

THE DAILY SEVA

Mangala

This is the first darshan of the day and it centers around the act of awakening Shri Krishna. In the main *havelis*, Shri Krishna is awoken with the sound of a conch or with bells and then is offered Kaleva or breakfast which consists of sweets, milk and butter.

Krishna's Awakening:

Raga Bhairav

*O Lalana,
Awake, it is morning.
Take some milk, curds, sweets
Along with a roti and butter.*

*Lotuses are blooming,
Everyone is singing,
Their voices so pure.
Everywhere birds are chirping.*

*Sings Rasika Pritam,
"Yashoda bids her Beloved Krishna,
'Get up Nanda Kishor!'"*

After breakfast, the temple doors are opened and *Mangal*

Arati songs are sung. The following "Auspicious" poem by Shri Gusainji is sung every day.

Raga Bhairav

*Auspicious, so very auspicious
Is this blessed land of Braja.
Auspicious are both Nanda and Yashoda as
They lovingly tend to their infant Krishna
Singing his praises as he rests
So charmingly on their laps.*

*Shri Shri Krishna-
These names are the essence of all scriptures.
Krishna's name, the auspicious sound
Removes the anguish of the bhaktas
Who take His shelter.*

*The beautiful women of Braja,
Krishna's cowlad friends, his cows and
The herds of deer, all manifested Krishna's essence.
They are an ocean of auspiciousness.*

*Auspicious is Krishna's delicate grin, his glance
And words. his pearl nose ring trembles
As he raises his head to play the flute.
When he places His gentle fingers over the holes
A sound arises that enchants all of Vrindavan.*

*Everything is auspicious.
The Gopis' languid gait.
Now enchanted and enraptured
As they sing in Krishna's Rasa dance.
Krishna! Always glories to you-
Protect your intimate one!*

Raga Bhairav

*O friend, come see Gopal's morning arati.
Every morning I am so lucky
To see Krishna's face and behold His wide eyes.*

*The beautiful Shyam is so auspicious.
His lovely forehead accommodates
Those auspicious eyebrows.*

*Sings Chaturbhujdas
"Krishna the Mountain Holder-
Always my lucky treasure."*

Shringara

After *Mangala*, Shri Krishna is bathed and adorned with garments and jewellery that is appropriate for the season. Light cotton in the summer and silks in the winter. After the ornamentation is complete, a mirror is held up for Shri Krishna to behold Himself. Shri Krishna sits surrounded by soft cushions. Paintings or other types of wall-hangings decorate His chambers. Knowing what things Krishna likes as well as understanding when to offer them is the true knowledge in the Path of Grace. With this important understanding, Shri Krishna comes alive for His *bhaktas* and relates to them on a personal level.

Ornamentation

Raga Vilaval

*Come Gopal it's time to adorn you.
First I annoint you with various scented soaps*

*And bathe you with warm water.
Now I dry you with a towel, braid your hair and
Then lovingly make you a flower garland,
Tie a bejeweled red turban on Your head
And top it with a silver plume.*

*Put on this red skirt stamped with golden designs
While I put henna on your feet.
Wear this lovely purple shawl,
A charming golden necklace
And a strand of enormous pearls.*

*Beloved, after I adorn you with a garland
Of forest flowers, behold yourself in this mirror.
To see you chills my heart and eyes.
Now eat some dried fruits and sweets.
Allow me to feed you with my own hands.
Sings Vishnudas, "This is the fruit of grace-
To praise the Child Lila everyday."*

After Ornamentation is complete, these songs are sung:

Raga Vilaval

*With loving understanding I now explain the essential
Nectar path of beautiful Krishna's devotional service.*

*Hari's garments are outstanding,
His crooked turban is well-tied
With a peacock feather in it.
Krishna wears a strand of large pearls
And a gunja bead necklace-
A pendant hangs by his heart.
He wears red pants and has henna on his feet.*

*After the adornment is completed-
Krishna looks at himself
Repeatedly in the mirror
And Shri Harirayaji smiles.*

Gwala and Palana:

During the period of *Gwala* (only performed in the homes of Shri Vallabhacharya's lineage-holders), Shri Krishna is honored as a cowlad. Before Shri Krishna goes to graze the cows in the company of other cowlads, He is offered the creamy froth of fresh milk. In some temples, after ornamentation is completed, Child Krishna is swung in a cradle.

