

ॐ Kṛṣṇa Līlā notes – Chapter 54 (Kṛṣṇa Defeats All the Princes and Takes Rukmiṇī Home to Dvārakā)

**Kṛṣṇa defeats Rukmī and all the princes**

- ॐ Jarāsandha and all the other princes were very angry at Kṛṣṇa for having kidnapped Rukmiṇī.
- ॐ Struck by Rukmiṇī’s beauty, they had fallen from the backs of their horses and elephants, but now they began to stand up and properly arm themselves.
- ॐ Picking up their bows and arrows, they began to chase Kṛṣṇa on their chariots, horses and elephants.
- ॐ To check their progress, the soldiers of the Yadu dynasty turned and faced them.
- ॐ Thus terrible fighting began between the two belligerent groups. The princes opposing Kṛṣṇa, who were led by Jarāsandha and were all expert in fighting, shot their arrows at the Yadu soldiers just as a cloud splashes the face of a mountain with torrents of rain.
- ॐ Gathered on the face of a mountain, a cloud does not move very much, and therefore the force of rain is much more severe on a mountain than anywhere else.
- ॐ The opposing princes were determined to defeat Kṛṣṇa and recapture Rukmiṇī from His custody,
- ॐ and they fought with Him as severely as possible.
- ॐ Rukmiṇī, seated by the side of Kṛṣṇa, saw arrows raining from the opposing party onto the faces of the Yadu soldiers.
- ॐ In a fearful attitude, she looked upon Kṛṣṇa’s face, expressing her gratefulness that He had taken such a great risk for her sake only.
- ॐ Her eyes moving, she appeared sorry, and Kṛṣṇa, who could immediately understand her mind, encouraged her with these words:
- ॐ “My dear Rukmiṇī, don’t worry. Please rest assured that the soldiers of the Yadu dynasty will kill all the opposing soldiers without delay.”
- ॐ
- ॐ As Kṛṣṇa was speaking with Rukmiṇī, the commanders of the Yadu dynasty’s soldiers, headed by Lord Balarāma, who is also known as Saṅkarṣaṇa, as well as by Gada, not tolerating the defiant attitude of the opposing soldiers, began to strike their horses, elephants and chariots with arrows.
- ॐ As the fighting progressed, the princes and soldiers of the enemy began to fall from their horses, elephants and chariots.
- ॐ Within a short time, millions of severed heads, decorated with helmets and earrings, had fallen on the battlefield.
- ॐ The soldiers’ hands were severed along with their bows and arrows and clubs; arms were piled upon arms, thighs upon thighs, and horses upon horses.
- ॐ Similarly, other animals, such as camels, elephants and asses, as well as infantry soldiers, all fell with severed heads.

Description is found  
Srimad Bhagavatam  
(Krishna Book)

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ॐ When the enemy, headed by Jarāsandha, found that they were gradually being defeated by the soldiers of Kṛṣṇa, they thought it unwise to risk losing their armies in the battle for the sake of Śiśupāla.

ॐ Śiśupāla himself should have fought to rescue Rukmiṇī from the hands of Kṛṣṇa, but when the soldiers saw that Śiśupāla was not competent to fight with Kṛṣṇa, they decided not to lose their armies unnecessarily; therefore they ceased fighting and dispersed.

ॐ Some of the princes, as a matter of etiquette, appeared before Śiśupāla.

ॐ They saw that Śiśupāla was discouraged, like one who has lost his wife.

ॐ His face appeared dried up, he had lost all his energy, and all the luster of his body had disappeared.

ॐ

ॐ They addressed Śiśupāla thus:

ॐ “Our dear Śiśupāla, don’t be discouraged in this way.

ॐ You belong to the royal order and are the chief amongst the fighters.

ॐ There is no question of distress or happiness for a person like you because neither of these conditions is everlasting.

ॐ Take courage.

ॐ Don’t be disappointed by this temporary reversal.

