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Features

**INDRA'S FURY TOWARDS
THE RESIDENTS OF GOKULA**
Srila Sukadeva Goswami

KRISHNA LIFTING GOVARDHANA HILL
His Divine Grace
A .C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

**WHY DID KRISHNA USE
GOVARDHANA TO PROTECT VRAJVASIS?**
Sripad Vallabhacharya

THE PASTIMES UNDERNEATH GOVARDHANA
Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

ŚRĪ GOVARDHANĀŚRAYA-DAŚAKA
TEN APPEALS FOR SHELTER AT GOVARDHANA HILL
Srila Raghunatha Das Goswami



INDRA'S FURY TOWARDS THE RESIDENTS OF GOKULA

Srila Sukadeva Goswami

When Indra understood that his sacrifice had been put aside, he became furious with Nanda Maharaja and the other cowherd men, who were accepting Krishna as their Lord. Angry Indra sent forth the clouds of universal destruction, known as Samvartaka. Imagining himself the supreme controller, he spoke as follows.

Indra said: Just see how these cowherd men living in the forest have become so greatly intoxicated by their prosperity! They have surrendered to an ordinary human being, Krishna, and thus they have offended the gods. Their taking shelter of Krishna is just like the foolish attempt of men who abandon transcendental knowledge of the self and instead try to cross over the great ocean of material existence in the false boats of fruitive, ritual sacrifices. These cowherd men have acted inimically toward me by taking shelter of this ordinary human being, Krishna, who thinks Himself very wise but who is simply a foolish, arrogant, over talkative child.

[To the clouds of destruction King Indra said:] The prosperity of these people has made them mad with pride, and their arrogance is backed up by Krishna. Now go and remove their pride and bring their animals to destruction. I will follow you to Vraja, riding on my elephant Airavata and taking with me the swift and powerful wind-gods to decimate the cowherd village of Nanda Maharaja.

On Indra's order the clouds of universal destruction, released untimely from their bonds, went to the cowherd pastures of Nanda Maharaja. There they began to torment the inhabitants by powerfully pouring down torrents of rain upon them. Propelled by the fearsome wind-gods, the clouds blazed with lightning bolts and roared with thunder as they hurled down hailstones. As the clouds released torrents of rain as thick as massive columns, the earth was submerged in the flood, and high ground could no longer be distinguished from low. The cows and other animals, shivering from the excessive rain and wind, and the cowherd men and ladies, pained by the cold, all approached Lord Govinda for shelter. Trembling from the distress brought about by the severe rainfall, and trying to cover their heads and

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

calves with their own bodies, the cows approached the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

— *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » 25. Lord Kṛṣṇa Lifts Govardhana Hill» Verses: 1-12* ❧

WHY DID KRISHNA USE GOVARDHANA TO PROTECT VRAJASIS?

Sripad Vallabhacharya

On hearing the pleading prayer of the Gopas, Lord Krishna thought in His own mind, as to whether, He should destroy Indra fully or remove the clouds, or stop the rains or bless all the Gopas with the supernatural capacity, or take all of them away to a different place? viz. can I take all of these people in Gokula and make them merge in My own Divine self? Or should I have another strategy to protect this Gokula?

Due to the constant rain of hailstones from the sky, Lord Krishna saw the entire Gokula in great sorrow and pain and He understood this danger, as having been caused by the angry Indra. Lord Krishna thought as to whether the Gopas are telling this as a truth i.e. they are convinced that, it is Indra, who has caused all these. Lord Krishna thought about this for sometime. Usually people have the tendency to relate various events together, from the point of view of its cause and effect, although their surmise may be incorrect at all times. The Gopas now thought that all this danger has been caused by Indra, who has become angry due to his sacrifice being given up by them; or certainly, is it that the only reason for this sorrow for Gokula is the anger of Indra?

