

Balvala

- ॐ Lord Balarāma prepared Himself to meet the demon Balvala.
- ॐ At the time when the demon usually attacked the sacred place, there appeared a great hailstorm, the whole sky became covered with dust, and the atmosphere became surcharged with a filthy smell.
- ॐ Just after this, the mischievous demon Balvala began to shower torrents of stool and urine and other impure substances on the arena of sacrifice.
- ॐ After this onslaught, the demon himself appeared with a great trident in his hand.
- ॐ He was a gigantic person, and his black body was like a huge mass of carbon.
- ॐ His hair, his beard and his mustache appeared reddish like copper, and because of his great beard and mustache, his mouth appeared dangerous and fierce.
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- ॐ As soon as He saw the demon, Lord Balarāma prepared to attack him.
- ॐ He first considered how He could smash the great demon to pieces.
- ॐ Lord Balarāma then called for His plow and club, and they immediately appeared before Him.
- ॐ The demon Balvala was flying in the sky, and at the first opportunity Lord Balarāma dragged him down with His plow and angrily smashed the demon’s head with His club.
- ॐ Balarāma’s striking fractured the demon’s forehead, making blood flow profusely.
- ॐ Screaming loudly, the demon, who had been such a great disturbance to the pious brāhmaṇas, fell to the ground like a great mountain with a red oxide peak being struck and smashed to the ground by a thunderbolt.
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- ॐ The inhabitants of Naimiṣāraṇya, learned sages and brāhmaṇas, became most pleased by seeing this, and they offered their respectful prayers to Lord Balarāma.
- ॐ They offered their heartfelt blessings to the Lord, and all agreed that none of Lord Balarāma’s attempts to do something would ever be a failure.
- ॐ The sages and brāhmaṇas then performed a ceremonial bathing of Lord Balarāma, just as the demigods bathe King Indra when he is victorious over the demons.
- ॐ The brāhmaṇas and sages honored Lord Balarāma by presenting Him with first-class new clothing and ornaments and the lotus garland of victory;
- ॐ this garland was the reservoir of all beauty and was everlasting—it was never to be dried up.

Description is found
Srimad Bhagavatam
(Krishna Book)

Balarāma continues his pilgrimage

- ॐ After this incident, Lord Balarāma took permission from the brāhmaṇas assembled at Naimiṣāraṇya and, accompanied by other brāhmaṇas, went to the bank of the river Kauśikī.
- ॐ After taking His bath in this holy place, He proceeded toward the river Sarayū and visited the source of the river.
- ॐ Traveling on the bank of the Sarayū River, He gradually reached Prayāga, where there is a confluence of three rivers—the Ganges, Yamunā and Sarasvatī.
- ॐ Here also He took His bath, and then He worshiped in the local temples of the demigods and, as enjoined in the Vedic literature, offered oblations to the forefathers and sages.
- ॐ He gradually reached the āśrama of the sage Pulaha and from there went to the rivers Gaṇḍakī and Gomatī.
- ॐ After this He took His bath in the river Vipāśā.
- ॐ Then He gradually came to the bank of the Śoṇa River. (The Śoṇa River is still running as one of the big rivers in Bihar Province.)
- ॐ He also took His bath there and performed the Vedic ritualistic ceremonies.
- ॐ He continued His travels and gradually came to the pilgrimage city of Gayā, where there is a celebrated Viṣṇu temple.
- ॐ According to the advice of His father, Vasudeva, He offered oblations to the forefathers in this Viṣṇu temple.
- ॐ From here He traveled to the delta of the Ganges, where the sacred river Ganges mixes with the Bay of Bengal.
- ॐ *This sacred place is called Gaṅgāsāgara, and at the end of January every year there is still a great assembly of saintly persons and pious men, just as there is an assembly of saintly persons in Prayāga every year called the Māgha-melā fair.*
- ॐ After finishing His bathing and ritualistic ceremonies at Gaṅgāsāgara, Lord Balarāma proceeded toward the mountain known as Mahendra Parvata,
- ॐ where He met Paraśurāma, an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa,
- ॐ and offered Him respect by bowing down before Him.
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- ॐ After this Lord Balarāma turned toward southern India and visited the banks of the river Godāvarī.
- ॐ After taking His bath in the river Godāvarī and performing the necessary ritualistic ceremonies, He gradually visited the other rivers—
- ॐ the Veṇā, Pampā and Bhīmarathī.
- ॐ On the bank of the river Bhīmarathī is the deity called Svāmī Kārttikeya.

