

Krishna calls the gopis with his flute

- ॐ It appears from the statements of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam that Kṛṣṇa had to wait another year for such a moon before enjoying the rāsa dance with the gopīs.
- ॐ At the age of seven years He lifted Govardhana Hill.
- ॐ Therefore the rāsa dance took place during His eighth year.
- ॐ When Kṛṣṇa saw the full-moon night of the śarat season, decorated with various seasonal flowers—especially the mallikā flowers, which are very fragrant—He remembered the gopīs’ prayers to goddess Kātyāyanī, wherein they prayed for Kṛṣṇa to be their husband.
- ॐ He thought that the full-moon night of the śarat season was just suitable for a nice dance.
- ॐ So their desire to have Kṛṣṇa as their husband would then be fulfilled.
- ॐ The words used in this connection in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam are *bhagavān api*. This means that although Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and thus has no desire that needs to be fulfilled (because He is always full with six opulences), He still wanted to enjoy the company of the gopīs in the rāsa dance. *Bhagavān api* signifies that this dance is not like the ordinary dancing of young boys and young girls.
- ॐ The specific words used in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam are *yogamāyām upāsritah*, which mean that this dancing with the gopīs is on the platform of *yogamāyā*, not *mahāmāyā*.
- ॐ The difference between the platforms of *yogamāyā* and *mahāmāyā* is compared in the Caitanya-caritāmṛta to the difference between gold and iron. From the viewpoint of metallurgy, gold and iron are both metals, but the quality is completely different. Similarly, although the rāsa dance and Lord Kṛṣṇa’s association with the gopīs appear like the ordinary mixing of young boys and girls, the quality is completely different. The difference is appreciated by great Vaiṣṇavas because they can understand the difference between love of Kṛṣṇa and lust.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa enjoyed the rāsa dance with the gopīs when He was eight years old.
- ॐ At that time, many of the gopīs were married
- ॐ At the same time, they continued to hope that Kṛṣṇa would be their husband.
- ॐ Their attitude toward Kṛṣṇa was that of paramour love.
- ॐ Therefore, the loving affairs of Kṛṣṇa with the gopīs are called *parakīya-rasa*. The attitude of a married man who desires another wife or a wife who desires another husband is called *parakīya-rasa*.
- ॐ Out of all these rasas, the *parakīya-rasa* is considered to be the topmost.
- ॐ When the full moon rose in the east, it tinged everything with a reddish color.
- ॐ With the rising of the moon, the whole sky appeared smeared by red *kuṅkuma*.
- ॐ When a husband long separated from his wife returns home, he decorates the face of his wife with red *kuṅkuma*.

Description is found
Srimad Bhagavatam
(Krishna Book)

- ॐ This long-expected moonrise of the śarat season was thus smearing the eastern sky.
- ॐ The appearance of the moon increased Kṛṣṇa's desire to dance with the gopīs.
- ॐ The forests were filled with fragrant flowers.
- ॐ The atmosphere was cooling and festive.
- ॐ When Lord Kṛṣṇa began to blow His flute, the gopīs all over Vṛndāvana became enchanted.
- ॐ Their attraction to the vibration of the flute increased a thousand times due to the rising full moon, the red horizon, the calm and cool atmosphere and the blossoming flowers.
- ॐ All the gopīs were by nature very much attracted to Kṛṣṇa's beauty, and when they heard the vibration of His flute, they became apparently lustful to satisfy the senses of Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ Immediately upon hearing the vibration of the flute, they all left their respective engagements and proceeded to the spot where Kṛṣṇa was standing.
- ॐ While they ran very swiftly, their earrings swung back and forth.
- ॐ They all rushed toward the place known as Vamśivaṭa.
- ॐ Some of them were engaged in milking cows, but they left their milking business half finished and immediately went to Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ One of them had just collected milk and put it in a milk pan on the stove to boil, but she did not care whether the milk overboiled and spilled—she immediately left to go see Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ Some of them were breast-feeding their small babies, and some were engaged in distributing food to the members of their families, but they left all such engagements and immediately rushed toward the spot where Kṛṣṇa was playing His flute.
- ॐ Some were engaged in serving their husbands, and some were themselves engaged in eating, but caring neither to serve their husbands nor eat, they immediately left.
- ॐ Some of them wanted to decorate their faces with cosmetic ointments and to dress themselves very nicely before going to Kṛṣṇa, but unfortunately they could not finish their cosmetic decorations or put on their clothes in the right way because of their anxiety to meet Kṛṣṇa immediately.
- ॐ Their faces were decorated hurriedly and were haphazardly finished; some even put the lower part of their clothes on the upper part of their bodies and the upper part on the lower part.
- ॐ While all the gopīs were hurriedly leaving their respective places, their husbands, brothers and fathers were all struck with wonder to know where they were going.
- ॐ Being young girls, they were protected either by husbands, elder brothers or fathers.
- ॐ All their guardians forbade them to go to Kṛṣṇa, but they disregarded them.
- ॐ Some of the gopīs were factually detained from going to Kṛṣṇa by their husbands and were locked up by force within their rooms.