But Lord Krishna, who is omniscient, knew the truth (as nothing can be hidden from Him). Lord Krishna did not want to exhibit His omniscience and hence He acted like this, as though, He too was thinking about the possible cause for this sorrow and the ways and means of protecting Gokula. Thus He said, “We have spoiled the sacrifice for Indra. Due to this reason, He has got angry and hatred for all of us, and He is now engaged in the destruction of Vraja, through this cruel unseasonal rain of hailstones, accompanied by furious winds.”

Lord Krishna decides to take immediate action, as He could not tolerate or put up with the destruction of Gokula. The entire Gokula was seen as unconscious. Hence, there was no way, the Gopas will again plead or tell and there was no time to wait for or waste. Lord Krishna is the *Īśvara* of this entire universe. He is always aware of everything and about every way of protecting them. Sometimes such type of cruel and dangerous rains occur due to the natural causes also. But the Lord knew that this was not natural as these rains are unseasonal. Moreover, the time, when this happened, at Gokula, is



one, where everything should function, including the rains in an orderly fashion (Dwapara Yuga) and not, as in Kali Yuga (the times in which we are living), rains can pour at any time it wishes! (i.e. in Kaliyuga rains do come, when it is unseasonal or not intended – this will cause destruction). Moreover, such type of dangerous rain, that too, most unseasonal is rare, indeed. These rains are accompanied by furious winds also, which carry the clouds, hither and thither. Hail and other type of heavy stones are also being hurled. Water is not in plenty but the hail stones are in plenty! For these four types of blemish, it is, now certain that only Indra is doing all this. None else!

Lord Krishna said to Himself “I will now undertake corrective action, through the power of My own Yogamaya. These celestial deities like Indra and others, have got pride and infatuation, thinking of themselves as

independent, *Īsvara*. Now, I will eliminate his infatuation of opulence” (i.e. remove Indra’s “pride”).”

The Lord thought that by removing Indra from this post as the Divine Indra – the king of all celestial demi-gods would be a very severe punishment, not in consonance with the gravity of the crime committed by him. Why? The rulership was blemish free; only in the exercise of the power, Indra had committed this offence. If the Lord decides to stop the rains, then Indra will come Himself to give a battle! (He was so angry, being ignored). By killing him in the battle or sparing him will not remove the blemish of the wrong use of the power of Indra. “If I were to stop the rains, Indra may destroy the clouds, once and for all and this may lead to the permanent stoppage of rains, due to the absence of the clouds! Hence, I have to plan out a different strategy to fight Indra. I will now



KRISHNA LIFTING GOVARDHANA HILL

His Divine Grace

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devise a plan to bring Indra into proper understanding and behavior. If I were to take these people of Vraja to a different place, there also Indra may cause these rains and it may lead to sorrow and pain, there also. In this event, we may have to give up that place also and take refuge in another place!

"As this Govardhana mountain only has consumed all the food items and other materials, intended originally for Indra. I should make the Govardhana mountain only as the instrument of their protection."

Lord Krishna thus decided to protect the people of Vraja, by lifting the Govardhana mountain.

— From Sri Subodhini, Sripad Vallabhacharya's commentary on Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāna) » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 25. Lord Kṛṣṇa Lifts Govardhana Hill» Verses: 14-16 » Translated in English by Sri T. Ramanan



Lord Krishna immediately picked up Govardhana Hill with one hand, exactly as a child picks up a mushroom from the ground. Thus He exhibited His transcendental pastime of lifting Govardhana Hill. Lord Krishna then addressed His devotees, "My dear brothers, My dear Father, My dear inhabitants of Vrindavan, you can now safely enter under the umbrella of Govardhana Hill, which I have just lifted. Do not be afraid of the hill and think that it will fall from My hand. You have been too much afflicted from the heavy rain and strong wind; therefore I have lifted this hill, which will protect you exactly like a huge umbrella. I think this is a proper arrangement to relieve you of your immediate distress. Be happy along with your animals underneath this great umbrella." Being assured by Lord Krishna, all the inhabitants of Vrindavan entered beneath the great hill along with their property and animals, and they all appeared to be safe.

