



SANDARSHAN

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Krishn Never Leaves Vrindavan

Many people think that Krishn only grew up in Vrindavan, and left to become the King of Dwarka. But in reality, Krishn never leaves Vrindavan.

In the *Laghu Bhagwatamritam*, Shri Roop Goswami reveals that there are two forms of Krishn: Vasudev-Nandan and Nand-Nandan. Vasudev-Nandan was born to Devaki in Mathura, whilst Nand-Nandan was born to Yashoda in Gokul. When Vasudev brought Vasudev-Nandan to Gokul, Vasudev-Nandan merged with Nand-Nandan.



(see *Laghu Bhagwatamritam* 1.5.450-488 with Baldev Vidyabhushan's commentary; this is also mentioned by Sanatan Goswami, Jeev Goswami and Vishwanath Chakravarti in their *Shrimad Bhagwatam* commentaries).

In the same way, when Krishn left Braj for Dwarka, it was Vasudev-Nandan who left. But Nand-Nandan never leaves Braj. Quoting the *Yamal*, Mahaprabhu says:

कृष्णोऽन्यो यदुसम्भूतो यः पूर्णः सोऽस्त्यतः परः
वृन्दावनं परित्यज्य स क्वचिन् नैव गच्छति

kṛṣṇo'nyo yadu-sambhūto
yah pūrnah so'styataḥ parah
vrindāvanam parityajya
sa kvacin naiva gacchati

"Krishn in his supreme form (as Nand-Nandan) is different than Vasudev-Nandan. He never leaves Vrindavan to go elsewhere." (*Chaitanya Charitamrit, Antya* 1.67, and *Laghu Bhagwatamritam*, 1.5.461)

The *Laghu Bhagwatamritam* goes on to say that when Vasudev-Nandan left Braj, the *gopis* thought Krishn had left, even though Nand-Nandan would still appear to them. It was only after Uddhav came to Braj that the *gopis* realised they were not hallucinating, but seeing Krishn in reality. The *Skand Puran* says:

एकमेवात्र गोपीनामकूरावसरे पुरा
विरहाभास एवासीदुद्धवेन समाहितः
तेनैव भवतीनां चेद् भवेदत्र समागमः
तर्हि नित्यं स्वकान्तेन विरहमपि लप्स्यथ

ekamevātra gopīnām-akrūrāvasare purā
virahābhāsa evāśid-uddhavena samāhitah
tenaiva bhavatīnām ced bhavedatra
samāgamah
tarhi nityam svakāntena virahamapi
lapsyatha

"When Akrur took Shri Krishn from Nandgaon to Mathura, the separation that the *gopis* experienced was not true separation, but only seemed like it [because Krishn actually stayed in Braj]. As long as they didn't realise that, they felt great pain; but when Uddhav came to Braj and spoke with them, they were able to understand that." (*Skand Puran, Srimad Bhagwatam Mahatmyam*, 2.16)

Mahaprabhu and his followers are exclusively devoted to Radha and Krishn of Vrindavan. They teach us that the *gopis'* love for Krishn is the highest, and if we want to offer Krishn the greatest possible happiness, we have to follow in the *gopis'* footsteps only.

Mahaprabhu's followers have sometimes mentioned Dwarka in their writings, but they have done so to show Vrindavan's glory.



Sage Narad Searches for the Greatest Devotee



In the *Brihad Bhagwatamritam* (Part 1), Sanatan Goswami tells of Sage Narad's journey to find the greatest devotee.

First, Narad met a sadhu in Prayag, who performed beautiful seva for Shri Bindu Madhav, an ancient deity of Krishn. Narad was touched by his heartfelt seva and said to him:

"O great one, your seva for Krishn is so beautiful! I am sure you are the greatest devotee of all!" The sadhu felt embarrassed to hear this and said, "There is nothing special in what I am doing. But there is a great king in South India who is truly blessed. You should go and meet him."

Narad took the sadhu's advice and went to meet the South Indian king, but he also humbly denied being Krishn's dearmost. From there, Narad travelled to the higher worlds. He met Indra, Brahma, Shiv, Prahlad, Hanuman and even Arjun, but they all denied being the greatest and described the demerits of their own love. Arjun asked Narad to go and meet Uddhav.

Krishn in Separation

When Narad entered Krishn's palace, Uddhav was sitting at the door of Krishn's bedroom.

Devaki, Balram, Balram's mother Rohini, and Krishn's queens were gathered around too. They looked very worried.

Uddhav started crying when Narad praised him. He said, "O great Sage! Surely I am blessed, but ...