ॐ After visiting Kārttikeya, Lord Balarāma gradually proceeded to Śailapura, a pilgrimage city in the province of Mahārāṣṭra.

ॐ *Śailapura is one of the biggest districts in Mahārāṣṭra province.*

ॐ He then gradually proceeded toward Draviḍa-deśa.

ॐ *Southern India is divided into five parts, called Pañca-draviḍa. Northern India is also divided into five parts, called Pañca-gauḍa. All the important ācāryas of the modern age—namely Śaṅkarācārya, Rāmānujācārya, Madhvācārya, Viṣṇu Svāmī and Nimbārka—adverted themselves in these Draviḍa provinces. Lord Caitanya, however, appeared in Bengal, which is part of the five Gauḍa-deśas.*

ॐ The most important place of pilgrimage in southern India, or Draviḍa, is Venkaṭācala, commonly known as Bālaḷī.

ॐ After visiting this place Lord Balarāma proceeded toward Viṣṇukāñcī,

ॐ and from there He proceeded on the bank of the Kāverī.

ॐ While going to Viṣṇukāñcī, He visited Śivakāñcī.

ॐ Lord Balarāma took His bath in the river Kāverī;

ॐ then He gradually reached Raṅgakṣetra.

ॐ *The biggest Viṣṇu temple in the world is in Raṅgakṣetra, and the Viṣṇu Deity there is celebrated as Raṅganātha. There is a similar temple of Raṅganātha in Vṛndāvana. Although not as big as the temple in Raṅgakṣetra, it is the biggest in Vṛndāvana.*

ॐ After visiting Raṅgakṣetra, Lord Balarāma gradually proceeded toward Madurai, commonly known as the Mathurā of southern India.

ॐ After visiting this place, He gradually proceeded toward Setubandha, the place where Lord Rāmacandra constructed the stone bridge from India to Laṅkā (Ceylon).

ॐ *In this particularly holy place, Lord Balarāma distributed ten thousand cows to the local brāhmaṇa priests. It is the Vedic custom that when a rich visitor goes to any place of pilgrimage he gives the local priests houses, cows, ornaments and garments as gifts of charity. This system of visiting places of pilgrimage and providing the local brāhmaṇa priests with all necessities of life has greatly deteriorated in this Age of Kali. The richer section of the population, because of its degradation in Vedic culture, is no longer attracted by these places of pilgrimage, and the brāhmaṇa priests who depended on such visitors have also deteriorated in their professional duty of helping the visitors. These brāhmaṇa priests in the places of pilgrimage are called paṇḍā or paṇḍita. This means that they were formerly very learned brāhmaṇas and used to guide the visitors in all details of the purpose of coming there, and thus both the visitors and the priests benefited by mutual cooperation.*

Kṛṣṇa Līlā notes – Chapter 79 (The Liberation of Balvala, and Lord Balarāma’s Touring the Sacred Places)

