

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

Volume - 2

Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

Part 5

Prema- Love of God

Text 173

My dear boy,
How is it that you
have developed this eagerness
to take shelter of Q's lotus
feet & see these pastimes?

tāta tādṛśa-gopāla-
deva-pāda-sarojayoḥ
vinoda-mādhurīḥ tām tām
utsuko 'sīkṣitum katham

My dear boy (tāta), how is it (katham) that are you so eager (utsukah) to take shelter of the lotus feet of this Gopāla-deva (tādṛśa-gopāla-deva-pāda-sarojayoḥ) and see (īśīkṣitum) all those sweet pastimes (tām tām vinoda-mādhurīḥ)?

Nārada's mind is perplexed by the thought that this simple boy Gopa-
kumāra is intent on gaining the realization most rarely achieved.

My dear brother
pls understand, that
to attain Him is very difficult
esp bcoz of the devotional discipline
required.

Text 174

satyaṁ jānīhi re bhrātas
tat-prāptir ati-durghaṭā
tat-sādhanam ca nitarām
eṣa me niścayaḥ paraḥ

Dear brother (re bhrātaḥ), you must understand (satyaṁ jānīhi) that to attain Him (tat-prāptih) is exceedingly difficult (ati-durghaṭā), especially because (nitarām) of the devotional discipline required (tat-sādhanam ca). Of this (eṣaḥ) I am fully convinced (me niścayaḥ paraḥ).

Gopa-kumāra may argue that with the blessings of pure saints like Nārada, nothing is impossible.

But Nārada warns him: so difficult is the goal that even Nārada's mercy will not be of much help.

By saying this, Nārada hopes to increase Gopa-kumāra's eagerness to reach Goloka.

Most JIVĪS have
no ability to discern
good from bad.
Only a few of humans can ascertain
the proper way to behave.

Text 175

prāṇinaḥ prāyaśaḥ śūnyā
hitāhita-vivecanaiḥ
narā vā katicit teṣu
santv ācāra-vicāriṇaḥ

Most living entities (prāyaśaḥ prāṇinaḥ) have no ability to discern (vivecanaiḥ śūnyā) good from bad (hita ahita). Only a few human beings (teṣu narā vā katicit) can ascertain the proper way to behave (ācāra-vicāriṇaḥ santu).

The vast majority of conditioned jīvas live in subhuman forms of life.

In the bodies of lower species like animal, bird, and insect, they have no higher intelligence with which to judge ethical values.

Human beings normally have some concept of right and wrong, but only a few apply that understanding consistently in how they act.

Amongst those humans
most are devoted to
wealth & enjoyment.
↓
Only a few amongst them
are interested in religious life
to enter Svarga.

Text 176

drśyante 'thāpi bahvas te
'rtha-kāma-parāyanāh
svarga-sādhaka-dharmeṣu
ratās tu katicit kila

Among them (athāpi te), most (bahvah) are seen (drśyante) devoted to wealth and enjoyment (artha-kāma-parāyanāh). Only very few (kila katicit) are serious (ratāh) about religious life for entering into heaven (svarga-sādhaka-dharmeṣu).

Most people who regulate the way they act are driven by desires for wealth, power, and sense gratification, not by true respect for religion (dharma).

Of the few who follow dharma, most do so merely for the sake of public esteem.

And even fewer desire elevation to Svarga-loka.

Text 177

Always keep
only a few
Practice
Next ↓
& amongst them only a few
want liberation.

teṣām katipaye syur vā
ratā niṣkāma-karmasu
tathāpy arāṅiṇas teṣām
kecid eva mumukṣavaḥ

Of those candidates for heaven (teṣām), only a few (katipaye) are intent upon (ratāḥ syuḥ) working without selfish desire (niṣkāma-karmasu), and among them (tathāpy teṣām arāṅiṇaḥ) fewer still want liberation (kecid eva mumukṣavaḥ).

Although it is true that the process of niṣkāma-karma—
working without attachment to the fruits of work—
encourages the spirit of renunciation, just how effectively it
does so varies among individuals.

Only a few niṣkāma-karma-yogīs are renounced in their
hearts and therefore eager for liberation.

