

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

**Volume - 2**

**Śrī-goloka-māhātmya**

**The Glories of Goloka**

# Part 7

## Jagad-ānanda

**The Bliss of the Worlds**

## Text 122

yat-pāda-pāṁśur bahu-janma-kṛcchrato  
dhṛtātmabhir yogibhir apy alabhyaḥ  
sa eva yad-dṛg-viṣayaḥ svayaṁ sthitaḥ  
kiṁ varṇyate diṣṭam ato vrajaukasām

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“Yogīs (**yogibhiḥ**) may undergo severe austerities and penances (**kṛcchrataḥ**) for many births (**bahu-janma**). Yet in due course of time, when these yogīs (**saḥ eva**) attain the perfection of controlling the mind (**dhṛta-ātmabhiḥ**), they will still be unable to taste (**alabhyaḥ**) even a particle of dust from the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (**yat-pāda-pāṁśuḥ api**). What then can we describe (**ataḥ kiṁ varṇyate**) about the great fortune (**diṣṭam**) of the inhabitants of Vraja-bhūmi (**vraja-okasām**), with whom (**yat**) the Supreme Personality of Godhead personally (**svayaṁ**) lived (**sthitaḥ**) and who saw the Lord face to face (**dṛk-viṣayaḥ**)?”

The good fortune of the cowherd boys in being able to see Kṛṣṇa face to face defies description, what to speak of how blessed they must be to be able to play with Kṛṣṇa constantly.

The cowherd boys and all the residents of Vraja-bhūmi are the most fortunate beings in creation because they can look directly on the beauty of Kṛṣṇa.

Dedicated yogīs endeavor for lifetimes to approach Kṛṣṇa, but for all their labor they can never hope to become as fortunate as the Vraja-vāsīs.

Even one particle of dust from Kṛṣṇa's feet is impossible to achieve for yogīs who do not follow humbly in the footsteps of the devotees of Vraja.

The meaning of “the dust from Kṛṣṇa's feet” may be understood in several ways.

It can mean a single atom of His feet.

It can mean the marks of His footprints in the dust of Vraja-bhūmi.

It can mean dust that has been in contact with His feet and then shaken off somewhere in His wanderings.

It can refer to anything that has been even indirectly in contact with His feet, no matter from how far away.

Or the words pāda-pāmśu—“the dust from Kṛṣṇa’s feet”—can be redivided and modified to pādapa-amśu, meaning the effulgence (amśu) emanating from Kṛṣṇa’s favorite kadamba trees and the other trees (pādapa) of the Vṛndāvana forest.

Even the most distant contact with Kṛṣṇa’s pāda-pāmśu in any of these senses is for mystic yogīs a rare accomplishment.



Determined yogīs, in their attempts to succeed, practice severe disciplines, such as brahmacarya and other austerities.

For many lifetimes they struggle to steady themselves by withdrawing the mind and senses from material objects.

But even if they achieve the success of samādhi, they cannot achieve Kṛṣṇa, who is the full embodiment of spiritual perfection, **sac-cid-ānanda-ghana-mūrti**.

He is beyond the purview of the senses.

Only the Vraja-vāsīs can see Him as He is.

The form of the Supreme Lord visible in Vraja is not a vibhūti, one of God's opulent expansions, nor is He a partial incarnation of Godhead, nor is He even Lord Nārāyaṇa.

He is the original source of all forms of God yet viewable by the cowherds like any other perceptible object and constantly fixed (sthitaḥ) in their sight.

In other words, He never leaves the path of their eyes.

How then can the exalted fortune of the Vraja-vāsīs ever be adequately described?

Or, translating Śukadeva's question in a different way, **kim varṇyate diṣṭam** asks whether the condition of the Vraja-vāsīs is the result of their fate.

The answer, of course, is that the Vraja-vāsīs' situation is not the karmic effect of pious works done in previous lifetimes.

It is solely the result of Kṛṣṇa's mercy.

Or, dividing words another way, the fortunate condition of the Vraja-vāsīs is a perpetual festival (diṣṭa-maho).

Or the power of their good fortune is inconceivable (adiṣṭa- or adrṣṭa-maho).

The pure devotional service of the Vraja-vāsīs displays all these features.

