

Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

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

## Part 4

# Vaikuntha- The Spiritual Kingdom

## TEXT 49

Sometimes the  
place appears full  
of riches &  
@ sometimes it looks  
white like condensed moon-light

kadācit svarṇa-ratnādi-  
mayam tat tat pratiyate  
kadācic ca ghanī-bhūta-  
candra-jyotsneva kakkhaṭī

Sometimes that place appears (kadācit pratiyate) full of riches like gold and  
jewels (tat tat svarṇa-ratnādi-mayam), and sometimes (kadācic) its  
atmosphere appears chalk-white (kakkhaṭī), like a thick condensation of  
moonlight (ghanī-bhūta-candra-jyotsnā iva).

Gold, jewels, and moonlight are among the greatest fascinations in the  
material world.

Yet they only dimly reflect the infinitely varied attractions of the Vaikuṅṭha  
atmosphere.

## TEXT 50

kathañcit tat-prabhāveṇa  
vijñātaṁ syān na cānyathā  
grahītuṁ kila tad-rūpaṁ  
manasāpi na śakyate

It is possible  
to understand Vaikunṭha  
without its own SP-influence

Vaikunṭha may be somehow understood (kathañcit vijñātaṁ syāt)  
only by its own spiritual influence (tat-prabhāveṇa), and not  
otherwise (na ca anyathā). Indeed (kila), even the mind (manasāpi)  
cannot grasp (na grahītuṁ śakyate) its form (tad-rūpaṁ).

One can understand the Lord of Vaikunṭha and know the various locations of His pastimes only when He reveals Himself by His special potencies such as kārūṇya (mercy).

Devotees favored by the Lord can use their spiritual intelligence to infer something about the nature of Vaikuntha by comparison with things they have seen, touched, and otherwise encountered in the material world.

And devotees fully purified can perceive Vaikuntha directly. The external mind and senses, however, can never discern the spiritual existence.

One therefore has no right to speak as an authority on that existence unless one has been granted insight by the Lord's mercy potency.

## TEXT 51

Except by  
direct experience, no  
one can rightly understand  
I cannot describe more than this

na kaścit prabhaved boddhum  
samyak svānubhavam vinā  
etan-mātram hi śakyeta  
nirūpayitum añjasā

Except by direct experience (svānubhavam vinā), no one can  
rightly understand Vaikuṅṭha (na kaścit samyak boddhum  
prabhaved). No more than this can I accurately describe (etad-  
mātram hi añjasā nirūpayitum śakyeta).

A conditioned soul may discover the transcendental world of Vaikuṅṭha, but only if he sees that higher reality for himself.

By hearing from someone who has seen Vaikuṅṭha one may gain only a glimmer of understanding.

Nonetheless, when a devotee aspiring for the Lord's service hears the pure instructions of his self-realized spiritual master and faithfully practices the disciplines such a guru recommends, the devotee gradually becomes pure in heart.

And when his faith sufficiently matures, he can see the spiritual world.

Only by that direct perception does knowledge become perfect.  
Casual hearing, even from those who have seen the truth, is not  
enough.

One must become a disciple of such an authority and accept the  
disciplines that lead to self-realization.