Text 178

Of the aspirants of liberation, hardly a few are liberated. & amongst them only a few have accepted D-s (P-D-s)

tesām paramahamsā ye
muktāḥ syuḥ kecid eva te
kecin mahāśayās teṣu
bhagavad-bhakti-tatparāḥ

Of the aspirants for liberation (tesām paramahamsā ye), hardly a few are transcendental, liberated souls (muktāḥ syuḥ kecid eva te), and of those exalted transcendentalists (teṣu mahāśayāḥ) only a few (kecid) are dedicated to the devotional service of the Lord (bhagavad-bhakti-tatparāḥ).

Persons firmly fixed in the practice of yoga are called hamsas,
and those who have factually realized the self are called
paramahamsas.

Paramahamsas are liberated, but even most of them are still
enjoying the remnants of their accumulated karma.

Among all paramahamsas, only a few are completely perfect, and
of those perfected beings fewer still have no desire other than the
selfless devotional service of the Personality of Godhead.

most evolved faith.

Those most rare persons have the sharpest intelligence and gravest purpose; by the grace of the Supreme Lord they understand how insignificant liberation is.

They are called mahāśayas, wise souls, by virtue of their unbounded and unalloyed enthusiasm for bhakti-rasa.

As Śrī Parīkṣit Mahārāja told Śukadeva Gosvāmī in the Sixth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.14.3–5):

rajobhiḥ sama-saṅkhyātāḥ
pārthivair iha jantavaḥ
teṣāṃ ye kecanehante
śreyo vai manujādayaḥ

In this material world (iha pārthivaiḥ) there are as many living entities as atoms (rajobhiḥ sama-saṅkhyātāḥ jantavaḥ). Among these living entities (teṣāṃ), a few are human beings or devatās (kecana manuja ādayaḥ), and among them (teṣāṃ), a few practice dharma (kecana śreyo ihante).

prāyo mumukṣavas teṣām
kecanaiva dvijottama
mumukṣūṇām sahasreṣu
kaścin mucyeta sidhyati

O best of the brāhmaṇas (dvijottama)! Out of those follow dharma (teṣām), only a few desire liberation (kecana eva prāyo mumukṣavaḥ). Among many thousands who desire liberation (mumukṣūṇām sahasreṣu), one person becomes a jivamukta (kaścin mucyeta) and out of many such persons, only one attains the spiritual world (sidhyati).

muktānām api siddhānām
nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ
su-durlabhaḥ praśāntātmā
koṭiṣv api mahā-mune

O great sage (**mahā-mune**)! Greater than those who are jīvanmukta
and greater than those who attain liberation (**muktānām api**
siddhānām) is the devotee of Lord Nārāyaṇa (**nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ**).
Such a devotee, who is in śānta or other rasas (**praśāntātmā**), is very
rare (**su-durlabhaḥ**), even among ten million people (**koṭiṣv api**).

To call the Vaiṣṇavas praśāntātmā, “persons of peaceful mind,” is an
understatement because the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa consciousness
reaches far beyond ordinary ideas of “peace.”

Text 179

śrīman-madana-gopāla-
pāda-padmaika-sauhr̥de
ratātmāno hi nitarām
durlabhās teṣv api dhruvam

Amongst devotees
devotees of
are with rare.

Sa teṣu ṣṭya
an intimate form of
of relationship.

And even among the Supreme Lord's devotees (tesu api), those eager to give their hearts (ratātmānah) in exclusive friendship (eka-sauhr̥de) to the lotus feet (pāda-padma) of Śrīmān Madana-gopāla (śrīman-madana-gopāla) are by far the most rare (nitaram durlabhāh), without a doubt (dhruvam).

As mentioned above, Parīksit Mahārāja also confirmed that among great souls devotees of Kṛṣṇa are the most rare.

He therefore said:

vr̥tras tu sa katham̐ pāpah̐
sarva-lokopatāpanah̐
ittham̐ dr̥dha-matiḥ kṛṣṇa
āsīt saṅgrāma ulbaṇe

How did sinful Vr̥trāsura (katham̐ vr̥tras tu pāpah̐), who caused so much suffering to others (sarva-loka upatāpanah̐), become so fixed in Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa ittham̐ dr̥dha-matiḥ āsīt) during the raging battle (saṅgrāma ulbaṇe)? (Bhāgavatam 6.14.6)

Text 180

The contents of
Sādhni & the SEPTAS
that teach them should be
understood to differ
according to the different
goals to be achieved.

evam tat-tat-sādhyanām
rītir apy avagamyatām
taj-jñāpakānām śāstrānām
vacanānām ca tādrśī

The methods of discipline (evam tat-tat-sādhyanām rītir
apy) and the scriptural statements (śāstrānām vacanānām ca)
that teach them (taj-jñāpakānām) should be understood
(avagamyatām) to differ according to the different goals to be
achieved (tādrśī).

