

Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

- ① Vairāgye
- ② Jñāna
- ③ bhajane.
- ④ Vaikunthe.

## Part 4

# Vaikuntha- The Spiritual Kingdom

## TEXT 115

Sometimes the Lord would secretly go somewhere with His intimate associates & they would lament due to separation.

kadācid īśo nirbhṛtam prayāti  
kuto 'pi kaiścit samam antarīṇaiḥ  
tadā khilānām khalu tatra śoko  
bhaved abhāvāt prabhu-darśanasya

Sometimes (kadācid) the Lord (īśah) would secretly go (nirbhṛtam prayāti) somewhere (kutah api) with a few of His intimate associates (kaiścit samam antarīṇaiḥ). Then (tadā) everyone else who had been near Him (akhilānām khalu tatra) would lament (śoko bhaved), unable to see their master (prabhu-darśanasya abhāvāt).

Couldn't Gopa-kumāra feel assured that by the magical influence of life in Vaikuṅṭha even his hopes for reciprocation might eventually be fulfilled?

Perhaps, but he had other reasons to feel unhappy.

TEXT 116

When I would ask  
Others what the Lord  
was doing in these outings,  
they would not tell as if  
protecting a great secret

mayā samprcchyamānam tad-  
vṛttam vara-rahasya-vat  
saṅgopayan na kaścin me  
samudghāṭayati sphuṭam

When I would ask (mayā samprcchyamānam) what the Lord was doing on  
these outings (tad-vṛttam), everyone would keep the facts from me (me  
saṅgopayan) like privileged secrets (vara-rahasya-vat). No one would  
disclose anything (na kaścin samudghāṭayati) clearly (sphuṭam).

Despite his earnest inquiries, no one told Gopa-kumāra where Lord Nārāyaṇa had gone or why.

Anyone who knew was unwilling to discuss the subject openly, because making public news of the private pastimes of the Supreme Lord could disrupt the reverential mood of Vaikuṅṭha.

## TEXT 117

tasminn eva kṣaṇe tatro-  
dite śrī-jagad-īśvare  
dr̥śyamāne sa santāpo  
naśyed dharsābdhir edhate

@ the very moment  
I inquired → FLP  
Lord would appear & resolve  
our distress →

Then, at the very moment I inquired (tasminn eva kṣaṇe), the Lord of the universe (śrī-jagad-īśvare) would reappear before us (tatradite dr̥śyamāne), putting our distress to an end (sah santāpo naśyed) and enlarging our joy to an ocean (harṣa abdhīh edhate).

From Gopa-kumāra's description it might seem that Vaikuṅṭha has unhappiness just like everywhere else.

But as we see here, the Lord's absence was only momentary.

As soon as the devotees felt distress, the Lord returned.

Time is subtler in Vaikuṅṭha than in the mortal realm; an instant in Vaikuṅṭha equals the largest span of time in the mundane world.



Śrī Maitreya describes this in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.11.38):

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**kālo 'yaṁ dvi-parārdhākhyo**  
**nimeṣa upacaryate**  
**avyākṛtasyānantasya**  
**hy anāder jagad-ātmanah**

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The span of two parardhas (**kālo ayaṁ dvi-parārdhākhyo**), the life time of Brahmā, is represented by a moment of time for the Supreme Lord (**nimeṣa upacaryate**) who is beyond change (**avyākṛtasya**), without end (**anantasya**) or beginning (**anāder**), and the cause of the universe (**jagad-ātmanah**).

This scale of comparative time is only metaphorical, yet such a figurative sense of spiritual time contributes to the charm of the Supreme Lord's līlās in Vaikuṅṭha.

In reality, time in Vaikuntha is not the kind of force it is in the material world; time does not delimit the lifespan of residents in Vaikuṅṭha, because everything there is eternal and infallible.

Lord Nārāyaṇa's return from His excursions relieved His devotees from their anxiety and expanded the ocean of their ecstasy, just as the moonrise expands the ecstasy of poets.

## TEXT 118

yāvat tāvac ca vaikalyam  
manaso 'stu svabhāva-jam  
tal-loka-mahimodrekāt  
kṣīyate 'rkād yathā tamah

Whenever my mind  
would become disturbed  
the vast splendours of  
world dispel my agitation.

Whenever my mind (yāvat manasah), by its own nature (svabhāva-jam),  
would become disturbed (vaikalyam astu), the vast splendours of the  
Vaikunṭha (tāvad tal-loka-mahimā udrekāt) world would dispel my agitation  
(kṣīyate), as the sun dispels darkness (yathā arkād tamah).

Gopa-kumāra's mind remained restless because in Vaikunṭha he was unable  
to find the object of his desire.

TEXT 119

yadā kadācin nija-labhya-vastuno  
'nāptyeva hṛt sīdati pūrva-pūrva-vat  
tadā tadīyāparipūrṇatā-rujām  
nidānam ājñāya nirasyate svayam

Whenever it seemed  
that I had not  
achieved the object of  
my desire, my heart  
would suffer, my heart  
@ that time, I would  
realize the root cause  
of my suffering

& that understanding would drive away the pain.

Whenever (yadā kadācit) it seemed that I had not achieved (anāptya iva) the object of my desire (nija-labhya-vastunah), and when my heart would therefore suffer (hṛt sīdati), like many times before (pūrva-pūrva-vat), I would remember (tadā) (ājñāya) the root cause (nidānam) of my incompleteness (tadīyāparipūrṇatā-rujām), and that understanding itself would drive away the pain (nirasyate svayam).

The dissatisfaction Gopa-kumāra felt in Vaikunṭha had been arranged to help him progress further, to a world even more special and dear.

There he would discover the final success of his worship of Śrī Madana-gopāla's lotus feet.

Meanwhile, the powerful influence of Vaikunṭha kept him from feeling much distress, even though he had not yet attained his goal.

By his intelligence he could discern that the cause of his suffering was his desire to reach a special place beyond even Vaikunṭha, and this understanding was enough to pacify him for the time being.

~~He knew that now that he had reached Vaikuntha he would surely feel fully~~  
satisfied, if not at once then after only a short while.