Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmrta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

Volume - 2

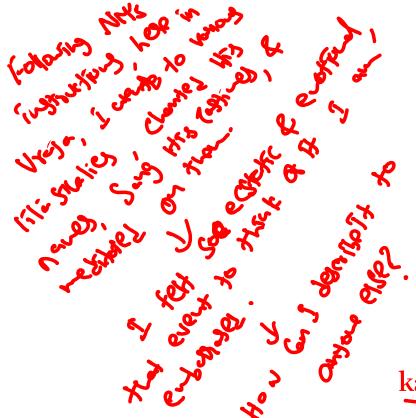
Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

Part 6

Abhīsta-lābha

The Attainment of All Desires



Texts 1-2 <u>śrī-gopa-kumāra uvāca</u> tām nāradīyām anusrtya śikṣām śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāni nija-priyāṇi saṅkīrtayan su-svaram atra līlās tasya pragāyann anucintayamś ca

 tadīya-līlā-sthala-jātam etad vilokayan bhāva-daśe gato ye tayoh sva-citte karaņena lajje katham parasmin kathayāny aham te

Śrī Gopa-kumāra said: Following (anusrtya) Nārada's instructions (tām nāradīyām śikṣām), here in Vraja (atra) I went (gatah) to see (vilokayan) the many places of Sri Kṛṣṇa's pastimes (etad tadīyalīlā-sthala-jātam). I sang (saṅkīrtayan) His names (śrī-krsna-nāmāni) most dear to me (nija-priyāṇi), I sang loudly (pragāyann) about His pastimes (tasya līlāh) sweetly (su-svaram), I focused my mind upon them (anucintayamś ca)—and I attained such a state of ecstasy and became so emotional (bhāva-daśe gatah) that it embarrasses me (lajje) even to think of it (tayoh sva-citte karaṇena). How then (katham) can I describe (kathayāny aham) this (te) to anyone else (parasmin)? In this Sixth Chapter, Gopa-kumāra goes to Goloka and meets Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa shows him special mercy, and Go<u>pa-kumāra joins th</u>e pastimes of that world.

The first five verses show the good fortune <u>Gopa-kum</u>āra gained by following the instructions of Śrī Nārada.

This good fortune will be his means of achieving Goloka.

While visiting Śrī Vṛndāvana on earth, Gopa-kumāra saw with his own eyes Kṛṣṇa performing His cowherd pastimes.

As a result, Gopa-kumāra's mind reached a rare level of ecstasy and manifested such exceptional states as unmāda ("divine madness").

Text 3

sadā mahārtyā karuņa-svarai rudan nayāmi rātrīr divasāms ca kātarah na vedmi yad yat su-cirād anusthitam sukhāya vā tat tad utārti-sindhave

I <u>spent</u> (<u>nayāmi</u>) my days and nights (<u>rātrīr</u> divasāmś ca</u>) in great distress (<u>kātarah</u>), al<u>ways</u> (<u>sadā</u>) crying (<u>rudan</u>) in a pitiful voice (<u>mahārtyā</u> <u>karuṇa-svaraih</u>), not knowing (<u>na vedmi</u>) whether the practice I had so long been following (<u>yad yat su-cirād anuṣthitam</u>) would lead me to happiness (<u>tat tad sukhāya</u>) or (<u>vā</u>) cast me into an ocean of distress (<u>uta ārti-sindhave</u>). It is difficult for Gopa-kumāra to describe his embarrassing state, but because of his special affection for the Mathurā brāhmaņa he will try to explain it to some extent.

Gopa-kumāra began his spiritual practice the day he left home as a young boy, and now all his practice seems to be reaching its culmination.

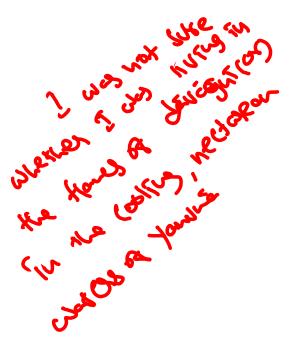
But now he is uncertain whether the final result will be happy.