Raga Ramakali

*Mother Yashoda, my daily routine is to adorn your son.
I arise and then while swinging him in the cradle,
I sing about how he turned over the cart.*

*Krishna dances and the Gopis make him prance
To the beat of their clapping hands.
Sings Askarana, "Krishna is a Clever Enchanter.
When I behold his face I experience a
Perfect Contentment."*

Child Lila:

Raga Asavari

*My dear Hari speaks so sweetly-
As He wanders the courtyard his anklets chime.*

*His tilak is made with khol, he wears a short necklace,
And a bright yellow shawl.
Sings Paramanandadas, "I follow the Krishna
The Gopis swing in a cradle."*

Rajabhoga

At about mid-day, mother Yashoda calls her Krishna home for the main meal of the day. This is called *Raja Bhoga*. *Raja Bhoga* can also be a picnic brought out to the forest by His beloved Gopis. Shri Krishna sometimes goes to a Gopi's home for His *Raja Bhoga*. The *Raja Bhoga* lunch offering is a wondrous array of sumptuous foods made with milk products, sugar and certain vegetables, grains and beans. Chita Svami exquisitely describes Shri Krishnas forest picnic with His cowlad friends.

*Shri Krishna, sits under the shade of a tree
Enjoying his lunch with his cowlads friends
Who all look after him.*

*The dark lovely Lord mixes on a leaf plate
Some curds and rice, then smiles and asks for more.
He relishes the various preparations
All beyond comparison, inexplicable-
Joyfully sent by mother Yashoda.*

*Sings Chita Svami, "The Mountain-Holder Krishna
Shines in the circle of friends and captivates everyone.
Seeing him, I celebrate and offer it all.*

Raja Bhog Darshan

Raga Sarang

*Hari sits with Radha in a bower cottage
Filled with his own delight.*

*He picks up his flute, presses it to his lips
And plays the saranga melody.*

*Krishna is extremely enchanting, exceptionally clever a
Treasure of virtues and still he plays a wrong note.*

*Beloved Radha, an ocean of arts and
Extremely talented, catches his mistake.*

*She picks up her vina and with her fresh and
Lovely being, she plays the melody correctly.*

*Krishna is so impressed that he takes off his garland-
Presents it to her and showers her with praise,*

*"Radha! Beloved! Bravo! Bravo!
You are so elegant and engaging."*

Raga Sarang

Beloved, it is good you have come at noon.

The day, the moment, the hour, the time,

The stars, everything is so auspicious.

A mass of bliss has arisen and

Removes my anguish of your separation.

I have prepared some sandalwood-paste

To annoint you with. I fall at your feet.

Sings Tansen, "Be kind to me. Turn this

Withered limb into a blooming green vine."

Utthapan

After a nap in the forest, Shri Krishna arises and gets ready for His afternoon lila.

Raga Nat

*Subala and Shri Dama call out to their cowlad friends,
"Arjuna sound the conch, awake Krishna-
It is time to head home."*

*Close by, other cowlads play and sing sweetly-
While deep in a forest bower, the son of Nanda awakes
And enjoys some betal leaves and fruit.
The Govardhan hill, Hari's best follower fulfills every
Desire and relieves the anguish of Shri Gokul.*

*Sings Paramananda, "Shri Krishna heads towards Gokul
Twirling a lotus by its stem, increasing ultimate joy."*

Bhoga

Shri Krishna is offered fruits by the tribal women called *Pulindis*. Then He prepares to herd His cows home and end the bhakta's day-long separation. They all anxiously await His return.

Raga Nat

*Know that the Beloved is found only through love.
Physical beauty, good virtues, fine character
And a noble home will never please God.
Nor can a high birth, good karmas auspicious signs
Or Vedic and Puranic knowledge.*

*Sings Govinda, "If you don't love,
What is the point of your countless recitations?"*

Sandhya Arati

This is when Shri Krishna returns home with His cows. As He enters Gokul the Blessed Lord is offered food items and the arati lights are waved around Him as He delights His bhaktas with His blissful presence.

