

# GOVARDHAN LILA

## Narration:

Srila Rupa Goswami says in the Nectar of Instruction: “ The Holy Place known as Mathura is spiritually superior to Vaikuntha, the transcendental world, because the lord appeared there. Superior to Mathura Puri is the transcendental forest of Vrindavan because of Krishna’s rasa-lila pastimes. And superior to the forest of Vrindavan is Govardhan Hill, for it was raised by the divine hand of Lord Krishna and was the site of his various loving pastimes.”

Sri Govardhan has a dual identity. On one hand it is non-different than Krishna Himself because Krishna manifested Himself as Govardhan and on the other hand He is also the topmost devotee of Krishna as described by the gopis themselves. Many of our exalted acharyas like Srila Raghunath Das Goswami, Srila Krishnadas Kaviraj Goswami, Srila Madhvasra Puri and others chose the Holy foothills of Govardhan to enhance their spiritual ecstasies in the divine remembrance of Sri Radha and Sri Krishna.

So for the pleasure of Srila Prabhupada, Guru Maharaj and all the assembled vaishnavas, we present this most celebrated of Lord Krishna’s pastimes of how Krishna came to be known as Govardhan Dhari.

We now take you back by 5000 years, to the Holy Dham of Braj, where the devout Brijvasis have gathered to perform their traditional Indra – Puja.

## SCENE 1

( Curtian opens - Full Lights - Festive Music - All Brajbasis gathered with Nand Maharaj arranging yajna paraphanelia. )

**Yasoda :-** Oh! Hear come my Krishna and Balaram.  
( The two children go and sit on the laps of their mother.)

**Krishna:-** I see that all of you are preparing for some great sacrifice. Tell me Baba, what are all these arrangements for?

**Nand M :-** Kanha ! we are making arrangements to perform a traditional sacrifice.

**Krishna:-** Oh! A big sacrifice. For whose satisfaction is it being performed?

**Nand M:-** We wish to please King Indra.

**Krishna:-** And what will be the result to please king Indra?

**Nand M:-** The rain clouds are his representatives. By arranging to pacify him, he will kindly send us rain clouds to pour down sufficient quantity of rain.

**Krishna:-** Is this ceremony according to Vedic injunction or simply a popular ceremony? Tell me all details Baba, do not keep any secrets from me.

**Nand M:-** Water is very important because without rainfall you cannot have any farm nor any grains. We cannot even live if there is no rainfall. Water is necessary for the performance of successful religious ceremonies, economic development and finally to gain liberation. Hence this is a popular ceremony and we must do this ceremony.  
( Music stops )

**Narration :** after hearing this from his father, Krishna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in the presence of his father, the sages and the cowherd men of Vrindavan, deliberately spoke the Karma Mimamsa philosophy in a way to make the heavenly King Indra very angry.

**Krishna:-** My dear father, I don't think you need to worship any demigod for getting rains to help in farming activities. If one performs his karma nicely, the result is sure to come. Even if there is a God or a demigod, there is no need to worship him because unless man performs his karma, He cannot bestow good result. Ultimately and not the God or demigod, is most important. So, in my opinion, there is no need to worship Indra at all.

**Nand M:-** Then, definitely King Indra will be very angry with us.

**Krishna:-** Even if he becomes angry, what will he do?

**Cowherd Boy:-** What will he do? King Indra is the controller of Clouds. On his order they will all leave Vrindavan and this most beautiful forest of Vrindavan will become nothing more than a dry desert.

**Brajbasi:-** What to talk of trees, not even a blade of grass will grow.

( all others nod in agreement.)

**Krishna:-** If he is so heartless, what kind of God is he? God must be kind and always willing to forgive the mistakes of his devotees. So this Indra does not appear God to me. If we worship him only then he supplies rain and if don't, then he withdraws the clouds. These are the traits of one who is a business man and not of God. So if you would listen to me, then worship that God who is equally disposed and showers His rain of mercy on everyone alike.

**Nand M :-** That is all right. However, if Indra is infuriated then with a single blow of his powerful thunderbolt, we will all perish instantly.