The inhabitants of Vrindavan and their animals remained there for one week without being disturbed by hunger, thirst or any other discomforts. They were simply astonished to see how Krishna was holding up the mountain with the little finger of His left hand.

— From the book "KṚṢṆA, The Supreme Personality of Godhead" by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada ❀

THE PASTIMES UNDERNEATH GOVARDHANA

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

Ordinarily a large cowherd community, which included many thousands of cows, calves, bulls and so on, could not fit under the base of a medium-sized hill like Sri Govardhana. However, because the hill was in ecstasy, being touched by the hand of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, it acquired inconceivable power and even felt the hundreds of deadly thunderbolts thrown upon its back by angry Indra to be offerings of soft, fragrant flowers. At times Sri Govardhana was not even aware that the thunderbolts were striking. In *Hari-varṇā*, Sri Krishna Himself said, *trai-lokyam apy utsahate rakṣitum kim punar vrajam*: "Sri Govardhana can give shelter to all the three worlds, what to speak of the simple land of Vraja."

NO ONE EXPERIENCED THE SLIGHTEST DISTRESS

When Indra's attack began and Krishna lifted the hill, the deer, wild hogs, and other animals and birds standing on the hill's flanks climbed up to its peaks, and even they did not experience the slightest distress.

The Vrajavasis forgot about hunger and thirst for seven days because they were immersed in the ecstatic bliss of seeing Krishna continuously. This is explained in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*:

*vrajaika-vāsibhir harṣa-vismitākṣair nirīkṣitaiḥ
gopa-gopī-janair hṛṣṭaiḥ prīti-visphāritekṣaṇaiḥ
sainstūyamāna-caritaiḥ kṣṇaiḥ śailam adhārayat*

Sri Krishna held up the mountain while His praises were chanted by the Vrajavasis, all of whom now had the opportunity to dwell together with Him, and who glanced at Him with joyful and amazed eyes. Thus the cowherd men and women were all elated, and out of loving affection they opened their eyes wide.

It should be understood that Krishna stood directly facing everyone. By continuously drinking the nectar of the beauty and sweetness of Krishna, the Vrajavasis felt no hunger, thirst or fatigue, and Sri Krishna, by seeing the beautiful forms of His beloved gopis, also

forgot about eating, drinking and sleeping. The seven days of continuous rain from the Samvartaka clouds failed to flood the district of Mathura because the Supreme Lord, simply by His *icchā-śakti* (Supreme will power), immediately dried up the water as it fell to the ground. For the Vrajavasis the seven days passed as if they were one *ghaṭikā*. [One *ghaṭikā* equals 24 minutes]

When Indra observed this exhibition of Lord Krishna's mystic power, he became most astonished. Pulled down from his platform of false pride, and his intentions thwarted, he ordered his clouds to desist. Seeing that the fierce wind and rain had now ceased, the sky had become clear of rainclouds, and the sun had risen, Lord Krishna, the lifter of Govardhana Hill, spoke to the cowherd community as follows: My dear cowherd men, please go out with your wives, children and possessions. Give up your fear. The wind and rain have stopped, and the rivers' high waters have subsided.

After collecting their respective cows and loading their paraphernalia into their wagons, the cowherd men went out. The women, children and elderly persons gradually followed them.

VRAJAVASIS APPROACHING KRISHNA

Overwhelmed in love, each of the Vrajavasis approached Krishna according to his position—as an inferior, younger member of the community; as an equal; or as a superior—and they dealt with Him accordingly. Krishna's superiors offered auspicious benedictions, lovingly smelled His head, kissed Him, massaged His left arm (which held up the mountain), cracked the fingers of His left hand, and inquired with parental affection as to whether He was tired or pained. Krishna's equals laughed or joked with Him, and those who were younger fell at His feet, massaged His feet, and so on.

