

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

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**Volume - 2**

**Śrī-goloka-māhātmya**

**The Glories of Goloka**

# Part 5

**Prema-** Love of God

# 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.

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

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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.



Such devotees are much greater than the ātmārāma mystics because pure devotees do not care even for liberation.

This also implies that Kṛṣṇa is the most generous giver of charity because to such pure devotees He gives away even His very self.

Sages busy in the cultivation of karma and jñāna have no time to worship the Personality of Godhead's lotus feet.

They lack the special knowledge that would inspire them to begin such worship, and they also lack the spiritual strength needed for devotional service.

→ Lack Sukṛti

But karmī and jñānī sages who associate with pure Vaiṣṇavas can receive the Vaiṣṇavas' mercy and thus acquire the requisite knowledge and strength.

In other words, the devotees of the Supreme Lord are superior to nondevotee sages.

By referring to the goddess Śrī as devī (“demigoddess”) rather than bhagavatī (“beloved of Bhagavān”), Akrūra indicates that he is talking not about Lord Nārāyaṇa’s wife Mahā-lakṣmī but about the partial expansion of Mahā-lakṣmī who rules the opulences of the material world.

Vaiṣṇavas worship the original Mahā-lakṣmī as the dearmost consort of the Supreme Lord, which means that the Vaiṣṇavas accept her as greater than themselves.

Akrūra contemplates Kṛṣṇa going to the forest with His companions, the young cowherd boys, and in this way thinks of Kṛṣṇa's absolute affection and compassion for His devotees.

The forest is Vṛndāvana, the place of Kṛṣṇa's greatest pleasure pastimes, and the purpose of His entering that forest is to tend His cows, a pastime of supreme happiness.

It is not precisely right to think that the words arcitam and anucaraiḥ together mean “worshiped by His companions.”

DGS → Lakṣmi → ātmāśāśitā → devotees

↓  
Cows & Gopīs  
← Gopīs

There may be some grammatical justification for such an understanding, but because the cowherd boys are Kṛṣṇa’s intimate friends, their “worship” of His lotus feet differs from the worship usually indicated by the word arcitam.

Akrūra says that Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet are smeared with kuṅkuma  
from the breasts of the gopīs.

This not only points toward an uncommon mode of  
worshiping the Supreme Lord but also indicates how Kṛṣṇa  
sports romantically and bestows the highest form of His  
mercy by coming under the control of pure love.

The gopīs are mentioned last in this comparative sequence because they are the greatest of all of Kṛṣṇa's worshipers, and the word yad is repeated a second time in the last line to highlight the special nature of their worship.

The sweetness invoked by the image of Kṛṣṇa's feet smeared with the gopīs' kuṅkuma suggests that His loving exchanges with the gopīs are the most important purpose for which He descended as an avatāra; His favoring the gopīs by submitting to their love is the most glorious thing He ever does.

In this way Akrūra compares various worshipers of Kṛṣṇa's  
lotus feet in exactly the fitting order: Lord Brahmā is greater  
than the demigods, Lord Śiva greater than Brahmā, the  
goddess Śrī greater than Śiva, the self-contented sages greater  
than Śrī, the pure Vaisnavas greater than the sages, and  
Kṛṣṇa's cowherd friends and finally the gopīs greater than all  
others.

Thus Akrūra became ecstatic as he approached Vṛndāvana,  
thinking:



athāvarūḍhah sapadiśayo rathāt  
pradhāna-puṁsoś caraṇam sva-labdhave  
dhiyā dhṛtam yogibhir apy aham dhruvam  
namasya ābhyām ca sakhīn vanaukaśaḥ

“Then I will at once alight (atha sapadi avarūḍhaḥ) from my chariot (rathāt) and bow down to the lotus feet (caraṇam) of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma (īśayoh), the Supreme Personalities of Godhead (pradhāna-puṁsoḥ). Theirs are the same feet that great mystic yogīs striving for self-realization (sva-labdhave yogibhiḥ) bear within their minds (dhiyā dhṛtam). I will also offer my obeisances (aham dhruvam namasye) to the Lords’ cowherd boyfriends (sakhīn) and to all the other residents of Vṛndāvana (ābhyām ca vanaukaśaḥ).” (Bhāgavatam 10.38.15)

## Text 198

apy añghri-mūle patitasya me vibhuḥ  
śirasy adhāsyān nija-hasta-pañkajam  
dattābhayaṁ kāla-bhujāṅga-ramhasā  
prodvejitānām śaraṇaiṣiṇām nṛṇām

