

Part Twenty

DESCENT OF RADHA KRISHNA TO GOLAK DHAM BRINDABAN

NARD CLEARED BASUDEV'S DOUBTS



Modern Kurukshetra, Haryana, Mahadev Temple in Brahma Sarovar.
(Courtesy: Stock photo. Royalty-Free)

Basudev interrupted Nard's talk and said, "Oh muni, it is easy to say "yes I will do it, but it is not always easy to work it out in practice." The Yajna and alms giving to all the inhabitants of the three loks, including birds, animals, and others living things are so enormous that having just a high aspiration is not enough to carry it out successfully.

To give full contentment to such an ambition we need a complex set of supports in how the organisation is led, structured, and staffed. We need the right people working in them who can think and act.

In the first place, we need someone who is very capable of planning, arranging, and managing the project. Secondly, it requires a colossal amount of liquid asset. In these respects, the whole enterprise is beyond my means.

To begin with, oh great muni, would you be so kind as to tell me where I can find such a place that is so vast to accommodate all these guests, and which is also a Tirth.

Nard apprised Basudev. "There is a place called Prabas. It is a Tirth. The place is very capacious and sweeping. It is also known as Kurukshetra in the world. Saraswati river runs through it. It is so vast that I have no idea how many *yuthak* it would be in its breadth and length. But the place will easily accommodate everyone from the three loks."

Nard gave Basudev further advice, " Apart from trust and integrity on your personality, it is of paramount importance that you welcome and satisfy these guests with good food. So, you must plan to procure all these

commodities, and make an inventory of all the items that would be needed for such a big yajna, well in advance and in sufficient quantities.”

Nard further elaborated on the advantages and disadvantages, which Basudev must consider carefully before he performed such a huge yajna on the day of the coming solar eclipse, so that he could make a sensible decision.

And that, Nard added, it was good to remember that those who would come, have a dip in this Tirth, so that they would be blessed forever by Shree Hari, who would shower his love to them for many future births.

Basudev sounded a bit perplexed, but it did not drive him to despair. So, he asked Nard for further clarification in that, in his understanding, Brahmins did not accept alms during the solar eclipse, and would not eat until it would be over?

Basudev also asked Nard politely, “Please forgive me Gurudev, and kindly take the trouble to illuminate my darkness regarding factual knowledge, as distinct from guesswork, concerning how I could finish the Yajna during the *unholy* eclipse.”

Nard asked Basudev to send for his sons, Balram and Krishna, before he began to explain. [Balram was born to Rohini, Basudev’s second wife].

Thirtieth Chapter

NARD ADVISED BASUDEV TO SEND FOR BALRAM AND KRISHNA

Nard explained to Basudev that Prabas in Kurukshetra, is the most famous Tirth. Bhagwan Parshuram slaughtered all the kings of the world, one after the other, twentieth times. All the blood shed by these Kshatriyas, ran over this place, where it settled as a lake. He performed many yajna at this place to atone for his sins. That was why all the Hindus would come and take a dip during the solar eclipses.

[Parshuram, Sanskrit: “Ram with the Ax”, was one of the 10 avatars (6th incarnation) of the Hindu god Vishnu. He played an important role in the Mahabharat war, serving as mentor to Bhishma (chapter 5.178), Drona (chapter 1.121) and Karna (chapter 3.286), teaching weapon arts and helping key warriors in both sides of the war].



[Even now, hundreds of thousands of Hindus take a dip in the lake at Kurukshetra to cleanse themselves from sins during a solar eclipse.]

Nard muni took time to expound further about the yajna to Basudev in simple and intelligible terminology.

Solar eclipse with dark moon in front.

Nard explained: “Listen Basudev. I know you are not sure how to go about this yajna in detail. Let me elucidate to you. You should donate all the alms at the feet of *Bhagawan* with *Utsarga* (Vedic ceremony) before the start of the eclipse. Then with *mukti snanam* [Bath of liberation from the mortal world] you offer alms to the Brahmins and follow it by feeding them bellyful. It is an ancient tradition. You need not worry about it.”

[*Bhagawan* in Hinduism represents the concept of a universal God but do not worship a specific deity. In bhakti school literature, the term is typically used for any deity to whom prayers are offered].

Basudev was quite relieved, but he still had quite a substantial problem for which he asked Nard with all timidity, for some more counselling. “Gurudev, kindly tell me how can I perform such gargantuan alms giving function? I am just a poor man. I am known as a lucky man, only because of my sons who are well-off and powerful. It is true I am not starving. I command respect from people who know me, and I have no enemies.”

As you are aware muni, a father has no access to his son’s wealth. Please have a think about my son [Krishna] also. He has so many children and grandchildren in Dwarka, and I do not think he is that opulent, considering the expenses that would accrue in feeding and clothing and educating them all.

Let us say, in the real world, if my son Krishna becomes invalid or in great trouble, who is there to help him out in Dwarka? He lives a good life and does things to his satisfaction, only because of his wealth. What can a poor old man like me do by going there at Prabas? Please do not get me wrong. I really like to do it as you muni has instructed, but I do not think I am capable of it. This is outside my assets including financial securities.”

