

Name: _____ Date: _____

Radha Kunda and Shyama Kunda

The eighth day of the waning moon of Kartika month is also known popularly as Bahulashtami. Its significance is that it marks the appearance of Sri Radha Kunda and Shyama Kunda, which is said to be the holiest of holy spots and the special scene of Radha and Krishna's divine pastimes

Once Krishna, knowing Aristasura's intention to kill him, went to graze His cows in the forest. Seeing that his victim had come so close, Aristasura thought to assume the form of a bull and finish Him off. On his first charge, Sri Krishna simply caught hold of his horns and pushed him back with such a force that Aristasura lost consciousness. On regaining his senses, he charged again, but this time with double force. Seeing this, Krishna simply caught hold of his horns again and picked him up like a toy, whirled him over His head and threw him away with such a force, that the demon lost his life-air.

Later, Srimati Radharani came there with her friends to meet Sri Krishna. When she heard that Sri Krishna had killed a bull, she refused to associate with Him unless He purified Himself from the sin of bull-killing by bathing in all the holy rivers of the universe. Sri Krishna pleaded that since the bull was Aristasura in disguise, this was not necessary. However, Srimati Radharani said that She heard from Madhumangal's grandmother Purnamasi that even Indra the king of the material heavens, had to atone for the sin of killing Vritasura, who was a brahmin by birth. Sri Krishna then asked Srimati Radharani if she would be pleased if He called all the sacred rivers of the three worlds to come here. Srimati Radharani replied : "We are simple cowherd-village-girls. How could we know?" Sri Krishna then replied: "I will convince you".

Lord Krishna then struck His right heel into the ground and created a large hollow. Then He called all the sacred rivers which came in personified forms and offered their obeisances to Him. They identified themselves as Sri Godavari, Kaveri, Brahmaputra, Sindhu, Krishna, Yamuna, etc. and offered

Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Hare Hare

prayers to Sri Krishna to become waters to fill Shyama Kunda

After doing this they left and Sri Krishna relieved Himself from the sin of killing a bull to Srimati Radharani's satisfaction by bathing in the water. He then started joking with her:

Srimati Radharani exhibited her transcendental anger (Mana) and seeing a big hoof print of the Aristasura demon on the western side of Sri Shyama Kunda, She broke one of Her bangles and started digging there. With the help of thousands of her girl-friends (sakhis) and assistants (manjaris) a large depression in the earth was created. When it was finished, there was no water, so Sri Krishna told Srimati Radharani to take water from His kund to fill it, but she refused, considering that water polluted by the sin of Krishna's bull-killing.

Srimati Radharani then made arrangements to bring water from Manasi-Ganga, nearly 5 kilometers away. Seeing this quarrel between Radha and Krishna, the personified sacred waters appeared again and requested Krishna to be allowed to fill the Radhakund. Sri Krishna told them to do that, but they should take permission first from Srimati Radharani Herself.

All the personified rivers then began offering nice prayers to Srimati Radharani, who being kindness personified, hinted through eye-movements to Srimati Lalita, the chief of the sakhies, to have this done. So at 11.45 P.M. on the eighth day of the waning moon in karttik (Damodar, October-November) the rivers personified broke the walls of Shyama Kunda and entered to fill Radhakund.

Sri Krishna then took bath in Radhakund and announced that to whoever takes bath in Radhakund on this day of the year or any day in future, the seed of intense love (PremaBhakti) which Srimati Radharani has for Him would be given to him/her. Similarly, Srimati Radharani took bath in Shyama Kunda and announced that to anyone who takes bath in Shyama Kunda, She would also give the seed of love that Sri Krishna has for Her.

Presently, thousands of pilgrims desiring love for Sri Sri Radha-Krishna come to this holy spot for Ardha-Ratri-Snan (Midnight bath) to take bath in a reverential mood, bathing first in Sri Radhakund, then in Sri Shyama Kunda, and then again in Sri Radhakund. This is the only place of pilgrimage where an auspicious bath is taken at midnight.

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