

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

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Volume-2

Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

Chapter-2

Jñāna: Knowledge

The happiness of
 self-realization is
 very lesser
 ↓
 criticism of those who accept
 the 3rd of fruit of mokṣa

2.2.176

jīva-svarūpa-bhūtasya
sac-cid-ānanda-vastunaḥ
sākṣād-anubhavenāpi
syāt tādṛk sukham alpakaṁ

1 → I am not this body. I
 am spirit soul
 2 → Jīva-svarūpa bhūta-kr. śloka
 nitya-śāśa.
 3 → Gopi bhaktar pada kevalya
 śāśa - - -
 4 → Realizing our real
 our identity in relation
 with P (bhāva & prapñā)

The happiness (tādṛk sukham) that arises from directly perceiving (sākṣād-anubhavenāpi) the true identity of the jīva soul (jīva-svarūpa-bhūtasya)—the entity composed of eternity, knowledge, and bliss (sac-cid-ānanda-vastunaḥ)—is actually meager (alpakaṁ syāt).

The mokṣa, or liberation, conceived in the first two ideas cited above—mokṣa as the end of misery or as the end of the causes of misery—affords no positive happiness.

- ① ~~अप्ययता दुःखनिवृत्ति~~
- ② ~~अप्ययते काले कस्यचि~~
- ③ ~~मयि-कृता अयंते रूपा येनैव
सर्वेषु भवेत्तु मोकसा~~

This was not difficult to show.

Furthermore, the happiness of self-realization presumed in the third theory of mokṣa, that of vivarta, is actually meager, as the bhakti-śāstras, in texts [176 through 196, now set out to prove.

Compared to the bliss of performing pure devotional service and realizing the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, who embodies all the perfections of Brahman, realizing the identity of the jīva soul brings very little happiness.

In fact, this so-called happiness of self-realization is nothing more than the negation of suffering; the scriptures refer to it as happiness only as a concession to the foolish.

But at least the “happiness” of perceiving the jīva soul serves as a standard of comparison by which to think of the joy of pure devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

That pure self is
Called Brahman.
It is devoid of Qualities,
Free from attachment, unchanging,
& inactive

2.2.177

śuddhātma-tattvaṃ yad vastu
tad eva brahma kathyate
nirguṇaṃ tac ca niḥsaṅgaṃ
nirvikāraṃ nirīhitaṃ

That entity (yad vastu)—the reality of pure self (śuddha ātma-tattvaṃ)—is called Brahman (tad eva brahma kathyate). It is devoid of qualities (tad nirguṇaṃ), free from attachment (niḥsaṅgaṃ), unchanging (nirvikāraṃ), and inactive (nirīhitaṃ).

The impersonalists might now suggest that, in contrast to the small happiness of realizing the minute jīva, the relish of perceiving the impersonal Supreme in liberation is unlimited.

However, the bhakti-śāstras here point out that the Vivarta-vādīs' own definition of the Supreme leaves little room in Brahman realization for happiness.

According to them, Brahman is devoid of qualities such as compassion.

It has no attachment to anything or anyone, including the pure Vaiṣṇavas.

It undergoes no changes, such as the transformations of a heart melting in the ecstasy of love, and displays none of the dynamic varieties of opulence and sweetness shown by the Supreme Lord in His personal form.

It is also inactive, which implies that it has no wonderful all-attractive pastimes.

Thus the happiness of realizing Brahman cannot transcend the limits of impersonalism

But Bhagavan is
Para Brahma.
He is Perpetual, Palatable
& Sec-cid-ananda-glorious
Mahimā arṇavaḥ

2.2.178

bhagavāms tu param brahma
parātmā parameśvaraḥ
su-sāndra-sac-cid-ānanda-
vigraho mahimārṇavaḥ

But the Personality of Godhead is the Supreme Brahman (bhagavān
tu param brahma), the Supersoul (parātmā), the absolute controller
of everything (parameśvaraḥ). His body is the concentrated essence
of eternity, knowledge, and bliss (su-sāndra-sac-cid-ānanda-
vigrahaḥ). He is an ocean of superlative qualities (mahimā arṇavaḥ).

Substantial happiness is not to be found in the impersonal
conception of the Supreme, but rather in pure devotional service to
the Personality of Godhead.

He is the complete Absolute Truth, param brahma.

He is also the Supreme Soul, the indwelling controller who regulates
everyone's consciousness.

As such, He is the ultimate controller of everything, the ruler of even Brahmā and all the other demigods.

And as the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha He is the most concentrated manifestation of eternity, knowledge, and bliss, which constitute His transcendental body.

He is an ocean—steady, deep, and infinitely wide—of countless inconceivable and amazing perfections.

When the bhakti-śāstras refer to the full personal concept of the Absolute Truth, the term normally used is Para-brahman or param brahma, as in Bhagavad-gītā (10.12): param brahma param dhāma pavitram paramam bhavān (“You are the Supreme Brahman, the supreme abode, the supreme purifier”).

When the spiritual reality is indicated in a more generic sense, it is usually called simply Brahman, as again in Bhagavad-gītā (14.27): brahmaṇo 'hi pratiṣṭho 'ham (“I am the foundation of the Absolute”).

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.87.1) also says:

brahman brahmaṇy anirdeśye
nirguṇe guṇa-vṛttayah
katham caranti śrutayah
sākṣāt sad-asataḥ pare

“How can (katham) the Vedas (śrutayah) directly describe (sākṣāt caranti) the Supreme Absolute Truth (brahmaṇy), who cannot be described in words (anirdeśye)? O brāhmaṇa (brahman), the Vedas are limited to describing the qualities of material nature (guṇa-vṛttayah), but the Supreme is devoid of those qualities (nirguṇe), being transcendental to all material manifestations and their causes (sad-asataḥ pare).”

