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GREATER THAN KRISHNA

*His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta
Swami Prabhupada*

In the last verse of his *Śikṣāṣṭakam*, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu gives us this instruction, *āśliṣya vā pāda-ratāṁ pinaṣṭu mām adarśanān marmahatāṁ karotu vā. Adarśanam* — everyone wants to see Krishna, but a pure devotee says, “No, if you don’t like to see me, that’s all right. You can break my heart. I may always pray to see you. But if you do not come and instead break my heart, that is also accepted by me. I shall still worship you.” This is pure devotion. Not that, “I asked Krishna to come before me dancing and he did not come. So I gave up this nonsense, and now the Krishna consciousness movement has no value for me.” Like that.

This is Radharaṇī’s attitude. When Krishna left Vrindavan, all the *gopīs* passed their days simply crying for Krishna. But they never condemned Krishna. Krishna was also thinking of them, because the *gopīs* are the topmost devotees. There is no comparison to the devotion of the *gopīs*. Therefore Krishna was always obliged to them. Krishna said to the *gopīs*, “You have to be satisfied with your own business. I cannot



*His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada*

return back anything for your love.” Krishna, the Supreme, the all-powerful, was unable to repay the debt he considered that he owed to the *gopīs*. Chaitanya Mahaprabhu therefore said *ramyā kācid upāsanā vraja-vadhū-vargeṇa yā kalpitā*. There is no better worship than what was conceived by the *gopīs*. Therefore, the *gopīs* are the topmost devotees. And amongst the *gopīs*, Srimati Radharaṇī is the topmost. Therefore Srimati Radharaṇī is greater than Krishna. ❀

— From a lecture on *Bhāgavad-Gītā*, London, 4 August 1973.

RAVAL, THE BIRTHPLACE OF RADHA

Adapted from the fifth wave of
Srila Narahari Chakravarti Thakur's
Śrī Bhakti-ratnākara

In the fifth wave of Sri Bhakti Ratnakara, Narahari Chakravarti Thakur glorifies the birthplace of Srimati Radharani. In this first excerpt, he quotes Raghava Pandit's discussion with Srinivas Acharya while touring various places in Vraja.

*ahe śrīnivāsa dekha e 'rāvala'-grāma
ethā vṛṣabhānura vasati anupama
śrī-rādhikā prakāṣa ha-ilā eikhāne
yāhāra prakāṣe sukha vyāpila bhuvane*

O Srinivas, just see Raval, the village where Maharaja Vrishabhanu happily resided. Sri Radhika appeared here and by her auspicious appearance the whole world became filled with joy. (5.1809-1810)

*gāndharvāyā jani-maṇir abhūd yatra saṅkīrtitāyām
ānandotkaiḥ sura-muni-naraiḥ kīrtidā-garbha-khanyām
gopī-gopaiḥ surabhi-nikaraiḥ samparite 'tra mukhe
rāvalyākhye vṛṣaravi-pure prīti-pūro mamāstām*

[Srila Raghunath Das Goswami, in *Vraja-vilasa-stava*, text 90, prays as follows:] Praised by jubilant devas, rishis, and human beings, the womb of Kirtida is like a mine from which the precious gem Sri Radha appeared. May I be filled with love for Raval — the place of Maharaja Vrishabhanu, which is surrounded in all directions by surabhi cows, cowherd boys and *gopīs*.

Seeing Radha's beauty on the occasion of her appearance, her parents became agitated in love and were unable to take their minds away from her. Desiring auspiciousness for their daughter, they gave various gifts in charity. Who can describe this scene? Only fortunate souls can see. Sri Radha would wander around with many other girls and her mother felt joyful while watching her. Maharaja Vrishabhanu and his associates would sit and watch her. In this way there was no limit to the happiness in Raval.

O Srinivas, after coming from Gokula, Gau-rachandra and his associates stayed here for some time. He became overwhelmed with ecstatic love when he saw Raval. What to speak of others, even Ananta Sesh cannot adequately describe his feelings of ecstatic love for this place. When Lord Gaurahari was here, people

came running from all directions, chanting the holy name of Lord Hari and exclaiming, "O brother, see this jewel amongst the *sannyāsīs*." Everyone became mad while drinking the nectar of the Lord's moon-like face. Greatly happy, they spoke to one another, "I have concluded that he is definitely Krishna. By his own will, he is wandering throughout Vraja in this form."

Someone else said, "By seeing this golden complexioned form of the Lord, I am unable to speak, although I wish to."

After saying these things, by the mercy of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu the people became agitated in love and tears flowed from their eyes. After manifesting his transcendental pastimes here, the Lord, along with the *śanoḍiyā brahmana*, went on to Mathura. O Srinivas, this place where Radhika performed her enchanting childhood pastimes is most confidential.



Nāma-tattva

RISING SUN OF THE NAME *Sri Lakshmidhar*

The poet Sri Lakshmidhar is considered to be a godbrother of Srila Sridhar Swami, the famous Orissan commentator on the Bhāgavatam cited by Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. The below verse is from Lakshmidhar's book Bhagavān-nāma-kaumudī, which describes the glories of Krishna's holy names.

