

## Part Twenty-Nine

# DESCENTION OF RADHA KRISHNA TO GOLAK DHAM BRINDABAN

### Fifty-Second Chapter

## NAND AND JASHODA HAVING A CONSULTATION



Yashoda Rani bathing Baby Krishna. (Courtesy: Bhagawat Puran 15,00 CE)

Yashoda could not understand Nand Maharaj's perplexity and irresolution. With some timidity she asked him what was upsetting him.

“I have heard my son is at Prabas. Should you not be ordering to beat the big drums and blow the *Bheri* (the war trumpet) to let everyone know about it? It is said that Prabas is not too far. Only 60 Krosh [one Krosh is 3,000 meters). If we go by carriage, it will take only three days.

“All the suffering we have had for eons will then be over. Just holding my son will quench my thirst of longing to see him. I do not care about a bath in the *tirth* water and all the *karmaphal* (result of action) that would bring to me by a dip in the holy river. All I want is to see my son. Wherever my son is, it is heaven for me. If my son is not there, even *Veikunth* is hell. My lord, please do not defer anymore. I am begging you by touching your feet to please organise for me to see my son and save my soul.

Hearing the heart-rending sorrowful supplication of Yashoda, Nand replied, “What is this you are saying my love? I am in the same chain of thought as you are. Just ponder over it for a while my Rani, why I feel very hurt. This yagna at Prabas is well-known in three lokas. Invitations have been sent to *Swarg* (heaven), *Mart* (mortal world, the earth) and *Patal* (netherworld). But Braj, where I am still alive, has been missed. I do not think it will be a foresight of Basudev.

There must be some cogent reason which we do not know. Think about it, my Rani. When we reach there, if we are ignored by Basudev, what kind of state will we be in before so many people? I must kill myself then and there.”

On hearing her husband’s meaningful words, Yashoda replied, “What kind of interpretation is this? Please take kindly of the fact that this yagna though performed for Basudev, is our son’s yagna for his father. While it is natural to invite other people it is not customary to invite your own people. How can Krishna invite us, like strangers! He would be worried about sending us a formal invitation lest we feel offended. And if we had such an invitation, I would have killed myself.”

“All that we are going to do, is to take part in our son’s yagna. What do we care about Basudev? If we are welcomed by him, it is well and good. If he does not, we do not give a fig about it. After all, it is my son’s function not his. For me, all I care about is to meet my son.”

Nand knew that Yashoda’s love for her son would override any other encumbrances. Still, he became quite emotional with tears welling up in his eyes. He said to Yashoda, “It is not that I do not know what you are saying. What is worrying me also is just that, how our son would react? I remember very vividly that, soon after Krishna killed Kansa I, very happily asked him to come along to Braj, when he indignantly told me to go ahead, in front of Basudev. Just like that. But he was my son, and I did not want to leave him there. When I insisted, he was still reluctant and stayed behind with a grin on his face.

If you had seen his smug face at that time, you would have drowned yourself in the nearest river. As I have a man’s heart, and having it hardened like a stone, I was able to return to Brindaban. After that day I resolved never again would I go to meet Krishna anywhere. Since then, I kept the incident hidden in my heart and began to spend my life meditating.”

As the emotion of an abiding annoyance began to rise like flood water, Nand, unable to deal with it, upended his lament. He paused and began sobbing. Hearing Nand’s affection for his offspring (*Batsala prem*), Yashoda Rani was left, lost for words. She also cried, and holding her husband’s legs, she blurted out, “My lord, since you are an intelligent man, you could picture Krishna in your mind’s eye while sitting at home. But for me, a simpleton woman, the more I try to conjure up his face the harder I can bear.

Krishna is the journey of my mind, and he is my spiritual knowledge. No wealth is more opulent than him in my possession. There is nothing I crave that is more than looking at his lotus-like face or, holding him

in my lap and kissing him. That is all I think about all day and night. Nothing else.”

Nand sympathised. “I understand what you mean, my Rani. But how could we leave Braj after all these years when I clung to my life with the wishful thinking that one day Krishna would return to Braj. I am sure he will be there at Prabas, but I doubt we will be able to meet him. Our weird rustic attire and custom would bar us from joining the congregation by the doormen at the gates. If that happens, how could I endure you killing yourself by sheer disappointment and with a broken heart?”

## Fifty-Third Chapter

“Correct me if I am wrong,” pleaded Yashoda. “In my opinion, Braj Brindaban is only a place where Krishnachandra lived. Please do not be offended and stop me from going ahead alone to Prabas. I will happily go to hell for failing to obey my husband’s orders as a free woman.

It is said that for the sake of Krishna, disobeying a husband’s command is not a damnation according to sacred texts. It was not so long ago that in the *Ashokban*, when Krishna was tending to cattle, a few wives of these munis, fed Krishna with a hearty meal against the strict opposition from their husbands. Those women were far from being condemned as sinful. Rather, they earned enough virtues, which created a place for piety in their husbands’ hearts.