**Krishna:-** Your fear is unreasonable. Don't you know that birth and death are predestined. Indra , however powerful he may be, cannot kill a person before his destined time.

**Brahmana:-** Dear Krishna, I am in agreement with whatever you have just said, but without the satisfaction and blessings of the predominating God, one cannot derive any good result simply by performing one's prescribed karma.

**Krishna:-** O learned Brahmana, in that case the proper prescribed duty of the Brahmanas is the study of the Vedas, that of the kshatriyas is to protect the citizens, that of the vaishyas is agriculture, trade and cow protection and that of the sudras is service to the higher classes. And since we belong to the vaishya community, and are engaged in cow protection, our mother cow is our worshipable deity. And cows live on fresh grass and water which is so mercifully being provided by the Govardhan Hill. I therefore request you, o my dear father, let us begin a sacrifice which will satisfy the local Brahmanas, cows and Govardhan Hill, and let us have nothing to do with Indra.

**Brahmana:-** Krishna you are very intelligent.

**Nand M:-** My dear boy, since you are asking, I shall arrange a separate sacrifice for Govardhan Hill, but for the present, let me execute this sacrifice this known as Indra-yagna.

**Krishna:-** My dear father, don't delay. The sacrifice you propose for the Govardhan Hill will take much time. Better take the arrangements and paraphernalia you have already made for the Indra-Yagna and immediately engage it all to satisfy Govardhan Hill. This is my idea and you may carry it out if it appeals to you. Such a sacrifice will be very dear to the brahmanas, the cows, the Govardhan Hill and also to me.

( Music stops)

**Brahmin:-** Nanda Maharaj, you are very fortunate to have a son like Krishna. Whatever He has just spoken is fully supported by the highest revealed scriptures. I am convinced that we should go on with this Govardhan Puja.

**Nand M:-** If you are convinced and if it pleases my dear Krishna, then it must be auspicious. Let us begin without further delay.

## SCENE II

### **Narration:**

The honest and simple cowherd men, headed by Nand Maharaj accepted Krishna's proposal and executed in detail everything. He advised, without any consideration of the consequences of not worshipping Indra. After all they simply loved Krishna and His satisfaction was their life and soul. Indeed the Brijbasis did not know any one else but Krishna and if it was His to perform Govardhan Puja there was no question not executing His will.

Nand Maharaj and the cowherd men called in learned brahmanas and began to worship Govardhan Hill by chanting Vedic hymns and offering prasadam. The inhabitants of Vrindavan, assembled together, decorated their cows and gave them grass. Keeping the cows in front, they began to circumambulate the Govardhan Hill. The Gopis also dressed themselves luxuriantly and sat in bull driven carts, chanting the glories of Krishna's pastimes.

( Brijbasis busy arranging Bhoga. Nand Maharaj and the Brahmanas standing on a side directing all arrangements and chanting Vedic Hymns. On the other side there is Yagnakund. The Brajbasis bowing down to the Brahmanas. This goes on some time.)

**Brajbasi I :-** Nand Maharaj, I just heard that this year we are worshipping Govardhan? Very good, very good. I will soon come back with my offerings.

**Brajbasi II :-** Did you hear Panditji?, this year all the brajbasis have decided to worship Govardhan.

**Brajbasi III :-** Then what about King Indra? He is the Lord of the Heavens. What if he gets angry with us?

**Brajbasi II:-** Indra may be powerful but what can he do? Krishna is there to protect us, as he has always done in the past.

**Nanda M:-** O Janakinathji, you have brought nice jalebi for Govardhan. So nice of you. Please keep it here. Madan Mohanji, your kheer is famous all over the braja. You must have definitely brought kheer. Ha ! Ha !! Ha !!!

**Brahman:-** So Nanada Maharaj, the auspicious time to initiate the puja has come.  
( music stops here ) Let us begin without further delay.

( Chanting of mantras and performance of arti by brahmanas ---- begins)

( **Fog machine starts and Krishna appears from the hill. )**

**Narration :** Krishna then assumed a great transcendental form and declared to the inhabitants of Vrindavan that He was Himself Govardhan Hill.

