

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī

Volume-2

Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

Chapter-1

Vairāgya: Renunciation

Truly my father has
understood the essence of
all śāstras & revealed it
to my grandmother

2.1.1

śrī-janamejaya uvāca

satyaṁ sac-chāstra-vargārtha-
sāraḥ saṅgrhya durlabhaḥ
gūḍhaḥ sva-mātre pitrā me
kṛṣṇa-premṇā prakāśitaḥ

परिक्लिप्त

Śrī Janamejaya said: Truly (satyaṁ), ^{परिक्लिप्त} my father (pitrā me) gleaned (saṅgrhya) the essential meaning of all eternal scriptures (sat-śāstra-varga-ārtha-sāraḥ), and with great love for Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa-premṇā) he revealed (prakāśitaḥ) to his mother (sva-mātre) that rare confidential truth (durlabhaḥ gūḍhaḥ).

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī begins his commentary on the second part of Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta by offering his homage to Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Śrīla Sanātana writes, “By taking shelter of Lord Caitanya’s gemlike beauty, even a dull person like me can be inspired to dance wonderfully.”

This second part of Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta reveals the glories of the highest spiritual planet, Goloka, where pure devotees who have received the essence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s mercy enjoy the infinite ecstasy of playing with Kṛṣṇa forever.

To prepare us for hearing the superexcellent glories of Goloka, Kṛṣṇa’s personal abode, the seven chapters in Part One of Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta were meant for gradually removing all obstructing misconceptions.

There the first chapter began a story, in answer to a question by Uttarā, that first told of the glories of devotional service manifest on earth by depicting the opulent, first-class worship offered to Kṛṣṇa by a learned brāhmaṇa who was master of a village and by a mighty king.

To hear more of the discourse between Uttarā and her son, Parīkṣit, his son Janamejaya asks Jaimini a question.

Jaimini was Janamejaya's spiritual master, and to please him Janamejaya praises what he has heard thus far.

In Part One of Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta, Parīkṣit left aside everything superfluous and spoke to his mother the essence of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, the best of revealed scriptures.

This rare accomplishment required that he understand many scriptures, many sources of pure knowledge, and carefully ascertain their confidential purport regarding unalloyed devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

By the word satyam, King Janamejaya confirms that he accepts everything spoken in the first part as authoritative and true.

I am not satisfied -
PLS speak more of this
bhāgavatavīta

2.1.2

śrīmad-bhāgavatāmbhodhi-
pīyūṣam idam āpiban
na tṛpyāmi muni-śreṣṭha
tvad-mukhāmbhoja-vāsitam

O best of sages (muni-śreṣṭha), I cannot drink enough (āpiban na tṛpyāmi) of this nectarean ocean of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (idam śrīmad-bhāgavatāmbhodhi-pīyūṣam), its fragrance enhanced by contact with your lotus mouth (tvad-mukhāmbhoja-vāsitam).

Although Janamejaya Mahārāja has already tasted perfect nectar in Part One, he still wants to taste more.

The Bhāgavatam and other scriptures that reveal the secrets of pure devotional service are śrīmat, “full of beauty and riches.”

These exceptional scriptures are like boundless oceans, for the scriptures are vast not only in size but also in the scope of their ideas.

Just as the Ocean of Milk is the greatest ocean, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the greatest devotional scripture, unfathomably deep.

In the narration of Nārada's search for the greatest object of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's mercy, Janamejaya has enthusiastically drunk the exquisitely sweet nectar of the Bhāgavatam. Nonetheless, his thirst is not yet quenched.

Because Jaimini has mixed into this nectar the attractive fragrance emanating from his own lotus mouth, Janamejaya's thirst to hear has become so much stimulated that he cannot hear enough.

∴ On you 2C
tell me what other
nectarean topics were
discussed by the two of them?

2.1.3

tan mātā-putrayor vidvan
saṁvādaḥ kathyatām tayoh
sudhā-sāra-mayo 'nyo 'pi
kṛṣṇa-pādābja-lubdhayoḥ

Therefore (tad), O learned one (vidvan), please tell me (kathyatām)
what other (anyah api) nectarean topics were discussed (sudhā-sāra-
mayo saṁvādah) by the mother and son (tayoḥ), who were greedy
to enjoy the taste of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet (kṛṣṇa-pādābja-lubdhayoḥ).

Although the topics discussed by Uttarā and Parīkṣit involve privileged knowledge meant only for pure devotees of the Lord, Jaimini Ṛṣi is also vidvān, a competent knower of those secrets

These subject
matters are very
difficult to understand
& speak. For even the
great sages these topics
are difficult to comprehend

2.1.4

śrī-jaiminir uvāca
naitat sva-śaktito rājan
vaktum jñātum ca śakyate
sarva-jñānām ca durjñeyam
brahmānubhavinām api

Śrī Jaimini said: O king (rājan), to understand or speak about these topics (etad vaktum jñātum ca) by one's own strength (sva-śaktito) is impossible (na śakyate). Even all-knowing sages (sarva-jñānām) who directly perceive the Absolute Truth (brahmānubhavinām api) find them difficult to comprehend (durjñeyam).

