

SWALLOWING THE FOREST FIRE

Entering Into Krishna's Adventures

Seeing Our Life as Part of Krishna's Story

Jaiva Dharma Part Four: The Jiva Swallowed by Maya, the Illusory Energy

"The lilas of Sri Krsna are unlimited and variegated; hence, this (the material world) also is another of His many unique activities. When the Supreme Autocrat willfully engages in a kaleidoscope of pastimes, why should it be unusual for Him to enact this particular pastime? If the principle of variegated lilas is kept intact, not a single type of lila can be rejected.

"Whatever the lila, the participants assisting the Lord may have to accept many hardships and pain. Sri Krishna is the purusa, the Supreme Enjoyer and Absolute Master. All the upakarana, participants and paraphernalia, are fully under the control of the purusa and they are the working tools of the Supreme Creator. In fully surrendering oneself to the sweet will of the Supreme Lord, it is only natural that one may have to accept adversities also. If finally this material adversity turns into an auspicious state that is far from miserable, then why ultimately should one call it adversity?

"On the transcendental platform, the tribulations of the jiva while trying to satisfy the Lord in His pastimes are by all accounts pleasurable. Yet, the conditioned soul by misuse of his free will denies himself the exultation one experiences whilst directly assisting Sri Krishna in His transcendental pastimes. Instead, he embraces maya who gives him only acute harassment. If anyone is to blame for this dilemma, it is the jiva, and definitely not Krishna."

--Bhaktivinoda Thakura

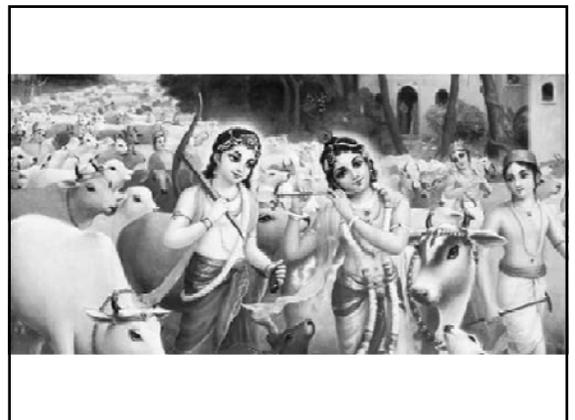
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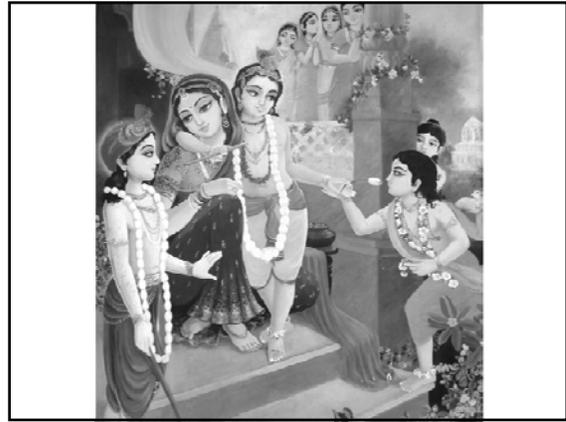
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How to see our life

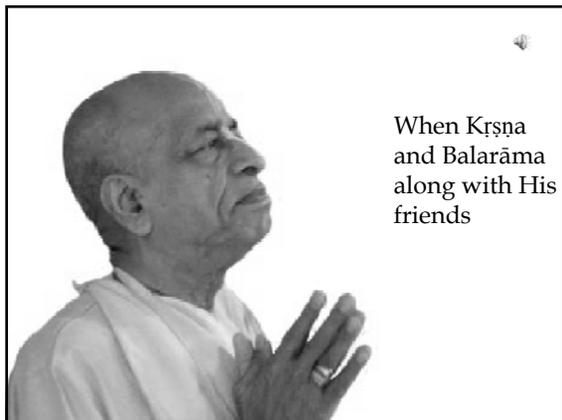
The secret of surrendering to Krishna: Such surrendered devotee sees that everything is part of Krishna's plan, that whatever is meant to be, I am doing that, so let me do it with my full attention to every detail, let me become absorbed in such service, never mind what it is, but let all other considerations be forgotten and only my desire to do the thing best for Krishna's alone pleasure be my motive. That is advanced stage of understanding devotional service or Krishna Consciousness.

Letter to: Jayapataka -- Bombay 19 December, 1972

Everyone should think that he is engaged in a particular type of occupation by Hrsikesa, the master of the senses. And by the result of the work in which one is engaged, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Sri Krsna, should be worshiped. If one thinks always in this way, in full Krsna consciousness, then, by the grace of the Lord, he becomes fully aware of everything. That is the perfection of life.

