

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

Volume - 2

Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

Part 5

Prema- Love of God

Text 124

brahmāpi yām vīkṣya vilāsa-mādhurīm

mumoha tāṁ varṇayitum nu ko 'rhati

kva sātma-vatsārbhaka-rūpa-dhāritā

kva mugdha-vat tat sakhi-vatsa-mārgaṇam

Who can describe the
charm of those pastimes
which bewildered even Brahmā
↓
Ⓟ Himself assumed
the forms of the calves
& goats & yet
went to search
for them

like an innocent child.

Who can describe (kah nu varṇayitum arhati) the charm of those pastimes (tām vilāsa-mādhurīm), which bewildered even Brahmā (brahmāpi mumoha) when he saw them (yām vīkṣya)? Kṛṣṇa Himself assumed (kva sātma dhāritā) the forms of the calves and cowherd boys (vatsa-arbhaka-rūpa), and yet He went to search for His friends and calves (kva tat sakhi-vatsa-mārgaṇam) like an innocent child (mugdha-vat).

This pastime is doubly bewildering: Kṛṣṇa does something possible only for the supreme mystic, yet He acts like a naive child.

Nārada Muni feels so charmed by this pastime that he doubts his ability to describe it.

Text 125

tat-tad-vilāsāspada-gokulasya sa
brahmaiva mähātmya-viśeṣa-vittamaḥ
astaut tathā yo bhagavantam ādarān
mūrto mahā-prema-raso vrajasya yaḥ

to understand better
than anyone the (special)
glories of Gokula.
∴ with respect of the pastimes
who embodies the pastimes vraja-rasa

Lord Brahmā (brahmā eva) grew to understand better than anyone else (vittamaḥ) the special glories (mähātmya-viśeṣa) of Gokula (gokulasya), the abode of all those pastimes (tat-tad-vilāsa āspada), so with great respect (tathā ādarāt) he praised (yaḥ astaut) the Supreme Lord (bhagavantam) who embodies (yaḥ mūrtaḥ) the exalted tastes of pure love (mahā-prema-raso) in Vraja (vrajasya).

Brahmā's defeat by Kṛṣṇa in their match of wits not only humbled Brahmā but also elevated him in understanding of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Gokula, so much so that Nārada calls him māhātmya-viśeṣa-vittama, "the best of those who know the special glories of Gokula."

We find evidence of Brahmā's understanding in his solemn prayer to Kṛṣṇa:

tad bhūri-bhāgyam iha janma kim apy aṭavyām
yad gokule 'pi katamānghri-rajo-'bhisekam
yaj-jīvitam tu nikhilam bhagavān mukundas
tv adyāpi yat-pada-rajah śruti-mṛgyam eva

“My greatest possible good fortune (tad bhūri-bhāgyam) would be to
take any birth whatever (kim apy janma) in this forest of Gokula (iha
gokule aṭavyām) and have my head bathed by the dust falling from the
lotus feet of any of its residents (katamah aṅghri-rajo-'bhisekam).
Their entire life and soul (yaj-jīvitam tu nikhilam) is the Supreme
Personality of Godhead, Mukunda (bhagavān mukundah), the dust of
whose lotus feet (yat-pada-rajah) is still being searched for in the
Vedic mantras (adyāpi śruti-mṛgyam eva).” (Bhāgavatam 10.14.34)

Brahmā became qualified to praise Kṛṣṇa suitably by realizing Him as the reservoir of all the ecstatic moods of vraja-prema.

In many verses of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī expertly describes those varieties of rasa.

For example:

tan-mātarō veṇu-rava-tvarotthitā
utthāpya dorbhiḥ parirabhya nirbharam
sneha-snuta-stanya-payah-sudhāsavam
matvā param brahma sutān apāyayan

The mothers of the boys (tad-mātarah), upon hearing the sounds of the flutes and bugles being played by their sons (veṇu-rava), immediately rose from their household tasks (tvarā utthitā), lifted their boys onto their laps (utthāpya), embraced them with both arms (dorbhiḥ parirabhya) and began to feed them with their breast milk, which flowed forth because of extreme love specifically for Kṛṣṇa (nirbharam sneha-snuta-stanya-payah-sudhāsavam). Actually Kṛṣṇa is everything, but at that time, expressing extreme love and affection, they took special pleasure in feeding Kṛṣṇa, the Parabrahman, and Kṛṣṇa drank the milk from His respective mothers as if it were a nectarean beverage (param brahma sutān matvā apāyayan). (Bhāgavatam 10.13.22)

