

# Caitanya Reader Book Seven

The Story of Mādhavendra Purī

A Children's Reader

Adapted from the Caitanya Caritāmṛta

by

His Divine Grace

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# Part One

Once, 500 years ago, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu was visiting the holy temple of Gopīnātha at Remuna. While there, he told His disciples the following true story of Mādhavendra Purī.

Mādhavendra Purī was a great saint who travelled in India a long time ago. He liked to travel alone from one holy place to another. As he walked, his mind was always thinking of Lord Kṛṣṇa and how he could serve the Lord.

When evening came and Mādhavendra Purī was tired, he would take rest under a large tree. He never begged for food but would only eat if someone came and offered food to him. Living in this simple way, Mādhavendra Purī was satisfied because he was always chanting the holy names of God – Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Once after walking all day, Mādhavendra Purī arrived outside the village of Vṛndāvana. This is the same Vṛndāvana in

which Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead played and lived as a young boy. Mādhavendra Purī was very happy to be visiting such a holy place. He sat under a tree near Govardhana Hill and continued chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.

Mādhavendra Purī was very hungry and thirsty because he had not eaten anything for a long time. Suddenly, a young cowherd boy appeared before the great saint. The beautiful boy was carrying a milk pot.

He set the milk pot before Mādhavendra Purī and said, “Please drink this milk. Why have you been sitting here so hungry and thirsty?” The boy continued, “Why don’t you ask someone for food like other saintly men who visit Vṛndāvana?”

Mādhavendra Purī was so amazed by the beautiful boy that his hunger vanished. “Who are you?” the saint asked joyfully. “Where is your home? How did you know I was here?”

“I am a cowherd boy of Vṛndāvana, the village nearby,” the boy answered sweetly. “Some village women saw you and

they asked me to bring you some milk. In Vṛndāvana no one goes hungry.” The boy added, “I must go to milk the cows now. Please drink the milk and I’ll come back later for the pot.” The boy then left for His cows.

## Part Two

Mādhavendra Purī immediately missed the boy. The saintly old man drank the milk and thought about the cowherd boy. In fact he could not stop thinking about the boy.

The sun sat behind Govardhana Hill and still the cowherd boy had not returned. Mādhavendra Purī chanted long into the night hoping the child would return. Toward morning, the saintly old man fell into a light sleep. During his sleep, a wonderful dream came to him.

In the dream the beautiful boy came and stood before Mādhavendra Purī. The boy took his hand and quietly lead him to a tangled grove on one side of Govardhana Hill. The grove was thick with vines, creepers and thorny bushes.

The small boy looked into Mādhavendra Purī's eyes and said, "Dear friend, I live in this uncomfortable grove. In the summer the sun dries up the leaves and scorches the ground. During the rainy season everything is muddy and damp and in the winter, cold winds chill me and I catch a fever."

Mādhavendra Purī felt very sorry for the cowherd boy and wished he could serve the boy in some way.

## Part Three

The wonderful boy knew the thoughts of the great saint. This was only possible because the boy was no ordinary boy. He was Gopāla, Lord Kṛṣṇa, The Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.

The transcendental boy then said to Mādhavendra Purī,  
“Because of your great faith in Me, I have appeared to you. I would be pleased to accept your service.

“As you know, I am Gopāla Kṛṣṇa. A long time ago, I lifted this same Govardhana hill with one finger. Near this place I once played with My friends and herded many calves for My father.” The beautiful boy said, “For a long time I have waited just for you.

“Because I am the Supreme Lord, I can appear with all My powers in any form I desire. In order to let men without spiritual eyes see Me, I will take My arcā form, made of stone.” The beautiful Gopāla Kṛṣṇa continued, “My dear Mādhavendra Purī, I want you to go to Vṛndāvana and tell the



men to come and take me out of this uncomfortable grove. Instruct them to build a throne for Me on top of this hill. By doing this you will be serving Me very well.”

At dawn the next day, Mādhavendra Purī took his bath in a cool stream and hurried off towards the village. He was eager to engage the villages in the service of Gopāla Kṛṣṇa.

“People! People! Please listen,” the saint called out loudly as he entered the village. “The Lord of this village, the lifter of Govardhana Hill, is hidden within a nearby grove. Let us go there at once and bring Him out. The grove is very dense so bring axes and spades.

