

**Bhakti Sandarbha**

**by**

**Srila Jiva Goswami**

# Introduction to the Sandharbas

From the traditional Indian perspective, Vyāsa is the complier of the Vedas and he himself wrote the explanation of Vedānta in the Bhāgavata Purāṇa.

Therein he establishes that the Absolute Truth is indeed a person.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu revealed that the Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is the natural and authoritative commentary on the Vedānta-sūtras.

Śrī Jīva finds support for this in scripture.

Being composed in Sanskrit, Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is  
prone to interpretation.

Hence the need arose for a thorough analysis that could  
resolve the thorny issues of interpretation.

For this purpose, and to synthesize the message of the  
entire gamut of Vedic literature, Jīva Gosvāmī wrote the  
Ṣaṭ Sandarbha.

Through the Ṣaṭ Sandarbhas, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī has provided the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava School with a clear identity on a par with those of Śrī Rāmānujācārya, Śrī Madhvācārya, and others.

He drew freely from the entire heritage of Vaiṣṇava philosophical thought available to him.

Śrī Jīva wrote no important conclusion without supporting scriptural references, and yet his conclusions are not mere repetitions, but bear the mark of originality and deserve independent consideration.

They are widely acknowledged within the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition as Jīva Gosvāmī's philosophical magnum opus.

The original name of the Ṣaṭ Sandarbha was Bhāgavata Sandarbha, indicating that it is an exposition and analysis of the essential message of Śrīmad Bhāgavata Purāṇa.

In this work, Śrī Jīva offers a comprehensive and exhaustive analysis of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam, and concludes the highest feature of the Absolute is a personal God.

Jīva Gosvāmī's Sat Sandarbhas consist of six parts, each delving into a different aspect of the Bhāgavatam philosophy.

①

First is the Tattva Sandarbha, which has two divisions.

In the first division, Śrī Jīva sets forth the pramāṇas, or the epistemology of the personalist school.

Here he tackles such questions as: What are the means of attaining knowledge? And, what is the evidence or proof in support of those means?

In the second division he gives the prameya; that is, he explains the object to be realized by knowledge.

② In the second book, Bhagavat Sandarbha, Jīva Gosvāmī speaks about the Bhagavān, His abode, and His associates.

*Sad Sandarbhas → Bhāgavata Sandarbhas*  
*(6)*

He demonstrates with conclusive evidence that Bhagavān is the complete and indivisible Absolute Reality and that all other manifestations are dependent on and thus inferior to Him.



③ In Paramātmā Sandarbha, Śrī Jīva tells of the three manifestations of Bhagavān's Immanent Being and describes how the Immanent Being is related with each individual self in the material world.

Śrī Jīva also describes māyā, or the external potency of God.

④

In Kṛṣṇa Sandarbha, he shows that the form of Kṛṣṇa is the original form of Bhagavān and explains why He is the object of loving devotional service.

⑤ Then, in the Bhakti Sandarbha, Śrī Jīva establishes the path of devotion as the sole means to direct God realization.

Finally, in Prīti Sandarbha, he analyses prema-bhakti, devotional service in pure love of God, and shows how it is the supreme goal of life for all living beings.

