Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmrta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

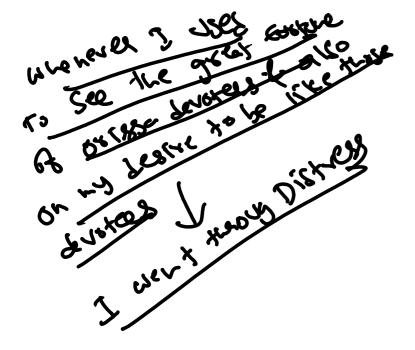
Volume-2

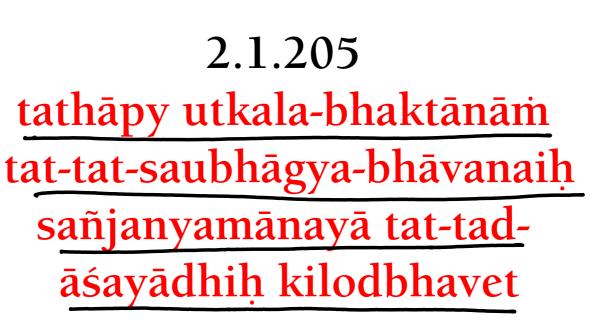
Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

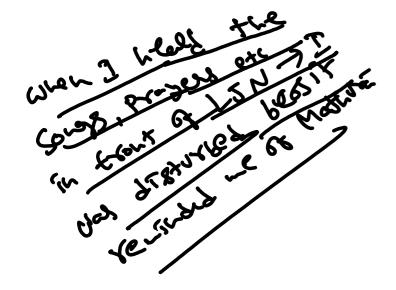


Vairāgya: Renunciation





Even so (tathāpy), I went through anguish (ādhiḥ kila udbhavet) when I thought of the kinds of good fortune (tat-tat-saubhāgyabhāvaṇaiḥ) the Orissan devotees enjoyed (utkala-bhaktānāṁ sañjanyamānayā) and when I reflected in various ways on my desire to be like those devotees (tat-tad-āśayā).



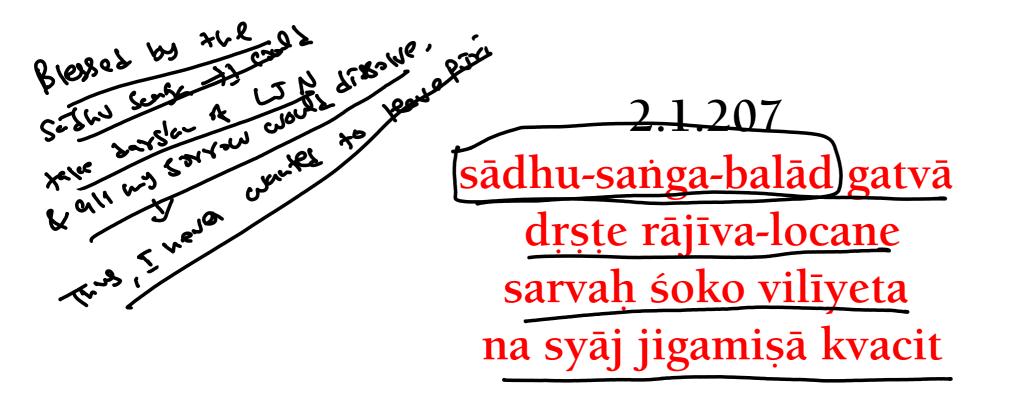
2.1.206 n<u>āma-saṅkīrtana-stotra-</u> g<u>ītāni bhagavat-puraḥ</u> śr<u>ūyamāṇāni dunvanti</u> mathurā-smārakāṇi <u>mām</u>

When I heard (śrūyamāņāni) the songs (gītāni), prayers (stotra), and congregational chanting of the Lord's names (nāma-saṅkīrtana) in front of Lord Jagannātha (bhagavat-puraḥ), I was disturbed (mām dunvanti) because they reminded me of Mathurā (mathurāsmārakāņi). I<u>n the presence of Lord Jagannātha, devotees would chant names of the Lord</u> like Mathurā-nātha, Vṛndāvana-candra, and Govardhanoddhāraṇa.

