

Nectar of Instruction (*Upadeśāmṛta*) Verse 9

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Text 9

*vaikuṅṭhāj janito varā madhu-purī tatrāpi rāsotsavād
vṛndāraṇyam udāra-pāṇi-ramaṇāt tatrāpi govardhanaḥ
rādhā-kuṅḍam ihāpi gokula-pateḥ premāmṛtāplāvanāt
kuryād asya virājato giri-taṭe sevām vivekī na kaḥ*

The holy place known as Mathurā is spiritually superior to Vaikuṅṭha, the transcendental world, because the Lord appeared there. Superior to Mathurā—Purī is the transcendental forest of Vṛndāvana because of Kṛṣṇa's rāsa-līlā pastimes. And superior to the forest of Vṛndāvana is Govardhana Hill, for it was raised by the divine hand of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and was the site of His various loving pastimes. And, above all, the superexcellent Śrī Rādhā-kuṅḍa stands supreme, for it is overflowed with the ambrosial nectarean prema of the Lord of Gokula, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Where, then, is that intelligent Person who is unwilling to serve this divine Rādhā-kuṅḍa, which is situated at the foot of Govardhana Hill?

I. The progression

- A. The spiritual world is greater than the material world

The spiritual world is three fourths of the total creation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and it is the most exalted region. (NOI 9)

Comment [JH1]:

☞ This is because the spiritual world is three-fourths the creation whereas the material world is only one fourth

- B. Mathurā is greater than the spiritual world

The spiritual world is naturally superior to the material world; however, Mathurā and the adjoining areas, although appearing in the material world, are considered superior to the spiritual world because the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself appeared at Mathurā. (NOI 9)

Comment [JH2]:

☞ Because Kṛṣṇa took birth here

- C. Vṛndāvana (Dvādaśa-vana) is greater than Mathurā

The interior forests of Vṛndāvana are considered superior to Mathurā because of the presence of the twelve forests (dvādaśa-vana), such as Tālavana, Madhuvana and Bahulāvana, which are famous for the various pastimes of the Lord. (NOI 9)

Comment [JH3]:

☞ Because of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes

- D. Govardhana is greater than Vṛndāvana

Thus the interior Vṛndāvana forest is considered superior to Mathurā, but superior to these forests is the divine Govardhana Hill because Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhana Hill like an umbrella, raising it with His lotuslike beautiful hand to protect His associates, the denizens of Vraja, from the torrential rains sent by the angry Indra, King of the demigods. It is also at Govardhana Hill that Kṛṣṇa tends the cows with His cowherd friends, and there also He had His rendezvous with His most beloved Śrī Rādhā and engaged in loving pastimes with Her. (NOI 9)

Comment [JH4]:

☞ Because of Kṛṣṇa's lifting it
☞ Because of Kṛṣṇa's tending the cows
☞ Because of Kṛṣṇa's rendezvous with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī

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E. Rādhā-kuṇḍa is greater than Govardhana

Rādhā-kuṇḍa, at the foot of Govardhana, is superior to all because it is there that love of Kṛṣṇa overflows. (NOI 9)

Comment [JH5]:

☞ Because it is overflowing with prema.

II. Other notes

1. Advanced devotees prefer to reside at Rādhā-kuṇḍa because this place is the site of many memories of the eternal loving affairs between Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī (*rati-vilāsa*). (NOI 9)
2. . Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given much stress to Rādhā-kuṇḍa because of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's desire to find it. Who, then, would give up Rādhā-kuṇḍa and try to reside elsewhere? No person with transcendental intelligence would do so. (NOI 9)
3. The importance of Rādhā-kuṇḍa, however, cannot be realized by other Vaiṣṇava sampradāyas, nor can persons uninterested in the devotional service of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu understand the spiritual importance and divine nature of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Thus Rādhā-kuṇḍa is mainly worshiped by the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, the followers of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu. (NOI 9)
4. But our line is preachers.

