

Śrī-Śrī Govardhana Vāsa Prārthanā Daśakam

"Ten prayers for being able to reside at
Govardhana Hill"

By Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī



Commentaries by
Radhakunda Mahanta
Śrīla Ananta dās Bābājī
Translated by Advaita das

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VERSE 1

*nija-pati-bhuja-daṇḍā-chatra-bhāvaṁ prapadya
pratihata-mada-dhṛṣṭoddāṇḍa-devendra-garva
atula-prṭhula-śāila-śreṇi-bhūpa priyaṁ me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam*

nija - own; *pati* - Lord; *bhuja* - arm; *daṇḍa* - staff; *cchatra* - umbrella; *bhāvaṁ* - as; *prapadya* - attained; *pratihata* - to obstruct; *mada* - proud; *dhṛṣṭa* - bold; *uddaṇḍa* - arrogant; *deva* - demigod; *indra* - King; *garva* - pride; *atula* - matchless; *prṭhula* - big; *śāila* - mountain; *śreṇi* - group; *bhūpa* - king; *priyaṁ* - dear; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikaṭa* - vicinity; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

**O Govardhana Hill! You became like an umbrella
which was held by the staff-like arm of your own Lord,**

Śrī Kṛṣṇa, to destroy the pride of Indra, the proud, bold and arrogant king of demigods.

You are the incomparable king of mountains and you are very dear to me. Please grant me the residence near you which is so dear to me !

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this Govardhana Vāsa Prārthanā Daśakam Śrīmat Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's heart becomes very attracted to the great glories of Śrī Girirāja and thus he reveals his desire to reside at the base of his greatly beloved Govardhana Hill.

First of all he says: *nija pati bhuja daṇḍa cchatra bhāvaṁ prapadya* "O Govardhana! You became like an umbrella that is carried by the staff-like hand of your own Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa and you were so fortunate as to have remained thus for seven days and nights."

Just as a boy easily takes up an umbrella Śrī Kṛṣṇa suddenly picked up Govardhana Hill to protect Vraja. Śrī Śuka Muni said: *dadhāra līlayā kṛṣṇaś chatrakam iva bālakaḥ* (Bhāg. 10.25.19) Śrī Kṛṣṇa's left arm looked as beautiful as a rod, holding the umbrella Govardhana, and the people of Vraja, attaining a place under this umbrella, exhibited an opulence which is rarely attained within the three worlds. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has written in his Gopāla Campūḥ:

*vilasita maṇi daṇḍa śrīr mukundasya bāhus
tad upari parito'pi cchatra tulya girīndrah
prati diśam iha muktā dāmad vāri-dhārā
vraja sadana janānāṁ pratyutābhūd vibhūtiḥ*

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa was surrounded by the Vrajavāsīs in the big hole under the Govardhana Hill as He lifted the hill with His left

hand. This made His upright left arm resemble a sapphire stick, the hill an umbrella and the raindrops that dripped from all of its sides strings of pearls. Thus it looked as if the people of Vraja had displayed rare opulence by standing under this extraordinary umbrella".

Indra was very puffed up because of his opulences. Although he has a thousand eyes, he showed his actual blindness by becoming angry at the Vrajavāsīs for giving up their sacrifice to him, even after he had seen how little Kṛṣṇa had smashed so many powerful demons, and sending the apocalyptic Samvartaka-clouds to Vraja to destroy the place.

In his Gopāla Campū-grantha (Pūrva Campū, 18th Pūraṇa) Śrīmat Jīva Gosvāmīpāda has elaborately described how proud Indra was of his regal opulences. This is just a basic description: After having gradually sent hail, rain and thunderbolts to Vraja to destroy the place, Indra doubtfully sent 100 wind-spies there to find out what damage his rains had caused, and the spies, upon returning, told him: "O Mahārāja! Until now the place is not yet inundated!"

Indra then sent more powerful rainclouds to inundate Vraja-maṇḍala, thinking: "This huge shower surely must have inundated Vraja-maṇḍala!" With this in mind he sent his cloud-spies to find out what was accomplished, but they also returned swiftly and reported that his purpose had yet not been fulfilled.

Hearing this, Indra became astonished, jumped on his elephant Airāvata and came to Vraja's air-space, very angrily prodding Airāvata with his elephant-goad and then he personally began to throw fiery thunderbolts on Vraja. Finally he sent his lightning-spies to find out about the result.

The lightning-spies returned and told him: "O King of the demigods! Hear this most amazing news! Govardhana has

grown because of eating the huge food-offerings of the people of Vraja and has now lifted himself off the ground!"

Indra sent his lightning-spies out once more and said: "Go and see why the hill has lifted itself and where the miserable people of Vraja have gone with their children and other relatives!" "As you order!", the lightning-spies said and went back to Vraja to find this out. They returned to Indra and said: "O Devarāja! It seems our strikes have scorched everyone to ashes! We can't find anyone in the entire Vraja-maṇḍala anymore!"

Hearing this, king Indra was very happy and he blessed the spies by saying: "May you live long!" He sent them back to Vraja once more to find out all the details. And again the lightning-spies went to Vraja, but this time they reported upon returning: "O Lord of the three worlds! None of the people of Vraja have been vanquished! They are all hiding under Govardhana Hill, making a blissful noise and Balānuja Śrī Kṛṣṇa is lifting the hill!"

Hearing this, Indra said: "Aho! Now I understand! In the past I cut the wings off the mountains, but Govardhana Hill has now regrown its wings and is giving shelter to the Vrajavāsīs, taking their side against me! Allright then, let me throw some more fiery thunderbolts down to smash all the Vrajavāsīs completely!"

Saying this Indra began to cast these thunderbolts, but he soon found out through his spies that he had accomplished nothing with it. Then Indra angrily told his spies: "Go and find out exactly what is going on and why my thunder-fire is thrown in vain all the time!"

The spies inspected the whole scene thoroughly and told Indra: "O King of gods! Not even two or three leaves have fallen from the trees of Govardhana Hill and not even one ant was killed there, no matter how many fiery thunderbolts you threw on them, then what to speak of the people of Vraja, who are

blissfully enjoying shelter under the hill?" Finally, after another endeavour to smash Govardhana with his thunderbolt, Indra became embarrassed and fearful and he once more realized Śrī Kṛṣṇa's greatness.¹⁸

Through all this, the pride and impudence of Indra, caused by his intoxication of opulence, and also the prowess and glories of Govardhana Hill are shown. Śrī Raghunātha says:

*atula pṛthula śailaśreṇi bhūpa priyaṁ me nija nikaṭa nivāsa
dehi govardhana tvam*

"O Giripate! You are the king of all mountains, even of the Himālaya and Sumeru! Residence at your vicinity is very dear to me, therefore I very much crave for that! But if the holy *dhāma* does not give its shelter no one can live there simply by his own endeavours: I therefore pray to you: please bless me so that I can live at your base!"

*ohe govardhana! tumi ei akiñcane;
more atiśaya priya tava sannidhāne
vāsa dāna kori more kṛtārtha koro;
atula mahimā tava āmāre dekhāho
śrī kṛṣṇera hasta rūpa daṇḍa agrabhāge;
virājita hoye tumi yeno chatra-bhāve
mada matta uddhata ye śaci-pati indra;
tāra garva kharva koile mahimā pracaṇḍa
girivara rāja tumi e boḍo mahimā;
ātmasāt koro more koriyā karuṇā*

"O Govardhana! This wretch very much loves to reside close to you. Please bless me with a place in your vicinity and show me your matchless glories! You were held like an umbrella on the rod-like hand of Śrī Kṛṣṇa to destroy the pride of Śaci's lord

¹⁸See Gopāla Campūḥ, Pūrva Campū 18th Pūraṇa.

Indra, who was intoxicated by false vanity, and to establish your own glories. O Govardhana, you are so great! Please take me to you!"

VERSE 2:

*pramada-madana-līlāḥ kandare kandare te
racayati nava-yūnor dvandvam asminn amandam
iti kila kalanārthaṁ lagnakas tad-dvayor me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam*

pramada - intoxicated; *madana* - erotic; *līlā* - pastimes; *kandare kandare* - in every cave; *te* - your; *racayati* - performs; *nava* - young; *yūnoḥ dvandvam* - of the couple; *asminn* - in this; *amandam* - great; *iti* - thus; *kila* - certainly; *kalana* - seeing; *arthaṁ* - for the sake; *lagnakaḥ* - amidst; *tad* - that; *dvayor* - the couple; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikaṭa* - near; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! The youthful couple Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa play passionate erotic pastimes in your every cave and I became very eager to witness them. Please allow me to live close to you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Within Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's heart, illuminated by *viśuddha sattva*, the different glories of Śrī Girirāja are revealed.

The Lord personally said: *mad bhakta pūjābhyaḍhika*¹⁹

¹⁹ Śrīmad Bhāgavatam 11.19.21

"The worship of My devotee is greater than My own worship". Therefore Śrī Raghunātha hopes to live nearby the crown jewel of devotees, Śrīla Girirāja for the fulfillment of his sacred aspirations.

It is as if Govardhana asks Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī: "Ohe Raghunātha! If you are so anxiously revealing your aspiration to love close to me, then your aspirations can also be fulfilled by living close to me for just two or four days. Why do you want to stay here all the time? Don't the scriptures say that simply by living in Vraja for even one day one attains devotion to Hari (*dinam ekaṁ nivāseṇa harau bhaktir prajāyate* - Padma Purāṇa)? Therefore you can become blessed even if you stay here for only two or four days!"

To this Śrīla Dāsa Gosvāmī replies: "Ohe Girirāja! I am not just eager to be blessed with the attainment of *bhakti*; I have still another desire that I want to submit to your lotus feet. In each and every one of your caves my Śyāma-Svāminī are constantly engaged in greatly intoxicating **erotic pastimes**!"

The saints say: *sādhū sāvadhana*! "Beware, O holy man! This is not mundane **eros**!"

*vṛndāvane aprākṛta navīna madana;
kāma gāyatrī, kāma bīje yāhāra upāsana
puruṣa yoṣit kibā sthāvara jaṅgama;
sarva cittākaraṣaka sāksān manmatha madana*

(C.C. Madhya 8)

"Kṛṣṇa is Vṛndāvana's **transcendental youthful Cupid** Who is meditated upon by the *Kāma-gāyatrī mantra* with the *Kāma bīja* (seed of spiritual desire). He attracts everyone - men,

women, moving and non moving beings, for He Himself agitates Cupid".