ॐ After all, we are not the final actors; as puppets dance in the hands of a magician, we are all dancing by the will of the Supreme, and according to His plan alone we suffer distress or enjoy happiness.

ॐ We should therefore be equipoised in all circumstances.”

ॐ

ॐ Having seen his sister forcibly taken away by Kṛṣṇa after he had planned to marry her to Śiśupāla, Rukmī was frustrated.

ॐ So after Śiśupāla, his friend and intended brother-in-law, returned home, Rukmī, very much agitated, was determined to teach Kṛṣṇa a lesson personally.

ॐ He called for his own soldiers—a military phalanx consisting of several thousand elephants, horses, chariots and infantry—and equipped with this military strength, he began to follow Kṛṣṇa to Dvārakā.

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ॐ To show his prestige, Rukmī promised all the returning kings,

ॐ “You could not help Śiśupāla marry my sister, Rukmiṇī,

ॐ but I cannot allow Rukmiṇī to be taken away by Kṛṣṇa.

ॐ I shall teach Him a lesson.

ॐ Now I am going to follow Him.”

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ॐ He presented himself as a big commander and vowed before all the princes,

ॐ “Unless I kill Kṛṣṇa in the fight and bring back my sister from His clutches, I shall not return to my capital city, Kuṇḍina.

ॐ I make this vow before you all, and you will see that I shall fulfill it.”

ॐ

ॐ After thus vibrating all these boasting words, Rukmī immediately got on his chariot and told his chariot driver to pursue Kṛṣṇa.

ॐ He said,

ॐ “I want to fight with Him immediately.

ॐ This cowherd boy has become proud of His tricky way of fighting with kṣatriyas, but today I shall teach Him a good lesson.

ॐ Because He had the impudence to kidnap my sister, I, with my sharp arrows, shall teach Him very good lessons indeed.”

ॐ Thus this unintelligent man, Rukmī, ignorant of the extent of the strength and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, voiced his impudent threats.

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ॐ In great stupidity, he soon stood before Kṛṣṇa, telling Him repeatedly,

ॐ “Stop for a minute and fight with me!”

ॐ

ॐ After saying this he drew his bow and directly shot three forceful arrows against Kṛṣṇa’s body.

ॐ Then he condemned Kṛṣṇa as the most abominable descendant of the Yadu dynasty and asked Him to stand before him for a minute so that he could teach Him a good lesson.

ॐ “You are carrying away my sister just like a crow stealing clarified butter meant for use in a sacrifice.

ॐ You are proud of Your military strength, but You cannot fight according to regulative principles.

ॐ You have stolen my sister; now I shall relieve You of Your false prestige.

ॐ You can keep my sister in Your possession only until I beat You to the ground for good with my arrows.”

ॐ

ॐ Lord Kṛṣṇa, after hearing all these crazy words from Rukmī, immediately shot an arrow and severed the string of Rukmī’s bow, making him unable to use another arrow.

ॐ Rukmī immediately took another bow and shot another five arrows at Kṛṣṇa.

ॐ Being attacked for the second time, Kṛṣṇa again severed Rukmī’s bowstring.

ॐ Rukmī took a third bow, and Kṛṣṇa again cut its string.

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ॐ This time, to teach Rukmī a lesson, Kṛṣṇa shot six arrows at him and then shot another eight arrows, killing four horses with four arrows, killing the chariot driver with another arrow, and chopping off the upper portion of Rukmī's chariot, including the flag, with the remaining three arrows.

ॐ Rukmī, having run out of arrows, took assistance from swords, shields, tridents, lances and similar weapons used for fighting hand to hand, but Kṛṣṇa immediately broke them all in the same way.

ॐ Being repeatedly baffled in his attempts, Rukmī took his sword and ran swiftly toward Kṛṣṇa, just as a fly proceeds toward a fire.

ॐ But as soon as Rukmī reached Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa cut his weapon to pieces.

ॐ This time Kṛṣṇa took out His sharp sword and was about to kill him immediately, but Rukmī's sister, Rukmiṇī, understanding that this time Kṛṣṇa would not excuse her brother, fell down at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet and in a very grievous tone, trembling with great fear, began to plead with her husband.

