

Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā

by Śrī Brahmaji

About Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā

From

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TEXT 1

īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ
sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ
sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam ||1||

Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇaḥ) is the supreme controller (īśvaraḥ). He is the enjoyer of innumerable consorts (paramaḥ), and the possessor of an eternal (sat) form (vigrahaḥ) of knowledge (cit) and bliss (ānanda). Though, he is without origin (anādiḥ), he is the source of all other forms of God (ādiḥ), and is the cause of all causes (sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam). He is Govinda, the boy who cares for the cows (govindaḥ).

Rūpa Gosvāmī, whose younger brother was Śrī-vallabha, and whose older brother is Sanātana Gosvāmī, is my good fortune.

Indeed, he is the good fortune for all living entities.

May the excellence of Kṛṣṇa's form be honored in my heart!

It is by Kṛṣṇa's mercy that I desire to explain the *Brahma-saṁhitā*.

This work, passed down by the sages, though difficult to
understand, becomes filled with meaning on careful consideration.

In considering the proper meaning of this work, I will take shelter of
the greatest among sages, Vedavyāsa.

Though the *Brahma-saṁhitā* has a hundred chapters, this fifth
chapter is complete in itself, since it expresses compactly the essential
meaning of all the scriptures.

What persons of pure intelligence realize in the Śrīmad-bhāgavatam and other works is presented in this work.

What I have explained extensively in *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbhā* I have reviewed and I have used some points to explain the *Brahma-saṁhitā*.

Thus my heart has become joyful.

The word (kṛṣṇa)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
10 11

The Bhāgavatam verse ete cāṁśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam has established that Kṛṣṇa is the primary form of Bhagavān (SB 1.3.28).

kṛṣṇa s tu bhagavān svayaṁ → īśvaraḥ paramaḥ
kṛṣṇaḥ

The same is stated in the first verse of Brahma-saṁhitā with īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ.

The word Kṛṣṇa denotes a specific form of the Lord whose name is Kṛṣṇa.

This same form is denoted by great devotees such as Śukadeva Gosvāmī in verses like the following:

10.3.11

sa vismayotphulla-vilocano harim
sutaṁ vilokyānakadundubhis tadā
kṛṣṇāvatārotsava-sambhramo 'sprśan
mudā dvijebhyo 'yutam āpluto gavām

When Vasudeva saw his extraordinary son (harim sutaṁ vilokya ānakadundubhis tadā), his eyes were struck with wonder (sah vismaya utphulla-vilocanah). In transcendental jubilation (mudā āplutah), he mentally collected ten thousand cows and distributed them among the brāhmaṇas (dvijebhyo ayutam gavām asprśan) as a transcendental festival (kṛṣṇa avātāra utsava-sambhramo).

The same form of the Lord is denoted in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* of the *Sāma Veda*:

kṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya devakī-nandanāya

...unto Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva, the son of Devakī (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, belonging to the *Sāma Veda*, says *kṛṣṇāya devakī-nandanāya*. *Kṛṣṇāya devakī-nandanāya vāsudevāya* is found in *Tripad-vibhūti Upaniṣad* of the *Atharva Veda*).

① Kṛṣṇa → refers to the son of Vasudeva.

By placing the word kṛṣṇa first in a series of names of the Lord, in this verse from Chāndogya Upanisad, the supreme position of Kṛṣṇa's name is also indicated.

② By putting the word Kṛṣṇa first, the supreme position of (K)Ṛ is indicated.