- ॐ Being unable to go to Kṛṣṇa, they began to meditate upon His transcendental form by closing their eyes.
- ॐ The gopī associates of Kṛṣṇa who assembled in the place where Kṛṣṇa was appearing were from different groups.
- ॐ Most of the gopīs were eternal companions of Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ So some of the gopīs who joined Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes within this material world were coming from the status of ordinary human beings.
- ॐ If they had been bound by fruitive action, they were fully freed from the reaction of karma by constant meditation on Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ Their severely painful yearnings caused by their not being able to see Kṛṣṇa freed them from all sinful reactions, and their ecstasy of transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa in His absence ended all their reactions to material pious activities.
- ॐ the gopīs who began to meditate on Kṛṣṇa transcended both positions and became purified and thus elevated to the status of the gopīs already expanded by His pleasure potency.
- ॐ All the gopīs who concentrated their minds on Kṛṣṇa in the spirit of paramour love became fully purified of all the fruitive reactions of material nature, and some of them immediately gave up their material bodies developed under the three modes of material nature.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit’s inquiry

- ॐ Mahārāja Parīkṣit heard Śukadeva Gosvāmī explain the situation of the gopīs who assembled with Kṛṣṇa in the rāsa dance.
- ॐ When he heard that some of the gopīs, simply by concentrating on Kṛṣṇa as their paramour, became freed from all contamination of material birth and death, he said,
- ॐ “The gopīs did not know that Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- ॐ They accepted Him as a beautiful boy and considered Him to be their paramour.
- ॐ So how was it possible for them to get freed from the material condition just by thinking of a paramour?”
- ॐ
- ॐ On hearing this question from Mahārāja Parīkṣit, Śukadeva Gosvāmī replied, “My dear King, your question is already answered, even before this incident.”
- ॐ “Why are you again asking about the same subject matter which has already been explained to you?
- ॐ Why are you so forgetful?”.
- ॐ Śukadeva Gosvāmī then reminded Parīkṣit Mahārāja about the salvation of Śiṣupāla.
- ॐ Śiṣupāla was always envious of Kṛṣṇa, and because of his envy Kṛṣṇa killed him.
- ॐ But since Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Śiṣupāla gained salvation simply by seeing Him.

- ॐ If an envious person can get salvation simply by concentrating his mind on Kṛṣṇa, then what to speak of the gopīs, who are so dear to Kṛṣṇa and always think of Him in love?
- ॐ There must be some difference between the enemies and the friends.
- ॐ If Kṛṣṇa’s enemies could get freed from material contamination and become one with the Supreme, then certainly His dear friends like the gopīs can achieve such freedom and much more.
- ॐ Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued to inform Mahārāja Parīkṣit that Kṛṣṇa is not an ordinary person but rather the Supreme Personality of Godhead—imperishable, immeasurable and without any material qualities but full of all spiritual qualities.
- ॐ He appears in this material world out of His causeless mercy, and whenever He appears, He appears as He is, without change.
- ॐ Śukadeva Gosvāmī therefore assured King Parīkṣit that he should always rest assured that one who is attracted by Kṛṣṇa attains liberation from material bondage because Kṛṣṇa is the transcendental master of all mystic power.