ॐ

ॐ Rukmiṇī first addressed Kṛṣṇa as Yogeśvara.

ॐ *Yogeśvara means “one who is possessed of inconceivable opulence and energy.” Kṛṣṇa possesses inconceivable opulence and energy, whereas Rukmiṇī's brother had only limited military potency. Kṛṣṇa is immeasurable, whereas her brother was measured in every step of his life. Therefore, Rukmī was not comparable even to an insignificant insect before the unlimited power of Kṛṣṇa. She also addressed Kṛṣṇa as the God of the gods. There are many powerful demigods, such as Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, Indra, Candra and Varuṇa, but Kṛṣṇa is the Lord of all these gods, whereas Rukmiṇī's brother was not only an ordinary human being but in fact the lowest of all because he had no understanding of Kṛṣṇa. In other words, a human being who has no conception of the actual position of Kṛṣṇa is the lowest in human society. Then Rukmiṇī addressed Kṛṣṇa as Mahābhujā, which means “one with unlimited strength.” She also addressed Kṛṣṇa as Jagatpati, the master of the whole cosmic manifestation. In comparison, her brother was only an ordinary prince.*

ॐ *In this way, Rukmiṇī compared the position of Rukmī with that of Kṛṣṇa and very feelingly pleaded with her husband not to kill her brother just at the auspicious time of her being united with Kṛṣṇa, but to excuse him. In other words, she displayed her real position as a woman. She was happy to get Kṛṣṇa as her husband at the moment when her marriage to another was to be performed, but she did not want it to be at the loss of her elder brother, who, after all, loved his young sister and wanted to hand her over to one who, according to his own calculations, was a better man.*

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ॐ While Rukmiṇī was praying to Kṛṣṇa for the life of her brother, her whole body trembled, and because of her anxiety, her face appeared to dry up and her throat became choked, and due to her trembling, the ornaments on her body loosened and fell scattered on the ground.

ॐ In this manner, when Rukmiṇī was very much perturbed, she fell down on the ground, and Lord Kṛṣṇa immediately became compassionate and agreed not to kill the foolish Rukmī.

ॐ But, at the same time, He wanted to give him some light punishment, so He tied him up with a piece of cloth and snipped at his mustache, beard and hair, keeping some spots here and there.

ॐ While Kṛṣṇa was dealing with Rukmī in this way, the soldiers of the Yadu dynasty, commanded by Balarāma Himself, broke the whole strength of Rukmī's army just as an elephant in a pond discards the feeble stem of a lotus flower.

ॐ In other words, as an elephant breaks the whole construction of a lotus flower while bathing in a reservoir of water, the military strength of the Yadus broke up Rukmī's forces.

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ॐ When the commanders of the Yadu dynasty came back to see Kṛṣṇa, they were all surprised to see the condition of Rukmī. Lord Balarāma became especially compassionate toward His sister-in-law, who was newly married to His brother.

ॐ To please Rukmiṇī, Balarāma personally untied Rukmī,

ॐ and to further please her, Balarāma, as the elder brother of Kṛṣṇa, spoke some words of chastisement.

ॐ “Kṛṣṇa, Your action is not at all satisfactory,” He said.

ॐ “This is an abomination very much contrary to Our family tradition!

ॐ To cut someone's hair and shave his mustache and beard is almost comparable to killing him.

ॐ Whatever Rukmī might have been, he is now Our brother-in-law, a relative of Our family, and You should not have put him in such a condition.”

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ॐ After this, to pacify Rukmiṇī, Lord Balarāma said to her,

ॐ “You should not be sorry that your brother has been made odd-looking.

ॐ Everyone suffers or enjoys the results of his own actions.”

ॐ

ॐ Lord Balarāma again turned toward Kṛṣṇa and said,

ॐ “My dear Kṛṣṇa, a relative, even though he commits such a blunder and deserves to be killed, should be excused.

