

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

Volume - 2

Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

Part 5

Prema- Love of God

āsām aho carāṇa-reṇu-juṣām ahaṁ syām
vṛndāvane kim api gulma-latauṣadhīnām
yā dustyajam sva-janam ārya-patham ca hitvā
bhejur mukunda-padavīm śrutibhir vimṛgyām

The gopīs love
 abandoned the families
 & chastity to take shelter
 ∴ let me be a gulma-lata-
 ② to receive their dust.

“The gopīs of Vṛndāvana (āsām) have given up (hitvā) the association of their husbands, sons, and other family members (sva-janam), who are very difficult to give up (yā dustyajam), and have forsaken the path of chastity (ārya-patham ca hitvā), to take shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda, Kṛṣṇa (bhejur mukunda-padavīm), which one should search for by Vedic knowledge (śrutibhir vimṛgyām). Oh (aho), let me be fortunate enough (ahaṁ syām) to be one of the bushes, creepers, or herbs in Vṛndāvana (vṛndāvane kim api gulma-latauṣadhīnām), because the gopīs trample them and bless them with the dust of their lotus feet (carāṇa-reṇu-juṣām).”

This is a verse spoken by Uddhava in the Tenth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.47.61).

Uddhava will now explain this verse briefly, and later more elaborately.

Then ॐ, filled
with emotions of love
jumped up & continued
to sing

Text 186

atha prema-parīpāka-
vikārair vividhair vṛtaḥ
sa-camatkāram utplutya
so 'gāyat punar uddhavaḥ

Then Uddhava (atha uddhavaḥ), filled with (vṛtaḥ) all sorts of emotions (vividhah vikārah) of fully blossomed love (prema-parīpāka), jumped up (utplutya) and continued to sing (agāyat punah), full of wonder (sa-camatkāram).

Text 187

nāyam śriyo 'nga u nitānta-rateḥ prasādaḥ
svar-yoṣitām nalina-gandha-rucām kuto 'nyāh
rāsotsave 'sya bhujā-daṇḍa-grhīta-kaṇṭha-
labdhāśiṣām ya udagād vraja-sundarīṇām

Gopis are more fortunate than even mother Lakshmi the women of Braj etc.
why?
Bros @
The women of Braj etc.

Subject
The
see here.

“When Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was dancing with the gopīs in the rāsa-līlā (**rāsotsave**), the gopīs were embraced by the arms of the Lord (**bhujā-daṇḍa-grhīta-kaṇṭha**). This transcendental favor (**ayam prasādaḥ**) was never bestowed upon the goddess of fortune or other consorts in the spiritual world (**na śriyah**). Indeed, never was such a thing even imagined by the most beautiful girls in the heavenly planets (**na svar-yoṣitām**), whose bodily luster and aroma resemble those of the lotus (**nalina-gandha-rucām**). And what to speak of worldly women who are very beautiful by mundane estimation (**kuto anyāh**)?” The gopīs who enjoy Kṛṣṇa’s embraces in the rāsa dance are clearly much more fortunate than Laksmī, and the rāsa dance is clearly the most glorious of the Supreme Lord’s pastimes.

This is another verse from the forty-seventh chapter of the Tenth Canto (10.47.60).

Nārada will explain this verse thoroughly later on.

Uddhava cites these texts from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to give his words more authority.

Then NM, immersed
in utter surprise, looked @
He in ~~me~~ by distress &
spoke to me.

Text 188

tato 'ti-vismayaṁviṣṭo
nārado bhagavān punaḥ
nirīkṣyamāṇo mām artam
sa-sambhramam idam jagau

Then (**tataḥ**) the great Nārada (**nārado bhagavān**), immersed
in utter surprise (**ati-vismaya āviṣṭaḥ**), looked at me again
(**mām punaḥ nirīkṣyamāṇaḥ**) in my distress (**ārtam**) and
spoke to me (**idam jagau**) with great respect (**sa-**
sambhramam).

After hearing from Uddhava, Nārada could understand even better how difficult it would be for a less qualified person like himself to attain the prema of Goloka.

He therefore felt somewhat discouraged.

Text 189

śrī-nārada uvāca

śreyas-tamo nikhila-bhāgavata-vrajeṣu
yāsām padāmbuja-rajo bahu vandamānaḥ
yāsām padābja-yugalaika-rajo-'bhimarśa-
saubhāgya-bhāk-trṇa-janim uta yācate 'yam

Śrī Nārada said: Uddhava is the very best (śreyas-tamah) among all the devotees of the Personality of Godhead (nikhila-bhāgavata-vrajeṣu) because He is so much absorbed in glorifying (bahu vandamānaḥ) the dust of the gopīs' lotus feet (yāsām padāmbuja-rajah). Indeed, to have the good fortune of being touched (abhimarśa-saubhāgya-bhāk) by a single particle of dust (eka-rajah) from those feet (yāsām padābja-yugala), he has prayed (ayam yācate) for birth as a blade of grass (trṇa-janim).