Brahmā himself also very competently described these rasas in his prayers:

aho 'ti-dhanyā vraja-go-ramanyah
stanyāmṛtaṁ pītam atīva te mudā
yāsāṁ vibho vatsatarātmajātmanā
yat-tr̥ptaye 'dyāpi na cālam adhvarāḥ

“O almighty Lord (vibho), how greatly fortunate (aho ati-dhanyā) are the cows and ladies of Vrndāvana (vraja-go-ramanyah), the nectar of whose breast-milk (yāsāṁ stanyāmṛtaṁ) You have happily drunk to Your full satisfaction (te pītam atīva mudā), taking the form of their calves and children (vatsatarā ātmaja ātmanā)! All the Vedic sacrifices performed from time immemorial up to the present day (alam adhvarāḥ) have not given You as much satisfaction (adyāpi na yat-tr̥ptaye).” (Bhāgavatam 10.14.31)

PIS WITH? THE
WONDERFUL PASTIMES SUCH AS
a) tending the cows
b) honoring His elder brother
c) glorifying the beauty of V
d) Imitating the singing of the bees

Text 126

DESCRIPTION OF
Paungkida-lila
starts here.

gopālanenāgraja-mānanena
vṛndāvana-śrī-stavanena cāsau
tenāli-gānābhinayādināpi
prabhur vyadhād yām bhaja tām su-līlām

Please worship (bhaja) the wonderful pastimes (tām su-līlām) the Lord enacted (yām prabhuh vyadhād), such as tending the cows (gopālanenā), honoring His elder brother (agraja-mānanena), glorifying the beauty of Vṛndāvana (vṛndāvana-śrī-stavanena), and imitating the singing of the bees (ali-gāna-abhinaya ādinā).

This verse begins the recounting of Kṛṣṇa's pauganda-līlā, the pastimes of years six through ten.

Besides imitating the bees, Kṛṣṇa and His friends would also imitate the chattering of parrots, call out in deep voices to the distant cows, and enjoy naps on beds of soft leaves.

Text 127

tālī-vane yāvirabhūc ca līlā
yā dhenuka-jñāti-vimardane ca
sāyam vraja-strī-gana-saṅgame 'pi
stotum na śaknomy abhivādaye tām

The Lord disposed of
Dhenuka & his relatives
Tālavana
I cannot describe this
I can only offer my respects.

The Lord disposed of Dhenuka and his relatives (dhenuka-jñāti-vimardane ca āvirabhūt) in the Tālavana (tālī-vane) and met at dusk (sāyam saṅgame) with the women of Vraja (vraja-strī-gaṇa). These pastimes (yā līlā) I cannot adequately praise (na stotum śaknomy); I can only offer them my respects (tām abhivādaye).

Because the cowherd boys wanted to eat the fruits of the tāla trees and play with them as balls, they asked Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to rid the Tālavana forest of the ass demons who refused to allow anyone to enter, and Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma did so.

After such sports, when Kṛṣṇa came home in the evening, at the entrance of Nanda Mahārāja's village He would be greeted by His family and friends, including the young gopīs:

taṁ go-rajāś-churita-kuntala-baddha-barha-
vanya-prasūna-rucirekṣaṇa-cāru-hāsam
veṇuṁ kvaṇantam anugair upagīta-kīrtiṁ
gopyo didṛkṣita-drśo 'bhyagaman sametāḥ

“Lord Kṛṣṇa’s hair (kuntala), powdered with the dust raised by the cows (go-rajāś-churita), was decorated with a peacock feather (baddha-barha) and forest flowers (vanya-prasūna). The Lord glanced charmingly (rucira ikṣaṇa) and smiled beautifully (cāru-hāsam), playing upon His flute (veṇuṁ kvaṇantam) while His companions chanted His glories (anugaih upagīta-kīrtiṁ). The gopīs (gopyah), all together (sametāḥ), came forward to meet Him (abhyagaman), their eyes very eager to see Him (didṛkṣita-drśo).

pītvā mukunda-mukha-sāragham akṣi-bhr̥ṅgais
tāpaṁ jahur viraha-jaṁ vraja-yoṣito 'hni
tat sat-kṛtiṁ samadhigamya viveśa goṣṭham
savrīḍa-hāsa-vinayaṁ yad apāṅga-mokṣam