इदानीं यद् व्रजे गत्वा किमप्यन्वभवं ततः
महासौभाग्यमानो मे स सद्यश्चूर्णतां गतः
तत एव हि कृष्णस्य तत्प्रसादस्य चाद्वृता
तत्प्रेमणोऽपि मया ज्ञाता माधुरी तद्वतां तथा

*idānīm yad vraje gatvā
kimapy-anvabhavam tataḥ
mahā-saubhāgya-māno me
sa sadyaś-cūrṇatām gataḥ
tata eva hi kṛṣṇasya
tatprasādasya cādbhutā
tatpremṇo'pi mayā jñātā
mādhuri tadvatām tathā*

"I used to be proud of my extreme good fortune; but when I went to Braj, what I experienced there crushed all my pride into dust. Only then did I truly realize the wonder and sweetness of Krishn's love, his mercy, and his dear ones who have that love." (*Brihad Bhagwatamritam*, 1.6.25-26)

"It's true!" said Rukmini. "Krishn always thinks about Braj. Sometimes in his sleep, Krishn lovingly calls out the names of his cows.

"Sometimes he asks his mother for butter to eat, and sometimes he cries 'Radha! Radha!' and soaks the pillow with his tears. He must have dreamed about Vrindavan last night, because he has been lying in bed all morning, crying and pretending to be asleep, with the blanket pulled over his head."

Attracted by their talks of Braj, Krishn came out of his room. But when they mentioned the deep pain the Brajwasis felt without him, he fainted in separation.

Aware of the situation, the god Brahma came and said, "There is a replica Vrindavan near the ocean. It was built by the divine architect Vishwakarma and looks much like the real Vrindavan. Krishn should go there for some time."

The Replica Vrindavan

Garud Dev took Krishn to the replica Vrindavan by the sea. Uddhav and the others also came, and remained hiding as they watched Krishn.

The replica Vrindavan had beautiful pasturelands, and a copy of Krishn's home in Nandgaon. There were even statues of Krishn's Brajwasi friends and family. The statues looked realistic, but they could not talk or move.

Balram and Rohini had lived in Braj before, so now they resumed their roles in Krishn's household. Garud Dev took Krishn to his bedroom and placed him in bed.

A few minutes later, Balram said, "Krishn, wake up! It's very late! The cows and cowherd boys are waiting for you!" Slowly Krishn woke up, and his lotus eyes were filled with wonder. He had the biggest smile on his face as he found himself back in his room in Nandgaon.

When he saw the statue of his father, Nand Maharaj, Krishn bowed at his lotus feet, thinking it was really him. Then he saw his mother Yashoda and ran to her side.

"Maiyya!" he cried, "I just had the strangest dream. It was so long, and it felt so real! That must be why I slept so late!" Krishn offered *pranam* to his mother and left quickly for the forest.

Krishn Meets "Radha"

As he wandered through the pasturelands of the replica Vrindavan, Krishn found the statues of Radharani and her *sakhis*. Thinking the statues were real, Krishn said to Radha:

"O Goddess of my life! Now that you have met me, your devotee, in this private place, why are you being so silent? What have I done to offend you? O Knower of all! I think you must know about the dream I had last night, and that's why you are angry. But I only married those queens in my dream, because they were threatening to commit suicide if I didn't!"

अस्तु तावदिदानीं तद्रम्यते त्वरया वने
सन्तोषदे प्रदोषेऽद्य मया त्वं मोदयिष्यसे

astu tāvad-idānīm tad gamyate tvarayā
vane
santoṣa-de pradoṣe'dya mayā tvam
modayisyase

"I must go to the forest now. But tonight, o Giver of all my joy, you shall enjoy with me!" (*Brihad Bhagwatamritam*, 1.7.44)

After saying this, Krishn looked all around, threw a handful of flowers at Radha, and kissed her.

Seeing Krishn in his Vrindavan mood for the first time, Devaki was overwhelmed with a love she had never felt before. Rukmini fainted and Satyabhama became crazed with longing. She tried to run and grab Krishn, but Kalindi held her back.

When Krishn finally reached the ocean, he thought it was the Yamuna river. But when he saw Dwarka on the horizon, he realised the truth. Balram somehow comforted Krishn and gently bathed him in the sea.

Krishn Blesses Narad

When Krishn returned to his palace, he smiled at Narad and said, "O great Sage, has your question been answered now?"

"Yes, by your mercy, I now know that Shri Radha and the *gopis* are the ones who love you most of all!" said Narad.

"I wish to bless you," said Krishn. "So please ask for anything you desire."

