

The Killing of the Elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa

Description is found
Srimad Bhagavatam
(Krishna Book)

- ॐ After taking Their baths and finishing all other morning duties, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma could hear the beating of the kettledrums in the wrestling arena.
- ॐ They immediately prepared Themselves to proceed to the spot to see the fun. When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma reached the gate of the wrestling arena, They saw a big elephant of the name Kuvalayāpīḍa being tended by a caretaker riding on its head.
- ॐ The caretaker was deliberately blocking Their entrance by keeping the elephant in front of the gateway.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa could understand the purpose of the caretaker, and He prepared Himself by tightening His clothes before combating the elephant.
- ॐ He addressed the caretaker in a very grave voice, as resounding as a cloud: “You miscreant caretaker, give way and let Me pass through the gate.
- ॐ If you block My way, I shall send you and your elephant to the house of death personified.”
- ॐ The caretaker, being thus insulted by Kṛṣṇa, became very angry, and in order to challenge Kṛṣṇa, as was previously planned, he provoked the elephant to attack.
- ॐ The elephant then moved before Kṛṣṇa like inevitable death.
- ॐ It rushed toward Him and tried to catch Him with its trunk,
- ॐ but Kṛṣṇa very dexterously moved behind the elephant.
- ॐ Being able to see only to the end of its trunk, the elephant could not see Kṛṣṇa hiding behind its legs,
- ॐ but it tried to capture Him with its trunk.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa again very quickly escaped capture,
- ॐ and He again ran behind the elephant and caught its tail.
- ॐ Holding the elephant by its tail, Kṛṣṇa began to pull it,
- ॐ and with very great strength He dragged it for at least twenty-five yards, just as Garuḍa drags an insignificant snake.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa pulled the elephant from this side to that, from right to left, just as He used to pull a calf by its tail in His childhood.
- ॐ After this, Kṛṣṇa went in front of the elephant and gave it a strong slap.
- ॐ He then slipped away from the elephant’s view and ran to its back. Then, falling down on the ground, Kṛṣṇa placed Himself in front of the elephant’s two legs and caused it to trip and fall.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa immediately got up, but the elephant, thinking that He was still lying down, tried to push an ivory tusk through the body of Kṛṣṇa by forcibly stabbing it into the ground.
- ॐ Although the elephant was harassed and angry, the caretaker riding on its head tried to provoke it further.

- ॐ The elephant then rushed madly toward Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ As soon as it came within reach, Kṛṣṇa caught hold of the trunk and pulled the elephant down.
- ॐ When the elephant and caretaker fell, Kṛṣṇa jumped up on the elephant, broke off one of its tusks, and with it killed the elephant and the caretaker also.
- ॐ After killing the elephant, Kṛṣṇa took the ivory tusk on His shoulder.
- ॐ Decorated with drops of perspiration and sprinkled with the blood of the elephant, He looked very beautiful, and thus He proceeded toward the wrestling arena.
- ॐ Lord Balarāma took the other tusk of the elephant on His shoulder.
- ॐ Accompanied by Their cowherd boyfriends, They entered the arena.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma enter the arena

- ॐ When Kṛṣṇa entered the wrestling arena with Balarāma and Their friends, He appeared differently to different people according to their different relationships (rasas) with Him.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa is the reservoir of all pleasure and all kinds of rasas, both favorable and unfavorable.
- ॐ He appeared to the wrestlers exactly like a thunderbolt.
- ॐ To the people in general He appeared as the most beautiful personality.
- ॐ To the females He appeared to be the most attractive male, Cupid personified, and thus He increased their lust.
- ॐ The cowherd men who were present there looked upon Kṛṣṇa as their own kinsman, coming from the same village of Vṛndāvana.
- ॐ The impious kṣatriya kings who were present saw Him as the strongest ruler and their chastiser.
- ॐ To the parents of Kṛṣṇa, Nanda and Yaśodā, He appeared to be the most loving child.
- ॐ To Kāṁsa, the king of the Bhoja dynasty, He appeared to be death personified.
- ॐ To the unintelligent, He appeared to be an incapable personality.
- ॐ To the yogīs present, He appeared to be the Supersoul.
- ॐ To the members of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty He appeared to be the most celebrated descendant.
- ॐ Thus appreciated differently by different kinds of people present, Kṛṣṇa entered the wrestling arena with Balarāma and His cowherd boyfriends.
- ॐ
- ॐ Having heard that Kṛṣṇa had already killed the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa, Kāṁsa knew beyond doubt that Kṛṣṇa was formidable.
- ॐ He thus became very much afraid of Him. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had long arms.

