



Sri Krishna Kathamrita Bindu

तवकथामृतं तप्तजीवनम्
tava kathāmṛtam tapta-jīvanam

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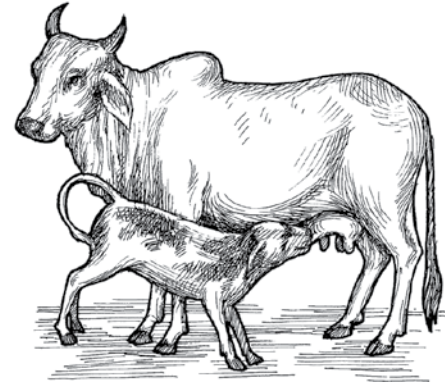
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“MY DUTY TO THE COWS”

His Divine Grace

A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

A person who can speak sweetly even with his enemy just to pacify him is called a pleasing talker. Krishna was such a pleasing talker that after defeating his enemy Kaliya in the water of the Yamuna, he said, “My dear king of the snakes, although I have given you so much pain, please do not be dissatisfied with me. It is my duty to protect these cows, which are worshiped even by the demigods. Only in order to save them from the danger of your presence have I been obliged to banish you from this place.”

Kaliya was residing within the water of the Yamuna, and as a result, the back portion of that river had become poisoned. Thus so many cows who had drunk the water had died. Therefore Krishna, even though he was only four or five years old, dipped himself

into the water, punished Kaliya very severely, and then asked him to leave the place and go elsewhere.

Krishna said at that time that the cows are worshiped even by the demigods, and he practically demonstrated how to protect the cows. At least people who are in Krishna consciousness should follow in his footsteps and give all protection to the cows. Cows are worshiped not only by the demigods. Krishna himself worshiped the cows on several occasions, especially on the days of *Gopāṣṭamī* and *Govardhana-pūjā*. 🙏

— *Nectar of Devotion*, chapter 21, part 9. Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. Bombay. 1989.

RADHARANI’S DISGUISE

Sri Srimad Gour Govinda Swami Maharaja

Krishna’s Friend Subal

One day, Srimati Radharani made a very nice flower garland for Krishna and gave it to Vrinda Devi, “You take and give this to Krishna.”

Vrinda Devi thought, “Subal Sakha is a *priya-narma-sakha*. He is very dear to Krishna. If Subal Sakha takes and gives it to Krishna, then Krishna will become very pleased.” So Vrinda Devi gave the garland to Subal Sakha.

Krishna was sitting on the bank of Radhakund. It was midday. Subal Sakha came and gave the garland to Krishna. Then he explained everything, who had



Unknown artist

Radha dresses like a cowherd boy

prepared the garland, how it had come to his hand, and how he was handing it over.

Then Krishna said, “Oh! I was just sitting here thinking about Radharani when you brought me her garland. My mind is very much agitated. Please help me, please help me! Bring Radharani here. Please bring Radharani here. I want to meet with her.”

Subal Sakha said, “Oh my friend, this is not a good time. It is noontime. It is quite impossible to bring Radharani here now. Oh, my friend, give up this hope. It is quite impossible.”

Krishna said, “But my dear friend, my mind is very restless and agitated. Unless you bring Radharani for me then I will drown myself in the Yamuna River and finish my life. I cannot survive.”

Subal thought, “Oh? My friend cannot survive? He will drown in the Yamuna? All right, then. By hook or by crook, somehow I must bring Radharani and give pleasure to my friend.”

The friend’s mentality is to give pleasure. The sakhas always understand Krishna’s mentality. They know what Krishna is thinking and how they can help

him and give him pleasure. This is *sakhyarasa* — a *madhura-rasa*, sweet mellow. Such are the activities of the *priya-narma-sakhas*. They are very dear to Krishna.

Suspicious Jatila

Subal Sakha is very expert in all these activities. He went to Yavat, Radharani’s father-in-law’s house. Radharani’s mother-in-law Jatila had just finished taking her lunch and was sitting at the doorstep facing the window of Radharani’s room. When she saw Subal, she said, “Hey! Why have you come here at noontime?” She knows, “Oh, this boy has come for some purpose. Yes. He’s a naughty boy.”

