

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

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Volume - 2

Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

Part 5

Prema- Love of God

Text 39

evam vasantaṁ mām tatra
śrīmad-yādava-puṅgavāḥ
viśva-bāhyāntar-ānanda-
didrksārdra-hṛdo'bruvan

After I had lived
in Dvārakā for a while,
some of the best of the
divine Yādavas
told me something
to see everyone with
their hearts melted
with eagerness
to see everyone happy
within and without.

After I had lived for some time there in Dvārakā (evam vasantaṁ mām tatra), some of the best of the divine Yādavas (śrīmad-yādava-puṅgavāḥ) said something to me (abruvan), their hearts melted (ārdra-hṛdah) with eagerness to see (didrksā) everyone in the world (viśva) happy (ānanda) within and without (bāhya-antah).

What Gopa-kumāra is speaking to his disciple is not merely theoretical.

While residing in Dvārakā Gopa-kumāra had tasted enough of Dvārakā's unique happiness to rightfully claim knowledge of it.

On one occasion during his stay, he had been approached by some concerned residents who only wanted the greatest possible happiness for everyone, both externally in the form of good food, clothing, ornaments, and other means for enjoyment and internally in the form of the priceless treasure of prema and its ecstasies.

Text 40

śrī-yādavā ūcuḥ

vaikunṭhato 'py uttama-bhūti-pūrite
sthāne tvam etyātra sakhe 'smad-anvitaḥ
yad vanya-veśena sudīna-vad vaser
manyāmahe sādhu na tat kathañcana

The divine Yādavas said: Dear friend (sakhe), you have come (tvam etya) to this place (atra sthāne), which is more full in supreme splendor (uttama-bhūti-pūrite) than even Vaikunṭha (vaikunṭhato 'py), and you are now ~~our companion~~ (asmad-anvitaḥ). We think (manyāmahe) it hardly fitting (na tat kathañcana sādhu) that you ~~continue to dress like a miserable forest dweller~~ (yad vanya-veśena sudīna-vad vaseh).

You have
come to this most
splendid place & look
become one of us...
it is not befitting that
you are together with
miserable forest dwellers.

Of course, Gopa-kumāra was beyond material misery, as the
Yādavas expressed by speaking of him as sudīna-vat, “as if very
miserable”—not actually miserable.

Still, they felt that Gopa-kumāra’s incongruous dress and
behavior were depriving him of many of the joys of residing in
Dvārakā.

This troubles our
minds. → ∴ a part of
type of dress.

Text 41

citte duhkham ivāsmākam
api kiñcid bhaved atah
svataḥ siddham tam asmākam
iva veśādikam tanu

This troubles our minds (asmākam citte duhkham iva bhaved), so (ataḥ) please take on (tanu) our type of dress and looks (asmākam iva veśādikam), which are naturally available (svataḥ siddham) to anyone who lives here (tam kiñcid).

The citizens of Dvārakā know only the highest constant ecstasy,
but these devotees felt a little unhappy to see Gopa-kumāra in an
apparently wretched condition.

By nature they were intolerant of even an outward semblance of
misery.

Gopa-kumāra should not wonder where to get the right dress and
capabilities for enjoying like a Dvārakā-vāsī, because the very
atmosphere of Dvārakā readily provides these to any resident who
wants them.

Do not
insist+ance that
in my vest I stayed
dress I could not have been
able to taste the special mood
that appealed to me & to @

Text 42

śrī-gopa-kumāra uvāca
teṣāṁ tatrāgrahenāpi
sva-cittasyācyutasya ca
alabdhvā sva-rasaṁ teṣu
nīcākiñcana-vat sthitah

Śrī Gopa-kumāra said: Even though these Yādavas insisted (tesāṁ tatra āgrahenāpi), I stayed like a poor, simple devotee (nīca akiñcana-vat sthitah) because in their dress (teṣu) I would not have been able to taste (alabdhvā) the special mood (sva-rasaṁ) that appealed to my mind (sva-cittasya), and to Lord Acyuta's (acyutasya ca).

Gopa-kumāra preferred to stay inferior to these prominent
Yādavas.

To him, more important than keeping up appearances was to
protect his personal rasa with Kṛṣṇa.

Then I became
shy & feared &
approaching the Lord
when He was in His Court.

Text 43

āsīnasya sabhā-madhye
sevitasya maharddhibhiḥ
pārśve bhagavato 'thāham
gantum lajje bibhemi ca

I then became shy and feared (atha aham lajje bibhemi ca) to go (gantum) the side of the Personality of Godhead (bhagavataḥ pārśve) when He was seated in His court (āsīnasya sabhā-madhye) and being served (sevitasya) by His transcendental opulences (maha rddhibhiḥ).