Gopa-kumāra expresses himself here in a narrative present

tense.

Thus he says na vedmi—literally, "I do not know."

But this clearly implies that this doubt has been with him for a long time and will continue for some time more.



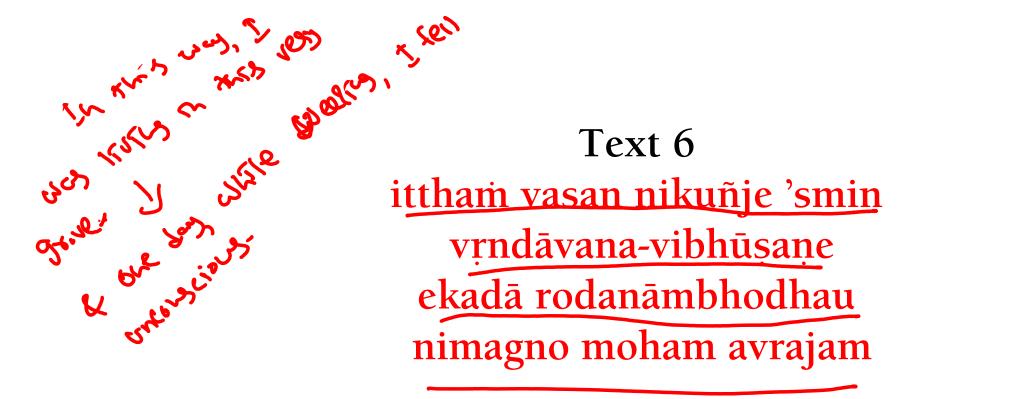
Text 4 kathañcid apy ākalayāmi naitat kim eṣa dāvāgni-śikhāntare 'ham vasāmi kim vā paramāmrtācchasu-śītala-śrī-yamunā-jalāntaḥ

I couldn't tell (na etat kathañcid apy akalayāmi) whether (kim) I was living (aham vasāmi) in the flames of a forest fire (esa dāvāgniśikhā antare) or (kim vā) in (antaḥ) the supreme nectar (parama amṛta) of the clear (accha), cool waters (su-śītala) of Śrī Yamunā (śrī-yamunā-jala).

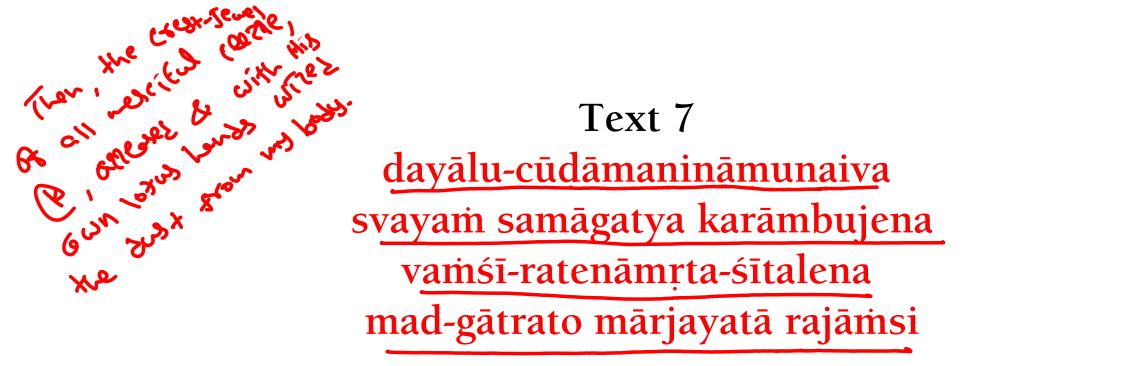
Text 5

Levis and Joseph kadācid evam kila niścinomy aham śathasya haste patito 'smi kasyacit sadā nyamañjam bahu-duhkha-sāgare sukhasya gandho 'pi na mām sprset kvacit

Sometimes (kadācid) I thought (evam kila niścinomy aham) I had fallen (patitah asmi) into the hands (haste) of some great deceiver (kasyacit śathasya). I was always submerged (sadā nyamañjam) in a vast ocean of misery (bahu-duhkha-sāgare). Not (na) even a drop of happiness (sukhasya gandhah api) ever touched me (mām sprset kvacit).