Krishna addresses the gopis

- ॐ When all the gopīs assembled, as described, before Kṛṣṇa, He began to speak to them, welcoming them as well as discouraging them by word jugglery.
- ॐ “O ladies of Vṛndāvana,” Kṛṣṇa said, “you are very fortunate, and you are very dear to Me.
- ॐ I am very much pleased that you have come here, and I hope everything is well in Vṛndāvana.
- ॐ Now please order Me.
- ॐ What can I do for you?
- ॐ What is the purpose of your coming here in the dead of night?
- ॐ Kindly take your seats and let Me know what I can do for you.”
- ॐ
- ॐ Then Kṛṣṇa began to instruct them: “My dear friends, you must know that it is now the dead of night and the forest is very dangerous.
- ॐ At this time all the ferocious jungle animals—the tigers, bears, jackals and wolves—are prowling in the forest.
- ॐ Therefore it is very dangerous for you.
- ॐ You cannot select a secure place now.
- ॐ Everywhere you go you will find that all these animals are loitering to find their prey.
- ॐ I think, therefore, that you are taking a great risk in coming here in the dead of night.
- ॐ Please turn back immediately, without delay.”
- ॐ

- ॐ When He saw that they continued to smile, He said, “I very much appreciate your bodily features.
- ॐ All of you have nice, very thin waists.” *All of the gopīs there were exquisitely beautiful. They are described by the word sumadhyamā; the standard of beauty of a woman is said to be sumadhyamā, when the middle portion of the body is slender.*
- ॐ “It does not look very well for young girls and boys to remain together in the dead of night.”
- ॐ After hearing this advice, the gopīs did not seem very happy; therefore Kṛṣṇa began to stress the point in a different way.
- ॐ “My dear friends, I can understand that you have left your homes without the permission of your guardians;
- ॐ therefore I think your mothers, your fathers, your elder brothers and even your sons, and what to speak of your husbands, must be very anxious to find you.
- ॐ As long as you are here, they must be searching in different places, and their minds must be very agitated.
- ॐ So don’t tarry.
- ॐ Please go back and make them peaceful.”
- ॐ
- ॐ When the gopīs appeared to be a little bit disturbed and angry from hearing the free advice of Kṛṣṇa, they diverted their attention to looking at the beauty of the forest.
- ॐ At that time the whole forest was illuminated by the bright shining of the moon, and the air was blowing very silently over the blooming flowers, and the green leaves of the trees were moving in the breeze.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa took the opportunity of their looking at the forest to advise them. “I think you have come out to see the beautiful Vṛndāvana forest on this night,”
- ॐ He said, “but you must now be satisfied.
- ॐ So return to your homes without delay.
- ॐ I understand that you are all very chaste women, so now that you have seen the beautiful atmosphere of the Vṛndāvana forest,
- ॐ please return home and engage in the faithful service of your respective husbands.
- ॐ Some of you must have babies by this time, although you are very young.
- ॐ You must have left your small babies at home, and they must be crying. Please immediately go back home and just feed them with your breast milk.
- ॐ I can also understand that you have very great affection for Me, and out of that transcendental affection you have come here, hearing My playing on the flute.
- ॐ Your feelings of love and affection for Me are very appropriate because I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead. All living creatures are My parts and parcels, and naturally they are affectionate to Me.
- ॐ So this affection for Me is very welcome, and I congratulate you for this.