**Govardhan Hill:-** My dear Brijbasis, I am extremely pleased with your sincere love and devotion and therefore I am gladly accepting all your offerings.

**Gopi I :-** O just see, the face of Govardhan so much resembles the face of our Krishna.

**Gopi II:-** Don't be funny. Govardhan has four hands and our Krishna has only two hands.

**Gopi III:-** And besides that, Krishna is just standing next to us. You seem to be in some sort of illusion.

**Krishna:-** Just see how this hill has appeared in person and bestowed mercy upon us. Thus Govardhan Hill assuming another form he wishes, will kill any resident of the forest who neglects Him. Therefore let us pay our obeisances to Him for the safety of our cows and ourselves.

( Music stops here )

( Then obeisances are paid.)

**All Brajbasis:-** Sri Giri Govardhan Ki Jai !  
Govardhan Nath ki Jai !!

( Curtain closed )

### **Narration:**

Together with the people of Braja, the Lord bowed down to this form of Govardhan Hill, thus in effect, offering obeisances unto Himself. The members of the cowherd community, having thus been inspired by Lord Vasudeva to properly execute the sacrifice to Govardhan Hill, the cows and the brahmanas, returned with Lord Krishna to their village Braja.

This ancient festival of Krishna eating during Govardhan Puja is also called as Annakuta. It was revived by the great Madhavendra Puri during installation of Gopalji on top of the Govardhan Hill. During this festival even upto this day devotees prepare mountains of bhoga of all descriptions from grains and ghee. Thus there is rice, dal, halwa, ladoos, pakoras, puris and all kinds of milk preparations like sweet-rice, sandesh, rasogullas etc. Sri Krishna appearing from the Govardhan Hill, devoured all the mountains of bhoga in one morsel and began calling out “Aniyora – Aniyora – Give me more – Give me more.” The Brijbasis had practically exhausted all their stocks and thus a wise elderly Brahmin offered the Lord one Tulsi leaf which completely satisfied him.

Even today, 5,000 years later, this festival of Annakuta is celebrated with great devotional power in all the major Krishna temples all over the world. Thus everyone in the four directions was rejoicing in jubilation except Indra.

So now we take you to ( Indra’s court music ) the heavenly abode of Indra, where in the mood of an enjoyer, he is relishing the mellows of Heavenly Pleasures.

### SCENE III

( Palace scene ---- Full lights on --- King Indra sitting with four ministers – two dasis fanning him --- he is enjoying musical instruments recitation. )

( curtain opens --- music goes on for some time. )

**Guard:-**All Glories to Maharaj Indra !

**Indra :-** Yes ! Tell me, what is the reason for your untimely arrival ?

**Guard:-** Pardon my intrusion, O great one, but I considered it most urgent to deliver this important message unto you.

( This dialogue give indication to stop music and singing.)

**Indra:-** What information?

**Guard:-** This year the inhabitants of earth have stopped performing sacrifice unto You.

**Indra:-** ( very angry) What ? The residents of planet earth have stopped their sacrifice to me? No! This cannot be true. No mortal can dare to do this. Impossible!!

**Guard:-** But this is true my Lord.

**Indra:-** Who has spoiled their intelligence in this way?

**Guard:-** Krishna, the son of Nanda Maharaj, who is the king of cowherd community in Vrindavan. On his advice, they have forsaken your worship and will be worshipping the cows and hills, instead.

**Indra:-** Krishna ! You mean say that defying the demigods they shall now worship stones and trees. Just see how these cowherd men living in the forest have been greatly intoxicated by their prosperity. They have surrendered to an ordinary human being Krishna, and thus have offended the Gods. These cowherd men have acted enemically towards me by taking shelter of this ordinary human being Krishna, who thinks himself to be very wise but is a foolish, arrogant, impudent and over talkative child. By believing in this child, they have enraged me. For this audacity of theirs, they shall have to pay a heavy price.