In such a way I lived (ittham vasan) in this grove (asmin nikuñje), this most attractive ornament of Vṛndāvana (vrndāvana-vibhūṣaṇe). And one day (ekadā), while immersed (nimagnah) in an ocean of weeping (rodana ambhodhau), I fell unconscious (moham avrajam).



Then the crest jewel of all who are merciful (amunā eva dayālucūdāmaņinā) appeared before me (svayam samāgatya). With His own lotus hand (karāmbujena), a hand cool like nectar (amrtaśītalena) and always pleased to hold His flute (vamśī-ratena), He wiped the dust (mārjayatā rajāmsi) from my limbs (mad-gātratah).

Text 8

n<u>ī</u>to 'smi sañcālya muhuḥ sa-līlam saṁjñāṁ mahā-dhūrta-vareṇa yatnāt nāsā-praviṣṭair apurānubhūtair āpūrya saurabhya-bharaiḥ svakīyaiḥ

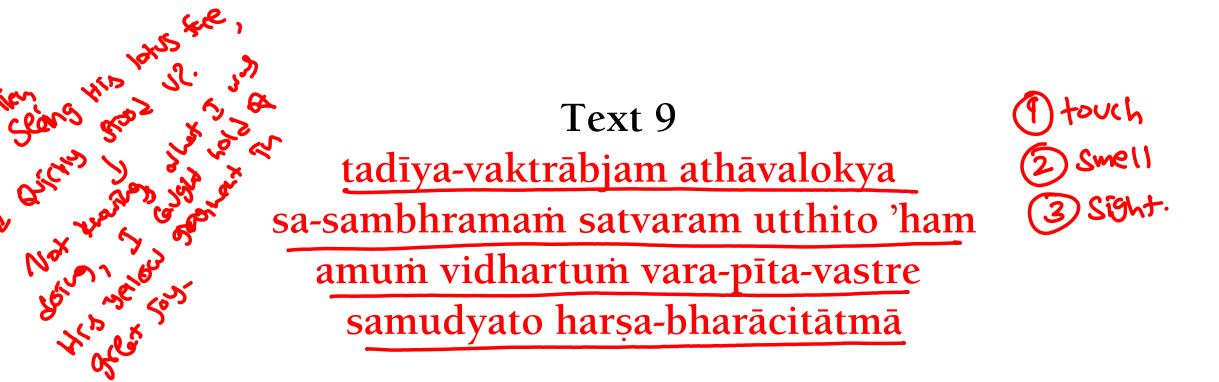
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It wasn't easy (yatnāt), but that greatest of cheats (mahā-dhūrtavareņa) playfully (sa-līlam) stirred me back to consciousness (sancālya samjnām nītah asmi) by filling my nostrils (nāsāpravistaih) with His unique (svakīyaih) heady fragrances (saurabhya-bharaih), which I had never known before (apurā anubhūtair). Śrī Madana-gopāla-deva appeared in person before Gopakumāra to award him the highest perfection.

Gopa-kumāra was in a deep swoon, oblivious to everything around him, but Kṛṣṇa's presence awakened one of his senses, namely the sense of smell. Because Krsna, the most expert enchanter, knows very well how to stir the senses of even an unconscious person, Gopakumāra wants to acknowledge Krsna's omniscience by speaking of Him as mahābhijña-vara ("the best of those who know everything"), but the ecstasy of his love transforms that original idea, and it comes out from his mouth as mahādhūrta-vara ("the greatest of cheats").