*anīhaḥ samharad akhilaṁ
sakṛd udayād eva sakala-lokasya
taraṇir iva timira-jaladhīn
jayati jagan-maṅgalaṁ harer nāma*

As the rising sun immediately dissipates all the world's darkness, which is deep like an ocean, so the holy name of the Lord, if chanted once without offenses, can dissipate all the reactions of a living being's sinful life. All glories to that holy name of the Lord, which is auspicious for the entire world! ❀

— Quoted in Rupa Goswami's *Padyāvalī*, text 16, and in *Cc. antya* 3.181.



Narahari Chakravarti Thakur also composed a song in this connection:

*āju ki ānanda vṛṣabhāmura mandire
jammilā rādhikā-devī kṛtikā-udare*

Who can understand the great joy in Vrishabhanu's house when Radhika appeared from the womb of Kirtida?

*dīśā daśa kare ālo-rūpera chaṭāya
ye dekhe bāreka tā'ra tāpa dūre yāya*

Sri Radha's effulgent form illuminated the ten directions. Whoever once sees her is freed from the threefold miseries.

*sukomala tanu jini kanaka-lavanī
āhā mari! kibā prati aṅgera balanī*

Her body is extremely soft and her complexion is like molten gold. Alas! How is it possible to describe the exquisite movements of her limbs?

*jananī-janaka-dhṛti dharite nā pāre
kata sādhe cāndamukha dekhe bāre bāre*

Seeing her beauty, her parents could not control their excitement and repeatedly looked at her moon-like face.

*jaya jaya kalarave bharila bhuvana
gāoye maṅgala-gīta gopānārī-gaṇa*

All the elderly gopis sang auspicious songs and the entire universe became filled with the sound of "Jaya! Java!"

*bājaye vividha bādya parama rasāla
nācaye sakala loka bale, — bhāla bhāla*

The sounds of various instruments enchanted everyone and people began dancing as they exclaimed, "Very good! Very good!"

*dadhi dudha haldi aṅgane chaḍāiyā
hāsaye hāsāya kata bhaṅgi prakāśiyā*

Turmeric, yogurt, and milk were scattered in the courtyard for the occasion and the cowherd men laughed and made others laugh with their gestures.

*viṅra, vandi-gaṇe dāna kare nānā bhātī
dekhi ghanāśyāma o nā raṅga sukhe māti*

The brahmins and the singers were offered valuable gifts and Ghanashyam (Narahari Chakravarti Thakur), says that although he is seeing this scene, he is unable to relish its happiness.

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Kirtida shows a picture of Krishna to baby Radha

THIS DAUGHTER OF YOURS

Jnana Das

*e tora bālikā, cāndera kalikā
dekhiyā juḍāya āṅkhi
hena mane laya, sadāi hṛdaye
pasarā kariyā rākhi*

This daughter of yours resembles the budding moon. Her sight soothes my eyes. I feel as if I should always keep her deep within the crevices of my heart.

*śuna vṛṣabhānu-priye
ki hena kariyā, kolete rekhecha
e hena sonāra jhiye*

(Chorus) O Kirtida, beloved of Vrishabhanu! How beautifully you have placed your golden-hued daughter on your lap. Please listen to what I say.

*taḍita jiniyā, vadana sundara
mukhe hāsi āche ādhā
gaṇake ye nāma, se nāma rākhuka,
āmarā rākhilāma rādhā*

Her beautiful face overpowers the brilliance of lightning, as she slightly smiles. Let the astrologers suggest any suitable name, but I'll only call her Radha.

svarūpa lakṣaṇa, *ati vilakṣaṇa*
tulanā diba vā kiye
mahāpuruṣera, *preyaśi ha-ibe*
soṅaribā yadi jīye

Her natural characteristics are so extraordinary, how can they be compared to anything else? Mark my words, O Kirtida, one day she'll be the beloved of a great personality.

duhitā baliyā, *duḥkha nā bhāviha*
iñho uddhāriba vaṁśa
jñānadāsa kahe, *śunechi kamalā*
iñhāra aṁśera aṁśa

Don't be distressed that you're blessed with a daughter, for she'll deliver your entire lineage. Jnana Das says, "I've heard that even Lakshmi Devi is an expansion of her expansion." ❧

— Translation by Krishnabhishek Das, assisted by Uddhava Das and Bhakta Biplav Belel.

Click to listen to Gour Govinda Swami sing this song: <http://www.archive.org/details/EiToraBalika>

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The beautiful daughter of Maharaja Vrishabhanu

THE GLORIES OF RADHA

Srila Baladev Vidyabhushan's
Aiśvarya Kādambinī 5.21-22

yāṁ varṇayantaḥ kavayo'pi vibhyuś
candrāravindādi ninindur uccaīḥ
dhyānena yasyā nitibhiś ca śaśvat
pramodam uccair hṛdayeṣu bhejuḥ

When poets attempt to describe Sri Radha they become filled with awe and they loudly rebuke the moon, the lotus, and other beautiful things of this world. By constantly meditating on Sri Radha and by repeatedly offering obeisances to her, these poets attain intense happiness within their hearts.

kaṭākṣa-pātād abhajanta yasyā
vibhūtayaḥ sarva-vidhāḥ prakāśam
guṇa-vrajān vaktum adhiśvaro'pi
śaśāka no nanda-sutaḥ samastān

Every kind of transcendental glory and opulence is manifest from Sri Radha's sidelong glance. Even Lord Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is not able to describe them all. ❧

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