“With their beelike eyes (akṣi-bhr̥ṅgaih), the women of Vṛndāvana (vraja-yoṣitah) drank (pītvā) the honey (sāragham) of the beautiful face of Lord Mukunda (mukunda-mukha), and thus they gave up (jahur) the distress (tāpaṁ) they had felt during the day (ahni) because of separation from Him (viraha-jaṁ). The young Vṛndāvana ladies cast sidelong glances at the Lord (yad apāṅga-mokṣam)—glances filled with bashfulness, laughter, and submission (savrīḍa-hāsa-vinayaṁ)—and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, completely accepting these glances (tat samadhigamya) as a proper offering of respect (sat-kṛtiṁ), entered the cowherd village (viveśa goṣṭham).” (Bhāgavatam 10.15.42–43)

Nārada feels unable to describe such intimate exchanges
between Kṛṣṇa and His devotees, either because words are
incapable of capturing the essence of these pastimes or because
Nārada fears that if he says more than a few words about each
pastime he will become too ecstatic and lose control of
himself.

Now, therefore, unable to freely offer elaborate service to these
pastimes, he simply offers them obeisances with his words.

Text 128

yo vai vihāro 'jani kāliyasya
hrade yaśodā-tanayasya tasya
taṁ smartum īso na bhavāmi śoka-
praharṣa-vegāt katham ālapāni

The sport (vihārah) that the son of Yaśodā (yah yaśodā-tanayasya) enjoyed (ajani) in the lake of Kāliya (kāliyasya hrade) disturbs me so much with both sorrow and joy (śoka-praharṣa-vegāt) that I can't bear to remember it (taṁ smartum na bhavāmi īśah). How then can I recount it to you (katham ālapāni)?

Kāliya's daughter
So I'm much disturbed
to sorrow → that I both joy &
to remember it - can't bear
How then can I describe it

Remembering the violence done by Kāliya made Nārada sad,
but remembering how Kṛṣṇa tamed Kāliya by dancing on his
hoods enlivened him.

Text 129

When the Lord
gave the Lord
punishment
that one angry
And what He gave
When He felt
joy He felt
festival of dancing
On His
hood!

kva duṣṭa-ceṣṭasya khalasya tasya
daṇḍas tadā krodha-bhareṇa kāryah
kva connate tat-phana-varga-raṅge
nṛtyotsavo harṣa-bhareṇa tādrk

When the Lord's anger swelled (tasya krodha-bhareṇa kāryah), what a punishment He gave (tadā kva daṇḍah) to that wicked, cruel-hearted creature (duṣṭa-ceṣṭasya khalasya)! And what joy the Lord felt (kva harṣa-bhareṇa) when He performed His festival of dancing (nṛtyotsavo) on the stage of that serpent's upraised hoods (unnate tat-phana-varga-raṅge)!

Kāliya had the arrogance to grasp with his filthy coils the divine body of the Supreme Person, thus causing great anxiety to the Lord's devotees.

Kāliya's heart was full of wicked pride, and he felt no shame raising his hoods high in the air.

Therefore Kṛṣṇa gave him a fitting punishment: He turned Kāliya's hoods into a dancing stage and gleefully pummeled the serpent into submission.

Text 130

kva nigrahas tādṛg anugrahaḥ kva vā
śeṣo 'pi yaṁ varṇayitum na śaknuyāt
tan nāga-patnī-nivahāya me namaḥ
stuty-arcane yo 'kṛta kāliyāya ca

Even Ananta Śeṣa
& his wives
I bow down to
nāga-patnīs & Ananta
to Kāliya.

Even Ananta Śeṣa (śeṣaḥ api) is unable to describe (yaṁ varṇayitum na śaknuyāt) such punishment and mercy (kva nigrahas tādṛg anugrahaḥ kva vā)! To the serpent's many wives (tan nāga-patnī-nivahāya), who offered (yaḥ akṛta) Kṛṣṇa prayers and worship (stuty-arcane), and to Kāliya himself (kāliyāya ca), I bow down (me namaḥ).

Kāliya received the severe punishment of having his heads crushed by the Supreme Lord's heels and simultaneously the exquisite mercy of obtaining the dust of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet on those same heads.

The dust of Kṛṣṇa's feet is the rarest treasure.

Even the original thousand-headed serpent, Ananta Śeṣa, has difficulty, therefore, expressing the glories of the mercy Kāliya received.