Gopa-kumāra's ecstasy forces him to reason,

"Although Kṛṣṇa may now be wiping my body with His own hands, soon enough that same Kṛṣṇa is just as likely to abandon me."



Then (atha), seeing (avalokya) His lotus face (tadīya-vaktrābjam), I (aham) quickly (satvaram) stood up (utthitah). Not knowing what I was doing (sa-sambhramam), my heart filling with joy (harşa-bhara ācita ātmā), I tried to catch hold (amum (īdhartum (samudyatah)) of His splendid yellow cloth (vara-pita-vastre).

Text 10

Who have here way here way a set of the set A Soure. sa nāgarendro 'pasasāra prsthato ninādayams tām muralīm sva-līlayā abhūc ca kuñjāntaritah sapady asau mayā na labdho bata dhāvatāpy alam

That king of charming heroes (sah nagara indrah) blew His flute (tām muralīm ninādayan) in His own playful way (sva-līlayā) and escaped behind me (apasasāra prsthatah). Suddenly (sapady) He (asau) stepped into a grove (kuñja antaritah abhūt). And—alas (bata)!—though I ran about looking (dhāvatā apy alam), I couldn't find Him (na mayā labdhah).

Text 11

antarhitam tam tv avilokya mūrcchām

prāpto 'patam śrī-yamunā-pravāhe

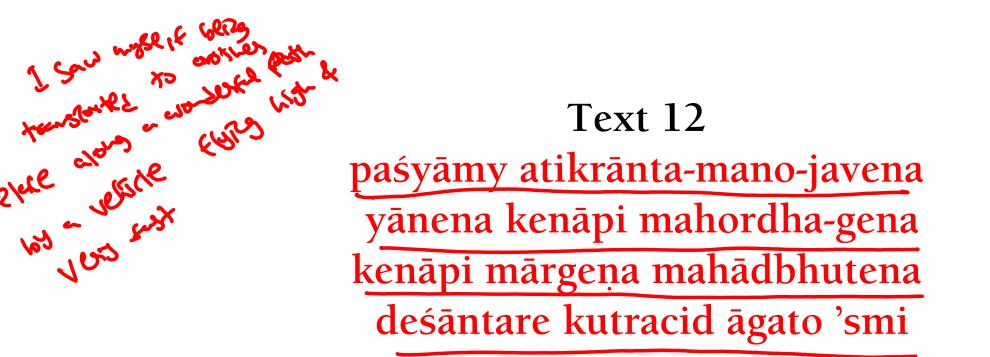
e<u>tasya vegena samuhyamāno</u>

labdhveva samjñām vyakiram sva-drstī

He had disappeared (antarhitam). Unable to see Him (tam tv avilokya), I fainted (mūrcchām prāptah) and fell (apatam) into the swift current of the Yamunā (śrī-yamunā-pravāhe). And as it forcefully carried me away (etasya vegena samuhyamānah), I seemed to regain normal awareness (samjñām labdhvā iva) and looked around (sva-dṛṣṭī vyakiram). Gopa-kumāra says that he "seemed to regain consciousness" (labdhvā iva samjñām) because he had not actually lost his awareness; his fainting was not a material disturbance but an external symptom of ecstasy.

His recovery of normal consciousness was also only apparent, because the abnormal bewilderment of his prema had still not subsided.

Two verses later he will describe his "collecting his wits" (cittam samādhāya), which shows that now, at this earlier moment, he was still disoriented.



I saw (paśyāmy) myself being transported (āgato asmi) to another place (kutracid deśāntare), along some (kenāpi) wonderful path (mahā adbhutena mārgeņa), by a vehicle (kenāpi yānena) flying faster than the mind (atikrānta-mano-javena) and higher than one could imagine (mahā ūrdha-gena). Gopa-kumāra couldn't identify the vehicle that took him away, so he refers to it simply as "a certain vehicle" (yānena kenāpi).