- ॐ *It is clear from the description of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam that when Lord Balarāma was visiting the different places of pilgrimage He properly followed the Vedic system.*
- ॐ After distributing cows at Setubandha, Lord Balarāma proceeded toward the Kṛtamālā and Tāmraparṇī rivers.
- ॐ *These two rivers are celebrated as sacred, and Lord Balarāma bathed in them both.*
- ॐ He then proceeded toward Malaya Hill.
- ॐ *This hill is very great, and it is said to be one of seven peaks called the Malaya Hills.*
- ॐ The great sage Agastya used to live there, and Lord Balarāma visited him and offered His respects by bowing down before him.
- ॐ After taking the sage’s blessings, Lord Balarāma, with the sage’s permission, proceeded toward the Indian Ocean.
- ॐ At the point of the cape (known today as Cape Comorin) is a big temple of goddess Durgā, who is known there as Kanyākumārī.
- ॐ *This temple of Kanyākumārī was also visited by Lord Rāmacandra, and therefore it is to be understood that the temple has been existing for millions of years.*
- ॐ From there, Lord Balarāma went on to visit the pilgrimage city known as Phālguna-tīrtha, which is on the shore of the Indian Ocean, or the Southern Ocean.
- ॐ *Phālguna-tīrtha is celebrated because Lord Viṣṇu in His incarnation of Ananta is lying there.*
- ॐ From Phālguna-tīrtha, Lord Balarāma went on to visit another pilgrimage spot, known as Pañcāpsarasa.
- ॐ There also He bathed according to the regulative principles and observed the ritualistic ceremonies.
- ॐ This site is also celebrated as a shrine of Lord Viṣṇu; therefore Lord Balarāma distributed ten thousand cows to the local brāhmaṇa priests.
- ॐ From Cape Comorin Lord Balarāma turned toward Kerala.
- ॐ *The country of Kerala is still existing in southern India under the name of South Kerala.*
- ॐ After visiting this place, He came to Gokarṇa-tīrtha, where Lord Śiva is constantly worshiped.
- ॐ Balarāma then visited the temple of Āryādevī, which is completely surrounded by water.
- ॐ From that island He went on to a place known as Śūrparāka.
- ॐ After this He bathed in the rivers known as Tāpī, Payoṣṇī and Nirvindhya,

- ॐ and then He came to the forest known as Daṇḍakāraṇya. This is the same Daṇḍakāraṇya forest where Lord Rāmacandra lived while in exile.
- ॐ Lord Balarāma next came to the bank of the river Narmadā, the biggest river in central India.
- ॐ On the bank of this sacred Narmadā is a pilgrimage spot known as Māhiṣmatī-purī.
- ॐ After bathing there according to regulative principles, Lord Balarāma returned to Prabhāsa-tīrtha, where He had begun His journey.

Balarāma arrives for the end of the Kurukṣetra battle

- ॐ When Lord Balarāma returned to Prabhāsa-tīrtha, He heard from the brāhmaṇas that most of the kṣatriyas in the Battle of Kurukṣetra had been killed.
- ॐ Balarāma felt relieved to hear that the burden of the world had been reduced.
 - ॐ *Lord Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma appeared on this earth to lessen the burden of military strength created by the ambitious kṣatriya kings. This is the way of materialistic life: not being satisfied by the absolute necessities of life, people ambitiously create extra demands, and their illegal desires are checked by the laws of nature, or the laws of God, appearing as famine, war, pestilence and similar catastrophes. Lord Balarāma heard that although most of the kṣatriyas had been killed, the Kurus were still engaged in fighting.*
- ॐ Therefore He returned to the battlefield just on the day Bhīmasena and Duryodhana were engaged in a personal duel.
- ॐ As the well-wisher of both of them, Lord Balarāma wanted to stop them, but they would not stop.
- ॐ When Lord Balarāma appeared on the scene, King Yudhiṣṭhira and his younger brothers Nakula and Sahadeva, as well as Lord Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, immediately offered Him their respectful obeisances,
- ॐ but they did not speak at all.
- ॐ The reason they were silent was that Lord Balarāma was somewhat affectionate toward Duryodhana, who had learned from Balarāmajī the art of fighting with a club.
- ॐ When the fighting was going on, King Yudhiṣṭhira and others thought that Balarāma might have come there to say something in favor of Duryodhana, and they therefore remained silent.
- ॐ Both Duryodhana and Bhīmasena were very enthusiastic in fighting with clubs, and, in the midst of a large audience, each very skillfully tried to strike the other.
- ॐ While attempting to do so they appeared to be dancing, but nonetheless it was clear that both of them were very angry.
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- ॐ Lord Balarāma, wanting to stop the fighting, said, “My dear King Duryodhana and Bhīmasena, I know that both of you are great fighters and are well known in the world as great heroes, but still I think that Bhīmasena is superior to Duryodhana in bodily strength.
- ॐ On the other hand, Duryodhana is superior in the art of fighting with a club.
- ॐ Taking this into consideration, My opinion is that neither of you is inferior to the other in fighting.
- ॐ Under the circumstances, there is very little chance that one of you will be defeated by the other.
- ॐ Therefore I request you not to waste your time fighting in this way. I wish you to stop this unnecessary fight.”
- ॐ The good instruction given by Lord Balarāma to Bhīmasena and Duryodhana was intended for the equal benefit of both of them.
- ॐ But they were so enwrapped in anger against each other that they could remember only their long-standing personal enmity.
- ॐ Each thought only of killing the other, and they did not give much importance to the instruction of Lord Balarāma.
- ॐ Both of them then became like madmen in remembering the strong accusations and ill behavior they had exchanged with each other.
- ॐ Lord Balarāma, being able to understand the destiny awaiting them, was not eager to go further in the matter.