After listening to what the great saint said, the people gladly did as he asked. They followed him up the mountain and began to clear the area Mādhavendra Purī pointed out. Very soon they found the beautiful Gopāla Deity. After offering obeisances, the strongest men of the village lifted the wonderful Deity. Slowly they carried Gopāla Kṛṣṇa to the top of the mountain and Mādhavendra Purī directed the men as they placed the Deity on a stone throne.

## Part Four

The amazing news of Gopāla's appearance quickly spread. Wherever people heard the news they became overjoyed and left their homes to travel to Vṛndāvana. Each person who came to see the Deity brought Him nice gifts of food, silk and tulāsi trees. One hundred pots of water from Govinda-kunḍa (a sacred pond) were also brought and presented to Gopāla.

Huge amounts of the most delicious foods were collected for a holy offering to Lord Gopāla. Ten brāhmaṇas cooks prepared rice and dahl and five brāhmaṇas cooks prepared vegetable dishes of many types. Seven more cooks baked breads and chapattis.

Mādhavendra Purī bathed Lord Gopāla with water from Govinda-kunḍa and anointed Him with scented oils. Then Gopāla was dressed in colourful silks and decorated with flashing jewels, fragrant flowers and sandalwood pulp.

Of course, the Supreme Lord never needs anything. He is always completely satisfied but just to make it possible for His

devotees to serve Him, He accepts everything offered to Him in love. Mādhavendra Purī took all the food that had been prepared by the cooks and offered it to the Lord. Because of his spiritual eyes, the saint could see the Deity eat all of the food. He then witnessed the Lord return the food to the altar as it was before.

The spiritual food returned by the Lord was given to all the village people and everyone ate as much as he desired. While everyone was feasting, Mādhavendra Purī told all the brāhmaṇas about the joy of serving Lord Gopāla with love. At the end of the festival the great saint was very satisfied. He understood that everyone who eats food first offered to Kṛṣṇa makes advancement in spiritual life.

This festival was only a beginning of Gopāla's fame. Soon the whole country knew about His appearance. People from all over came to worship Him. Poor people brought rice, wheat, dahl, sweets, vegetables and milk. Rich people constructed a beautiful temple for Gopāla and contributed gold and silver for His use. Lord Gopāla accepted the love with which the

gifts were offered. He does not care how much the gift costs. His only concern is the love with which the gift is given.

Mādhavendra Purī was very happy and excited by what Gopāla Kṛṣṇa was telling him. The saint listened carefully to what He said.

## Part Five

The Lord in His original form of a young cowherd boy said, “I desire to appear before the eyes of all men and accept their service. No one can be happy if he doesn’t serve Me.

Unfortunately, only a very, very few men have the spiritual eyes that you have. Without such eyes, no one can see Me as I am.”

Gopāla then explained a wonderful plan that would permit all men to see, worship and serve Him. Then all men could personally serve the Lord just as Mādhavendra Purī was doing.

Two years passed very peacefully. Then one evening, Gopāla again came in a dream to Mādhavendra Purī. “My body is always burning with a fever,” He said. “The heat will go away if you bathe Me with special sandalwood pulp. My dear friend, you are the only one who can perform this service for Me, so please go at once to Purī and bring this sandalwood pulp for Me.”

Mādhavendra Purī was very unhappy that Gopāla was burning with a fever but at the same time he was excited about being able to do this special service for the Lord.

Before the sun rose the next day, the saint began his journey. He was not concerned with what he would eat or where he would sleep and he was not afraid of the thieves and wild animals along the road. Mādhavendra Purī only wanted to serve his Lord and he knew that Gopāla would take care of him.

The saint walked toward the East for many days. Finally he reached Śāntipur in Bengal. There Mādhavendra Purī met and initiated the great Advaita Ācārya, who later became a personal associate of Lord Caitanya. Mādhavendra Purī eagerly took up his journey again and travelled south until he reached Remuna.

In Remuna there was another Deity form of the Lord named Gopīnātha. Lord Gopīnātha was offered a very delicious milk preparation by the brāhmaṇas. Mādhavendra Purī wanted to

be able to offer Gopāla the same fine preparation so he asked one of the priests how to prepare it.