The wives of the *brāhmaṇas* joined with the cowherd ladies to offer auspicious items like yogurt and unbroken grains. They gave blessings to Krishna by saying, "May You subdue the wicked, protect the decent people, give pleasure to Your parents and be enriched with all wealth and opulence."

WHY DIDN'T BALARAMA LIFT THE GOVARDHANA HILL?

The very special position of Krishna's own mother and other intimate relatives, however, it is not unsuitable to include Balarama in the group that feels parental affection (*vātsalya-bhāva*) toward Krishna. Because Balarama acts in that capacity as Krishna's elder brother. One may object saying, "Since Balarama is so affectionate, why didn't He assume His plenary expansion of Ananta Sesa, since He is already holding up the earth, and Himself enact the great

feat of holding up Govardhana Hill on behalf His younger brother?" The answer is that once Krishna made His decision to stop Indra's sacrifice, to worship Govardhana, and to lift Govardhana Hill in order to protect the Vrajavis, it would be improper and impossible for His *amīṣa* (plenary portion), Balarama, to do anything else. Thus Balarama did not show His powers. As Krishna is the *śaktiman*, the possessor of innumerable potencies, by His desire alone suitable powers will appear when necessary in His *amīṣa*.

In this regard, sometimes ancient paintings show Krishna as Giridhari being given butter by His two mothers Yashoda and Rohini while Nanda Maharaja and Balarama hold up Govardhana Hill with their heads or sticks. In the *Vaiṣṇava-toṣaṁī*, Srila Sanatana Gosvami says that this occurred due to being overwhelmed by love.

In the heavens, all the demigods, including the Siddhas, Sadhyas, Gandharvas and Charanas, sang the praises of Lord Krishna and showered down flowers in great satisfaction. The demigods in heaven resoundingly played their conchshells and kettledrums, and the best of the Gandharvas, led by Tumburu, began to sing.

While Krishna was lifting Govardhana Hill, Radha and other beloved gopis, unnoticed by others, were intimately associating with Him by exchanging secret glances from a distance. While returning to their homes the gopis lovingly sang about Krishna's pastimes.

— From *Sārārtha-darśinī* commentary on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* by Srila Vishvanātha Cakravartī Thakura » Canto 10: The Summum Bonum » Chapter 25. Lord Kṛṣṇa Lifts Govardhana Hill Verses: 20-33 Translated by His Holiness Bhanu Swami

ŚRĪ GOVARDHANĀŚRAYA-DAŚAKA

TEN APPEALS FOR SHELTER AT GOVARDHANA HILL

Srila Raghunatha Das Goswami

*saptāhaṁ murajit-karāmbuja-paribhrājat-kamiṣṭhāṅguli-
prodyad-valgu-varātakoparimilan-mugdha-dvirepho 'pi yaḥ
pāthah-ḷṣepaka-śakra-nakra-mukhataḥ kroḍe vrajanī drāg apāt
kas taṁ gokula-bāndhavaṁ giri-varaṁ govardhanaṁ nāśrayet*

Who would not take shelter of Govardhana hill? He, being the friend of everyone in Gokula, is the best of all mountains. He quickly took all the inhabitants of Sri Vraja dhama in his lap, protecting them from death by the devastating rainfall sent by the alligator-like king of heavens, Indra. For seven days and nights he sheltered them, resting on Lord Krishna's lotus-like hand, being uplifted by Krishna's little finger, being present just as a love-intoxicated bee on a nectar-filled seed-vessel of a lotus.

*indratre nibhṛtaṁ gavāṁ suranadī-toyena dīnātmanā
śakreṇāmugatā cakāra surabhir yenābhīṣekaṁ hareḥ
yat-kacche 'jani tena nandīta-janaṁ govinda-kunḍaṁ kṛtī
kas taṁ go-nikarendra-paṭṭa-śikharaṁ govardhanaṁ nāśrayet*

On the land bordering Govardhana hill, the heavenly surabhi cow, who was followed by humbled Indra, secretly bathed Lord Hari with water from the celestial Ganges, thus crowning Him to be the monarch and protector of all cows. From the water of this bathing ceremony the lake Govinda-kunda was created which delights all people. Which accomplished person would not take shelter of this Govardhana hill whose peaks are the resting places for Govinda, the king of the multitude of cows?

