISKCON into the most glorious spiritual organization in the world. That alone will provide spiritual shelter for everyone in this material universe and unify them all under the umbrella of Prabhupada's ISKCON.

ISKCON is Krsna's lifeboat to rescue all the living entities suffering in this material ocean and take them back to the spiritual sky. Therefore, just take advantage of this wonderful mercy of His Divine Grace and try to offer it to everyone you meet.

Never feel satisfied with your own comfortable situation. Instead, always try to realize how all the living entities are suffering in this material nature and release them from this suffering condition by giving them Krsna consciousness and inviting them into ISKCON.

Do not care for your own welfare but care for others. Srila Prabhupada will be pleased with you, Caitanya Mahaprabhu will be pleased with you and this world will become as beautiful as the spiritual sky.

Your ever well wisher,

PRABHUPADA PASTIMES

In the last series of Guru-maharaja's pastimes with Srila Prabhupada, Guru-maharaja explained how he first saw Srila Prabhupada at Allahabad and then met with him while travelling on the train from Allahabad to Calcutta. Now Guru-maharaja describes how he began serving Srila Prabhupada and became his personal servant.

Srila Prabhupada stayed in Calcutta for three days. It was a wonderful time and I was trying to be with Prabhupada all the time. There were a lot of restrictions in seeing Prabhupada but I had access to his room, so I was trying to be with him as much as I could.

One evening Srila Prabhupada was giving darshan and many important people came to see him. When arati began in the temple, Srila Prabhupada told everyone to attend arati. I left Srila Prabhupada's room and went to the arati along with everyone else. Arati began but I started to think, "I can attend arati any time but now that Prabhupada is here, I should be with him."

I knocked on Srila Prabhupada's door and he asked me to come in. When I entered I saw Srila Prabhupada was counting the money people had given him as pranami.

***I asked Prabhupada, "Will you initiate me?"
Prabhupada said, "Yes, sure. I will give you
initiation during the Gaura-purnima festival."***

At first I could not understand. I wondered, "Srila Prabhupada is a sadhu, why is he counting money?" I immediately brushed this thought aside by thinking, "I am not able to judge a pure devotee like Prabhupada. Whatever he does is perfect, whatever he does is for Krsna."

Prabhupada was still counting the money, but looking at me from the corner of his eyes he asked, "So what happened? You did not go to the arati?" I said, "Srila Prabhupada, I thought I would come and stay with you." Prabhupada replied, "OK, sit down then." Prabhupada finished counting the money, stacked it neatly and put it into his drawer.

Both Prabhupada and I were silent for a short while and then I asked Prabhupada, "Will you initiate me Srila Prabhupada?" Prabhupada replied, "Yes, sure. I will give you initiation during the Gaura-purnima festival."

I had been hesitant to ask for initiation because I was thinking what would happen if Prabhupada didn't want to give me initiation. I felt so fallen I thought Prabhupada may not want to accept me as a disciple. However, when Prabhupada gave me his assurance he would initiate me, I felt extremely happy.

Srila Prabhupada went to Bhubaneswar from Calcutta. I could have gone with him but I decided to stay in

Calcutta because I was in the middle of printing a book. I had collected Srila Prabhupada's Bengali articles from the Gaudiya Math and was printing them into a book. (This book has now been printed in English as "Renunciation Through Knowledge.") I wanted to complete this printing and present the book to Prabhupada when he returned to Mayapur.

Prabhupada returned to Mayapur and it was ecstatic. There were a lot of devotees because it was just before Gaura-purnima festival. When Prabhupada arrived he got out of the car at the main gate and walked to the temple. The devotees were wild with kirtan. They were dancing all around Prabhupada and he was in the centre just gliding through.

There were devotees on top of a building and they were showering flowers on Prabhupada as he walked by. It was such an ecstatic sight. The devotees were feeling intense emotions towards Srila Prabhupada. I could not tell whether they were laughing or crying.

One day I went to Calcutta for printing the book for Prabhupada. It was still not ready which was very frustrating for me. I had to return to Mayapur emptyhanded. I returned to Mayapur the next morning and some devotees told me that Prabhupada had been asking for me.

