

Krishna's Govardhan Leela (Annakoot)

From the Govardhan Lila Annakut collection



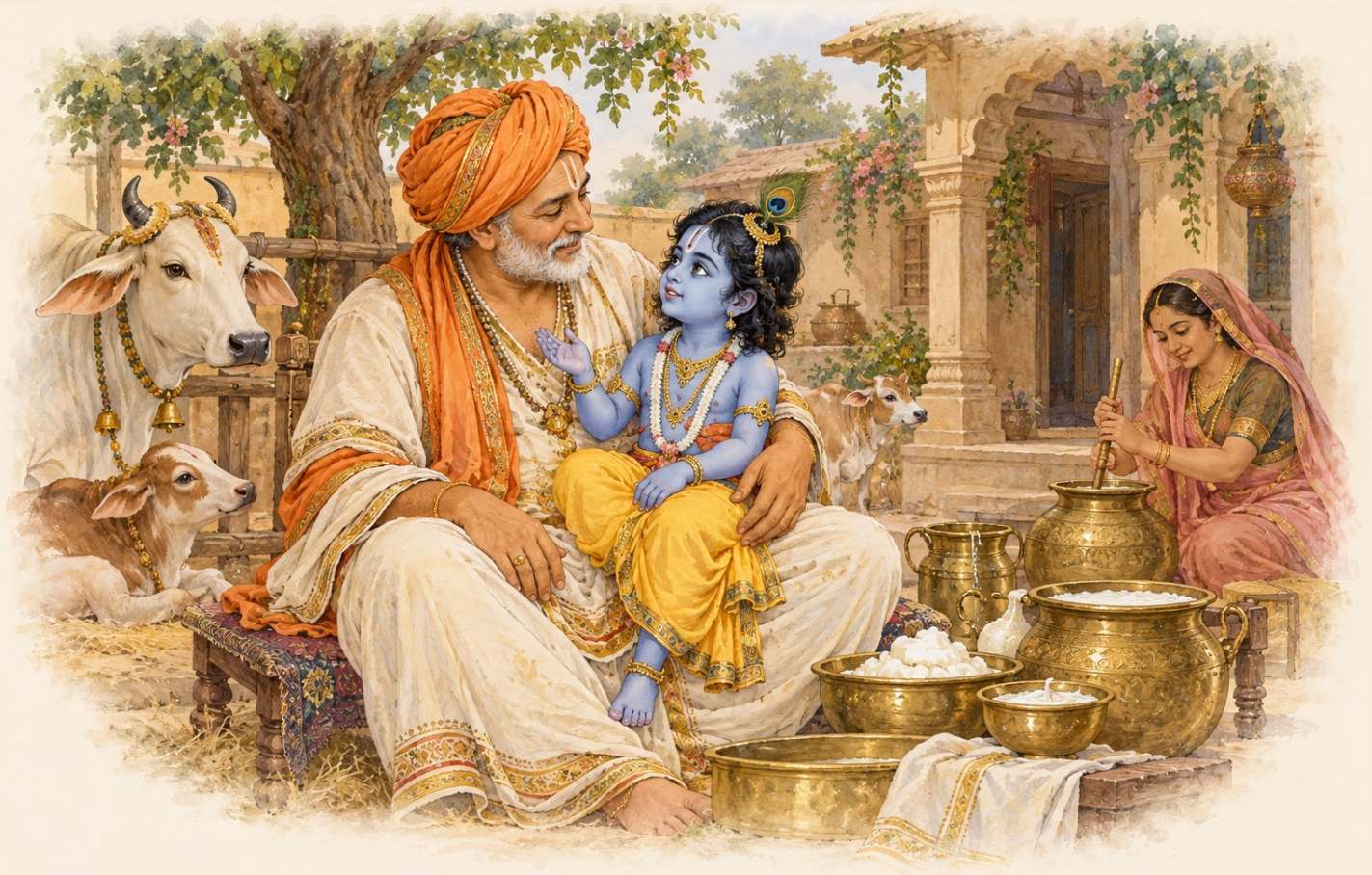
Before We Begin



Shri Vallabh

This story is inspired by the kirtans in Govardhan Lila Annakut from pushtikirtan.com. These kirtans express the divine experiences of Pushtimargiya poets. The pictures are based on their descriptions. This little book is for younger children who cannot yet read or understand the kirtans, so they may experience a little of their beauty and divinity.