A discriminating reader may question the placement of this verse—which tells of the good fortune of merely seeing Kṛṣṇa—after the verse depicting the special fortune of the cowherd boys in being able to always play with Kṛṣṇa.

The good fortune of playing with Kṛṣṇa automatically includes the good fortune of seeing Him and goes beyond it, the reader may argue, so placing these items out of the natural logical order of lesser to greater, general to specific, is a fault in poetic style.

To accommodate this reasonable doubt, we may construe Śukadeva's statements in yet another way:

The boys who enjoy playing with Kṛṣṇa are indeed extremely fortunate, and this verse amplifies that assertion by showing that actually all creatures living in Vraja are fortunate beyond description.

It is easy to prove that any resident of Vraja is greater than the most accomplished yogī.

So it naturally follows that the boys who live so closely with the Personality of Godhead and are so uniquely dear to Him are, of all living beings, the most exalted.

Or we can say that Śukadeva is continuing to glorify the cowherd boys in particular—these inhabitants of Vraja-bhūmi—because Kṛṣṇa is the constant object of their vision.

The eyes of the gopa-kumāras see Kṛṣṇa and nothing else.



As a general rule, each individual sense has its own proper object.

The sense of sight perceives only visible forms, not tastes, smells, or other sensations.

But the attention of the boys is so engrossed in Kṛṣṇa that they are disregarding of whatever else is present before them.

The eyes of other people perceive various objects like pots and cloths, but wherever the cowherd boys turn their eyes they see only Kṛṣṇa—that is to say, they see everything in relationship to Kṛṣṇa.

The poetry of Śrī Jayadeva Kavi illustrates this kind of special vision: **paśyati diśi diśi rahasi bhavantam**, “In every direction, in every secret corner, She sees only You.” (Gīta-govinda 12.1)

Thus it is appropriate for Śukadeva to speak this verse after the previous one, since even greater than the cowherd boys' good fortune of always playing with Kṛṣṇa is their being always able to see Him everywhere.

This marks their love for Kṛṣṇa as being almost as good as that of the gopīs.

## Text 123

14. Gōḷēs

**kvacit pallava-talpeṣu  
niyuddha-śrama-karśitaḥ  
vrkṣa-mūlāśrayaḥ śete  
gopotsaṅgopabarhaṇaḥ**

“Sometimes (**kvacit**) Lord Kṛṣṇa grew tired (**śrama-karśitaḥ**) from fighting (**niyuddha**) and lay down (**śete**) at the base (**mūla**) of a tree (**vrkṣa**), resting (**āśrayaḥ**) upon a bed (**talpeṣu**) made of soft twigs and buds (**pallava**) and using the lap of a cowherd friend (**gopa-utsaṅga**) as His pillow (**upabarhaṇaḥ**).

Texts 123 through 125 are from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.15.16–18).

Here Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes some of the services the cowherd boys did for Kṛṣṇa while He rested in the forest.

These pastimes were a part of Kṛṣṇa's paugaṇḍa-līlā of tending His cows in Śrī Vṛndāvana forest.

Kṛṣṇa would enjoy lying down to rest at various times (when fatigued after wrestling with His friends, for instance) and in various places, such as the cool, breezy shore of the Yamunā.

To rest comfortably, He would choose the base of a kadamba, tamāla, or other tree with ample shade.

Anticipating Kṛṣṇa's daily pastimes, the goddess Vṛndā would have beds of leaves, flowers, and young soft twigs waiting at the bases of those trees, or sometimes Kṛṣṇa's gopa friends would arrange this bedding when they arrived.

Even though Kṛṣṇa lay down on only one bed at a time, Śrīla Śukadeva refers to the beds in the plural, either because many devotees were involved in making them, or simply out of great respect for the paraphernalia of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, or else because the cowherd boys would compete to make several different beds and Kṛṣṇa would expand His universal form to please all the boys by simultaneously lying down on each bed, unseen by the makers of the others.

Kṛṣṇa would accept as His pillow the lap of His most intimate friend, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's brother Śrīdāmā.

## Text 124

pāda-saṁvāhanam cakruḥ  
kecit tasya mahātmanah  
apare hata-pāpmāno  
vyajanaiḥ samavījayan

“Some of the cowherd boys (kecit), who were all great souls (mahā-ātmanah), free of all sin (hata-pāpmānah), would then massage His lotus feet (tasya pāda-saṁvāhanam cakruḥ), and others (apare) would expertly fan Him (vyajanaiḥ samavījayan).”