He could only say that it was moving upward at a speed greater than that of the mind.

The path the vehicle took was also unfamiliar and not able to be identified, so Gopa-kumāra could only describe it as "most amazing."

It was utterly different from any road he had ever traveled before.

Collecting my wits (cittam samādhāya), I was amazed (vismitah) to see (mṛśāmi yāvad) I was passing through (itah asmi) Vaikuņṭhaloka (tam vaikuṇṭha-lokam), and going beyond (tāvat). I watched (vīkṣya) with great delight (praharṣam vahan) as I passed (atyagām) Ayodhyā and other realms (ayodhyā adikam). Without delay, the vehicle sped past the domain of Lord Nārāyana, in which Gopa-kumāra had previously resided, and then past other supreme abodes, including Ayodhyā and Dvārakā.

Text 14

Joshivel Crotope Alore all other reals. Alore all search remains śrī-golokam tam cirāśāvalambam prāpto bhāntam sarva-lokoparistāt āste śrīman-māthure mandale 'smin yādrk sarvam tatra vai tādrg eva

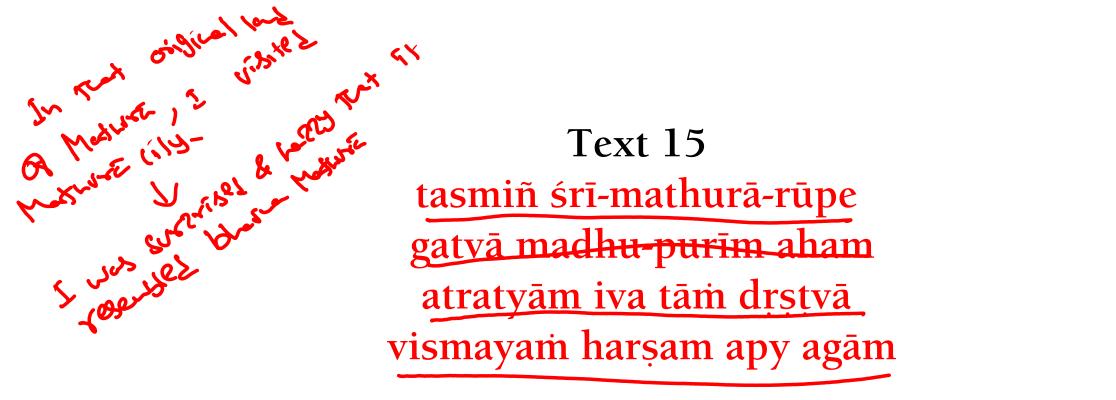
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I arrived (prāptah) at the shining (bhāntam) world above all others (sarva-loka uparisțāt)—Śrī Goloka (tam śrī-golokam), which I had long aspired to reach (cira āśā avalambam). Everything there (yādrk sarvam tatra) appeared the same (tādrg eva vai āste) as in this divine Mathurā-mandala (śrīmad-māthure mandale) of the material world (asmin).

Gopa-kumāra had long desired to attain Goloka, the land where his worshipable Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, eternally enjoys His pastimes.

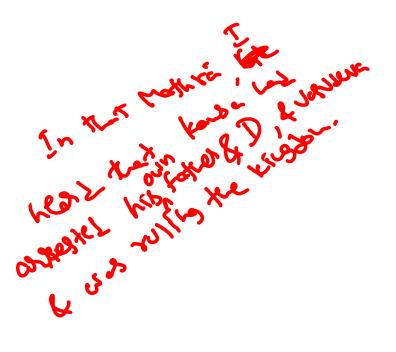
The Mathurā brāhmaņa, G<u>opa-kumāra's disciple</u>, lacks the spiritual vision to understand Goloka properly, but to give him some idea of the glories of Goloka, G<u>opa-kum</u>āra compares it to the transcendental abode where the two of them now sit.