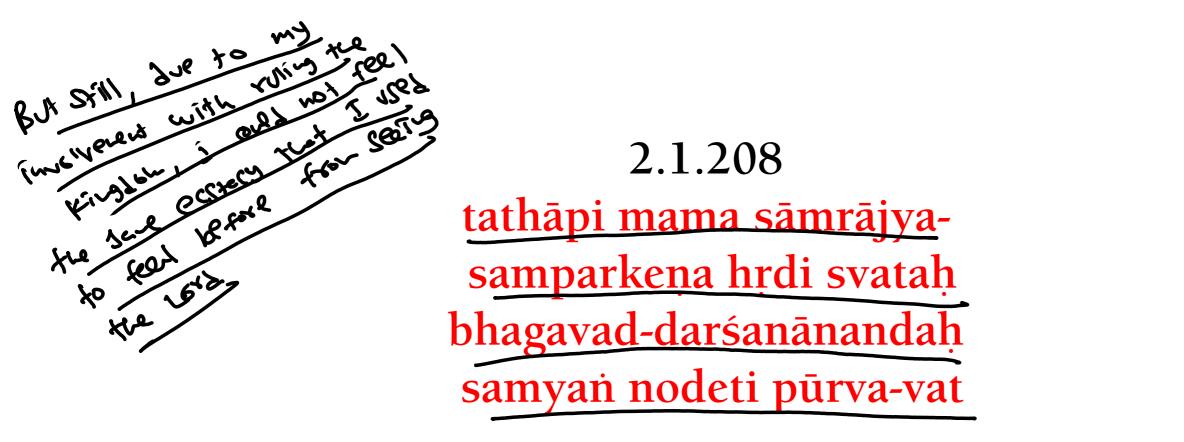
They would recite ancient prayers from the Purāņas and prayers by modern authors.

They would sing properly composed songs, with suitable melody and rhythm.

Hearing those auspicious sounds troubled Gopa-kumāra's mind because they made him more vividly remember Mathurā and started him thinking about going back.



Blessed by the strength of my closeness with saintly devotees (<u>sādhu</u>sanga-balād), I was able to go (<u>gatvā</u>) see (drste) the <u>lotus-eyed Lo</u>rd (rājīva-locane), and whenever I went to see Him all my sorrow would dissolve (sarvaḥ śoko vilīyeta). Thus I never wanted to go anywhere else (na syāt jigamiṣā kvacit).

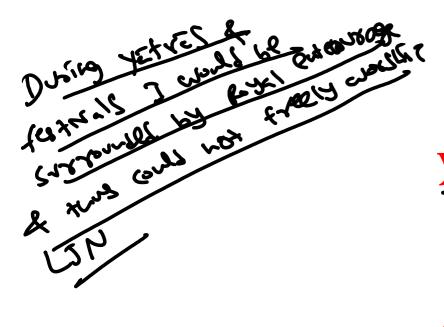


But (tathāpi) because of my involvement with ruling the kingdom (mama sāmrājya-samparkeņa), my heart (svatah hṛdi) could never feel (na udeti) the complete spontaneous ecstasy (samyak ānandaḥ) it used to feel (pūrva-vat) from seeing the Lord (bhagavad-darśana). By the mercy of the great devotees of Purī, Gopa-kumāra got repeated darśana of the all-blissful Lord Jagannātha, and every visit destroyed his sorrow.

Only by the powerful mercy of the devotees was he able to relish the beauty of the Lord; on the strength of his own spiritual accomplishments alone he would never have overcome his distress.

Yet his happiness was never as full as before, because he was entangled in the management of the kingdom.

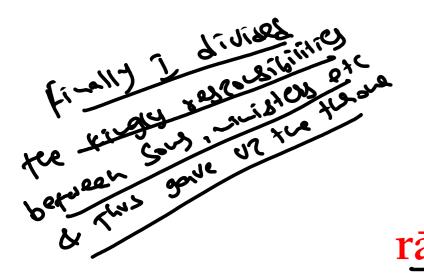
Despite having officially offered the kingdom at the feet of Lord Jagannātha, he was still burdened by the many anxieties of a king.