(purport Bhagavad-gita 18.46)

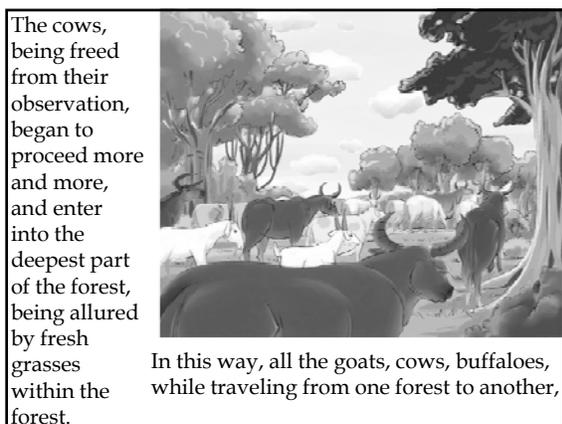
Prabhupada tells the story



When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma along with His friends



were engaged in such pastimes in the forest, and killing the Pralambāsura



The cows, being freed from their observation, began to proceed more and more, and enter into the deepest part of the forest, being allured by fresh grasses within the forest.

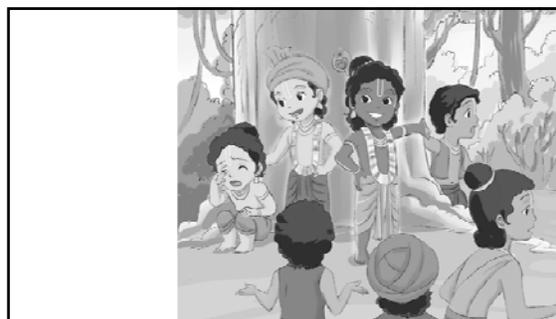
In this way, all the goats, cows, buffaloes, while traveling from one forest to another,



they entered another forest which was known as Īṣikāṭavī. This Īṣikāṭavī forest was full with green grass, and therefore they're allured by the place; but when they entered they saw



that there was a forest fire, and thus they began to cry.



On the other side Rāma-Kṛṣṇa, along with His cowherd friends, when they could not trace out their animals, they became very much aggrieved. And thinking



where the cows had gone, they began to trace out the cows by following their footprints, as well as the



path of eaten grass by the cows. All of them were thinking that their means of livelihood, the cows, are now lost. When searching out



the cows in the forest, and they're hearing the crying sounds of the cows, they were themselves were



very much tired and thirsty. They began to return from that place. Kṛṣṇa then began to call for the cows



by their respective names, with great voice. And the cows also immediately after hearing Kṛṣṇa's calling, replied



the call with great joy. This time the forest fire surrounded



all of them; the scene appeared to be very fierceful. The flames of the forest fire were expanding.



There was companion of the fire – the wind blowing very fast. The whole thing together appeared as if they were prepared



to devour everything movable and not movable in that spot. All the cows and the cowherd boys became too much frightened by the



expansion of the fire. All the cowherd boys began to look toward Baladeva and Kṛṣṇa as if a dying man was looking to the picture of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.



They began to say like this: "My dear Kṛṣṇa! My dear Kṛṣṇa! Both you and Balarāma are very powerful. We are now burning by the heat of the blazing fire. Let us take the shelter of Your lotus feet.



We know You can protect us from this great danger. My dear friend Kṛṣṇa, we are Your intimate friends. It does not behoove that we shall suffer in this condition of life.



We are all completely dependent on You, and You are the knower of all religious life. We do not know anyone else except Yourselves."



The Personality of Godhead heard this appealing voice of His friends, and with pleasing glance over them He began to answer as follows.



He impressed upon His friends by speaking through His eyes that there was no cause of fear: "Don't be worried."



Then Kṛṣṇa, the supreme mystic, powerful Personality of Godhead, immediately swallowed up all the flames of the fire within His mouth. All the cows and cowherd boys were thus saved from imminent danger. The cowherd boys, out of fear, became almost unconscious



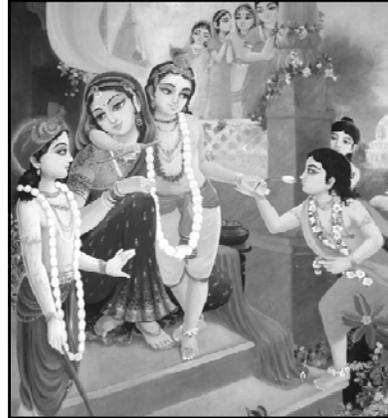
but when they came to their consciousness and opened their eyes, they saw that all of them, along with Kṛṣṇa Balarāma and the cows, they're again in the Bhāṇḍīra forest.



When they found themselves along with their cows in a safe place, all of them became very much astonished. When the cowherd boys saw themselves completely free from the attack of the blazing fire and their cows are saved,



they thought within themselves that Kṛṣṇa was not an ordinary boy but He was some demigod.



Thus Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, along with cowherd boys and cows, returned to Vṛndāvana, in the evening, while playing on their flutes. Thus they returned to the village of Vṛndāvana.