Goloka's resemblance to the earthly Gokula is the very reason why Goloka does without the mood of reverence for God's supremacy and displays instead the priceless treasure of superexcellent prema.



In that original land of Mathurā (tasmiñ śrī-mathurā-rūpe), I visited (aham gatvā) Mathurā City (madhu-purīm). I was surprised and happy (vismayam harṣam apy agām) to see (dṛṣṭvā) that it (tām) resembled the Mathurā here on earth (atratyām iva). Gopa-kumāra was astonished to see that even above Vaikuņțha things appeared as in the mortal world.

He was pleased to find such arrangements for fulfilling his spiritual desires.



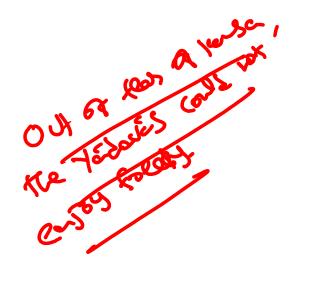
Text 16 tasyām aśrņavam cedam nigrhya pitaram svayam devakīm vasudevam ca kamso rājyam karoti saḥ

In that original Mathurā (tasyām), I heard (aśrnavam) that Kamsa (kamsah) had taken it upon himself to arrest his father (svayam pitaram nigrhya) and Krsna's parents, Devakī and Vasudeva (devakīm vasudevam ca), and was ruling the kingdom (rājyam karoti sah).

Kamsa needed no introduction, especially to a person who hailed from Mathurā City.

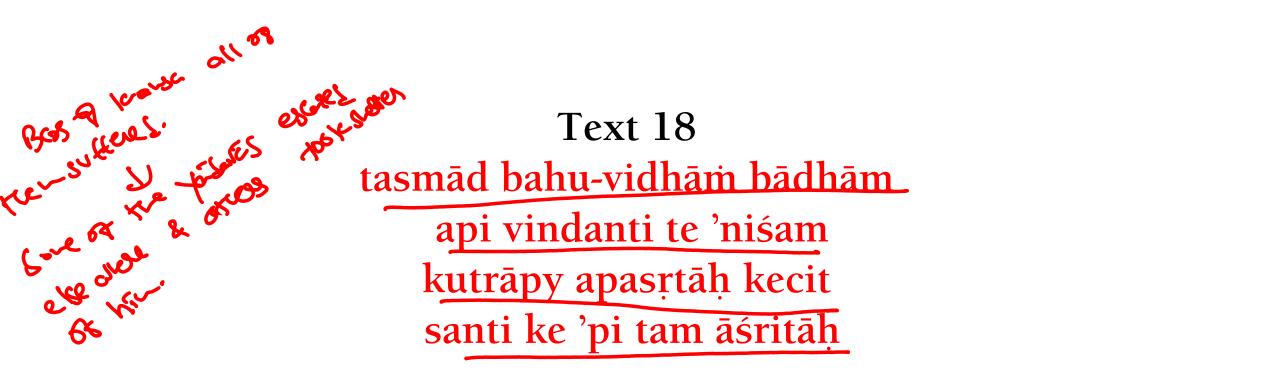
The brāhmaņa must at least have read about him in the Purāņas and other scriptures.

Later in this narration we will discover how persons like wicked Kamsa, who in the material world had died long ago, could still be active in Śrī Goloka.



Text 17 tasya priya-surāmitraparivārasya śaṅkayā notsahante yathā-kāmaṁ vihartuṁ yādavāḥ sukham

Out of fear (śańkayā) of Kamsa (tasya), whose family and friends (priya parivārasya) were enemies of the demigods (sura amitra), the Yādavas (yādavāḥ) dared not enjoy themselves (na vihartum utsahante) freely (yathā-kāmam).