Śrīla Kṛṣṇa Dāsa Kavirāja writes in his Sāraṅga Raṅgadā-commentary on verse 3 of Kṛṣṇa Karṇāmṛta

(*kāmāvatārāṅkuram*): *prākṛtāprākṛta kandarpa nidāna vṛndāvanābhinava kandarpaṁ ity arthaḥ. āgamādau kāmāgāyatrīyā kāmā-bijena ca tasya tad rūpeṇopāśyatvāt. koṭi madana vimohanāśeṣa cittākarṣaka sahaja madhuratara lāvaṇyāmṛtāpārārṇavena mahānubhāva-cayenānubhūyamāna tat tan mahā bhāva nivahena śrīman madana gopāla rūpeṇādhunāpi vṛndāvane virājamānatvāc ca.*

"This transcendental youthful Cupid of Vṛndāvana is the origin of all mundane and spiritual love gods, the origin (*avatārī*) of all the different manifest descensions (*avatāra*), and His worship has been prescribed by the Vedas through the Kāma Gāyatrī-*mantra* with the *kāma bija*.

He enchants millions of Cupids and attracts everyone's minds with His nectarean elegance, which is like a shoreless ocean, and in *mahā-bhāva* (the greatest divine love) for Him this sweetness is fully experienced. He eternally resides in transcendental Vṛndāvana as Śrīman Madana-Gopāla (the beautiful Cupid as cowherd boy)".

This transcendental youthful Cupid of Vṛndāvana is experienced through the fully blown *mahā-bhāva*, the quintessence of the supreme love of God, residing in the hearts of the Vrajadevīs; hence the Vedic scriptures and the great saints call their love *kāma* (lust):

*premaiva gopa rāmānām kāma ity āgamāt pratham
ity uddhavādayo'py etaṁ vāñchanti bhagavat priyaḥ*

(*Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu* 1.2.285,286).

"Although the love of the *gopīs* is called lust, it is actually nothing else but pure love: This love is coveted even by the greatest lovers of the Lord, like Uddhava, but not attained by them." This rarely attained thing has now become the practice and the goal of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas by the grace of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava-*ācāryas* like Śrīla Rūpa and Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī have relished it and taught it to the *sādhakas* of this world.

The jewelled caves of Govardhana Hill are very solitary and filled with all kinds of paraphernalia suitable for the love-pastimes of the Yugala Kīśora, such as jewelled bedsteads, jewelled lamps, garlands, sandalwoodpulp, betelnuts etc. Thus all these caves are suitable places for the Yugala Kīśora's greatly intoxicated confidential loving pastimes, which only take place in Vraja-maṇḍala and nowhere else.

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: "O Girirāja! By living close to you one becomes blessed by seeing and experiencing all the love-pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava! You know that I am Śrī Rādhikā's maidervant and that I want to be blessed by seeing these incomparable loving pastimes and attaining the service of my Īśvarī and Her Prāṇanātha! By living close to you I will see how my Īśvarī fights beautiful and intense erotic battles with Her Prāṇanātha."

*rati-rase mātala atiśaya nāha;
amiyā sarovare duhuṁ avagāha
sahaje niraṅkuśa nāgara rāja;
tāhe manamatha nṛpa kautuka kāja
dṛḍha parirambhane ghana sītakāra;
anukhana kiṅkiṇī koroye phukāra
kara gahi rākhi o yuga cakebā;
damśaite sarasija bārabo kebā*

*koho hariballabha saha-carī kule;
dekhoi nibhṛte ulāsaḥi phule*

"They both plunged into a lake of nectar when They became greatly intoxicated by the flavours of love. Nāgara Rāja (Kṛṣṇa, the king of amorous heroes) is naturally very wayward and king Cupid played many tricks on Him. In Kṛṣṇa's firm embrace Rādhikā uttered loud screams and Her waistbells were constantly jingling. Śrī Kṛṣṇa held both Her breasts with His hands and bit Her lips without hindrance. Hariballabha says to the *sakhīs* and *mañjarīs*: 'Behold the blossoming of Their secret delight!' When will I see my Īśvarī falling on Her Lord's chest on the erotic bed, perspiring and exhausted at the end of Her love-pastimes?"

*śramajala kaṇa digdha snigdha nispanda mūrtir
galita vasana bhūṣākalpa jalpa prajalpā
priya hṛdi patitāṅgī rādhikā mīlitākṣī
sthira taḍid iva navyāmbhodhare sa vyarājīt*

(Śrī Govinda Līlāmṛta 15,23)

"Śrī Rādhikā was exhausted from Her erotic battle with Her beloved and She fell on His chest. Her motionless body was beautified by sweatdrops of fatigue, Her eyes were closed and Her dress and ornaments had fallen off. While She exchanged loving words with Him, She looked like a steady lightning-strike on a fresh raincloud."

The poet Govinda Dāsa sings:

*rati rasa charame, śyāma hiye śutali,
śarada indumukhī balā*

*marakata madane, koi janu pūjala,
 dei nava kāñcana mālā
 śyāma vayāna pora, vayāna virājai,
 ura para kuca yuga sāje
 kanaka kumbha janu, ulaṭi boisāyalo,
 madana mahodadhi mājhe*

"This girl (Rādhikā), Whose face shines like the autumn-moon, lies on Śyāma's chest after reaching the climax of Her loveplay. It is as if someone worships an emerald-coloured Cupid with a new golden necklace. She keeps Her face near Śyāma's face and Her breasts, which resemble golden jugs lying upside-down in an ocean of eros, on His chest."

*joḍala tanu mana, bhuje bhuje bandhana,
 adharahi adhara miśāna
 beḍalo mṛṇāle, hema nilamaṇi janu,
 bāndhalo yuga eka ṭhāna
 ghana saṇe dāminī, dukūle dukūle janu,
 duhuṇ jana eka paṭavāsa
 caraṇa beḍhiyā cāru, aruṇa saroruha,
 madhukara govinda dāsa*

"Their bodies and minds have merged, Their arms embrace each other and Their lips meet each other. Golden and sapphire lotus stems (Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's arms) entwine and bind each other. Śrī Rādhikā looks like a lightning strike lying on a cloud. Both the lovers are covered with one mere silken garment. Govinda Dāsa is like a bee circling around their beautiful reddish lotus like feet."

(Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī prays:) "O Girirāja! When will I see my master and mistress thus enjoying in your caves as soon as I obtained residence close to you? I will dry up Their

sweatdrops by sweetly fanning Them (when They are tired of love making in the cool caves of Govardhana Hill) I will wash Their lotus like faces and hands with cold water from a golden jug, place delicious fresh betel leaves in Their mouths, put Their scattered anklebells and bangles back on Their wrists and feet, hang flower garlands around Their necks and anoint Their beautiful bodies with fragrant camphor and sandalwood pulp!"

*govardhana girivara, kevala nirjana sthala,
rāi kānu koribe śayane
lalitā viśākhā saṅge, sevana koribo raṅge,
sukhamaya rātula caraṇe*

*kanaka sampūṭa kori, karpūra tāmbūla pūri,
yogāibo vadana kamale
maṇimaya kiṅkiṇī, ratana nūpura āni,
porāibo caraṇa yugale*

*kanaka kaṭorā pūri, karpūra candana bhari,
kobe dibo du'janāra gāya
mallikā mālatī yūthi, nānā phule mālā gānthi,
kobe dibo doṇhāra golāya*

(Prārthanā)

"There is a solitary place at Govardhana Hill where Rāi and Kānu lay down to rest and where I will serve Their blissful ruddy lotus feet in the company of Lalitā and Viśākhā. I will fill up a golden box with camphor-laced betel leaves and place them in Their lotus mouths and I will bring jewelled waistbells and anklebells and place them on Their lotus feet. When will I fill up a golden box with camphor and sandalwood pulp and anoint Their limbs with these unguents, and when will I string

garlands of various flowers like Mallikā, Mālatī and Yūthi, and hang them around Their necks?"

This is the practice as well as the goal of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas! Their lives are filled with this aspiration. They meditate on all these devotional services during the stage of practice (*sādhana*) and attain that service directly when they attain perfection (*siddhi*). The Gosvāmīs are the Lord's eternal associates that have descended to the world of *sādhana* to teach devotional expertise to the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas by giving the perfect example.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha dāsa says: "O Govardhana! You are the mediator in the attainment of the perfection of *rasa*! You can make me so fortunate to be able to attain such fortune. Therefore you don't have to do anything more than allowing me to stay at your base and this will bring my aspiration to its fulfillment. Therefore please bless me by granting me residence in your vicinity!"

*pramada madana līlā kandare kandare;
koriteche nitya nava yugala kiśore
sei līlā daraśane ākula parāṇa;
tomāra nikāṭe śiḡhra vāsa koro dāna*

"O Govardhana! The Yugala Kiśora is performing intoxicating erotic pastimes in each of your caves, so please quickly grant me residence in your vicinity, for I am very anxious at heart to see these pastimes."

VERSE 3:

*anupama-maṇi-vedī-ratna-siṃhāsanorvī-
ruha-jhara-dara-sānu-droṇi-saṅgheṣu raṅgaiḥ
saha bala-sakhibhiḥ saṅkhalayan sva-priyaṁ me
nija-nikāṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam*

anupama - incomparable; *maṇi* - jewelled; *vedī* - altars; *ratna* - jewelled; *siṃhāsana* - thrones; *urvīruha* - trees; *jhara* - waterfalls; *dara* - caves; *sānu* - peaks; *droṇi* - valleys; *saṅgheṣu* - in the multitudes; *raṅgaiḥ* - with happiness; *saha* - with; *bala* - Balarāma; *sakhibhiḥ* - with friends; *saṅkhalayan* - playing; *sva* - own; *priyaṁ* - dear; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikāṭa* - near by; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! Kṛṣṇa plays many games with His brother Balarāma and His cowherd boyfriends on your incomparable jewelled thrones, under your trees, in your brooks, caves, valleys and on your peaks! Please grant me the residence near you which is so dear to me!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: How many hundreds of honey-sweet pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the incomparable, natural and beautiful surroundings of Śrī Girirāja awaken within the *mahā-bhāva*-saturated consciousness of Śrīpāda Raghunātha, who is floating on the waves of prayer!

In the previous verse he revealed his aspiration to reside permanently at the base of Govardhana Hill and witness the frantic erotic pastimes of the Yugala Kiśora in its caves. Then it is as if Śrī Girirāja says: "Ohe Raghunātha Dāsa! You can also reside at other meeting places of the Yugala like Saṅketa and

be blessed with the vision of such frantic erotic pastimes. Therefore I don't see any direct need for you to stay near my base. Moreover, you can be blessed by seeing these Yugala-pastimes much easier in the lovely Nikuñja-mandiras on the level surface than in my caves, which are hardly accessible."

