

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 77

sthānam gopī-gaṇa-kuca-taṭī-kuṅkuma-śrī-bharārdra-  
śrīmat-pādāmbuja-yuga-sadā-prīti-saṅga-pradāyi  
jijñāso te janani kathito 'śeṣa-sandeha-ghātī  
goloko 'yaṁ madhura-gahana-praśna-bhāvānusārāt

That Goloka  
bestows eternal  
contact with lotus  
feet.  
I have now answered  
ur questions & ur  
doubts must now  
be cleared.

That place (ayam sthānam) Goloka (golokaḥ) bestows (pradāyi) eternal (sadā) loving (prīti) contact (saṅga) with Kṛṣṇa's beautiful (śrīmat) lotus feet (pāda-ambuja-yuga), which are thickly smeared (śrī-bhara-ārdra) with the kuṅkuma (kuṅkuma) from the slopes (taṭī) of the gopīs' (gopī-gaṇa) breasts (kuca). Dear mother (janani), I have thus replied (kathitaḥ) according to (anusārāt) the spirit (bhāva) of your affectionate (te jijñāsoḥ madhura) and deeply thoughtful (gahana) questions (praśna), and all (aśeṣa) your doubts (sandeha) should now have been destroyed (ghātī).

Now that Parīkṣit has told his mother what she ought to do, he wants to remind her that Goloka is the final goal and that meditation on Goloka will greatly foster her progress.

Uttarā's original request was "Please deliver me," and in this verse Parīkṣit responds directly.

Considering Uttarā's plea altogether praiseworthy, he ~~has gladly satisfied~~ her.

Simply by hearing in detail the glories of Goloka, all doubts are vanquished.

## Text 78

⑤ Or be  
obtained only by  
exclusive, boundless love  
for Vraj  
In that land one obtains  
the most valuable  
rewards

vaikuṅṭhasyāpy upari nitarām rājate yo nitānta-

śrīmad-gopī-ramaṇa-carāṇa-prema-pūraika-labhyah

vāñchā-vāñchopari-guru-phala-prāptir bhūmir yadīyā

lokā dhyātā dadhati paramām prema-sampatti-niṣṭhām

→ when one meditates on the residents → they grant preme-niṣṭhā

That world Goloka (yah), shining (nitarām rājate) even above Vaikuṅṭha (vaikuṅṭhasya api upari), can be achieved (labhyah) only (eka) by firm (nitānta), boundless (pūra) love (prema) for the blessed (śrīmat) feet (carāṇa) of the lover (ramaṇa) of the gopīs (gopī). In that land (bhūmiḥ) one reaps (prāptiḥ) the most valuable (guru) rewards (phala), far beyond one's desires (vāñchā-vāñchā-upari). When one meditates (dhyātāḥ) on the residents (lokāḥ) of that world (yadīyā), they grant (dadhati) the highest (paramām) fortune (sampatti) of firm standing (niṣṭhām) in prema (prema).

The only effective sādhana for reaching the highest world Goloka is the special kind of love that holds fast to the lotus feet of Śrī Gopīnātha.

And since that love reposes in the residents of Goloka, remembering the exalted Vaiṣṇavas of Goloka is the key to all success.

Now / Please hear  
Some relevant statements  
of great sages that will fully  
satisfy ur mind.

## Text 79

adhunātrābhiyuktāni  
munīnām mahatām śṛṇu  
imāni vacanāny ātma-  
citta-santoṣaṇāni hi

Now (adhunā) please hear (śṛṇu) some relevant (atra  
abhiyuktāni) statements (vacanāni) of great (mahatām) sages  
(munīnām), statements (imāni) that will fully satisfy  
(santoṣaṇāni) your mind (ātma-citta).



Parīkṣit has answered his mother's inquiries by narrating two histories, one about Nārada and the other about Gopa-  
kumāra.

Earlier in this second half of Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta (2.1.33) he told his mother:

śruti-smṛtīnām vākyaṇi  
sākṣāt tātparyato 'py aham  
vyākhyāya bodhayitvaitat  
tvām santoṣayitum kṣamaḥ

I could satisfy your request (**aham tvām etat santoṣayitum kṣamaḥ**) by explaining to you (**vyākhyāya bodhayitvā**) the statements of the śrutis and smṛtis (**śruti-smṛtīnām vākyaṇi**), both in their literal meaning and in their implications (**sākṣāt tātparyato apy**).

To conclude, he will now cite the supporting opinions of reputable authorities about the glories of Goloka.

## Text 80

svargād ūrdhvaṁ brahma-loko  
brahmarṣi-gaṇa-sevitaḥ  
tatra soma-gatiś caiva  
jyotiṣāṁ ca mahātmanām

“Above heaven (tatra svargād ūrdhvaṁ) is Brahmaloka (brahma-lokaḥ), which is served (sevitaḥ) by many brahmarṣis (brahma-rṣi-gaṇa). It is the goal (gatiḥ) of Lord Śiva and his wife, Umā (sa-umā), and of great luminous souls who are liberated in the Supreme (jyotiṣāṁ ca mahā-ātmanām).