To maintain his unbroken inner mood of service, Gopa-kumāra declined to follow the Yādavas' suggestion that he change his dress.

But this further disturbed his heart.

Now that the matter had been brought to his attention, he began to feel uncomfortable about appearing before Lord Kṛṣṇa in the assembly hall; he thought his own appearance incongruent and was apprehensive that he might do something wrong.

Not only was he embarrassed, he was also daunted by the great opulence he saw in the Sudharmā hall and the huge crowds of kings, sages, and demigods.

His uneasiness at coming before Kṛṣṇa while the Lord was seated on His throne in the royal court made Gopa-kumāra begin thinking again about going somewhere else.

Sometimes I would see the Lord with 4 hands. I could not always see the special pastimes in Vraja. He performs

Text 44

catur-bāhutvam apy asya
paśyeyaṁ tatra karhicit
na ca krīḍā-viśeṣaṁ taṁ
vraja-bhūmi-kṛtaṁ sadā

Sometimes (karhicit) I would see (paśyeyaṁ) the Lord (asya) with four hands (tatra catur-bāhutvam apy). I couldn't always see (na ca sadā) the special pastimes (taṁ krīḍā-viśeṣaṁ) He performs in Vraja-
bhūmi (vraja-bhūmi-kṛtaṁ).

When devotees like Śrī Rukmiṇī were present, Gopa-kumāra found it difficult to envision Kṛṣṇa as He is in His Vṛndāvana pastimes.

When the Lord was talking with Nārada Muni or Arjuna, Gopa-kumāra could hardly see Him tending His cows.

Sometimes Gopa-kumāra could see Him as if in Vṛndāvana, but not often enough.

Sometimes the
Lord would go alone
to visit the PANDAVAS
who lived near by.

Text 45

kadācid eṣa tatraiva
vartamānān adūrataḥ
pāṇḍavān īkṣitum gacched
ekākī priya-bāndhavān

Sometimes (kadācid) the Lord (eṣa) would go alone (ekākī gacched)
to visit (īkṣitum) His dear friends (priya-bāndhavān) the Pāṇḍavas
(pāṇḍavān), who stayed nearby (tatra eva adūrataḥ vartamānān).

On earth the Pāṇḍavas lived a good distance away from Dvārakā, in Hastināpura, so Kṛṣṇa had to make a long journey to meet them.

In Vaikuṅṭha, however, the situation is different.

Even if the residence of the Pāṇḍavas is physically distant from Dvārakā-purī, in the spiritual realm there are no limitations of time and space.

By the power of the Lord's desire, any place to which He wishes to travel is at once nearby.

Text 46

ittham cirantanābhīṣṭā-
sampūrtyā me vyatheta hṛt
tādṛg-rūpa-guṇasyāsyā
dr̥ṣṭyaivāthāpi śāmyati

∴ because of the
Mon-fulfillment of the
long held desire of these
would feel tormented → my heart
But, when I could see His beauty &
qualities, my heart would become peaceful.

And so (ittham), because of desires long held (cirantana abhīṣṭā) but unfulfilled (asampūrtyā), my heart would feel tormented (me vyatheta hṛt). But (athāpi) when I could see (dr̥ṣṭyā eva) His (asya) beauty and qualities once again (tādṛg-rūpa-guṇasyā), my heart would again become peaceful (śāmyati).

Being unable for even a short time to see Kṛṣṇa's beauty and
His kind behavior would throw Gopa-kumāra into anxious
turmoil.

But as soon as Kṛṣṇa would return, Gopa-kumāra would
recover his composure.

His nectarean
words revealed
His mercy,
How can I even imagine
describing that ecstasy.

Text 47

tasya vāg-amṛtais tais taiḥ
krpābhivyañjanair api
bhavet sukha-viśeṣo yo
jihvā sprśatu taṁ katham

His nectarean words (tasya vāg-amṛtaiḥ tais taiḥ) revealed (abhivyañjanaiḥ) His mercy (krpā). How can my tongue (katham taṁ jihvā) even touch (sprśatu bhavet) the unique happiness they created (yah sukha-viśeṣah)?

During my stay
I would feel, wherever
I would conceal it by feigning
happiness.

Text 48

evam uddhava-gehe me
dināni katicid yayuh
yadi syāt ko 'pi śokas taṁ
saṁvṛṇomy avahitthayā

During the several days (katicid dināni) I spent this way (evam me yayuh) in the house of Uddhava (uddhava-gehe), if there were any unhappiness (yadi kah api śokah syāt) I would conceal it (taṁ saṁvṛṇomy) by feigning happiness (avahitthayā).

