

Tridandisvami Srila Bhaktivedanta Narayana Maharaja  
ANNAKUTA MAHOTSAVA  
Badger, California: June 4, 2002 – Part 1

First of all, I offer millions of humble obeisances unto the lotus feet of my paramaradyadeva, Om Visnupada Sri Srimad Bhakti Prajnana Kesava Gosvami Maharaja, and the same millions of obeisances unto the feet of my siksa-guru, Srila Bhaktivedanta Swami Maharaja.

Today we observed the maha-mahotsava (great festival) of Giriraja Govardhana. Who is Govardhana?

pramada-madana-lilah kandare kandare te  
racayati nava-yunor dvandvam asminn amandam  
iti kila kalanartham lagnakas tad-dvayor me  
nija-nikata-nivasam dehi govardhana! tvam

"O Govardhana! Please grant me a dwelling near your side so that I can easily witness and serve the youthful lovers Sri Radha-Krsna as They perform newer and newer secret, amorous lilas within your many caves, and where They become completely maddened from drinking prema. You are present there, and you make everything possible." (Sri Govardhana-Vasa-Prarthana-Dasakam, verse 2)

So many secret and sweet pastimes of Radha and Krsna and the gopas and gopis take place in the caves and groves of Giriraja Govardhana. It can be understood, therefore, that Govardhana is not male. Radha and Krsna would not be able to play so many grove-lilas and kunja-lilas in front of a male. That would be absurd. Giriraja has actually come from the heart of Srimati Radhika. It is not that Krsna became Giriraja Govardhana. Krsna is the predominating Deity of Giriraja, but it has been written in Tapani Upanisad and Bhavisya Purana that Giriraja Govardhana has manifested from the heart of Radhika.

There were three mantras especially uttered by Srila Prabhupada Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura when he offered puspanjali at the lotus feet of Giriraja Govardhana. Although they are taken from songs, they are now accepted as the mantras used in the worship of Govardhana. The first is from Stava-mala by Srila Rupa Gosvami:

Govardhana tvam kuru manoratam purnam

Srila Rupa Gosvami prayed, "O Giriraja Govardhana, I have so many very confidential desires that cannot be revealed to any person besides you. I want to serve Radha-Krsna Conjugal in your groves, in many ways, as the personal maidservant of Srimati Radhika. I have this hope; so please bestow your mercy upon me."

The second mantra is: nija-nikata-nivasam dehi govardhana! tvam

Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami prayed, "O Giriraja Govardhana, you give so many facilities to Krsna and His cowherd boys. You supply grasses, very beautiful and sweet water, the shade of kadamba and other trees, you fulfill the desires of the cowherd boys, and you give beautiful ornaments of flowers to Krsna and Radhika, and to all their associates.

This mantra is taken from a verse from Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami's Sri Govardhan-Vasa-Prarthana-Dasakam:

sthala-jala-tala-saspari bhuruhac-chayaya ca  
prati-padam anukalam hanta samvardhayan gah  
tri-jagati nija-gotram sarthakam khyapayan me  
nija-nikata-nivasam dehi govardhana! tvam

["O Govardhana! Please grant me residence near your side. You are worshipping Sri Radha-Krsna with your nice spacious fields, ponds, streams and waterfalls, forests, fresh grass, and shade-trees, and you are nourishing Sri Krsna's beloved cows whose numbers are thus increasing at every moment. Your very name 'Govardhana' (gah means cows, and vardhayati means to nourish and increase) is successful and renowned throughout the three worlds. If I can reside near you, I will also be able to receive the darsana of my istadeva Sri Krsna, who comes to you when He brings His cows out to graze." (Sri Govardhana-Vasa-Prarthana-Dasakam, verse 6)]

In this way, Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami prays, "O Giriraja Govardhana, please keep me at your lotus feet." Giriraja Govardhana has kindly given an opportunity to me, and also to you all. For more than fifty years I desired to somehow live at Govardhana. Now he has given me a place, and you are all invited to come there during the month of Kartika.

The third mantra, govardhano me disatam abhistam, is taken from the verse:

yatraiva krsno vrsabhanu-putrya  
danam grhitum kalaham vitene  
sruteh sprha yatra mahaty atah sri-  
govardhano me disatam abhistam

["Demanding a road tax, Krsna quarreled for several hours at Dan Ghati with the daughter of Vrsabhanu Maharaja. Rasika-bhaktas visiting Govardhana are eager to listen to that sweet prema quarrel. May that Govardhana fulfill my desire that I can also hear that verbal battle." (Sri Govardhanastakam, verse 3)]

Always pray: "O Giriraja, I have so much hope, and I have come to you with this hope. Srimati Radharani and Krsna were quarrelling in so many ways, in so many lilas. I want to be there, and I want to hear all those sweet quarrels. I pray to you to give me a very good place at your lotus

feet so that, continually weeping and my heart melting, I can always remember Radha and Krsna's pastimes. I don't want to remember any worldly matters at all."

Your festival, Giriraja Govardhana Annukuta, was extremely beautiful. I hope it will be observed each and every year in this way. Whether I come or not, you must do it.

Gaura Premanande

Editorial advisors: Puyjapada Madhava Maharaja and Sripad Brajanatha dasa

Transcriber: Dhanvantari dasa

Editor: Syamarani dasi

Typist: Radhika dasi