

Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

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

Part 4

Vaikuntha- The Spiritual Kingdom

TEXT 143

Some have focus of
varāha, Nṛ. Si-ḥa etc.

varāhā nara-simhās ca
vāmanās ca tri-locanāḥ
catur-mukhāḥ sahasrākṣāḥ
mahā-puruṣa-vigrahāḥ

Some have become hogs, man-lions (varāhā nara-simhās ca), or dwarfs (vāmanās ca), and some have three eyes (tri-locanāḥ), four ^{in less} arms (catur-mukhāḥ)—or thousands of eyes (sahasrākṣāḥ) like the Mahāpuruṣa (mahā-puruṣa-vigrahāḥ).

TEXT 144

sahasra-vaktrāḥ sūryendu-
vāyu-vahny-ādi-rūpiṇaḥ
catur-bhujādi-rūpāś ca
tat-tad-veśādi-rūpiṇaḥ

Some have 1000 faces,
Some have forms like the
Devs with multiple hands,
dress & symbols

Some have assumed bodies with thousands of faces (sahasra-
vaktrāḥ), or with features like such deities as the gods of air and fire
(sūrya-indu-vāyu-vahny-ādi-rūpiṇaḥ). Some have four arms, or
eight, or twelve or more (catur-bhujādi-rūpāś ca), and various kinds
of dress, ornaments, symbols, and other attributes (tat-tad-veśādi-
rūpiṇaḥ).

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.9.11–12) describes the residents of Vaikunṭha as appearing similar to the Supreme Lord and having varied bodily colors:

śyāmāvadātāḥ śata-patra-locanāḥ
piśaṅga-vastrāḥ surucaḥ supeśasaḥ |
sarve catur-bāhava unmisaṅga-maṇi-
praveka-ṅkaṅkaraṅkaḥ suvarcasāḥ |
pravāla-vaidūrya-mṛṅgala-varcasāḥ
parisphurat-kuṅḍala-mauli-mālināḥ ||

The inhabitants of Vaikunṭha are dark in complexion (śyāma) and effulgent (avadātāḥ). They have lotus eyes (śata-patra-locanāḥ), yellow cloth (piśaṅga-vastrāḥ), and pleasing demeanor (surucaḥ) and are youthful (supeśasaḥ). They all have four arms (sarve catur-bāhava) and wear ornaments of the best shining jewels (unmisaṅga-maṇi-praveka-ṅkaṅkaraṅkaḥ). They have all splendors (suvarcasāḥ). Some are colored red, yellow or white (pravāla-vaidūrya-mṛṅgala-varcasāḥ). They wear glittering earrings, crowns and garlands (parisphurat-kuṅḍala-mauli-mālināḥ).

In texts 144 through 147, Nārada depicts in some detail this variety of bodily form, dress, and so on.

Some Vaikunṭha devotees appear as human beings because of having attained sārūpya—likeness in form—with such incarnations of the Lord as Śrī Raghunātha.

Others appear as munis by sārūpya with sage incarnations like Śrī Kapiladeva, or as demigods by sārūpya with manvantara-avatāras like Lord Satyasena and Lord Vibhu.

Others appear as ṛṣis by sārūpya with incarnations like Śrī Paraśurāma, or as fish by sārūpya with Lord Matsya, or tortoises with Lord Kūrma.

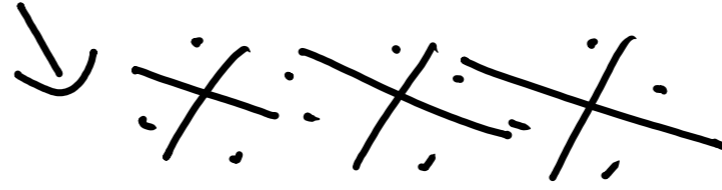
Some, who worship Śiva or Brahmā as a representative of the Supreme, appear in bodies with three eyes or four heads.

Some appear like Indra with a thousand eyes, like Ananta Śeṣa with thousands of heads, or like Sūrya or other demigods.

Vedic scriptures like the aindra-śrutis, the mantras glorifying Indra, support such worship of demigods as representatives of the Supreme Lord.

In the Fifth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam we also find demigods like Sūrya being worshiped as representatives of the Lord in Plaksa-dvīpa and the other divisions of the Bhūr-loka planetary system.

The only means to achieve entrance into Vaikuṅṭha is pure, exclusive love for the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord.



