

## Question Five

### What does it mean to live on the banks of Rādhā-kuṇḍa?

Rādhā-kuṇḍa is within Vraja, so let's first take a look at what Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has to say about *vraja-vāsa* — living in Vraja.

*We cannot attain vraja-vāsa without the mercy of the vraja-vāsīs. But why should they speak to us? How will we see them with material eyes? Because we are covered with pride and envy, they will not listen to what we say. Because we have no attachment for them, they do not speak to us. Why would the vraja-vāsīs engaged in eternal spiritual pastimes speak to us? They say, “You are searching for material pleasure. Has Kṛṣṇa become a material object for your pleasure?” One cannot know about Vraja except through subservience to Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and Śrī Rati Mañjarī. When we receive the mercy of Prabhu Nityānanda, on that very day we will understand the mercy of Śrī Rūpa Mañjarī and Śrī Rati Mañjarī; otherwise:*

*prakṛteḥ kriyamāṇāni guṇaiḥ karmāṇi sarvaśaḥ  
ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhātmā kartāham iti manyate*

*The spirit soul bewildered by the influence of false ego thinks himself the doer of activities that are in actuality carried out by the three modes of material nature. (Bg 3.27)*

*—To Be a Vraja-vāsī, October 8 lecture, 1932 in Mathurā  
by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura*

### Living at Rādhā-kuṇḍa

**Lecture at Rādhā-kuṇḍa, 16th October, 1932  
by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura**

*Only the most fortunate live with pure hearts in the most sanctified place, Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa, and worship Kṛṣṇa twenty four hours a day. Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa is the highest section of Goloka, the most confidential place in the spiritual sky, and the only shelter for devotees on the platform of mādhyura-rasa.*

*The point is that one must forsake materialistic conceptions. After attaining the aprākṛta body of the gopīs, aprākṛta living entities render aprākṛta service to aprākṛta Śrī Rādhā in aprākṛta Vraja as the aprākṛta maidservants of Śrī Rādhā in the transcendental groves on the bank of aprākṛta Rādhā-kuṇḍa.*

It's very clear from all this that we are talking not so much about just physical residence on this banks of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. We are talking about a very high level of consciousness and state of heart. In fact, Śrīla Prabhupāda tells us that “Vṛndāvana is revealed in the

heart of the sincere devotee. In reality, it is not on any map, nor is it part of any country.”

— **Vṛndāvana Days, p55**

Keeping all of this in mind, let's now take a look at Śrīla Prabhupāda's Text 11 purport.

- 1) *Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes in this connection that Śrī Rādhā-kuṇḍa is the most select place for those interested in advancing their devotional service in the wake of the lady friends (sakhīs) and confidential serving maids (mañjarīs) of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Living entities who are eager to return home to the transcendental kingdom of God, Goloka Vṛndāvana, by means of attaining their spiritual bodies (siddha-deha) should live at Rādhā-kuṇḍa, take shelter of the confidential serving maids of Śrī Rādhā and under their direction engage constantly in Her service.*
- 2) *It is also recommended that one should live on the banks of Rādhā-kuṇḍa and should be absorbed in the loving service of the Lord.*
- 3) *If one is thus constantly engaged during his lifetime, after giving up the body he will return back to Godhead to serve Śrī Rādhā in the same way as he contemplated during his life on the banks of Rādhā-kuṇḍa. The conclusion is that to live on the banks of the Rādhā-kuṇḍa and to bathe there daily constitute the highest perfection of devotional service.*

It is worth taking a look at Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's concluding words in Text 10 to help place what Śrīla Prabhupāda has said in clear perspective. He says, “Who, then, will not reside at Rādhā-kuṇḍa and, in a spiritual body surcharged with ecstatic devotional feelings [*aprākṛtabhāva*], render loving service to the divine couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda, who perform Their *aṣṭakāliya-līlā*, Their eternal eightfold daily pastimes?”

This clearly indicates that one not only knows his *svarūpa* but has entered Śrī Śrī Rādhā Govinda's pastimes to perform *nitya-sevā*. Clearly we are talking spiritual residence, not just physical residence at Rādhā-kuṇḍa. One may also be physically residing on the banks of Rādhā-kuṇḍa, but the core—essence is one's qualification to live there spiritually. As Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura has explained previously, we are talking of “*aprākṛta* service to *aprākṛta* Śrī Rādhā in *aprākṛta* Vraja as the *aprākṛta* maidservants of Śrī Rādhā in the transcendental groves on the bank of *aprākṛta* Rādhā-kuṇḍa.”

**Not such a cheap thing to live on the banks of Rādhā-kuṇḍa, is it?**