

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

Volume-2

Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

Chapter-1

Vairāgya: Renunciation

2.1.122

pūjā-vidhiṃ śikṣayitum
dhyeyam uccārayan jape
premākulo gato moham
rudan virahiṇīva saḥ

He was going to
teach us the method of
worshipping along with the mantra.
But, as soon as he mentioned the
object of meditation → He was
lost in loving ecstasy

He was about to explain the method of worshipping (pūjā-vidhiṃ śikṣayitum) with the mantra (jape), but as soon as he mentioned the object of meditation (dhyeyam uccārayan) he was overcome by pure love of God (premākulah), became confused (gato moham), and started crying like a woman separated from her lover (rudan virahiṇīva).

→ Madan Gopā

Gopa-kumāra's guru had the instructions for properly using the mantra just on the tip of his tongue.

He was about to tell Gopa-kumāra how to mark the body with the syllables of the mantra, how to meditate systematically on the meaning of the mantra, and all the other details for reciting the mantra in worship.

But as soon as he started to describe the beautiful form of Śrīmān Madana-gopāla a sudden ecstasy caught hold of him, and, crying like a lovesick woman remembering her distant beloved, he lost his train of thought.

When he regained his
consciousness, I was afraid
to ask him anything.
He stood up & went away in a
distressed mood & was never to
be seen.

2.1.123

samjñām prāpto 'tha kiñcin na
praṣṭum śakto mayā bhiyā
utthāya vimanasko 'gāt
kvāpi prāptaḥ punar na saḥ

When he regained normal consciousness (atha samjñām prāpto) I was afraid (mayā bhiyā) to ask him anything (na kiñcit praṣṭum śaktaḥ). He stood up (utthāya) and went away (agāt), distressed (vimanasko). And after that he was nowhere to be found (kvāpi prāptaḥ punar na saḥ).

Having just received initiation, Gopa-kumāra felt deep reverence for his spiritual master, and without first being spoken to he dared not say anything.

He feared he might have done something offensive to upset his guru and thought that if he said anything wrong his guru might start crying again.

Why didn't the saintly brāhmaṇa give the missing instructions unasked?

In his ecstatic mood he was unhappy and distracted, so he went away saying nothing more.

And because he had no fixed residence he was not to be found again.

I had no idea
What this mantra was,
What is the fruit & how
it needs to be practiced

2.1.124

mayā tu kim idam labdham
kim asya phalam eva vā
mantraḥ katham sādhanīya
iti jñātam na kiñcana

I had no idea (mayā tu na kiñcana jñātam) what this mantra was
that I had received (kim idam labdham), what fruit its chanting
would bear (kim asya phalam eva vā), or even how the mantra was
to be practiced (mantraḥ katham sādhanīya iti).

Gopa-kumāra did not even know the name of this ten-syllable
mantra.

Was the mantra meant to be sung out loud?

Or chanted quietly?

Or was it a mantra at all?

If it was powerful, when chanted perfectly what fruit would it bear?

His guru had told him that the mantra would fulfill all his desires,
but that was vague.

Until now Gopa-kumāra had never thought seriously about his
ultimate desires and goals.

Simply out of
respect for the
brāhmaṇa's words
I constantly chanted the
in a secluded place
of curiosity

2.1.125

tad-vākya-gauravenaiva
mantram taṁ kevalam mukhe
kenāpy alakṣito 'jasram
japeyam kautukād iva

Simply out of respect for the brāhmaṇa's words (tad-vākya-gauravena eva), I constantly murmured this mantra (mantram taṁ ajasram kevalam mukhe) in secluded places, unseen by others (kenāpy alakṣito). I chanted it just out of curiosity (japeyam kautukād iva).

Gopa-kumāra, aware of his ignorance of the true nature of the
mantra, was embarrassed to chant it in public.

But it certainly fascinated him.

By the power of that
Brahmanā, even by such
aimless chanting, my mind
became purified & I developed
faith in the mantra

2.1.126

tan-mahā-puruṣasyaiva
prabhāvāt tādrśena ca
japena citta-śuddhir me
tatra śraddhāpy ajāyata

By the influence of that great person (tan-mahā-puruṣasyaiva
prabhāvāt), even such aimless chanting (tādrśena ca japena)
purified my mind (me citta-śuddhih), and I developed faith in the
mantra (tatra śraddhāpy ajāyata).

