

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 96

kim ca,

10.14.13

punṣyā bata vraja-bhuvo yad ayaṁ nr-liṅga-
gūḍhaḥ purāṇa-puruṣo vana-citra-mālyah
gāḥ pālayan saha-balah kvaṇayanāś ca veṇum
vikrīḍayāñcati giritra-ramārcitāṅghriḥ

He plays flute, tends cows in the company of (B).

Furthermore: “How pious (punṣyāḥ bata) are the tracts of land in Vraja (vraja-bhuvaḥ), for there (yaṭ) the primeval Personality of Godhead (ayaṁ purāṇa-puruṣaḥ), disguising (gūḍhaḥ) Himself with human (nr) traits (liṅga), wanders about (āñcati), enacting His many pastimes (vikrīḍayā)! Adorned with wonderfully variegated (citra) forest (vana) garlands (mālyah), Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose feet (aṅghriḥ) are worshiped (arcita) by Lord Śiva (giritra) and the goddess Ramā (ramā), vibrates (kvaṇayan) His flute (veṇum) as He tends (pālayan) the cows (gāḥ) in the company (saha) of Balarāma (balah).”

How fortunate
is the land of
Vraja
for there is the SPB
himself in a human
form
His lotus feet
are worshipped by
Śiva & Rāmā

Starting with this verse, the next fifty-eight verses come from the Tenth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

Of these the first eleven (texts 96 through 106) establish in a general way the glories of Vraja-bhūmi and its residents.

The current verse (10.44.13) was spoken by the women of Mathurā City.

Kṛṣṇa had just arrived in Mathurā from Nanda-gokula.

Early that morning He had killed the elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa,
and now as the women watched He was wrestling with
Cānūra.

Shocked to see such an unfair competition between powerful
athletes and little boys, some of the women sharply criticized
their friends and the other people present:

mahān ayam batādharma
eṣām rāja-sabhā-sadām
ye balābalavad yuddha
rājño 'nvicchanti paśyataḥ

“Alas (bata), what a greatly irreligious act (ayam mahān adharma) the members of this royal assembly are committing (eṣām rāja-sabhā-sadām)! As the king watches (rājño paśyataḥ) this fight between the strong and the weak (ye bala-abalavad yuddha), these assembly members also want to see it (anvicchanti).” (Bhāgavatam 10.44.7)

Other outraged women spoke the verse under discussion, in which they declared that only Vraja-bhūmi is a pious place, unlike the metropolis of Mathurā.

3 कारण why Vraja-bhūmi is addressed in plural as Vraja-bhuvāḥ:

① For respect.

The women referred to vraja-bhuvāḥ in the plural to offer Vraja respect, to indicate its large extent, and to include not only the land of Vraja but all its living beings, and even its sticks, stones, and other inert objects.

② Large size

③ They wanted to include the vegetables & even its sticks, stones etc.

In Vraja, Śrī Kṛṣṇa is visible to everyone's eyes in all His charm, wandering about to enjoy His many different pastimes.

As the speakers of this verse described that scene, they thought,
“This assembly, in which Kṛṣṇa is being threatened with defeat,
should be condemned. But the land of Vraja, where Kṛṣṇa moves
about and plays, is pious. The people of that place are good, but
the residents of this city are not.”

The word añcati means “he moves about,” but it may also mean
“he honors.”

Taken in that sense, it indicates that Kṛṣṇa honors the people of
Vraja by His presence.

While speaking this verse, the women used the pronoun ayam
("this"), and one of them pointed her finger towards Krsna.

The women avoided saying Krsna's name because they
considered Him like their own husband (a chaste woman does
not speak of her husband by name) and because they were
afraid that if they pronounced His name out loud they might
lose control of themselves in ecstasy.

Someone hearing the women condemn Mathurā might assert that from the authoritative prediction of the venerable ṛṣi Garga it was already known that Kṛṣṇa would become the master of Mathurā.

That city, then, and all its residents gathered at the assembly were destined to become very fortunate.

As unavoidable as this truth might have been, the women of Mathurā still insisted that Vraja-bhūmi is the only truly pious place.

Kṛṣṇa, the primeval Lord of all living beings, is realized by spiritual aspirants in countless ways.

He is the Supersoul dwelling in every creature's heart, and His feet are worshiped by Lord Śiva and the goddess Mahā-lakṣmī.

Even so, in Vraja He disguises Himself as an ordinary human being.

To deceive enemies like Kamsa, He hides His prowess, and to
enjoy with His devotees He hides in the bushes of Vrndāvana.

In Vraja Kṛṣṇa wears all sorts of garlands made with forest
flowers.

He is always accompanied by Bala—His older brother.
Balarāma—or by forces (bala), an army of friends.