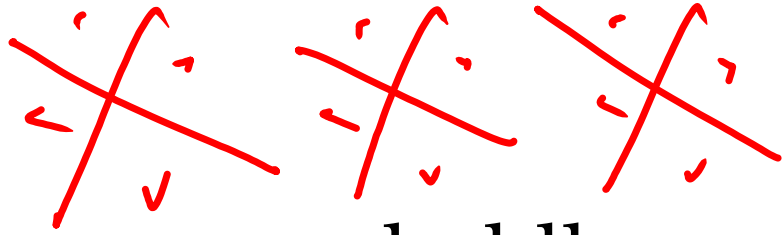
After 6 days:  
When I offer my  
His hands on my head.  
These hands remove fear  
those fearful of time & his. I have this  
taken shelter of his. I have this

And when I have fallen at His feet (apy añghri-mūle patitasya me),  
the almighty Lord (vibhuḥ) will place (adhāsyān) His lotus hand  
(nija-hasta-pañkajam) upon my head (śirasy). For those who seek  
shelter in Him (śaraṇa eṣiṇām nṛṇām) because they are greatly  
disturbed (prodvejitānām) by the swift (ramhasā), powerful serpent  
of time (kāla-bhujāṅga), that hand removes all fear (datta abhayaṁ).

Akrūra also speaks this verse and the next in the Tenth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.38.16–17).

The words kāla-bhujāᅅga suggest that persons who are serious about achieving liberation fear the force of time.

In another sense, however, the words kāla-bhujāᅅga refer to liberation itself, comparing it to an all-devouring python or (still another meaning of bhujāᅅga) a profligate man.



A profligate man may boldly enter another person's house and refuse to leave, even if the owner tries to expel him; similarly, even though by the strength of Vaiṣṇava association a liberated soul may come to understand the paltriness of liberation and try to reject it, liberation may still persist in its hold on him.

## Text 199

Akṛvā:  
By offering charity  
& Bali to that lotus hand  
Purandara & Indra  
during the rāsa dance  
removes the sweat  
of the gopīs  
His touch

samarhaṇam yatra nidhāya kauśikas  
tathā baliś cāpa jagat-trayendratām  
yad vā vihāre vraja-yoṣitām śramam  
sparśena saugandhika-gandhy apānudat

“By offering charity (samarhaṇam nidhāya) to that lotus hand (yatra), Purandara and Bali (kauśikah tathā baliś ca) earned (āpah) the status of Indra, king of heaven (jagat-traya indratām), and during the pleasure pastimes of the rāsa dance (yad vā vihāre), when the Lord wiped away (apānudat) the gopīs’ perspiration and removed their fatigue (śramam), the touch of their faces (sparśena) made that hand as fragrant as a sweet flower (saugandhika-gandhy).”

Having described how Kṛṣṇa removes all fear from persons who take shelter of Him, Akrūra now describes how Kṛṣṇa awards His devotees success in life, whether or not they still have material desires, and how He gives Himself away to His most surrendered devotees.

Both Indra, while performing sacrifice, and Bali, while fulfilling Lord Vāmana's request for charity, sanctified their acts by placing items of worship in the Supreme Lord's hand.

That was the right way for them to proceed, because no one  
can have a fruitful ritualistic performance without making  
some offering to the Supreme Lord.

Here the word kauśika refers to Indra Purandara, who is  
called Kauśika because he is a descendant of Kuśika Ṛṣi, but  
Kauśika is also another name of the sage Viśvāmitra.

During the pastimes of Lord Rāmacandra, Viśvāmitra made various offerings to the Lord, such as teachings in śāstra and mantras, and various items of hospitality in his āśrama, including sanctified food.

It is well known how Viśvāmitra thus became great in several ways, especially by attaining intense devotion to the Lord's lotus feet.

Thus Viśvāmitra became as prominent among the sages as Indra among the demigods.



Kṛṣṇa blessed the gopīs with the highest joy and became subservient to the dictates of their love because they considered Him their very life and soul.

The word vihāra (“sport”) indicates that Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes with the gopīs were very enjoyable.

The words vraja-yoṣitām (“of the women of Vraja”) suggest that it was fitting for Kṛṣṇa to grant them His favor because these women of Vraja—the gopīs—were so affectionate to Him.

The word śramam (“fatigue”) implies that Kṛṣṇa reciprocated with the gopīs very skillfully, giving them the greatest pleasure, which compensated for the effort the gopīs spent in singing and dancing.

That He removed their fatigue “by His touch” (sparśena) implies the coolness of His touch, and that His hand is saugandhika-gandhi (“fragrant like a flower”) implies that His hand is supremely attractive and has the power to create happiness.

In the same way that the subtle fragrance of a flower may be  
perceivable only by certain people, Kṛṣṇa's beauty and charm  
are fully relished only by devotees as dear to Him as the Vraja  
gopīs.