When Kṛṣṇa's cowherd friends, who loved Him so much, saw that He was fatigued, many of them responded immediately, doing whatever they could to relieve His discomfort.

In this flurry of activity, the boys were overcome by ever-increasing affection for Him.

Many boys would massage His legs, either one boy at a time in turns or else all the boys massaging various places at once.

It may also be that to please His beloved friends, who all wanted to serve Him in this way, the Supreme Lord manifested His all-pervasive form—without leaving aside His form as the son of Śrī Nanda—and allowed a huge crowd of cowherd boys to massage His feet simultaneously, each unseen by the others.

Thus Kṛṣṇa displayed His supreme powers even in His childhood pastimes, as expressed in a later verse of the Bhāgavatam (10.15.19) by the words **īśa-ceṣṭitaḥ** (“exhibiting feats only God can perform”).

With this in mind, instead of taking the word mahātmanah in this verse to refer to Kṛṣṇa's friends, we can take it as referring to Kṛṣṇa ("the Supreme Soul").

In these pastimes, Kṛṣṇa demonstrates the greatness of the Supreme Being even more convincingly than in God's typical activities like creation.

In these childhood pastimes, Kṛṣṇa shows His power to enchant the entire world with His sweetness.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī speaks of Kṛṣṇa's friends as **hata-pāpmānaḥ**, "persons who have had their sins destroyed."

~~For ordinary pious persons, whatever contradicts the principles of religion is sin, but for devotees of the Supreme Lord, sin is anything that obstructs pure devotional service, and that is the sense that applies here; the cowherd boys of Vraja have not the slightest inclination to do anything that does not please Kṛṣṇa.~~

Kṛṣṇa Himself is also called hata-pāpmānaḥ in the sense that  
He destroys the sins of all the worlds by displaying His glories  
for everyone to hear and chant.

## Text 125

anye tad-anurūpāṇi  
mano-jñāni mahātmanah  
gāyanti sma mahā-rāja  
sneha-klinna-dhiyaḥ śanaiḥ

16. Notes  
Others would sing songs  
appropriate to the occasion  
that would enchant the boys  
hearts of the boys & the  
is love for Him, would melt

“My dear king (mahā-rāja), other boys (anye) would sing songs (gāyanti sma), appropriate to the occasion (tad-anurūpāṇi), that would enchant (manah-jñāni) Kṛṣṇa (mahā-ātmanah), and the hearts (dhiyaḥ) of the boys would melt (śanaiḥ klinna) out of love for Him (sneha).”

Some of Kṛṣṇa's friends sang songs with sweet, gentle melodies, just right for His nap time.

This encouraged Him to fall asleep quickly.

Kṛṣṇa is the most exalted of persons, graver than the combined depth of millions of oceans, but these songs fascinated Him because they described His loving dealings with the gopīs.

And His mind was strongly attracted even to the parts of those songs that merely glorified His devotional service in general ways.

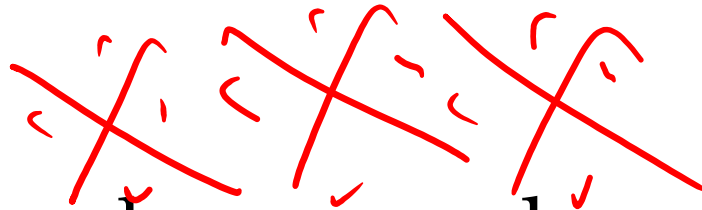
It may be that here Śukadeva Gosvāmī uses the word mahātmanah ironically.

Unable to control his ecstasy, Śukadeva calls Kṛṣṇa a “great soul” with the understanding that Kṛṣṇa is actually the prince of womanizers, who shamelessly indulges His lusty propensities by stealing the clothes of the cowherds’ daughters, making them appear naked before Him.



The songs sung by Kṛṣṇa's friends for His pleasure inspired intensifed prema, which melted the boys' hearts.

They sang softly, their voices choked with tears of ecstasy.



From this we can know that even though pure love for Kṛṣṇa arises in the course of all kinds of devotional service, it appears most quickly and fully when one performs saṅkīrtana by singing songs dear to Kṛṣṇa and otherwise glorifying His name and fame.