If we are denied entry into the yagna place by the guards at the gates for not being properly dressed, so be it. What is left here, in Braj, for unfortunate Yashoda, who had been bereft from seeing her child for ages? There is no fun in living anymore. Please hurry Maharaj. Kindly give the order to sound the war trumpet to spread the news to everyone in Braj to attend the yagna.

Yashoda Rani hardly finished telling Nand before she rushed out to the gate with tousled hair flying about and holding a slice of cheese in her hand. As her patience was strained, she cried out in a high-pitched tone, “Ha Gopal, Ha Gopal” as she ran to the gate. Nand followed her and got hold of her before she went out of the gate.

Nand, who was also sobbing, spoke gently to Yashoda, while repeating to himself, “Oh Krishna, it is so mindboggling that you could be such a heartless and callous man, who could not see the wretchedness of your mother!” Nand tried to pacify Yashoda’s restless mind. He demurred, “It is okay Rani. You have won. I will be going to Prabhas with you.” He then gave the order to sound the war trumpet.

## Fifty-Four Chapter

### THE WHOLE BRAJ HEARD ABOUT THE YAGNA EVERYONE WAS PREPARING TO GO TO PRABHAS

In pursuance to Nand’s diktat, Upanand, a wise man who lives on the bank of holy Jamuna River, spread the news throughout Braj, that for the sake of his father Basudev, Krishna has come now to Prabhas tirth. “If anyone loves Krishna and wants to go to Prabhas, he or she is welcome. Yashoda Rani and Nand Maharaj are also going. Many carriages are now being assembled to take everyone there.

Nand Maharaj had ordered innumerable carriages that are well-covered and colourfully decorated with ample sitting arrangements. There are passenger carriages and separate goods carts.

In a few days, many presents for the yagna were requisitioned and enough provisions of food and drinks for the passengers were commissioned to last the journey. They were loaded in carts. There were also rice puddings, curds, butter and *durgh* [coagulated butter] as delicacies.

It was such a colossal enterprise that Nand had to marshal. There were large crowds milling around Nenad's Palace. The atmosphere was rough, noisily jolly, and turbulent. It was marked by a happy feeling of enjoyable and festive mood. Old folks and disabled people and gleeful children were among them.

One and all were anxious to see Krishna. No one would wish to be left behind. The mother of Srimati Radhika named Kritika, Dhanishta, Sangketi, Sarla and others, along with all the milkmaids of Braj, were gathered there. All the animals, birds and fish were also ready to attend the event.

While Nand was busy organising enough transport and provisions of food and drinks for his subjects, various *sakhis* [female friends of Radha], came over to see Radha, bringing the happy news. They told her that the whole Braj was brimming with all kinds of people and animals for the trip as soon as they heard Nand's *Bheri*.

They pointed out to Radha, "Please listen Radhe to the joyous hubbub the crowds are making. Why are you sitting here brooding alone? It seems the Bidhi [Viidhi or Vidhata, another name of Brahma], has sent Krishna to Prabas to put an end to your everlasting sorrows."

Despite the supplications and persuasion by many *sakhis*, Radhika would not stir. She remained serene and mirthless with decorous seriousness, despite the cacophony of sound and the commotion all around her. She sat sedate on the floor, without uttering a single word. All the *sakhis*, seeing Radha's hopelessness, simply waited for her response.

Coincidentally at this time, Brinda Devi came and approached Radha. She talked to her with soothing words, “ Oh Radhe, I know you have been roasting in the flame of unrequited love for years. You are the epitome of love, and the personification of *Mahabhab* [great emotions]. It is therefore inappropriate that you remain quiescent while the whole Braj is in a state of heightened fervour”.

[Maha Bhav, meaning a few things like the emotional state of a person towards a particular deity as Krishna in Vaishnavism; a concept, or a spiritual goal. The seven combined ingredients of *mahā-bhāva* are pride, ambition, fear, dry artificial crying, anger, envy, and mild smiling. Ref. Shrimad-Bhagavatam].

“I am also a devotee of Krishna. Please share with me your deliberations. It is said that confiding one’s inner grief to someone else lightens the load of carrying it. We were all born in Braj. Serving the *Jugal-Muti* was the greatest pleasure for all the sakhis. Only serving you two in that posture is my eternal wish. Please allow me and others to see you two standing, with you lady on the left of Krishna, leaning to each other sideways. Please Radhe, get ready to go and attend the great event at Prabas. A moment now is like a *Yug* that should not be wasted.

[The significance of Jugal Murti or Jugal Rup is the ultimate spiritual goal of merging one's consciousness with the divine, experiencing divine love, and attaining spiritual liberation. The twin statues representing Radha and Krishna signify the union of two souls, two characters, which are regarded as one, rather than separately].

As the gopis began to weep and blubber, touching her feet, and persuading her to go to Prabas along with them, demoralised and dispirited Radha began to explain why she was not able to go to Prabas despite herself. [Vide infra].

*Listen with undivided attention, the leela of Prabas is such Amrit-like that the listeners would have their pain and sorrow thoroughly relieved.*