III. Lord Caitanya resurrects Rādhā-kuṇḍa

In Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā) it is stated that when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu first visited the area of Vrajabhūmi, He could not at first find the location of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. This means that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was actually searching for the exact location of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Finally He found the holy spot, and there was a small pond there. He took His bath in that small pond and told His devotees that the actual Rādhā-kuṇḍa was situated there. Later the pond was excavated by Lord Caitanya's devotees, headed first by the six Gosvāmīs, such as Rūpa and Raghunātha dāsa. Presently there is a large lake known as Rādhā-kuṇḍa there. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given much stress to Rādhā-kuṇḍa because of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's desire to find it. Who, then, would give up Rādhā-kuṇḍa and try to reside elsewhere? No person with transcendental intelligence would do so. (NOI 9)

*vṛndāvane sthira-carān
nandayan svāvalokanaiḥ
ātmānaṁ ca tad-ālokād
gaurāṅgaḥ parito 'bhramat*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu traveled all over Vṛndāvana and pleased all living entities, moving and nonmoving, with His glances. The Lord took much personal pleasure in seeing everyone. In this way Lord Gaurāṅga traveled in Vṛndāvana.

*jaya jaya gauracandra jaya nityānanda
jayādvaita-candra jaya gaura-bhakta-vṛnda*

All glories to Lord Gauracandra! All glories to Nityānanda Prabhu! All glories to Advaita Prabhu! And all glories to all the devotees of Lord Caitanya, headed by Śrīvāsa Ṭhākura!

*ei-mata mahāprabhu nācite nācite
'āriṭ'-grāme āsi' 'bāhya' haila ācambite*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu danced in ecstasy, but when He arrived at Āriṭ-grāma, His sense perception was awakened.

Āriṭ-grāma is also called Ariṣṭa-grāma. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu understood that in that village Ariṣṭāsura had been killed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa. While there, He inquired about Rādhā-kuṇḍa, but no one could tell Him where it was. The brāhmaṇa accompanying Him could also not ascertain its whereabouts. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu could then understand that the holy places known as Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa were at that time lost to everyone's vision. He therefore discovered Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa, which were two reservoirs of water in two paddy fields. Although there was very little water, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was omniscient and could understand that formerly these two ponds were called Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa. In this way Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa were discovered.

*āriṣṭe rādhā-kuṇḍa-vārtā puche loka-sthāne
keha nāhi kahe, saṅgera brāhmaṇa nā jāne*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu asked the local people, "Where is Rādhā-kuṇḍa?" No one could inform Him, and the brāhmaṇa accompanying Him did not know either.

*tīrtha 'lupta' jāni' prabhu sarvajña bhagavān
dui dhānya-kṣetre alpa-jale kailā snāna*

The Lord then understood that the holy place called Rādhā-kuṇḍa was no longer visible. However, being the omniscient Supreme Personality of Godhead, He discovered Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa in two paddy fields. There was only a little water, but He took His bath there.

*dekhi' saba grāmya-lokera vismaya haila mana
preme prabhu kare rādhā-kuṇḍera stavana*

When the people of the village saw Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu taking His bath in those two ponds in the middle of the paddy fields, they were very much astonished. The Lord then offered His prayers to Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa.

*saba gopī haite rādhā kṛṣṇera preyasī
taiche rādhā-kuṇḍa priya 'priyāra sarasī'*

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“Of all the gopīs, Rādhārāṇī is the dearest. Similarly, the lake known as Rādhā-kuṇḍa is very dear to the Lord because it is very dear to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

*yathā rādhā priyā viṣṇoḥ
tasyāḥ kuṇḍam priyam tathā
sarva-gopīṣu saivaikā
viṣṇor atyantavallabhā*

“Just as Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is most dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, so Her lake, known as Rādhā-kuṇḍa, is also very dear to Him. Of all the gopīs, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is certainly the most beloved.’

This is a verse from the Padma Purāṇa.

*yei kuṇḍe nitya kṛṣṇa rādhikāra saṅge
jale jala-keli kare, tīre rāsa-raṅge*

“In that lake, Lord Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī used to sport daily in the water and have a rāsa dance on the bank.

*sei kuṇḍe yei eka-bāra kare snāna
tānre rādhā-sama ‘prema’ kṛṣṇa kare dāna*

“Indeed, Lord Kṛṣṇa gives ecstatic love like that of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī to whoever bathes in that lake even once in his life.

*kuṇḍera ‘mādhurī’—yena rādhāra ‘madhurimā’
kuṇḍera ‘mahimā’—yena rādhāra ‘mahimā’*

“The attraction of Rādhā-kuṇḍa is as sweet as that of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Similarly, the glories of the kuṇḍa [lake] are as great as Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī’s.

