

BHAGAVATAM – Krishna Leelas 4



Remember the last lesson? All the gopas (cow boys) came out with their cattle safely from the serpent, Aghasura's mouth when Krishna killed him. After that, everyone was irresistibly attracted towards Krishna, more than ever before. Krishna was dear to his parents because he was dutiful and obedient. His friends loved him because of his friendly nature and cheerfulness. The neighbors loved him because he protected them from all dangers. The gopikas (cow maidens) loved him for the beauty and the divinity of his very being. Thus Krishna was the darling of all.

Dhenukasura

Time passed, and the boys grew older. They took the cattle for grazing to the rich pasturelands of Brindavan. Some distance away from where the boys usually played, there was a beautiful orchard. Near the orchard lived a demon named Dhenukasura along with his family. He used to roam in the form of a huge ferocious ass, and killed animals and men who passed nearby. The gopas came to know about that orchard, and one day they suggested to Krishna that they all go and enjoy the juicy fruits. Krishna at once agreed, and soon all gopas with Krishna and Balaram made for the orchard.

Balaram went up to the trees and shook them mightily. As the trees shook, the fruits



fell to the ground. Dhenukasura heard the noise and got angry. He came running in his form of an ass. He charged Balaram, and hit him on the chest with his hind-legs. Balaram launched a counter-attack by seizing the ass's hind-legs which had been raised to strike again and whirling the ass round and round in the air, he hurled the ass against a tree. Now Dhenukasura's men also reached the scene. Krishna ran to help his brother Balaram. A big fight took place. Krishna and Balaram caught

Dhenukasura by the legs and struck them against tree trunks killing them one by one. After that, the gopas enjoyed the fruit to their hearts content, and danced and sang at their victory over Dhenukasura. From then onwards, the orchard was free for romping by the gopas.

In this story, Dhenukasura represents all our bad qualities. People cannot enjoy the fruits of life if they have bad qualities. It is necessary to get rid of our bad qualities. Then, like Krishna and the gopas, we can enjoy the fruits in the orchard of life.

Krishna Sucks Wildfire

Krishna used to accompany the gopas for grazing the calves daily. The cows and the calves kept grazing while Krishna, along with his gopa friends, indulged in various playful activities and thus they all enjoyed themselves.

One day when Krishna was engaged in play with his friends, the cattle strayed to a long distance, and reached a forest with a dense growth of wild grass. Roaming and grazing there, the cattle lost their way. They began to low loudly to attract the attention of their grazers. Hearing the loud cries of the cattle, the gopas were reminded of them, and so went about looking for them. Soon they reached the forest with the wild grass where their cattle were grazing.

Unfortunately, the grass burst into flames due to a forest-fire, and the gopas felt worried about the safety of their cattle. They might be roasted alive! They requested Krishna to do something to save their cattle. Krishna smiled and asked his friends to close their eyes for a while. The gopas did not want to close their eyes at first, but when asked again they complied with Krishna's suggestion in implicit faith. As soon as they closed their eyes, Krishna began to swallow the fire and in a few moments there was not even a sign of it anywhere. All the gopas praised Krishna for this miracle.



The gopas lost their cows because they were busy playing with Krishna, and not paying attention to the cows. In the same way, if we spend too much time playing we may get into various troubles. Fortunately, God can save us from any trouble, as Krishna did when he put out the grass fire.

Kaliya Mardhana

There was a deep lake close to the bank of river Yamuna that flowed by Brindavan. A huge poisonous serpent (Naga) with hundred and one hoods, named Kaliya, made this lake its home. The lake and waters of Yamuna were being poisoned as Kaliya spit poison continuously from its hoods. The residents of Brindavan were very afraid of the serpent and avoided to go near the lake. Whoever unknowingly went to take water from the lake was being killed by the serpent. This became the cause of concern and discussion for Nanda and all the elderly people in Brindavan. Krishna overheard this discussion and decided that it was time to get the serpent out of the lake, and restore it to the people of Brindavan.

One day, Krishna intentionally went near that lake to play with his friends. While playing, he threw a ball into the lake purposely, and then he told his friends that he will go and get the ball. He climbed a nearby tree, and jumped into the river. Kaliya got furious! Hissing violently; it gripped Krishna in its curl and caused him to swoon. This caused great chaos amongst the gopas. A few of them ran immediately to tell Krishna's parents Nanda and Yashoda. Soon the entire village of Brindavan assembled at the shore.



Krishna expanded Himself until the serpent could no longer hold him, and lost its grip. Then Krishna jumped up on to the top of the serpent's hoods and started dancing so hard that it could not bear the pain. Then Kaliya began to die. But then the Naga's wives came and prayed to Krishna with joined palms, worshipping Krishna and praying for their husband. Kaliya, recognizing the greatness of Krishna, surrendered, promising he would never harass or harm anybody again. Krishna agreed, and Kaliya with his wives moved to some other place leaving that lake forever.

We all may have done something bad at one time or another and perhaps our parents scolded us. But when we say we are sorry, they forgive us. Even though the serpent was very bad, when his wives asked Krishna to pardon him, he did - but only after the serpent promised not to harm anyone again. God is like the parent of everyone, even bad serpents.

Questions:

- People found Krishna irresistible. What does irresistible mean?
- What form did Dhenukasura take?
- Do you think Balaram was afraid of him?
- What did Dhenukasura represent?
- Why did the gopas lose their cows?
- Do you ever get into trouble from spending too much time playing?
- Who saves you when you get into trouble?
- Why were people of Brindavan afraid of going to the lake near the Yamuna River?
- What is a "naga"?
- Did Krishna kill the naga, Kaliya? Why or why not?
- Is God parent to all?

Daily Slokas:

Ganesh Sloka:

*Vakra Tunda Mahaa Kaaya; Suryakoti Samaprabha
Nirvighnam Kurume Deva; Sarvakaaryeshu Sarvadaa*

Saraswati Stotra:

*Saraswathi Namasthubyam; Varade Kamaroopini
Vidyarambham Karishyami; Siddhir Bhavatume Sada*

Guru Stotra:

*Gurur Brahmaa Gurur Vishnu; Gurur Devo Maheshwarah
Guruh Saakshaat Parabrahma; Tasmai Shree Gurave Namah*

Vishun Stotra:

*Shuklambharadharam Vishnum Shashivarnam Chaturbhujam
Prasanna Vadanm Dhyayet Sarva Vignopa Shantaye*

Rama Mantra:

*Sri Rama Rama Rameti, Rame Rame Manorame
Sahasranama tattulyam, Rama Nama Varanane*

Durga Stotra:

*Om Sarva Mangala Maangalye Shive Sarvaartha Saadhike
Sharanye Triyambake Gauri, Naaraayani Namostute*

Hanuman Mantra:

*Manojavam Maarutatulyavegam; Jitendriyam Buddhimataam Varistham
Vaataatmajam Vaanarayoothamukhyam; Sriramadootam Sirasa Namami*

Matru Devo Bhava Sloka:

*Maathru Devo Bhava; Pitru Devo Bhava
Acharya Devo Bhava; Athidhi Devo Bhava*

Morning Sloka:

*Karaagre Vasate Lakshmi; Kara Madhye Saraswathi
Kara Moole Tu Govinda; Prabahate Kara Darshanam*

Bath Sloka:

*Gange cha Yamune chaiva Godavari Saraswati,
Narmade Sindhu Kaveri jalesmin sannidhim kuru*

Jumble Words – All words are from this lesson

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Coloring exercise – Lord Krishna, the cowboy