Call Samvartaka - - - The clouds of Devastation !

**Minister:-** Pardon my interruption O mighty King of heaven. May I speak something with your permission.

**Indra:-** Speak.

**Minister:-** Dear king, you yourself had said that the Supreme personality of Godhead has descended on earth in the form of Krishna in the womb of Devaki. In fact you accompanied Lord Brahma and Narad Munito offer reverential prayers while he was in the womb.

**Indra:-** Yes, yes I remember it all. May be that time I mistook his identity or may be this child known as Krishna is someone else. Because if he were the Supreme God, then he would never dishonour the demigods in this way. And after all the king is always the king. Even the Supreme Personality of Godhead shall respect his position as such. This boy Krishna is simply a mischievous, puffed up child who is ignorant of the power and strength of the king of Gods. So, today he along with his foolish cowherd community will be destroyed.

( Samvartaka enters in Indra's court )

**Samvartaka:-** Please accept my humble obeisances, My Lord. The function of pralaya or unusual destruction is still along way from now from now, may I know reason for being called urgently at this time.

( Angry music )

**Indra :-** Samvartaka ( says loudly ) . Go to Vrindavan and flood entire village with your full fierce of rain, hailstorm and thundering. Destroy that village and all the Brijbasis along with it. Those insignificant jivas have angered the king of heaven. They have to pay the price for it. Go teach them a good lesson.those inhabitants of forest have infatuated with their friend Krishna, who is nothing but an ordinary human being. Taking his side they dare defy the demigods. Uhhh !!!!

**Samvartaka;-** But, but the Brijbasis are under the protection of Lord Krishna. He.....

**Indra:-** Samvartaka you don't be afraid of anything. You just go ahead and do as I have ordered, OK I shall also follow you on my Aravata with great strength and I will apply my full strength to punish the Brijbasis.

( Curtain closed)

### **Narration :**

Although Indra knew perfectly well that Krishna was protecting the brajbasis, demonically Indra thought himself to be the all powerful personality. When demons become very powerful, they defy the supreme controller, the personality of Godhead. Indra, though not a demon, was puffed-up by his material position and he wanted to challenge the supreme controller. He thought himself, atleast for the time being, as power as Krishna.

( blowing cyclone winds.....) Samvartaka enters Vrindavan.

### **SCENE IV**

( Back to Vrindavan. Village back-drop. All the lights on. Make them gradually dim to show the effect of black clouds coming )

**One Brajbasi to another:** Are ! rains in the month of kartik?

( looks up in the sky- looks surprised and fearful ) Are look, such dense dark clouds are coming in this direction. I have seen such dark clouds in my life.

**Second Brajbasi:-** Come, lets rush home.

**Brajbasi with child:-** Baba, I am feeling very cold.

**Father:-** ( looks at a distance) Looks like a cyclone is coming this way. Come lets rush. Our cows must be shivering with cold.

( Winds stronger ---- Music of loud thundering – Light s get dimmer )

( Brajbasis running here and there in chaos.)

**I Brajbasi:-** Help, help! My hut as blown off. I have no other shelter than going to Krishna.

**II Brajbasi:-** ( shivering and Chattering ) What is thia ? Looks like Lord Indra is angry with us.

**III Brajbasi:-** ( shivering) Yes, of course ! He has become angry because we did not offer his sacrifice.

**IV Brajbasi:-** But we surely did as Krishna told us. What is our fault?

**V Brajbasi:-** Let us go to Krishna, together. He will definitely save us as He has done before.

( They approach Krishna and speak )

**One Brajbasi:-** My dear Krishna, you are all powerful and hence you can do anything. You are also very affectionate towards your devotees and therefore you are called bhakta-vatsala.

**Another Brajbasi:-** Our cows are helpless too. Be merciful upon us, O Gopal.

**III Brajbasi:-** Yes Krishna, Kindly protect us, we are being harassed by Indra. We have no other shelter than You. We are helpless.