There was a darshan with Srila Prabhupada on the lawn

in front of the Lotus Building and Prabhupada had asked, "Where is that boy who joined recently?" Srila Prabhupada was enquiring about me. I felt this was the most glorious event in my entire life. As soon as the devotees told me this, I just ran to Prabhupada's room.

I entered Prabhupada's room and said, "Prabhupada, you were looking for me?" "Yes", said Prabhupada, "Where did you go yesterday?" I then told Prabhupada that I had gone to Calcutta to supervise some printing and Prabhupada asked, "What happened? Is the book not ready?" I said, "No Prabhupada", and he told me, "Then what is the use? If you went to Calcutta but you didn't get the book printed, then what is the use of going?"

We used to live on the boundary wall in those days. There was no bathroom so we took bath under a row of hand-pumps in a cemented area and a barber used to come there to shave us. It was a couple of days after I had last spoken to Prabhupada and I was in the middle of having a shave when Bhavananda Maharaja came to me and said that Prabhupada wanted to see me. Prabhupada wanted to see me! Somehow I quickly took my bath and just ran to see Prabhupada.

Prabhupada asked me, "Do you know how to write Hindi?" I immediately said, "Yes Srila Prabhupada",

Every morning when Guru-maharaja is in Mayapura, he meets with all of his disciples to chant japa together. This japa session begins with Guru-maharaja leading everyone in singing one of his favourite bhajans. Below is one of those bhajans. (Please save this page as a song-sheet).

MANASA DEHA GEHA by Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura (from Saranagati)

1)	manasa, deho, geho, jo kichu mor arpilu tuwa pade, nanda kisor!	5)	kita-janma hau jatha tuwa das bahir-mukha brahma-janme nahi as
2)	sampade vipade, jivane-marane day mama gela, tuwa o-pada barane	6)	bhukti-mukti-sprha vihina je bhakta labhaite tako sanga anurakta
3)	marobi rakhobi – jo iccha tohara nitya-dasa prati tuwa adhikara	7)	janaka, janani, dayita, tanay prabhu, guru, pati-tuhu sarva-moy
4)	janmaobi moe iccha jadi tor bhakta-grhe jani janma hau mor	8)	bhaktivinoda kohe, suno kana! radha-natha! tuhu hamara parana

Mind, body and family, whatever may be mine, I have surrendered at Your lotus feet, O youthful son of Nanda!

In good fortune or in bad, in life or at death, all my difficulties have disappeared by choosing those feet of Yours as my only shelter.

Slay me or protect me as You wish, for you are the master of Your eternal servant.

If it is Your will that I be born again, then may it be in the home of Your devotee.

May I be born again, even as a worm, so long as I may remain Your devotee. I have no desire to be born as Brahma averse to You.

I yearn for the company of that devotee who is completely devoid of all desire for worldly enjoyment or liberation.

Father, mother, lover, son, Lord, preceptor and husband; You are everything to me.

Thakura Bhaktivinoda says, "O Kana, please hear me! O Lord of Radha, You are my life and soul!"

and received the benediction he wanted. Vindya mountain then had two daughters, Radharani and Candravali.

When Radharani and Candravali were just babies, Putana stole them wanting to kill them. As she was flying away with these two baby girls, the priests of Vindya began to chant a special *mantra* that kills demons and witches. Putana understood her life was in danger so she dropped Radharani and Candravali and flew away to save her life.

Radharani and Candravali then fell into the Jamuna river and were floating down when King Vrsabhanu found Radharani and King Candrabhanu found Candravali.

There is another very interesting story about Radharani's appearance. King Vrsabhanu and Kirtida were very happy to get Radharani as their daughter. She was extremely beautiful but she was blind, her eyes were closed. Still, King Vrsabhanu and Kirtida accepted everything as their destiny and proceeded to bring up Radharani as their sweet little daughter.

Here we see how *Vedic* culture teaches people to accept everything as Krsna's arrangement. They do not lament but accept everything as their destiny and try to live according to that. We can also understand from the stories in the *Puranas* and *Vedic* scriptures that everything is happening due to previous arrangements and not by chance.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Please accept our humble obeisances. All glories to Guru-maharaja. All glories to Srila Prabhupada and his ISKCON.

