

Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

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

Part 4

Vaikuntha- The Spiritual Kingdom

TEXT 186

ekah sa kṛṣṇo nikhilāvatāra-
samaṣṭi-rūpo vividhair mahattvaiḥ
tais tair nijaiḥ sarva-vilakṣaṇair hi
jayaty anantair bhaga-śabda-vācyaiḥ

Ⓚ alone is
the source of all
incarnations.
His excellences are distinct
from that of other incarnations.

Kṛṣṇa alone (**kṛṣṇah ekah**) is the source of all the incarnations of Godhead (**nikhila avatāra-samaṣṭi-rūpah**). By His infinitely various excellences (**nijaiḥ vividhair mahattvaiḥ**), distinct from those of everyone else (**tais tair sarva-vilakṣaṇair hi**), He is always supreme (**jayaty anantair**). Those excellences are known by the term “bhaga. (**bhaga-śabda-vācyaiḥ**)”

The plenary expansions of God are all nondifferent, but Śrī Kṛṣṇa, being the source of the others, is supreme.

Nārada calls Kṛṣṇa the *samaṣṭi-rūpa*, which means that Kṛṣṇa's form subtly embodies all the other forms of the Godhead.

Only Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of Goloka, is completely endowed with the special excellences of the Supreme Lord, all of them rare, unlimited, infinite, beyond the power to describe, and not found the same way in anyone else.

Those excellences are identified in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa (6.5.74) by Parāśara Ṛṣi:

**aiśvaryasya samagrasya
vīryasya yaśasaḥ śriyaḥ
jñāna-vairāgyayoś caiva
ṣaṇṇām bhaga itiṅganā**

“Complete sovereignty (**aiśvaryasya samagrasya**), prowess, beauty, fame (**vīryasya yaśasaḥ śriyaḥ**), knowledge, and renunciation (**jñāna-vairāgyayoś caiva**)—these six are called bhaga [opulences] (**ṣaṇṇām bhaga itiṅganā**).”

TEXT 187

nārāyaṇād apy avatāra-bhāve

saṁvyajyamānair madhurair mano-jñaiḥ

tat-prema-bhaktyārdra-hṛd-eka-vedyair

māhātmya-vargair vividhair viśiṣṭaḥ

Ⓟ is different
from Ⓡ
How?
When he descends to the M.W
→ He fully manifests many unique
glories that distinguish (Purāṇa).
These sweet jobs can
be understood
only by
precise-
blows

And Kṛṣṇa is different from Nārāyaṇa (**nārāyaṇād**), for when Kṛṣṇa appears in His descent in the material world (**avatāra-bhāve**) He fully manifests (**saṁvyajyamānair**) the many unique glories that distinguish Kṛṣṇa alone (**vividhair viśiṣṭaḥ māhātmya-vargair**)—charming, attractive glories (**madhurair mano-jñaiḥ**) that can be known only (**eka-vedyair**) to hearts softened by prema-bhakti (**tat-prema-bhaktyā ārdra-hṛd**).

Someone may raise the doubt that since Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, is also described in Vedic scriptures as the avatārī, or source of all incarnations, how can Śrī Kṛṣṇa be greater than Nārāyaṇa?

Nārada replies in this verse. Kṛṣṇa is the all-victorious Supreme Personality of Godhead, greater than everyone, including the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha.

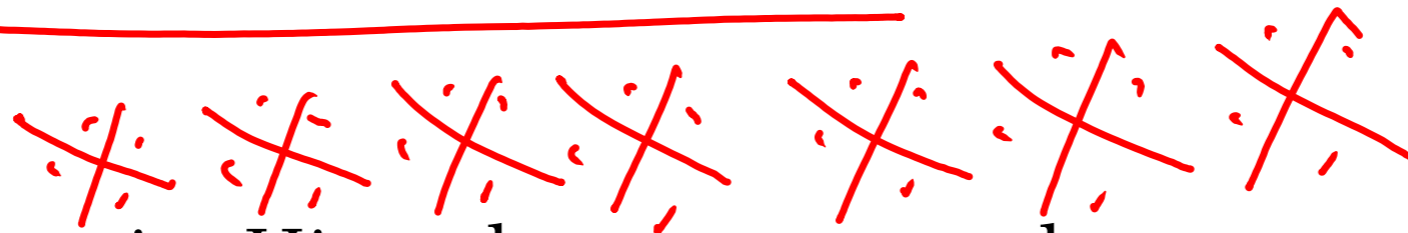
When Kṛṣṇa descends to the material world, He reveals especially sweet qualities that attract the hearts of everyone.

What kinds of qualities distinguish Śrī Kṛṣṇa as greater than all avatāras, even the avatārī Nārāyaṇa?

To understand this topic properly one needs a heart softened by pure love for Kṛṣṇa.

But even without that requirement one can consider that most forms of Godhead, like the Nārāyaṇa of Badarikāśrama, are only avatāras, whereas the supreme controller Śrī Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, is not an avatāra but the avatārī.

Kṛṣṇa, however, is both avatārī and avatāra.



Thus Kṛṣṇa displays in His role as avatāra the sweetness of His varied pastimes and in His role as the avatārī the supreme status of the absolute controller.

Therefore Kṛṣṇa is the greatest form of God.

The special glories of Kṛṣṇa will be further discussed in the later chapters of Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta.

Even the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in which He defeats and kills evil persons are sweeter and more charming than anyone can describe or can infer by logic, because each enemy Kṛṣṇa kills receives Kṛṣṇa's complete mercy.