In this verse Śrīpāda answers these words by saying:
 "O Giripate (lord of mountains)! There is another reason why I pray to you for residence in your vicinity. While you are the charming abode where Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava have Their confidential pastimes with Their *sakhīs*, you are also the exclusive abode of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's blissful and variegated pastimes with His brother Balarāma and His cowherd boyfriends. Your jeweled platforms, different flowering and fruitful trees, cascades, caves, valleys and passages are the different blissful places where Śrī-Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Baladeva take rest, make different luscious jokes, search for their cows, play on the swing, play hide-and-seek, wrestle, eat and lie down to rest on jewelled bedsteads. In Śrīmad Bhāgavata there are the following words from the lotus mouth of Śrī Rādhārāṇī²⁰:

*mānaṁ tanoti saha go-gaṇayos taylor yat
 pānīya sūyavasa kandara kanda mūlaiḥ
 (10.21.18)*

"This Govardhana Hill serves Śrī Kṛṣṇa and Baladeva, Who are surrounded by Their cows and cowherd boyfriends, in different ways with his stainless water, soft grass, wonderful caves, bulbs and roots."

²⁰ This will be explained in verse 8.

*tanotīti sarvair anyair api kriyamānaṁ mānamayaṁ vistāreṇa
karotītyarthaḥ pānīyāni peyāni jala-madhvādīti
sūyavasāni komalāni puṣṭi varddhanāni dugdha sampādakāni. yad
vā pānīyaṁ suvate kṣarati pānīyasuvo nirjharāḥ bhū iti kvacit
pāṭhaḥ. upaveśādyartham sundara sthānam ityarthah. kandarā
guhāḥ taiś ca tatratya ratna paryāṅka pīṭha
pradīpādarśadayopyupalakṣyāḥ yathā-sambhavaṁ ca taiś teṣāṁ
māno jñeyah
(Tīkā - Vaiṣṇava Toṣaṇī)*

"On his body Śrī Girirāja keeps different ingredients which he applies in the service of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-Balarāma and Their cows and cowherd boyfriends, such as spotless water, honey, fruit juice and other drinks, fresh soft grass for the cows, which will increase their strength and their output of milk, cascades, different enchanting sitting places, jewelled bedsteads in the caves, jewelled lamps and jewelled mirrors."
Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! Just by living at your base one becomes so fortunate to perceive all these pastimes."

At this point one may ask: "Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī meditated on himself as a maidservant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. He should have desired to see Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's loving pastimes around Govardhana Hill. Why did he instead reveal his desires to see the different pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and the cowherd boys near Girirāja?"

The *ācāryas* say out of experience that the erotic pastimes in Vraja of Nitya Kīśora Rasa-rāja Rasikendra Maulī Vrajendra-Nandana with Mahā-bhāva-mayī Śrī Rādhārāṇī are incomparable, and friends, parents and servants are all supporting these loving affairs of the Yugala Kīśora. Pastimes with His mother, father, friends and girlfriends are all necessary for Kṛṣṇa to relish His wonderfully sweet erotic pastimes with

Śrī Rādhārāṇī. All pastimes nourish and increase the great relish of the Yugala-līlā.

For instance, although they are the personifications of motherly love, mother Yaśodā and Rohiṇī-devī can't satisfy anyone unless they are fed food which was cooked by Śrī Rādhārāṇī's hand. For this reason Śrī Rādhā and Her girlfriends come to Kṛṣṇa's abode Nandīśvara to cook for Him every morning and Kṛṣṇa enjoys a wonderful sweet erotic relish during these pastimes of cooking and eating. Similarly, Kṛṣṇa's *goṣṭha līlā* (when He goes out every morning to herd His cows) is also to make Him relish the sweetness of meeting with Śrī Rādhikā.

rākhāla loiyā bone, sadā phiri dhenu-sane, tuyā lāgi bone banacārī (Pada Kalpataru): "For You I'm always rambling with My cows, taking My cowherd boyfriends with Me and for You I am wandering in the forest as a forest dweller!"

Rādhārāṇī is always on Śyāmasundara's mind and when He is out in the meadows She is difficult to see, so that increases the astonishing flavour of His transcendental yearning for Her. The experienced *rasikas* can understand all these purports. Also in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes of tending the cows with Baladeva and His friends the wonderful and special features of the Yugala's anxious erotic pastimes are preserved.

*ohe govardhana! tumi ati manohara;
tomāra nikṣa vāse juḍāya antara
nirupama līlā yoto tāra daraśane;
sukha anubhava koro prati kṣaṇe kṣaṇe
anupama maṇi-vedī ratna simhāsane;
manohara vrkṣa-śobhā parama nirjane
kibā nirjhara sānudeśa giri kandarete;
baladeva sakhā saha giri saṅkaṭete*

*sadā vihariche kṛṣṇa parama ānande;
 parihāsa lukocuri malla kṛīḍācchande
 nava nava līlā yoto tomāra gocare;
 tomāte bihare sadā navīna kiśore
 tomā sama bhāgyavān nāhi tribhuvane;
 pada tale sthāna dāo ei dina jane*

"Ohe Govardhana! You are so enchanting! My heart is soothed by living just next to you, experiencing jubilation at every moment by seeing all the matchless ever-fresh pastimes, like joking, hide-and-seek and wrestling, which Kṛṣṇa constantly enjoys with Baladeva and His friends around your incomparable jewelled platforms and thrones, your beautiful and charming solitary trees, your cascades, valleys, caves and passages.

The Navīna-Kiśora Kṛṣṇa always enjoys on and around you, therefore no one in the three worlds is as fortunate as you are. Please give this wretch a place at your base!"

VERSE 4:

***rasa-nidhi-nava-yūnoḥ sākṣiṇīm dāna-keler
 dyuti-parimala-viddham śyāma-vedim prakāśya
 rasika-vara-kulānām modam āsphālayan me
 nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam***

rasa-nidhi - ocean of spiritual flavours; *nava* - youthful; *yūnoḥ* - of the Couple; *sākṣiṇīm* - witness; *dāna* - tax; *keleḥ* - of the pastimes; *dyuti* - splendor; *parimala* - fragrance; *viddhām* - filled; *śyāma vedī* - Śyāma vedi; *prakāśya* - revealing; *rasika* - men of taste; *vara* - best; *kulānām* - of the hosts; *modam* - joy; *āsphālayan* - increasing; *me* - my;

nija - own; *nikṭa* - nearby; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! Revealing the beautiful and fragrant Śyāma-Vedī (or Dāna-Ghāṭī), the place witnessing the Dāna-Keli (tax game) of the young Divine Couple Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, Who are an ocean of rasa (spiritual flavours), you increase the ecstasy of the rasika devotees (spiritual connoisseurs) ! Please allow me to live close to you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this verse Śrīpāda Raghunātha perceives the great glories of Śyāma-vedī at the Dāna-Ghāṭī, one of the pastime-places of Śrī-Śrī Girirāja.

The Dāna-*līlā* is one of the very delicious pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava. Remembering this **Dāna-līlā** Śrīpāda Raghunātha calls it the pastime of the *rasa-nidhi nava yūnoḥ*, **the ocean of rasa**, Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava, the hero and heroine also known as the Śrī-Śrī Yugala Kīśora.

Just as the *ācāryas* have defined Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the embodiment of all nectarean spiritual flavours (*akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ*), the object of everyone's purest love, the embodiment of the erotic transcendental flavours, the transcendental youthful Cupid of Vṛndāvana and the agitator of even Cupid who attracts everyone's mind, including His own, they have described Śrī Rādhā as *akhaṇḍa-rasa-vallabhā* (the lady love Who embodies all *rasa*) *ānanda cinmaya rasa ghana vighrahā* (the embodiment of all condensed transcendental flavours), *mahā-bhāva svarūpinī* (the personification of the pinnacle of spiritual ecstatic love), *viśuddha kṛṣṇa-prema ratnākara* (the ocean of pure love for Kṛṣṇa) and the mine of transcendental attributes like beauty, sweetness and good fortune.

The *rasika* pastimes of *akhaṇḍa rasa vigraha* Śrī Kṛṣṇa and *akhaṇḍa-rasa-vallabhā* Bhānu-nandinī are like an ocean of *rasa* which is hard to cross, hard to enter and boundless. Who can ascertain how unlimited is the power of He Who is able to inundate the whole universe with a mere drop of His being? Great *rasika-mukuta-maṇi* devotees (the crown jewels of transcendental connoisseurs) come and stand on the shore of this transcendental ocean in astonishment. Perhaps they are standing there on the shore, desiring to touch a single drop of it and thus consider all their *sādhana* to be successful.

Beyond all that, even Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the embodiment of condensed transcendental bliss, stands on the shore of the ocean of Śrī Rādhā's *mādanākhyā-rasa*, the source of all *bhāvas*, speechless like a wooden doll, for it awakens a wonderful intoxication even in Him!

How wonderful is the manifestation of this transcendental ocean of emotions! In this ocean there are thousands of experiences of union such as embraces and kisses as well as thousands of kinds of separation, appearing like a mutually opposed mixture of nectar (union) and poison (separation) that is most extraordinary.

The supreme culmination of this *prema-tattva* of blended poison and nectar is found in Śrīmatī Bhānu-nandinī. In Her we find the summit of all ecstatic transcendental flavours.

The manifestation of *rasika* bliss in the Dāna-keli is vast and enormous, hence it is the *rasa-nidhi* of hero and heroine Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava.

At Śyāma-Vedī, near the Dāna-Ghāṭī, the sensitive *rasika* devotees of Kṛṣṇa relish the mellows of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava's Dāna-*līlā*. On the one hand this pastime is full of billowing waves of joking and laughter and on the other hand it

is deeper than millions of oceans: boundless and never able to touch the bottom.

A billowing ocean may have high waves on its surface, but on the bottom it is still and deep. Similarly the *Dāna-līlā* is billowing with the wave-like exchanges of humorous words between Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, Who are surrounded by Their boyfriends and girlfriends, but when he dives deep a *rasika* devotee will feel the depth of complete and causeless love. The wave-like *vyabhicārī bhāvas* (transgressing moods) like joy, fear, anger and jealousy are dancing on the ocean of their *sthāyi bhāva* (permanent mood) called *prīti* (love) here.

Śrī Rādhikā and Her *sakhīs* walk on, carrying pots of *ghī* on their heads, but that is just a pretext. Their actual purpose is to see Kṛṣṇa: *dāna cchale bheṭibo kānāi*. When She is suddenly stopped on the way by Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His chums, Śrīmatī reveals the *kila-kiñcit-bhāva*, a mixture of seven contradicting moods: joy-producing pride, desire, crying, smiling, jealousy, fear and anger.

When one high wave of the ocean hits the other, an explosive collision of waterdrops takes place which extends to all four directions. In the same way, the wave of Śrī Bhānu Nandinī's joy is covered over by a wave of negligence in the ocean of Her love, as She tries to conceal the bliss that swells up in Her when She sees Kṛṣṇa. Because of the resultant clash, all above-mentioned seven moods are externally revealed. Such is the fathomless ocean of *rasa* and *bhāva* of this encounter.

