

KARTIK INSPIRATIONS 2021

RADHA'S TASTE FOR KRISHNA

Today there was a little drama in our ashram. A snake that was around 1 m and 77 cm long, almost 2 meters, came into our garden to shed its skin—we still kept it hanging from one of the champak trees. Later we found out from our neighbours that this snake is known as the “fat” snake because it hunts and eats rats and therefore has a good bodily volume. Living next to a snake is not so nice, as long as you are always afraid, wondering, ‘Will it become agitated?’ Because when Atul Krishna saw the snake, he said it raised its head. He said it was not a cobra, though. But somehow, we have not seen it again—it must have slipped away. What we had been seeing for a few hours was our projection of the snake. We were remembering, ‘O, the snake, maybe it is here behind the bush, maybe it is next to Tulasi?’ It is in this way that we have lived so many times in our life—in fears that are produced only by our minds.

So, let us hear the medicine against fears in material life. *Mukunda-mala-stotra* by king Kulashekhara says, “Sing the names of Radha and Krishna! Radha and Krishna Themselves glorify Their Names.”

There is also a verse that says, “O, Krishna, with Your flute You sing the glories of Prema Murti Radha who is also Kartika Devi.”

Now, Krishna sings with the flute, “O, Radhe, Your tongue always relishes rasagya (it is the Sanskrit), the nectar of glorifying the name of Mukunda who gives joy and delivers His devotees from this world.”

I especially liked this name of Radha Prema Murti, “She is the condensed form of love and rasagya”—She knows how to taste Krishna. Imagine, you would know how to taste the joy that is Krishna. You would be always full of ecstasy like our neighbour who sings very loudly in his house. You would be very much aloof from the alluring temptation of material pleasures.

There is a song by Chandidas about Radha when She first heard Krishna calling Her name through His flute. She said, “O, Purnamasi, who is playing the flute? I hear the flute in the Yamuna, I hear from the meadows of Goloka. I have become totally mad in agitation, and I offer my life to that flute player.” When She said this, an unbroken stream of tears poured forth and She said, “This attraction to Krishna is something no one can understand, it is like blazing fire in the potter’s stove. My heart,” She says, “is parched.”

What She says when She says that Her heart is parched is, “I am so happy! I feel my yearning for Krishna increasing!” This is what *rasagya* Radha, the one who knows how to taste Krishna, is teaching us through chanting or hearing about Krishna—that our taste for Krishna increases.

Let us now sit down peacefully, let our minds be withdrawn from the many, many things in this world and become mindful of Srimati Radharani.

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Rācīnāndana Śraṇis

ŚACINANDANA SWAMI