

Kṛṣṇa Līlā notes – Chapter 39 (Akrūra’s Return Journey and His Vision of Viṣṇuloka
Within the Yamunā River)

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma Akrūra and Akrūra informs them of his mission

- ॐ Akrūra was warmly received by Lord Kṛṣṇa and Nanda Mahārāja and offered a resting place for the night.
- ॐ In the meantime, the two brothers Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa went to take Their supper.
- ॐ Akrūra sat on his bed and began to reflect that all the desires he had contemplated while coming from Mathurā to Vṛndāvana had been fulfilled.
- ॐ After taking Their supper, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma came to bid goodnight to Akrūra and asked him how Kāmsa was dealing with Their friends and relatives.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa then inquired into Kāmsa’s plans.
- ॐ The Supreme Personality of Godhead then informed Akrūra that his presence was very welcome.
- ॐ He inquired from him whether all his relatives and friends were well and free from all kinds of ailments.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa stated that He was very sorry that His maternal uncle Kāmsa was the head of the kingdom;
- ॐ He said that Kāmsa was the greatest anomaly in the whole system of government and that they could not expect any welfare for the citizens while he ruled.
- ॐ Then Kṛṣṇa said, “My father has undergone much tribulation simply from My being his son.
- ॐ For this reason also he has lost many other sons.
- ॐ I think Myself so fortunate that you have come as My friend and relative.
- ॐ My dear uncle Akrūra, please tell Me the purpose of your coming to Vṛndāvana.”
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- ॐ After this inquiry, Akrūra, who belonged to the dynasty of Yadu, explained the recent events in Mathurā, including Kāmsa’s attempt to kill Vasudeva, the father of Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ He related the things which had happened after the disclosure by Nārada that Kṛṣṇa was the son of Vasudeva, hidden by Vasudeva in the house of Nanda Mahārāja.
- ॐ Akrūra narrated all the stories regarding Kāmsa.
- ॐ He told how Nārada had met Kāmsa and how he himself was deputed by Kāmsa to come to Vṛndāvana.
- ॐ Akrūra explained to Kṛṣṇa that Nārada had told Kāmsa all about Kṛṣṇa’s being transferred from Mathurā to Vṛndāvana just after His birth and about His killing all the demons sent by Kāmsa.
- ॐ Akrūra then explained to Kṛṣṇa the purpose of his coming to Vṛndāvana: to take Him back to Mathurā.
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Description is found
Srimad Bhagavatam
(Krishna Book)

The cowherd men prepare to go to Mathurā

- ॐ After hearing of these arrangements, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, who are very expert in killing opponents, mildly laughed at the plans of Kāṁsa.
- ॐ They immediately informed Nanda Mahārāja that Kāṁsa had invited all the cowherd men and boys to go to Mathurā to participate in the ceremony known as Dhanur-yajña.
- ॐ Kāṁsa wanted them all to go there to participate in the function.
- ॐ On Kṛṣṇa’s word, Nanda Mahārāja at once called for the cowherd men and asked them to collect milk and all kinds of milk products to present to the King in the ceremony.
- ॐ He also sent instructions to the police chief of Vṛndāvana to tell all the inhabitants about Kāṁsa’s great Dhanur-yajña function and invite them to join.
- ॐ Nanda Mahārāja informed the cowherd men that they would start the next morning.
- ॐ They therefore arranged for the cows and bulls to carry them all to Mathurā.

The gopīs anxiety

- ॐ When the gopīs heard that Akrūra had come to take Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma away to Mathurā, they became overwhelmed with anxiety.
- ॐ Some of them became so aggrieved that their faces turned black and they began to breathe warmly and had palpitations of the heart.
- ॐ They discovered that their hair and clothes immediately loosened.
- ॐ Hearing the news that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were leaving for Mathurā, others, who were engaged in household duties, stopped working, as if they had forgotten everything, like a person who is called forth to die and leave this world at once.
- ॐ Others immediately fainted due to separation from Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ Remembering His attractive smile and His talks with them, the gopīs became overwhelmed with grief.
- ॐ They all remembered the characteristics of the Personality of Godhead, how He moved within the area of Vṛndāvana and how, with joking words, He attracted all their hearts.
- ॐ Thinking of Kṛṣṇa and of their imminent separation from Him, the gopīs assembled together with heavily beating hearts.
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- ॐ They were completely absorbed in thought of Kṛṣṇa, and with tears falling from their eyes, they spoke as follows.
- ॐ “O Providence, you are so cruel!
- ॐ It appears that you do not know how to show mercy to others.
- ॐ By your arrangement, friends contact one another, but without fulfilling their desires you separate them.
- ॐ This is exactly like a child’s game that has no meaning.