The Vraja-sundarīs want to serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa without reward. In Śrīmad Bhāgavatā (10.31.2) the *gopīs* call themselves Kṛṣṇa's unpaid maidservants - *aśulka dāsikāḥ*. But in this *Dāna-Keli* Kṛṣṇa asks payment from them! These contradictions are only possible in the transcendental kingdom of ecstasy and are inconceivable to the Vedas. Actually Kṛṣṇa wants only love from

the *gopīs*, and the Dāna-Keli is just an external cause. Śrī Kṛṣṇa begs causeless love from them, hence He is named **Mahā Dānīndra** (the great king of taxcollectors) at the Dāna-Chāṭī. Śrī Rādhā is unlikely to go anywhere without offering *mahādāna* (the great gift of love). Therefore Paurṇamāsī-devī has said: the Dāna-*līlā* only serves to show the world (***viśva-prakaṭa dāna***) how Dānīndra Śrī Kṛṣṇa is controlled by love alone.

The banner of this attribute of *prema-vaśyatā*, through which He can relish the mellows of Śrī Vṛṣabhānu-Nandinī's love, flies in all directions in the sky of loving devotion.

sa ca tāsām dāna vyavahāro bāhyaḥ abhilaṣita vāstava eva (Viśvanātha) "The actual relish of the mellows of love, which was Their highest aspiration, was concealed by the external event of the Dāna-*līlā*."

Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmīpāda has written:

*yasyādhyakṣaḥ sakala haṭhinām ādāde cakravartī
sulkam nānyad vraja mṛgadṛśam arpaṇād vighrahasya
ghaṭṭasyoccair madhukara rucas tasya dhāma prapañcāḥ
śyāma prasthaḥ prathayatu sadā śarma govardhano naḥ*

(*Stavamālā*)

"May Govardhana Hill, where Kṛṣṇa became the king of the toll-station, which was coloured like a blackbee, and which made the tableland become coloured bluish-black, and where He did not ask any other tax from Vraja's doe-eyed *gopīs* but their bodies, grant us all auspiciousness!" The *rasika* devotees can still experience all of this.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! The most fragrant and lustrous Śyāma-vedī at the Dāna-Ghāṭī on top of your good self is a witness to this most relishable pastime even now."

In other words, when the *rasika* devotees of Kṛṣṇa see this place they feel as if Rādhā-Śyāma's dazzling bodily luster illuminates the Śyāma-vedī and when they smell the fragrance of this place they feel that the transcendental fragrance of Their bodies is scenting this place.

"O Girirāja! Hankering for the relish of a drop from that ocean of bliss I am hoping to attain residence at your base!"

nija nikaṭa nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam.

*ohe girirāja tomāra premamaya rūpa;
rādhā-kṛṣṇera dāna lilāra sākṣi-svarūpa
divya kānti parimāla 'śyāma-vedī' nāma;
prakāśa koriyā tumi ati bhāgyavān
rasika bhakata gaṇera ānanda vardhana;
koriteche sarva kṣaṇa ohe govardhana
parama nirjana sthāna tuyā pāda-deśe;
sthāna diyā dhanya koro lilāra uddeśe*

"Ohe Girirāja! Your love-filled form is the direct witness of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's Dāna-līlā, and you are very fortunate to reveal the place known as Śyāma-vedī, which is endowed with divine luster and fragrance and which increases the ecstasy of the *rasika* devotees at every moment. Please bless me by granting me a place to stay at your most solitary base, so that I can witness the transcendental pastimes there."

VERSE 5:

*hari-dayitam apūrvam rādhikā-kunḍam ātma-
priya-sakham iha kaṇṭhe narmaṇāliṅgya guptaḥ
nava-yuva-yuga-khelās tatra paśyan raho me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana tvam*

hari dayitam - dear to Hari; *apūrvam* - wonderful; *rādhikā kunḍam* - Rādhikā's lake; *ātma* - own; *priya* - dear; *sakham* - friend; *iha* - here; *kaṇṭhe* - around the neck; *narmana* - jokingly; *āliṅgya* - embracing; *guptaḥ* - secretly; *nava yuva* - youthful; *yuga* - couple; *khelāḥ* - play; *tatra* - there; *paśyan* - seeing; *raho* - privately; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikaṭa* - nearby; *nivāsam* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! Affectionately and secretly you embrace the neck of your own dear friend, Hari's dear wonderful lake Rādhākunḍa, secretly watching the pastimes of the youthful Divine Couple. Please allow me to live close to you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: Śrīpāda Raghunātha describes the glories of the different pastime-places around Śrī Girirāja and the sweetness of the pastimes that take place there, and prays to be allowed to reside in these pastime-places at the base of Śrī Girirāja. To that it is as if Śrī Girirāja says: "O Raghunātha! There are many places all around me! Tell me frankly in which place you like to reside!" Experiencing these words of Girirāja Śrī Raghunātha reveals his desire to reside at Śrī Rādhākunḍa at the base of Girirāja in this verse.

Kuṇḍavāsī Śrī Raghunātha is exclusively attached to residing at **Śrī Rādhākunḍa**. Sitting on the bank of Śrī Rādhākunḍa he

is floating in his own tears while writing this 'Stavāvalī.' He has no desire to leave the bank of Śrī-kuṇḍa to go anywhere else. He/she is Kuṇḍeśvarī's *kiṅkarī*, and Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is millions of times dearer to him than his own life. At the end of Vilāpa Kusumāñjali he has written:

*sva kuṇḍam tava lolākṣi sa priyāyāḥ sadāspadam
atraiva mama saṁvāsa ihaiva mama saṁsthiti (97)*

"O restless-eyed Śrī Rādhē! This *kuṇḍa* of Yours is the dear most playground of You and Your heart's lover Śrī Kṛṣṇa. On the bank of this Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa I live. May I reside here forevermore.

saṁvāsa saṁsthiti means: "Living there completely and remaining there fully." These words reveal Śrīpāda's firm fixation in residing at Rādhākuṇḍa. In his Śrī Prārthanāśraya Caturdaśakam (3) he has written:

*udañcat kārūṇyāmrta vitarāṇair jīvita jagad
yuva-dvandvaṁ gandhair guṇa sumanasāṁ vāsita janam
kṛpāṁ cen mayyevaṁ kirati na tadā tvaṁ kuru tathā
yathā me śrī kuṇḍe sakhi sakalam aṅgaṁ nivasati*

"O *sakhi* (Rūpa Mañjarī)! If this Youthful Couple, Who enlivens the whole world by distributing the nectar of Their mercy and Who scents all the people with the fragrance of Their flower-like attributes, do not bestow Their mercy on me, then please arrange for it that I can always stay at Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa!" Through this we can understand how firmly fixed Śrīpāda was in residing at Rādhākuṇḍa.

In his prayer to Govardhana Hill for residence at Rādhākuṇḍa Śrīpāda first says: *hari-dayitam apūrvam rādhikā-*

kuṇḍam "Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is unique and is most dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa." In the Padma Purāṇa it is said:

*yathā rādhā priyā viṣṇos tasyāḥ kuṇḍam priyam tathā
sarva gopīṣu saivaikā viṣṇor atyanta vallabhā*

"Just as Śrī Rādhā is dearer to Śrī Nanda-Nandana than His own life, so is Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa. Of all the *gopīs* Śrī Rādhā is Nanda-Nandana's dear most beloved." She is endowed with *mādanākhyā-mahā-bhāva* and She is His dear most beloved because of Her attributes of love, beauty and good fortune.

Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is similarly incomparably dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

When the *kuṇḍa* appeared in this world Śrī Kṛṣṇa personally revealed it in His words:

*proce hariḥ priyatame tava kuṇḍam etat
mat kuṇḍato'pi mahimādhikam astu loke
atraiva me salila kelir ihaiva nityam
snānam yathā tvam asi tadvad idam saro me*

Śrī Hari said: "O Dearest One! May Your *kuṇḍa* be even more glorious in this world than mine! Here I will always bathe and play in the water, because this lake is as dear to Me as You are!"

In this way Hari's beloved Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is **unique**. Priyājī's Sarasī (Rādhā's lake) is the abode of an enchanting beauty equal to that of Priyājī's, and it shines like the crown jewel of the Yugalā's playgrounds in Vraja-maṇḍala, keeping all these playgrounds on its banks and in its waters.

*kuṇḍera mādhuri yeno rādhāra madhurimā;
kuṇḍera mahimā yeno rādhāra mahimā (C.C.)*

"The *kuṇḍa*'s sweetness is like Rādhā's sweetness and the *kuṇḍa*'s greatness is like Rādhā's greatness."

Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatipāda has described the uniqueness of the *kuṇḍa*'s natural beauty as follows:

*rādhā-kṛṣṇa raha kathānuvadanād āścarya mādhyavad
dhvānaiḥ śrī śuka sārīkā-vyatikarair ānanda sarvasvadam;
karṇākaraṣi kuhūḥ kuhūr iti kalālāpair vṛtaṁ kokilair
nṛtyan matta mayūram anya vihaḡaiś cānanda kolāhalam
tan madhye nava maṇju kuṇja valayaṁ śobhā vibhūtyāsamā-
nordhvaṁ divya vicitra ratna latikādyānanda puṣpa śriyā;
antastalpa varaṁ varopakaraṇair āḍhyaṁ samantād dadhad
rādhā-mādhava bhukta bhogyam akhilānandaika sāmṛājya-bhūḥ
madhyaitādrṣa kuṇja maṇḍalam aho kuṇḍaṁ mahā mohanam
sāndrānanda mahā-rasāmṛta bharaṇiḥ svacchaiḥ sadā sambhṛtam;
ratnābaddha catustaṭi vilasitaṁ sad ratna sopānavat
tīrthaṁ śrī taṭa sat kadambaka talacchāyā maṇi kuṭṭimam*

"The *kuṇjas* give great delight with their sweet and amazing male and female parrots which loudly repeat Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's intimate talks, and they are decorated with cuckoos which delight the ears with their unclear sweet singing of *kuhū kuhū*, intoxicated peacocks which beautify the place with their dancing and various birds which make a great ecstatic tumult.

These fresh groves have attained a peerless status with their treasures of beauty and the blissful flowers of the wonderful and divine jeweled vines. Here again are the greatest couches which are endowed with the most excellent ingredients for the enjoyment of Śrī Rādhā and Mādhava. In this way nothing else

can be perceived anywhere but the kingdom of transcendental bliss".

"In the middle of these *kuñjas* is a charming pond, which is always filled with clear nectar-like water which crystalizes the strong flavours of deep bliss. Its four banks are studded by jewels; the *ghāṭs* (landing places) are beautified by super excellent jeweled staircases and enchanting jeweled platforms which lie in the shade of Kadamba-trees."

