

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

Volume - 2

Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

Part 6

Abhīṣṭa-lābha

The Attainment of All Desires

Texts 1-2

śrī-gopa-kumāra uvāca
tām nāradyām anusrtya śikṣām
śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāni nija-priyāni
saṅkīrtayan su-svaram atra līlās
tasya pragāyann anucintayamś ca

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

Śrī Gopa-kumāra said: Following (anusrtya) Nārada's instructions (tām nāradyām śikṣām), here in Vraja (atra) I went (gatah) to see (vilokayan) the many places of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes (etad tadīya-līlā-sthala-jātam). I sang (saṅkīrtayan) His names (śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmāni) most dear to me (nija-priyāni), 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 gato) 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)?

Following Nārada's instructions, here in Vraja, I went to see the many places of Sri Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, I sang loudly about His pastimes, & sweetly, I focused my mind upon them. I felt so ecstatic & emotional that even to think of it embarrassed me. How can I describe this to anyone else?

In this Sixth Chapter, Gopa-kumāra goes to Goloka and meets Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa shows him special mercy, and Gopa-kumāra joins the pastimes of that world.

The first five verses show the good fortune Gopa-kumāra 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 unumāda ("divine madness").

Text 3

sadā mahārtyā karuṇa-svarai rudan
nayāmi rātrīr divasāṁś ca kātaraḥ
na vedmi yad yat su-cirād anuṣṭhitam
sukhāya vā tat tad utārti-sindhava

I spent my
days & nights in
great distress - always crying
long sp. practicing what led to
happiness or distress.

I spent (nayāmi) my days and nights (rātrīr divasāṁś ca) in great distress (kātaraḥ), always (sadā) crying (rudan) in a pitiful voice (mahārtyā karuṇa-svaraiḥ), not knowing (na vedmi) whether the practice I had so long been following (yad yat su-cirād anuṣṭhitam) would lead me to happiness (tat tad sukhāya) or (vā) cast me into an ocean of distress (uta ārti-sindhava).

It is difficult for Gopa-kumāra to describe his embarrassing state, but because of his special affection for the Mathurā brāhmaṇa 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.

Whether I was hot like
the flames of a forest fire
is the cooling, nectar
of Yamunā

Text 4

kathañcid apy ākalayāmi naitat
kim eṣa dāvāgni-śikhāntare 'ham
vasāmi kim vā paramāmṛtāccha-
su-śītala-śrī-yamunā-jalāntaḥ

I couldn't tell (na etat kathañcid apy ākalayāmi) whether (kim) I was living (aham vasāmi) in the flames of a forest fire (eṣa dāvāgni-śikhā 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).

Sometimes I thought
I had fallen into the
hands of a great deceiver
I was always
submerged.

Text 5

kadācid evam kila niścinomy aham
śaṭhasya haste patito 'smi kasyacit
sadā nyamañjam bahu-duḥka-sāgare
sukhasya gandho 'pi na mām sprṣet kvacit

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

in this way, I
lived in this way, I
& one day while
unconscious, I fell

Text 6

ittham vasan nikuñje 'smin
vṛndāvana-vibhūṣaṇe
ekadā rodanāmbhodhau
nimagno moham avrajam

In such a way I lived (ittham vasan) in this grove (asmin nikuñje),
this most attractive ornament of Vṛndāvana (vṛndāvana-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 merciful (amunā),
(A) appeared & with His
own lotus hand (karāmbujena)
the dust from my limbs
wiped
the dust from my body.

Text 7

dayālu-cūdāmanināmunaiva
svayaṁ samāgatya karāmbujena
vaṁśī-ratenāmṛta-śītalena
mad-gātrato mārjayatā rajāmsi

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

② - the greatest cheat,
brought me back to
consciousness by filling my
nostrils with His unique
fragrance.

Text 8

nīto 'smi sañcālya muhuḥ sa-līlam
sañjñām mahā-dhūrta-vareṇa yatnāt
nāsā-praviṣṭair apurānubhūtaiḥ
āpūrya saurabhya-bharaiḥ svakīyaiḥ

It wasn't easy (yatnāt), but that greatest of cheats (mahā-dhūrta-vareṇa) playfully (sa-līlam) stirred me back to consciousness (sañcālya sañjñām nītaḥ asmi) by filling my nostrils (nāsā-praviṣṭaiḥ) with His unique (svakīyaiḥ) heady fragrances (saurabhya-bharaiḥ), which I had never known before (apurānubhūtaiḥ).

Śrī Madana-gopāla-deva appeared in person before Gopa-
kumāra 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.

~~X~~ → sphūṛti — insight

Because Kṛṣṇa, the most expert enchanter, knows very well how to stir the senses of even an unconscious person, Gopakumāra wants to acknowledge Kṛṣṇa'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.”