Without scientific knowledge of its practice and significance, the young sādḥaka Gopa-kumāra could hardly have solid faith in the mantra.

He was not firmly convinced of its efficacy, nor was he affectionately attracted to it.

Nonetheless, his naive chanting purified his mind of lust, envy, and greed.

Just by contemplating on
my guru's words, I understood
that the mantra is the sādhanā
to achieve the Śākya of Jagad-īśa
∴ I became satisfied & absorbed in
Chanting

2.1.127

tad-vākyam cānusandhāya
jagad-īśvara-sādhakam
taṁ mantram manyamāno 'ham
tuṣyan japa-paro 'bhavam

Contemplating my guru's words (tad-vākyam ca anusandhāya), I understood the mantra (taṁ mantram manyamāno aham) to be the means for achieving the Lord of the universe (jagad-īśvara-sādhakam). Thus I became satisfied (tuṣyan) and absorbed in chanting (japa-paro abhavam).

Gopa-kumāra's guru had told him, "Accept the Supreme Lord's mercy."

Remembering this, Gopa-kumāra concluded that the mantra was meant for obtaining the favor of the Supreme Lord.

This was a satisfying reason to take enthusiastically to the chanting.

i became eager to
know this lord, please
to see him & with
this aspiration I left home
& came to the banks of Gaṅgā

2.1.128

kīdr̥śo jagad-īśo 'sau
kadā vā dr̥śyatām mayā
tad-eka-lālaso hitvā
gr̥hādīn jāhnavīm agām

I became eager to know who this Lord of the universe was (kīdr̥śo jagad-īśo asau) and when I might be able to see Him (kadā vā dr̥śyatām mayā). With this as my only aspiration (tad-eka-lālaso) I abandoned my home and other attachments (gr̥hādīn hitvā) and went to the bank of the Gaṅgā (jāhnavīm agām).

Wanting to identify the Lord of the universe, Gopa-kumāra compared Him to familiar people and things.

But he could find no clue in the place where he had been brought up, so he left home to wander in search of the Lord.

I heard the sound of
Conchshell & I followed it
& saw a learned brāhmaṇa
Śālagrāma-śilā worshiping

2.1.129

dūrāc chaṅkha-dhvanim śrutvā
tat-padam pulinaṃ gataḥ
vipraṃ vīkṣyānamam tatra
śālagrāma-śilārcakam

Hearing the distant sound of a conchshell being blown (dūrāc chaṅkha-dhvanim śrutvā), I followed that sound to its origin on a sandy bank of the river (tat-padam pulinaṃ gataḥ). There I saw a learned brāhmaṇa (vipraṃ vīkṣyānamam tatra) worshiping a Śālagrāma-śilā, and I bowed down (śālagrāma-śilārcakam).

2.1.130

kiṁ imaṁ yajasi svāminn
iti pṛṣṭo mayā hasan
so 'vadat kiṁ na jānāsi
bālāyaṁ jagad-īśvaraḥ

I asked him who
he was worshipping &
he laughingly replied
"Don't you know that this
Jagad-īśvaraḥ?"

I asked him (mayā pṛṣṭah), “Master (svāminn), what are you worshipping (kiṁ imaṁ yajasi)?” Laughing (hasan), he replied (sah avadat), “Dear boy (bāla), don't you know (kiṁ na jānāsi) that this is the Lord of the universe (ayaṁ jagad-īśvaraḥ)?”

The worshiper was surprised that anyone, even a child, would be ignorant that Śrī Śālagrāma is a direct incarnation of the Lord of the universe.

Hearing this I was
So happy like:
a) a poor man finding treasure
b) a family man reuniting with a
lost relative.

2.1.131

tac chrutvāham su-samprāpto
nidhim labdhveva nirdhanah
naṣṭam vā bāndhavo bandhum
paramām mudam āptavān

Hearing this (tac śrutvā) I felt unlimited happiness (aham paramām mudam āptavān), like a poor man (nirdhanah) finding (labdhvā) a welcome treasure (su-samprāpto nidhim iva), or a family man (vā bāndhavah) reuniting with a long-lost relative (naṣṭam bandhum).