But Kāliya's wives managed to describe it in their humble prayers.

Text 131

tīre hradasyāsyā davānalena yā
krīḍādbhutā mañju-vane 'py ato 'dhikā
bhāṇḍīra-saṅkrīdana-cāturī ca sā
jyeṣṭhasyā kīrtyai racitā tanotu śam

The pastime of
the forest fire took place
→ in the shore of the lake
& a greater fire occurred in
Mañju-vana.
In Bhāṇḍīra-vaṇe →
clever arrangements
for sporting
→ magnified the glories of Balarāma.

The pastime of the forest fire (yā davānalena adbhutā krīḍā) took place on the shore of that same lake (asya hradasya tīre), and a fire even greater in the forest known as Mañju (mañju-vane apy ato adhikā). In the Bhāṇḍīra forest (bhāṇḍīra) the clever arrangements for sporting (saṅkrīdana-cāturī) magnified the glories (kīrtyai racitā) of Balarāma, the Lord's elder brother (jyeṣṭhasyā). May all these pastimes (sā) expand our good fortune (tanotu śam).

Kṛṣṇa twice saved the cowherd boys from a forest fire, but the second fire was even more amazing than the first.

In that emergency Kṛṣṇa told His friends to simply close their eyes and He would save them, and then suddenly they found themselves transported to Bhāṇḍīravana.

While the boys played in that forest, Lord Balarāma especially
showed His glories.

Kṛṣṇa, defeated in wrestling, carried Śrīdāma on His back,
and victorious Balarāma carried Pralambāsura, whom
Balarāma then killed.

All glories to
His pastimes in
the rainy season
to His resting at
the feet of trees.
& to His scored pastimes which
increased the pain of
the girls.

Text 132

manoharā prāvṛṣi yā hi līlā
mahīruhānkāśrayaṇādikā sā
jīyād vraja-stri-smara-tāpa-dātrī
śarad-vana-śrī-bhara-varḍhitā ca

All glories (jīyād) to His pastimes in the rainy season (yā manoharā prāvṛṣi līlā), like His resting (āśrayaṇa adikā) at the feet of trees (mahī ruhā anka), and to His autumnal pastimes (sā śarad)—enhanced (vardhitā) by the beauty of the forests (vana-śrī-bhara)—which heaped the pain of Cupid's torment (smara-tāpa-dātrī) on the women of Vraja (vraja-stri).

During the rains, Kṛṣṇa enjoyed such seasonal pastimes as sitting at the bases of trees, eating white radishes, and joining His friends on the tops of big rocks to feast on yogurt rice.

When the next season commenced, the beauty of the forest increased luxuriantly, expanding the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes and increasing the disturbance the girls of Vraja felt from the arrows of Cupid.

As described by Śukadeva Gosvāmī in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.20.45):

āśliṣya sama-śītoṣṇam
prasūna-vana-mārutam
janās tāpam jahur gopyo
na kṛṣṇa-hṛta-cetasah

“The people (janāh) could forget their suffering (tāpam jahuh) by embracing (āśliṣya) the wind (mārutam) coming from the flower-
filled forest (prasūna-vana), a wind neither hot nor cold (sama-
śītoṣṇam). But the gopīs could not (na gopyah), for their hearts had
been stolen by Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa-hṛta-cetasah).”

Text 133

sā vanya-bhūṣā sa ca veṇu-vādya-
mādhurya-pūro 'khila-citta-hārī
tad gopa-yoṣid-gaṇa-mohanam ca
mayā kadāsyānubhaviṣyate 'ddhā

When will I see with my own eyes mayā kadā anubhaviṣyate addhā
the way He dresses in forest attire (asya sā vanya-bhūṣā), steals
everyone's heart (akhila-citta-hārī) with the downpour of sweetness
(mādhurya-pūrah) from the music of His flute (veṇu-vādya), and
enchants (mohanam) all the cowherd girls (tad gopa-yoṣid-gaṇa)?

