

Notes on *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 20.247*

Unfortunately, neither Śrīla Prabhupāda, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura nor Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura offer a commentary on this fascinating verse. Hence we needed to research the matter. Let's take a look at the results and let's do that in Question/Answer form.

Question One:

In texts 245-256 Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī lists the 6 kinds of *avatāras* of Kṛṣṇa. Why then does he mention the childhood and boyhood of Kṛṣṇa in 247?

Answer:

Śrīla Prabhupāda gives an interesting insight in his *Ādi-līlā* 2.100p:

The Personality of Godhead manifests Himself in six different features: (1) prābhava, (2) vaibhava, (3) empowered incarnations, (4) partial incarnations, (5) childhood and (6) boyhood. The Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose permanent feature is adolescence, enjoys His transcendental proclivities by performing pastimes in these six forms. In these six features there are unlimited divisions of the Personality of Godhead's forms.

And Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī tells us in *Ādi-līlā* 2.99:

“The Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is eternally an adolescent, is the primeval Lord, the source of all incarnations. He expands Himself in these six categories of forms to establish His supremacy throughout the universe” (*Ādi-līlā* 2.99) and verse 97 tells us Kṛṣṇa “enjoys Himself in these six primary expansions.”

- * So we can understand that Text 247 is a framework key to this section. We are being reminded that Kṛṣṇa is *avatāri* but He also descends in His original form which has characteristics called *bālyā* and *paugāṇḍa* which, like Him, are eternal.
- * Let's explore this a little by reading from *Ānanda-vṛndāvana-campū*:
“Kṛṣṇa's eternal form is that of a fifteen year-old youth. However, His *kaumāra* and *paugāṇḍa-līlās* (childhood and boyhood pastimes) also eternally remain within His body. According to His sweet will, Kṛṣṇa manifests one particular pastime form or another. Kṛṣṇa displays these different pastime periods to fulfill the desires of His devotees, who themselves are wish fulfilling creepers. Although the stages of His childhood, boyhood and youthful pastimes differ in nature, they do not conflict with each other. Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of transcendental bliss, maintains the eternal *kaiśora-rūpa* (form of youth) within Himself. His pastimes, therefore, do not undergo any transformation. In order to nourish his *bālyā-līlā* (childhood pastimes) Kṛṣṇa conceals His six opulences and His form of eternal youth by His sweet will. This is the explanation of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

Although Kṛṣṇa showed His manifold opulences when He killed Pūtanā, Trṇāvarta, and other demons, He quickly hid these powers in order to preserve the sweet mellow of *vātsalya-rasa* (parental love). Therefore the influence of Kṛṣṇa’s divine majestic powers (*aiśvarya*) remain in the background so that He can relish the sweet flavor (*mādhurya*) of His Vṛndāvana pastimes with His intimate loving servants. Within Kṛṣṇa’s transcendental body of eternity, knowledge, and bliss the various mellows of parental affection, friendship, and paramour love reach perfection. Why does Kṛṣṇa perform these pastimes? To favor His devotees, who are fixed in the mood of *vātsalya*, *sākhyā*, and *mādhurya bhāvas*. Kṛṣṇa allows Himself to come completely under their control.

These various pastime periods of Kṛṣṇa are eternal and beyond judgement and argument.”

- * We can understand from this that *bālyā* nourishes *vātsalya-rati* in the heart of a devotee, and *paugāṇḍa* nourishes *sākhyā-rati*.

Question Two:

Why is the emphasis on *bālyā* and *paugāṇḍa*? (in 247).

Answer:

It’s because we are talking of Kṛṣṇa’s **personal characteristics** when He descends into this world. We are talking *naimittika-līlā* here. We can understand this if we take a look at Rūpa Gosvāmī’s *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.63 which is quoted as *Madhya-līlā* 20.380:

*vayaso vividhatve ’pi
sarva-bhakti-rasāśrayaḥ
dharmī kiśora evātra
nitya-līlā-vilāsavān*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternally enjoying Himself, and He is the shelter of all kinds of devotional service. Although His ages are various, His age known as *kiśora* [pre-youth] is best of all.

In this verse *svayam-rūpa* Śrī Kṛṣṇa Kiśora is referred to as “**dharmī**”. This is what is meant by “**vigrahera**” in 247. **Dharmī’s dharma** (characteristic), (**vigrahera dharma**), is the two other ages He manifests – *bālyā* and *paugāṇḍa*. He **manifests** these only in *prakāṣa-līlā*. That’s why Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī is writing as he does in 247.

In *aṣṭa-kālīya-līlā*, Kṛṣṇa is eternally *kaiśora*. That’s why Kiśora Kṛṣṇa is **dharmī** and the other two ages (manifested for relishing/ nourishing *vātsalya* and *sākhyā rasas*) are His **dharma** – His qualities, characteristics or attributes.

But because **dharmī** is eternal His **dharma** are also eternal. Thus these two ages are eternally the attributes of Kṛṣṇa.

Jīva Gosvāmī also makes an interesting comment in his *ṭikā* on Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.63 (*Madhya-līlā* 20.380). He tells us that **dharmī** in this verse means “possessing all qualities” or “a full manifestation of qualities”. That is, Kṛṣṇa's *kaiśora-rūpa* is best because its attributes are *bālyā* and *paugaṇḍa*. All the forms are within the *kaiśora* form and therefore it contains all the *rasas*. Hence Kṛṣṇa's *kaiśora* age is considered the best, the most complete.

The is confirmed by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī in *Madhya-līlā* 19.103:

*bālyā, paugaṇḍa, kaiśore, śreṣṭha māna' kāya?
'vayaḥ kaiśorakaṁ dhyeyaṁ'—kahe upādhyāya*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked, “Of the three ages of Kṛṣṇa known as childhood, boyhood and fresh youth, which do you consider best?”
Raghupati Upādhyāya replied, “Fresh youth is the best age.”

Question 3:

Why has Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī used the word “*vigraha*” in 247 and not *rūpa* or *svarūpa*?

Answer:

He is referring back to that original Personality whom he mentions in Text 154 and whom he describes as non-different from His expansions. He is not only meaning **form** but person/ personality. Supreme, original personality.

Question 4:

Why does Śrīla Prabhupāda translate *vigrahera* as Deity?

Answer:

This is unusual for Śrīla Prabhupāda. Usually he translates it as Supreme Personality of Godhead (Ādi 1.69, 2.28) or as form/person (Madhya 6.152, 166, 167, 264/ Madhya 9.155/ Madhya 17.131/ Madhya 20.164/ Madhya 25.114 + 115, etc. etc.)

- 1) The Deity manifests in the material sky. And so, it seems that Śrīla Prabhupāda is using **Deity** to differentiate between Kṛṣṇa's *nitya* and *naimittika* form. He is indicating that we are talking *naimittika* form.
- 2) *Bālyā, paugaṇḍa* and *kaiśora* all manifest in the deity form in the material sky. We are talking about nourishing *vātsalya, sakhya* or *mādhurya* through their worship. *kaiśora* age = *mādhurya rasa* which is prominent in Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's *sampradāya* and so *kaiśora* form is prominent. Other *sampradaya* members may worship *bālyā* Kṛṣṇa or *paugaṇḍa* Kṛṣṇa because of the *rati* growing in their hearts. Deities in these ages may be ideal for their worship and *prayojana*. (Eg. Vallabha *sampradāya*.)