

Atmarama + Not Atmarama...

Jiva Goswami: Bhagavat Sandarbha 49

The Lord was present in the past, is present now and will be present in the future. Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 3.8.3

Upasam-hāryatvam means that it is proper to gather all forms during meditation. The Lord's birth is different from material birth. It is an appearance of the Lord, which resembles a material birth. Sometime it is not similar to a material birth also. *Ajāyamānā bahudhā vijāyate*: unborn, he is born in many ways. (Puruṣa-sūkta)

“Then the Lord, complete with all his expansions, who is situated in the core of everyone's heart, responding to the request of his devotees, appeared from Devakī, non-different from the Lord, in the dense darkness of night, like the full moon rising on the eastern horizon.” SB 10.3.8

“To prove the words of his servant--that he is present in all objects--to be true, the Lord showed an astonishing form which was neither animal nor human to the assembly.” SB 7.8.17

“After a long time, the Supreme Lord, Madhusūdana, who is like fire in wood, controlled by the strength of bhakti of Kardama, made his appearance.” SB 3.24.6

By the power of Kardama's bhakti the *avatāra* Kapila appeared in this manner. The philosophers say *lokavat tu līlā-kaivalyam*: the Lord's pastimes without motive, similar to actions in this world. (Brahma-sūtra 2.1.33) In this world a madman out of intense bliss dances without a particular motive. Similarly, the Lord acts without motive.

“Without a goal, the Lord carries out creation out of bliss alone, like a mad man dancing. What is the question of a goal for the Lord who is complete bliss? Persons who are liberated have no desires to be fulfilled. What then to speak of desires in the Lord, the soul of all beings?” Nārāyaṇa-saṁhitā

In this example, the mad man is ignorant. One should not imply this in the Lord. Rather the example is used to show that the Lord enacts pastimes without considering his goal, by simply out of great inherent bliss. Similarly, one could find fault with the example of inhaling and exhaling. This is natural, but in deep sleep the person is also unaware (whereas the Lord is always aware). Thus the Lord's pastimes arise from the natural bliss of his *svarūpa*. Śruti says “The act of creation is the nature of the Lord; for one whose desires are fulfilled at all times, what desire does he have?” Māṇḍukya Upaniṣad

If the Lord's actions in relation to creation of the universe are unmotivated, then what can one say about his actions in Vaikuṅṭha?

“O Lord Hṛṣīkeśa, master of the senses, please let us offer our obeisances unto you, whose pastimes are beyond matter, whose pastimes are proclaimed everywhere, unto you who are *ātmārāma* but not *ātmarāma*.” SB 10.16.47

[NOTE: BBT Translation of 10.16.47 is “O Lord Hṛṣīkeśa, master of the senses, please let us offer our obeisances unto You, whose pastimes are inconceivably glorious. Your existence can be inferred from the necessity for a creator and revealer of all cosmic manifestations. But although Your devotees can understand You in this way, to the nondevotees You remain silent, absorbed in self-satisfaction.”]

The attraction of Śukadeva and others for the Lord’s pastimes (without material motive) is therefore commendable.