Kṛṣṇa herds His cows, plays on His flute, and enjoys the rāsa dance and other pastimes with His devotees.

But the residents of Mathurā think of Kṛṣṇa differently.

Mathurā's eminent kṣatriyas, steeped in knowledge of the smṛtis and śrutis, always see Kṛṣṇa as the timeless Personality of Godhead, an attitude that prevents them from having more intimate relationships with Him.

They and the other residents of Mathurā, seeing Him as Vāsudeva, the Lord in the heart, feel no urgent need to have Him always present before them outside the heart.

Generally, the devotees of Mathurā envision Kṛṣṇa with four arms and all the other opulent features of the Supreme Lord, and they remember how He is worshiped by Lord Śiva and other demigods; consequently, they cannot realize the same fullness of prema as the devotees of Vṛndāvana.

In Vṛndāvana, all the Vraja-vāsīs are always so eager to see Kṛṣṇa that they cannot tolerate being absent from Him even for a moment.

They forever see Him in His most attractive humanlike form, and their love for Him is always fully awakened.

Thinking of Him as the darling son of Śrī Nanda and Yaśodā, they feel for Him the sweetest of sentiments.

Their relationships with Him are a treasure so precious and confidential, they feel, that their lives depend upon protecting it.

Worshiping Him in various intimate ways, they enjoy the extreme limits of happiness.

Certainly they are more fortunate than anyone else, and so the land where they live is naturally the most fortunate of places.

Of course, the Yādavas of Mathurā are great Vaiṣṇavas,
situated on the transcendental platform of love of God, but
Kṛṣṇa never appears among them decorated with wonderful
garlands of forest flowers, as He does among the Vraja-vāsīs.

And even if by His royal wealth He does sometimes acquire
such garlands in the big city of Mathurā, we cannot expect to
see Him tending cows there.

And even if He owns a royal herd of cows and sometimes plays at taking care of them, how in Mathurā can He always be in the company of Balarāma?

Very often one or the other of the two transcendental brothers has to go somewhere else to carry out His duties.

And in Mathurā how can Kṛṣṇa play with all the young cowherd boys?

The young Yadus may sometimes dress up as cowherd boys in
games to imitate Kṛṣṇa's friends in Vraja, but even then in
Mathurā Kṛṣṇa doesn't play His flute.

Nor does He exhibit the many special pastimes unique to
Vraja, like His rāsa-līlā.

By using the word **krīḍayā** (“with His playful pastimes”), the
speakers of this verse hinted at Kṛṣṇa's rāsa dance, but due to
feminine shyness they avoided mentioning it by name.

The last phrase of this verse states that Kṛṣṇa's feet are
worshiped by **giritra-ramā**—Lord Śiva and Mahā-lakṣmī.

But there is another way to understand these words, a way
that shows careful regard for the consistency of the verse as
glorification of Vraja-bhūmi.

While Kṛṣṇa held Govardhana Hill, Śrīmatī Rādhārānī freed
Him from the danger of dropping the mountain by relieving
Him of His fatigue with Her loving glance.

Thus She, the original goddess of fortune (ramā), saved Him
from the mountain (giri-trā).

Or else Kṛṣṇa Himself, having saved Vraja-bhūmi by means of
the mountain, is called Giritra, and because Rādhā gives
pleasure to that Govardhana-dhārī, She is called Giritra-ramā.

She worships Kṛṣṇa's feet, but only in Vraja, so Vraja alone is
pious.

By recounting the glories of Śrī Goloka, Parīkṣit Mahārāja realized such an advanced level of prema that he felt the ecstatic mood of the women of Mathurā-purī, and in this frame of mind he sang this verse.

Text 97

aho 'ti-dhanyā vraja go ramanyah
stanyāmṛtaṁ pītam atīva te mudā
yāsām vibho vatsatarātmajātmanā
yat-trīptaye 'dyāpy atha nālam adhvarāḥ

→ All the Vedic sacrifices → there as given u such satisfaction

“O (aho) almighty Lord (vibho), how greatly fortunate (ati-dhanyāḥ) are the cows (go) and ladies (ramanyah) of Vṛndāvana (vraja)! Taking the form of their calves and children (vatsatara-ātmaja-ātmanā), You have happily drunk (pītam) to Your (te) full (atīva) satisfaction (mudā) the nectar (amṛtaṁ) of their breast milk (yāsām stanya). All the Vedic sacrifices (yad adhvarāḥ) performed from time immemorial up to the present day (adya-api) have not given You as much satisfaction (na alam trīptaye).

how fortunate
are the cows &
gods of V.
Taking the form of
calves & children → their
u drink to u full
satisfaction.

Texts 97 through 106 form the final part of Lord Brahmā's prayers to Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana (Bhāgavatam 10.14.31–40).

