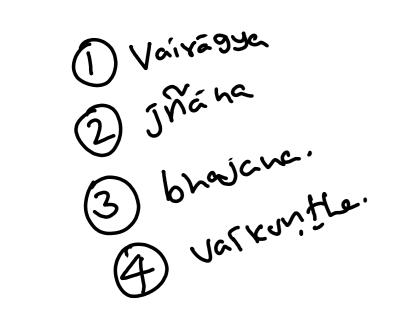
## Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmrta

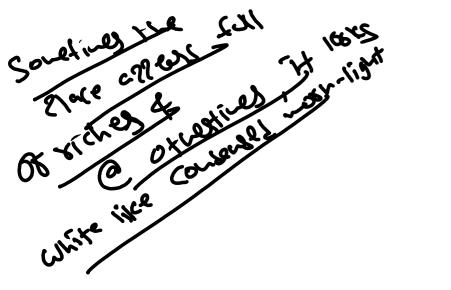
## by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

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Part 4

## Vaikuntha- The Spiritual Kingdom



TEXT 49

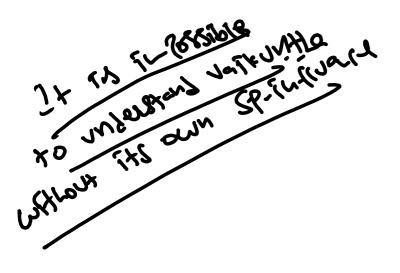
kadācit svarņa-ratnādimayam tat tat pratīyate kadācic ca ghanī-bhūta-

candra-jyotsneva kakkhatī

Sometimes that place appears (kadācit\_pratīyate) full of riches like gold and jewels (tat tat svarņa-ratnādi-mayam), and sometimes (kadācid) its atmosphere appears chalk-white (kakkhațī), 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 Vaikuntha atmosphere.



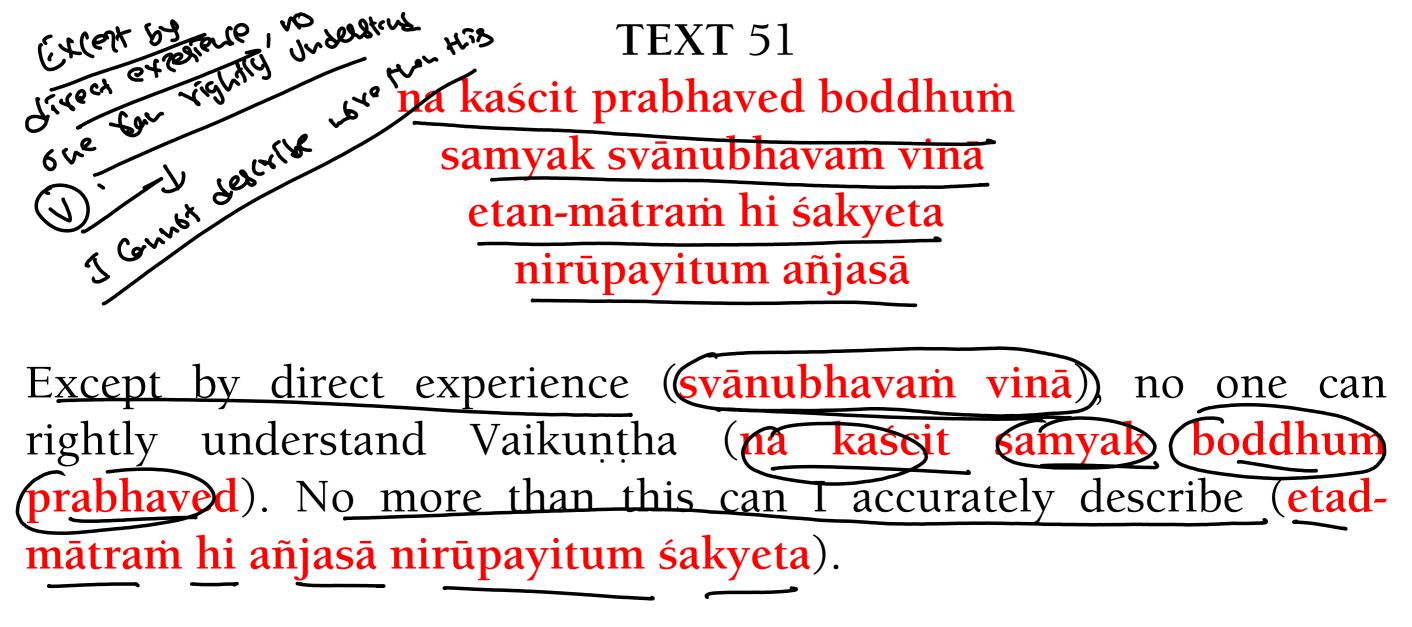
TEXT 50 kathañcit tat-prabhāveņa vijñātam syān na cānyathā grahītum kila tad-rūpam manasāpi na śakyate

Vaikuntha may be somehow understood (kathañcit vijñātam syāt) only by its own spiritual influence (tat-prabhāveņa), and not otherwise (na ca anyathā). Indeed (kila), even the mind (manasāpi) cannot grasp (na grahītum śakyate) its form (tad-rūpam). One can understand the Lord of Vaikuntha and know the various locations of His pastimes only when He reveals Himself by His special potencies such as kārunya (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.



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

By hearing from someone who has seen Vaikuntha 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.