

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

Volume-2

Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

Chapter-2

Jñāna: Knowledge

2.2.225

brahmāṇḍāt koṭi-pañcāśad-
yojana-pramitād bahiḥ
yathottaram daśa-guṇāny
aṣṭāv āvaraṇāni hi

- ① Earth
- ② Water
- ③ Fire
- ④ Air
- ⑤ Ether
- ⑥ FE
- ⑦ MT
- ⑧ Prakāśa

Outside the
Universe at egg → the
egg & coverings → the
each 10 times thicker than
the previous

Outside the egg of the universe (brahmāṇḍāt bahiḥ), which extends for five hundred million yojanas (koṭi-pañcāśad-yojana-pramitād), are eight covering shells (aṣṭāv āvaraṇāni hi), each ten times thicker than the one before (yathā uttaram daśa-guṇāny).

The eight shells covering the universe consist of earth, water, fire, air, ether, ego, mahat, and pradhāna.

These layers form the stock of subtle causal ingredients from which all things in material existence are produced.

Some philosophers consider the covering of earth to be part of the internal structure of the universe and so recognize only seven shells.

That idea, however, conflicts with the measurement for the diameter of the universe as five hundred million yojanas, and it also leaves the transformations of earth within the universe with no identifiable primary source.

2.2.226

tāny atikramya labhyeta
tan (nirvāṇa-padam) dhruvam
mahā-kāla-purākhyam yat
kārya-kāraṇa-kālanāt

After Crossing
the shells & shells you
Reach Mahā-kāla-pura
Material existence disappears
& No material cause & effect

By crossing beyond those shells (**tāny atikramya**) one reaches (**labhyeta**) the abode of Lord Mahākāla, the imperishable abode where material existence disappears (**tad nirvāṇa-padam dhruvam**). It is called Mahākāla-pura (**mahā-kāla-purākhyam**) because there all material causes and effects are nonexistent (**yat kārya-kāraṇa-kālanāt**).

Mahākāla-pura, famous as the place to which Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna made their way to retrieve the sons of the Dvārakā brāhmaṇa, is the location and the essential identity of [nirvāṇa, or sāyujya, the liberation of becoming one with the Supreme.

Of course, from the absolute point of view, liberation is not confined to some specific location.

Nonetheless, in spatial terms it is conceived as being outside the coverings of the material cosmos.

This same conception should be applied to the various spiritual locations Gopa-kumāra will visit later.

The material creation consists of gross and subtle causes (kāryas)—such as the five basic elements—and gross and subtle products (kāraṇas), like the bodies and senses of the living entities.

In the realm of ^{Asoka-jyoti} (Mahākāla-pura) these kāryas and kāraṇas are not to be found.

Lord Mahākāla's
personality cannot be
described.
↓
He appears with
form or without
depending on the
mentality of the worshiper.

2.2.227

tat-svarūpam anirvācyam
kathañcid varṇyate budhaiḥ
sākāram ca nirākāram
yathā-maty-anusārataḥ

Lord Mahākāla's personality cannot be described (tat-svarūpam anirvācyam), but wise sages somehow describe Him (kathañcid varṇyate budhaiḥ). He appears with form or without (sākāram ca nirākāram), in accord with the various mentalities of His worshipers (yathā-maty-anusārataḥ).

The real identity of Lord Mahākāla is beyond the power of words to describe, but transcendental scholars somehow attempt to describe Him.

Na śītaṁ na coṣṇaṁ suvarṇāvadātaṁ / prasannaṁ sadānanda-saṁvit-svarūpam: “He is neither cold nor hot, but is brilliant like gold.

He is the perfectly satisfied Self of perpetual bliss and awareness.”

Those who have no better evidence to depend on than theoretical knowledge perceive Him as best they can, some seeing Him with personal form and others as formless.

In Śrī Hari-vamśa (2.113.25), Arjuna tells how, according to his ability, he saw Lord Mahākāla:

tatas tejaḥ prajvalitam
apaśyaṁ tat tadāmbare
sarva-lokaṁ samāviśya
sthitam puruṣa-vigraham

“Then (**tatah**) I saw in the ether (**apaśyaṁ tat tadā ambare**) a brilliant light (**prajvalitam tejah**). It pervaded the entire cosmos (**sarva-lokaṁ samāviśya**) yet was situated in one place in a personal form (**sthitam puruṣa-vigraham**).”

The Supreme Lord is always a person, but those attached to dry knowledge think of Him as formless and impersonal.

Be that as it may, the devotees of the Lord can always discern His personal form.

The Lord's servants
whose desires bring
them to Māhā-pura
Him there in their hearts
the concentrated form of AT

2.2.228

bhagavat-sevakais tatra
gataiś ca svecchayā param
hṛdy ākāraṁ ghanī-bhūtaṁ
brahma-rūpaṁ tad īkṣyate

The Lord's servants (bhagavat-sevakaih) whose desires bring them to Mahākāla-pura (svecchayā tatra gataih) see Him there (tad param īkṣyate) in their hearts (hṛdy) as the concentrated form (ghanī-bhūtaṁ ākāraṁ) of the Absolute Truth (brahma-rūpaṁ).

Liberated Vaiṣṇavas are free in all their movements.

If they travel to Mahākāla-pura it is only because they want to see the Lord there as Brahman in person.