As stated in the previous verse, the boys who served Kṛṣṇa  
while He rested were hata-pāpmānaḥ, “free from all sin.”

They were great souls, extremely advanced in devotional  
service, each capable of purifying the entire universe.

Thus as they performed their individual services for Kṛṣṇa  
they felt more and more love for Him, and their hearts melted  
in ecstasy.

And again, the word mahātmanah applies equally well to both  
Kṛṣṇa and His friends.

In this verse Śrīla Śukadeva addresses King Parīkṣit as mahā-  
rāja.

This may mean that the pastime of Kṛṣṇa's being served in  
royal style is fit to be heard by a king.

Or it may imply that kings like Parīkṣit Mahārāja can hardly expect such luxurious comforts.



Or describing to Parīkṣit the supreme fortune of the cowherd boys creates an upsurge of loving feelings in Śrī Śukadeva's heart that makes him address Parīkṣit as mahā-rāja to attract the attention of the king, who is also overwhelmed by the bewilderment of pure prema.

Or Śukadeva calls Parīkṣit mahā-rāja, the best of the royal class, because only King Parīkṣit is competent to understand the sublime good fortune of these cowherd boys.

Or else the term may indicate that the fondness cherished by the cowherd boys for Kṛṣṇa is supremely splendid; it is the mahā-rāja of loving sentiments.

Although this sneha, or love, is always present within the boys, in this setting of intimate service it now rises to the peak of its potency.

It radiates with infinite brilliance, leaving all contamination far behind.

17-21 → NM & YM  
 17. What great fortune must have been performed by NM & YM to have achieved such a perfection.

nandaḥ kim akarod brahman

śreya evaṁ mahodayam

yaśodā ca mahā-bhāgā

papau yasyāḥ stanam hariḥ

Having heard of the great fortune of mother Yaśodā, Parīkṣit Mahārāja inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī: O learned brāhmaṇa (brahman), what past auspicious activities were performed by Nanda Maharaj (nandaḥ kim śreyaḥ akarod) to have achieved such a perfection (evaṁ mahodayam)? What to speak of the most fortunate mother Yaśodā (yaśodā ca mahā-bhāgā) whose breast milk was sucked by the Supreme Personality of Godhead (papau yasyāḥ stanam hariḥ).

Texts 126 through 130 are dedicated to the supreme glories of Goparāja Nanda and his wife, Śrī Yaśodā.

After Śukadeva explains to Parīksit Mahārāja the special way Kṛṣṇa favored Mother Yaśodā, Parīksit speaks the current verse (Bhāgavatam 10.8.46).

By showing the universal form and by displaying other exceptional pastimes, Kṛṣṇa made Himself known to all the Vraja-vāsīs as the Supreme Lord.

But then, to show His most extreme mercy especially to His mother, He again covered her consciousness with His unique potency so that she could think of Him only as her son.

Thus Kṛṣṇa made the highest degree of pure affection pervade His mother's mind and all her senses.



Parīkṣit addresses the son of Badarāyana Vyāsa with the word brahman, “O direct embodiment of the Supreme Absolute Truth,” because Parīkṣit is asking a question that only the Lord Himself can answer: What special pious acts could Nanda and Yaśodā have done to achieve such a blessed state, unattainable in this material world?

The devotional success of Nanda and Yaśodā is mahodayam, “the greatest perfection,” unequaled by other devotees, including Vasudeva and Devakī.

In the very next Bhāgavatam verse (10.8.47), Śrī Parīksit states:

pitarau nānvavindetām  
kṛṣṇodārārbhakehitam  
gāyanty adyāpi kavayo  
yad loka-śamalāpaham

Although Kṛṣṇa was so pleased with Vasudeva and Devakī that He descended as their son (**implied**), they could not enjoy (**pitarau nānvavindeta**) Kṛṣṇa's magnanimous childhood pastimes (**kṛṣṇa udāra arbhaka ihitam**), which are so great that simply chanting about them (**gāyanty adyāpi kavayo**) vanquishes the contamination of the material world (**yad loka-śamala āpaham**). Nanda Mahārāja and Yaśodā, however, enjoyed these pastimes fully, and therefore their position is always better than that of Vasudeva and Devakī.