2.1.209

yātrā-mahotsavāmś cāham āvṛto rāja-mandalaiḥ sukham kalayitum neśe svecchayā bahudhā bhajan

A<u>t</u> the Ratha-yātrā and other big festivals (yātrā-mahotsavāmś ca</u>), I was surrounded (aham āvṛtah) by my royal entourage (rājamaṇḍalaiḥ) and unable to spend time enjoying the occasions (sukham kalayitum na īśe). And I could no longer worship Lord Jagannātha (na īśe bhajan) according to my own desire (svecchayā) in the various ways I had before (bahudhā). As king, Gopa-kumāra had opportunities to sweep the road in front of Lord Jagannātha's cart, wipe the Lord's face, and offer betel nut to His mouth, but the pleasure he felt from these services was constrained by the presence of the crowds.

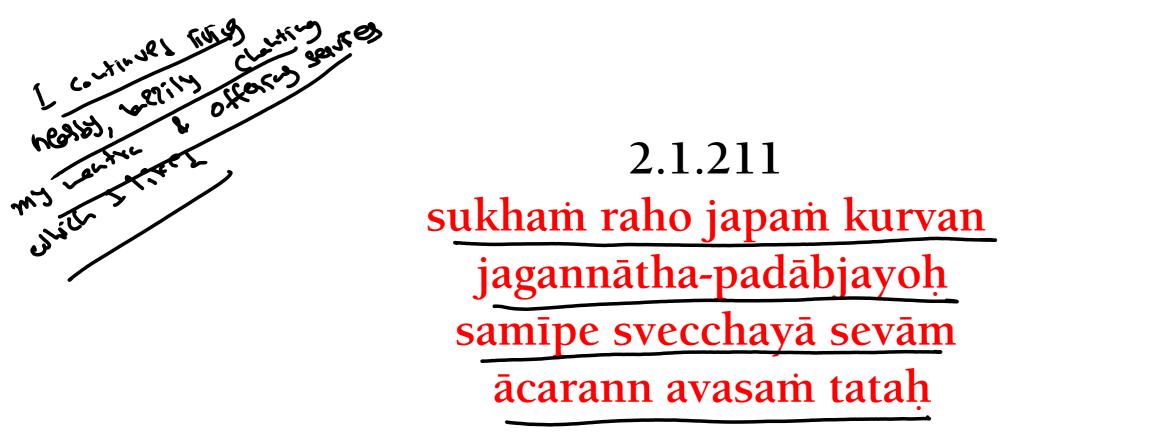


2.1.210

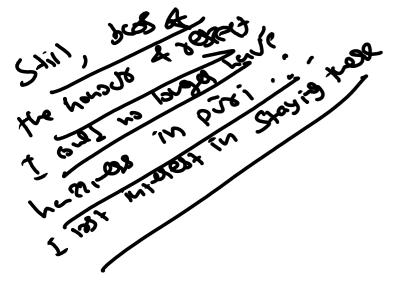
rājño 'patyeṣv amātyeṣu bandhuṣv api samarpya tam rājya-bhāraṁ svayaṁ prāg-vad udāsīnatayā sthitaḥ

So I handed over (samarpya) the burden of ruling the kingdom (rājya-bhāram) to the sons, ministers (apatyesu amātyesu), and relatives (bandhusv api) of the previous king (rājnah), and as before (prāg-vad) I became uninvolved and aloof (svayam udāsīnatayā sthitah).

At last he abdicated the throne.