- ॐ Now you can go back to your homes.
- ॐ Another thing I must explain to you is that for a chaste woman, service to the husband without duplicity is the best religious principle.
- ॐ Not only should a woman be faithful and chaste to her husband, but she should also be affectionate to the friends of her husband, obedient to the father and mother of her husband, and affectionate to the younger brothers of her husband.
- ॐ And most importantly, a woman must take care of her children.”
- ॐ “Even if he is not of very good character, or even if he is not very rich or fortunate, or even if he is old or invalid on account of continued diseases, whatever her husband’s condition, a woman should not divorce her husband if she actually desires to be elevated to the higher planetary systems after leaving this body.
- ॐ Besides that, it is considered abominable in society if a woman is unfaithful and goes searching for another man.
- ॐ Such habits will deter a woman from being elevated to the heavenly planets, and the results of such habits are very degrading.
- ॐ A married woman should not search for a paramour, for this is not sanctioned by the Vedic principles of life.
- ॐ If you think that you are very much attached to Me and you want My association, I advise you not to personally try to enjoy Me.
- ॐ It is better for you to go home, simply talk about Me and think of Me, and by this process of constantly remembering Me and chanting My names you will surely be elevated to the spiritual platform.
- ॐ There is no need to stand near Me.
- ॐ Please go back home.”

The gopis respond

- ॐ When Kṛṣṇa spoke in such a discouraging way to the gopīs, they became very sad, for they thought that their desire to enjoy the rāsa dance with Kṛṣṇa would be frustrated.
- ॐ Thus they became full of anxiety.
- ॐ Out of great sadness, the gopīs began to breathe very heavily.
- ॐ Instead of looking at Kṛṣṇa face to face, they bowed their heads and looked at the ground, and they began to draw various types of curved lines on the ground with their toes.
- ॐ They were shedding heavy tears, and their cosmetic decorations were being washed from their faces.
- ॐ The water from their eyes mixed with the kuṅkuma on their breasts and fell to the ground.
- ॐ They could not say anything to Kṛṣṇa but simply stood there silently.
- ॐ By their silence they expressed that their hearts were grievously wounded.

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ॐ “Kṛṣṇa,” they said, “You are very cruel!

ॐ You should not talk like that.

ॐ We are full-fledged surrendered souls.

ॐ Please accept us, and don’t talk in that cruel way.

ॐ Of course, You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead and can do whatever You like,

ॐ but it is not worthy of Your position to treat us in such a cruel way.

ॐ We have come to You, leaving everything behind, just to take shelter of Your lotus feet.

ॐ We know that You are completely independent and can do whatever You like,

ॐ but we request You, don’t reject us.

ॐ We are Your devotees.

ॐ You should accept us as Lord Nārāyaṇa accepts His devotees.

ॐ There are many devotees of Lord Nārāyaṇa who worship Him for salvation, and He awards them salvation.

ॐ Similarly, how can You reject us when we have no shelter other than Your lotus feet?

ॐ “O dear Kṛṣṇa,” they continued, “You are the supreme instructor.

ॐ There is no doubt about it.

ॐ Your instructions to women to be faithful to their husbands and merciful to their children, to take care of household affairs and to be obedient to the elder members of the family, are surely just according to the tenets of the śāstras.

ॐ But we know that one may perfectly observe all these instructions of the śāstras by keeping oneself under the protection of Your lotus feet.

ॐ Our husbands, friends, family members and children are all dear and pleasing to us only because of Your presence, for You are the Supersoul of all living creatures.

ॐ Without Your presence, one is worthless.

ॐ When You leave the body, the body immediately dies, and according to the injunction of the śāstras, a dead body must immediately be thrown into a river or burned.

ॐ Therefore, ultimately You are the dearest personality in this world.

ॐ By placing our faith and love in Your personality, we are assured of never being bereft of husband, friends, sons or daughters.

ॐ If a woman accepts You as the supreme husband, then she will never be bereft of her husband, as in the bodily concept of life.

ॐ If we accept You as our ultimate husband, then there is no question of being separated, divorced or widowed.

ॐ You are the eternal husband, eternal son, eternal friend and eternal master, and one who enters into a relationship with You is eternally happy.