Raga Puravi

*In front of Krishna are cows-
In back of him are cows.
Here there are cows and
Over there are cows.
Govinda loves to live with his cows.*

*He runs with the cows and is content with the cows.
Krishna smears the dust raised by their hooves
All over his body.
To see the cows cover the land of Braja
Makes one forget about the eternal realm of Vaikuntha.
For the sake of the cows, Shri Krishna
Picked up the Govardhan hill.*

*Sings Chitsvami, Giridhari is Vitthalnathji.
He appears as a cowlad and
Arrives with a herd of cows.*

Raga Gori

*His stride pleases the Gopis.
It is the late afternoon and Krishna is embellished*

*By a circle of cowlad friends.
His body is covered with the dust raised by his cows.
He wears a peacock crown, a gunja bead necklace-
And a yellow shawl. His flute sounds a melodious song.*

*Sings Chaturbhujadas,
"When Giridhar arrives home from the forest
His mother Yashoda greets him with the arati lights."*

Raga Gori

*O friend, Krishna is crooked!
Even his hair is crooked,
He strolls with lazy feet.
His gait with the Gopis is crooked.
His brow is crooked, it is curved and moves.
He plays a crooked tune on his flute.
With a crooked cane in hand,
He herds his cows and calls out to them, "move on !"*

*Sings Nandadas,
"When the Gopis see their crooked Lord
They flirt and venerate him."*

Sayana

At Sayana, Shri Krishna is first offered dinner and then the darshan opens. Many different bhavas arise during the evening lilas. The following poem is sung after Shri Krishna's dinner.

Raga Kalayan

*O Radha! Take this lovely betel-leaf
That Mohan has sent you from his own mouth.
Listen to the message from your Lord of Life.*

*Why hesitate, come closer open your veil!
Fill your eyes with his visage!
Now let's go, follower of the Beloved.*

*Kumbhandas entreats, "When you embrace Him
Your heart will be cooled."*

Raga Nayaki

*My heart is stuck to that cowherder Shyam and
Now my days and nights don't pass.
How to restrain this yearning heart?
He stops me along the narrow way,
And harrasses me with his crowd of cowlad friends.*

*Sings Krishna Jivan, "I have been swindled by that
Lord of Lakshmi. Now I am no longer aware of my body."*

After the evening arati lights are waved, Shri Krishna is put to rest. Actually, Shri Krishna never sleeps, He is always playing lila with Radha and the other Gopis.

In the following poem, Govinda Svami describes a moment of Shri Radha's annoyance in love with Shri Krishna.

Raja Vihag

(One Gopis tries to convince Shri Radha...)

*O Radha, Shri Krishna, is waiting for you
In the bower-palace. Now speak to your
Lord of Enjoyment and Beloved of life.
Go to him, He is so anxious.
Get up and embrace him!
O beloved, I will celebrate the moment
You renounce this bitter-sweet annoyance in love.*

*Leave this anger and adorn yourself.
Take the mirror and look at your face-
Your beauty dispells a billion cupids.
Now wear this blue sari. Sings Govinda,
"In the love play an ocean of nectar arises.
Put your arms around his neck and embrace him!
Put that Krishna under your control."*

After Radha's annoyance in love, songs of union are sung.

Raga Vihag

*Today Shri Radha wanders full of Joy.
Her Govinda, the dark moon, is filled with nectar.
Nearby a cuckoo chants a lovely song.
Shri Radha puts on a blue sari and a golden necklace.
She weighs her beauty with a mirror in hand.
Sings Shri Bhatt, "He made the Gopi apt in Love-
And sundered her knot of modesty.*

Raga Vihag

*Young Krishna rests with the fresh Radha-
Her body fair and lovely. Their bed is immaculate-
Fragrant, cool and embedded with jewels.
Her body is adorned with his teeth marks.
While Radha chews her betel-leaf She is filled
With the flavor of his loving nectar.*

*Sings Chaturbhujadas, "Everywhere
Waves arise in the ocean of love. The delightful Radha
And the enjoyer Giridhar have defeated the love-god!*

Refuge Poems:

After the seva is complete for the day and Shri Krishna has been put to *lila* rest, bhaktas sing songs about devotional refuge and humility.

*Chakai bird, fly to the reservoir of God's feet
Where there is no separation from love-
Nor can the oblivion of darkness prevail.
It's a sea of joyous union. There, the sage Sanaka Resides
as a swan and celestial singers are the fish.*

*Krishna's toe nails shine as the sun.
There blooming lotuses never fear the moon and
Black bees hum the sweet Veda.
In that lake, blessed pearl fruits imbibe the pure glory.
O silly bird, why would you ever leave that reservoir?
What are you doing here? In that lake, thousands of
Lakshmis are always making splendid lila.
Sings Surdas, "Now I have no taste for what is petty.
My hopes repose in that lake."*

Raga Vihag

*Live by the Govardhan hill and place your mind
At the feet of the enchanting Gopal.
When I roll in the sands of Braja
My body bristles with joy.
Then I bathe in Govinda's lake.*

*Sings Rasika Pritam, "I tell Shri Krishna
What is good for the heart."*