While in Vṛndāvana, Brahmā witnessed the unlimited mercy of Kṛṣṇa and bathed in the rasa of Kṛṣṇa's omnipotence.

And after Kṛṣṇa removed the misgivings from Brahmā's heart, Brahmā was also able to taste that rasa fully.

So Brahmā now understands that the greatest way one can praise the Personality of Godhead is simply to describe the unlimited glories of His devotees and devotional service.

From the very beginning of his life, Brahmā had prayed to the Supreme Lord for bhakti, the most fortunate of goals, but only now that he has received the special mercy of Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana has the true greatness of the Vraja-vāsīs been revealed to Him.

Now that he has some idea of just how much they cherish Kṛṣṇa, he hopes to obtain the same kind of bhakti they have, and he acclaims them the Supreme Lord's most fortunate devotees.

First he mentions the greatness of the gopīs and cows who serve as Kṛṣṇa's mothers by giving Him their milk.

The interjection aho expresses great surprise, and the prefix ati in the word ati-dhanyāḥ indicates that the good fortune of these mothers is extraordinary.

By suckling Kṛṣṇa the ladies and cows of Vraja please Him, and so their glories give pleasure to the entire universe.

The motherly gopīs are referred to after the cows because the mothers are even more fortunate.

Why? Because even though Kṛṣṇa is not fully satisfied by all the Aśvamedha-yajñas and all the other sacrifices performed since the creation of the universe by great demigods and sages like Brahmā himself, He is satisfied at every moment while drinking the milk of these mothers.

Exalted devas and ṛṣis are expert in gratifying anyone they choose to favor, but they cannot so fully satisfy Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa assumed the forms of the calves and the sons of all those mothers in Vraja just so He could drink their milk.

By using the past tense (pītam), Brahmā implies that the time for that special arrangement has come to an end, for the calves and boys he had stolen have now returned to their mothers.

The word atīva (“fully”) can be understood to be connected either with the preceding word pītam (“has been drunk”) or the following word mudā (“with satisfaction”).

Because of the unlimited affection Kṛṣṇa has for His devotees, He drank the milk of all those mothers very much, and He drank with great pleasure.

By addressing Kṛṣṇa with the word **vibho** (“O infinite Lord”),
Brahmā establishes that even during the time Kṛṣṇa assumed
the forms of calves and calf-herding boys He remained
unlimited.

The word **vibho** also describes Kṛṣṇa as endowed with
supreme mystic power, by which He remains the unlimited
Absolute Truth even when He appears in limited sizes to
entertain His devotees.

Kṛṣṇa can easily do what is ordinarily impossible.

Although it would have been most appropriate to describe first the glories of the best of Kṛṣṇa's beloved devotees—Śrīmatī Rādhārānī and Her companions—Brahmā does not do so, because he has not yet realized how extraordinary is the rasa of the gopīs' love for Kṛṣṇa.

Since knowledge of the gopīs' supreme devotion has not yet awakened in Brahmā's heart, he does not pray for elevation to their standard of bhakti.

In Vrndāvana Brahmā could see Kṛṣṇa only in the form of Bāla-gopāla, so when he begins his prayers he addresses Kṛṣṇa as “the son of a cowherd, with small, tender feet,” not as Gopīnātha, the Lord of the gopīs.

Besides, despite being Kṛṣṇa’s oldest servant, Brahmā thinks of himself as Kṛṣṇa’s son, so he naturally wants to avoid intruding into Kṛṣṇa’s amorous affairs.

As Parīkṣit Mahārāja sang these ten verses, he felt in his own
heart the moods of Śrī Brahmā, the spiritual master of all
classes of Vaiṣṇavas.

How fortunate
are the
of the
telis
of the
SFG has become
friends.

Text 98

aho bhāgyam aho bhāgyam
nanda-gopa-vrajaukasām
yan-mitram paramānandaṁ
pūrṇaṁ brahma sanātanam

“How greatly fortunate (aho bhāgyam aho bhāgyam) are Nanda Mahārāja (nanda), the cowherd men (gopa), and all the other inhabitants of Vraja-bhūmi (vraja-okasām)! There is no limit to their good fortune, because the Absolute Truth, the source of transcendental bliss (parama-ānandaṁ), the eternal (sanātanam) Supreme Brahman (pūrṇaṁ brahma), has become their (yat) friend (mitram).

Kṛṣṇa acts for the benefit of the Vraja-vāsīs not just in certain situations but always.

And He not only delivers them from fear but also provides for them the highest varieties of ecstasy.

Thus He is the source of their intense happiness, and they consider Him their dearest friend.

Were He merely God, their love for Him would be severely
restricted.

But Kṛṣṇa, at once, is both the Supreme Absolute Truth and
the dear friend of the residents of Nanda's cowherd village.