*śrī-rādhēva hares tadīya-sarasī preṣṭhādbhutaiḥ svair guṇair
yasyām śrī-yuta-mādhavendur anīṣam prītyā tayā kṛḍati
premāsmīn bata rādhikeva labhate yasyām sakṛt snāna-kṛt
tasyā vai mahimā tathā madhurimā kenāstu varṇyaḥ kṣitau*

“Because of its wonderful transcendental qualities, Rādhā-kuṇḍa is as dear to Kṛṣṇa as Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. It was in that lake that the all-opulent Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa performed His pastimes with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī with great pleasure and transcendental bliss. Whoever bathes just once in Rādhā-kuṇḍa attains Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī’s loving attraction for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Who within this world can describe the glories and sweetness of Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa?”

This verse is found in the Govinda-līlāmṛta (7.102).

*ei-mata stuti kare premāviṣṭa hañā
tīre nṛtya kare kuṇḍa-lilā sañariyā*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu thus offered prayers to Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Overwhelmed by ecstatic love, He danced on the bank, remembering the pastimes Lord Kṛṣṇa performed on the bank of Rādhā-kuṇḍa.

*kuṇḍera mṛttikā lañā tilaka karila
bhaṭṭācārya-dvārā mṛttikā sañge kari' laila*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu then marked His body with tilaka made from the mud of Rādhā-kuṇḍa, and with the help of Balabhadra Bhaṭṭācārya, He collected some of the mud and took it with Him.

*tabe cali' āilā prabhu 'sumanaḥ-sarovara'
tāhāñ 'govardhana' dekhi' ha-ilā vihvala*

SYNONYMS

From Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu went to Sumanas Lake. When He saw Govardhana Hill from there, He was overwhelmed with joy. (CC 2.18.1-15)

IV. *The appearance of Rādhā-kuṇḍa* (from SB 10.36.16 purport)

From the Purāṇas, Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has quoted twenty verses describing a joking conversation between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa that took place after Kṛṣṇa had killed the demon Ariṣṭa. This conversation, so kindly quoted by the ācārya, describes the origin of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Śyāma-kuṇḍa, Rādhā's and Kṛṣṇa's bathing ponds. The verses are as follows:

*māsmān sprśādya vṛṣabhārdana hanta mugdhā
ghoro 'suro 'yam ayi kṛṣṇa tad apy ayam gauḥ
vṛtro yathā dvija ihāsty ayi niṣkṛtiḥ kim
śudhyed bhavāms tri-bhuvana-sthīta-tīrtha-kṛcchrāt*

“The innocent young gopīs said, ‘Ah, Kṛṣṇa, don't touch us now, O killer of a bull! Alas, even though Ariṣṭa was a terrible demon, still he was a male cow, so You will have to undergo atonement, just as Lord Indra did after killing Vṛtrāsura. But how can You purify Yourself without going to the trouble of visiting every single holy place in the three worlds?’ ”

*kim paryatāmi bhuvanāny adhunaiva sarvā
āñiya tīrtha-vitāṭiḥ karavāñi tāsū
snānam vilokayata tāvad idaṁ mukundaḥ
procyāiva tatra kṛtavān bata pārṣṇi-ghātam*

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“[Kṛṣṇa replied,] ‘Why should I have to wander throughout the entire universe? I will at once bring all the countless pilgrimage places here and take My bath in them. Just watch!’ With this, Lord Mukunda struck His heel on the ground.”

*pātālato jalam idaṁ kila bhogavyā
āyātam atra nikhilā api tīrtha-saṅghāḥ
āgacchateti bhagavad-vacasā ta etya
tatraiva rejur atha kṛṣṇa uvāca gopīḥ*

“[Then He said,] ‘This is the water of the Bhogavatī River, coming from the Pātāla region. And now, O holy places, all of you please come here!’ When the Supreme Lord had spoken these words, all the holy places went there and appeared before Him. Kṛṣṇa then addressed the gopīs as follows.”

*tīrthāni paśyata harer vacasā tavaivaṁ
naiva pratīma iti tā atha tīrtha-varyāḥ
procuḥ kṛtāñjali-putā lavaṅābdhir asmi
kṣīrābdhir asmi śṛṇutāmara-dīrghikāsmi*

“ ‘See all the holy places!’

“But the gopīs replied, ‘We don’t see them as You describe.’

“Then those best of holy places, joining their palms in supplication, spoke up:

“ ‘I am the salt ocean.’

“ ‘I am the ocean of milk.’