“Why are you coming here at this time?”

Then Subal, with much humility, said, “O mother! One of my calves is missing. I have searched all of the expected places, but I couldn’t find him. At last I have come here. He might be here. Mother, will you please go in and see if my calf is here? I will be freed from anxiety if I know my calf is here or not.”

Jatila became very angry. “I have already taken my lunch. I cannot move myself. You go inside and see.”

He was expecting her to say that. It was very difficult to go inside because she was sitting at the doorstep. So he got the opportunity. All of Krishna’s *līlās* take place by the wonderful arrangement of Yogamaya.

Remembering Yogamaya, Subal Sakha prayed, and then entered into the inner apartment where Radharani was. He told everything to Radha. “Krishna is sitting there on the bank of Radhakund intensely thinking of you. You have to go there, otherwise he will drown himself in the Yamuna.”

Radharani said, “How will it be? This is an awkward time and my mother-in-law is sitting there at the doorstep. How can I go? How can I go?”

But what is impossible? If you are very anxious to do something, to give pleasure to Krishna, what is impossible? Krishna can do and undo things. Nothing is impossible for Krishna. Krishna gives the intelligence. Pure intelligence comes from Krishna. The *Gītā* (10.10) describes:

*teṣāṁ satata-yuktānāṁ bhajatāṁ prīti-pūrvakam
dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ yena māṁ upayānti te*

To those who are constantly devoted to serving me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to me.

Krishna says, “One who is *satata-yuktā*, constantly engaged in my *bhajana* with *prīti*, with love, I give him pure intelligence.”

Radharani’s Disguise

So the intelligence came what should be done. Subal Sakha has the same appearance as Radharani. Subal Sakha said, “All right, Radharani. You take my garments.” He gave his *dhoti*, his *kurta*, his turban, and everything to Radharani. “You put all of this on. Now, you give me your sari. I will put on your sari and remain here.” They exchanged clothes.

Then how to get out? The keen eyes of Radharani’s mother-in-law Jatila and her sister-in-law Kutila are there on Radharani. How to get out?

Now that Radharani was dressed in his clothes, Subal Sakha told her, “Pick up a calf. Hold the calf on your breast like this, then go out.” Subal Sakha had come to get his calf.

She did as Subal told her. Dressed in the form of Subal Sakha, she picked up a calf, pressed it to her breast, and passed through. When she came to where Jatila was sitting, Radharani as Subal Sakha said, “Mother, I got my calf.”

“Oh, you got your calf? All right, very good. Now go away! Get out!”

Radharani got out and went to Radhakund and met Krishna. Happy union.

However, Subal Sakha was still inside wearing Radharani’s sari. How was he going to get out? Another problem!

Generally, at noontime, the damsels of Vrajabhumi all go to Suryakund to offer *pūjā* to Suryadev. Now was that time, so all the damsels of Vrajabhumi came out from their houses.

Jatila called out, “Oh, daughter-in-law! Daughter-in-law! Aren’t you going to go to Suryakund to offer *pūjā* to Suryadev?”

Imitating Radha’s voice, Subal Sakha said, “Yes, yes, mother. I am going, I am going.” In this way Subal Sakha got out of the house and went to Radhakund. Krishna became very happy because Subal Sakha brought Radharani before Him. Krishna looked at Subal Sakha and both of them were laughing.

This is *sakhya-rasa* in *vraja-līlā*. The *sakhas*, friends of Krishna, always help Krishna and give him pleasure according to what he wants. Such are the loving dealings among friends. This pastime is known as *subala-milana*. 🌸

— From *Mathura Meets Vrindavan*. Gopal Jiu Publications. Bhubaneswar, India. 2003. Pages 65-67.

