

Practical and Transformational Insights

Excerpts from Śrīla Prabhupāda's Text 9 Purport

The spiritual world is three fourths of the total creation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and it is the most exalted region. The spiritual world is naturally superior to the material world; however, Mathurā and the adjoining areas, although appearing in the material world, are considered superior to the spiritual world because the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself appeared at Mathurā. The interior forests of Vṛndāvana are considered superior to Mathurā because of the presence of the twelve forests (*dvādaśa-vana*), such as Tālavana, Madhuvana and Bahulāvana, which are famous for the various pastimes of the Lord. Thus the interior Vṛndāvana forest is considered superior to Mathurā, but superior to these forests is the divine Govardhana Hill because Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhana Hill like an umbrella, raising it with His lotuslike beautiful hand to protect His associates, the denizens of Vraja, from the torrential rains sent by the angry Indra, King of the demigods. It is also at Govardhana Hill that Kṛṣṇa tends the cows with His cowherd friends, and there also He had His rendezvous with His most beloved Śrī Rādhā and engaged in loving pastimes with Her. Rādhā-kuṇḍa, at the foot of Govardhana, is superior to all because it is there that love of Kṛṣṇa overflows. Advanced devotees prefer to reside at Rādhā-kuṇḍa because this place is the site of many memories of the eternal loving affairs between Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī (*rati-vilāsa*).

In *Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya-līlā)* it is stated that when Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu first visited the area of Vrajabhūmi, He could not at first find the location of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. This means that Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was actually searching for the exact location of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Finally He found the holy spot, and there was a small pond there. He took His bath in that small pond and told His devotees that the actual Rādhā-kuṇḍa was situated there. Later the pond was excavated by Lord Caitanya's devotees, headed first by the Six Gosvāmīs, such as Rūpa and Raghunātha dāsa. Presently there is a large lake known as Rādhā-kuṇḍa there. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has given much stress to Rādhā-kuṇḍa because of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu's desire to find it. Who, then, would give up Rādhā-kuṇḍa and try to reside elsewhere? No person with transcendental intelligence would do so. The importance of Rādhā-kuṇḍa, however, cannot be realized by other Vaiṣṇava *sampradāyas*, nor can persons uninterested in the devotional service of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu understand the spiritual importance and divine nature of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. Thus Rādhā-kuṇḍa is mainly worshiped by the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas, the followers of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya Mahāprabhu.