In this issue we have begun Guru-maharaja's seminar, "Krsna's Pastimes in the Puranas", which he gave in Mayapur during the Gaura-purnima festival 1992. There were six classes in this seminar, so we will be printing one class in each upcoming issue of Spiritual Connections.

You will notice that we have printed the first class in the four centre pages of the newsletter (pages 3-6) allowing it to be 'pulled-out' as a separate item. We plan to do this with all six of the seminar classes so that you can keep them as a complete set of Guru-maharaja's seminar. We hope you like this presentation.

We wish to thank you for all the letters appreciating Spiritual Connections newsletter. This has been very pleasing to say the least. It has also given us the much needed encouragement to continue with the newsletter.

Therefore, it is a waste of time to try and change our destiny because everything has already been pre-arranged by the divine will of the Supreme Controller. The intelligent person flows with the current of destiny and also develops the goal of life - Krsna *prema*.

Soon after Radharani was born, Mother Yasoda came with Krsna to see Kirtida and her new daughter. They were very happy to see these two beautiful children together and the mothers exchanged their babies. Mother Yasoda took Radharani on her lap and Mother Kirtida took Krsna.

Later when the mothers were busy talking to each other, Krsna crawled away and went to the cradle where Srimati Radharani was laying with Her eyes closed. Krsna held onto the side of the cradle and stood up to see the little girl lying there. Srimati Radharani then opened Her eyes to see the most attractive little boy. Radharani had purposely kept her eyes closed because she did not want to see anyone but Krsna. She was waiting for Krsna and only then would she open her eyes.

Everyone was amazed and started saying how wonderful Krsna is. "He must know some *mantras*. Although He is a child, He is showing such wonderful characteristics and qualities." This is how Krsna began His pastimes in Vraja.

Next Issue: From Nandagram to Vrndavava

We have enjoyed receiving your words of support, however we have not received any suggestions on what you would like to see in the newsletter or how it should develop.

Please write and let us know your ideas for articles etc. Should we print only Guru-maharaja *katha* or should we have other items? Write and tell us what you want, the address is on the back-page. We look forward to hearing from you. We beg to remain,

Your servants, Chief Editor - Manjari Devi Dasi
Contributing Editor - Syamananda Krsna Das

Guru-maharaja's itinerary:

(subject to change!)

1st February - Zurich

2nd February - Paris

4th February - USA

15th February - London

18th Feb/April - Mayapur

Krsna's Pastimes in the Puranas Seminar

Class One : "Krsna and Radharani's Appearance"

The following is the first in a series of six classes given by Guru-maharaja in his seminar "Krsna's Pastimes in the Puranas" at Mayapur Gaura Purnima Festival 1992.

This seminar is a compilation of Krsna's pastimes from selected *Puranas*. *Srimad Bhagavatam* is the main source of Krsna's pastimes, but a lot have been described in the *Brahma Vaivarta Purana* and *Harivamsa*. *Brahma Vaivarta Purana* has one section called *Krsna khanda* which deals exclusively with Krsna's pastimes.

Srila Rupa Goswami, Sanatan Goswami and Srila Jiva Goswami also wrote on Krsna's pastimes quite extensively. Jiva Goswami

describes Krsna's

pastimes in his

Gopala Champu

and Rupa Goswami

wrote a number of

dramas such as *Vidagdha-Madhava*, *Lalita-Madhava* and *Dana Keli Kaumudi*. Srila Raghunatha Das Goswami also wrote a drama named *Dana Keli Cintamani*.

Krsna's pastimes are like a play. They are known as *lila* which means activities done out of His own sweet will.

Sometimes we find contradictions in the writings of different *acaryas* on Krsna's pastimes. For example, *Brahma Vaivarta Purana* describes Radharani appeared as the daughter of King Vrsabhanu and Kirtida. However, Rupa Goswami, in *Lalita-Madhava*, describes that Radharani was born as the daughter of Vindya mountain.

When Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakur was asked why such contradictions are in the scriptures, he explained it was due to "*Kalpa bheda*." Krsna's pastimes take place in different ways in different *kalpas*.