Ordinary demigod worshipers are never eligible to become residents of Vaikuṅṭha, but worshipers who regard Śiva and other demigods as nondifferent from Lord Viṣṇu achieve Special Vaiṣṇava perfection.

As the Vāmana Purāṇa and other scriptures describe, those devotees join the exalted associates of the Supreme Lord they worship, either on the respective planets of the demigod representatives of the Lord or, in some cases, on a Vaikuṅṭha planet, where the devotees are endowed with the special opulences of those demigods.

The Vaikunṭha-vāsīs whose bodies are just like the transcendental body of the Mahāpuruṣa, the first incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu for material creation, are those who have achieved sārūpya by worshiping Him.

↓ कारेणोदात्तस्य (१)

They have thousands of arms, legs, heads, and other limbs. In Text 144 the word ādi (“and so on”) occurs twice.

The first time, it indicates that some devotees in Vaikunṭha assume bodies that resemble those of yet other demigods, like Yamarāja and Aryamā, who are material representatives of various personal powers of the Supreme Lord.

The second time, ādi indicates that besides the usual four arms, some Vaikunṭha devotees have eight arms, twelve arms, or more.

TEXTS 145-146

rasena yena yenānte veśākārādinā tathā
sevitvā kṛṣṇa-pādābje yo yo vaikunṭham āgataḥ

tasya tasyākhilam tat tac chrīmad-bhagavataḥ priyam
tasmai tasmai praroceta tasmāt tat tad rasādikam

Whoever comes to
realizes the
to Lord the
developed a taste for
the end of his
life. ↓
for which he
was
taste @

Lord &
devotee
↑

He realizes that service in full detail → according to his mood & his perfectly pleases both

Whoever comes to Vaikunṭha (yah yah vaikunṭham āgataḥ) realizes the very same service to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa (sevitvā kṛṣṇa-pādābje) for which he had developed a taste (yena yena rasena) by the end of his material life (ante), and he realizes that service in full detail (tasya tasyākhilam tat tac), with its dress, form, and so on (veśākārādinā tathā), for each mood of devotion (tat tad rasādikam) is dear to the Personality of Godhead (śrīmad-bhagavataḥ priyam) and each gives pleasure (praroceta) to the devotee absorbed in it (tasmai tasmai).

The bodies of some Vaikuṅṭha residents resemble those of sages and other humans—or monkeys, demons, or whatever—but do not resemble any of the humanlike or sagelike forms of the Lord, such as Lord Rāmacandra or Kapiladeva, nor any expansion or incarnation the Lord accepts in other species.

- ① SĀRŪYA → WITH NERĪYA
- ② SĀRŪYA → WITH AVATĀRĪS → METSEYA
- ③ SĀRŪYA → DG S → whom they worshipped as representatives of Lord.

The unusual forms that some Vaikuṅṭha devotees accept are explained in the current two verses.

- ④ They were worshipping the Lord in a particular sage & therefore assumed an appropriate form to share that sage.

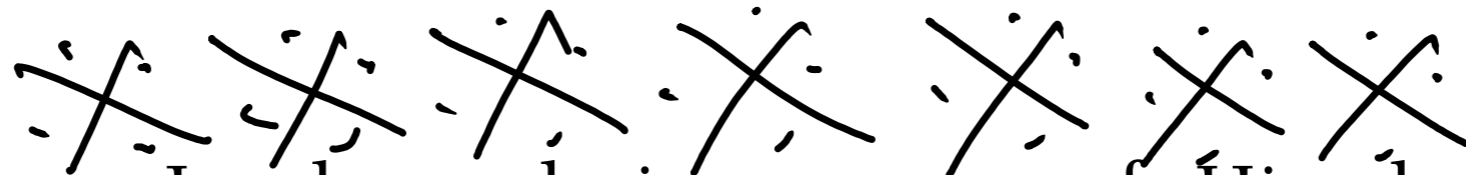
While practicing devotional service in their previous material lives, those devotees neared the perfection of love of God and so began to display symptoms of that perfection.

Those devotees varied in their individual moods, or rasas, and varied accordingly in the forms of the Lord upon which their devotion focused.