Nowhere in the Vrajamaṇḍala is there any playground for Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava which is so solitary, filled with a wealth of natural beauty and suitable in all respects. Therefore Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa is the place where the most confidential midday-pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava and Their *sakhīs* are taking place.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! You are embracing your dear most Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa around the neck as the dear most friend and thus you have become so fortunate to be able to secretly and blissfully witness the most intimate midday-pastimes of Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Mādhava and relish their sweet mellows. Please allow me to reside on the bank of this your dear most Rādhākuṇḍa, which is situated close to you, so that I can also become blessed with the relish of the sweet mellows of these pastimes!"

*govardhana! tumi mora nivedana dhara;
tomāra nikāṭe sei sthāna dāna koro
priya sakhā śrī kuṇḍere ālīngana kori;
gupta bhāve sadā hero vilāsa mādhuri
kṛṣṇa priya rādhākuṇḍe yugalera khelā;
vibhōra hoiyā heri se ānanda līlā*

"O Govardhana! Please hear my prayer! Please give me a place close to your dear friend Śrī Rādhākunḍa, whom you embrace to be able to secretly watch the sweet pastimes of the Yugala Kīśora there, so that I can also be immersed in bliss while watching these pastimes at Kṛṣṇa's dear most Rādhākunḍa."

VERSE 6:

***sthala-jala-tala-śaṣpair bhūruha-chāyayā ca
pratipadam anukālam hanta samvardhayan gāḥ
tri-jagati nija-gotraṁ sārthakaṁ khyāpayan me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam***

sthala - land; *jala* - water; *tala* - surface; *śaṣpaiḥ* - with grasses; *bhūruha* - trees; *cchāyayā* - with shade; *ca* - and; *prati* - each; *padam* - step; *anu-kālam* - every moment; *hanta* - alas!; *samvardhayan* - keeps; *gāḥ* - cows; *tri-jagati* - three worlds; *nija* - own; *gotraṁ* - name; *sārthakaṁ* - meaningful; *khyāpayan* - proclaiming; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikaṭa* - nearby; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! You make your name (keeper of cows) meaningful by always providing land, water, grasses and the shade of your trees to the cows and thus you proclaim yourself in the three worlds! Please allow me to live close by you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this verse Śrīpāda Raghunātha ascertains how suitable the name of Govardhana is and prays to be allowed to live close to the Hill. At different

places Śrī Girirāja has facilities where the cows are herded, where they can drink water, table-lands where they can rest, places where there is grass for them to graze and places where there are trees whose shades protect them from the heat and rain. Because he thus protects and maintains the cows the hill is justly called *go* (cows) *vardhana* (protector). When He was seven years old Lord Śrī Gopāladeva told Nanda and the Vrajavāsīs just that when they were about to worship Indra with a sacrifice and He made it clear to them that they should give that up and worship Govardhana Hill instead.

*na naḥ puro janapadā
na grāmā na grhā vayam
vanaukasas tāta nityam
vana śaila nivāsinaḥ
tasmād gavām brāhmaṇānām
adreś cārabhyatām makhah
ya indra-yāga-sambhārās
tair ayam sādhyatām makhah*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.24.24-25):

"We do not possess any cities, territories, villages, or even houses, O father! We are cowherders, therefore we are eternally forest- and mountain-dwellers! Let us therefore offer sacrifice to the cows, the *brāhmaṇas* and the (Govardhana) Hill!" Śrīdhara Svāmī explains in his commentary on this Bhāgavata-verse: *asmākaṁ yoga-kṣema hetur vana śailādaya eveti bhāvaḥ* "O father! The cows provide our livelihood, and this hill provides everything to them! Therefore he is our worshipable Godhead (instead of Indra)!" The cowherdmen floated in an ocean of topmost bliss when they heard these

reasonable words of Gopāla and they gave up their traditional worship of Indra to turn to worship of Govardhana. As the cowherds commenced this the cows, that were their means of subsistence, filled all directions with an ecstatic tumult, and this increased the bliss of the cowherds unlimitedly.

*ānanda janano ghoṣo mahān mudita gokulaḥ
turyapraṇāda ghoṣaś ca vṛṣabhānām ca garjjitaiḥ
hāmvaravaś ca vatsānām gopānām harṣa vardhanaḥ*

(Hari Vamśam)

"When the Govardhana pūjā commenced in Vraja a great ecstatic tumult arose in all directions and the cows went beside themselves of bliss. Transcendental sounds were heard, cows and bulls were bellowing, calves could be heard to moo in all directions and all the people of Vraja were submerged in an ocean of bliss."

While Govardhana was worshipped the Lord Himself assumed the wonderful form of Śrī Girirāja and offered boons, so the cowherds prayed for an increase in their number of cows. He also personally ordered them:

*sa uvāca tato gopān giri prabhavayā giriḥ
adya prabhṛti cejyo'haṁ goṣu ced asti vo dayā
ahaṁ vaḥ prathamo devaḥ sarva kāmakaraḥ śubhaḥ
mama prabhāvāc ca gavām ayutāny-eva bhokṣatha
śivaś ca vo bhaviṣyāmi mad bhaktānām vane vane
raṁsyē ca saha yusmābhir yathā divigatas tathā
ye ceme prathitā gopa nanda gopa purogamāḥ
evam prītaḥ prayacchāmi gopānām vipulam dhanam*

(Hari Vamśam)

With a voice as deep as the clouds the huge form of Govardhana told the cowherds: "If you are kind to your cows, then you should worship me from today on! I am your first worshipable deity and I can fulfill all your desires and arrange for your welfare! By my power you can enjoy the possession of many thousands of cows! You are my devotees and there is auspiciousness for my devotees in all the forests (in the form of ample grass, water etc. for the maintenance of the cows).

I will play with you as I ramble with my associates in my transcendental abode! With love I will give ample wealth to all the renowned cowherds of Vraja, headed by Nanda Mahārāja!"

For this reason Śrī Govardhana, who deserves his name, provides the cows with plenty of fragrant, soft, enjoyable and nutritious grass, which gives them wonderful strength, nourishment and satisfaction and which will increase their huge output of milk, making it smell like lotus flowers.

This milk will please Śrī Gopāladeva and thus the love of the cowherders for Gopāla's lotus feet will increase beyond description! Similarly, Govardhana quenches the thirst of the cows and cowherd boys with cool drinkable water from its brooks and cascades and provides them with places to rest and protection against rain and heat under the thick shade of his trees. Govardhana also expands the service of the cows through various means, like providing them tablelands where they can blissfully walk around or lie down to rest. In this way Govardhana Hill makes his name, meaning 'protector and maintainer of cows, useful!'

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! Please allow me to live close by you, so that I can become blessed with the vision of my beloved Śrīman Madana Gopāla-deva and His friends, who are herding and protecting the cows there. Hence I say: *nija nikṣaṇa nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam.*"

*sthala jala tala ghāsa vṛkṣa-chāyā dāne;
 vardhana koroho tumi sadā gābhī-gaṇe
 tāi govardhana nāma anvartha tomāra;
 ataeva tava pade prārthanā āmāra
 sevāra saubhāgya tomāra tri-jagate khyāti;
 tomāra nikāṭe āmāya dibe ki vasati?
 gocāraṇe śrī govinde kon śubha kṣaṇe;
 niścaya pāibo dekhā tuyā saṅga guṇe*

"Because you maintain the cows with your land, water, grass and the shade of your trees you fully deserve the name Govardhana. Therefore I offer one prayer unto you. You are famous throughout the three worlds for your fortune of devotional service. Will you allow me to reside close to you? Then I would certainly be able to see Śrī Govinda herding His cows at some blessed moment, on the strength of your association!"

VERSE 7:

***surapati-kṛta-dīrgha-drohata goṣṭha-rakṣāṁ
 tava nava-grha-rūpasyāntare kurvataiva
 agha-baka-ripuṇocair datta-māna drutaṁ me
 nija-nikāṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam***

surapati - the king of demigods; *kṛta* - done; *dīrgha* - long; *drohataḥ* - from enmity; *goṣṭha* - Vraja; *rakṣāṁ* - protection; *tava* - your; *nava* - new; *grha* - house; *rūpasya* - of the form; *antare* - within; *kurvata* - done; *eva* - surely; *agha* - Aghāsura; *baka* - Bakāsura; *ripuṇā* - by the enemy; *uccaiḥ* - greatly; *datta* - given; *māna* - honour; *drutaṁ*

- swiftly; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikṭa* - nearby; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the enemy of Aghāsura and Bakāsura, quickly gave you a lot of honour when He used you as a new house for the people of Vraja to live in, protecting them from the long lasting anger of the king of demigods, Indra. Please allow me to live close to you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: How many hundreds of Śrī Girirāja Govardhana's glories become manifest in the heart of Śrīpāda Raghunātha, which is permeated by *viśuddha sattva*!

Śrī-Śrī Girirāja is the unrivalled playground of the Original Personality of Godhead Vrajendra-Nandana! Hari dāsa Varya, the unrivalled servant of Śrī Hari (Govardhana), is always immersed in the mellows of service, providing all the paraphernalia for service at hand.

When the Lord wants to accept service from a particular servant, although there are hundreds of other servants around and there are hundreds of other means through which He can be served, but still the Lord rejects them all, then that servant is truly blessed. Śrīla Govardhana is such an exclusive servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa; this is ascertained in this verse.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa killed the powerful demons Aghā and Bakāsura, for whom Indra and the other demigods were fearfully hiding behind the clouds without difficulty. He who casually could kill such powerful demons in the course of His childhood pastimes could easily have protected Vraja from the onslaught of the ordinary Indra through some other means. Therefore we can't find any other reason for Him to have gone through such a lot of trouble by carrying the Govardhana Hill for seven days and nights.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "He only did it to give great honour to Govardhana Hill. Girirāja obtained the great fortune and honour of having been held like an umbrella on the blue sapphire rod-like arm of the Original Personality of Godhead Vrajendra-Nandana. In this way he attained the greatest service and the greatest honour by protecting Śrī Kṛṣṇa's beloved Gokula-vāsīs. Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has written:

*nila stambhojjvala ruci-bharair maṇḍite bahu-daṇḍe
chatra-cchāyām dadhad agharipor labdha saptāha vāsaḥ
dhārāpāta glāpita-manasām rakṣitā gokulānām
kṛṣṇa-preyān prathayatu sadā śarma govardhano naḥ*

(*Stavamālā*)

"May Girirāja Govardhana, who was beautifully held like an umbrella on Śrī Kṛṣṇa's rod-like arm, which resembled a sapphire pillar endowed with dazzling luster, for seven days and nights, and who was thus fortunate enough to protect the people of Gokula, who had become very distressed because of being showered by Indra's heavy rains, bestow all auspiciousness upon us!"