2.1.132

jagad-īśam muhuḥ paśyan
daṇḍa-vac chraddhayānamam
pādodakam sa-nirmālyam
viprasya kṛpayāpnuvam

I gazed for a long time (muḥuḥ paśyan) at the Lord of the universe (jagad-īśam) and with faith bowed down to Him (śraddhayā naman), my whole body flat on the ground like a rod (daṇḍa-vat). By the brāhmaṇa's mercy (viprasya kṛpayā) I received (āpnuvam) some water that had washed the Lord's feet (pādodakam), and some remnants of offerings to Him (sa-nirmālyam).

a I gazed at Him for
a long time, bowed down to
Him. ↓
By the brāhmaṇa's mercy, I received
the remnants of offerings

With newborn faith and affection for the Lord in His Śālagrāma form, Gopa-kumāra happily accepted the Lord's caraṇāmṛta, along with remnants of tulasī leaves and other items earlier offered to the Lord.

The brahmana prepared
to return home & put the Lord
to rest in a box.
Pained to see this GK started to
cry & complain

2.1.133

udyatena grham gantum
karande tena sayitam
jagad-islam vilokyarto
vyalapam sasram idram

Then the brāhmaṇa, preparing to return home (udyatena grham gantum), lay the Lord of the universe to rest (tena jagad-islam sayitam) in a box (karande). Pained to see this (vilokya artah), I tearfully complained in this way (vyalapam sasram idram):

You are putting
the Lord in a box
without feeling him?
How can He sleep hungry?

2.1.134

hā hā dhṛtaḥ karaṇḍāntar
asthāne parameśvaraḥ
kim apy asau na cābhuṅkta
nidrā tu kṣudhayā katham

“My God (hā hā), you are putting the Supreme Lord (parameśvaraḥ dhṛtaḥ) into a box (karaṇḍa antar)—such an unfit place (asthāne)! And He (hasn't even eaten) (asau na ca abhuṅkta)! How will He sleep (nidrā tu katham) if He is hungry (kṣudhayā)?”.

Gopa-kumāra thought the little box an ill-chosen place for the Lord of the universe.

flight

Told that being placed in such a box is what is done with the Deity after worship to Him is finished, Gopa-kumāra replied that he had not seen the brāhmaṇa make an offering of food substantial enough to satisfy the Lord's appetite and that the Lord should not be forced to sleep without first being fed.

Oh brahmana! Because of my
material conditioning, I could not
imagine that the Lord of the
universe could have a form so
different from us

2.1.135

prakṛtyaiva na jānāmi
māthura-brāhmaṇottama
asmād vilakṣaṇaḥ kaścit
kvāpy asti jagad-īśvaraḥ

O excellent brāhmaṇa from Mathurā (māthura-brāhmaṇottama),
because of my material conditioning (prakṛtyaiva) I was unaware
(na jānāmi) that the Lord of the universe (jagad-īśvaraḥ) is different
(vilakṣaṇaḥ asti) from everyone and everything (kaścit kvāpy) in
this world (asmād).

Gopa-kumāra was ignorant of the Supreme Person's transcendental nature.

The Lord can enjoy Himself everywhere simultaneously by expanding into an infinite number of forms.

There is no reason to worry that He will go hungry because of one devotee's neglect.

He may seem to be a small stone trapped in a box, but in fact the Lord is unlimited.

As I was complaining
& lamenting, the brāhmaṇa
tried to console me
& shyly

2.1.136

ity akṛtrima-santāpam
vilāpāturam abravīt
brāhmaṇaḥ sāntayitvā mām
hrīṇa-vad vinayānvitaḥ

As I complained and suffered (vilāpa āturam) in my uncontrived lamentation (akṛtrima-santāpam), the brāhmaṇa tried to console me (brāhmaṇaḥ sāntayitvā mām). Full of humility (vinayānvitaḥ), he shyly spoke (hrīṇa-vad abravīt).

The saintly brāhmaṇa was ashamed of being too poor to feed even a human guest, what to speak of the Supreme Lord.

And in fact the place where he had now performed his worship simply had no facilities for cooking.

But the humility the brāhmaṇa felt was not caused by any external circumstance; it was a natural ecstasy of his individual type of love of God.