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ॐ For when such a relative is conscious of his own fault, that consciousness itself is like death. Therefore, there is no need to kill him.”

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ॐ Balarāma again turned toward Rukmiṇī and informed her that the current duty of the kṣatriya in human society is so fixed that, according to the principles of fighting, one’s own brother may become an enemy.

ॐ Then a kṣatriya does not hesitate to kill his own brother. *In other words, Lord Balarāma wanted to instruct Rukmiṇī that Rukmī and Kṛṣṇa were right in not showing mercy to each other in the fighting, despite the family consideration that they happened to be brothers-in-law.*

ॐ Śrī Balarāma informed Rukmiṇī that kṣatriyas are typical emblems of the materialistic way of life; they become puffed up whenever there is a question of material acquisition. *Therefore, when there is a fight between two belligerent kṣatriyas for kingdom, land, wealth, women, prestige or power, they try to put one another into the most abominable condition.*

ॐ Balarāma instructed Rukmiṇī that her affection toward her brother Rukmī, who had created enmity with so many persons, was a perverse consideration befitting an ordinary materialist. *Her brother’s character was not at all admirable, considering his treatment of his friends, and yet Rukmiṇī, as an ordinary woman, was affectionate toward him. He was not fit to be her brother, and still Rukmiṇī was lenient toward him.*

ॐ “Besides that,” Balarāma continued, “the consideration that a person is neutral or is one’s friend or enemy is generally made by persons in the bodily concept of life.

ॐ Such foolish persons are bewildered by the illusory energy of the Supreme Lord.

ॐ The spirit soul is of the same pure quality in any embodiment of matter, but those who are not sufficiently intelligent see only the bodily differences between animals and men, literates and illiterates, rich and poor, which cover the pure spirit soul.

ॐ Such differences, observed merely on the basis of the body, are exactly like the differences between fires in terms of the various types of fuel they consume.

ॐ Whatever the size and shape of the fuel, there is no such variety of size and shape in the fire which comes out. Similarly, in the sky there are no differences in size or shape.”

ॐ In this way Balarāma reconciled the situation by His moral and ethical instructions to Rukmiṇī and Kṛṣṇa.

ॐ To Rukmiṇī He stated further, “This body is part of the material manifestation, consisting of the material elements, living conditions and interactions of the modes of material nature.

ॐ The living entity, or spirit soul, being in contact with these, is transmigrating from one body to another due to illusory enjoyment, and that transmigration is known as material existence.

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ॐ This contact of the living entity with the material manifestation has neither integration nor disintegration.

ॐ My dear chaste sister-in-law, the spirit soul is, of course, the cause of this material body, just as the sun is the cause of sunlight, eyesight and the forms of material manifestation.”

ॐ Lord Balarāma continued: “One’s consciousness in material existence can be compared to sleeping and dreaming.

ॐ When a man sleeps, he dreams of many nonfactual happenings, and as a result of dreaming he becomes subject to different kinds of distress and happiness.

ॐ Similarly, when a person is in the dream of material consciousness, he suffers the effects of accepting a body and giving it up again in material existence.

ॐ Opposite to this material consciousness is Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

ॐ In other words, when a man is elevated to the platform of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he becomes free from this false conception of life.”

ॐ *In this way, Śrī Balarāma instructed Rukmiṇī in spiritual knowledge.*

ॐ He further addressed His sister-in-law thus: “Sweet, smiling Rukmiṇī, do not be aggrieved by false notions caused by ignorance.

ॐ Only because of false notions does one become unhappy, but one can immediately remove this unhappiness by discussing the philosophy of actual life.

ॐ Be happy on that platform only.”

ॐ After hearing such enlightening instructions from Śrī Balarāma, Rukmiṇī immediately became pacified and happy and adjusted her mind, which was very much afflicted by the degraded position of her brother Rukmī.