Moreover, the ways that Kṛṣṇa defeats and kills demons are supremely attractive, what to speak of the ways Kṛṣṇa reciprocates kindly with His surrendered devotees.

With all of them He reciprocates according to their rasa—sharing meals with them, relaxing with them, playing His flute for their pleasure, dancing with them in the rāsa-līlā, and so on.

This will be described more fully later on.

TEXT 188

Still, the servants of the Lord's incarnations achieve the greatest happiness in serving the Lord according to their mood.

teṣām apy avatārāṇām
sevakaiḥ paramam mahat
labhyate sukham ātmātma-
priya-sevā-rasānugam

Still, the servants of the Lord's incarnations (teṣām apy avatārāṇām sevakaiḥ) achieve (labhyate) the greatest happiness (paramam mahat sukham) in the loving services they prefer (ātma ātma-priya-sevā), each according to his own mood (rasānugam).

Since Śrī Kṛṣṇadeva is the boundless ocean of all superexcellent glories, why doesn't every devotee serve Him and Him alone to obtain the highest possible happiness?

The answer is that every Vaiṣṇava, no matter what form of Viṣṇu he worships, achieves a special individual happiness, suited exactly to his own attitude, and this completely fulfills his heart's desires.

All the Supreme Lord's pure servants know such perfect satisfaction, so they all attain the ultimate limit of happiness available in their own rasas.

TEXT 189

upāsanānusāreṇa
datte hi bhagavān phalam
na tatrāparitoṣaḥ syāt
kasyacit sādhya-lābhataḥ

According to
the way one worships
→ one gets appropriate results.
And one is never dissatisfied
with these offerings

According to the way one worships (upāsanānusāreṇa), the Lord awards different results (datte hi bhagavān phalam). One who thus reaches the goal he has pursued (kasyacit sādhya-lābhataḥ) never feels discontent (na tatra aparitoṣaḥ syāt).

The Personality of Godhead knows everything there is to know.

He is also the most merciful giver of charity.

Why then doesn't He give the same supreme happiness to all His devotees?

It is because what He gives them depends on their expressed desires.

Then aren't the devotees dissatisfied who receive happiness that is relatively less?

No.

When the Supreme Lord reciprocates the love of any of His pure devotees,
the devotee is never left feeling incomplete, because everything the devotee
wanted the Lord provides.

TEXT 190

vicitra-līlā-vibhavasya tasya

ṣamudra-koṭī-gahanāśayasya

vicitra-tat-tad-ruci-dāna-līlā-

vibhūtim uttarkayitum prabhuḥ kaḥ

The Lord's pastimes (tasya līlā) expand in unlimited variety (vicitra-vibhavasya). His mind (āśayasya) is deeper (gahana) than millions of oceans (ṣamudra-koṭī). The opulence (vibhūtim) of His diverse pastimes (vicitra līlā) attracts His devotees to Him in so many ways (tat-tad-ruci-dāna). Who can understand Him by speculation (uttarkayitum prabhuḥ kaḥ)?

The Lord's pastimes
expand in unlimited
variety. ↓
His opulence attracts the devotees
in unlimited ways
∴ who can understand Him
by speculation?

But why doesn't the Lord bestow the very best method of worship upon all His devotees?

After all, He is Hṛṣīkeśa, the master of the senses, who inspires all the energies of knowledge and activity.

If He wanted to bestow the very best method, He could, but He chooses instead to respond to the individual taste of each devotee for a particular loving service.

This variety of reciprocation with many different devotees is His līlā and His special greatness.

How can anyone presume to understand why He acts as He does?

We can understand only this much: Were He not to expand varieties of pastimes with various devotees, the charm of His variegated enjoyment would not be complete.

TEXT 191

Even amidst
such diverseness,
none of the devotees are
envious of other such
towards others. affected by
Each devotee attains the
highest fruit of seva sukha
yathā ruci.

sidhyet tathāpy atra kṛpā-mahiṣṭhatā
yat tāratamye 'pi nija-svabhāvataḥ
spardhādy-avṛttair nikhilair yathā-ruci
prāpyeta sevā-sukham antya-sīma-gam

Even amidst such diverseness (tathāpy) the Lord's mercy achieves its highest perfection (kṛpā-mahiṣṭhatā sidhyet), for despite the hierarchy of greater and lesser devotees (yat tāratamye 'pi), none are affected by envy or by any such bad feelings toward others (nikhilair spardhādy-avṛttair). Each devotee, following his own nature (nija-svabhāvataḥ), attains (prāpyeta) the final limit (antya-sīma-gam) of happiness in the service (sevā-sukham) that suits his own taste (yathā-ruci).

That the Supreme Lord does not behave the same with every devotee does not invalidate the glory of His boundless compassion.



Rather, His discriminating dealings with His servants enhance His reputation because every devotee relishes the highest possible happiness.

By the nature of devotional service, none of the Lord's servants ever become dissatisfied.

On the heavenly planets and elsewhere in the material world, inequality always leads to conflict and envy, but not so in the dealings between the Supreme Lord and His devotees.

Rivalry, jealousy, and other undesirable emotions never interfere with their happiness.

Devotees on the path of pure devotional service are protected from these inauspicious influences, including false pride and malice towards others.

Vaiṣṇavas are naturally friendly to one another.

Free from envy, they can peacefully pursue their real self-interests.