When the adjective param is seen with the term brahma, it may occasionally be intended to distinguish brahma the Supreme Truth from Vedic sound, which is also called brahma.

Contrary natures
like saguna & nirguna
are resolved in Him -
The different shik
Impersonal
Equality of Gt & He
Brahman & the
It is well established

2.2.179

sagunatvāgunatvādi-
virodhāḥ praviśanti tam
mahā-vibhūtir brahmāsya
prasiddhettham tayoḥ bhidā

Contrary natures (virodhāḥ), like having qualities and having no qualities (sagunatva-agunatva-ādi), conjoin in Him (tam praviśanti). Since impersonal Brahman (brahma) is an infinite opulence (mahā-vibhūtiḥ) of the Personality of Godhead (asya), the difference between Him and Brahman (ittham tayoḥ bhidā) is well established (prasiddhā).

As rivers merge into an ocean, many opposite qualities converge in the Supreme Person.

The word ādi after saḡuṇatva and aḡuṇatva indicates more opposites—detachment and association, changelessness and change, inactivity and endeavor, oneness and multiplicity, nonduality and specific qualities.

Conceived as impersonal Brahman, the Supreme is devoid of qualities and other dualities.

Conceived as Paramātmā and Parameśvara, the Supreme displays characteristics such as having relationships with other living beings, possessing wonderful qualities, and so on.

Thus in truth the Supreme is full of qualities, many of them apparently contradictory.

Śāstra may sometimes say that the Supreme cannot be described in words and that He has no name, but the literal construction of these statements is refuted by the Vāsudevādhyātma:

aprasiddhes tad-guṇānām
anāmāsau prakīrtitah
aprākṛtatvād rūpasyāpy
arūpo 'yaṁ pracakṣate

“Because His qualities are not well known (aprasiddheh tad-guṇānām), He is said to have no name (anāmāsau prakīrtitah). And because His form is not material (aprākṛtatvād rūpasya apy), He is said to have no form (arūpah yaṁ pracakṣate).”

Māyāvādīs argue that the Personality of Godhead may have qualities but as products of Māyā those qualities are illusory.

Thus they want to reconcile His having qualities with their idea of reality, that the Supreme actually has no qualities.

In fact, however, the supreme powers of the Absolute Truth are eternal and real, not illusory like the material creation.

And therefore when the personal feature of the Supreme, Bhagavān, is said to be nirguṇa, like Brahman, the sense is different, namely that Bhagavān transcends all material qualities.

At the same time, like the material world, He has many different qualities,
and so He is also said to be saḡuᅇa.

This seems contradictory, but it is possible by His inconceivable, amazing
potencies.

The Supreme Person is indeed mahimārᅇava, the ocean in which all
perfections converge. This is confirmed in many śāstras.

In the words of the Mokᅇa-dharma (Mahābhārata, Śānti-parva 335.10–11):

yat kiñcid iha loke vai deha-bandham viśām-pate
sarvaṁ pañcabhir āviṣṭaṁ bhūtair īśvara-buddhi-jaiḥ

īśvaro hi mahad bhūtaṁ prabhur nārāyaṇo virāt
bhūtāntar-ātmā vijñeyah (saguṇo nirguṇo 'pi saḥ)

“O ruler of the people (**viśām-pate**), whatever you see in this world (**yat kiñcid iha loke vai**) in connection with the material bodies of the living entities (**deha-bandham**), whatever you see composed of the five elements (**pañcabhir bhūtair āviṣṭaṁ**) born from the intelligence of the Supreme Lord (**īśvara-buddhi-jaiḥ**)—know all that to be the Supreme Lord Himself (**sarvaṁ īśvarah hi**). Both possessing qualities and having none (**saguṇo nirguṇo 'pi**), He is the ultimate element of all creation (**saḥ hi mahad bhūtaṁ**), the supreme master (**īśvarah**), the body of the universe (**virāt**), Lord Nārāyaṇa (**nārāyaṇah**). Try to understand Him (**vijñeyah**) to be the inner Self of all creatures (**bhūta antar-ātmā**).”

In the Kūrma Purāṇa:

asthūlaś cānaṇuś caiva sthūlo 'ṇuś caiva sarvataḥ
avarnaḥ sarvataḥ proktaḥ śyāmo raktānta-locanaḥ

aiśvarya-yogād bhagavān viruddhārtho 'bhidhīyate
tathāpi doṣāḥ parame naivāhāryāḥ kathañcana
guṇā viruddhā api tu samāhāryāś ca sarvataḥ

“He is neither large nor infinitesimal (asthūlaś ca anaṇuś caiva); yet He is larger and smaller than everything else (sthūlah aṇuh caiva sarvataḥ). He is said to be devoid of color (avarnaḥ sarvataḥ proktaḥ); yet He is dark blue (śyāmah), and the corners of His eyes are reddish (rakta anta-locanaḥ). By the play of His personal powers (aiśvarya-yogād), the Supreme Lord (bhagavān) is known by contradictory designations (viruddha artho abhidhīyate). Yet He is the Supreme (tathāpi parame), and faults should never be ascribed to Him (doṣāḥ na eva āhāryāḥ kathañcana). In Him all contrary qualities combine (sarvataḥ viruddhā guṇā api tu samāhāryāś).”