ॐ *As far as Rukmī was concerned, his promise was not fulfilled, nor was his mission successful. He had come from home with his soldiers and military phalanx to defeat Kṛṣṇa and release his sister, but on the contrary he lost all his soldiers and military strength. He was personally degraded and very sorry, but by the grace of the Lord he could continue his life to its fixed destination. Because he was a kṣatriya, he could remember his promise that he would not return to his capital city, Kuṇḍina, without killing Kṛṣṇa and releasing his sister, which he had failed to do; therefore, he decided in anger not to return to his capital city, and he constructed a small cottage in the village known as Bhojakāṭa, where he resided for the rest of his life.*

### Kṛṣṇa Defeats and Weds Rukmiṇī in Dvārakā

ॐ After defeating all the opposing elements and forcibly carrying away Rukmiṇī, Kṛṣṇa brought her to His capital city, Dvārakā, and then married her according to the Vedic ritualistic principles.

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- ॐ After this marriage, Kṛṣṇa became the King of the Yadus at Dvārakā.
- ॐ On the occasion of His marriage with Rukmiṇī, all the inhabitants were happy, and in every house there were great ceremonies.
- ॐ The inhabitants of Dvārakā City were so much pleased that they dressed themselves with the nicest possible ornaments and garments and went to present gifts, according to their means, to the newly married couple, Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇī.
- ॐ All the houses of Yadupurī (Dvārakā) were decorated with flags, festoons and flowers.
- ॐ Each and every house had an extra gate specifically prepared for this occasion, and on both sides of the gate were big water jugs filled with water.
- ॐ The whole city was made fragrant by the burning of fine incense, and at night there was illumination from thousands of lamps, which decorated every building.
- ॐ The entire city appeared jubilant on the occasion of Lord Kṛṣṇa's marriage with Rukmiṇī.
- ॐ Everywhere in the city there were profuse decorations of banana trees and betel-nut trees. *These two trees are considered very auspicious in happy ceremonies.*
- ॐ At the same time there was an assembly of many elephants, who carried the respective kings of different friendly kingdoms. *It is the habit of the elephant that whenever he sees some small plants and trees, out of his sportive and frivolous nature he uproots the trees and throws them hither and thither. The elephants assembled on this occasion also scattered the banana and betel nut trees, but in spite of such intoxicated action, the whole city, with the trees thrown here and there, looked very nice.*
- ॐ The friendly kings of the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas were represented by Bhīṣma, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, the five Pāṇḍava brothers, King Drupada, King Santardana and Rukmiṇī's father, Bhīṣmaka.
- ॐ Because of Kṛṣṇa's kidnapping Rukmiṇī, there was initially some misunderstanding between the two families, but Bhīṣmaka, King of Vidarbha, being approached by Śrī Balarāma and persuaded by many saintly persons, was induced to participate in the marriage ceremony of Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇī.
- ॐ *Although the incident of the kidnapping was not a very happy occurrence in the kingdom of Vidarbha, kidnapping was not an unusual affair among kṣatriyas. Kidnapping was, in fact, current in almost all their marriages. Anyway, King Bhīṣmaka was from the very beginning inclined to hand over his beautiful daughter to Kṛṣṇa. In one way or another his purpose had been served, and so he was pleased to join the marriage ceremony, even though his eldest son was degraded in the fight. It is mentioned in the Padma Purāṇa that Mahārāja Nanda and the cowherd boys of Vṛndāvana joined the marriage ceremony. Kings from the kingdoms of Kuru, Sṛñjaya, Kekaya, Vidarbha and Kunti all came to Dvārakā on this occasion and met with one another very joyfully.*



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ॐ The story of Rukmiṇī's being kidnapped by Kṛṣṇa was poeticized, and professional readers recited it everywhere.

ॐ All the assembled kings and their daughters especially were struck with wonder and very much pleased upon hearing the chivalrous activities of Kṛṣṇa.

ॐ In this way, all the visitors as well as the inhabitants of Dvārakā City were joyful to see Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇī together.

ॐ *In other words, the goddess of fortune was now united with the Supreme Lord, the maintainer of everyone, and thus all the people felt extremely jubilant.*