U
devotees
absorbed in glorifying
dust from the gopis
He has prayed to take lotus dust
grass so that he receives
one particle of dust from their feet.

Text 190

saubhāgya-gandham labhate na yāsām

sā rukmiṇī yā hi hari-priyeti

khyātācyutāśāsta-kulīna-kanyā-

dharmaika-narmokti-bhiyā mṛteva

Rukmiṇī
renowned as the
of the abandoned
to satisfy
but still - SLP
cannot obtain
a trace
of the gopis' good fortune.

Rukmiṇī (sā rukmiṇī) is renowned (yā hi khyātā) as the dearest
queen of Hari (hari-priyā iti), but despite having abandoned (asta)
the religious principles (dharma) of an aristocratic maiden (kulīna-
kanyā) just to satisfy Lord Acyuta's desire (acyuta āśā), and despite
having once almost died (mṛtā iva) of fear (bhiyā) from a few of His
joking words (eka narma ukti), she cannot obtain (na labhate) a
trace of the gopis' good fortune (yāsām saubhāgya-gandham).

In the previous verse, Nārada commented on two of Uddhava's statements (texts 183 and 185): "At every instant, I offer my respects to the dust from the feet of the women of Nanda's Vraja" and "Oh, let me be fortunate enough to be one of the bushes, creepers, or herbs in Vṛndāvana."

Now, in this verse and the next, he comments on the statement (made in Text 187) "This transcendental favor was never bestowed upon the goddess of fortune."

The name Śrī in that text (nāyaṁ śriyo 'ṅga) can be understood to refer either to the consort of Lord Nārāyaṇa or to Rukmiṇī, Kṛṣṇa's first queen in Dvārakā.

When Uddhava first spoke this verse, during his visit to Gokula, Rukmiṇī and Kṛṣṇa were not yet married, but in the present context, because Uddhava is reciting this verse again in the Dvārakā of Vaikuṅṭha, the name Śrī may fittingly indicate Rukmiṇī.

Or perhaps when Uddhava first spoke this verse he had the mystic foresight to know that Rukmiṇī would be Kṛṣṇa's wife.

In any case, Mahā-lakṣmī is Rukmiṇī's expansion, so Lakṣmī and Rukmiṇī are nondifferent.

Both of them, therefore, may be called Hari-priyā.

And because Śrīmatī Rukmiṇī is a greater devotee than Lakṣmī, that the gopīs are much greater than Lakṣmī is implied.

Rukmiṇī abandoned the standards of behavior acceptable for unmarried girls, just because Kṛṣṇa wanted her to.

Ignoring the rule that an aristocratic girl should be offered in marriage by her father, she invited Kṛṣṇa to kidnap her.

And when Kṛṣṇa once teased her, she almost died of fear that He was rejecting her.

On that occasion Lord Kṛṣṇa had said:

athātmano ’nurūpaṁ vai
bhajasva kṣatriyaṣabham
yena tvam āśiṣaḥ satyā
ihāmutra ca lapsyase

“Now (atha) you should definitely accept (bhajasva) a more suitable husband (ātmano anurūpaṁ vai), a first-class man of the royal order (kṣatriya ṣabham) who can help you achieve (yena tvam lapsyase) everything you want (āśiṣaḥ satyā), both in this life and in the next (iha amutra ca).” (Bhāgavatam 10.60.17)

And Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes:

tasyāḥ su-duḥkha-bhaya-śoka-vinaṣṭa-buddher
hastāc chlathad-valayato vyajanam papāta
dehaś ca viklava-dhiyaḥ sahasaiva muhyan
rambheva vāyu-vihato pravikīrya keśān

“Rukmiṇī’s mind (tasyāḥ buddheh) was overwhelmed (vinasta) with unhappiness, fear, and grief (su-duḥkha-bhaya-śoka). Her bangles slipped from her hand (hastād ślathad-valayato), and her fan fell to the ground (vyajanam papāta). In her bewilderment (viklava-dhiyaḥ) she suddenly fainted (sahasaiiva muhyan), her hair scattering all about (pravikīrya keśān) as her body (dehaś ca) fell to the ground like a plantain tree (rambhā iva) blown over by the wind (vāyu-vihato).”
(Bhāgavatam 10.60.24)

Even the best
of the other queens
of the Gopīs, like Kāṇḍī (or)
Satyabhāṁā, cannot compare
with the Gopīs.