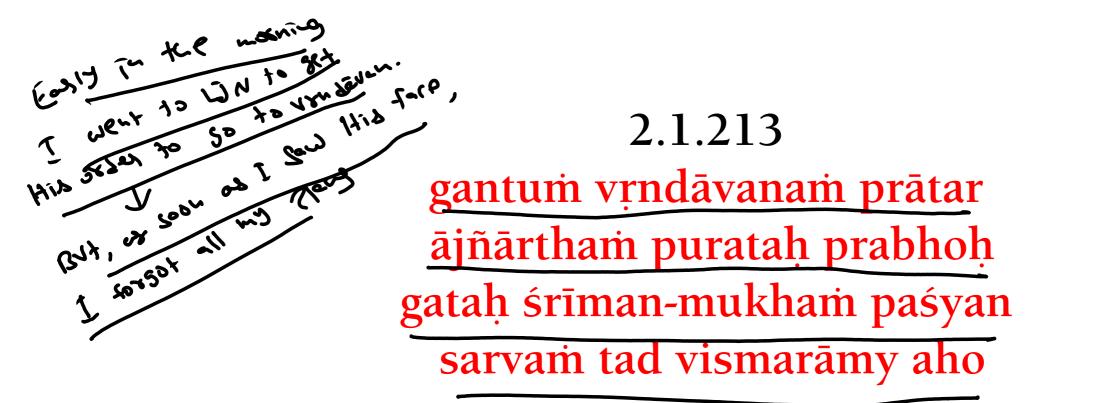
I continued living nearby (samīpe avasan tataḥ), happily chanting my mantra (sukham japam kurvan) in private (rahah) and offering service (sevām ācarann) at the lotus feet of Lord Jagannātha (jagannātha-padābjayoḥ) as I liked (svecchayā).



2.1.212 tathāpi loka-sammānādaratas tādrśam sukham na labheya vinirviņņamanās tatrābhavam sthitau

But (tathāpi) because of the honor and respect I received from the populace (loka-sammāna ādaratah), I could no longer feel (na labheya) happiness in Purī (tādṛśaṁ sukham). And so I lost interest (vinirviṇṇa- manāh abhavan) in staying there (tatra sthitau).

Gopa-kumāra tried to refuse formal worship from his former subjects, but even when they obliged him, dispensing with formalities, they still treated him with great respect.



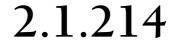
Early in the morning (prātar), I went before Lord Jagannātha (prabhoḥ purataḥ gataḥ) to ask His permission (ājñārthaṁ) to leave for Vṛndāvana (vṛndāvanaṁ gantuṁ); but oḥ (aho), when I saw His beautiful face (śrīman-mukhaṁ paśyan) I forgot all my plans (sarvaṁ tad vismarāmy). Gopa-kumāra reasoned like this: "The Lord of the universe, for whose sake I left Vraja-bhūmi, I have obtained directly here.

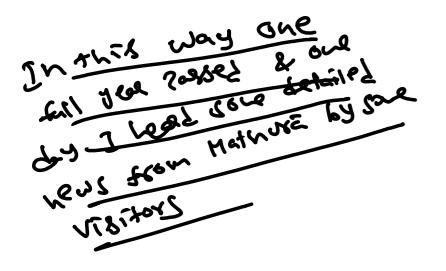
How is it right for me to abandon Him, and how can I find the power to do such a thing?

And even if the same Lord wants to bring me back to His favorite playground Vrndāvana to show me some special mercy, I still cannot go away from here without first getting His express permission."

But when Gopa-kumāra went before Lord Jagannātha in the temple, as soon as he saw the Lord's divine face he forgot everything—his mental pain, the remembrance of Vrndāvana that caused the pain, and his intention to ask the Lord's permission to go.

This pattern occurred day after day.