While lifting Govardhana Hill, Śrī Kṛṣṇa made a new, large and enchanting home (for the people of Vraja) under the hill. In this connection it is written in the Vaiṣṇava-Toṣaṇī-ṭikā (commentary on Śrīmad Bhāgavata by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmīpāda) on the Bhāgavata-verse *ityuktvaikena hastena* (10.25.19):

*tatra vraja kartṛka darśana saukaryāya śrī kṛṣṇa-kartṛka dhāraṇa
saukaryāya śobhā-viśeṣāya ca idam kalpyate utthāpana samaye līlā-
śaktyānukūlyena parvata madhyādho-bhāgāt vicchidyā*

*kuṭṭimāyamāno mahā-śilā samuccaya eko madhya gartye sthitaḥ
yaṁ śilā samuccayam āruhya yaṁ nimnaṁ parvata madhya-deśaṁ
śrī-hastena viṣṭabhya ca sukhaṁ dadhāreti*

"When Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhana Hill with His left hand, the people of Vraja had a good opportunity to admire His lotus like face. On the ground under the hill was an elevated spot where Kṛṣṇa could stand on, and on the bottom of the hill itself was a lower portion where Kṛṣṇa held His finger (to hold the hill). Kṛṣṇa was, after all, only seven years old and He was the smallest of His clan. If these spots had not been there, there wouldn't have been any height for all the big cowherdmen to stand under the hill or to gaze at Kṛṣṇa's beauty for seven days and nights".

In the Hari Vamśa, Kṛṣṇa says:

*śailotpātana bhūr eṣa mahatī nirmītā mayā
trailokyam apy usāhate rakṣitum kiṁ punar vrajam*

"There is enough place to protect all the three worlds under this Govardhana Hill I'm lifting, what to speak of just the people of Vraja?"

There should not be any doubt or astonishment about this, because even one speck of dust from the Lord's transcendental abode can contain all the innumerable mundane universes. The Garga-Saṁhitā describes how the Vrajavāsīs were protected from the vast showers of Indra's devastating Samvārtaka-clouds for seven days and nights:

*jalaugham āgataṁ vīkṣya bhagavāṁs tad girer adhaḥ;
sudarśanaṁ tathā śeṣaṁ manasājñāṁ cakāra ha
koṭi sūrya prabhaṁ cādrer ūrdhvaṁ cakraṁ sudarśanam;*

*dhārā sampātām apibad agastya iva maithila
 adho'dhas tad gīreḥ śeṣaḥ kuṇḍalibhūtam āsthitah;
 rurodha taj jalam dirgham yathā velā mahodadhim
 saptāham susthiras tasthau govardhana dharo hariḥ;
 śrī kṛṣṇacandraṁ paśyantaś cakorā iva te sthitāḥ*

"Although Śrī Kṛṣṇa gave shelter to the Vrajavāsīs by holding Govardhana Hill with His left hand, Indra would not stop showering them. Thinking that the cowherds might become afraid that the huge streams of rainwater might inundate the cavity under Govardhana Hill where they were standing, Kṛṣṇa mentally ordered His Sudarśana-chakra and the divine serpent Śeṣa to come.

Invisible to others, the Sudarśana-chakra hung over Govardhana Hill, shining like ten million suns and drinking the rainstreams just as Agastya Muni drank the water of all the seven oceans. Meanwhile the serpent Śeṣa formed a ring around the cavity under the hill where the Vrajavāsīs were hiding to stop the water from pouring in, just as a barrage stops the water of the ocean from inundating the towns and villages on the coast. Thus Hari stood steadily for seven days lifting Govardhana Hill while the Vrajavāsīs drank the nectar from His moon like face, like thirsty Cakora-birds".

By Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mere wish He could have stunned the hands of the thunderbolts and the showers of the clouds within a moment, but just to reveal the fortune of Girirāja Govardhana He made Indra continue his hostilities so that He had to lift the Hill singlehandedly for seven days and thus to also give the Vrajavāsīs the fortunate opportunity to relish the sweetness of this indescribable and amazing pastime of His for each moment of these seven days and nights.

Śrīmat Jīva Gosvāmī gives an indication of this indescribable pastime of Giridhārī by writing:

*saptāhar niśa nirmītā giribhṛtā ye ye vilāsas tadā
tān kalpaiḥ saha saptabhiḥ kathayitum śeṣo'pi nāśeṣataḥ
evam ced vacanair amuṁś tricaturaiḥ sac cāturī varjitaḥ
tūrṇam varṇitavān kavīḥ svayam asau durbhūya dodūyate*

(Gopāla Campū)

‘Even in seven *kalpas* (millennia) the thousand-headed Śeṣa could not finish His description of Giridhārī’s pastime of lifting the Govardhana Hill for seven days! If any poet would try to describe it in just three or four stories, he would simply gain misery and infamy!’

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! Who will not desire to live close to a highly fortunate great devotee of Lord Hari like you? Therefore *nija nikāṭa nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam*.

*agha-bakāsura śatru govinda āpane;
indrera jighāṁsā hoite vrajavāsi-jane
nava grha rūpa tomāra yei madhya-sthāne;
rakṣā lāgi vāsa dilo krame sāta dine
ei rūpe tava māna varddhana korilo;
haridāsa varya nāma sārthaka hoilo
ohe girirāja more tomāra nikāṭe;
sthāna diyā dhanya koro yāci karapuṭe*

"O Govardhana! Govinda, the enemy of Aghāsura and Bakāsura, gave shelter to the Vrajavāsīs for seven days in a new house that He made of you, just to protect them from Indra’s attacks. In this way He increased your fame and made you

deserve your name Haridāsa Varya, the best of Hari's servants.
Ohe Girirāja! I pray to you with folded hands: Please bless me
by giving me a place to live close by you.

VERSE 8:

*giri-nṛpa-hari-dāsa-śreṇi-varyeti-nāmā-
mṛtam idam uditam śrī-rādhikā-vaktra-candrāt
vraja-nava-tilakatve klpta-vedaiḥ sphuṭam me
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsam dehi govardhana tvam*

giri - of mountains; *nṛpa* - king; *hari dāsa* - servants of Lord Hari;
śreṇi - class; *varya* - the best; *iti* - thus; *nāma* - name; *amṛtam* - nectar;
idam - this; *uditam* - appeared; *śrī rādhikā* - Śrī Rādhikā; *vaktra* -
mouth; *candrāt* - from the moon; *vraja* - of Vraja; *nava* - new; *tilakatve*
- as the tilak marking; *klpta* - made; *vedaiḥ* - by the Vedas; *sphuṭam*
- manifested; *me* - my; *nija* - own; *nikaṭa* - nearby; *nivāsam* -
residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

**O Govardhana, whose nectarean name of ‘best of Lord
Hari’s servants’ emanated from Śrī Rādhikā’s moon like
mouth! You are the king of mountains and the Vedas
describe you as the new tilaka of Vraja. Please allow me
to live close to you!**

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In the previous verse Śrīpāda
Raghunātha revealed the great glories of Śrī Girirāja in which
the Lord Himself gave him such a great honour to use him to
protect the people of Vraja, and while ascertaining this he
revealed his desire to live at the base of Śrī Girirāja.

It is as if Śrī Girirāja Govardhana says: "Ohe Raghunātha! You are the greatest scholar! Remember Śrī Kṛṣṇa's statements in the Padma-Purāna: *panca yojanam evāsti vanam me deha rūpakaṁ*:

"This Vṛndāvana which extends over forty miles is My body." Therefore your devotional desires will be fulfilled by living at any place in Vraja, which is the wish-yielding body of Śrī Kṛṣṇa! Why are you over-praising me by calling me 'the best place of Vraja'?"

Thinking about these words of Girirāja, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa says: "O Girirāja! My praises are not exaggerated! Śrī Vṛṣabhānavī Rādhā Herself has called you 'the best of Hari's servants' in the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, the crown jewel of all Purāṇas:

*hantāyam adrīr abalā haridāsa varyo
yad rāma kṛṣṇa caraṇa sparśa pramodāt
mānam tanoti saha go gaṇayos tayor yat
pānīya sūyavasa kandara kanda mūlaiḥ*

(Śrīmad Bhāgavata 10.21.18)

"O girls! This mountain is the best of Lord Hari's servants and he feels very happy when Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma's lotus feet touch him! He gives all honour to Them and Their cows by providing them with water for drinking, soft grass, caves and roots!"

Śrīmad Bhāgavata makes this statement in the *veṇu-gīta*-chapter, which describes the *gopīs' pūrva-rāga* (falling in love), but Śrīmat Dāsa Gosvāmī clearly states that the words uttered in this verse emanate from the moon like mouth of the crown jewel of all the *gopīs*, Vṛṣabhānu-nandinī.

Certainly the crown jewels of devotees like Dhruva, Prahlāda, Nārada, Vyāsa and Śukadeva gave up everything to serve the Lord, but no other devotee but Govardhana could offer his own body to the Lord as His playground. That is why Śrī Rādhā's moon like mouth calls him 'the best of Hari's servants'.

In Śrīmad Bhāgavata there are a number of devotees called Hari dās: king Yudhiṣṭhira, Uddhava and Govardhana. But of them Govardhana is the best for he offers Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and Their dear most cows and cowherd boy friends fresh grass as soft sitting places, cool caves, fruits and roots for eating, the shade of his trees, the trees' honey for drinking, mineral pigments for make-up, different flowers for garlands, caves with jewelled couches as sitting places and its shining rocks as jewelled lamps.

He also shows all the signs of transcendental ecstatic love on his body, such as goose pimples by his erect grass, sweating by his moisture, tears by his cascades etc.

When he is touched by the lotus feet of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, so in all respects he is the crown jewel of all of Lord Hari's devotees!

Śrīpāda Raghunātha dāsa says: "O Girirāja! Just as material nectar which trickles from the moon is enjoyable for the demigods, so the nectar of your glories as **Hari's greatest servant** emanates from Śrī Rādhā's moon like mouth to be relished by the saintly devotees. (Previously, in Manaḥ Śikṣā verse 11, Śrīpāda has mentioned five kinds of nectar with which to serve Girirāja)

O Girirāja! You told me that Kṛṣṇa says in the Purāṇas that I should give up living close to you and that I should live in Vṇḍāvana. We are Rādhikā's maidservants, we can't always

understand the tricky words of this crown jewel of cheaters (Kṛṣṇa)! But our Īśvarī (Rādhā) is very honest and sincere! We have full faith in Her nectarean words (in the above-quoted Bhāgavata verse). Moreover, She is our very life! We can also easily understand that Śrīmad Bhāgavata, the crown jewel of all the Purāṇas, has much more authority than the other Purāṇas. And especially for those who wish to relish *rasa*, the association of Kṛṣṇa's *rasika* devotees is even more important than Kṛṣṇa's own association. The Bhāgavata (3.7.19) says:

ratir asau bhavet tivraḥ padayor vyasanardanaḥ: "As a result of serving or associating with great souls, intense love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet is attained."

And Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī says (in B.R.S.): *rasikāsaṅga raṅginām*: "For one who wants to taste *rasa*, the association with *rasika* devotees is very blissful."

That is why my ultimate desire is to live close by you.

And I also say: "O Giripate! The Vedic scriptures say that you are the *tilaka* on Vraja-maṇḍala's forehead."²¹ In the Garga Saṁhitā, Nārada Muni tells king Bahulāśva of Mithila:

*govardhana giri rājan sarva tīrtha-varaḥ smṛtaḥ
vṛndāvanam ca goloka mukuta'driḥ prapūjitaḥ
gopa-gopī gavāṁ raksā pradaḥ kṛṣṇa priyo mahān
pūrṇa brahmātapatram yas tasmāt tīrtha-varaś ca kaḥ*

"O King! Govardhana Hill is the best of all holy places! It is the crown of Vṛndāvana and Goloka and it is always protecting the cowherd boys, the *gopīs*, and the cows. It is most dear to

²¹ With 'new *tilaka* of Vraja', Dāsa Gosvāmī means to say that Govardhana Hill is the best of holy places, ornamenting Vraja as one ornaments one's forehead with a mark of *tilaka*.

Kṛṣṇa and it serves as an umbrella for the full *brahman*. What greater holy place could there be?" Therefore, O Girirāja! Please bless me by allowing me to live close by you!

*śrī rādhikā nija sakhī sambodhana kore;
candra-mukhe tomāra guṇa kīrtana ye kore
hantāyam adrīr abalā haridāsa varya;
haridāsa gaṇa madhye tumi śīrodharya
bhāgavata padye tomāra ei nāmāmṛta;
prakāśa koriyā viśva koilo āpyāyita
tilaka svarūpe tumi vrajera lalāṭe;
bhūṣita āchaho śāstra kohe akapaṭe
ohe girirāja! tumi mahā-śakti-dhara;
pāda-deśe dīna jane vāsa dāna koro*

"O Govardhana! Śrī Rādhikā glorifies you with Her moon like mouth when She tells Her girlfriend '*hantāyam adrīr abalā haridāsa varya*': You are the crown jewel of all of Hari's servants.

Thus She revealed the nectar of your name to the world in this Bhāgavata-verse. The scriptures boldly declare that you are the *tilaka* that decorates Vraja's forehead. Ohe Girirāja! You are so powerful! Please give this fallen soul a place to stay at your base!"

VERSE 9:

*nija-jana-yuta-rādhā-kṛṣṇa-maitrīrasākta-
vraja-nara-paśu-pakṣi-vrāta-saukhyaiika-dātaḥ
agaṇita-karuṇatvān maṁ urī-kṛtya tāntaṁ
nija-nikāṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam*

nija - own; *jana* - people; *yuta* - endowed; *rādhā kṛṣṇa maitriḥ* - with friendship for Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa; *asāṅkta* - attached; *vraja* - of Vraja; *nara* - people; *paśu* - animals; *pakṣi* - birds; *vrāta* - to the hosts; *saukhya* -happiness; *eka* - only; *dātaḥ* - donor; *agaṇita* - immeasurable; *karuṇatvat* - out of mercy; *mādhuri* - sweetness; *kṛtya* - doing; *tāntaṁ* - weary; *nija* - own; *nikāṭa* - nearby; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! You are the only giver of joy to the people, animals and birds of Vraja who are attached to the friendship of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and Their groups (the *gopīs* and *gopas*). Please accept weary me out of your unlimited mercy and allow me to live close to you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: After proclaiming Govardhana to be *haridāsa-varya* Śrīpāda Raghunātha now mentions another characteristic of Govardhana.

It is natural that the devotees of Hari, whose hearts and minds are filled with the service of the Lord, also develop great love, faith and friendship for other devotees of Hari. Therefore all the people, animals and birds of Vraja who are befriended with Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa and Their friends in Vraja have unlimited faith and love for Girirāja, who gives topmost bliss to them.

Those who whose hearts are lovingly attached to Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa perceive Their different confidential pastimes as soon as they see Haridāsa-varya Girirāja. On the bank of Śrī Rādhākūṇḍa Their very wonderful and most confidential, long-lasting midday pastimes take place, and around Govardhana there are lonely places where the *Dāna-līlā*, the *Rāsa-līlā* and the boating pastimes can freely take place.

Apart from that Girirāja bears all the hallmarks of these confidential pastimes, giving topmost bliss to the loving devotees of the Yugala Kīśora. Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmī wrote in his Stavamālā:

*gāndharvāyāḥ surata kalahoddāmatā vāvadūkaiḥ
klānta śrotrotpala valayibhiḥ kṣipta piñchāvataṁsaiḥ
kuñjais talpopari pariluṭhad vaijayantī paritaiḥ
puṇyāṅga śrīḥ prathayatu sadā śarma govardhano naḥ*

"May Govardhana Hill, in whose beautiful enchanting *kuñjas* the ear-decorating lotuses, the bangles made of lotus-stems and the peacock feather-crowns wilt and fall, where the Vaijayantī-flower garlands roll on the bed, revealing Śrī Rādhā's intense erotic battle, bestow all auspiciousness unto us!"

The animals, birds and men who take shelter of Vraja-dhāma are all naturally attached to Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa in love and friendship. All the cows that Śrī Kṛṣṇa herds are endowed with a natural motherly love for Him. The love of the cows and calves for Śrī Kṛṣṇa was described by the *gopīs* themselves during their *pūrva-rāga* (falling-in-love) stage:

*gāvaś ca kṛṣṇa mukha nirmita veṇugīta
pīyūṣam uttabhita karṇapuṭaiḥ pibantyaḥ
śāvēḥ snuta stana-payāḥ kavalāḥ sma tasthur
govindam ātmani dṛśāśru kalāḥ sprśantyāḥ*

(*Bhāgavata* 10.21.13)

"The cows too, when they drink the nectar of Govinda's flute song with the raised cups of their ears along with their calves which drink from their udders, embrace Him within their

hearts and stand motionlessly before Him with tear filled eyes!"
The cows are always kept and protected as Kṛṣṇa's personal
pets and He cuddles them in a motherly mood. But even the
more distant deer in the forest carry a great love for Kṛṣṇa:

*dhanyāḥ sma mūḍha matayo'pi hariṇya etā
yā nanda-nandanam upātta vicitra veśam
ākarmaṇya veṇu raṇitaṁ saha kṛṣṇa-sārāḥ
pūjāṁ dadhur viracitaṁ praṇayāvalokaiḥ*

(*Bhāgavata* 10.21.11)

"Blessed are these foolish deer for when they hear the flute
song of Nanda's wonderfully dressed son, they come along with
their husbands the black antelopes to worship Him with their
loving glances!"

Even the birds in Vraja are not ordinary birds - they are
munis who carry natural love for Kṛṣṇa. That is also described
by the Vraja-*devīs*:

*prāyo batāmba vihagā munayo vane'smin
kṛṣṇekṣitaṁ tad uḍitaṁ kala veṇugītaṁ
āruhya ye drumabhujan rucira prabālān
śṛṇvanty amīlita dṛśo vigatānya vācaḥ*

(*Bhāgavata* 10.21.14)

"O mother!²² All these birds here in the forest are sages who
are rising on the trees which have fresh sprouts on their

²² Although there is no one in the assembly of *pūrvarāgavati*
Vrajasundarīs who should have been addressed as mother, the address
'O mother!' is easily used by an astonished woman.

branches, listening to Kṛṣṇa's flute song and staring at Him with wide open eyes, forgetting all other words (such as the Vedas and Upanisads in which they are usually very learned)!"

In the same way the male and female parrots in the trees wake Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa up early in the morning, help Them to meet Each other at noontime, sing beautiful poems about Their love and forms and delight the Yugala with their *rasika* quarrels in the afternoon. The old she-monkey Kakkhatī helps them out of Their complacent morning hang-over, etc.

Because it is such a lovely place of solitude for the Yugala-pastimes, Govardhana Hill gives the greatest joy also to all these devoted animals and birds of Vraja, and because Girirāja gives the greatest happiness to the animals and birds Śrīpāda Raghunātha covets a place to stay nearby him.

It is as if Girirāja says: "Ohe Raghunātha Dāsa! All you say is true! The greatest loving devotees are blessed by staying close by me, this is how I make them happy. But you don't have such devotion, so how will you be able to attain a position close to me?"

To this Śrī Raghunātha answers: "What you say is true a thousand times! I am very fallen and I have no devotion nor am I doing any *bhajan*, there is no doubt about that! But still I say, O Girirāja, you are the abode of boundless mercy, be merciful to this undevoted soul and bless me by allowing me to live close to you!"

*nija jane veṣṭita ye yugala kiśora;
tāndera maitrī rase yāra sikta kalevara
sei vraja nara paśu pakṣi sukha dātā;
emana dayālu svabhāva āra pābo kothā
kṛpā kori mo adhame aṅgikāra kore;
tomāra nikaṭe vāsa dāna koro more*

O Govardhana! Where can I find such merciful creatures as the delight-bestowing humans, animals and birds of Vraja, whose bodies are sprinkled with the nectar of friendship for the Yugala Kīśora, Who are surrounded by Their own devotees? Please accept a fallen soul like me and allow me to reside close to you!"

VERSE 10:

***nirupadhi-karuṇena śrī-śacīnandanena
tvayi kapaṭi-śaṭho 'pi tvat-priyenārpito 'smi
iti khalu mama yogyāyogyatām mām agrhṇan
nija-nikaṭa-nivāsaṁ dehi govardhana tvam***

nirupadhi - causeless; *karuṇena* - by mercy; *śrī śacī-nandanena* - by Lord Caitanya; *tvayi* - in you; *kapaṭi* - cheater; *śaṭhe* - in a deceitful; *api* - even; *tvat* - you; *priyeṇa* - by the dear; *arpita* - submitted; *asmi* - I am; *iti* -thus; *khalu* - surely; *mama* - my; *yogya* - suitable; *ayogyatām* - being unfit; *tām* - him; *agrhṇan* - not considering; *nija* - own; *nikaṭa* - nearby; *nivāsaṁ* - residence; *dehi* - give; *govardhana* - Govardhana; *tvam* - you.

O Govardhana! Although I am hypocritical and deceitful I was submitted to you by your dear most and causelessly merciful Śrī Sacīnandana (Śrī Caitanya Mahaprabhu). Therefore do not consider whether I am qualified or not but accept me and allow me to live close to you!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In the previous verse Śrī Girirāja said: "Can a person with the devotion like Raghunātha dāsa attain that which the great devotees attain?"