Text 191

kva svar-devya iva strīṇām
madhye śreṣṭha-tamā api
kāṇḍī-satyabhāmādyāḥ
kva cānyā rohiṇī-mukhāḥ

Though as attractive as the women of heaven (svaṛ-devya iva), how can even the best of Kṛṣṇa's queens compare to the gopīs (kva strīṇām madhye), even the main queens (śreṣṭha-tamā api)—like Kāṇḍī and Satyabhāmā (kāṇḍī-satyabhāmā ādyāḥ)—or the others, headed by Rohiṇī (kva ca anyā rohiṇī-mukhāḥ)?

Despite possessing all heavenly beauty and good character,
Kṛṣṇa's eight principal queens cannot hope for even a slight trace
of the gopīs' good fortune.

So what to speak of Kṛṣṇa's other 16,100 queens?

Indeed, svar-yoṣitām nalina-gandha-rucām kuto 'nyāḥ: “Never
was such good fortune even imagined by the most beautiful girls
in the heavenly planets, whose bodily luster and aroma resemble
those of the lotus.” (Bhāgavatam 10.47.60)

The supreme goddess of fortune, Śrī Rukmiṇī, sometimes embraces the chest of Kṛṣṇa, but she cannot achieve the same favor Kṛṣṇa bestows upon the gopīs.

Therefore, since Kālindī and the other queens are inferior to Rukmiṇī, how can those queens expect such favor?

I am an insignificant
creature. → what right
do I have to describe
the glories of the gopīs?
But still, my restless tongue
cannot stay still.

Text 192

aham varākaḥ ko nu syām
tāsām mähātmya-varṇane
tathāpi capalā jihvā,
mama dhairyaṁ na rakṣate

I am just an insignificant creature (aham varākaḥ). What right do I have (ko nu syāt) to even try to describe the glories of the gopīs (tāsām mähātmya-varṇane)? Even so (tathāpi), my ill-mannered tongue (mama capalā jihvā) cannot stay still (dhairyaṁ na rakṣate).

Text 193

bho gopa-putra vraja-nātha-mitra he
tat-prema-bhakta-pravarō 'yam uddhavaḥ
tat-sāra-kāruṇya-viśeṣa-bhāgyatas
tāsām vraje prema-bharam tam aikṣata

Oh Gok!
Anger (Pi) devotes
is most exalted.
He has attained the
very:
He has seen the
extent of
love of Gopi
for Govind.

O son of a cowherd (bho gopa-putra), dear friend of the Lord of Vraja (vraja-nātha-mitra he), among Kṛṣṇa's devotees in pure love (tat-prema-bhakta) this Uddhava (ayam uddhavaḥ) is the most exalted (pravaraḥ). By his good fortune (viśeṣa-bhāgyataḥ) he has attained the essence of the Lord's mercy (tat-sāra-kāruṇya): In Vraja (vraje) he has seen (tam aikṣata) the extent of the gopīs' love for Kṛṣṇa (tāsām prema-bharam).

Text 194

tāsām prasādātiśayasya gocaras
tat-saṅgato vismṛta-kṛṣṇa-saṅgamah
nirdhāram etaṁ vyavahāram idṛśaṁ
kurvan vaded yat tad atīva sambhavet

U received from the gopis such mercy
in their company that he forgot
about his companionship with Kṛṣṇa
so whatever he concludes about them
and whatever he does or says will
be altogether right

Uddhava received (gocarah) from the gopīs (tāsām) such mercy (īdṛśaṁ atiśayasya prasāda) that in their company (tat-saṅgatah) he even forgot (vismṛta) about his companionship with Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa-saṅgamah). So whatever he concludes about them (nirdhāram etaṁ vyavahāram), and whatever he does or says (yat kurvan vaded), will be altogether right (tad atīva sambhavet).

Uddhava, being the best prema-bhakta of Lord Vrajanātha, is blessed with Kṛṣṇa's exceptional mercy.

Kṛṣṇa has drawn Uddhava very close to Him because the Lord considers Uddhava especially worthy of His kindness.

Uddhava attained this perfection by seeing in Vṛndāvana the exalted love the gopīs have for Kṛṣṇa and by obtaining the gopīs' blessings.

The gopīs disclosed to Uddhava their most confidential ecstasies.

In Uddhava's own words:

sarvātma-bhāvo 'dhikṛto
bhavatīnām adhokṣaje
virahena mahā-bhāgā
mahān me 'nugrahaḥ kṛtaḥ

“O most glorious gopīs (mahā-bhāgā), you have rightfully claimed the
privilege (bhavatīnām adhikṛtaḥ) of unalloyed love (sarvātma-
bhāvah) for the transcendental Lord (adhokṣaje). Indeed, by
exhibiting your ecstasy of separation from Him (virahena), you have
shown me great mercy (me mahān anugrahaḥ kṛtaḥ).” (Bhāgavatam
10.47.27)

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī, in his commentary on this verse, gives
his paraphrase, **bhagavat-prema-sukha-pradarśanena**
mamaiva mahān anugrahaḥ kṛtaḥ: “By showing the joy of
your love for the Supreme Lord, you have greatly favored
me.”