Because of him (tasmād) they (te) constantly (aniśam) suffered (vindanti) all sorts of affliction (bahu-vidhām bādhām api). Some of the Yādavas (kecit) escaped elsewhere (kutrāpy apasrtāh santi), and others (ke api) took shelter of him (tam āśritāh). Uddhava and other Yādavas went into exile in other districts. And some, like Akrūra, became Kamsa's order carriers.

As described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.2.1–4):

pralamba-baka-cāņūrat<u>rņāvarta-mahāśanai</u>ḥ mustikārista-dvividapūtanā-keśī-dhenukaiḥ

anyaiś cāsura-bhūpālair bāṇa-bhaumādibhir vṛtaḥ yadūnāṁ kadanaṁ cakre balī māgadha-saṁśrayaḥ

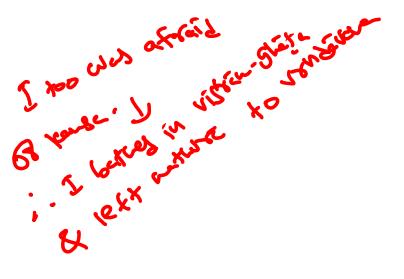
Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Under the protection of Magadharāja, Jarāsandha (māgadha-samśrayaḥ), the powerful Kamsa (halī) began persecuting the kings of the Yadu dynasty (yadūnām kadanam cakre). In this he had the cooperation (yutah) of demons like Pralamba, Baka, Cānūra, Tṛṇāvarta, Aghāsura, Mustika, Ariṣṭa, Dvivida, Pūtanā, Keśī, Dhenuka, Bāṇāsura, Narakāsura and many other demoniac kings on the surface of the earth (anyaiś c asura-bhūpālair). <u>te pīditā nivivišuh</u> kuru-pañcāla-kekayān śālvān vidarbhān niṣadhān videhān kośalān api

e<u>ke tam anurundhānā</u> jñātayaḥ paryupāsate

Persecuted by the demoniac kings (pīditā), the Yādavas left their own kingdom (te niviviśuh) and entered various others, like those of the Kurus, Pañcālas, Kekayas, Śālvas, Vidarbhas, Niṣadhas, Videhas and Kośalas. Some of their relatives (eke jñātayah), however, began to follow Kamsa's principles (tam anurundhānā) and act in his service (paryupāsate).

The Supreme Lord arranges for His pleasure pastimes to occur in Goloka just as on earth.

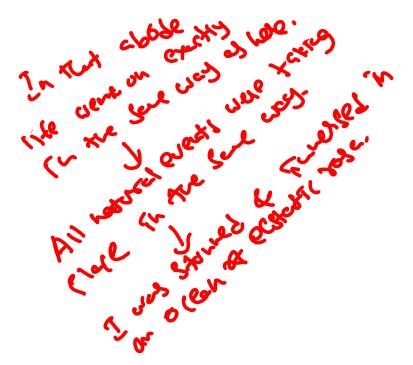
Were this not so, the hearts of His unalloyed devotees would not be fully satisfied.



Text 19 tato 'ham api bhītaḥ san kṛta-viśrānti-majjanaḥ niḥsṛtya tvarayāgacchaṃ śrīmad-vṛndāvanaṁ tataḥ

I too was afraid of Kamsa (aham api bhītaḥ san). So (tatah) as soon as I finished bathing at Viśrānti-ghāṭa (kṛta-viśrānti-majjanaḥ) I hurriedly left Mathurā (tvarayā niḥsrtya) and went (tataḥ āgaccham) to glorious Vṛndāvana (śrīmad-vṛndāvanam).

It was very good for Gopa-kumāra that he was already assuming the character of the Goloka-vāsīs, for that would lead him to his final perfection.