Therefore, when we see any contradiction, we have to understand that that pastime is from a different *kalpa*. The details may differ, but the

underlying principle is the same. The pastimes generally follow the same pattern, but some details may appear to be different. It is the same in our daily lives. The pattern of our days may be the same everyday, but each day is different.

WHY KRSNA APPEARED

Now we can consider why Krsna decided to come and play His pastimes. Mother Earth became over-burdened with the sinful activities of the demonic people headed by Kamsa. She could not bear this torture and went to Lord Brahma pleading for help. Lord Brahma told Mother Earth he could not do anything because Kamsa was a very demoniac personality. He

was so

powerful

that no-

one, not

even the

demigods, could do anything against him.

And who is Kamsa? He is a demon named Kalnemi, the son of Hiranyaksa. He performed great austerities to please Lord Siva and become immortal. He offered oblations into a sacrificial fire for many thousands of years while standing on his head. When Lord Siva was pleased, he appeared before Kamsa and Kamsa asked for the benediction of immortality.

Lord Siva told Kamsa he could not give that benediction because no one can be immortal in this material nature. However, Lord Siva told Kamsa, "only one person will be able to kill you - the eighth son of someone who is very dear to you". Kamsa doubted that the son of someone very dear to him would actually kill him, so he accepted this benediction and became virtually immortal just like Hiranyakashipu.

Because of this benediction there was no one powerful enough to kill Kamsa. Therefore,

(continued page four)

Mother Earth, Lord Brahma and the demigods went to the Supreme Lord, Ksirodakasayi Visnu, and offered prayers.

Hearing these prayers, Ksirodakasayi Visnu woke from his *yoganidra*. He became very angry when He learnt of Mother Earth's plight. "Why do these demigods give all kinds of benedictions to the demons? It causes so much disturbance to the earth planet and then you come to Me to solve your problems." Being angry at the distress caused to His devotees, Ksirodakasayi Visnu agreed to appear as the eighth son of Devaki and kill Kamsa.

Ksirodakasayi Visnu then instructed the demigods to also take birth on the earth planet before Him and assist Him in His pastimes. There is an underlying principle behind this instruction to the demigods.

When one develops his attachment and love for Krsna, he becomes eligible to go back to Godhead. But the way to the spiritual sky is through the earth planet. Therefore, Krsna allows qualified souls to take birth on the earth planet when He is due to appear and then takes them back to His eternal pastimes in the spiritual sky.

When Krsna performs His pastimes, His eternal associates come with Him. However, He also invites certain living entities who have understood their eternal loving relationship with Him. He allows them to develop their final attachment to Him by participating in His pastimes on the earth planet. This gives them the final qualification they need to go back to the spiritual sky.

Many demigods are recruited in this way. For example, Indra came as Arjuna; Yamaraj came as Vidura; Vayu came as Bhima and Vasu came as Bhishma.

KRSNA'S BIRTH

There is an interesting point concerning Krsna's birth. Although it appears that Mother Yasoda gave birth to one child, a daughter, Jiva Goswami points out that in *Harivamsa* and *Brahma Vivarta Purana*, it says Mother Yasoda actually gave birth to two children, one son and one daughter. The son is original Krsna and the daughter is Yogamaya.

Mother Yasoda gave birth to original Krsna but Vasudeva-Krsna, the son of Vasudeva and Devaki, became one with original Krsna, the son of Mother Yasoda. Srila Rupa Goswami mentioned in *Laghu Bhagavatamrita*;

*krsno 'nyo yadu-sambhuto
yah purnah so 'sty atah parah
vrndavanam parityajya
sa kvacin naiva gacchati*

"The Krsna who was born in the Yadu dynasty (and who manifests His pastimes in Mathura and Dwarka) is different from the Krsna, the full Personality of Godhead, (known as the son of Nanda Maharaja) who never at any time leaves Vrndaban."

It has also been mentioned, "Krsna the son of Yasoda, Krsna the son of Nanda, Krsna the moon of Vrndavana." This Krsna must be the original Krsna of Vrndavana and the original Krsna of Vrndavana is the son of Mother Yasoda. Therefore, Mother Yasoda actually gave birth to a son and that son is original Krsna.