Kṛṣṇa Līlā notes – Chapter 39 (Akrūra’s Return Journey and His Vision of Viṣṇuloka
Within the Yamunā River)

- ॐ It is very abominable that you arrange to show us beautiful Kṛṣṇa, whose bluish curling hair beautifies His broad forehead and sharp nose, and who is always smiling to minimize all grief in this material world, and then arrange to separate Him from us.
- ॐ O Providence, you are so cruel!
- ॐ But most astonishingly you appear now as Akrūra, which means ‘not cruel.’
- ॐ In the beginning we appreciated your workmanship in giving us these eyes to see the beautiful face of Kṛṣṇa, but now, just like a foolish creature, you are taking away our eyes by not letting us see Kṛṣṇa here anymore.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda Mahārāja, is also very cruel!
- ॐ He must always have new friends;
- ॐ He does not like to keep friendship for a long time with anyone.
- ॐ We gopīs of Vṛndāvana, having left our homes, friends and relatives, have become Kṛṣṇa’s maidservants, but He is neglecting us and going away.
- ॐ He does not even look upon us, although we are completely surrendered unto Him.
- ॐ Now all the young girls in Mathurā will have the opportunity.
- ॐ They are expecting Kṛṣṇa’s arrival, and they will enjoy His sweet smiling face and will drink its honey.
- ॐ Although we know that Kṛṣṇa is very steady and determined, we are afraid that as soon as He sees the beautiful faces of the young girls in Mathurā, He will forget Himself.
- ॐ We fear He will become controlled by them and will forget us, for we are simple village girls.
- ॐ He will no longer be kind to us.
- ॐ We therefore do not expect Kṛṣṇa to return to Vṛndāvana. He will not leave the company of the girls in Mathurā.”
- ॐ “The most astonishing feature is that Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda, without consideration, has already seated Himself on the chariot.
- ॐ From this it appears that Kṛṣṇa is not very intelligent.
- ॐ Yet He may be very intelligent—but He is not very merciful.
- ॐ Not only Kṛṣṇa but all the cowherd men are so callous that they are already yoking the bulls and calves for the journey to Mathurā.
- ॐ The elderly persons in Vṛndāvana are also merciless;
- ॐ they do not take our plight into consideration and stop Kṛṣṇa’s journey to Mathurā.
- ॐ Even the demigods are very unkind to us; they are also not impeding His going to Mathurā.”
- ॐ The gopīs prayed to the demigods to create some natural disturbance, such as a hurricane, storm or heavy rainfall, so that Kṛṣṇa could not go to Mathurā.

Kṛṣṇa Līlā notes – Chapter 39 (Akrūra’s Return Journey and His Vision of Viṣṇuloka
Within the Yamunā River)

- ॐ They then began to consider, “Despite our parents and guardians, we shall personally stop Kṛṣṇa from going to Mathurā.
- ॐ We have no alternative but to take this direct action.
- ॐ Everyone has gone against us to take away Kṛṣṇa from our sight.
- ॐ Without Him we cannot live for a moment.”
- ॐ The gopīs thus decided to obstruct the passage through which the chariot of Kṛṣṇa was supposed to pass.
- ॐ They began to talk among themselves: “We have passed a very long night—which seemed only a moment—engaged in the rāsa dance with Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ We looked at His sweet smile and embraced Him and talked with Him.
- ॐ Now, how shall we live even for a moment if He goes away from us?
- ॐ At the end of the day, in the evening, along with His elder brother Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa would return home with His friends.
- ॐ His face would be smeared with the dust raised by the hooves of the cows, and He would smile and play on His flute and look upon us so kindly.
- ॐ How shall we be able to forget Him? How shall we be able to forget Kṛṣṇa, who is our life and soul?
- ॐ He has already taken away our hearts in so many ways throughout our days and nights, and if He goes away, there is no possibility of our continuing to live.”
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- ॐ Thinking like this, the gopīs became more and more grief-stricken at Kṛṣṇa’s leaving Vṛndāvana.
- ॐ They could not check their minds, and they began to cry loudly, calling the different names of Kṛṣṇa,
- ॐ “O dear Dāmodara! Dear Mādhava!”

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma depart for Mathurā

- ॐ The gopīs cried all night before the departure of Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ As soon as the sun rose, Akrūra finished his morning bath, got on the chariot and started for Mathurā with Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.
- ॐ Nanda Mahārāja and the cowherd men got up on bullock carts after loading them with big earthen pots filled with yogurt, milk, ghee and other milk products, and then they began to follow the chariot of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.
- ॐ In spite of Kṛṣṇa’s asking the gopīs not to obstruct Their way, they all surrounded the chariot and stood up to see Kṛṣṇa with pitiable eyes.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa was very much affected upon seeing the plight of the gopīs, but His duty was to start for Mathurā, for this was foretold by Nārada.

