

A Glimpse of the Rādhā-kuṇḍa

Kṛṣṇa Sees

(As presented in *Bhavanāsāra Saṅgraha*)

Kṛṣṇa, longing to meet His beloved Rādhikā, walked along a hidden path leading to Rādhā-kuṇḍa. *Govinda-līlāmṛta* 7.1

The fresh attractive groves surrounding Rādhā-kuṇḍa were unparalleled in their profound beauty and wealth of colourful flowers blooming blissful, jewel creepers. One grove featured an excellent highly ornamented bed, surrounded by pleasing items for the pleasure of Rādhā-Mādhava. Every inch of Rādhā-kuṇḍa was saturated with absolute bliss.

The beautiful lake in the middle of the grove was always filled with sweet, clear water. Verily, it was the form of condensed bliss. Four gem-studded banks adorned with jewelled bathing *ghāṭas* surrounded the lake. Regal *kadamba* trees kept the banks cool and fresh. The lake had bathing depths to serve the whims of Rādhā-Mādhava. The lake also supplied a variety of tastes in different places for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure. Astonishing lotuses and water lilies opened and closed continuously. The beautiful forest groves flanking the lake reflected in its waters glowing with the color of various gems. *Vṛndāvana-māhimāmṛta* 4.106-108

The magnificence of Rādhā-kuṇḍa was further enhanced by the fragrance of countless blossoming water lilies, lotuses, blue lotuses and night lotuses, along with the joyous playing and sweet warbling of swans, cranes, ducks and pairs of *cakravākas*. Hundreds of swarms of bees buzzed in all directions around the lake. *Vṛndāvana-māhimāmṛta* 3.103

On the four sides of Rādhā-kuṇḍa were platforms with steps leading down to the water. The pair of trees standing beside each platform supported a wonderful swing, richly decorated with flowers and fine cloth. The swings were suspended from *bakul* trees in the north, *kadamba* in the east, *campaka* in the south and mango in the west. There was a picturesque footbridge on pillars in the south corner of Rādhā-kuṇḍa, which extended east to Śyāma-kuṇḍa. The waters of both *kuṇḍas* mixed under the bridge. *Govinda-līlāmṛta* 7.4-6

The bowers around Rādhā-kuṇḍa resounded with the incredibly sweet singing of *myna* birds and affectionate parrots discussing the intimate pastimes of Rādhā-Mādhava. The cuckoos pleased everyone with their sweet “*Kuhū, kuhū.*” The madly dancing peacocks and the tumultuous joyful warbling of flocks of birds further enhanced the charm of the groves. *Vṛndāvana-māhimāmṛta* 4.105

As soon as the pigeons, turtledoves and *cātakas* saw Kṛṣṇa, their bodies swelled in joy and they enlivened the forest of Rādhā-kuṇḍa with their happy chirping, which sounded like nectar to the ears. The wise *cakora* birds, rejecting the feeble

splendour of the moon, preferred to drink the nectarean moonlight of Kṛṣṇa's lovely face which defeated countless full-moons. The banks and the water of Rādhā-kuṇḍa manifested wonderful splendour to assist Rādhā-Mādhava's confidential pastimes. The abundant trees and creepers in the groves around Rādhā-kuṇḍa were bending over from the weight of their buds, flowers, new leaves, unripe, half-ripe and ripened fruits.

Seeing the clusters of white lotus flowers in Rādhā-kuṇḍa, one could conjecture that the *kuṇḍa* was laughing at the inferior beauty of the ocean of milk. Next to Rādhā-kuṇḍa was a lake named Śyāma-kuṇḍa created by the touch of Kṛṣṇa's lotus foot.

The *kuñjās* of the eight chief *sakhīs* (Lalitā, Viśākhā etc.) began in the north and continued to the north-west of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. With great love the *sakhīs* diligently decorated the *kuñjās* with their own hands to serve the pastimes of Rādhā-Mādhava. Small groves, craft rooms and artistically landscaped gardens bisected by narrow lanes lined by rows of shady trees extended outward from the *kuñjās*. The lanes were made of pure crystal studded with blue sapphires, creating the effect of little creeks with small waves. The gates and walls separating the various *kuñjās* were inlaid with such astonishing jewel work that a wall was easily mistaken for a door and a door mistaken for a wall. *Govinda-līlāmṛta* 7.22-30