Because some goals of life are more popular than others, the disciplines the Vedic scriptures recommend for various ambitions vary in prominence.

The śāstras teach more about economic development, somewhat less about sense gratification, still less about religiosity, less again about liberation, and the least about devotional service.

For artha and kāma there are numerous engagements of the body, speech, and mind; for dharma, fewer practices, involving charity, pilgrimages, proper behavior, and vows of austerity; and for liberation only a few methods, such as aṣṭāṅga-yoga.

And still fewer and lesser known are the simple sādhanas of bhakti-yoga, beginning with hearing and chanting.

Thus we can understand that pure devotional service, especially service given exclusively to the lotus feet of Śrī Madana-gopāladeva, is difficult to achieve.

And so too, therefore, is the spiritual realm of Goloka; it is obtainable only by unalloyed devotion to Madana-gopāla.

There are
further distinctions
among the devotees of ①,
but I am unfit to
describe them.

Text 181

tatrāpi yo viśeṣo 'nyah
keṣāñcit ko 'pi vartate
lokānām kila tasyāham
ākhyāne nādhikāravān

Among some of the devotees of Śrī Madana-gopāla (tatrāpi keṣāñcit lokānām) there are further distinctions still (yah kah api anyah viśeṣah vartate), but I am unfit to describe them (tasya aham ākhyāne na adhikāravān).

Here Nārada hints at the superexcellent devotion to Śrī
Madana-gopāla found in the devotees whose service follows
in the mood of the blessed gopīs.

Nārada considers Uddhava more qualified than himself to
talk about this most confidential topic.

Text 182

śrī-gopa-kumāra uvāca
ity uktvoddhavam āliᅅgya
sa-dainyam kāku-cātubhiᅇ
yayāce nāradas tasya
kiñcit tvam kathayeti saᅇ

Śrī Gopa-kumāra said: Having spoken thus (ity uktvā), Nārada (nāradaᅇ) embraced Uddhava (uddhavam āliᅅgya) and begged him (saᅇ yayāce) with great humility (sa-dainyam), in a plaintive and prayerful voice (kāku-cātubhiᅇ), “Please tell us something about this (tasya kiñcit tvam kathaya iti).”

Having spoken
thus, NM embraced
U & begged him to
speak about this.

Text 183

U, moved by
pure love, bowed his
head again & again & said:
At every instant I offer my
respects to the dust from
the lotus feet of the
gopis.

jagau premāturaḥ śirṣṇo-
ddhavo nīcair muhur naman
vande nanda-vraja-strīṇām
pāda-reṇum abhikṣṇaśaḥ

Uddhava (uddhavaḥ), moved by pure love (prema āturaḥ), bowed his head low again and again (śirṣṇaḥ nīcair muhur naman). He then said (jagau): “At every instant (abhikṣṇaśaḥ), I offer my respects (vande) to the dust from the feet (pāda-reṇum) of the women of Nanda’s Vraja (nanda-vraja-strīṇām).”

Uddhava knew exactly what Nārada was referring to.

With intense feeling, he bowed his head to the floor and then lifted his head and began to sing the glories of the gopīs.

The words he speaks in this verse appear in the Tenth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.47.63).

Text 184

kṣaṇān mahārtito vyagro
gr̥hītvā yavasam radaiḥ
nāradasya padau dhṛtvā
hari-dāso 'vadat punaḥ

For a moment
& greatly distressed
places grass b/w his teeth
→ & holding NMS feet → he
spoke.

For a moment (kṣaṇān) that servant of Hari (hari-dāsaḥ) appeared agitated (vyagraḥ) and greatly distressed (mahā ārtitaḥ). Placing between His teeth a blade of grass (gr̥hītvā yavasam radaiḥ) and taking hold of Nārada's feet (nāradasya padau dhṛtvā), he spoke again (avadat punaḥ).

Uddhava expected that his touching Nārada's feet would assure the success of his own prayer.