Nard understood what Basudev meant of course. He then gently and compassionately told him: “Basudev, you are a very intelligent person. I am a bit surprised that you talk like a nonsensical person.

Do you think a person can protect himself or arrange to provide himself with food for sustenance? No. All these had been arranged before his birth. They had all been destined by the Creator. A baby before it is born, had adequate arrangements for its milk in the chest of the mother. Man, who is thinking about his provisions for food is wasting his time. Happiness and unhappiness are the result of his karma.

How come, you especially are impoverished, while Ram and Krishna are around? You say this, only because you have become quite prosperous and as a result, you have forgotten all about dharma [Moral values] and karma [Mental and physical actions and their consequences].

You have a lofty and often arrogant assumption of superiority in some respect because of your sons. The line between memory and fact is often blurry. Mistakes are common. One’s recollection may vary as yours.

I am sure when you were in Kansa’s prison, suffering and eating the horrible prison food provided; you would have thought about doing many virtuous karmas, which you have now forgotten completely. It is not really your fault but human nature. It is the essence of human characteristics.

Everybody prays when in trouble and distress. And they all forget it when it is over and happy. Only a few people show gratitude to God. It is rare that stingy people give things to charity. Listen Basudev, if you like, it is time that you call Ram and Krishna and discuss with them posthaste.

If they two agree, there is nothing that cannot be worked out. As a matter of fact, I would like the yajna to be performed while I am here, and on the day of this coming solar eclipse.” Having given his counsel to Basudev according to his plan, Nard sat down composed and serene.

Basudev was actually a virtuous and sagacious person, but he had no professional standing based on demonstrable achievements and competence like Nard muni. He listened very attentively to all that Nard had to say, knowing very well that the advice was for his welfare.

Taking Nard’s hint, Basudev immediately organised for a messenger to go to Ram and Krishna, asking them to come over and see him as soon as possible.

Such is Shree Hari’s Leela. It is like Amrit that can alleviate all the human woes and suffering. An elixir of life.

Thirty-First Chapter

ARRIVAL OF RAM AND KRISHNA TO MEET BASUDEV

A messenger promptly, went to see Ram and Krishna. No sooner had they received the message then they arrived to see their father. They bowed to their father. They paid their respects to Nard who was seated by his father's side. They kneeled and with folded hands, asked Basudev the reason why they had been summoned to come and see him.

Nard answered instead. "There is a big problem with your father. I will do the explaining and you two will pay attention. Your father has been nurturing to carry out a gigantic task for ages, but he has not been able to translate it into practice. It remained as his dream only. With my presence here now, he thinks it is the right time to carry out his ambition. And he wants to discuss it with you."

Ram inquired of his father, "What kind of task have you been thinking about for so long that remains unfulfilled? There is nothing you dear father cannot do while both of us are alive."

Nard was pleased with the response. He then explained with a touch of diplomacy, "It is not a very difficult job. Lots of very eminent people do it. Because of you two boys, the world speaks about your father Basudev as a fortunate man. But so far, your loving father has been unable to execute even a single *sat* [glorious] *karma*.

When I asked your father the reason why he had not done so, he talked about his insolvency. I have been telling him that while you two are around, there cannot be a shortage of funds and resources. And that you two, Krishna and Ram are Absolute Brahma/Narayan [The refuge of all creations], and *Sankarshan Bhagwan* (one among functional manifestations of lord Bishnu).

I told him that only because of an illusion, he was made to believe you two as his sons. And if he was in doubt about what I am saying, he should call you two, and tell you what he wants. Then he will know what you are, and that you will fulfil his wish.

In the end, he was convinced and agreed to send for you two brothers, so that the world would not lament later, that, despite having two grown-up and very prosperous sons – Ram and Krishna, their father could not achieve his only one aspiration in life."

Although the conversation was quite anodyne, Shree Govind felt quite a bit embarrassed. Outwardly he began to laugh and said, "There is none greater than parents for their children to worship in the life of humanity. Father is the tallest and mother is the heaviest, says all Ved shastra. There is none more immoral than someone who thinks only about his wife and children and ignores his parents in this world.

"A father is a son's tap [austere spiritual meditation practice, and mother is Jap [uttering mantas in low voice as in *mala jap*]. There is no greater Gurus than one's parents. Shree Ram went to forests for fourteen years to make his father Dasarath keep his promise."

[Ram, his wife Sita and brother Lakshman from Ayodhya, spent 14 years in exile, roaming the forests of Dandaka, and Panchabati (now Nashik in Maharashtra) from where Ravan kidnapped Sita. The custom in those days was that if a king did not take responsibilities of his kingdom for 14 years, he would lose the right to rule the kingdom permanently. That was the reason Kaikey, third consort of king Dashrath, requested for 14 years of exile].

Shree Govind further emphasised that "While two of us brothers are still around, there should not be any disappointment in what our father wants to do. We are ready to help our father without going through its merits and demerits, strengths, and weaknesses.

Nard cut in as if he did not know. "I do not know exactly what your father wants to do. You should ask him."
Whereupon Govind asked his father what was that he wanted to accomplish?