Garga Muni indicates the same by mentioning the name of Kṛṣṇa before the name of Vāsudeva in the Bhāgavatam:

āsan varṇās trayo hy asya gr̥hṇato 'nuyugam tanūh
śuklo raktas tathā pīta idānīm kṛṣṇatām gataḥ

prāg ayam vasudevasya kvacij jātas tavātmajah
vāsudeva iti śrīmān abhijñāḥ sampracakṣate

“This boy [Kṛṣṇa] (asya) has three other colors—white, red and yellow (śuklo raktas tathā pīta varṇās trayo āsan)—as He appears in different ages (anuyugam tanūh gr̥hṇataḥ). Now He has appeared in a transcendental blackish color (idānīm kṛṣṇatām gataḥ).” For many reasons, this beautiful son of yours (ayam tava śrīmān ātmajah), sometimes appeared previously (prāg kvacij jātaḥ) as the son of Vasudeva (vasudevasya). Therefore, those who are learned (abhijñāḥ) sometimes call this child Vāsudeva (vāsudeva iti sampracakṣate). SB

The *Brahma-saṁhitā* begins with *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ* to indicate, at the very beginning of the work, that *Kṛṣṇa* is the principal form of God.

This is similar to filling a pot with milk in the beginning, thus putting the pot to the best use first (*Payasā kumbham pūrayatīti nyāya*).

That *Kṛṣṇa*'s name is the chief name of the Lord is also stated by the Lord in the *Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa* of the *Padma Purāṇa* in the conversation between *Nārada* and *Kuśadvaja*:

nāmnām mukhyatamaṁ nāma kṛṣṇākhyam me parantapa

O conquerer of enemies (parantapa), my name Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇākhyam me nāma) is the chief among all names (nāmnām mukhyatamaṁ).

Similarly, in the hundred and eight names of the Lord mentioned in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, it is said:

sahasra-nāmnām puṇyānām trir-āvṛtṭyā tu yat phalam |
ekāvṛtṭyā tu kṛṣṇasya nāmaikam tat prayacchati ||

The auspicious results (puṇyānām phalam) obtained by reciting a thousand names of the Lord three times (yat sahasra-nāmnām puṇyānām trir-āvṛtṭyā) can be obtained (tat prayacchati) by reciting the name of Kṛṣṇa once (ekāvṛtṭyā tu kṛṣṇasya nāma ekam).

This statement of the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa that three thousand names of Viṣṇu are equal to one name of Kṛṣṇa also applies to the name Govinda mentioned later in the Brahma-saṁhitā (anadir adir govindāh and govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi).

Pankaja

Conventional meaning → Lotus

etymological meaning → From

Though the person indicated by the word Govinda is Kṛṣṇa, the word Govinda is used to indicate his special quality of herding the cows.

The other words in the verse, starting with the word īśvaraḥ, describe the unique nature of Kṛṣṇa, using the conventional meaning of the word Kṛṣṇa, denoted above as the son of Nanda

The same uniqueness of Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda, is stated by Garga:

āsan varṇās trayo hy asya gr̥hṇato 'nuyugam̐ tanūḥ |
śuklo raktas tathā pīta idānīm kṛṣṇatām gataḥ ||
bahūni santi nāmāni rūpāṇi ca sutasya te |
guṇa-karmānurūpāṇi tāny aham̐ veda no janāḥ ||

“This boy [Krsna] (asya) has three other colors—white, red and yellow (śuklo raktas tathā pīta varṇās trayo āsan)—as He appears in different ages (anu-yugam̐ tanūḥ gr̥hṇataḥ). Now He has appeared in a transcendental blackish color (idānīm kṛṣṇatām gataḥ).” For this son of yours (te sutasya) there are many forms and names (bahūni santi nāmāni rūpāṇi ca) according to His transcendental qualities and activities (guṇa-karma anurūpāṇi). These are known to me (tāny aham̐ veda), but people in general do not understand them (na janāḥ).

Here then is the meaning of these two verses. In every yuga the body of the person known as Kṛṣṇa, accepting various avatāra forms, appears with the colors white, red and yellow.

These avatāras, with white, red and yellow color, have now directly appeared within Kṛṣṇa as his limbs now that Kṛṣṇa has descended on earth.

Thus Kṛṣṇa is the principal name and form, since he is indicated as the cause of all other forms and as the most attractive among all the forms (*The verb kṛṣ can mean to hold power over others or to attract others*).

Thus all the other forms belong to him (*bahūni rūpāṇi*).