“ ‘I am the Amara-dīrghikā.’ ”

*śoṇo ’pi sindhur aham asmi bhavāmi tāmra-
parṇī ca puṣkaram ahaṁ ca sarasvatī ca
godāvarī ravi-sutā sarayuḥ prayāgo
revāsmi paśyata jalaṁ kuruta pratītim*

“ ‘I am the river Śoṇa.’

“ ‘I am the Sindhu.’

“ ‘I am the Tāmraparṇī.’

“ ‘I am the holy place Puṣkara.’

“ ‘I am the river Sarasvatī.’

“ ‘And we are the Godāvarī, Yamunā and Revā rivers and the confluence of rivers at Prayāga. Just see our waters!’ ”

*snātvā tato harir ati-prajagalbha eva
suddhaḥ saro 'py akaravaṁ sthita-sarva-tīrtham
yuṣmābhir ātma-januṣiḥa kṛto na dharmah
ko 'pi kṣitāv atha sakhīr nijagāda rādhā*

“After purifying Himself by bathing, Lord Hari became quite arrogant and said, ‘I have produced a pond containing all the various holy places, whereas you gopīs must never have executed any religious duties on this earth for the pleasure of Lord Brahmā.’ Then Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī addressed Her girlfriends as follows.”

*kāryaṁ mayāpy ati-manohara-kunḍam ekaṁ
tasmād yatadvam iti tad-vacanena tābhiḥ
śrī-kṛṣṇa-kunḍa-taṭa-pāścima-diśya-mando
gartaḥ kṛto vṛṣabha-dāitya-khurair vyaloki*

“I must create an even more beautiful pond. So go to work!’ Having heard these words, the gopīs saw that Ariṣṭāsura’s hooves had dug a shallow ditch just west of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s pond.”

*tatrārādra-mṛn-mṛdula-gola-tatiḥ prati-sva-
hastoddhṛtā anati-dūra-gatā vidhāya
divyaṁ saraḥ prakṛtitaṁ ghaṭikā-dvayena
tābhir vilokya sarasaṁ smarate sma kṛṣṇah*

“At that nearby spot, all the gopīs began digging up lumps of soft mud with their hands, and in this way a divine pond manifested in the short span of an hour. Kṛṣṇa was astonished to see the lake they produced.”

*proce ca tīrtha-salilaiḥ paripūrayaitan
mat-kunḍataḥ sarasijākṣi sahālibhis tvam
rādhā tadā na na na neti jagāda yasmāt
tvat-kunḍa-nīram uru-go-vadha-pātakāktam*

“He said, ‘Go ahead, lotus-eyed one. You and Your companions should fill this pond with water from Mine.’

“But Rādhā replied, ‘No, no, no, no! This is impossible, since the water of Your pond is contaminated by Your terrible sin of killing a cow.’ ”

*āhṛtya puṇya-salilāṁ śatsva-koṭi-kumbhaiḥ
sakhy-arbudena saha mānasa-jāhnavītaḥ
etat saraḥ sva-madhunā paripūrayāmi
tenaiva kīrtim atulāṁ tanavāni loka*

“I will have My countless gopī companions bring the pure water of the Mānasa-gaṅgā here in billions of pots. In this way I will fill this lake with My own water and thus make its renown unequalled in the entire world.’ ”

kṛṣṇeṅgitenā sahasaitya samasta-tīrtha-

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*sakhyas tadīya-saraso dhṛta-divya-mūrtiḥ
tuṣṭāva tatra vṛṣabhānu-sutām praṇamya
bhaktyā kṛtāñjali-putaḥ sravad-asra-dhāraḥ*

“Lord Kṛṣṇa then gestured to a heavenly personality who was an intimate associate of all the holy places. Suddenly that person rose up out of Kṛṣṇa’s pond and bowed down to the daughter of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu [Rādhārāṇī]. Then, with palms joined and tears pouring from his eyes, he began praying to Her in devotion.”