KRISHNA’S APPEAL TO HIS MOTHER

The Medieval Gaudiya Poet Vipradas Ghosh

It is generally accepted that Vipradas lived at Devipur near Ranihat. He is considered to be the creator of the *rāñihāṭī* style of *kīrtana*. However, other than this, very little is known about him. We don’t even know the era in which he was living. The following song, which appears in the classic Gaudīya songbook *Pada-kalpa-taru*, is his only known writing. *Pada-kalpa-taru* was compiled in the 1850’s by Gokulananda Sen under the pen name *Vaishnava Das*. The contributing poets in *Pada-kalpa-taru* are mostly associates of Mahāprabhu or the immediate generations following him, so at least we can be sure that Vipradas lived prior to 1850, and perhaps much earlier.

ogo mā āji āmi carāba bāchura
parāiyā deha dhaḍā mantra paḍi bāndha cuḍā
caraṇete parāha nūpura
alakā tilaka bhāle manamālā deha gale
śiṅgā-vetra-veṇu deha hāte

“O mother! I shall tend the cows today. Please dress me up, fix my hair in a top-knot and chant mantras over it. Give me anklets to put on my feet. Put tilak on my forehead and garland me. Put a horn, a cane, and a flute in my hands.

śrīdāmā sudāma dāma subalādi balarāma
sabhāi dādāiya rājapathe
viśāla arjuna jāna kinkini aṁśumāna
sājīyā sabhāi goṣṭhe yāya

“Sridama, Sudama, Dama, Subal, Balaram and others are all waiting for me on the road. Vishal, Arjuna, Jana, Kinkini and Amsuman are all dressed and ready to go to the pasturing fields.”

gopālera kathā śuni sajala nayane rāñi
acetane dharāñi loṭāya
cañcala bāhuri sane kemane dhāibā vane
komala dukhāni rāñgā pāya
vipradāsa goṣṭhe bale e bayase goṭhe gele
prāṇa ki dharite pāre māya

Hearing these words from her Gopal, the queen began to weep, and fell on the floor in a faint. “How can those tender feet keep pace with the restless calves in the forest?”

Vipradas Ghosh says, “How can mother tolerate it if you go to herd cows at such a young age?” 🌸

YASODA’S REPLY TO KRISHNA

The Medieval Gaudiya Poet Yadavendra Das

Yadavendra Das was a Gaudīyā Vaiṣṇava Brahmin who lived in the first half of the eighteenth century. He was an

inhabitant of the village Harispur near Suri in the Birbhum district of West Bengal. He is known to have written nine or ten songs, all of which speak of Krishna's pastimes of herding the cows.

āmāra śapati lāge nā dhāiha dhenura āge
parāñera parāña nilamañi
nikaṭe rākhiha dhenu pūriha mohana veṇu
ghare basi āmi yena śuni

“O dark jewel! O life of my life! Promise that you will not run before the cows. Let the cows graze nearby while you play on your flute so that I may hear it from the house.

balāi dhāibe āge āra śiśu vāma-bhāge
śrīdāma sudāma saba pāche
tumi tāra mājhe dhāiya saṅga chāḍā nā ha-iya
māṭhe baḍa ripura-taya āche

“Balai [Balaram] will go in front of you with the others on your right and left. Sridama and Sudama should be behind you. Stay in their midst and never stray away.

kṣudhā haile la-iyā khāiya patha-pāne cāhi yāiya
ātīśaya ṭṭānkura pathe
kāru bole baḍa dhenu phirāite nā yāiya kānu
hāta tuli deha mora māthe

“The pasture-ground is full of dangers. Eat when you are hungry and watch your steps. The path is full of thorns. Promise on my head, Kanu, that you



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will not agree to bring back a big cow on anyone's request. Listen to the pleas of your mother.

thākibe tarura chāya minati kariche māya
ravi yena nā lāgaye gāya
yādavendra saṅge la-iya bādhā pāna-i hāte thu-iya
bujhiyā yogāve rāṅgā pāya

“Stay in the shade, protected from the sun. Take Yadavendra with you to carry your shoes. He will help you to put them on when necessary.”

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Unknown photographer

LIKE A PURCHASED ANIMAL

Bhakti-viveka

*cintām kuryān na rakṣāyai vikrītasya yathā paśoḥ
tathārpayan harau dehaṁ viramed asya rakṣaṅāt*

Just as a purchased animal does not think of its protection, a person who offers his body to the Lord gives up protecting himself.

- Quoted in Srila Rupa Goswami's *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.197 and in Srila Jiva Goswami's *Bhakti Sandarbha anuccheda* 309. Translation by Bhanu Swami from *Bhakti Sandarbha*. Sri Vaikunta Enterprises. Chennai. 2012.