*sva-dhūny-ādi-vareṇya-tūrtha-gaṇato hr̥dyāny ajasraṁ hareḥ
sīri-brahma-harāpsaraḥ-priyaka-tat-śrī-dāna-kunḍāny api
prema-ḷṣema-ruci-pradāni parito bhr̥janti yasya vratī
kas taṁ manyā-munīndra-varṇita-guṇaṁ govardhanaṁ nāśrayet*

The many sacred places of pilgrimage all around Govardhana hill, Balarama-kund, Brahma-kund, Rudra-kund, Apsara-kund, Priyaka-kund and Sri Dan Nivartan kund, are forever dearer to Lord Hari's heart than even multitudes of the most exalted places as the heavenly Ganges and others. These lakes are bestowing love for the Lord, auspiciousness and taste for devotional service. What person engaged in religious vows would not take shelter of this Govardhana hill whose wonderful qualities are described by the most revered sages?

*ḷyotsnāmokṣaṇa-mālyā-hāra-sumano-gaurī-balāri-dhvajā
gāndharvādi-sarāṁsi nīrjhara-gīriḥ śr̥ḅgāra-sīnhāsanam
gopālo 'pi hari-sthalaṁ harir api sphūrjanti yat-sarvataḥ
kas taṁ go-mṛga-pakṣi-ur̥kṣa-lalitāṁ govardhanaṁ nāśrayet*

Govardhana hill is the place where Candra-sarovar, Papa mocana-kund, Malyahar-kund, Kusuma-sarovar, Gauri-kund, Balaridhvaj-kund, Gandharva-kund, and other lakes are splendidly present. There are many mountain streams, and naturally formed stone-thrones and sitting places suitable for amorous pastimes. There are many pastime places of the Lord everywhere. Who would not take shelter of this Govardhana hill who is charming with it's many cows, deers, birds and trees?

*gaṅgā-koṭy-adhikaṁ bakāri-pada-jāriṣṭāri-kunḍaṁ vahan
bhaktyā yaḥ śirasā natena satataṁ preyāṁ śivād apy abhūt
rādḥā-kunḍa-maṇinī tathaiṁ murajit-prauḍha-prasādanī dadhāt
preyaḥ-stayamano 'bhavat ka iha taṁ govardhanaṁ nāśrayet*

The kund belonging to the foe of Arishta (Shyamakund),



which was created by His foot is millions of times greater than Mother Ganga. Sri Govardhana always carries this kund on his bowed head with devotion and has thus become dearer to the Lord than even Lord Shiva. In the same way he is holding the jewel Sri Radhakund on his head which is the object of Krishna's complete favour. Thus he has become most praiseworthy even amongst the most dear. Who would not take shelter of this Govardhana hill?

*yasyām mādharma-nāviko rasavatīm ādhāya rādhāni tarau
madhye cañcala-keli-pāta-valanāt trāsaiḥ stuvatyās tataḥ
svābhiṣṭhāni paṇam ādadhe vahati sā yasmin mano-jāhnvī
kas taṁ tan nau-dam-pati-pratibhuvanī govardhanāni nāśrayet*

On Govardhana hill the Manasi Ganga is flowing. In the middle of her waters the boatman Madhava has taken sweet Radha on a boat. Ganga Devi's waters are playing being unsteady, so her waves are shaking the boat. Out of fear Sri Radha is offering prayers and then Madhava

takes from Her His desired wages. Who would not take shelter of this Govardhana hill who is *pratibhū* form of this divine fresh couple.

