

Why Is Śrī Rādhā Crest Jewel Among the *Gopīs*?

Each kind of devotee feels that his sentiment is the most excellent, and thus in that mood he tastes great happiness with Lord Kṛṣṇa. But if we compare the sentiments in an impartial mood, we find that the conjugal sentiment is superior to all others in sweetness. Increasing love is experienced in various tastes, one above another. But that love which has the highest taste in the gradual succession of desire manifests itself in the form of conjugal love. Therefore I call it *madhura-rasa*. It has two further divisions, namely wedded and unwedded love. There is a great increase of mellow in the unwedded conjugal mood. Such love is found nowhere but in Vraja. This mood is unbounded in the damsels of Vraja, but among them it finds its perfection in Śrī Rādhā. Her pure, mature love surpasses that of all others. Her love is the cause of Lord Kṛṣṇa's tasting the sweetness of the conjugal relationship.

— CC Ādi 4.43-49



The essence of the *hlādinī* potency is love of God, the essence of love of God is emotion [*bhāva*], and the ultimate development of emotion is *mahābhāva*. Śrī Rādhā Ṭhākuraṇī is the embodiment of *mahābhāva*. She is the repository of all good qualities and the crest jewel among all the lovely consorts of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Of these two *gopīs* [Rādhārāṇī and Candrāvalī], Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is superior in all respects. She is the embodiment of *mahābhāva*, and She surpasses all in good qualities. Her mind, senses and body are steeped in love for Kṛṣṇa. She is Kṛṣṇa's own energy, and She helps Him in His pastimes.

— CC Ādi 4.68-71



Rādhā is the one who gives pleasure to Govinda, and She is also the enchantress of Govinda. She is the be-all and end-all of Govinda, and the crest jewel of all His consorts. The transcendental goddess Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is the direct counterpart of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. She is the central figure for all the goddesses of fortune. She possesses all the attractiveness to attract the all-attractive Personality of Godhead. She is the primeval internal potency of the Lord.

— CC Ādi 4.82-83



Her worship [*ārādhana*] consists of fulfilling the desires of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Therefore the *Purāṇas* call Her Rādhikā.

— CC Ādi 4.87



Therefore Rādhā is *parama-devatā*, the supreme goddess, and She is worshipable for everyone. She is the protectress of all, and She is the mother of the entire universe.

— CC Ādi 4.89



Among the *gopīs*, Śrīmatī Rādhikā is the foremost. She surpasses all in beauty, in good qualities, in good fortune and, above all, in love. Just as Rādhā is dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, so Her bathing place [Rādhā-kuṇḍa] is dear to Him. She alone is His most beloved of all the *gopīs*.

“O Pārtha, in all the three planetary systems, this earth is especially fortunate, for on earth is the town of Vṛndāvana. And there the *gopīs* are especially glorious because among them is My Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.”

All the other *gopīs* help increase the joy of Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes with Rādhārāṇī. The *gopīs* act as the instruments of Their mutual enjoyment. Rādhā is the beloved consort of Kṛṣṇa, and She is the wealth of His life. Without Her, the *gopīs* cannot give Him pleasure.

— CC Ādi 4.214-218