This story is an adaptation inspired by the kirtans. We do not claim that it is an authentic account. Please forgive any mistakes.



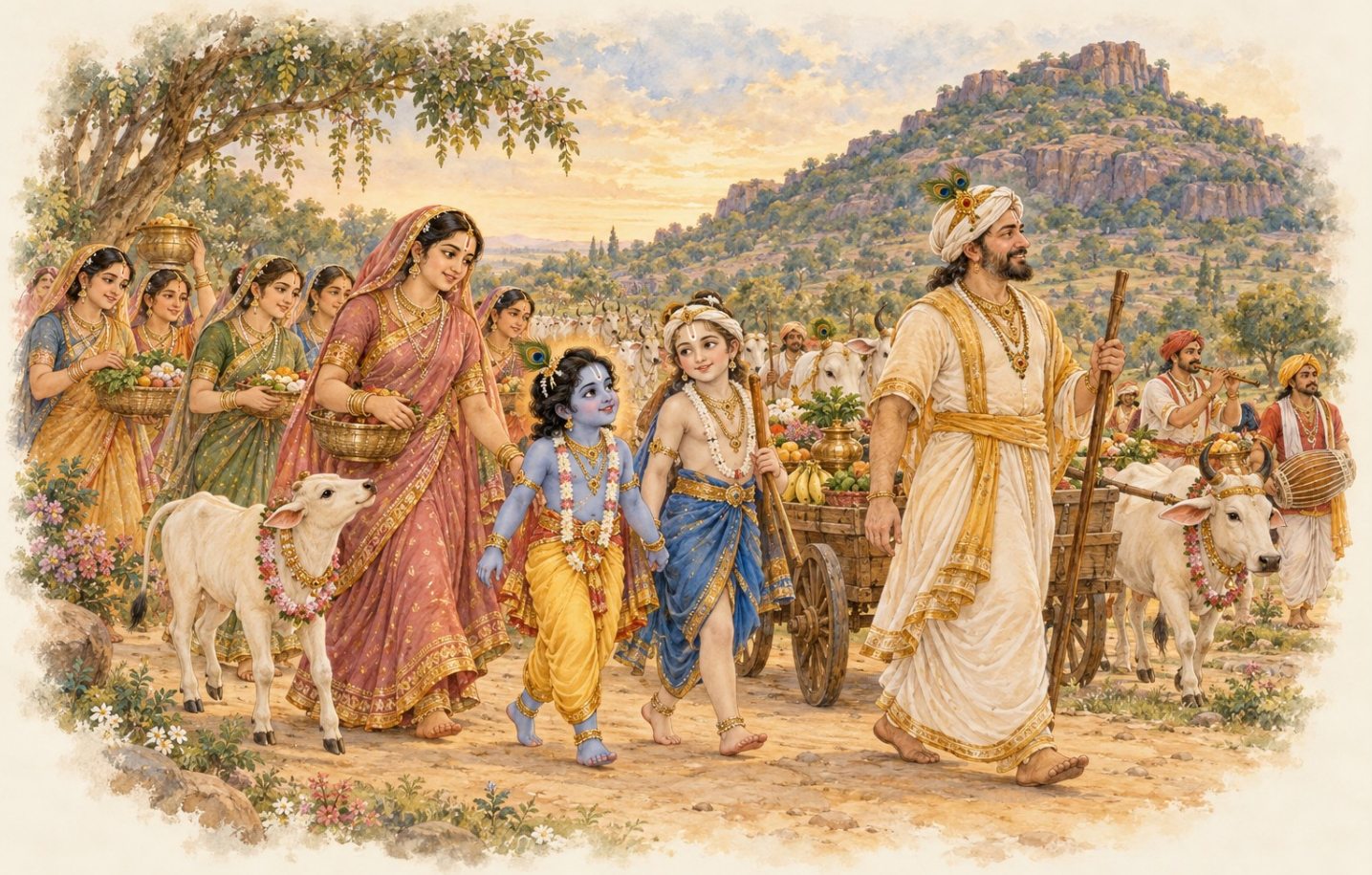
All through Vraj, families were getting ready for a great festival. Milk and curd were gathered in the homes, and many dishes were being prepared. Seven-year-old Krishna sat in his father Nanda's lap. He had a question about all that food: who was it for, and what did that deity do for them?