It is as if those words are still ringing in the ears of Raghunātha Dāsa, who is a mine of humility. It is as if Girirāja is still saying: "O Raghunātha! Greatly pious people are so fortunate that they can reside within my vicinity. What kind of pious merit do you have that you desire to live close to me?"

Śrīpāda Raghunātha is absorbed in thinking: "Throughout my life I have never performed any pious acts through which I could attain residence nearby Govardhana Hill!"

Absence of satiation is the nature of *prema*:

*premera svabhāva - yāhā premera sambandha;
se-i māne kṛṣṇe mora nāhi prema gandha*

(C.C. Antya 20)

"It is the nature of *prema* that the lover thinks 'I don't even have a whiff of love for Kṛṣṇa!'"

Śrī Raghunātha dāsa floats on an ocean of humility and the darkness of his despair becomes even deeper. Then at once his heart is illuminated by the light of hope when he remembers the causelessly merciful Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and in this light he speaks this verse.

Humbly and regretfully Śrīpāda says: "O Girirāja! I am very crooked and deceitful! I show a lot of devotion on the outside, but I don't really have any devotion in my heart. Publicly I speak very sweet words, but privately I speak very negatively. You know very well how unqualified I am, but you also know that the merciful Śrī Śacīnandana has submitted me to your lotus feet!" Śrī Caitanya Caritāmṛta (Antya 6, 306-308)

beautifully describes how Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu granted Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī a place near Govardhana Hill, being pleased with his devotion and renunciation:

*raghunātha sei śilā mālā yabe pālā;
 gosāira abhiprāya ei bhāvanā korilā
 śilā diyā more samarpilā govardhane;
 guñjā mālā diyā dilā rādhikā caraṇe
 ānande raghunāthera bāhya vismarāṇa;
 kāya mane sevileṇa gaurāṅga caraṇa*

"When Lord Caitanya gave him His rock from Govardhana Hill and His string of sacred *guñjā*-beads, Raghunātha thought about the Lord's purpose of this as follows: "**The Lord has entrusted me to Govardhana Hill by giving me this rock** and He placed me at the lotus feet of Śrī Rādhikā by giving me this string of *guñjā*-beads!" Raghunātha dāsa was beside himself of ecstasy and served Lord Gaurāṅga's lotus feet with body and mind".

Śrī Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! Although I am very deceitful and crooked, the causelessly merciful Lord Śacīnandana has submitted me to you, so don't consider my qualifications and allow me to live close to you! After all, the Lord is very dear to you. Forget about my lack of qualifications and remember my relationship with the Lord and give me the mercy! It is also natural that the qualities (of compassion) of the Lord are also present within his beloved servant."

Śrīla Prabodhānanda Sarasvatī has described how the Lord bestows His causeless mercy on all kinds of unqualified persons:

*pātrāpātra vicāraṇaṁ na kurute na svaṁ paraṁ vikṣyate
deyādeya vimarśako na hi na vā kāla pratikṣaḥ prabhuḥ
sadyo yaḥ śravaṇekṣaṇa praṇamana dhyānādinaṁ durlabhaṁ
datte bhakti-rasaṁ sa eva bhagavān gauraḥ paraṁ me gatiḥ*

(Caitanya Candrāmṛtam 77)

"This Lord Gaurasundara, Who makes no distinction between who is qualified and who is unqualified, what is his own and is of others, what is to be given and not to be given or what is the proper or improper time when He bestows *bhakti-rasa*, which is very hard to attain even through ardent meditation, hearing, seeing or offering obeisances, He is my only shelter!"

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "O Girirāja! Remembering the great munificence of the Lord, please follow the Lord's path of compassion, since you are so dear to Him and bless me by allowing me to reside close to your lotus feet."

*yogyāyogya pātrāpātra tomāra nikaṭe;
yadi pade vāsa dāna e vicāra ghaṭe
se vicāra koro nā he āmāra sambandhe;
ho'le-o kuṭila kapaṭa patati pāṣaṇḍe
tava atisāya priya śrī śacīnandana;
nirupādhi prema dātā patita pāvana
tinho samarpilo more tomāra padete;
avicāre grahaṇa koro kāṇāla patite
ei deho samarpilum ohe girirāja;
sthāna dāo pade prema bhaktira mahārāja*

"If you discriminate between who is qualified and unqualified to live close to you, then please don't practice such distinction with me, because the causeless bestower of *prema*

and saviour of the fallen, your dear most Śrī Śacīnandana, has offered me to your lotus feet, although I am a crooked and mischievous atheist.

O Girirāja! Please accept this fallen beggar without making any distinction! O great king of loving devotion! I have offered my body unto you! Please give me a place to stay with you!"

BENEDICTION:

*rasada-daśakam asya śrīla-govardhanasya
kṣitidhara-kula-bhartur yaḥ prayatnād adhīte
sa sapadi sukhade 'smin vāsam āsādyā sākṣāc
chubada-yugala-sevā-ratnam āpnoti tūrṇam*

rasada - giving spiritual flavours; *daśakam* - ten prayers; *asya* - this; *śrīla govardhanasya* - of beautiful Govardhana; *kṣitidhara* - mountain; *kula* - group; *bhartuḥ* - Lord; *yaḥ* - who; *prayatnāt* - carefully; *adhīte* - recites; *sa* - he; *sapadi* - suddenly; *sukhade* - giving bliss; *asmin* - in this; *vāsam* - residence; *āsādyā* - attains; *sākṣāt* - directly; *śubhada* - bestowing auspiciousness; *yugala* - of the Divine Couple; *sevā* - service; *ratnam* - jewel; *āpnoti* - attains; *tūrṇam* - swiftly.

Anyone who carefully recites these ten prayers which bestow spiritual flavours and which praise the king of mountains, beautiful Govardhana, will soon attain a place to live close to him, thereby giving him great joy. Surely he will obtain the precious jewel of the auspicious loving service to the Divine youthful Couple Śrī-Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa!

Stavāmṛta Kaṇā Vyākhyā: In this verse Śrīpāda Raghunātha pronounces the *phala-śruti* (final benediction) of his Govardhana-Vāsa-Prārthanā-Daśaka.

Govardhana is the king of all mountains. What to speak of other mountains, Śrī Girirāja Govardhana exceeds even the most sacred mountains here on earth.

In the Garga Saṁhitā it is written:

*girirājo hareḥ rūpaṁ śrīmān govardhano giriḥ;
tasya darśana mātṛeṇa naro yāti kṛtārthatām
gandha mādana yātrāyām yat phalaṁ labhate naraḥ;
tasmāt koṭi guṇaṁ puṇyaṁ girirājasya darśane
pañca varṣa sahasrāṇi kedāre yat tapaḥ phalam;
tac ca govardhane vipra kṣaṇena labhate naraḥ
malayādrau svarṇa-bhāra dānasyāpi ca yat phalam;
tasmāt koṭi guṇaṁ puṇyaṁ girirāje hi māsikam
ṛṣyamūkasya sahyasya tathā deva gire punaḥ;
yātrāyām labhate puṇyaṁ samastāyā bhuvaḥ phalam
girirājasya yātrāyām tasmāt koṭi guṇaṁ phalam;
girirāja samaṁ tīrthaṁ na bhūtaṁ na bhaviṣyati*

"Girirāja is another direct form of Śrī Hari. Simply by seeing Govardhana all living beings will be blessed. The mere view of Govardhana is ten million times more meritorious than circumambulating the Gandhamādana-mountain.

Staying near Govardhana Hill for just a moment is ten million times more meritorious than practicing penances on the Kedāra-mountain for five thousand years.

Residing near the base of Govardhana Hill for one month is ten million times more meritorious than donating loads of gold at the Malayan mountain and circumambulating Govardhana Hill is ten million times more meritorious than circumambulating the whole world, along with Ṛṣyamūka-

parvata, Deva-giri and Sahya-giri. There is no holy place equal to Govardhana and there never will be."

From this statement we can easily understand that Govardhana is the king of all mountains. The culmination of all religious activities is attainment of devotion to the lotus feet of Śrī Govinda.

svanuṣṭhitasya dharmasya saṁsiddhir hari toṣaṇam (Bhāg.)
"The perfection of all religious ceremonies is reached by satisfying Lord Hari."

Śrī Girirāja is called here *rasada* or the bestower of transcendental mellows. This is the greatest fruit of seeing Govardhana Hill, offering obeisances to him, serving him or circumambulating him.

Śrīpāda Raghunātha says: "Those who carefully recite these ten prayers to Śrī Girirāja, *govardhana vāsa prārthanā daśakam*, will quickly be blessed with a residence near Govardhana Hill, where they can most blissfully hear and chant about Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with the local *mahātmas* and nicely relish the mellows of devotion with them.

Śrīmat Rūpa Gosvāmī has written: *sajātiyāśayā snigdhe sādhoḥ saṅgaḥ svato-vare*.

"Those who are eager to advance in *sādhana-bhajana* and who want to enhance their relish of devotional mellows should associate with devotees who are endowed with similar devotional aspirations, who have a pleasant nature and who are more advanced than oneself."

Here the word *sajātiyāśaya* ascertains that by associating with such devotees one will advance in *bhajan* and one will be able to enhance one's relish of devotional mellows. The word *svato-vare* shows that by associating with *mahā-bhāgavatas* the flavours of devotion will awaken.

Therefore as a result of reciting this ‘Govardhana-Vāsa Prārthanā-Daśakam’ the *sādhaka* will become able to eternally reside at the base of blissful Girirāja and he will become blessed by attaining the most auspicious jewel of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa by Their grace. This is the merciful blessing of Śrīpāda Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī on the *sādhakas* of this world.

*bhūdhara kulera guru govardhana pade;
daśa śloka viracana svādu pade pade
yini ati yatna kore kore adhyayane;
ati śīghra vāsa pāya giri govardhane
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa sevā amūlya ratana;
sei sevā dena tāre giri govardhana
dāsa raghunātha bosī rādhākuṇḍa tīre;
daśa śloke mahā-ratna korilā pracāre
sei divya ślokāvalira kori anuvāda;
lobhe haripade sevāya māge anurāga*

"Anyone who carefully recites these ten verses which glorify Govardhana, the *guru* of all mountains, and which are relishable at every step, will very quickly attain residence at Govardhana, and Giri Govardhana will give such a devotee the valuable jewel of service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vraja.

Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī sits on the bank of Śrī Rādhākuṇḍa and writes these ten great jewel like verses and Haripada dāsa translated these divine verses (into Bengali), being passionately eager for devotional service."

**Thus ends Śrīla Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī's
‘Govardhana Vāsa Prārthanā Daśakam’**