Vasudeva and Devakī were Kṛṣṇa's true parents, but they were less fortunate than Nanda and Yaśodā, who witnessed Kṛṣṇa's childhood pastimes, in which He generously bestowed upon the world sense enjoyment, liberation, devotional service, and ecstatic love.

**Gāyanty adyāpi kavayah**: Even today, in the Kali-yuga, great poets like Brahmā and Vyāsadeva sing about these pastimes because this is the means for uprooting all the evils of the modern age.

Without glorifying Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, no one can eradicate the faults of Kali-yuga.

Pure devotees have always chanted these glories of Kṛṣṇa, and continue to do so up to the present day.

The phrase **loka-śamalāpaham** can be explained in several ways.

One is that this glorification, or saṅkīrtana, removes (apaha)  
the misery (śamala) of all living beings.

Or, taking śama to mean “peace of mind,” lāpa to mean  
“speech,” and ha to mean “killing,” another explanation is that  
by engaging in this hearing and chanting one develops the  
highest quality of prema, which in turn disturbs the  
equilibrium of the mind and brings the faculty of speech to a  
complete halt.

Or, reading śama as “well-being” and lāpa as “discussion,” another idea is that engaging in saṅkīrtana transforms the attitude of all who take part, leaving no scope for further discussion of impersonal self-contentment.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.8.21-45) describes some of the wonderful pranks the infant Kṛṣṇa shared with Nanda and Yaśodā by His special mercy.

Were it not for this unprecedented mercy, Mother Yaśodā would be on the same level as Devakī, who also fed Kṛṣṇa with her breast milk.

Later in the Tenth Canto (Bhāgavatam 10.85.55), while narrating how Kṛṣṇa recovered His dead elder brothers, Śukadeva says:

pītvāmṛtaṁ payas tasyāḥ  
pīta-śeṣaṁ gadā-bhṛtaḥ  
nārāyaṇāṅga-saṁsparśa-  
pratilabdha-ātma-darśanāḥ

“By drinking (pītvā) Devakī’s nectarean milk (tasyāḥ amṛtaṁ payah), the remnants of what (pīta-śeṣaṁ) Kṛṣṇa Himself had drunk (gadā-bhṛtaḥ), the six sons touched the transcendental body of the Lord, Nārāyaṇa (nārāyaṇa aṅga-saṁsparśa), and this contact awakened them to their original identities (pratilabdha ātma-darśanāḥ).”



This verse confirms that Kṛṣṇa once drank from Devakī's breast.

Right after Kṛṣṇa's birth in Kāṁsa's prison, Devakī begged four-armed Kṛṣṇa to become an ordinary baby, and at that time He must have sat on her lap for a few minutes and drunk from her breast.

Later, too, when Brahmā stole Kṛṣṇa's calves and friends, Kṛṣṇa took on their forms and drank the milk of all their mothers.

Therefore, in the verse quoted as the present text of Śrī Bṛhad-  
bhāgavatāmṛta, Parīkṣit takes care to distinguish Yaśodā's  
special good fortune from that of Kṛṣṇa's other mothers.

It is for this reason that he uses the word evam (“thus”).

Parīkṣit here calls Kṛṣṇa by the name Hari, indicating that by  
the motherly love Kṛṣṇa kindled in Yaśodā through His  
childhood līlās He constantly stole her mind.

And by speaking of her as mahā-bhāga, Parīkṣit implies that she is even more fortunate than Nanda Mahārāja.

It is common knowledge that children are more strongly bound by affection to their mothers than to their fathers.

This general truth applies to Kṛṣṇa also, as shown in the Tenth Canto by the descriptions of Kṛṣṇa's infant behavior, especially in the pastime of His being tied up with rope.

We will hear some of these descriptions in the verses recited next by King Parīkṣit.

Although Vasudeva and Devakī worshiped Kṛṣṇa with devotion for the duration of four yugas and underwent severe austerities to gain Him as their son, they could not achieve a trace of the blessings Kṛṣṇa showered upon Nanda and Yaśodā.

Vasudeva and Devakī could not directly enjoy Kṛṣṇa's pastimes of crawling about and otherwise acting as an infant, pastimes great poets headed by Śrī Brahma praise in song.