ॐ Since You are the teacher of all religious principles,

- ॐ Your lotus feet have to be worshiped first.
- ॐ Accordingly, the *sāstras* state, *ācārya-upāsanā*: the worship of Your lotus feet is the first principle.
- ॐ Besides that, as stated in the Bhagavad-gītā, You are the only enjoyer, You are the only proprietor, and You are the only friend.
- ॐ As such, we have come to You, leaving aside all so-called friends, society and love, and now You have become our enjoyer. Let us be everlastingly enjoyed by You.
- ॐ Be our proprietor, for that is Your natural claim, and be our supreme friend, for You are naturally so.
- ॐ Let us thus embrace You as the supreme beloved.”
- ॐ Then the gopīs told lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, “Please do not discourage our long-cherished desires to have You as our husband.
- ॐ Any intelligent man who cares for his own self-interest reposes all his loving spirit in You.
- ॐ Persons who are simply misled by the external energy, who want to be satisfied by false concepts, try to enjoy themselves apart from You.
- ॐ The so-called husband, friend, son, daughter, father and mother are all simply sources of material misery.
- ॐ No one is made happy in this material world by having a so-called father, mother, husband, son, daughter and friend.
- ॐ Although the father and mother are expected to protect the children, there are many children who are suffering for want of food and shelter.
- ॐ There are many good physicians, but when a patient dies, no physician can revive him.
- ॐ There are many means of protection, but when one is doomed, none of the protective measures can help, and without Your protection the so-called sources of protection simply become sources of continued distress.
- ॐ We therefore appeal to You, dear Lord of all lords: please do not kill our long-cherished desires to have You as our supreme husband.
- ॐ “Dear Kṛṣṇa, as women, we are certainly satisfied when our hearts are engaged in the activities of family affairs, but our hearts have already been stolen by You.
- ॐ We can no longer engage them in family affairs.
- ॐ Besides that, although You have repeatedly asked us to return home, and that is a very appropriate instruction, unfortunately we have been stunned here.
- ॐ Our legs have no power to move a step from Your lotus feet.
- ॐ Therefore, if even at Your request we return home, what shall we do there?
- ॐ We have lost all our ability to act without You.
- ॐ Instead of engaging our hearts in family affairs as women, we have now developed a different type of lust which is continually blazing in our hearts.

- ॐ Now we request You, dear Kṛṣṇa, to extinguish that fire with Your beautiful smile and the transcendental vibration emanating from Your lips.
- ॐ If You do not agree to do us this favor, we shall certainly be burned in the fire of separation.
- ॐ In that condition, we shall simply think of You and Your beautiful features and give up our bodies immediately.
- ॐ In that way we think it will be possible for us to reside at Your lotus feet in the next life.
- ॐ Dear Kṛṣṇa, if You say that if we go home our respective husbands will satisfy the lusty flame of our desire, we can only say that that is no longer possible.
- ॐ You have given us a chance to be enjoyed by You in the forest and have touched our breasts once in the past, which we accepted as a blessing, as do the goddesses of fortune, who are enjoyed in the Vaikuṅṭhalokas by You.
- ॐ Since we have tasted this transcendental enjoyment, we are no longer interested in going to anyone but You for the satisfaction of our lust.
- ॐ Dear Kṛṣṇa, the lotus feet of the goddess of fortune are always worshiped by the demigods.
- ॐ Although she is always resting on Your chest in the Vaikuṅṭha planets, she underwent great austerity and penance to have some shelter at Your lotus feet, which are always covered by tulasī leaves.
- ॐ Your lotus feet are the proper shelter of Your servitors, and the goddess of fortune, instead of abiding on Your chest, comes down and worships Your lotus feet.
- ॐ We have now placed ourselves under the dust of Your feet. Please do not reject us, for we are fully surrendered souls.
- ॐ “Dear Kṛṣṇa, You are known as Hari.
- ॐ You destroy all the miseries of all living entities, specifically of those who have left their homes and family attachment and have completely taken to You.
- ॐ We have left our homes with the hope that we shall completely devote and dedicate our lives to Your service.
- ॐ We are simply begging to be engaged as Your servants.
- ॐ We do not wish to ask You to accept us as Your wives.
- ॐ Simply accept us as Your maidservants.
- ॐ Since You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead and like to enjoy the parakīya-rasa and are famous as a transcendental woman hunter, we have come to satisfy Your transcendental desires.
- ॐ We are also after our own satisfaction, for simply by looking at Your smiling face we have become very lusty.
- ॐ We have come before You decorated with all ornaments and dress, but until You embrace us, all our garments and beautiful features remain incomplete.