Being in the company of the gopīs and staying in Gokula for a
long time strongly affected Uddhava, so much so that he
forgot his association with Kṛṣṇa, with whom he had been
friends since childhood.

Text 195

śvaphalka-putro bhagavat-pitṛvyah
sa nīrasa-jñāna-viśuṣka-cetāḥ
vṛddho dayārdrāntaratā-vihīnaḥ
kāmsasya dautye 'bhirato vraje yan

Akrūra, son of Śvaphalka (sah śvaphalka-putrah) and paternal uncle of Lord Kṛṣṇa (bhagavat-pitṛvyah), was an old man (vṛddhah) whose heart had dried up (viśuṣka-cetāḥ) from lifeless knowledge (nīrasa-jñāna). His heart (antaratā) was so devoid (vihīnaḥ) of the softness of mercy (dayā ārdra) that he came to Vraja (vraje yan) as the diligent order-carrier of Kāmsa (abhirataḥ kāmsasya dautye).

Akrūra
an old man
his heart had dried up
from lifeless knowledge
His heart was so devoid of
the softness of mercy that
he came to Vraja as the
order carrier of Kamsa.

Akrūra's name means "not cruel," but by taking Kṛṣṇa away from Vṛndāvana he committed cruel offenses against the Vrajavāsīs.

He may have been Kṛṣṇa's uncle, but according to Uddhava his heart was completely dried up by knowledge untouched by the rasas of devotional service.

Being an old man, Akrūra couldn't even make an outward
show of being a connoisseur of rasas.

And therefore, because he had no appreciation for the ecstatic
mood of vraja-prema, he accepted the task of dragging Krsna
away from Vraja.

Text 196

sañcintayan kṛṣṇa-padāmbuja-dvayam
tasya prakarṣātiśayam nyavarṇayat
gopī-mahotkarṣa-bharānuvarṇanais
tal-lolito dhārṣṭyam abhāvayan hr̥di

↳ he was blind to his own audacity.

Yet while meditating (sañcintayan) on the two lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa-padāmbuja-dvayam), he began to speak (nyavarṇayat) of Kṛṣṇa's supremacy (tasya prakarṣa atiśayam). And with his heart (hr̥di) tossing and turning (lolitah) from describing (anuvāṇanaih) the superexcellent glories of the gopīs (gopī-mahā utkarṣa-bhara), he was blind (abhāvayan) to his own audacity (dhārṣṭyam).

Yet, while meditating on the two feet of Kṛṣṇa he began to speak of his heart & with his heart from describing the superexcellent glories of the gopīs & turning

Text 197

Akrūra thought:
These lotus feet are
worshipped by
& even Lakṣmī.
But Vṛṣṇa these feet He
walks in the forest
smeared with
the

yad arcitam brahma-bhavādibhiḥ suraiḥ

śriyā ca devyā munibhiḥ sa-sātvataiḥ

go-cāraṇāyānucaraiś carad vane

yad gopikānām kuca-kuṅkumācitam

kuṅkuma from the breast of the gopīs.

[Akrūra thought:] “Those lotus feet are worshiped (yad arcitam) by Brahmā, Śiva, and all the other demigods (brahma-bhavādibhiḥ suraiḥ), by the goddess of fortune (śriyā ca devyā), and also by the great sages (munibhiḥ) and Vaisnavas (sa-sātvataiḥ). Upon those lotus feet (yad) the Lord walks about the forest (carad vane) while herding the cows (go-cāraṇāya) with His companions (anucaraiḥ), and those feet (yad) are smeared with the kuṅkuma (kuṅkumā ācitam) from the gopīs’ breasts (gopikānām kuca).”

This verse from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.38.8) expresses one of the thoughts Akrūra had while on the road to Vṛndāvana.

The persons of whom Akrūra speaks he mentions one after another in order of their increasing greatness.

Were he not to mention them in this way, his praise would be
as ridiculous as praise given to the same person first for being
a great brāhmaṇa and then a great king.

Competent poets disapprove of such awkward sequences;
such poets generally glorify related subjects in order, from the
least significant to the most.

That Brahmā and other demigods worship Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet indicates that those feet are the supreme worshipable Deity and that Kṛṣṇa is the supreme controller.

The goddess Lakṣmī, who bestows all riches simply by her sidelong glance, also worships Kṛṣṇa's feet, which indicates that Kṛṣṇa's feet possess the extreme limit of good fortune.

Mystics who are self-satisfied (ātmārāma) are indifferent to the favor of the goddess of fortune, yet they also worship Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet.

This means that to obtain Kṛṣṇa's feet is the highest goal of life.

And apart from great mystics, also worshiping Kṛṣṇa's feet are the devotees interested only in pure devotional service to the Supreme Person.