Urdhva  
Above  
the goal of  
of the brahmarṣi  
of the great souls who go to liberate.  
Kṛṣṇa

Texts 80 through 85, cited from Śrī Hari-vaṁśa (2.19.29–30, 32–35), are part of the prayers offered to Kṛṣṇa by Lord Indra after Kṛṣṇa lifted Govardhana Hill.

Here the term svarga is used in the same sense as in the following verse from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.5.42):

bhūr-lokaḥ kalpitaḥ padbhyām  
bhuvar-loko 'sya nābhitaḥ  
sva-lokaḥ kalpito mūrdhnā  
iti vā loka-kalpanā

Earth and the lower planets are imagined to extend from the feet (**bhūrlokaḥ kalpitaḥ padbhyām**). Bhuvarloka is at the navel (**bhuvarloko asya nābhitaḥ**). Svarga-loka is imaged to be the head (**sva-lokaḥ kalpito mūrdhnā**). This is how others imagine the planets on the universal form (**iti vā loka-kalpanā**).

In other words, svarga can be taken to mean the five upper planetary systems from Indra's world up to Brahmā's.

Above those planets is found the end of the material universe, and above that is Brahmaloaka (Vaikuṅṭha), the transcendental realm.

Vaikuṅṭha is also called Brahmaloaka because it is the abode of brahma, pure spirit, and because it is the world presided over by the Personality of Godhead, the Supreme Brahman, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Of course, beyond the five higher lokas, or worlds, mentioned here are the seven coverings of the universe, beyond them is the abode of liberation (mukti-pada), then comes Śrī Śivaloka, and then the spiritual world.

The verse quoted above, however, mentions only Svargaloka and Vaikuntha because the universal coverings are not normally understood to be “worlds” and because Svarga is well known as the heavenly destination of pious workers.

To give some idea of the greatness of Vaikuṅṭha, therefore, a description that conceives of the spiritual world as simply lying beyond Svarga is sufficient.

Rather than refer to the Supreme Personality of Godhead merely as Brahman, it is more correct to refer to Him as Parabrahman, the Supreme Brahman.

Kṛṣṇa is called param brahma narākṛti, “the Supreme Absolute Truth appearing in human form.”



Thus in Bhagavad-gītā (10.12) Arjuna says to Kṛṣṇa:

param brahma param dhāma  
pavitram paramam bhavān

“You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ultimate  
abode, the purest, the Absolute Truth.”

Ātmā and Brahman, therefore, may also be accepted as secondary  
names of Kṛṣṇa because they identify His expansions, namely the  
Supersoul and the impersonal Supreme.

Therefore in a later verse of the Tenth Chapter of Bhagavad-  
gītā (10.20) Kṛṣṇa begins to describe His opulent material  
expansions (vibhūtiḥ) by saying:

**aham ātmā guḍākeśa**  
**sarva-bhūtāśaya-sthitah**

“I am the Supersoul, O Arjuna, seated in the hearts of all  
living entities.”

The Br̥hat-sahasra-nāma-stotra, when referring to the Supreme Person's vibhūti in its list of secondary names, also calls Him Ātmā: **ātmā tattvādhipah** (“He is the Supreme Soul and the ruler of the elements of creation”).

The words of saintly Vaiṣṇavas also identify impersonal Brahman as one of the Supreme Lord's vibhūti: **parāt param brahma ca te vibhūtayah** (“These—including the Supreme Brahman, which is beyond everything else—are Your opulent expansions”).

Therefore, since the Brhat-sahasra-nāma-stotra includes among its one thousand names of the Personality of Godhead the names of His vibhūtis, these are factually His names, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa can properly be called Brahman.

Consequently, Śrī Śukadeva has said:

mūrdhabhiḥ satya-lokas tu  
brahma-lokaḥ sanātanah

Satyaloka is on the heads of that form (**mūrdhabhiḥ satyalokas**). Above this is the Lord's planet which is eternal (**brahmalokaḥ tu sanātanah**). (Bhāgavatam 2.5.39)

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī paraphrases this idea in his commentary:  
“The world of Brahman, known as Vaikuṅṭha, is perpetual,  
eternal. It is not contained within the material creation.”

In other words, Brahmaloaka means Vaikuṅṭha.

The verse from Śrī Hari-vaṁśa cited here in the Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta  
by Mahārāja Parīkṣit says that brahmarsis—either those absorbed in  
Brahman or great devotees like Nārada dedicated to Para-brahman,  
Bhagavān—always serve Brahmaloaka.

That spiritual realm is aspired for by the most exalted persons,  
including Lord Śiva and his consort as well as liberated sages who  
have realized oneness with the self-luminous Supreme.

In truth such candidates for entrance into Brahmaloḥka are not impersonalists but great devotees of the Personality of Godhead's lotus feet, like Sanaka-kumāra and his brothers, who know from their direct experience the insignificance of impersonal liberation.

Nārada and other associates of Lord Nārāyaṇa are also on this level of spiritual competence, but because they are considered eternal residents, not candidates for entrance into Vaikuṅṭha, the second sentence of this verse from Śrī Hari-vaṁśa does not mention them among persons who make Vaikuṅṭha their goal.