- ॐ They were beautifully dressed, and They were attractive to all the people assembled there.
- ॐ They were dressed as if They were going to act on a dramatic stage, and They drew the attention of all people.
- ॐ The citizens of Mathurā City who saw Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, became very much pleased and began to look on His face with insatiable glances, as if they were drinking the nectar of heaven.
- ॐ Seeing Kṛṣṇa gave them so much pleasure that it appeared as if they were not only drinking the nectar of seeing His face but were also smelling the aroma and licking up the taste of His body and were embracing Him and Balarāma with their arms.
- ॐ They began to talk among themselves about the two transcendental brothers.
- ॐ For a long time they had heard of the beauty and activities of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, but now they were personally seeing Them face to face.
- ॐ They thought that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were two plenary incarnations of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, who had appeared in Vṛndāvana.

The citizens of Mathurā praise Kṛṣṇa

- ॐ The citizens of Mathurā began to recite Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes—His birth as the son of Vasudeva,
- ॐ His being taken into the care of Nanda Mahārāja and his wife in Gokula,
- ॐ and all those events leading to His coming to Mathurā to favor them.
- ॐ They spoke of the killing of the demon Pūtanā,
- ॐ as well as the killing of Tṛṇāvarta, who came as a whirlwind.
- ॐ They also recalled the deliverance of the twin brothers from within the yamala-arjuna trees.
- ॐ The citizens of Mathurā spoke among themselves:
- ॐ “Śaṅkhacūḍa,
- ॐ Keśī,
- ॐ Dhenukāśura and many other demons were killed by Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in Vṛndāvana.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa also saved all the cowherd men of Vṛndāvana from a devastating fire.
- ॐ He chastised the Kāliya snake in the water of the Yamunā, and He curbed the false pride of the heavenly king, Indra.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa held up the great Govardhana Hill in one hand for seven continuous days and saved all the people of Gokula from incessant rain, hurricane and hailstorm.”
- ॐ They also began to remember other enlivening activities: “The damsels of Vṛndāvana were so much pleased by seeing Kṛṣṇa’s beauty and participating in His activities that they forgot the troubles of material existence.
- ॐ By seeing Kṛṣṇa and thinking of Him, they forgot all sorts of fatigue.”

- ॐ The Mathurā citizens discussed the dynasty of Yadu, saying that because of Kṛṣṇa’s appearance in this dynasty the Yadus would remain the most celebrated family in the whole universe.
- ॐ The citizens of Mathurā then began to talk about Balarāma.
- ॐ They spoke of His very beautiful lotus-petal eyes, and they remarked of Him, “This boy has killed the Pralamba demon and many others also.”
- ॐ While they were thus talking about the activities of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, they heard the vibrations of different bands announcing the wrestling match.

Cāṇūra

- ॐ The famous wrestler Cāṇūra then began to talk with Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. “My dear Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma,” he said, “we have heard about Your past activities.
- ॐ You are great heroes, and therefore the King has called You.
- ॐ We have heard that Your arms are very strong.
- ॐ The King and all the people present here desire to see a display of Your wrestling abilities.
- ॐ A citizen should be obedient and please the mind of the ruling king; acting in that way, the citizen attains all kinds of good fortune.
- ॐ One who does not care to act obediently is made unhappy because of the king’s anger.
- ॐ You are cowherd boys, and we have heard that while tending Your cows in the forest, You enjoy wrestling with each other.
- ॐ We wish, therefore, for You to join with us in wrestling so that all the people present here, including the King, will be pleased.”
- ॐ
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa immediately understood the purpose of Cāṇūra’s statements, and He prepared to wrestle with him.
- ॐ But according to the time and circumstances, He spoke as follows:
- ॐ “You are the subject of the King of the Bhojas, and you live in the jungle.
- ॐ We are also indirectly his subjects,
- ॐ and We try to please him as far as possible.
- ॐ This offer of wrestling is a great favor of his,
- ॐ but the fact is that We are simply boys.
- ॐ We sometimes play in the forest of Vṛṇḍāvana with Our friends who are Our own age.
- ॐ We think that to combat persons of equal age and strength is good for Us,
- ॐ but to fight great wrestlers like you would not be good for the audience.
- ॐ It would contradict their religious principles.” *Kṛṣṇa thus indicated that the celebrated, strong wrestlers should not challenge Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to fight.*

ॐ

ॐ In reply to this, Cāṇūra said, “My dear Kṛṣṇa, we can understand very well that You are neither a child nor a young man.

ॐ You are transcendental to everyone, as is Your big brother, Balarāma.

ॐ You have already killed the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa, who was capable of fighting thousands of other elephants.

ॐ You have killed him in a wonderful way.

ॐ Because of Your strength, it behooves You to compete with the strongest wrestlers amongst us.

ॐ I therefore wish to wrestle with You, and Your elder brother, Balarāma, will wrestle with Muṣṭika.”