

KARTIK INSPIRATIONS 2022

RADHA COMES

Welcome to this Kartik inspiration. Today we will hear how Srimati Radharani tested and then appeared to Madhava Dasa Baba, who comes from a place near the river Padma in Bengal.

Around 1870, Madhava Dasa Baba got permission from his spiritual master to practice solitary bhajan in Braj, and he went to a few lonely places. Then, as it goes, all worldly attachments and desires were gradually eliminated, and the only desire that remained in Madhava's heart was a desire for the darshan of Radha and Krishna. In fact, this desire became so absolutely strong that it was impossible for Madhava to live without the fulfillment of this desire.

So, one day when Radha and Krishna had still not appeared to him or sent him a clear sign, he decided to commit suicide by fasting and not taking any food any longer. The next morning, he laid down. The day before, he had not desired to go and beg for something to eat, *madhukari*. The following day he heard a little girl shouting before his door, "Baba, Baba, open!"

And the girl was standing there with a big dish full of puris, sweet rice, pastries, and many other delicious things to eat. Madhava Baba recognized the girl because he had gone to her mother multiple times before and had asked for—this is called *madhukari*—something to eat.

When the girl went away, Madhava was surprised. *I have never seen her looking so brilliant, so effulgent!* And when he ate the food she had brought, he almost fainted because it tasted so deliciously, so celestial, so absolutely not from this world.

So in the afternoon, he decided to check. He went to the mother of that girl in the village and inquired, "Ma, you have told your daughter to bring me today puris, pastries, and delicious things like sweet rice and so on?" But the village lady said, "No, my girl has not been out the whole day," and called inside. Then this girl came out,

and the mother asked her, "*Madhava Baba says you went to him in the morning with very nice food.*" The girl just looked and laughed, "*Baba, you must be dreaming. I was doing household chores today, and I did not leave the house. You are so much in your dreams when you do bhajan. You should not think of food!*" And she laughed and laughed and went inside.

So, for Baba everything was clear now. Outwardly he said, "Yes, your Lali is right. I must have seen these things in a daydream." And then he returned to his cottage, and there were still the remnants of this amazing food. He ate some more and was fainting in ecstasy.

He was happy that Radharani had at last given him darshan. But he was also sorry that She came under the guise of a brahmin girl. And he thought, "*Oh, I am still not qualified to see Her real, eternal form.*"

There is a general belief in Vrindavan amongst those who sincerely practice their spiritual life. The belief is that since Sanatana Goswami and Rupa Goswami—both of them—had received the order of Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu to look after the needs of the Vaisnavas who had renounced the world and went to live in Braj to do their spiritual practice. Rupa and Sanatana Goswamis would this arrange things, and sometimes even prayed to Radharani that She might show Her mercy to a *sadhaka*. So those who live here in Vrindavan always try to perform their *bhajan* in strict allegiance or following in the footsteps of Rupa and Sanatana who make all kinds of arrangements.

Yes, this is one of the many many, many, many stories of how the Divine Couple take on a form and appear to the devotees. In the Caitanya Caritamrta we hear how Krishna takes on the form of a cowherd boy and brings milk for Madhavendra Puri. Yes, so you never know whom you are meeting!

Thank you very much and we will continue tomorrow.

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Raviandana Pravis
ŚACINANDANA SWAMI