2.1.137

What can a boy
brāhmaṇa feel to
the Lord other than
what I cook for myself?

nava-vaiṣṇava kim kartum
daridraḥ śaknuyām param
arpayāmi sva-bhogyam hi
jagad-īśāya kevalam

“O new Vaiṣṇava (nava-vaiṣṇava),” he said, “what more can this poor man do (daridraḥ kim param kartum śaknuyām)? I can offer (arpayāmi) to the Lord of the universe (jagad-īśāya) only the meals I prepare for myself (sva-bhogyam hi kevalam).

The brāhmaṇa who lived near the Gaṅgā thought, “If this cowherd boy has never seen a brāhmaṇa like me worshiping Śālagrāma-śilā, he must be new to spiritual life.”

2.1.138-39

yadi pūjotsavam tasya vaibhavam ca didrkṣase
tadaitad-deśa-rājasya viṣṇu-pūjānurāgiṇaḥ

mahā-sādhoḥ purīm yāhi vartamānam adūrataḥ
tatra sākṣāt samīkṣasva durdarśam jagad-īśvaram

If you are eager to see
 the opulence of the Lord, then
 go to the capital
 city of the saintly
 king & behold the
 lot of the universe

“If you are eager to see (yadi didrkṣase) the Lord’s opulence (tasya vaibhavam) and a great festival of His worship (pūjā utsavam ca), please go (tadā yāhi) to the capital city (purīm) of this country’s very saintly ruler (etad-deśa-rājasya mahā-sādhoḥ). He is attached to the worship of Lord Viṣṇu in great love (viṣṇu-pūjā anurāgiṇaḥ). You will find his city not far away (vartamānam adūrataḥ), and there (tatra) you can behold (samīkṣasva) the Lord of the universe (sākṣāt jagad-īśvaram), who is so difficult to see (durdarśam).

The king of this district on the shore of the Gaṅgā was a sincere Vaiṣṇava, which made him a greater saint than any karmī, jñānī, or ordinary yogī.

He worshiped the Deity of Lord Viṣṇu with festive opulence.

If Gopa-kumāra liked, he could go to the capital and see for himself this king's wonderful worship.

He could see the Lord's beauty, the rich offerings made to the Lord, and His luxurious sleeping quarters.

The opulences of the king's Deity were much more readily visible than those of the poor brāhmaṇa's Sālagrāma-śilā.

You will feel great ecstasy
& all your desires will be
fulfilled.

↓
But, for now, come & honour
President @ my house

2.1.140

hṛt-pūrakam mahānandam
sarvathānubhaviṣyasi
idānīm etya mad-gehe
bhukṣva viṣṇu-niveditam

“You will feel great ecstasy (mahānandam anubhaviṣyasi), fulfilling all your heart’s desires (sarvathā hṛt-pūrakam). But for now (idānīm) please come have lunch in my house (etya mad-gehe bhukṣva) from the remnants of what has been offered to Lord Viṣṇu (viṣṇu-niveditam).”

Gopa-kumāra will certainly feel bliss if he witnesses the opulence of the Viṣṇu Deity in the royal city, hears the songs and prayers recited for the pleasure of the Lord, and tastes the remnants of food offered to the Lord.

The brāhmaṇa admits that devotees who have pure love for the Lord prefer to see Him worshiped with suitable opulence, opulence that he, a poor man, cannot provide for his own Deity.

Gopa-kumāra should therefore at once go to the capital, but before he goes he should have lunch at the brāhmaṇa's house, where he can taste what little rice and other items have been offered this morning to the brāhmaṇa's Śālagrāma Deity.

Delighted by the
brāhmaṇa's words, I immediately
set out to the capital city
without visiting his house

2.1.141

tad-vācānandito 'gatvā
kṣudhito 'pi tad-ālayam
taṁ praṇamya tad-uddiṣṭa-
vartmanā tāṁ purīm agām

Delighted by the brāhmaṇa's words (tad-vācā ānanditah), I offered him my obeisances (taṁ praṇamya) and without stopping at his house (tad-ālayam agatvā) (even though hungry (kṣudhito 'pi)), I set off for the capital (tāṁ purīm agām) by the road he pointed out (tad-uddiṣṭa-vartmanā).

Insight



Gopa-kumāra repeatedly prostrated himself before the brāhmaṇa with great devotion.

Insight



He did this partly to beg pardon for declining the brāhmaṇa's invitation and partly to beg blessings for an auspicious journey.