

## Kṛṣṇa – son born of both Vasudeva + Nanda

Ques:

We always hear that Kṛṣṇa was born in the prison house of Kamsa, as the son of Vasudeva and Devakī. However, mention is occasionally made of Kṛṣṇa being directly born from the womb of Yaśodā. Where is the scriptural reference which states that Kṛṣṇa was one of two children, twins, born of Yaśodā and Nanda Maharaja?

Ans:

Below are two commentaries' references.

1.

Laghu-bhagavatamṛta 1.5.459 – Rupa Goswami

---

“Exhausted by the labor of childbirth, Yaśodā was overwhelmed with sleep and unable to understand what kind of child had been born to her.” SB 10.3.53

Yaśodā, like Devakī, looking at the features of Kṛṣṇa, could understand that he was the supreme lord (*param*). But did Yaśodā not understand that she had given birth to a girl child also, and that Vasudeva had in front of her taken the girl and exchanged his son and left? She did not know about the exchange (*na tad veda*). Another version has *na tal-liṅgam* instead of *na tad veda*. In that case the meaning is “She did not know about the indications – the birth of the girl and Vasudeva exchanging the children.” *Liṅgam* means indication and inference, according to Viśva-kośa. The reason she did not understand is given: she was exhausted. In *Ādi Purāṇa* it is clearly said by Nārada *nanda-gopa-gr̥he putro yaśodā-garbha-sambhavaḥ: a son was born from the womb of Yaśodā in the house of Nanda*. It is said elsewhere that Kṛṣṇa was Yaśodā's son, and we should accept the direct meaning of such statements:

*nandas tv ātmaja utpanne jātāhlādo mahā-manāḥ*

Nanda Mahārāja was naturally very magnanimous, and when Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa appeared as his son, he was overwhelmed by jubilation. SB 10.5.1

*nāyam sukhāpo bhagavān dehinām gopikā-sutaḥ  
jñāninām cātma-bhūtānām yathā bhaktimatām iha*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, the son of mother Yaśodā, is accessible to devotees engaged in spontaneous loving service, but He is not as easily accessible to mental speculators, to those striving for self-realization by severe austerities and penances, or to those who consider the body the same as the self. SB 10.9.21

However, when Devakī spoke to Kamsa, she was trying to hide the fact of her son's birth by saying the eighth child was a daughter. It cannot be taken literally.

*upaguhyātmajām evaṁ rudatyā dīna-dīnavat  
yācitas tām vinirbhartsya hastād ācicchide khalah*

Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: Piteously embracing her daughter and crying, Devakī begged Kamsa for the child, but he was so cruel that he chastised her and forcibly snatched the child from her hands. SB 10.4.7

But why did Śukadeva not state the birth of Kṛṣṇa from Yaśodā directly? One should accept it as the Lord's intention. "I will appear in the house of both Nanda and Vasudeva. I will however remain only in Nanda's house with one form. If I have two forms, Kamsa will know that I have taken birth and will persecute both sets of parents. You (Śukadeva) should recite my story so that the secret is not revealed." This is the intention of the Lord. Accepting the Lord's desire, the author wrote the work accordingly. *Api* in text 450 indicates that Kṛṣṇa being Yaśodā's son is kept covered.

2. VCT's commentary on the same verse

The fact that Kṛṣṇa was also born to Yaśodā is not very well known. Because Yaśodā and Devakī were friends, Yaśodā gave her fame to Devakī and allowed Devakī to become famous as the mother of Kṛṣṇa. The name Yaśodā means to give (*dadāti*) fame (*yaśo*). However, the name Devakī is also another name of mother Yaśodā. as stated in the Bṛhad-viṣṇu Purāṇa: *dve nāmnī nanda-bhāryāyā, yaśodā devakīti ca, ataḥ sakhyam abhūt tasya, devakyā śauri-jāyayā*: "The wife of Nanda had two names, Yasodā and also Devakī. Therefore, it was natural that she [the wife of Nanda] developed friendship with Devakī, the wife of śauri [Vasudeva]." This is also in accordance with Vaiṣṇava Tosani, Ananda Vṛndāvana Campu and Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta.