

The Story of the Syamantaka Jewel

Description is found
Srimad Bhagavatam
(Krishna Book)

- ॐ There was a king of the name Satrājīt within the jurisdiction of Dvārakā-dhāma. He was a great devotee of the sun-god, who awarded him the benediction of a jewel known as Syamantaka.
- ॐ Because of this Syamantaka jewel, there was a misunderstanding between King Satrājīt and the Yadu dynasty
- ॐ Later the matter was settled when Satrājīt voluntarily offered Kṛṣṇa his daughter, Satyabhāmā, along with the Syamantaka jewel.
- ॐ Not only Satyabhāmā but also Jāmbavatī, the daughter of Jāmbavān, was married to Kṛṣṇa on account of the Syamantaka jewel.
- ॐ These two marriages took place before the appearance of Pradyumna, which was described in the last chapter.
- ॐ How King Satrājīt offended the Yadu dynasty and how he later came to his senses and offered his daughter and the Syamantaka jewel to Kṛṣṇa are described as follows.
- ॐ Since he was a great devotee of the sun-god, King Satrājīt gradually entered into a very friendly relationship with him.
- ॐ The sun-god was pleased with him and delivered to him an exceptional jewel known as Syamantaka.
- ॐ When Satrājīt wore this jewel in a locket around his neck, he appeared exactly like an imitation sun-god.
- ॐ Putting on this jewel, he entered the city of Dvārakā, and people thought that the sun-god had come into the city to see Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ They knew that Kṛṣṇa, being the Supreme Personality of Godhead, was sometimes visited by the demigods, so while Satrājīt was visiting the city of Dvārakā all the inhabitants except Kṛṣṇa took him to be the sun-god himself.
- ॐ Although King Satrājīt was known to everyone, he could not be recognized because of the dazzling effulgence of the Syamantaka jewel.
- ॐ Mistaking Satrājīt to be the sun-god, some of the important citizens of Dvārakā immediately went to Kṛṣṇa to inform Him that the sun-god had arrived to see Him.
- ॐ At that time, Kṛṣṇa was playing chess.
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- ॐ One of the important residents of Dvārakā spoke thus:
- ॐ “My dear Lord Nārāyaṇa, You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- ॐ In Your plenary portion as Nārāyaṇa, or Viṣṇu, You have four hands with different symbols—the conchshell, disc, club and lotus flower.
- ॐ You are actually the owner of everything, but in spite of Your being the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, You descended in Vṛndāvana to act as the child of

Yaśodāmātā, who sometimes used to tie You up with her ropes, and You are celebrated, therefore, by the name Dāmodara.”

ॐ *That Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, as accepted by the citizens of Dvārakā, was later confirmed by the great Māyāvādī philosophical leader Śaṅkarācārya. By accepting the Lord as impersonal, he did not reject the Lord’s personal form. Everything which has form in this material world is subject to creation, maintenance and annihilation, but because the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, does not have a material form subject to these limitations, Śaṅkarācārya, to convince the less intelligent men who take Kṛṣṇa to be an ordinary human being, said that God is impersonal. This impersonality means that He is not a person of this material condition. He is a transcendental personality without a material body.*

ॐ *The citizens of Dvārakā addressed Lord Kṛṣṇa not only as Dāmodara but also as Govinda, which indicates that Kṛṣṇa is very affectionate to the cows and calves; and just to refer to their intimate connection with Kṛṣṇa, they addressed Him as Yadunandana because He was born the son of Vasudeva in the Yadu dynasty. The citizens of Dvārakā concluded by addressing Kṛṣṇa as the supreme master of the whole universe. They addressed Kṛṣṇa in many different ways, proud of being citizens of Dvārakā who could see Kṛṣṇa daily.*

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ॐ When Satrājīta was visiting the city of Dvārakā, the citizens felt great pride to think that although Kṛṣṇa was living in Dvārakā like an ordinary human being, the demigods were coming to see Him.

ॐ Thus they informed Lord Kṛṣṇa that the sun-god, with his glaring bodily effulgence, was coming to see Him.

ॐ The citizens of Dvārakā confirmed that the sun-god’s coming into Dvārakā was not very wonderful, because people all over the universe who were searching after the Supreme Personality of Godhead knew that He had appeared in the Yadu dynasty and was living in Dvārakā as one of the members of that family.

ॐ Thus the citizens expressed their joy on this occasion.

ॐ On hearing the statements of His citizens, the all-pervasive Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, simply smiled.

ॐ Being pleased with the citizens of Dvārakā, Kṛṣṇa informed them that the person they described as the sun-god was actually King Satrājīta, who had come to visit Dvārakā City to show his opulence in the form of the valuable jewel obtained from the sun-god.

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ॐ Satrājīta, however, did not come to see Kṛṣṇa;

ॐ he was instead overwhelmed by the Syamantaka jewel.

ॐ He installed the jewel in a temple to be worshiped by brāhmaṇas he engaged for this purpose.

ॐ *This is an example of a less intelligent person worshiping a material thing. In the Bhagavad-gītā it is stated that less intelligent persons, in order to get immediate results from their fruitive activities, worship the demigods created within this universe. The word “materialist” means one concerned with gratification of the senses within this material world. Although Kṛṣṇa later asked for this Syamantaka jewel, King Satrājīt did not deliver it; on the contrary, he installed the jewel for his own purposes of worship. And who would not worship that jewel? The Syamantaka jewel was so powerful that daily it produced a large quantity of gold. A quantity of gold is counted by a measurement called a bhāra. According to Vedic formulas, one bhāra is equal to about twenty-one pounds, and one mound equals about eighty-two pounds. The jewel was producing about 170 pounds of gold every day. Besides that, it is learned from Vedic literature that in whatever part of the world this jewel was worshiped there was no possibility of famine, and wherever the jewel was present, there was no possibility of anything inauspicious, such as pestilence.*

ॐ Lord Kṛṣṇa wanted to teach the world that the best of everything should be offered to the ruling chief of the country.

ॐ King Ugrasena was the overlord of many dynasties and happened to be the grandfather of Kṛṣṇa, so Kṛṣṇa asked Satrājīt to present the Syamantaka jewel to King Ugrasena.

ॐ Kṛṣṇa pleaded that the best should be offered to the King.

ॐ But Satrājīt, being a worshiper of the demigods, had become too materialistic and, instead of accepting the request of Kṛṣṇa, thought it wiser to worship the jewel to get the 170 pounds of gold every day.

ॐ *Materialistic persons who can achieve such huge quantities of gold are not interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Sometimes, therefore, to show special favor, Kṛṣṇa takes away one’s great accumulations of materialistic wealth and thus makes one a great devotee. But Satrājīt refused to abide by the order of Kṛṣṇa and did not deliver the jewel.*

ॐ After this incident, Satrājīt’s younger brother, in order to display the opulence of the family, took the jewel, put it on his neck and rode on horseback into the forest, making a show of his material opulence.

ॐ While Satrājīt’s brother, who was known as Prasena, was moving here and there in the forest, a big lion attacked him, killed both him and the horse on which he was riding, and took away the jewel to his cave.

ॐ News of this was received by the gorilla king, Jāmbavān, who then killed that lion in the cave and took away the jewel.

ॐ Jāmbavān had been a great devotee of the Lord since the time of Lord Rāmacandra, so he did not take the valuable jewel as something he very much needed.

ॐ Kṛṣṇa Lilā notes – Chapter 56 (The Story of the Syamantaka Jewel)

ॐ He gave it to his young son to play with as a toy.

Jāmbavān

ॐ In the city, when Satrājit's younger brother Prasena did not return from the forest with the jewel, Satrājit became very upset.

ॐ He did not know that his brother had been killed by a lion and that the lion had been killed by Jāmbavān.

ॐ He thought instead that because Kṛṣṇa wanted that jewel, which had not been delivered to Him, Kṛṣṇa might have therefore taken the jewel from Prasena by force and killed him.

ॐ This idea grew into a rumor, which Satrājit spread in every part of Dvārakā.

ॐ The false rumor that Kṛṣṇa had killed Prasena and taken away the jewel spread everywhere like wildfire.

ॐ Kṛṣṇa did not like to be defamed in that way, and therefore He decided that He would go to the forest and find the Syamantaka jewel.

ॐ Taking with Him some of the important inhabitants of Dvārakā, Kṛṣṇa went to search out Prasena, the brother of Satrājit, and found him dead, killed by the lion.

ॐ At the same time, Kṛṣṇa also found the lion killed by Jāmbavān, who is generally called Ṛkṣa.

ॐ It was found that the lion had been killed by the hand of Ṛkṣa without the assistance of any weapon.

ॐ Kṛṣṇa and the citizens of Dvārakā then found in the forest a great tunnel, said to be the path to Ṛkṣa's house.

ॐ Kṛṣṇa knew that the inhabitants of Dvārakā would be afraid to enter the tunnel;

ॐ therefore He asked them to remain outside, and He Himself entered the dark tunnel alone to find Ṛkṣa, Jāmbavān.

ॐ After entering the tunnel, Kṛṣṇa saw that the valuable jewel known as Syamantaka had been given to the son of Ṛkṣa as a toy.

ॐ To take the jewel from the child, Kṛṣṇa approached and stood before him.

ॐ When the nurse taking care of Ṛkṣa's child saw Kṛṣṇa standing before her, she was afraid, thinking He might take away the valuable Syamantaka jewel, and she cried out loudly in fear.

ॐ Hearing the nurse's cries, Jāmbavān appeared on the scene in a very angry mood.

ॐ Jāmbavān was actually a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa,

ॐ but because he was angry he could not recognize his master and thought Him to be an ordinary man.

ॐ *This brings to mind the statement of the Bhagavad-gītā in which the Lord advises Arjuna to get free from anger, greed and lust in order to rise to the*

ॐ Kṛṣṇa Lilā notes – Chapter 56 (The Story of the Syamantaka Jewel)

spiritual platform. Lust, anger and greed run parallel in the heart and check one's progress on the spiritual path.

- ॐ Not recognizing his master, Jāmbavān challenged Him to fight.
- ॐ There was then a great fight between Kṛṣṇa and Jāmbavān, in which they fought like two opposing vultures.
- ॐ Whenever there is an eatable corpse the vultures fight heartily over the prey.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa and Jāmbavān first of all fought with weapons, then with stones, then with big trees, then hand to hand, until at last they were hitting each other with their fists, their blows like the striking of thunderbolts.
- ॐ Each expected victory over the other, but the fighting continued for twenty-eight days, both in daytime and at night, without stopping.
- ॐ Although Jāmbavān was the strongest living entity of that time, practically all the joints of his bodily limbs became slackened and his strength was reduced practically to nil, for he was struck constantly by the fists of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.
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- ॐ Feeling very tired, with perspiration all over his body, Jāmbavān was astonished.
- ॐ Who was this opponent who was fighting so hard with him?
- ॐ Jāmbavān was quite aware of his own superhuman bodily strength,
- ॐ but when he felt tired from being struck by Kṛṣṇa, he could understand that Kṛṣṇa was no one else but his worshipable Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- ॐ *This incident has special significance for devotees. In the beginning, Jāmbavān could not understand Kṛṣṇa because his vision was obscured by material attachment. He was attached to his boy and to the greatly valuable Syamantaka jewel, which he did not want to spare for Kṛṣṇa. In fact, when Kṛṣṇa came there he was angry, thinking that Kṛṣṇa had come to take away the jewel. This is the material position: although one is very strong in body, that cannot help him understand Kṛṣṇa.*
- ॐ *In a sporting attitude, Kṛṣṇa wanted to engage in a mock fight with His devotee. As we have experienced from the pages of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the Supreme Personality of Godhead has all the propensities and instincts of a human being. Sometimes, in a sportive spirit, He wishes to fight to make a show of bodily strength, and when He so desires, He selects one of His suitable devotees to give Him that pleasure. Kṛṣṇa desired this pleasure of mock fighting with Jāmbavān. Although Jāmbavān was a devotee by nature, he did not know that his opponent was Kṛṣṇa while he gave service to the Lord by his bodily strength. But as soon as Kāñēa was pleased by the fighting, Jāmbavān immediately understood that his opponent was none other than the Supreme Lord Himself. The conclusion is that he could understand Kṛṣṇa by his service, for Kṛṣṇa is sometimes satisfied by fighting also.*

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ॐ Jāmbavān therefore said to the Lord,

ॐ “My dear Lord, I can now understand who You are.