Besides Kṛṣṇa's occasional absence from Dvārakā, another cause of anxiety for Gopa-kumāra was the tendency to remember the land of his birth.

Although being unable to see his worshipable Lord playing in the pastimes of Vraja made Gopa-kumāra unhappy, he tried hard to conceal this because he knew that the Dvārakā-vāsīs couldn't tolerate seeing anyone in pain and also because he was reluctant to make a show of his private ecstasies.

Once I saw NM there.
→ I bowed down & spoke
to him in great joy &
amazement.

Text 49

ekadā nāradam tatrā-
gataṁ vīksya praṇamya tam
harṣeṇa vismayeṇāpi
veṣṭito 'vocam īdrśam

One day (ekadā) I saw (vīksya) Nārada come (nāradam tatra āgataṁ). I bowed down to him (praṇamya tam), and in (veṣṭitaḥ) utter joy (harṣeṇa) and amazement (vismayeṇa api) I spoke to him (avocāṁ) in the following way (īdrśam).

To help Gopa-kumāra achieve his long-cherished goal, Nārada
appeared at just the right moment to tell him about the glories of Śrī
Goloka and how to achieve Goloka.

Text 50

munīndra-veśa prabhu-pārṣadottama
svargādi-lokeṣu bhavantam īdṛśam
vaikuṅṭha-loke 'tra ca hanta sarvataḥ
paśyāmy aho kautukam āvr̥ṇoti mām

O Nārada, best of the Lord's associates (prabhu-pārṣada uttama) though in dress an exalted sage (munīndra-veśa), I see you (bhavantam paśyāmy) just everywhere (hanta sarvataḥ)—in the heavenly planets (svargādi-lokeṣu), in Vaikuṅṭha (vaikuṅṭha-loke), and now here (atra ca)—looking just the same (īdṛśam). How fascinated I am to see this (aho kautukam āvr̥ṇoti mām)!

O Nārada! the
best of the Lord's
associates!
I see you everywhere I go
in svarga, vaikuntha & now here.
looking just the same
I am so fascinated.

Inspired by the joy of seeing Nārada Muni, Gopa-kumāra wants to hear more about Nārada's glories from Nārada's own mouth and hear further details about the special powers of the Supreme Lord's associates in Vaikuṅṭha, powers Nārada has briefly mentioned before:

evam vicitra-deśeṣu
svapnādāv apy anekadhā
dr̥śyamānasya kṛṣṇasya
pārśadānām padasya ca

ekatvam apy anekatvam
satyatvam ca su-saṅgatam
ekasmims toṣite rūpe
sarvam tat tasya tuṣyati

Thus although (evam) Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇasya), His associates (pārśadānām), and His abode (padasya ca) are seen (dr̥śyamānasya) in various forms (anekadhā) in different places (vicitra-deśeṣu), and in dreams and other special states of consciousness (svapnādāv apy), they are with perfect consistency (su-saṅgatam) one although many (ekatvam apy anekatvam), and they are always real (satyatvam ca). When any one of His forms is satisfied (ekasmims toṣite rūpe), so too are all His others (sarvam tat tasya tuṣyati). (Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.4.161–162)

Nārada dresses in saffron like a lifelong brahmacārī, but the true extent of his glories goes far beyond strict celibacy.

In the words of Gopa-kumāra, Nārada is the best of the Supreme Lord's intimate associates.

Gopa-kumāra is amazed that he meets Nārada almost everywhere and sees him always the same, with the same vīṇā in hand and the same unabashed humor.

But as ~~Gopa-kumāra has already~~ heard from Nārada, even when Nārada expands himself to be present in many different locations he is still one and the same person.

My dear GK →
You have always
a curious boy.
But, haven't I already
explained
all this to you?

Text 51

śrī-nārada uvāca
gopa-bālaka evāsi
satyam adyāpi kautukī
pūrvam eva mayoddiṣṭam
etad asti na kim tvayi

Śrī Nārada said: My dear young cowherd (gopa-bālaka), surely (satyam eva) you have always been a curious boy (kautukī asi), and so you are even now (adya api). Haven't I explained (kim asti na mayā uddiṣṭam) all this (etad) to you (tvayi) before (pūrvam eva)?

Like Nārada, Gopa-kumāra has his own peculiar ways; he dresses and acts like a cowherd boy regardless of where he is.

Moreover, it seems curious to Nārada that Gopa-kumāra still doubts the ability of powerful devotees of the Lord to expand themselves into multiple forms, especially since Nārada has explained this truth scientifically and Gopa-kumāra has seen tangible evidence of it with his own eyes.