When will I see
With my own eyes
the way He dresses in
Gopa-vesta forest attire
heart with His flute
enchants the govt

About the Personality of Godhead's forest dress, Śukadeva Gosvāmī says:

barhāpīdam nata-vara-vapuh karnayoḥ karnikāram
bibhrad vāsaḥ kanaka-kapiśam vaijayantīm ca mālām
randhrān veṇor adhara-sudhayāpūrayan gopa-vṛndair
vṛndāraṇyam sva-pada-ramaṇam prāviśad gīta-kīrtiḥ

“Wearing a peacock-feather ornament upon His head (barhāpīdam), blue karnikāra flowers on His ears (karnayoḥ karnikāram), a yellow garment as brilliant as gold (bibhrad vāsaḥ kanaka-kapiśam), and the Vaijayantī garland (vaijayantīm ca mālām), Lord Kṛṣṇa exhibited His transcendental form as the greatest of dancers (nata-vara-vapuh) as He entered (prāviśad) the forest of Vṛndāvana (vṛndāraṇyam), beautifying it with the marks of His footprints (sva-pada-ramaṇam). He filled (āpūrayan) the holes of His flute (veṇor randhrān) with the nectar of His lips (adhara-sudhayā), and the cowherd boys (gopa-vṛndair) sang His glories (gīta-kīrtiḥ).” (Bhāgavatam 10.21.5)

The most expert analysts of the glories of Kṛṣṇa's flute are the gopīs, and many of their authoritative statements about those glories are recorded in the Tenth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam—for example, in the Twenty-first Chapter, in the eight texts beginning with this one (Text 9):

gopyaḥ kim ācarad ayam kuśalam sma veṇur
dāmodarādhara-sudhām api gopikānām
bhunkte svayam yad avaśiṣṭa-rasam hradinyo
hrṣyat-tvaco 'śru mumucus taravo yathāryāḥ

“My dear gopīs (**gopyaḥ**), what auspicious activities (**kim ayam kuśalam**) must the flute have performed (**veṇuh ācarad**) to enjoy (**bhunkte**) the nectar of Kṛṣṇa’s lips independently (**dāmodara adhara-sudhām**) and leave only a taste (**yad avaśiṣṭa-rasam**) for us gopīs (**gopikānām**), for whom that nectar is actually meant (**svayam**)! The forefathers of the flute, the bamboo trees (**āryāḥ taravaḥ**), shed tears of pleasure (**aśru mumucuḥ**). His mother, the river on whose bank the bamboo was born (**hradinyah**), feels jubilation, and therefore her blooming lotus flowers are standing like hair on her body (**hrṣyat-tvacah**).”

The gopīs, in their constant praise of Kṛṣṇa, frequently return to the theme of the enchanting power of His flute:

gā gopakair anu-vanaṁ nayator udāra-
veṇu-svanaiḥ kala-padais tanu-bhṛtsu sakhyah
aspandanam gati-matām pulakas tarūnām
niryoga-pāśa-kṛta-lakṣaṇayor vicitram

“My dear friends (sakhyah), as Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma pass through the forest (anu-vanaṁ nayatoḥ) with Their cowherd friends, leading Their cows (gā gopakaih), They carry ropes to bind the cows’ rear legs at the time of milking (niryoga-pāśa-kṛta-lakṣaṇayoh). When Lord Kṛṣṇa plays on His flute (veṇu-svanaiḥ), the sweet music (kala-padaih) makes the moving living entities (gati-matām tanu-bhṛtsu) become stunned (aspandanam) and the nonmoving trees tremble with ecstasy (pulakah tarūnām). These things are certainly very wonderful (vicitram).” (Bhāgavatam 10.21.19)

More than anything else, the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute most fully expresses the essence of His sweetness (mādhurya), so the wonders of Kṛṣṇa's flute-playing will be elaborated even more in the description of "the sweetness of all of Kṛṣṇa's excellent qualities" (aśeṣa-mahattva-mādhurī).

It was particularly in the autumn that Kṛṣṇa stole the hearts of the gopīs by playing the flute.

While speaking about the arrival of autumn in Vṛndāvana, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī says:

tad vraja-striya āśrutya
veṇu-gītaṁ smarodayam
kāścit parokṣaṁ kṛṣṇasya
sva-sakhībhyo ’nvavarnayan

“When the young ladies in the cowherd village of Vraja (tad vraja-striyah) heard (āśrutya) the song of Kṛṣṇa’s flute (veṇu-gītaṁ), which arouses the influence of Cupid (smarodayam), some of them (kāścit) privately (parokṣaṁ) began describing (anvavarnayan) Kṛṣṇa’s qualities (kṛṣṇasya) to their intimate friends (sva-sakhībhyo).” (Bhāgavatam 10.21.3)