ॐ You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, the source of everyone’s strength, wealth, reputation, beauty, wisdom and renunciation.” *This statement of Jāmbavān’s is confirmed by the Vedānta-sūtra, wherein the Supreme Lord is declared to be the source of everything.*

ॐ Jāmbavān identified Lord Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Personality, Lord Viṣṇu: “My dear Lord, You are the creator of the creators of the universal affairs.” *This statement is very instructive to the ordinary man, who is amazed by the activities of a person with an exceptional brain. The ordinary man is surprised to see the inventions of a great scientist, but the statement of Jāmbavān confirms that although a scientist may be a creator of many wonderful things, Kṛṣṇa is the creator of the scientist. He is the creator of not only one scientist but of millions and trillions, all over the universe.*

ॐ Jāmbavān said further, “Not only are You the creator of the creators, but You are also the creator of the material elements which the so-called creators manipulate.” *Scientists utilize the physical elements or laws of material nature to do something wonderful, but actually such laws and elements are also the creation of Kṛṣṇa. This is actual scientific understanding. Less intelligent men do not try to understand who created the brain of the scientist; they are satisfied simply to see the wonderful creation or invention of the scientist.*

ॐ Jāmbavān continued: “My dear Lord, the time factor, which combines all the physical elements, is also Your representative.

ॐ You are the supreme time factor, in which all creation takes place, is maintained and is finally annihilated.

ॐ And beyond the physical elements and the time factor, the persons who manipulate the ingredients and advantages of creation are part and parcel of You.

ॐ The living entity is not, therefore, an independent creator.

ॐ By studying all factors in the right perspective, one can see that You are the supreme controller and Lord of everything.

ॐ My dear Lord, I can therefore understand that You are the same Supreme Personality of Godhead whom I worship as Lord Rāmacandra.

ॐ My Lord Rāmacandra wanted to construct a bridge over the ocean, and I saw personally how the ocean became agitated simply by my Lord’s glancing over it.

ॐ And when the whole ocean became agitated, the living entities like whales, alligators and timiṅgila fish all became perturbed. *[The timiṅgila fish in the ocean can swallow big aquatics like whales in one gulp.]*

ॐ In this way the ocean was forced to give way and allow Rāmacandra to cross to the island known as Laṅkā.

ॐ After the construction of the bridge, a fire was set all over the kingdom of Rāvaṇa.

- ॐ During the fighting with Rāvaṇa, every part of his limbs was slashed to pieces by Your sharp arrows, and his heads fell to the face of the earth.
- ॐ Now I can understand that You are none other than my Lord Rāmacandra.
- ॐ No one else has such immeasurable strength; no one else could defeat me in this way.”
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- ॐ Lord Kṛṣṇa was satisfied by the prayers and statements of Jāmbavān,
- ॐ and to mitigate Jāmbavān’s pain, He began to stroke the lotus palm of His hand all over Jāmbavān’s body.
- ॐ Thus Jāmbavān at once felt relieved from the fatigue of the great fight.
- ॐ Lord Kṛṣṇa then addressed him as King Jāmbavān because he, and not the lion, was actually the king of the forest, having killed a lion with his bare hands, without a weapon.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa informed Jāmbavān that He had come to ask for the Syamantaka jewel because ever since it had been stolen His name had been defamed by the less intelligent.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa plainly informed him that He had come there to ask for the jewel in order to be free from this defamation.
- ॐ Jāmbavān understood the whole situation,
- ॐ and to satisfy the Lord he immediately delivered not only the Syamantaka jewel but also his daughter Jāmbavatī, who was of marriageable age, and presented her to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Satrājīṭ’s redemption