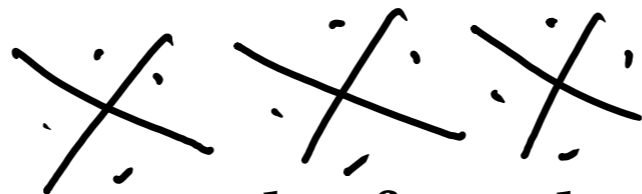
And when those devotees achieved Vaikuṅṭha they brought with them their individual rasas.

In each case, no matter how unusual the form of devotion was, it gave pleasure to the Supreme Lord.

Because those individual moods pleased the Lord, they were attractive also to the devotees expressing them, who therefore did not want to give them up.



When the Supreme Lord so desires, some of His devotees imitate the mundane activities of Indra, Candra, and other demigods—even in Vaikuṅṭha.



After all, everything that exists can be found in Vaikuṅṭha in a purified form.

TEXT 147

te ca sarve 'tra vaikunthe
śrī-nārāyaṇam īśvaram
tat-tad-varṇādi-yuktātma-
deva-rūpaṁ vicakṣate

In Vaikunṭha (atra vaikunṭhe) each devotee (te ca sarve) sees (vicakṣate) the Supreme Lord Śrī Nārāyaṇa (śrī-nārāyaṇam īśvaram) manifest as the particular Lord he worships (ātma-deva-rūpaṁ), with a form of suitable complexion and other qualities (tat-tad-varṇādi-yukta).

In Vaikunṭha, every devotee sees (N) manifest as the particular Lord he worships

Lord Nārāyana has four arms and a dark-blue complexion, but because devotees are attracted to Him in other forms, the Lord's all-powerful personal energies enable devotees to see Him in whatever forms they like.

Thus in Vaikuṅṭha each devotee can cherish the Supreme Lord in his own way.

TEXT 148

The same kind of
ecstasy the devotees
enjoyed in worshipping the
Lord + they continue to relish in (✓)
↓
They experience it in an
unceasing, uninterrupted way

pūrva-vad bhajanānandam
prāpnuvanti navam navam
sarvadāpy aparicchinnam
vaikuṅṭhe 'tra viśeṣataḥ

The same kind of ecstasy these devotees previously enjoyed in worshipping the Lord (pūrva-vad bhajanānandam) they continue to relish here in Vaikuṅṭha (vaikuṅṭhe atra). They obtain it (prāpnuvanti) as a unique (viśeṣataḥ), uninterrupted (aparicchinnam), unceasing bliss (ānandam), newer and newer at every moment (sarvadāpy navam navam).

The type of devotional ecstasy each new resident of Vaikunṭha developed in his last material life continues in Vaikunṭha, but on the platform of spiritual perfection.

And the ecstasy constantly grows, acquiring newer and newer variety.

TEXTS 149–150

AS before, these devotees still see their own worshipable Lord →
 with all His unique features which they found charming while worshipping in the way of work.

ye tv asādhāraṇaiḥ sarvaiḥ pūrvair ātma-manoramaiḥ
parivārādibhir yuktaṁ nijam iṣṭa-taraṁ prabhum

sampaśyanto yathā-pūrvam sadaivecchanti sevitur
te 'tyanta-tat-tan-niṣṭhāntya- kāṣṭhāvanto mahāśayāḥ

As before (yathā-pūrvam), these devotees (ye tu) still see (sampaśyantaḥ) their own worshipable Lord (nijam iṣṭa-taraṁ prabhum), with all His unique features (asādhāraṇaiḥ sarvaiḥ yuktaṁ) they found charming (ātma-manoramaiḥ)—His same entourage and everything else (parivārādibhir). These devotees, each in his favorite mood (te), constantly hope to serve Him (sadaiva sevitur icchanti). They are indeed the wisest of saints (mahāśayāḥ), for they have each attained the final perfection (atyanta antya-kāṣṭhāvantaḥ) of their own faith (tat-tan-niṣṭhā).

Each Vaikuṅṭha-vāsī worships a form of the Lord as seen together with that Lord's unique entourage and paraphernalia.

Lord Raghunātha, for example, is accompanied by His brothers, headed by Lakṣmaṇa, and by the daughter of Janaka.

He also has His bow, His kingdom Ayodhyā, and His pastimes like being exiled to the forest.

The devotees of Śrī Raghunātha are especially attracted to these unique characteristics of the Lord.

Those devotees and all the others in Vaikuṅṭha are the best of saints because their faith in the Supreme Lord is unalloyed and unshakable.