**Krishna:-** Yes, I know Indra himself is sending these unseasonable heavy rains and winds to destroy Vrindavan.

**Balarama :-** Krishna, I will personally go and immediately destroy this Indra.

**Krishna:-** No Dau, I don't want to destroy Indra , instead I will destroy his pride.

( Krishna goes aside and thinks aloud, addressing the audience. )

**Krishna:-** I can understand that this has been done by Indra, Because we have stopped his sacrifice. But he is my devotee and hence, I shall destroy his ignorance. These Brijbasis are my own family members and I shall protect them by my mystic power.

( To Brijbasis) come along with me you have nothing to fear.

( Krishna lifts the Govardhan Hill ----- All the Brijbasis look at him in amazement )

( Loud Music )

**Krishna:-** O residents of Braja, you may all come under this hill. With your cows. Sri Govardhan can give shelter to all the three worlds, what to speak of the simple land of Braja.

( The Brijbasis look at each other in wonder and amazement )

**Krishna:-** Do not fear, this mountain will not fall from my hand. Come in, come in, come under this great umbrella.

( Thunderstorm + playful music )

( All enter under Govardhan )

( The Storm gets stronger ---- Indra keeps showering thunderbolts 2-3 minutes )

### **Narration**

Lord Krishna, forgetting hunger and thirst and putting aside all considerations for personal pleasure, stood there holding up the hill for seven days and seven nights. Lord Krishna held up the mountain while His praises were chanted by the residents of Vrindavan, all of whom, now had the opportunity to be together with him and who glanced at Him with joyful and amazed eyes. Thus all the cowherd men and women out of loving affection looked upon Krishna with wide open eyes.

By continuously drinking the nectar of the beauty and sweetness of the all attractive Sri Krishna, the residents of Vrindavan felt no hunger, thirst or fatigue.

Samavartaka clouds failed to flood the village of Vrindavan because the Supreme Lord, by His potency, simply dried up the water as it fell on the ground. Indra, on seeing this exhibition of the Lord, became most astonished. His false pride now smashed and his intuition failed. He ordered his clouds to desist from pouring anymore.

( Lower the thunderstorm music )

When Indra saw the exhibition of Lord Krishna's supreme mystic power of lifting Govardhan Hill, he became astonished and ordered samavartaka to desist from pouring torrential rains to destroyed Braja. Totally bewildered, Indra returned to his palace. He

was feeling despondent and utterly miserable. When this news reached the ears of Brihaspati, the Guru of the demigods, he went to Indra in private and addressed him:

( Put on Brihaspati's cassette )

**Brihaspati:** My dear Indra, you have offended the original personality of Godhead, Lord Sri Krishna and thus you will not be able to find any shelter to protect you from the reaction of your grievous offence. In the same way the trees and plants get their life force from the moon, so all living entities are maintained by Lord Sri Krishna. Even though you have a thousand eyes still you are not able to do things as they are.

**Indra:-** O Gurudev you are Brihaspati, the best of those who are learned. Kindly direct me how I can get out of this dangerous position.

**Brihaspati:** O king of the demigods, even when you hold such an important post, your intelligence has become covered and thus you have committed the great offence called Vaishnava Aparadha. I can do nothing to help you counteract this reaction, your only hope is to go and fall at the feet of Surabhi, the mother of all cows and beg her to request Lord Krishna to pardon you. Lord Krishna considers cows more dear than His own life. Perhaps if you take Surabhi along with you and beg His forgiveness, He may consider your case.

( Stop thunderstorm and playful music )

( the sky becomes clear )

( The lights are full bright ---- Music of chirping birds )

**Krishna:--** My dear cowherd men, now you can leave and take your wives, cows and valuables. Everything has now ended. The floods and rains are no more.

( when all come out, Krishna places the Govardhan Hill in its place )

( the cowherd boys simply embrace Krishna in joy and ecstasy )

**One cowherd boy:-** Oh Krishna ! My dearest friend, you are simply wonderful.

**Second cowherd boy:-** Krishna, Krishna my friend, I love you.

**Balarama:--** well done Krishna, well done.

## SCENE V

**Narration:** Completely humbled and humiliated like never before:  
( Surabhi's sad music )

**Indra:-** ( being in great humility ) Oh mother ! You are the best of Krishna's devotees and hence you are very dear to Lord Krishna's heart. I have committed grievous offences by trying to annihilate this saved land of Vrindavan, along with all its residents. I have come to seek your help, oh Mother.