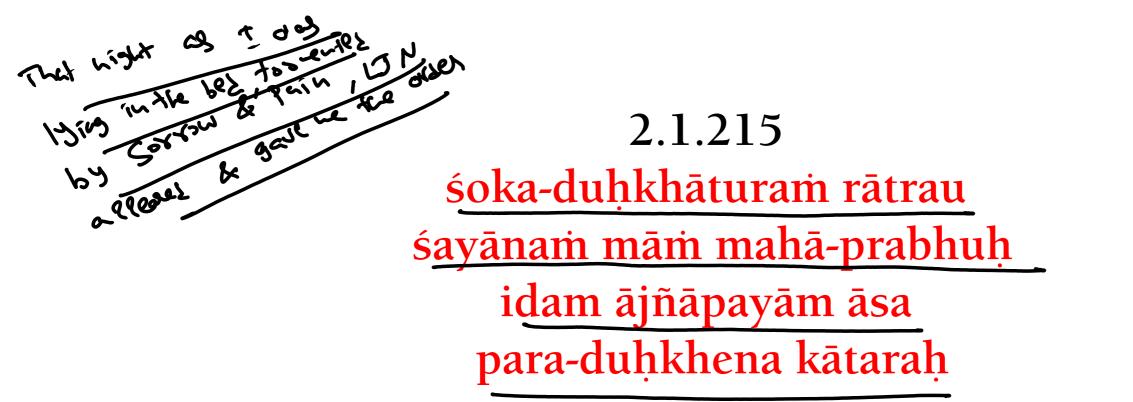




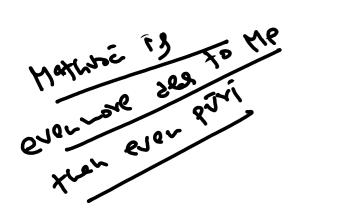
evam samvatsare jāte <u>mayā tatraikadā śrutam</u> <u>mathurāyāḥ prāyātebhyo</u> 'tratya-vṛttam viśeṣataḥ

T<u>hus one year passed</u> (evam samvatsare jāte), and then one day (ekadā) I heard (mayā śrutam) some detailed news of Mathurā (mathurāyāh vrttam viśeṣataḥ) from visitors who had come from there (atratya prāyātebhyo).

<u>Gopa-kumāra</u> heard these visitors describe the splendor of the cows, cowherds, birds, trees, forest animals, and other residents of such neighborhoods as Srī Vṛndāvana and Govardhana.



That night (rātrau) as I was lying in bed (śayānam mām), tormented by sorrow and pain (śoka-duḥkha āturam), the Supreme Lord Jagannātha (mahā-prabhuḥ), who is pained by the suffering of others (para-duḥkhena kātaraḥ), gave me the following command (idam ājñāpayām āsa).

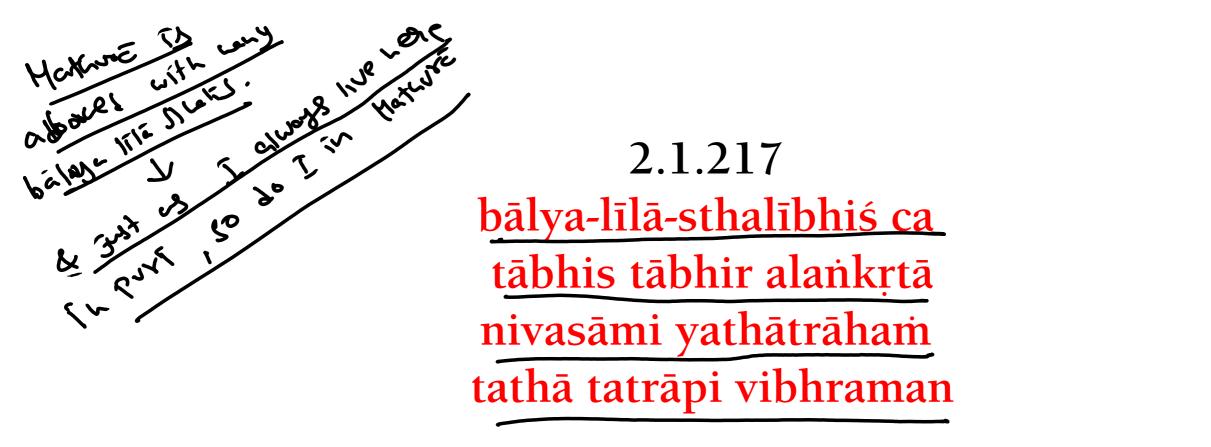


2.1.216

bho gopa-nandana kṣetram idam mama yathā priyam tathā śrī-mathurā 'thāsau janma-bhūmir viśeṣataḥ

"As dear as this holy city is to Me (yathā idam kṣetram mama priyam), O son of a cowherd (bho gopa-nandana), My birthplace (tathā asau janma-bhūmih), Śrī Mathurā (śrī-mathurā), is even more dear (viśeṣataḥ priyam).

By calling His devotee gopa-nandana, Lord Jagannātha subtly hinted that it was fitting for him to live in Vraja-bhūmi.