If the word jyotiṣām in the last line of this verse were taken literally to mean the sun, moon, and stars, the statement being made would be weak.

To say that the spiritual world is beyond the sun and moon is not to say much, since even Maharloka lies beyond the solar and lunar orbits.



The sun and moon cannot approach Satyaloka, what to speak of Vaikuṅṭha.

The word jyotiṣām, therefore, is better understood to refer to the spiritually effulgent sages who worship the Supreme Person.

## Text 81

tasyopari gavām lokah  
sādhyās taṁ pālayanti hi  
sa hi sarva-gataḥ kṛṣṇa  
mahākāśa-gato mahān

Above vaikunṭha  
13 Goloka which is  
protected by the  
associates of Kṛṣṇa.

“Above Brahmaloka (tasya upari) is the planet of the cows  
(gavām lokah), which (taṁ) is protected (pālayanti hi) by the  
Sādhyas (sādhyās). O Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa), that great planet (saḥ hi)  
is infinitely expansive (mahān), pervading (sarva-gataḥ) the  
unlimited spiritual sky (mahā-akāśa gataḥ).

Goloka  
Vaikunṭha  
Kṛṣṇa's associates still associates.

## Text 82

That ⑤ is  
above all others  
→ & there are other  
of heart. → U & to be  
achieved by intense concentration  
None of us can understand  
that world which we  
have inquired.

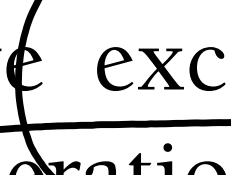
upary upari tatrāpi  
gatis tava tapo-mayī  
yām na vidmo vayam sarve  
pr̥cchanto 'pi pitāmaham

“That planet is above all others (upary upari), and there (tatra api) You are to be achieved (tava gatiḥ) by intense concentration of the heart (tapo-mayī). None of us can understand (na vidmaḥ vayam sarve) that world (yām), though we have inquired about it (pr̥cchantaḥ api) from our grandfather (pitāmaham).

Since Vaikuṅṭha is unlimited, nothing can be beyond it in ordinary time and space.

Yet there is a transcendental sense in which Goloka, the planet of the cows, lies above Vaikuṅṭha.

Just as Śrī Śivaloka, due to its comparative excellences, is considered “above” the infinite abode of liberation, and just as Vaikuṅṭha is understood to be “above” the boundless Śivaloka, so Śrī Goloka is above Vaikuṅṭha.



To assert that Goloka lies beyond even Vaikuntha is valid  
because only on Goloka do the pastime energies of the  
Personality of Godhead display reality in its most perfect state.

Goloka is presided over by the Sādhyas, meaning “those who are  
worshiped by great saints.”

These Sādhyas are Kṛṣṇa’s dearmost devotees—Śrī Nanda and  
others—whom Brahmā, Sanaka, Śiva, and Nārada try to emulate  
by all the means of spiritual discipline at their command.

Another way to understand the word sādhyā—as derived from the verb meaning “to accomplish”—is that all the cowherd men and women of Goloka manage to bring Kṛṣṇa under their control by the unique ecstatic sentiments they have for Him.

Or else these Sādhyas are the gopīs, headed by Śrī Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa’s dearest devotees and therefore the most important residents of Goloka, who perpetually manage to maintain the glories of that abode by their wonderful pastimes with Kṛṣṇa.

The term sādhyas normally refers to a class of ordinary demigods.

But the notion that texts 81 and 82 refer to these demigods is no more reasonable than the idea that the luminaries mentioned in Text 80 refer to the sun, moon, and stars.

The ordinary Sādhyas, like the celestial bodies of the material world, cannot travel even to Satyaloka, what to speak of Vaikuntha. Certainly, therefore, these Sādhyas cannot reach Goloka, and their being its protectors is out of the question.

Goloka pervades the spiritual sky, exceeds all limiting conditions of material existence, and most fully manifests pure eternity, cognizance, and bliss.

In contrast to the tiny sky of the material world, the spiritual sky is infinite.

Goloka has its place in that infinite sky.



The Absolute Truth is called ākāśa (“the sky”) because as the sky, or the material ether, pervades the created universe and remains unchanged as long as the universe exists, Brahman is all-pervading and eternal.

The greatest sky, mahākāśa, is Para-brahman, the Supreme Person Śrī Kṛṣṇa with His dense, dark-blue effulgence.

Vaikuṅṭha, the complete manifestation of sac-cid-ānanda, is present within Kṛṣṇa, and thus in essence nondifferent from Him.

And within that spiritual existence, Goloka is the supreme abode.

It is above Śrī Vaikuṅṭha, which is above all other worlds.

As difficult as it is for conditioned souls to comprehend  
Vaikuṅṭha, Goloka is even more mysterious.

Goloka can be understood only by the tapas of complete  
concentration of the heart.

Mundane reason fails even to begin to approach it.

And it remains unknown even to the great sages, who for  
information about it approach the grandfather of the universe,  
Brahmā.