

KARTIK INSPIRATIONS 2022

PAST LIVES

Welcome to our Kartik Inspirations.

Today we will hear yet another miracle of Vrindavan, this one about the animals who live here. Some of them are able to remember their past lives. There is a very nice example about a saint called Avada das, who initiated a young man who could not really stay in the ashram and practice spiritual life regularly, so he eventually left. For several years Avada baba had no information about him and began to worry about him.

One day while he was doing japa and just moving about in the ashram courtyard, a young monkey dashed forward and caught hold of his feet. Avada understood—he was the same Bengali disciple. He had died and was reborn as a monkey because he lived like a monkey. But on account of the bhakti, he remembered the offense he had committed in his previous life. That is why he was so repentant and came and took shelter. So Baba took pity on him and said, *“You have done well by returning. Now, don’t go anywhere. Remain near the ashram and come for prasadam two times a day.”*

Then he tied a Tulasi kanti around his neck and asked his people who lived in the ashram to take care of him. This monkey began to live near the ashram on the roof. Both times when prasadam was distributed, he came and sat down in the

courtyard. Then in the evening, when Baba gave his katha on the Bhagavatam, this monkey, whom everyone soon called Ram das, was always there and listened with rapt attention.

One day Avada Baba did not see Ram das, so he said to his disciples, *“I have not seen him for two days, look around and see where he is.”* They looked all over the ashram and found him lying dead on the rooftop. Avada Baba commented, *“Ram das was a Vaisnava; his funeral should be performed according to the Vaisnava tradition.”* So, he was carried on a little palanquin around Vrindavan, brought to the Yamuna, and burned.

Yes, my dear everyone, in Vrindavan, you find many such cases. You find dogs regularly coming to aratiks; cows, you know, coming before the deities when they give birth and delivering their calf to the lotus feet of Radha and Krishna; you find peacocks attending the various ceremonies.

There is a prayer, *“Oh, my Lord, please bestow this great fortune on me that I may live among Your intimate devotees and serve Your lotus feet—either here or somewhere else in a different body, even if it be that of some lonely creature like that of a bird or beast.”* In Vrindavan, you see the fulfillment of this prayer.

Stay tuned and come for the next Kartik inspirations.

Śacīnandana Prāsāda
ŚACĪNANDANA SWAMI

O, MY LORD, PLEASE BESTOW
THIS GREAT FORTUNE ON ME
THAT I MAY LIVE AMONG YOUR
INTIMATE DEVOTEES
AND SERVE YOUR LOTUS FEET.