- ॐ You are the Supreme Person, and if You complete our dressing attempt as the *puruṣa-bhūṣaṇa*, or the male ornament, then all our desires and bodily decorations are complete.
- ॐ “Dear Kṛṣṇa, we have simply been captivated by seeing You with tilaka and with earrings and by seeing Your beautiful face covered with scattered hair and bearing Your extraordinary smile.
- ॐ Not only that, but we are also attracted by Your arms, which always give assurance to the surrendered souls. And although we are also attracted by Your chest, which is always embraced by the goddess of fortune, we do not wish to take her position.
- ॐ We shall simply be satisfied by being Your maidservants.
- ॐ If You accuse us, however, of encouraging prostitution, then we can only ask, Where is that woman within these three worlds who is not captivated by Your beauty and the rhythmic songs vibrated by Your transcendental flute?
- ॐ Within these three worlds there is no distinction between men and women in relation to You because both men and women belong to the marginal potency, or prakṛti.
- ॐ No one is actually the enjoyer, or the male; everyone is meant to be enjoyed by You.
- ॐ There is no woman within these three worlds who cannot but deviate from her path of chastity once she is attracted to You, because Your beauty is so sublime that not only men and women but also cows, birds, beasts and even trees, fruits and flowers—everyone and everything—become enchanted, and what to speak of ourselves?
- ॐ It is, however, definitely decided that as Lord Viṣṇu is always protecting the demigods from the onslaught of demons, so You have also advented in Vṛndāvana just to give the residents protection from all kinds of distress. O dear friend of the distressed, kindly place Your hand on our burning breasts as well as on our heads, because we have surrendered unto You as Your eternal maidservants.
- ॐ If You think, however, that Your lotuslike palms might be burned to ashes if placed on our burning breasts, let us assure You that Your palms will feel pleasure instead of pain, as the lotus flower, although very delicate and soft, enjoys the scorching heat of the sun.”

Krishna reciprocates

- ॐ Upon hearing the anxious plea of the gopīs, the Supreme Personality of Godhead smiled, and being very kind to the gopīs, the Lord, although self-sufficient, began to embrace them and kiss them as they desired.
- ॐ When Kṛṣṇa, smiling, looked at the faces of the gopīs, the beauty of their faces became a hundred times enhanced.
- ॐ When He was enjoying them in their midst, He appeared just like the full moon surrounded by millions of shining stars.
- ॐ Thus the Supreme Personality of Godhead, surrounded by hundreds of gopīs and decorated with a flower garland of many colors, began to wander within the Vṛndāvana forest, sometimes singing to Himself and sometimes singing with the gopīs.

- ॐ In this way the Lord and the gopīs reached the cool, sandy bank of the Yamunā, where there were lilies and lotus flowers. In such a transcendental atmosphere, the gopīs and Kṛṣṇa began to enjoy one another.
- ॐ While they were walking on the bank of the Yamunā, Kṛṣṇa would sometimes put His arms around a gopī's head, breast or waist. Pinching one another and joking and looking at one another, they enjoyed.
- ॐ When Kṛṣṇa touched the bodies of the gopīs, their lust to embrace Him increased.
- ॐ They all enjoyed these pastimes.
- ॐ Thus the gopīs were blessed with all mercy by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for they enjoyed His company without a tinge of mundane sex life.
- ॐ The gopīs, however, soon began to feel very proud, thinking themselves to be the most fortunate women in the universe due to being favored by the company of Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is known as Keśava, could immediately understand their pride caused by their great fortune of enjoying Him personally, and in order to show them His causeless mercy and to curb their false pride, He immediately disappeared from the scene, exhibiting His opulence of renunciation.