"Mathurā is adorned (alankrtā) with the various sites (tābhis tābhis) of My childhood pastimes (bālya-līlā-sthalībhih). Just as I live always here in Purī (yathā atra aham nivasāmi), wandering about everywhere (vibhraman), so do I in Mathurā (tathā tatra api). <u>Mathurā is even more dear to the Personality of Godhead than</u> P<u>urusottama-ksetra because in Mathurā He displayed His birth and</u> childhood pastimes.

<u>Childhood technically means the years before maturity, which are</u> divided into the three phases called kaumāra, paugaņda, and kaiśora.

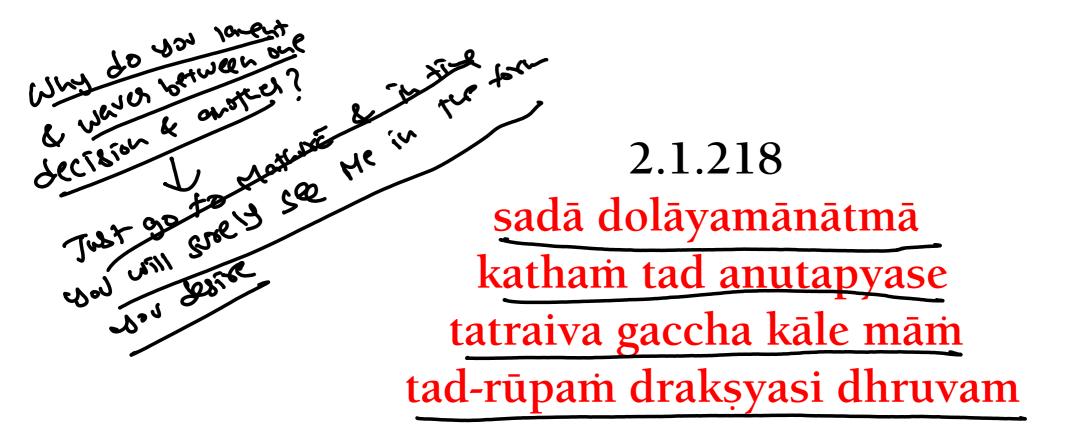
Many scriptural statements describe human life as passing through birth, youth, and old age. For example:

janma bālyam tatah sar jantuh prāpnoti yauvana avyāhataiva bhavati tato 'nu-divasam jarā

"Every creature is born, is then a child, and then a youth. And if his life is not interrupted prematurely, he daily approaches old age."

Gopa-kumāra might object that here in Purī the Lord is visible whereas in Mathurā He is not.

But Lord Jagannātha here answers that He certainly lives in Mathurā, wandering about and enjoying with His devotees.



"Why constantly lament (katham sadā anutapyase), wavering between one decision and another (dolāyamāna ātmā)? Just go to Mathurā (tatraiva gaccha), and in time (kāle) you will surely see Me (mām dhruvam drakṣyasi) in the form you desire (tad-rūpam)." The form of the Lord that Gopa-kumāra cherishes in his meditation is that of Śrī Madana-gopāla-deva.

Lord Jagannātha assures Gopa-kumāra, "You will see Me in that form at the proper time in Mathurā-bhūmi.

Thereafter, you will never again suffer sorrow or discontent."

Early that morning (prātar) at my residence (me vāse) I received (adaya) a flower garland indicating the Lord's command (ajñamālām) from some pūjārī brāhmanas (samāgatya pūjā-vipraih dattām). I placed the garland on my neck (kanthe baddhvā) and departed (prasthitah), bowing down (natvā) to the cakra on top of the temple (cakram) as I saw it for the last time (viksya). And in that way I came (atha āptah) to this land of Mathurā (etad māthuram deśam).

Just in case Gopa-kumāra might judge his dream false, Lord Jagannātha sent a garland from His morning pūjā as a sign of His approval.

This confirmed that the Lord wanted him to go to Mathurā.

Lord Jagannātha appeared on earth mainly to display His pastime of accepting formal worship in His temple, and His brāhmaņa pujārīs shared in this pastime.

<u>The Lord ordered His pūjārīs to take the garland off His neck and</u> bring it to Gopa-kumāra.

And rather than go to the temple to see the Lord's lotus face, Gopakumāra left at once for Mathurā.