

Gopala Vimsathi
(The twenty verses on the Cowherd)
By
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Translated by
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(Vedanta Desika (1269 – 1370) is a great poet, devotee, philosopher and master-teacher belonging to the Sri Vaishnava sect founded by saint Ramanuja. By the end of 14th century the followers of Saint Ramanuja had split in to Vadakalai and Tenkalai. The followers of the former consider Sri Vedanta Desika as their Acharya (teacher). This great Stotra sings about the greatness of Gopala (cow herd) and is extremely popular among his devotees. It is said that it was composed in Thiruvahindrapuram by the Acharya overwhelmed by the beauty of the Rajagopala idol in the temple. These are usually sung before Thadhiaradhanams (Group partaking of food offered to God) and on the occasion of marriages and on Krishna Jayanthi day in Thiruvahindrapuram.

The translation presented here is a simple literal translation, trying to bring out the beauty of this great stotra rathna. Those who are interested may refer Sri.V.Sadagopan's detailed commentary which is available in http://www.ibiblio.org/sripedia/ebooks/vdesikan/gopala_vimsati/index.html

**Vande Vrundavana Charam vallavee Jana Vallabham,
Jayanthi Sambhavam dhama vaijyanthi bhooshanam. 1**

Salutations to him, who wanders in Vrundavana,
Who is the darling of the Gopis there,
Who was born on the day of the Sri Jayanthi,
And who wears the garland called Vaijyanthi.

**Vacham nijangarasikam prasmeeekshamano,
Vakthraravinda vinivesitha pancha janya,
Varna trikona ruchire varapundarika,
Badhasano jayathi vallava chakravarthi. 2**

Victory to the emperor of the Gopis,
Who looks at Saraswathi sitting on his lap,
Who keeps his conch Pancha Janya close to his lips,
Who sits in the middle of a triangle placed,
In the middle of the holy lotus.

**Amnaya gandha ruchiru chira sphurithhadharoshta,
Masravilekshana manukshana mandhahasam,**

**Gopaladimbhavapusham kuhana janannya,
Pranasthanandhayamavaimi param pumaamsam.**

3

I see that divine gentleman,
Whose breath wafted the fragrance of the Vedas,
Whose pretty lips quivered,
When he cried and laughed,
With his form of a cow herd baby,
And smiled in between the bouts of cry,
At the approach of the deceitful mother*,
And drank her life force and blessed her.

*Poothana the ogress sent to kill him

**Aavirbhavathvanibruthabharanam purasthaat,
Aakunchithaika Charanam nibrudhanyapadam,
Dadhnaa nimanthamukurena nibhaddhatalam,
Nathaasya nanda bhavaneh nava neeta natyam**

4

Let that form with the several ornaments,
Appear before my mind,
In which he folds one leg and,
Holds the other leg straight,
In which he produced musical sounds,
And dancing steps in line with,
The sound of churning of curds,
Produced by his mother,
For getting freshly made butter

(Another version of the same:-

**Aavirbhavathya nibhruthabaranam purastha,
Dakunchidaika charanam nihithannypadam,
Radha nibadhamookurena nibadha thalam,
Nadhasya nanda bhavane nava neethanatyam.**

4

That form with the several ornaments,
Appears before my mind,
In which he folds one leg and,
Holds the other leg straight,
In which he keeps time with,
The jingling sound of anklets,
Which were tied on him by Radha,
And in which he jumps and trots ,
For getting butter in the house of Nanda.)

**Harthum Kumbhe vinihathikara swaduhingaveenam,
Drushtwa dhama grahana chatulam matharam jatha rosham,
Payadheeshath prachalitha pado napagachchanna thishtan,
Mithyagopa sapadhi nayane meelayan viswagoptha.**

5

Let me protected by the protector of the universe,
Who extended his hand to steal the sweet butter from the pot,
And seeing his very angry and clever mother with a rope,
Moved slightly his leg but not moving hither or thither,
Closed tightly both his eyes and waited for her.