Kṛṣṇa Līlā notes – Chapter 39 (Akrūra's Return Journey and His Vision of Viṣṇuloka
Within the Yamunā River)

- ॐ Kṛṣṇa therefore consoled the gopīs.
ॐ He told them that they should not be aggrieved:
ॐ He was coming back very soon after finishing His business.
ॐ
ॐ But they could not be persuaded to disperse.
ॐ The chariot, however, began to head west, and as it proceeded, the minds of the gopīs followed it as far as possible.
ॐ They watched the flag on the chariot as long as it was visible;
ॐ finally they could see only the dust of the chariot in the distance.
ॐ The gopīs did not move from their places but stood until the chariot could not be seen at all.
ॐ They remained standing still, as if they were painted pictures.
ॐ All the gopīs decided that Kṛṣṇa was not returning immediately, and with greatly disappointed hearts they returned to their respective homes.
ॐ Being greatly disturbed by the absence of Kṛṣṇa, they simply thought all day and night about His pastimes and thus derived some consolation.

Vision of Viṣṇuloka Within the Yamunā River

- ॐ The Lord, accompanied by Akrūra and Balarāma, traveled in the chariot with great speed toward the bank of the Yamunā.
ॐ Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma took Their baths in the river and washed Their faces.
ॐ After drinking the transparent, crystal-clear water of the Yamunā, They took Their seats again on the chariot.
ॐ The chariot was standing underneath the shade of big trees, and the two brothers sat down there.
ॐ Akrūra then took Their permission to also take a bath in the Yamunā.
 ॐ *According to Vedic ritual, after taking a bath in a river, one should stand at least half submerged and murmur the Gāyatrī mantra.*
ॐ While he was standing in the river, Akrūra suddenly saw Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa within the water.
ॐ He was surprised to see Them there because he was confident that They were sitting on the chariot.
ॐ Confused, he immediately came out of the water and went to see where the boys were, and he was very much surprised to see that They were sitting on the chariot as before.
ॐ When he saw Them on the chariot, he began to wonder whether he had mistakenly seen Them in the water.
ॐ He therefore went back to the river.

Kṛṣṇa Līlā notes – Chapter 39 (Akrūra's Return Journey and His Vision of Viṣṇuloka
Within the Yamunā River)

- ॐ This time he saw not only Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa there but many of the demigods and all the Siddhas, Cāraṇas and Gandharvas.
- ॐ They were all bowing down before the Lord.
- ॐ He also saw Lord Śeṣa Nāga, with thousands of hoods.
- ॐ Lord Śeṣa Nāga was covered with bluish garments, and His necks were all white.
- ॐ The white necks of Śeṣa Nāga appeared exactly like snowcapped mountains.
- ॐ On the coiled lap of Śeṣa Nāga, Kṛṣṇa was sitting very soberly, with four hands.
- ॐ His eyes were like the reddish petals of the lotus flower.
- ॐ In other words, after returning to the Yamunā, Akrūra saw Balarāma turned into Śeṣa Nāga and Kṛṣṇa turned into Mahā-Viṣṇu.
- ॐ He saw the four-handed Supreme Personality of Godhead, smiling very beautifully.
- ॐ He was very pleasing to all and was looking toward everyone with a merciful glance.
- ॐ He appeared beautiful with His raised nose, broad forehead, attractive ears and reddish lips.
- ॐ His arms, reaching to the knees, were very strongly built. His shoulders were high,
- ॐ His chest was very broad,
- ॐ His neck was shaped like a conchshell.
- ॐ His navel was very deep,
- ॐ His abdomen was marked with three lines.
- ॐ His hips were broad and big, resembling those of a woman,
- ॐ His thighs resembled the trunks of elephants.
- ॐ The other parts of His legs, the joints and lower extremities, were all very beautiful, the nails of His feet were dazzling,
- ॐ His toes were as beautiful as the petals of the lotus flower.
- ॐ His helmet was decorated with very valuable jewels.
- ॐ There was a nice belt around His waist, and He wore a sacred thread across His broad chest.
- ॐ Bangles were on His hands, and armlets on the upper portion of His arms.
- ॐ He wore bells on His ankles. He possessed dazzling beauty, and His palms were like lotus flowers.
- ॐ He was further beautified by the different emblems of the viṣṇu-mūrti—the conchshell, club, disc and lotus flower—which He held in His four hands.
- ॐ His chest was marked with the particular signs of Viṣṇu, and He wore fresh flower garlands.
- ॐ All in all, He was very beautiful to look at.

Kṛṣṇa Līlā notes – Chapter 39 (Akrūra’s Return Journey and His Vision of Viṣṇuloka
Within the Yamunā River)

- ॐ Akrūra also saw His Lordship surrounded by intimate associates like the four Kumāras—Sanaka, Sanātana, Sananda and Sanat-kumāra—and other associates like Sunanda and Nanda, as well as demigods like Brahmā and Lord Śiva.
- ॐ The nine great learned sages were there, and also devotees like Prahlāda and Nārada and the eight Vasus.
- ॐ All were engaged in offering prayers to the Lord with clean hearts and pure words.
- ॐ After seeing the transcendental Personality of Godhead, Akrūra immediately became overwhelmed with joy and great devotion, and all over his body there was transcendental shivering.
- ॐ Although for the moment he was bewildered, he retained his clear consciousness and bowed down his head before the Lord.
- ॐ With folded hands and faltering voice, he began to offer prayers to the Lord.