Nanda told him about Indra, whose clouds brought rain to the earth. Rain helped grain and flowers grow, filled the lakes, and brought grass for the cows. But Krishna spoke of Govardhan, the beloved hill near their grazing grounds. There, he said, the cowherd boys shared their meals with the Lord who stayed close to Vraj.



Krishna asked the elders to consider worshipping Govardhan and the cows. Nanda was delighted. He called the other cowherds, and together they agreed to follow Krishna's counsel. Nanda and Upananda spread the happy news through Vraj. Families would take their offerings to Giriraj, the mountain they loved, and celebrate there together.



Soon, carts were laden with everything needed for worship. Yashoda went with the women of Vraj, who lovingly tended and adorned the cows. Children, calves, and cowherds joined the journey. Nanda and the elders went ahead, while Krishna and his brother Balaram walked together. Music sounded all around as the people followed the paths toward Govardhan.



When Govardhan came into view, the people bowed their heads. As night began, Nanda offered lamps all around. Everyone walked joyfully about the hill, keeping it on their right. This loving walk is called parikrama. Lamps shone on every side, and the people stayed before Giriraj through the night, their hearts full of joy.



At dawn, they brought water from Manasi Ganga and milk in golden vessels for Giriraj's bathing. Sacred songs and instruments accompanied the worship. They offered sandalwood, flowers, and a yellow cloth, then incense and lamps. Afterward, the cowherds received prasada, the blessed offering. Festive bands were tied around their heads, and they were greeted with affectionate pats on the back.



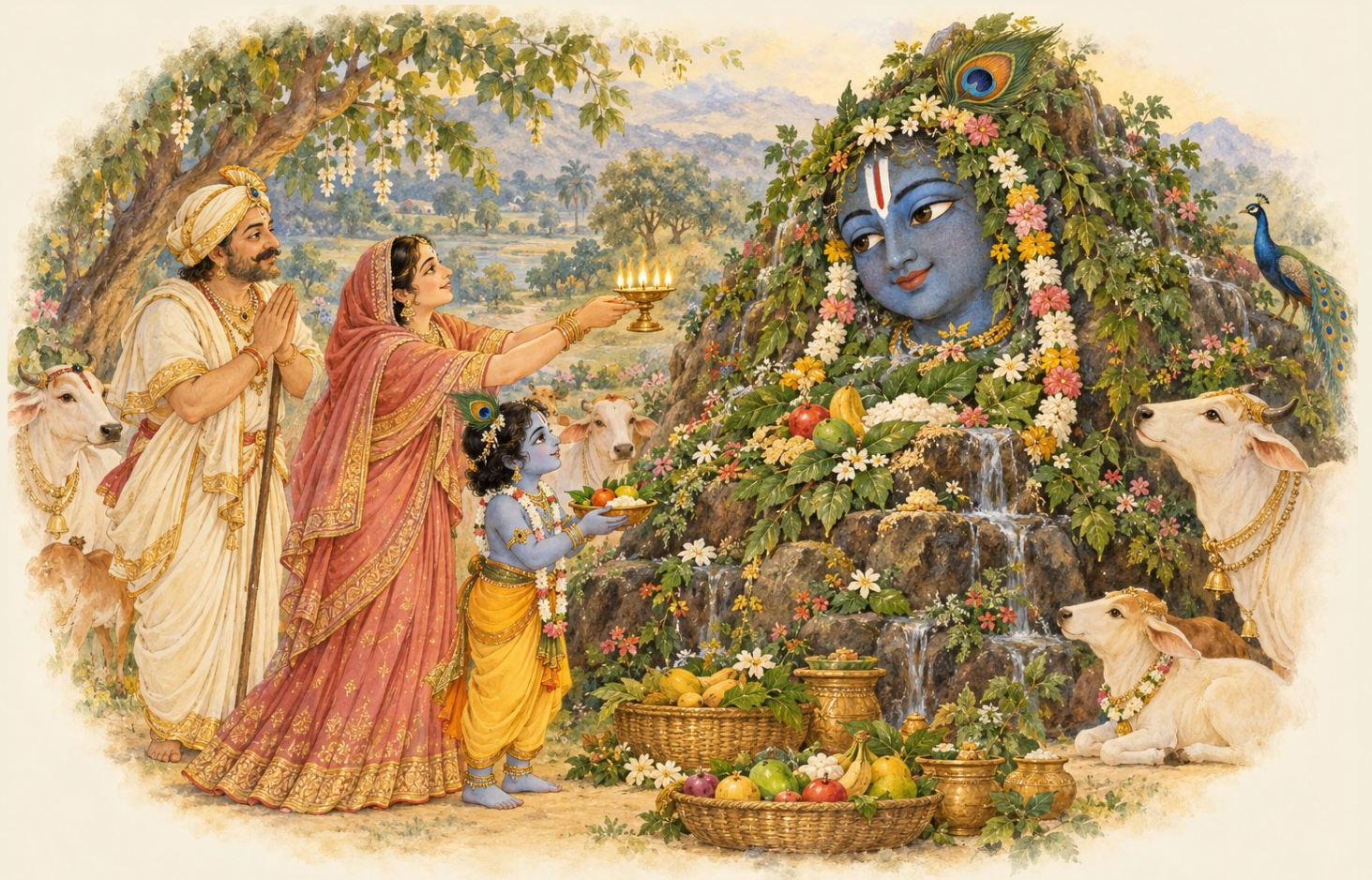
Now Nanda asked Krishna to play with the cows, beginning with Dhauri. Krishna gathered his yellow cloth and called to her. Dhauri hurried toward her calf, then joined the herd. The cowherds watched with delight. More cows were called, and happiness spread through Vraj as everyone prepared the great Annakoot, the mountain of food.