Text 9

tadīya-vaktrābjam athāvalokya
sa-sambhramam satvaram utthito 'ham
amum vidhartum vara-pīta-vastre
samudyato harṣa-bharācitātmā

- ① touch
- ② smell
- ③ sight.

Then
Seeing His lotus face,
I quickly stood up.
Not knowing what I was doing,
My heart filled with joy,
I tried to catch hold of
His splendid yellow cloth.

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 (harṣa-bhara ācita ātmā), I tried to catch hold (amum vidhartum samudyatah) of His splendid yellow cloth (vara-pīta-vastre).

Text 10

④ sound.

sa nāgarendro 'pasasāra pr̥ṣṭhato
ninādayams tām muralīm sva-līlayā
abhūc ca kuñjāntaritaḥ sapady asau
mayā na labdho bata dhāvatāpy alam

Then He blew
His flute & escaped
behind me into a grove
↓
I ran about looking for Him.
↓
But, I could not find Him.

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

Text 11

antarhitam tam tv avilokya mūrccchām
prāpto 'patam śrī-yamunā-pravāhe
etasya vegena samuhyamāno
labdhveva samjñām vyakiram sva-drṣṭī

He had disappeared.
Unable to see Him
fainted & fell into the
of Yamunā swift current
& regrettably carried me away
I seemed to regain normal awareness
looked around

He had disappeared (antarhitam). Unable to see Him (tam tv avilokya), I fainted (mūrccchām 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-drṣṭī 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 myself being transported to another place along a wonderful path by a vehicle flying high & very fast

Text 12

paśyāmy atikrānta-mano-javena
yānena kenāpi mahordha-gena
kenāpi mārgena mahāadbhutena
deśāntare kutracid āgato 'smi

I saw (paśyāmy) myself being transported (āgato asmi) to another place (kutracid deśāntare), along some (kenāpi) wonderful path (mahā adbhutena mārgena), 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,
I was amazed to see
that I was passing through
Vaikunṭha, ayodhya & other realms

Text 13

cittam samādhāya mṛśāmi yāvad
vaikuṅṭha-lokaṁ tam ito 'smi tāvat
tam vismito vīkṣya vahan praharsam
paśyann ayodhyādikam atyagām tat

Collecting my wits (cittam samādhāya), I was amazed (vismitah) to see (mṛśāmi yāvad) I was passing through (itah asmi) Vaikunṭha-loka (tam vaikuṅṭha-lokaṁ), and going beyond (tāvat). I watched (vīkṣya) with great delight (praharsam vahan) as I passed (atyagām) Ayodhyā and other realms (ayodhyā adikam).

Without delay, the vehicle sped past the domain of Lord
Nārāyaṇa, in which Gopa-kumāra had previously resided, and
then past other supreme abodes, including Ayodhyā and
Dvārakā.

Text 14

śrī-golokaṁ taṁ cirāśāvalambam
prāpto bhāntaṁ sarva-lokopariṣṭāt
āste śrīman-māthure maṇḍale 'smin
yādṛk sarvaṁ tatra vai tādṛg eva

I arrived @ Goloka
above all other planets.
Everything there seems the
same as here in bhāntaṁ māthure.

I arrived (prāptaḥ) at the shining (bhāntaṁ) world above all others (sarva-loka upariṣṭāt)—Śrī Goloka (taṁ śrī-golokaṁ), which I had ~~long aspired to reach~~ (cira āśā avalambam). Everything there (yādṛk sarvaṁ tatra) appeared the same (tādṛg eva vai āste) as in this divine Mathurā-maṇḍala (śrīmad-māthure maṇḍale) 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 brāhmaṇa, Gopa-kumāra's disciple, lacks the spiritual vision to understand Goloka properly, but to give him some idea of the glories of Goloka, Gopa-kumāra compares it to the transcendental abode where the two of them now sit.

→ Bhokta ṣṭhānā.

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, I visited
Mathurā City -
I was surprised & happy that it
resembled the Mathurā

Text 15

tasmiñ śrī-mathurā-rūpe
gatvā madhu-purīm aham
atratyām iva tām dr̥ṣtvā
vismayaṁ harṣam apy agām

In that original land of Mathurā (tasmiñ śrī-mathurā-rūpe), I visited (aham gatvā) Mathurā City (madhu-purīm). I was surprised and happy (vismayaṁ harṣam apy agām) to see (dr̥ṣtvā) that it (tām) resembled the Mathurā here on earth (atratyām iva).

Gopa-kumāra was astonished to see that even above
Vaikuṅṭha things appeared as in the mortal world.

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

In that Mathurā I
heard that Kamsa had
arrested his father & Devakī
& was ruling the kingdom.

