

Ācārya Commentaries on Kāliya-līlā

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that use of the name “Kālindī” indicates Kāliya.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that “without Rāma” because that day it was Balarāma’s birthday.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that they were very thirsty so they all drank at once and manifested symptoms of poisoning simultaneously, otherwise those who did not drink initially would have seen the effects and not drunk.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that “lost consciousness by the divine will of the Lord” indicates this was all going on by Kṛṣṇa’s arrangement to drive Kāliya away from Vraja. So this whole pastime is a display of the Lord’s amazing potency.

Kṛṣṇa could have brought ordinary devotees back to life by His desire, but because they were very special devotees He gave them His special glance which is a shower of nectar.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that “lifeless” means that with His *yogamāyā* potency He covered their life-airs. Otherwise the cowherd boys are eternal.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that they must have asked each other how it happened that they were revived from death. What herbs or *mantras* had been used?

Then one boy remembered what Gargamuni had said, that “you boys will easily cross over all obstacles by His (Kṛṣṇa’s) mercy.”

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that then they unanimously agreed that Kṛṣṇa’s glance must have been the exclusive cause.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that this is because such first-class devotees do not recognize any other cause for their good fortune than the grace of Kṛṣṇa.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that the Yamunā is very dear to Kṛṣṇa, so He became very concerned when He saw she was polluted, and He wanted to purify her of the contamination.

Śrīdhara Svāmī says that Kāliya had been living there for many *yugas*.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that the lake’s contamination was so great that it couldn’t have happened over a short time.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that lake was about one *yojana* wide, and away from the part of the Yamunā where the water was flowing, otherwise the poison would have mixed with the moving water and poisoned Mathurā.

Śrīdhara Svāmī says that the water was being brought to boiling temperature by the poison, therefore there was a strong vapor rising which was also poisonous. For one *yojana* around the lakeshore everything was poisoned.

Śrīdhara Svāmī says that in another *Purāṇa* there is an account of Garuḍa placing some nectar on the tree therefore, it had survived the poison.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that Kṛṣṇa dived in head first.

Śrīdhara Svāmī says that Kāliya is called *caḅṣu-śravā* because he hears through his eyes.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that his biting should be known as his heartily kissing the Lord, and his covering the body of the Lord should be understood as a firm embrace. “With anger” means “as if with anger,” but actually with pure love because the Lord showed him mercy. Other *ācāryas* don’t speak like this.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that shows the intensity of their relationship with the Lord. They were crying with painful sounds.

Actually Kṛṣṇa didn’t move because He was stunned because of the loving embrace. Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that the Lord didn’t move because of heroic pride. He was telling Kāliya “go ahead, show your strength, but later on I’ll show you My strength.”

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that their “standing up” was like a dead creature which is somehow struck by a thunderbolt and as a result rises up. We should understand that all the creatures of the forest came.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that “as if crying” means that their tears had dried up out of fear and anxiety.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that the presiding deities of the different natural functions, out of affection forgot His opulence. Out of fear they showed bad omens.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that they felt that because Balarāma didn’t go with Kṛṣṇa that Kṛṣṇa had therefore got into difficulty, but if Balarāma had gone with Him He would not have been troubled.

Jīva Gosvāmī says that He did not say anything in order to give them courage. He laughed for the same reason. Balarāma did not do anything because He could not - He was unable to act apart from the desire of Kṛṣṇa.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that Balarāma was laughing because He was thinking “He doesn’t take pleasure in playing with Me in My form as Śeṣanāga, but rather He wants to play with this lowest of snakes, the mundane petty Kāliya.”

He didn’t say anything because it would have been improper to cover over the mood of the others who were so absorbed in Kṛṣṇa. Also because He was incapable of doing so.

When He laughed they felt a little reassured and their desire to give up their lives reduced.

Sanātana Gosvāmī asks and answers “Why had His footprints not been covered over by now, seeing He had passed on that path some time before and many birds and beasts had passed on that path since then? Because all the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana forest carefully preserved His footprints as great treasures, the very ornaments of the earth.”