With great love, the people raised a mountain of freshly cooked rice. Around it they arranged dish after dish: sweet, sour, salty, and spicy. There were curd, milk pudding, delicate papars, ghee, and fresh butter. Round baras rested on the rice like little moons. Balaram stood beside the great mound, while young and old offered their worship.



Nanda offered tulsi leaves and a flower garland, then folded his hands in prayer. Before everyone's eyes, Giriraj appeared in a divine form and accepted the feast. He looked just like Gopal, with a peacock feather upon his head and a forest garland on his chest. The people gazed in wonder: Krishna's beauty was shining in Giriraj's own form.



Each family brought what it could: fruits, leaves, or lovingly prepared food. Giriraj accepted their offerings with delight. Even those who had hesitated and left theirs at home were asked for them, so his affection could be known. After the meal, prasada was shared among the people. Yashoda performed arati, and everyone bowed before setting out for home.



But Indra was angry that the festival had honoured Govardhan. He sent mighty clouds, and heavy rain poured upon Vraj. Seeing the people's distress, Krishna ran to the hill and lifted it on one finger of his left hand. The cowherds hurried near with their sticks to help. For seven days and nights, people and cows sheltered safely beneath Giriraj; not a raindrop touched them.



At last, Indra understood. He came with the sacred cow Surabhi and bowed at Krishna's feet. Krishna placed a gracious hand upon him, and Surabhi's milk was offered in worship. Vraj was restored, and flowers showered from above. Yashoda ran to embrace her beloved boy. With blessings and joyful praises of Giridhar, the people of Vraj returned to their homes.

Kirtans Used

Govardhan Lila Annakut
Govardhan Leela and the Annakoot offering

Open the source collection at pushtikirtan.com

Godabaith Gopal Kahat

First line: Godabaith Gopal kahat Vrajarajson.

Narrative pages: 3–14.

The original text and English meaning were consulted.

Read this kirtan · source 1511

Apane Apane Tol

First line: Apane apane tol kahat Vrajvasiyan.

Poet: Surdas (named in the closing verse).

Narrative pages: 3, 5–6, 10–12.

Read this kirtan · source 1512

Page numbers above refer to the numbered pages of this book. Original English adaptation; source verses are not reproduced in full.