Text 16

tasyām aśṛṇavam cedam
nigṛhya pitaram svayam
devakīm vasudevam ca
kamso rājyam karoti sah

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

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

The brāhmaṇa must at least have read about him in the Purāṇas and other scriptures.

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

Out of fear of Kamsa,
the Yādavas could not
enjoy freely.

Text 17

tasya priya-surāmitra-
parivārasya śaṅkayā
notsahante yathā-kāmaṁ
vihartuṁ yādavāḥ sukham

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

Because of him all of them suffered.
Some of the Yādavas escaped elsewhere & others took shelter of him.

Text 18

tasmād bahu-vidhām bādhām
api vindanti te 'niśam
kuṭrāpy apasṛtāḥ kecit
santi ke 'pi tam āśritāḥ

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 (kuṭrāpy apasṛtāḥ santi), and others (ke api) took shelter of him (tam āśritāḥ).

Uddhava and other Yādavas went into exile in other districts.
And some, like Akrūra, became Kāṁsa's order carriers.

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

pralamba-baka-cānūra-
trṇāvarta-mahāśanaiḥ
muṣṭikāriṣṭa-dviviḍa-
pūtanā-keśī-dhenukaiḥ

anyaiś cāsura-bhūpālair
bāṇa-bhaumādibhir vṛtaḥ
yadūnām kadanām cakre
balī māgadha-saṁśrayaḥ

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Under the protection of Magadharāja, Jarāsandha (māgadha-saṁśrayaḥ), the powerful Kaṁsa (balī) began persecuting the kings of the Yadu dynasty (yadūnām kadanām cakre). In this he had the cooperation (yutaḥ) of demons like Pralamba, Baka, Cānūra, Trṇāvarta, Aghāsura, Mustika, Ariṣṭa, Dviviḍa, Pūtanā, Keśī, Dhenuka, Bāṇāsura, Narakāsura and many other demoniac kings on the surface of the earth (anyaiś cāsura-bhūpālair).

te pīḍitā niviviśuh
kuru-pañcāla-kekayān
śālvān vidarbhān niśadhān
videhān kośalān api

eke tam anurundhānā
jñātayaḥ paryupāsate

Persecuted by the demoniac kings (pīḍitā), the Yādavas left their own kingdom (te niviviśuh) and entered various others, like those of the Kurus, Pañcālas, Kekayas, Śālvās, Vidarbhas, Niśadhas, Videhas and Kośalas. Some of their relatives (eke jñātayaḥ), however, began to follow Kaṁsa'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
kr̥ta-viśrānti-majjanah
niḥsr̥tya tvarayāgaccham
śrīmad-vṛndāvanam tataḥ

I too was afraid
of Kamsa. ↓
I bathed in Viśrānti-ghāṭa
& left hurriedly to Vṛndāvana

I too was afraid of Kamsa (aham api bhītaḥ san). So (tataḥ) as soon as I finished ~~bathing at Viśrānti-ghāṭa~~ (kr̥ta-viśrānti-majjanah) I hurriedly left Mathurā (tvarayā niḥsr̥tya) 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
lokeśvarānām api pārśadānām
etasya bhū-bhārata-varṣakīyā-
ryāvarta-deśasya nirūpya rītim

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

In that abode
life went on exactly
in the same way as here.
All natural events were taking
place in the same way.
I was stunned & immersed in
an ocean of ecstatic rasa.

In that realm (tasminn), beyond the reach (agamye) of all the demigods (akhila-devatānām), planetary rulers (lokeśvarānām api), and personal attendants of the Supreme Lord (pārśadānām), I saw that life was going on (nirūpya rītim) just as here in this Āryāvarta country (etasya āryāvarta-deśasya) in Bhārata-varṣa on earth (bhū-bhārata-varṣakīyā). 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).

(nre-bhāṣā-
-bhareṇa)

Demigods like Sūrya and Candra, planetary rulers like Indra and Brahmā, and even associates of Lord Nārāyaṇa like Śrī Garuḍa 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
I saw some cowherds
wandering in the forest
with some elderly gopīs
picking flowers.

Text 22

kṣaṇād apaśyaṁ bhramato
gopān iva vane narān
puṣpāṇi cinvatīr vrddhā
gopī-veśa-vatīḥ tathā

After a few moments (kṣaṇād) I saw (apaśyaṁ) some men (narān), who might have been cowherds (gopān iva), wandering (bhramataḥ) in the forest (vane) with some ladies, advanced in years (vrddhā) and also wearing cowherd dress (gopī-veśa-vatīḥ), who were picking flowers (tathā puṣpāṇi cinvatīḥ).

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.

14a

The younger gopīs were not there picking flowers, either because their feelings of separation from Kṛṣṇa 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.