Texts 20-21

tasminn agamye 'khila-devatānām lokeśvarāņām api pārṣadānām etasya bhū-bhārata-varṣakīyāryāvarta-deśasya nirūpya rītim

divyām dineśodgamanādinaitām bhaumīm nṛ-bhāṣā-caritādināpi mahā-camatkāra-bhareṇa ruddho nyamajjam ānanda-rasāmbu-rāśau

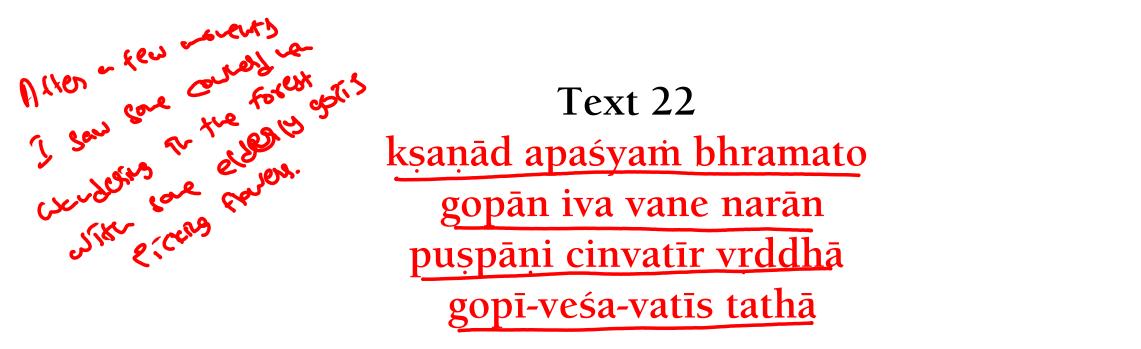
In that realm (tasminn), beyond the reach (agamye) of all the demigods (akhila-devatārām), planetary rulers (okesvarānām api), and personal-attendants of the Supreme Lord (parṣadānām), I saw that life was going on (nirūpya rītim) just as here in this Āryāvarta country (etasya āryāvartadeśasya) in Bhārata-varṣa on earth (bhū-bhārata-varṣakīya). The sun (dineśah) was rising (udgamana) and the other natural events were taking place every day (ādinā) in the sky (divyām), and on the land (bhaumīm) the people were speaking and behaving (nr-bhāṣā-carita ādinā api) in the same way as here (etām). I was stunned (ruddhah) by astonishment—extreme astonishment and immersed (nyamajjam) in an ocean (ambu-rāśau) of ecstatic rasa (ānanda-rasa). Demigods like Sūrya and Candra, planetary rulers like Indra and Brahmā, and even associates of Lord Nārāyaņa like Śrī Garuda cannot enter Goloka.

Gopa-kumāra, preparing his student for descriptions of life there, now gives him a glimpse of how Goloka resembles Vṛndāvana on earth.

Gopa-kumāra saw for himself that the environment and culture of Goloka were just like those of Āryāvarta, north central India, refined in civilization, where Vraja-bhūmi is located. What he saw in the sky (divyām) and on the ground (bhaumīm) could hardly be distinguished from the common experience of life on earth.

This sight amazed him.

He could now perceive the spiritual reality of rasa as something tangible, and the ecstasy of that rasa at once filled his heart and overflowed and left him swimming in an ocean of the nectar of devotion.



After a few moments (kṣanād) I saw (apaśyam) some men (narān), who might have been cowherds (gopān iva), wandering (bhramatah) in the forest (vane) with some ladies, advanced in years (vrddhā) and also wearing cowherd dress (gopī-veśa-vatīh), who were picking flowers (tathā puṣpāṇi cinvatīh). Gopa-kumāra says that the men appeared "as if cowherds" (gopān iva).

They certainly could not have been ordinary cowherds of the material world.

Nor could he assume that the old women he saw were what they appeared.

They were dressed as cowherd women, but what they actually were, Gopa-kumāra leaves for his student to find out later. The younger gopis were not there picking flowers, either because their feelings of separation from Krsna disenabled them from such useful service or else because they were not allowed to leave the cowherd village.

In any case, Gopa-kumāra saw clearly that even the old people of Goloka had very special love for the Supreme Lord.