Balarāma returns to Dvārakā and Naimiṣāraṇya

- ॐ Therefore, instead of staying, He decided to return to the city of Dvārakā.
- ॐ When He returned to Dvārakā, He was received with great jubilation by relatives and friends, headed by King Ugrasena and other elder persons, who all came forward to welcome Him.
- ॐ After this, He again went to the holy place of pilgrimage at Naimiṣāraṇya, and the sages, saintly persons and brāhmaṇas all stood up to receive Him.
- ॐ They understood that Lord Balarāma, although a kṣatriya, was now retired from the fighting business.
- ॐ The brāhmaṇas and sages, who were always for peace and tranquillity, were very much pleased at this.
- ॐ All of them embraced Balarāma with great affection and induced Him to perform various kinds of sacrifices in that sacred spot of Naimiṣāraṇya.
- ॐ *Actually Lord Balarāma had no business performing the sacrifices recommended for ordinary human beings; He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore He Himself is the enjoyer of all such sacrifices. As such, His exemplary*

Kṛṣṇa Līlā notes – Chapter 79 (The Liberation of Balvala, and Lord Balarāma’s Touring the Sacred Places)

action in performing sacrifices was only to give a lesson to the common man to show how one should abide by the injunctions of the Vedas.

ॐ The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Balarāma, instructed the sages and saintly persons at Naimiṣāraṇya on the subject matter of the living entities’ relationship with this cosmic manifestation,

ॐ on how one should regard this whole universe,

ॐ and on how one should relate with the cosmos in order to achieve the highest goal of perfection.

ॐ *This supreme goal is the understanding that the whole cosmic manifestation rests on the Supreme Personality of Godhead and that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is also all-pervading, even within the minutest atom, by the function of His Paramātmā feature.*

ॐ Lord Balarāma then took the avabhṛtha bath, which is taken after finishing sacrificial performances.

ॐ After taking His bath, He dressed Himself in new silken garments and decorated Himself with beautiful jewelry.

ॐ Amidst His relatives and friends, He appeared to be a shining full moon amidst the luminaries in the sky.

ॐ Lord Balarāma is the Personality of Godhead Ananta Himself; therefore He is beyond the scope of understanding by mind, intelligence or body.

ॐ *He descended exactly like a human being and behaved in that way for His own purposes; we can only explain His activities as the Lord’s pastimes. No one can even estimate the extent of the unlimited demonstrations of His pastimes because He is all-powerful. Lord Balarāma is the original Viṣṇu; therefore anyone remembering these pastimes of Lord Balarāma in the morning and evening will certainly become a great devotee of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and thus his life will be successful in all respects.*