- ॐ The episode of Jāmbavatī’s marriage with Lord Kṛṣṇa and the delivery of the jewel known as Syamantaka was finished within the mountain cave.
- ॐ Although the fighting between Kṛṣṇa and Jāmbavān went on for twenty-eight days, the inhabitants of Dvārakā waited outside the tunnel for twelve days, and after that they decided that something undesirable must have happened.
- ॐ They could not understand for certain what had actually happened,
- ॐ and being very sorry and tired they returned to the city of Dvārakā.
- ॐ All the members of the family, namely Kṛṣṇa’s mother, Devakī, His father, Vasudeva, and His chief wife, Rukmiṇī, along with all other friends, relatives and residents of the palace, were very sorry when the citizens returned home without Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ Because of their natural affection for Kṛṣṇa, they began to call Satrājīṭ ill names, for he was the cause of Kṛṣṇa’s disappearance.
- ॐ They went to worship the goddess Candrabhāgā, praying for the return of Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ The goddess was satisfied by the prayers of the citizens of Dvārakā, and she immediately offered them her benediction.
- ॐ Simultaneously, Kṛṣṇa appeared on the scene, accompanied by His new wife, Jāmbavatī, and all the inhabitants of Dvārakā and relatives of Kṛṣṇa became joyful.

ॐ Kṛṣṇa Lilā notes – Chapter 56 (The Story of the Syamantaka Jewel)

- ॐ The inhabitants of Dvārakā were as joyful as someone receiving a dear relative back from the dead.
- ॐ They had concluded that Kṛṣṇa had been put into great difficulties due to the fighting; therefore, they had become almost hopeless of His return.
- ॐ But when they saw that Kṛṣṇa had actually returned, not alone but with a new wife, Jāmbavatī, they immediately performed a ceremony of celebration.
- ॐ King Ugrasena then called for a meeting of all important kings and chiefs.
- ॐ He also invited Satrājī, and before the whole assembly Kṛṣṇa explained the incident of the recovery of the jewel from Jāmbavān.
- ॐ Kṛṣṇa wanted to return the valuable jewel to King Satrājī.
- ॐ Satrājī, however, was ashamed because he had unnecessarily defamed Kṛṣṇa.
- ॐ He accepted the jewel in his hand, but he remained silent, bending his head downwards, and without saying anything in the assembly of the kings and chiefs, he returned home with the jewel.
- ॐ Then he thought about how he could clear himself of the abominable act he had performed by defaming Kṛṣṇa. He was conscious that he had offended Kṛṣṇa very grievously and that he had to find a remedial measure so that Kṛṣṇa would again be pleased with him.
- ॐ King Satrājī was eager to get relief from the anxiety he had foolishly created due to being attracted by a material thing, specifically the Syamantaka jewel.
- ॐ Truly afflicted by the offense he had committed against Kṛṣṇa, he sincerely wanted to rectify it.
- ॐ From within, Kṛṣṇa gave him good intelligence, and Satrājī decided to hand over to Kṛṣṇa both the jewel and his beautiful daughter, Satyabhāmā.
- ॐ There was no alternative for mitigating the situation, and therefore he arranged the marriage ceremony of Kṛṣṇa and his daughter.
- ॐ He gave in charity both the jewel and his daughter to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.
- ॐ Satyabhāmā was so beautiful and qualified that Satrājī, in spite of being asked for her hand by many princes, was waiting to find a suitable son-in-law.
- ॐ By the grace of Kṛṣṇa he decided to hand his daughter over to Him.
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- ॐ Lord Kṛṣṇa, being pleased with Satrājī, informed him that He did not have any need of the Syamantaka jewel.
- ॐ “It is better to let it remain in the temple as you have kept it,”
- ॐ He said, “and every one of us will derive benefit from the jewel.
- ॐ Because of the jewel’s presence in the city of Dvārakā, there will be no more famines or disturbances created by pestilence or excessive heat and cold.”