Therefore, prominence is given to Kṛṣṇa's name because that name denotes the person who is the most prominent because of his specific qualities.

The etymological meaning of the word *kṛṣṇa*

The conventional meaning of Kṛṣṇa as the son of Nanda, having supreme qualities, coincides with the etymological meaning of the word:

kṛṣir bhū-vācakaḥ śabdo ṇaś ca nirvṛtivācakaḥ |
tayor aikyaṁ param brahma kṛṣṇa ity abhidhīyate ||

Kṛṣ means “existence” (kṛṣir bhū-vācakaḥ śabdah) and ṇa means “bliss.” (ṇaś ca nirvṛti vācakaḥ) Combined together (aikyaṁ), the two roots indicate (tayor abhidhīyate) that Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa) is the supreme form of God (param brahma ity).

This verse cannot refer to another person, for in dealing with
worship of Kṛṣṇa and discussion of the eighteen-syllable mantra, a
similar verse is seen in the Gautamīya-tantra:

kr̥ṣi-śabdaś ca sattārtho ṇaś cānanda-svarūpakah |
sukha-rūpo bhaved ātmā bhāvānanda-mayatvataḥ ||

Kṛi means “existence” (kr̥ṣi-śabdaś ca sattārtho) and ṇa means “having a form of bliss.” (ṇaś ca ānanda-svarūpakah) He is the very form of happiness (sukha-rūpo bhaved), because he is composed of the bliss arising from prema (ātmā bhāvānanda-mayatvataḥ).

Considering the statements of these two verses, the meaning is as follows.

The meaning of the root *bhū* in the phrase *kr̥ṣir bhū-vācakaḥ śabdo* is
“that entity by whose power all objects exist.”

kr̥ṣ → *bhū* → that-entity by whose power
all objects exist.

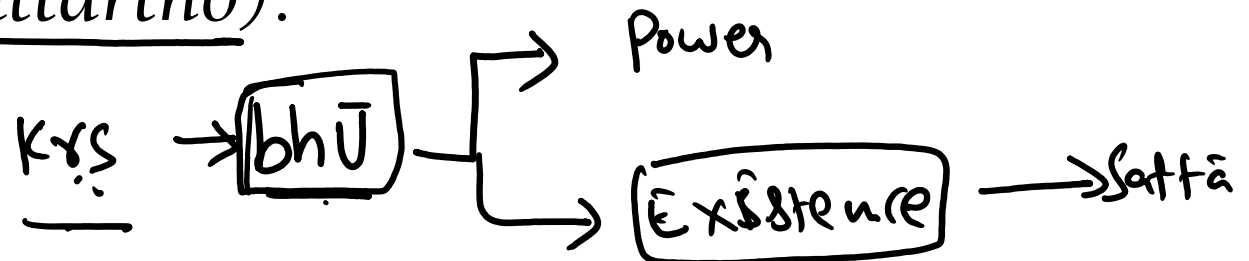
This is equivalent to the word *bhāva*, meaning “great power”, which is
inherent only in the Lord.

kr̥ṣ → to over power.

Because of this meaning of *kr̥ṣ*, when we say “*karṣati*”, derived from
the root *kr̥ṣ* (to overpower), it means “he controls all” in reference to
Kṛṣṇa.

Thus the two words *bhū* and *kṛṣ* are said to have the same meaning.

In the second verse from *Gautamīya-tantra*, *kṛṣ* is said to indicate *sattā* or existence (*kṛṣi-śabdaś ca sattārtho*).



That is because “existence” is another meaning of the root *bhū* (to exist).

Now, if we want to define a pot, we should infer one element (the pot) as a cause and the other element (the descriptive term) as effect, by establishing a relationship of cause and effect.

When we define a pot, we assume that it exists, and thus describing that the pot exists (“pot means the existence of pot”) does not tell us anything unique about the pot.

We cannot assume it means existence of some other object like cloth
(“Pot means the existence of cloth”), nor should we assume that it
means simply existence (“Pot is existence”), as both would be
meaningless as definitions.