**Vraja yoshidha panga vedaneeyam
Madhura bhagya mannanya bhagya meede,
Vasudeva vadhoosthanandayam thath,
Kimapi brahma kisora bhava drusyam.**

6

I meditate on that Brahmam,
Who is understood by the Gopis,
Just by a slight look on him by them,
Who is the luck of Mathura,
Who is the greatest luck to,
The unmatched souls every where,
Who drank milk out of the wife of Vasudeva,
And who always looks like a handsome lad.

**Parivarthitha kandaram bhayena,
Smitha phulladhara sambhavam smarami,
Vitapithwanirasakam kayoschid,
Vipololukala karshakam kumaram.**

7

I remember the lad smiling with lips,
Resembling the rosy leaf buds,
Who had turned his neck out of fear,
And who dragged the big mortar,
In between the two trees and,
Freed both of them of their,
Tree form forever.

**Nikuteshu nisamayami nithyam,
Nigamanthairadhunapi mrugyamanam,
Yamalarjuna drusha bala keleem ,
Yamuna sakshika youvanam yuvaanam.**

8

I see him daily near me,

Who is being searched by Vedas,
Who broke the two Arjuna trees,
And who is with young maidens,
Near the Yamuna with it as a witness

**Padavee madaveeyasim vimukther
Atavi sambada mambu vahayantheem,
Arunadhara sabilasha vamsam,
Karunam karuna manusham bhajami. 9**

I sing about that man who is the cause,
Who is the way which is near salvation,
Who is the great wealth of the forests,
Who is as gross as the rain bearing clouds,
Who has red lips fond of keeping the flute,
And who exists as the state of mercy.

**Animesha nisheva neeya makshnor,
Jahadhyouvana ma virasthu chithe,
Kala hayitha kunthalam kalapai,
Karunanmadha vigraham vibho may. 10**

May He, whose form maddened with mercy,
Appear and remain in my mind
Who has an ever youthful pretty form,
Which does not allow our eyes to close for a second,
And who has pretty hair decorated by peacock feather,

**Anuyayi manogna vamsa naalai,
Ravathu sparsitha vallavee vimoghai,
Anaghasmitha sheethalai rasou maam,
Anukampasaritham ambujai pangai. 11**

May I be protected by His sight,
Which resemble the lotus flowers,
Of his mind resembling the pond of mercy,
Cooled by his pleasant smile,
And which always falls on the flute with him,
And which makes the Gopis extremely happy,

**Adharahitha chharu vamsa nalaa,
Mukutalambhi mayoora pincha mala,
Hari neelashila vihanga leela,
Prathibhasanthu mamanthima prayane. 12**

I should be able to see Him,

With flute kept close to his lips,
With blue peacock feather adorning his hair,
And with his pranks shining like the blue gem,
During the last procession of my life.

**Akhilanaivalokayami kaalan,
Mahila leena bhujantharasya yoon,
Abhilasha padam vrujanganana,
Abhilapakrama dhooramaabhi roopyam. 13**

I see him always and all times,
With a chest carrying his Lady,
And also see him as prettiness,
That can never ever be described,
And which is the acme of desire of the gopis.

**Hrudhi Mugdha sikanda mandana
Likhitha kena mamaisha shilpana,
Madhanadhura vallavangana,
Vadhambhoja divakaro Yuva. 14**

I salute Him who is like a Sun.
To the lotus faces of lovelorn gopis,
Who are infatuated by his face,
Shining because of the peacock feather,
Worn by him in his head.
And who has etched his pretty face,
In their minds always.

**Mahase mahithaya moulina,
Vinathenanjali manjana twishe,
Kalyami vidagdhavallavee
Valaya bhashitha manju venave. 15**

I salute with folded hands,
Him who is black in colour,
And who plays his pretty flute,
In the midst of those gopis,
Who are intelligent and experts.