The priest told him, “This wonderful condensed milk drink is called amṛta-keli. It is offered every evening in twelve earthen pots. There is no taste in the whole world as delicious as this condensed milk.”

When Mādhavendra Purī heard this, he thought, “If I could only taste a little of this drink then I would know how to prepare it for my Lord Gopāla.” As soon as he had thought this, Mādhavendra Purī was sorry. Since the condensed milk had not been offered to Gopīnātha, the saint felt he had committed a terrible offense.

## Part Six

After the offering ceremony was over, Mādhavendra Purī left the temple without saying a word to anyone. He went to a quiet market place, sat under a tree and sang the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

No one offered him any food that evening so he did not eat. That was his vow. He satisfied himself by chanting the Lord's holy names.

At the temple, Lord Gopīnātha was taking rest. All the priests who served Him were also resting. One of the priests had a dream in which Lord Gopīnātha came to him.

The Deity said, “Wake Up! Wake Up! I have an important service for you. Mādhavendra Purī is sitting under a tree in the market place. He has not eaten anything all day.” The priest listened carefully as the Lord gave him instructions. Lord Gopīnātha continued, “I have taken one of the pots of condensed milk and hidden it in the back of the Deity room. Find it and take it to Mādhavendra Purī.”



At once the priest woke up, bathed and rushed to the temple room. He found the condensed milk just where Gopīnātha said it would be. Quickly, the priest took the pot of milk and left for the market place.

“Mādhavendra Purī! Mādhavendra Purī! Where are you?” cried the priest, “You are most fortunate! Lord Gopīnātha has stolen this pot of condensed milk for you. Please come and take it!”

Mādhavendra Purī went to the priest and introduced himself. The priest gladly gave the saint the pot of condensed milk. He explained to the saintly man how Lord Gopīnātha had stolen the milk and hidden it. The saint was so astounded by what Gopīnātha had done for him that he went into a spiritual trance. The priest could understand that Mādhavendra Purī was one of the Lord’s greatest devotees.

The priest returned to the temple feeling bliss by having shared in such a wonderful pastime of the Lord.

## Part Seven

Mādhavendra Purī knew the story of the stolen milk would soon be spread all over Remuna. He decided to leave quickly because he did not like to be praised for serving the Lord. After many days of traveling he arrived at the great city of Purī. The first thing he did was visit the wonderful Deity of Lord Jagannātha. Mādhavendra Purī felt so much joy he began to dance, laugh, sing and fall down.

The news of Mādhavendra Purī's loving service had reached the city of Purī. As soon as the people heard that the great saint was in their city, they came to honour him.

Mādhavendra Purī was so humble that he did not care for praise and honour. He only wanted to find the sandalwood pulp for his dear Lord and return to Vṛndāvana.

After the temple priests heard the saint's story they were excited. They worked hard to help him. Soon Mādhavendra Purī received some customs papers to help him pass quickly from one province to another.

Very happily, Mādhavendra Purī left the city and travelled until he again reached Remuna. He went directly to Gopīnātha’s temple. Remembering how Gopīnātha had stolen the condensed milk, the saint worshipped the Lord with great love.

When the priests of Gopīnātha saw the great devotee had returned, they were very excited and happy. They gave him the wonderful condensed milk preparation from the Lord’s plate. The old saint took rest in the temple that evening. While sleeping, the beautiful Gopāla Kṛṣṇa again appeared to Mādhavendra Purī.

The cowherd boy said sweetly, “My dear friend, you have served Me well. I have already accepted the sandalwood and camphor you gathered for Me. It is not necessary that you travel all the way to Vṛndāvana to give it to me. Simply smear the sandalwood on Lord Gopīnātha and my fever will be cooled.”

Mādhavendra Purī woke up and with the help of the temple priests he spread the sandalwood and camphor paste over

Lord Gopīnātha in Remuna. As the paste began to cool, Lord Gopāla in Vṛndāvana smiled a smile of great satisfaction.

Lord Kṛṣṇa helps men by appearing in many forms to accept their service. Service to any Deity form of the Lord is equal to direct service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus, by spreading the sandalwood on the Deity in Remuna, the Deity in Vṛndāvana was equally satisfied.

Hare Kṛṣṇa  
Hare Kṛṣṇa  
Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa  
Hare Hare  
Hare Rāma  
Hare Rāma  
Rāma Rāma  
Hare Hare