$kṛṣ \rightarrow bhū \begin{cases} \rightarrow \text{Power} \\ \rightarrow \text{Existence} \rightarrow \text{Cause of existence} \end{cases}$

In the same way, the use of the word $kṛṣ$ in describing Kṛṣṇa, should
not mean merely “existence” but “the cause of the existence of
everything”.

This should also be the sense of the word $ākaraṣam$, the noun derived
from the root $kṛṣ$; it should mean “the power of controlling everything
in all existence” rather than the literal meaning “attraction”.

Therefore, for defining Krsna, when it is said that "krs means existence," taking that meaning literally is meaningless. Another more specific meaning of "existence" must be inferred.

Na stands for nirvṛtti, which means bliss. param brahma ← kṛṣ + na → basis of all things
→ cause of bliss of all things

The combination of the two words kṛṣ and na (tayor aikyam), "the Lord as the basis of all things and the cause of bliss to all" indicates param brahma by identification of case (sāmānādhikaranyā) in the sentence.

Brahman means that object ^{nourishing} (brhanam) ^{substance} (vastu) which is the outstanding nourisher among all things, and param brahma means the greatest among all nourishers, or he who is greater than all other nourishers.

That param brahman or “greatest nourisher” is called Kṛṣṇa (tayor aikyaṁ param brahma kṛṣṇa ity abhidhīyate).

If one takes the word *kṛṣ* to mean simply “attraction” and combines that meaning with the word *ṇa*, meaning simply “bliss”, a relation of cause and effect between the object being described and the two modifying words cannot be established, since Kṛṣṇa and “attraction and bliss” simply equal each other.

Kṛṣṇa, the greatest object, is attraction and bliss.

This is similar to saying “Ghee is life.”

What we really mean by that statement is that ghee causes long life.

Similarly when we say “Kṛṣṇa is attraction”, we mean that Kṛṣṇa, having power over all things, causes attraction, or is attractive to all things.

The meanings of Brahman just given are supported by the Visnu Purāṇa, which gives the following derivation of the word Brahman:

Bṛh → Bṛhat → great
Bṛh → Bṛmhaṇa → nourish

bṛhattvād bṛmhaṇatvāc ca tad brahma paramam vidur

Brahman (tad brahma) is known (viduh) as the supreme entity (paramam) because it is the greatest (bṛhattva) (bṛhattvād) and because it is the nourisher of all things (bṛmhaṇatva) (bṛmhaṇatvād)

Viṣṇu Purāṇa 1.12.57

How can this be said? Viṣṇu Purāṇa is referring to śruti statements. The śruti states that brahma is that which is great and produces greatness (Atharva-śikha Upaniṣad says sarvāni bṛṁhayati brahma. Śandilya Upaniṣad says yasmāc ca bṛṁhati bṛṁhayati ca sarvān tasmād ucyate param brahma).

Another definition in Bṛhad-gautamīya-tantra also describes Kṛṣṇa as Brahman:

kṛṣi-śabdaś ca sattārtho ṇaś cānanda-svarūpakah |
sattā-svānandayor yogāt cit param brahma cocyate ||

The word kṛṣ means existence (kṛṣi-śabdaś ca sattārtho) and ṇa means having a form of bliss (ṇaś ca ānanda-svarūpakah). Because Kṛṣṇa is the cause of existence and thus the cause of bliss for all beings (sattā-svānandayor yogāt), he is called (ucyate) the Supreme Brahman with consciousness (cit param brahma).

Though the monists consider existence and bliss to be names with the same meaning to designate one Brahman (since Brahman has no qualities), the grammarians have acknowledged that the words “existence” and “bliss” have different meanings.

The word *sat* means the supreme cause of all things in existence.

Why?

This is proved by the statement *sad eva saumyedaṃ agra asīt*: what is called *sat* existed before everything. (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.2.1)

Also, if the two words *sattā* and *ānanda* had the same meaning, then one of the words would be redundant.