By the potency
of your Mantra, there
you will directly achieve
the fulfillment of your
desires

2.2.229

atas tatrāpi bhavato
dīrgha-vāñchā-mahā-phalam
sākṣāt sampatsyate svīya-
mahā-mantra-prabhāvataḥ

And so (ataḥ), by the potency of your transcendental mantra (svīya-
mahā-mantra-prabhāvataḥ), there (tatrāpi) you will directly achieve
(bhavataḥ sākṣāt sampatsyate) the complete fulfillment (mahā-
phalam) of your long-cherished desires (dīrgha-vāñchā).

Though Gopa-kumāra has long hankered to see the Lord he has been
worshiping by his mantra, he doubts his own qualification to achieve
this, because he knows that to see the Lord in person one must be
His fully surrendered servant.

But the bhakti-śāstras remind him that his ten-syllable mantra to Śrī
Madana-gopāla is all-powerful.

If you do not
wish to spend a
long time here &
to Vraja bhūmi

2.2.230

bahu-kāla-vilambam ca
bhavān nāpekṣate 'tra cet
tadā śrī-mathurāyās tām
vraja-bhūmim nijām vraja

If you do not wish to spend (bhavān cet na apekṣate) a long time (bahu-kāla-vilambam) here (atra), then just go (tadā vraja) to your Vraja-bhūmi (nijām tām vraja-bhūmim) in Śrī Mathurā (śrī-mathurāyāh).

Some residents of Lord Brahmā's planet are completely free from material desires, and some are not.

At the end of Brahmā's life, those who still have material desires return to lower planets, and those who are desireless attain liberation along with Brahmā.

311 trillion years
Brahmā's life, however, lasts for two parārdhas—the very lifetime of the universe—and Gopa-kumāra may not want to wait that long to graduate from the material world.

The supreme material powers and enjoyment available on
Brahmaloka delay the attainment of the Supreme Lord's kingdom.

But if Gopa-kumāra descends from Brahmāloka to the places on earth
where Śrī Kṛṣṇa sports—Śrī Vṛndāvana, Govardhana, and so on—all
his desires will be quickly fulfilled.

Oh Mathura
Brahmaṇi
These words of the
my Bhakti & this thought
was born.

2.2.231

śrī-gopa-kumāra uvāca
teṣām etair vacobhir me
bhaktir vṛddhim gatā prabhau
vicāraś caīṣa hṛdaye
’jani māthura-bhūsura

Śrī Gopa-kumāra said: O Mathurā brāhmaṇa (māthura-bhūsura),
these words of the scriptures (teṣām etair vacobhir) greatly
strengthened my devotion (me bhaktir vṛddhim gatā) for the
Supreme Lord (prabhau), and this thought (eṣa vicārah) was born in
my heart (hṛdaye ajani):

2.2.232

bhaktir yasyedṛśī so 'tra
sāksāt prāpto mayā pitā
taṁ parityajya gantavyam
anyatra bata kim-kṛte

Here, I have gained
in person, the Lord
my father, the Lord
D-s to Him is so great.
∴ why should I abandon Him
& go elsewhere?

“Here (atra) I have gained in person (mayā sāksāt prāptah), as my own father (pitā), the Lord (sah) whose devotional service is so great (yasya idṛśī bhaktih). Why (kim-kṛte), indeed (bata), should I abandon Him (taṁ parityajya) to go elsewhere (anyatra gantavyam)?”

Gopa-kumāra now understands that mukti is bhakti's maidservant and that bhakti offers inconceivable bliss.

On Brahmāloka, Lord Mahāpuruṣa, the object of devotional service, has been caring for Gopa-kumāra as a father indulges a son.

Thus it is difficult for Gopa-kumāra to leave Him.

When I was
thus perturbed
& spoke thus

2.2.233

ittham udvigna-cittam mām
bhagavān sa kṛpākarah
sarvāntar-ātma-vṛtti-jñah
samādiśad idaṁ svayam

When my mind was thus perturbed (ittham udvigna-cittam mām),
that Supreme Lord Himself (sah bhagavān), the reservoir of mercy
(kṛpākarah), who knows what takes place in everyone's heart
(sarvāntar-ātma-vṛtti-jñah), visited me and spoke (samādiśad idaṁ
svayam).

Lord Mahāpuruṣa, the ruling Deity of Brahmaloḥa, knows everything that takes place in every creature's heart, so He knew of Gopa-kūmāra's conflict over wanting to go to Vraja-bhūmi and not wanting to leave Him.

To settle Gopa-kumāra's mind, the Lord came to speak words from His own divine mouth to comfort him.

to
with
to
the
my
to
Mathura,
land
variegated
pastimes

2.2.234

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
nija-priya-tamām yāhi
māthurīm tām vraja-kṣitim
tat-tan-mat-parama-kṛidā-
sthaly-āvali-vibhūṣitām

The blessed Lord said: Go to Mathurā (yāhi māthurīm), to your dearest pasturing grounds (tām nija-priya-tamām vraja-kṣitim), to the land adorned (vibhūṣitām) with many places of My varied supreme pastimes (tat-tan-mat-parama-kṛidā-sthaly-āvali).

The rāsa dance and the other pastimes Śrī Kṛṣṇa performs in Vraja
are the most exalted of the Supreme Lord's activities.

Those pastimes take place in Vraja on earth, and therefore Vraja is
much greater than Brahmaloaka