**Jayathu lalitha kruthyam sikshatho valveenaam,
Sidhila valaya sinja seethalair hastha thalair,
Akhila bhuvana raksha gopa veshasya vishnor,
Adharamani sudhaya vamsavan vamsa nala. 16**

Victory to that flute which partakes the nectar,
Flowing from the lips of Vishnu,

Who has taken the form of a gopa lad,
For protecting all the world,
And to him who is being taught,
The dancing steps along with the ,
Beats created by the tingling sound,
Created by their bangles by the gopis.

**Chithrakalpa sravasi kalayan langalee karna pooram,
Barhothamsa sphuritha chikaro bandhu jeevam dadhana,
Gunjam badhamurasi lalitham darayan harayashteem,
Gopasthreenam jayathi kithavo gopikamapahari. 17**

Victory to Him who cures,
The passion of Gopi maidens,
By prettily dressing himself,
With flower from coconut sheaf in the ear,
With peacock feathers and the flower,
Of red hibiscus tied to his pretty tresses,
And the garland made of the black red
Seeds of Gunja* tree decorating his chest.

* Called Kundhumani in tamil, these seeds are used to weigh gold.

**Leelayashtim karakisalaye dakshinenyasya dhanyam,
Amse devya pulakanibide sannivishatanya bahu,
Meghasyamo jayathi lalitham mekhala datha venur,
Gunja peeda sphuritha chikuro gopa kanya bhujanga. 18**

Victory to him who keeps his flute,
Tucked in his golden wa ist band ,
Who keeps his right hand on a stick,
Used to mind the herds of cow,
Who keeps his left hand on the shoulder,
Of the lady* shivering with joy,
Who is of the black colour of the cloud,
And who ties his tresses with a chain of Gunja seeds.

*Sri Sadagopan in his commentary says this Lady is Nappinnai(neela Devi) a special sweet heart of Krishna. I saw another reference that this lady is Yasodha his mother. It could be Radha also but Radha is rarely mentioned in the work of disciples of Ramanuja.

**Prathyaleeda smruthi gaham praptha gadangapaalim,
Paschadeeshayilitha nayanam preyasim prekshamana,
Bhasthrayanthra pranihithakaro bhaktha jeevathuravya,**

Dwaree kreedā nibida vasano vallavee vallabho na.

19

May that Lord who is the Lord of the gopis,
Who swept his sweet heart gopi in to a tight embrace,
Along with his wet cloths made wet,
During the love play inside the water,
Who gave a loving glance to the gopi who,
Was keeping her eyes partially closed,
Who held in his hand a water gun,
And who is the savior of his devotees,
Save me from the ills of domestic life.

**Vasoo hruthwa dinakara sutha sannidhou vallaveenaam,
Leelasmero jayathi lalithamasthitha kunda shakhaam,
Sa vreedabhithadhanu vasanam thabhir abhyarthamana,
Kamee kaschid kara kamalayor anjalim yachamana.**

20

Victory to the playful one who ,
Sat daintily on the branch of the kunda tree,
And took away all the cloths left by Gopis,
Who were taking their bath in the river that is ,
The daughter of the sun god,
And when requested for their cloths,
Requested them to come out ,
And seek for the cloths with raised folded hands.
Phala Sruthi

**Ithyan anya manasaa vinirmitham,
Venkatesa kavina sthuthim padan,
Divya venu rasikam sameekshathe ,
Daivatham kimapi yowatha priyam.**

He who reads this poem written,
By the poet Venkatesa* with no one,
Else appearing in his mind,
Would go near the God who likes,
The holy flute , who is the God,
Who is the darling of all gopis.

* The name of Vedantha desika was Venkatesa.

Note:

In a book published from Kerala, the following Stanza is given as Stanza Number 5. But this is absent from many of the versions that I saw:-

**Kunda prasoona visadairdasanai chathurbhi,
Sandhasya mathranisam kucha choochukagram,**

**Nandasya vakthramavalokayatho murarer,
Mandasmithm mama maneeshitha mathanothu.**

**Let my desires be fulfilled by that ,
By the killer of Mura,
Who with his front four teeth,
Which are like the buds of Jasmine,
Bites the aureole of the busts of his mother,
And smiling looks at the face of Nanda.**