When Vasudeva brought Vasudeva-Krsna (Devaki's son) to the house of Nanda Maharaja, Vasudeva-Krsna and original Krsna (Mother Yasoda's son) became one and Vasudeva then picked up Mother Yasoda's daughter, Yogamaya, and took her to the prison of Kamsa.

PERSONALITIES APPEARING WITH KRSNA

1. NANDA MAHARAJA AND MOTHER YASODA

Who are Nanda Maharaja and Mother Yasoda? They were two vasus named Drona and Dhara. Drona became Nanda Maharaja and Dhara became Mother Yasoda. In their previous lives Drona and Dhara performed great austerities for a very long time because they wanted to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna.

When Krsna did not appear to them, they became so dejected they decided to give up their lives. They lit a huge fire and were about to enter into the flames when they heard a voice in the sky

saying, "Drona and Dhara, do not give up your bodies untimely. Be patient and you will get the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Krsna, as your son. When Krsna appears in Gokula, you will be his father and mother."

Drona and Dhara were very happy to hear this and in due course of time became Nanda Maharaja and Mother Yasoda.

2. BALARAMA

The next personality is Balarama. In Ramachandra's pastimes Balarama was Laksman and in Krsna's pastimes, this Laksman is Balarama. When Ramachandra came back to Ayodhya, everyone was very happy and were glorifying Lord Ramachandra for His wonderful activities of killing Ravana and rescuing Sita Devi.

At this time the great sage Agastya Muni said, "Actually, the credit for killing Ravana and rescuing Sita does not go to Rama, it goes to Laksman." Hearing this everyone asked Agastya Muni, "How is that possible? It was Lord Rama who killed Ravana and did so many other wonderful things."

Agastya Muni explained how Ravana's son, Meghnad, was invincible. No one, including the demigods, could defeat him and to defeat Ravana would have been impossible if Meghnad was alive. However, this Meghnad was killed by Laksman and Laksman was able to kill Meghnad because he was a perfect *brahmachari* and also did not eat anything for the fourteen years he was in the forest.

Lord Rama, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, out of His pastimes, challenged Agastya Muni by saying, "How is that possible? Sita was in the forest and a perfect *brahmachari* means one who does not even look at the face of a woman." Agastya Muni replied that Laksman did not look at the face of Sita, he looked only at her feet. Laksman admitted this was true.

Ramachandra then challenged Agastya Muni by saying, "You said Laksman did not eat

anything for fourteen years but everyday I personally gave him fruit. How can you say that he did not eat?" Laksman then said, "Actually, when You gave me the fruit, I used to return them to the forest."

Lord Ramachandra questioned Laksman, "Is this true?" and then instructed Hanuman, "Go to the forest and collect all the fruits. We will soon see if Laksman is telling the truth." Hanuman went to the forest and returned with all the fruits. Everyone was very excited and were saying, "How wonderful it is that Laksman did not eat anything for fourteen years."

Ramachandra is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and He knows everything, but to enhance His pastimes He continued challenging Agastya Muni's statements about Laksman. Lord Rama counted all the fruits and found five were missing. The number of fruits were 14 years x 365 days minus 5. Lord Rama asked Laksman, "How come five fruits are missing? You must have eaten on these five days."

Laxman then said, "My dear Lord Rama, if You remember You forgot to give me fruit on five days. Those five days were the day we got the news of our father's death, the day Sita was stolen, the day I was struck by 'shakti shell', the day You went to Patalaloka to help to kill Mahiravana and the day Sita was tested in the fire. On those days You did not give me any fruit. This is why five fruits are missing."

Hearing this everyone started to glorify Laksman for His wonderful activities and Ramachandra was so moved, He told Laksman, "In My next pastimes I will allow you to become My elder brother." This is how Laksman appeared as Balarama in Krsna's pastimes.

3. RADHARANI'S APPEARANCE

In the beginning I mentioned how Srila Rupa Goswami's drama, *Lalita-Madhava*, describes Radharani appearing as the daughter of Vindya mountain. This is a very interesting story.

Parvati is the daughter of Himalayan mountain and she became the wife of Lord Siva. Vindya mountain was very upset about that. He became envious and wanted a daughter who would have a son-in-law greater than Lord Siva. He performed many austerities and sacrifices