*devi tvadīya-mahimānam avaiti sarva
sāstrārtha-vin na ca vidhir na haro na lakṣmīḥ
kintv eka eva puruṣārtha-śiromanis tvat-
prasveda-mārjana-paraḥ svayam eva kṛṣṇaḥ*

“O goddess, even Lord Brahmā himself, the knower of all scriptures, cannot understand Your glories, nor can Lord Śiva or Lakṣmī. Only Kṛṣṇa, the supreme goal of all human endeavor, can understand them, and thus He feels obliged to personally make sure that You can wash away Your perspiration when You are fatigued.’ ”

*yaś cāru-yāvaka-rasena bhavat-padābjam
ārajya nūpuram aho nidadhāti nityam
prāpya tvadīya-nayanābja-taṭa-prasādam
svam manyate parama-dhanyatamaḥ prahr̥ṣyan*

*tasyājñayaiva sahasā vayam ājaḡama
tat-pārṣṇi-ghāṭa-kṛta-kuṇḁa-vare vasāmaḥ
tvam cet prasīdasi karoṣi kṛpā-kaṭākṣam
tarhy eva tarṣa-viṭapī phalito bhaven naḥ*

“He is always anointing Your lotus feet with nectarean cāru and yāvaka and decorating them with ankle bells, and He rejoices and feels most fortunate simply by satisfying the tips of the toes of Your lotus feet. On His order we have immediately come here to live in this most excellent pond, which He created by one stroke of His heel. But only if You now feel satisfied with us and bestow upon us Your merciful glance will the tree of our desire bear fruit.’ ”

*śrutvā stutiḁ nikhila-tīrtha-gaṇasya tuṣṭā
prāha sma tarṣam ayi vedayateti rādhā
yāma tvadīya-sarasīm sa-phalā bhavāma
ity eva no vara iti prakāṭam tadocuḥ*

“Hearing this prayer spoken by the representative of the full assembly of holy places, Śrī Rādhā was pleased and said, ‘So, kindly tell Me your desire.’

“They then told Her plainly, ‘Our lives would be successful if we could come to Your pond. That is the benediction we desire.’ ”

*āgacchateti vṛṣabhānu-sutā smitāsyā
provāca kānta-vadanābja-dhṛtākṣi-koṇā
sakhyo `pi tatra kṛta-sammatayaḥ sukhābdhau*

magnā virejur akhilā sthira-jaṅgamāś ca

“Glancing at Her beloved from the corners of Her eyes, the daughter of Vṛṣabhānu replied with a smile, ‘Please come.’ Her gopī companions all agreed with Her decision and became immersed in the ocean of happiness. Indeed, the beauty of all creatures, both mobile and stationary, was enhanced.”

*prāpya prasādam atha te vṛṣabhānujāyāḥ
śrī-kṛṣṇa-kuṇḍa-gata-tīrtha-varāḥ prasahya
bhittveva bhittim ati-vegata eva rādhā-
kuṇḍam vyadhuḥ sva-salilaiḥ paripūrṇam eva*

“Thus gaining the grace of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the holy rivers and lakes in Śrī Kṛṣṇa-kuṇḍa forcibly broke through its boundary walls and swiftly filled Rādhā-kuṇḍa with their waters.”

*proce hariḥ priyatame tava kuṇḍam etan
mat-kuṇḍato 'pi mahimādhikam astu loke
atraiva me salila-kelir ihaiva nityam
snānam yathā tvam asi tadvad idam saro me*

“Lord Hari then said, ‘My dear Rādhā, may this pond of Yours become even more world-renowned than Mine. I will always come here to bathe and to enjoy My water pastimes. Indeed, this lake is as dear to Me as You are.’ ”

*rādhābravīd aham api sva-sakhībhir etya
snāsyāmy ariṣṭa-śata-mardanam astu tasya
yo 'riṣṭa-mardana-sarasy uru-bhaktir atra
snāyād vasen mama sa eva mahā-priyo 'stu*

“Rādhā replied, ‘I will come to bathe in Your pond as well, even though You may kill hundreds of Ariṣṭa demons here. In the future, anyone who has intense devotion for this lake, which is on the spot where You chastised Ariṣṭāsura, and who bathes or resides here is sure to become very dear to Me.’ ”

*rāsotsavam prakurute sma ca tatra rātrau
kṛṣṇāmbudaḥ kṛta-mahā-rasa-harṣa-varṣaḥ
śrī-rādhikā-pravara-vidyud alaṅkṛta-śrīs
trailokya-madhya-vitātī-kṛta-divya-kīrtiḥ*

“That night Lord Kṛṣṇa initiated a rāsa dance at Rādhā-kuṇḍa, generating a torrent of the greatest mood of splendid pleasure. Śrī Kṛṣṇa resembled a cloud, and Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī a brilliant flash of lightning filling the sky with abundant beauty. In this way Their divine glories permeated the expanses of the three worlds.”