Gopa-kumāra may insist that he is honestly confused and not
simply trying to make some game of expressing doubt, but
Nārada reasserts that Gopa-kumāra, however briefly, has
already heard him elucidate the subject.

Just as
exists in multiple
forms in multiple places
→ So also we, His servants.

Text 52

yathā hi bhagavān ekah
śrī-kṛṣṇo bahu-mūrtibhiḥ
bahu-sthāneṣu varteta
tathā tat-sevakā vayam

Just as (yathā hi) the one Personality of Godhead (bhagavān ekah) Śrī Kṛṣṇa (śrī-kṛṣṇah) exists (varteta) in many forms (bahu-mūrtibhiḥ) and many places (bahu-sthāneṣu), so also do we (tathā vayam), His servants (tat-sevakā).

This applies to
all of us like Garuda,
Hanuman, Uddhava et.

Text 53

śrī-suparnādayaḥ sarve
śrīmad-dhanūmad-ādayaḥ
uddhavo 'pi tathāivāyaṁ
tādrśā yādavādayaḥ

So it is with all of us (tathā eva ayam)—Śrī Garuda and other
attendants (śrī-suparṇa ādayaḥ sarve), devotees like Śrīmān Hanumān
(śrīmad-dhanūmad-ādayaḥ), and our friend Uddhava (uddhavaḥ api),
and others too, like these Yādavas (tādrśāh yādava ādayaḥ).

Devotees like Garuḍa and Śeṣa are associates of the Lord of
Vaikuṅṭha, whereas Hanumān, Jāmbavān, and others are
servants of Lord Rāmacandra.

Hanumān sings the glories of Lord Rāma in the Kimpuruṣa-
loka of the Bhūloka region and simultaneously in the Ayodhyā
of Vaikuntha.

And Uddhava, whom Gopa-kumāra can see right before him,
is simultaneously one of the principal companions of Kṛṣṇa in
Dvārakā on earth, along with the Yādavas, the Pāṇḍavas, and
others.

Considering the topic too confidential to bring up just now,
Nārada chooses not to mention Kṛṣṇa's devotees in Śrī Goloka.

Text 54

sarve 'pi nityam kila tasya pārṣadāḥ
sevā-parāḥ krīḍanakānurūpāḥ
praty-ekam ete bahu-rūpavanto
'py aikyam bhajāmo bhagavān yathāsau

All the
are like
hands -
They serve
Stay
Lord -
nitya-pārasādāḥ
playthings
in the
a variety
of forms
Just like the

All the Lord's personal associates (sarve api pārṣadāḥ) are at His hand like playthings (tasya krīḍanaka anurūpāḥ). They are always (nityam kila) fully dedicated to His service (sevā-parāḥ). Each (praty-ekam ete) assumes a variety of forms (bahu-rūpavantaḥ apy) yet stays essentially one (aikyam bhajāmaḥ), just like the Lord Himself (asau bhagavān yathā).

As Śrī Kṛṣṇacandra, the original Supreme Person, expands Himself into innumerable forms of Godhead, when required for service to the Lord His eternal associates can also expand themselves into many forms.

Perpetually dedicated to worshiping Him, they are willing instruments in the enactment of His pleasure pastimes.

Whatever gives the Lord happiness is also their satisfaction.

So when He expands Himself and His abode into all sorts of forms, they accompany Him in suitably corresponding forms.

Gopa-kumāra should therefore not be amazed that Nārada appears in more than one place at once for the service of the Lord.

Text 55

nānā-vidhās tasya paricchadā ye
nāmāni līlāh priya-bhūmayaś ca
nityāni satyāny akhilāni tadvad
ekāny anekāny api tāni viddhi

Lord's nām, vītā
dharma & everything
On earth various forms
سورة و كل شيء
سورة → earth of things
Simultaneously one & many
all these are eternally

The Lord's names (tasya nāmāni), His pastimes (līlāh), and His favorite abodes (priya-bhūmayaś ca) and everything that has to do with His service (paricchadā ye) can assume various forms (nānā-vidhāh). And you should know (viddhi) that just as all these (akhilāni) are eternally real (nityāni satyāny), each of them (tadvad tāni) is simultaneously one and many (ekāny anekāny api).

While still on the topic of multiple expansions, Nārada takes the opportunity to mention that the Personality of Godhead's pastimes, His dear abodes such as Śrī Mathurā, and His paraphernalia like the Kaustubha gem and Sudarśana weapon display the same power of expansion.

Here the word bhūmi refers not only to the earth but to any location, and so indicates other spiritual realms, such as Vaikuṅṭha.

The Supreme Lord's personal property, His names, His pastimes, and the places of His appearance are all by nature pure sac-cid-ānanda, just as He is.