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that the adults asked the cowherd boys what had happened to Kṛṣṇa, but the boys were not able to reply, being stunned. The adults became even more stunned when they observed the stunned condition of the boys.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that having given a general description of the conditions of all present there, now a description of certain individuals or groups is to be given. First the *gopīs* — It is not possible that the snake could have overpowered Him, so we can understand that this is going on by His desire. They became overwhelmed because they could not recognize the scientific facts of the situation, because of their overwhelming burden of love.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that they felt the three worlds to be burned to ashes by the fire of separation from Him.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that Śukadeva is only revealing a little of how the different people are feeling because of being overwhelmed by his own burden of sorrow.

Sanātana Gosvāmī then quotes Viṣṇu Purāna to give details of the feelings others expressed to Mother Yaśoda: “It is better that all of us together with Mother Yaśoda, enter into this poisonous, mighty lake of the king of serpents rather than return to Vṛndāvana, which is no longer appropriate for us. After all, what is the use of the day without sun, of the night without the moon, of the cows without their bull, or of Vṛndāvana without Kṛṣṇa. Deprived of Kṛṣṇa we shall not return to Vṛndāvana. This forest is no longer fit to be resided in, just like a lake deprived of water. It is very amazing to us that Kṛṣṇa’s mother still maintains her hankering to reside along with Him in Vṛndāvana,

where that Lord Hari exhibited His complexion like that of the petals of the blue lotus. But, O wretched woman, how can we remain in the cow pastures without seeing Lord Hari, His eyes as shining as the petals of a full-blown lotus? All the wealth of our minds has been stolen away by His most charming talks, and therefore we will not go back to the cowherd village of Nanda Mahārāja without the lotus-eyed Lord Kṛṣṇa. Just see O *gopīs*, how even while being enveloped in the coils of the king of serpents, Kāliya, Kṛṣṇa is still glancing at us with His beautiful smiling face.”

They repeatedly washed Yaśoda’s face, which had become encrusted with the mucus from her tears. They were shedding tears in waves, or rivers, implying that one wave of tears would come out and flood over the top of the tears that had become out before.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that they were all indiscriminately entering, so how could He check them? Answer is in the word “Bhagavān.” Some He checked verbally, some by physical force, some by glancing at them reassuringly. Because He checked them they fell down unconscious, distressed at being stopped from joining Kṛṣṇa.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that Kṛṣṇa released Himself because of His being unable to tolerate the distress of others. One who meets another with special affection does not stand up and forcibly free himself from the embrace, but rather he remains embracing for some time and then stands up. In this way he imitated ordinary behavior.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that Kāliya became angry out of affection. Because of the Lord’s charm he simply looked at him.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that flaming poison was coming out from his eyes.

Śrīdhara Svāmī says that Kṛṣṇa was able to dance so nicely on the moving hoods because He is the original spiritual master of all arts.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that this display of dancing skill was particularly intended for the younger girls who were experiencing preliminary attachment for Him.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that the offering of paraphernalia was not done in proper order because all these people who came were in too much ecstasy to worry about these details, or because Śukadeva was in too much ecstasy to express it properly.

Sanātana Gosvāmī says that Kṛṣṇa danced somewhat excessively on Kāliya’s hoods to increase his good fortune. By all his hoods being broken is indicated that he was becoming humbled. He offered prayers within his mind because he was in too much pain to speak out loud. But within his mind he was saying “I am yours.”

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that the seed of devotion had been planted in his heart by his wives, but because of his fault of a predominance of anger due to previous offenses it was unable to sprout.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that previously the wives had thought that Kāliya was such a rascal that if he was killed it wouldn't worry them, but when they saw he was becoming a devotee they thought they should try to help him.

Madhvācārya says that “One who simply thinks with devotion ‘the punishment which the Supreme Lord is exerting upon me is actually mercy towards me’ indeed becomes pious. But for those who continue, even after punishment from the Lord, to envy Him, their attitude is the reason for their continuing to fail to recognize Him.”

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that these must have been Vaiṣṇava practices, because we do not see such qualities, particularly pridelessness, in people who are not Vaiṣṇavas.

Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says that he must have done some amazing Vaiṣṇava activities.