Narad said:

श्री कृष्णचन्द्र कस्यापि तुप्तिरस्तु कदापि न
भवतोऽनुग्रहे भक्तौ प्रेष्णि चानन्दभाजने

śrī krṣṇacandra kasyāpi
trptirastu kadāpi na
bhavato'nugrahe bhaktau
premṇi cānanda-bhājane

"O Ocean of bliss! Please grant me this blessing: may no devotee ever feel satisfied with their *bhakti*, with your grace, or with their love for you." [In other words, may we always want more and more!] (*Brihad Bhagwatamritam*, 1.7.135)

Krishn replied, "What kind of a blessing is that? That is the very nature of devotion! You have travelled from Prayag to Dwarka and met many devotees. All of them are great receivers of my mercy, and none of them have ever become satisfied with their *bhakti*. Please choose a different blessing."

Narad replied, "Then grant me this: may I always wander throughout this universe like a madman, drunk on the sweetness of your Holy Name. May my actions bring bliss to all souls."

"And I will ask another blessing: may whoever comes in contact with your stories, through speaking, hearing, seeing or even touching them, attain *prem* (sacred love) for your lotus feet, which are sprinkled with the red kumkum from the *gopis'* hearts."

Krishn held up his hand and said, "So be it!"

Mahaprabhu and Rath Yatra



Every year in Puri, Jagannath Dev makes his famous chariot journey or Rath Yatra from his temple to the Gundicha Mandir. In the Gaudiya Sampraday, the Jagannath Temple represents Dwarka, while the Gundicha Mandir represents Vrindavan.

Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu was always absorbed in the mood of Radharani. He and his companions would cleanse the Gundicha Temple, meditating that they were decorating the Nikunj for Krishn. And during Rath Yatra, they would pull Jagannath on his chariot from Dwarka back to Vrindavan, as Mahaprabhu danced and wept, chanting the Holy Name in ecstasy.

Rath Yatra at the Shri Radharaman Temple



Rath Yatra is also celebrated at the Radharaman Temple in Vrindavan. On this day, Shriji wears a new red outfit and gives *sandarshan* in the evening sitting on a silver chariot. Shaligram Shila is taken for a ride around the *jagmohan* (outer altar area) by Shriji's Goswamis on a small silver chariot.

The Chariot Festival

by Gunmanjari Das Goswami

श्रीराधारमण मनोरथ में बैठे प्रगटत केलि मनोज ।
बाढ़ विशाल अषाढ़ मास में शुक्लपक्ष शुभ दौज ॥
शोभा भरे धरे कंचन घट परसत सुन्दर सुभग उरोज ।
गुणमञ्जरी मुसिक्यान मान लखि दृग खंजन तिय
बदन सरोज ॥

*śrī-rādhāraman manorath mē baithe
pragaṭat keli manoj
bāḍh viśhāl aṣhāḍh mās mē*

*śhuklapakṣh sundar śhubh dauj
śhobhā bhare dhare kañchan ghaṭ
parasat sundar subhag uroj
guṇmañjarī musikyān mān lakhi dṛg
khañjan tiy badan saroj*

On this auspicious second day of the bright half of Ashaad, Radharaman is in the mood to enjoy romantic pastimes and so he rides upon the chariot of his heart. Filled with this desire, he tries to conquer the most graceful Priyaji by attempting to caress her. Taking *darshan* of this *lila* makes Gunmanjari smile and she says, "Priyaji is already upset and stops Priyatam from touching her. Instead, she defeats him by wounding his delicate body with her piercing side glances." (English translation from Sri Radharaman Gita)



Upcoming Events

Upcoming events at the Shri Radharaman Temple in August, 2018.

Shri Gopal Bhatt Goswami's Mahotsav (August 1-3)

The three-day celebration begins with an *adhivas kirtan*, a traditional group kirtan that is sung at the beginning of festivals. The following day, Harinaam Sankirtan is held for 24 hours. In the morning, Shri Gopal Bhatt Goswami's Samadhi is worshipped and *prasad* is distributed, and in the evening, Shriji sits on his golden throne and Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu's *prasadi* cloth is displayed on the altar. On the third day, a procession sings in the Raas Mandal outside the Shri Radharaman Temple campus, and there is *prasad* distribution.

Hariyali Teej and Jhulan Utsav (August 13-26)

On Hariyali Teej, Shriji wears a green dress and the entire altar is decorated in green cloth and fresh leaves. From this day until Raksha Bandhan, Shriji gives devotees *sandarshan* on his silver swing. The special *bhog* on this day is water chestnuts (*singhara*). For the duration of Jhulan Utsav, he is offered *malpua*, a type of sweet pancake. *Pavitra*, a garland made of silk, is offered to Shriji by the Goswamis of the temple on Dwadashi (the day after the Pavitra Ekadashi fast) to ask for forgiveness for any offences that may have happened in his worship over the past year. The last day of Jhulan Utsav is Raksha Bandhan. On this day, Shriji's forehead is marked with a *tilak* and a *rakhi* is tied on his wrist.