**Mother Surabhi:-** You have addressed me as mother therefore it is my sacred duty to help you. Tell me Oh great king of heaven, how can I serve you?

**Indra:-** Oh Mother thank you for your willingness to help me. I am feeling ashamed of having committed an unforgettable offence of harassing Krishna and His devotees. My Guru Maharaj Brihaspati has instructed that the only way I can possibly be pardoned is by approaching Sri Krishna through His dear devotees, Oh merciful mother. If you appeal on my behalf, than I have some hope in this hopeless condition.

## SCENE IV

( Stop sad music, start Krishna's flute loudly )

**Narration:** Thus Indra, the king of heaven ashamed of having offended the Lord, along with Mother Surabhi, approached Him in a solitary place, with a repentant heart.

( Stop Krishna's flute, continue sad music )

**Mother Surabhi:-** O Krishna ! Krishna !! Greatest of mystics. O Master of the universe, by Your grace, we have You as our master. You are the protector of cows, brahmanas, demigods and all others who are your pure devotees. Therefore we do not know anyone else, other than You, as the Supreme. You are our worshipable deity and therefore please become our Indra and let us bathe You with our own milk.

Oh Lord, You are famous as bhakta-vatsala and also ever willing to forgive Your devotee's offences. Indra is feeling sorry of his misbehaviour. Kindly give him Your merciful audience.

**Indra:-** You are the father and the spiritual master of this entire universe and also it's Supreme Controller. You are insurmountable time, imposing punishment upon the sinful, for their own benefit. By your free will, you remove the pride of those who falsely claim

to be God. You rightfully punish mischievous fools like me, only to instruct them. Engrossed in pride over my material power and ignorant of your unlimited power and majesty I offended you. O My Lord ! please forgive because I am fool number one. My intelligence was bewildered. Please bless me so that I do not act so foolishly again. My obeisances unto you, O Krishna, The chief of the Yadu Dynasty. I have now come to you for shelter.

**Krishna:-** My dear Indra, I have stopped your sacrifice just to show you my causeless mercy and also revive your memory, that I am your eternal master. You should always remember that your material opulences are due to My mercy alone .A man blinded by intoxication with power, cannot see me nearby with the rod of punishment in my hand. If I desire his real welfare, I personally drag him down from his material fortunate position. You may now go. Execute My order and remain in your appointed position as King of Heaven. But, be sober, without false pride.

**Indra:-** My dear Lord, Your mercy is like the fathomless ocean. One who becomes the object of your causeless mercy is relieved of all sinful reactions. Today I have seen Your unprecedented love for Your pure devotees headed by Mother Surabhi. How you, who are unconquerable by any means is conquered by the pure unalloyed devotion of your devotees. This is the glory of devotional service unto your Lotus Feet. For if it was not for Mother Surabhi, I would be rotting in the darkest region of hell for eternity.

It has dawned upon me that I am not Indra. You are the real Indra. India You are Govinda -- The one who gives pleasure to the cows, the senses and the sacred land on which you walk. O Lord, I have one desire. My heart is burning in the fire of repentance and will be some extent relieved if I could bathe You with the water of the celestial Ganges. Let me perform your Abhishek O Lord.

( stop sad music )

**Surabhi:-** Yes, O Gopal and let us bathe You with our own milk.

( Abhishek music )

### **Concluding Narration:**

In this way, Mother Surabhi performed Krishna's bathing ceremony with her own milk and Indra anointed the Lord with heavenly Ganga water from the trunk of his elephant carrier Aravata. Thus Indra coronated the Lord and gave Him the name GOVINDA. After satisfying the Lord of the cows in Vrindavan, king Indra took Krishna's permission to return to his heavenly abode.

( continue Abhishek music )