*rāse śrī-śata-vandya-sundara-sakhī-vṛndāñcitā saurabhā-
bhrājat-kṛṣṇa-rasāla-bāhu-vilasat-kañṭhī madhau mādhavī
rādḥā nṛtyati yatra cāru valate rāsa-sthālī sā parā
yasmin sa sukṛtī tam unmatam aye govardhanam nāśrayet*

O, what pious person would not take shelter of this sublime Govardhana hill where Sri Radha , the beloved of Madhava, dances in the spring season at the transcendental *rāsa-līlā* place? She moves beautifully, being revered by hundreds of groups of worshipable lovely friends. Krishna has placed His fragrant arm playfully around Her neck.

*yatra svīya-gaṇasya vikrama-bhṛtā vācā muhuh phullatoḥ
smera-kṛūra-dṛg-anta-vibhrama-śaraiḥ śaśvan mitho viddhayoḥ
tad yūnor nava-dāna-sṛṣṭija-kalir bhaṅgyā hasan jṛmbhate
kas tam tat-prthu-keli-sūcana-śilam govardhanam nāśrayet*

At Govardhana, the ever-fresh love-quarrel of the divine couple about paying tax is laughingly unfolding by indirect, crooked speech. The divine couples' faces are blossoming constantly because of the forceful bold words of Their companions, and They are perpetually piercing each other's hearts by Their arrow-like, amorously playful, smiling, sharp side-long glances. Who would not take shelter of this Govardhana hill whose stones are pointing out this great amusing pastime?

*śrīdāmādi-vayasya-saṅcaya-vṛtaḥ saṅkarṣaṇenollasan
yasmin go-caya-cāru-cāraṇa-paro rīṛiti gāyaty asau
raṅge gūḍha-guhāsu ca prathayati smāra-kriyāṁ rādḥayā
kas tam saubhāga-bhūṣitāñcita-tamam govardhanam nāśrayet*

At Govardhana, Sri Krishna is surrounded by a multitude of friends as Sridama and others, and He is delighted by Balarama. There, He laughingly sings "ri-ri", being absorbed in His pleasurable pastimes of herding the many cows. In the *rāsa-līlā* dance arena and inside Govardhana's hidden caves, He celebrates amorous pastimes with Sri Radha. Who would not take shelter of this Govardhana hill whose body is distinguished because of being adorned with great fortune?

*kālīndīm tapanodbhāvāṁ giri-gaṅgāṁ aty-unnamac-cekharāṁ
śrī-vṛndāvīpināṁ janepsita-dharāṁ nandīśvaraṁ cāśrayam
hitvā yaṁ pratīpūjayan vraja-kṛte mānaṁ mukundo dadau
kas tam śṛṅgi-kirīṭināṁ giri-nṛpaṁ govardhanam nāśrayet*

Mukunda (Krishna) had disregarded the daughter of the Sun-god, Kalindi (Yamuna), a quantity of very high mountains, the forest of Vrindavan, and the place of refuge desired by all, the Nandishvar-hill in Nandagaon and has given respect to Sri Govardhana, nicely worshipping him for the sake of the inhabitants of Vraja. Who would not take shelter of this Govardhana hill who is the king of all mountains and whose peaks are his crowns?

*tasmin vāsadam asya ramya-daśakam govardhanasyeha ya
prādurbhūtam idam yadīya-kṛpayā jṛṅgāndha-vaktrād api
tasyodyad-guṇa-vṛnda-bandhura-khaṇer jīvātu-rīpasya tat-
toṣyāpi alam bhavatv iha phalam pakvaṁ mayā mṛgyate*

This charming Govardhana-*daśakam* grants residence near him. It has come from the mouth of an old, blind man by the mercy of Him* who is a beautiful mine of uncountable excellent qualities and who is my very life. Solely his satisfaction is the ripened fruit strived after by me in presenting this *daśakam*.

* Translators Note: referring either to Sri Govardhana or Srila Rupa Goswami, or both.

— From the book 'Sri Stavavali' by Srila Raghunatha Das Goswami, Translated by Vrajsevika devi dasi ☸



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