The essence of the science of pure devotion to Kṛṣṇa is beyond the power of words to explain or the mind to comprehend.

Even mystics who can see past, present, and future, and even liberated souls, whose minds are attuned to perceiving transcendental reality, fail to understand the glories of Goloka revealed in the nectar ocean of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

Much more exalted than the spiritual reality of impersonal Brahman is the ultimate reality shared by the Personality of Godhead and His devotees.

SG is an ocean
of bhakti rasa & by his
mercy I could directly
hear the conversation b/w
U & PM

2.1.5

kr̥ṣṇa-bhakti-rasāmbhodheḥ
prasādād bādarāyaṇeḥ
parīkṣid-uttarā-pārśve
niviṣṭo 'śrauṣam añjasā

śukadeva G. 10.25.1

But Bādarāyaṇi (bādarāyaṇeḥ) is an ocean of the rasas of kr̥ṣṇa-
bhakti (kr̥ṣṇa-bhakti-rasāmbhodheḥ), and by his mercy (prasādād) I
sat (niviṣṭah) near Parīkṣit and Uttarā (parīkṣid-uttarā-pārśve) and
directly heard their conversation (aśrauṣam añjasā).

If, as Jaimini says, Kṛṣṇa and His devotional service are beyond the mind and words, how was Jaimini himself able to speak the sublime first part of Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta?

Jaimini answers that Śukadeva Gosvāmī, the son of Bādarāyaṇa, empowered him. Jaimini was expert in many departments of Vedic knowledge and had deep realization of the Absolute Truth.

But he was unable to understand and describe Kṛṣṇa's glories on the strength of these qualifications alone; rather, he was empowered by the favor of the exalted Vaiṣṇava Śukadeva.

Knowing that Jaimini was the only person fit to repeat the conversation between Parīkṣit and his mother, Sukadeva arranged for Jaimini to sit in a place that would be[out] next to them so he could hear the Bhāgavatāmṛta.

Since Jaimini heard it and was empowered by Śukadeva Gosvāmī[out] to understand it properly, the book has the potency to capture the serious attention of its readers.

And because of having been transmitted by the mercy of exalted devotees, Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta should be accepted as authentic revealed scripture.

Bro's the vedas
Say that a guru
Can speak even the
most confidential truth to the
loyal disciple, now please hear
the glories of Goloka

2.1.6

param gopyam api snigdhe
śiṣye vācyam iti śrutih
tac chrūyatām mahā-bhāga
goloka-mahimādhunā

The Vedas say (iti śrutih) that to a loyal disciple (snigdhe śiṣye) one may speak even the most confidential secret (gopyam api vācyam). Therefore (tac), O most fortunate one (mahā-bhāga), now please hear (adhunā śrūyatām) the glories of Goloka (goloka-mahimā).

Although what Janamejaya asked Jaimini is confidential, Jaimini is willing to speak because Janamejaya is fit to hear.

This is implied by the epithet mahā-bhāga, “O most fortunate one.”

In Part One, Jaimini described the glories of the most intimate devotees of the Supreme Lord, and now he will describe the glories of Goloka, the place dearest to the Lord.

Because this description glorifies the Lord and His devotees, it is fitting for the Bhāgavatāmṛta.

2.1.7

śrī-kṛṣṇa-karuṇā-sāra-
pātra-nirdhāra-sat-kathām
śrutvābhūt paramānanda-
pūrṇā tava pitāmahī

After your grandmother heard (śrutvā tava pitāmahī) the sacred narration (sat-kathām) about the search (nirdhāra) for the person most favored by the essence of Lord Kṛṣṇa's mercy (śrī-kṛṣṇa-karuṇā-sāra-pātra), she was filled with the highest bliss (paramānanda-pūrṇā abhūt).

After ① heard
the narration about the
search of PK very,
she was filled with
gratitude + bliss

2.1.8-9

tādr̥g-bhakti-viśeṣasya gopī-kānta-padābjayoh
śrotuṃ phala-viśeṣaṃ tad bhoga-sthānaṃ ca sat-tamam

vaikuṅṭhād api manvānā vimr̥śantī hr̥di svayam
tac cānākalayantī sā papraccha śrī-parīkṣitam

But, becos she could not conclude it on her own, she asked PM

Exceptional devotion (tādr̥g-bhakti-viśeṣasya) to the lotus feet of the Lord, the lover of the gopīs (gopī-kānta-padābjayoh), has a special fruit (phala-viśeṣam), and Uttarā was eager to hear about that fruit (tad śrotuṃ), and about the place where it is enjoyed (bhoga-sthānaṃ), which she thought (manvānā) must be higher than even Vaikuṅṭha (vaikuṅṭhād api sat-tamam). Wondering within her heart (vimr̥śantī hr̥di) about these topics (tac ca), unable to conclude anything on her own (svayam anākalayantī), she inquired from Śrī Parīkṣit (sā papraccha śrī-parīkṣitam).

① Udg Raga
hbg about to
g) the exention fruit of
devotion to Gopi-kanta
b) bhoga-sthāna
she felt that
place must be
than vaikuṅṭha
she
she

Mother Uttarā was uncertain about the identity of the place of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's intimate pleasure pastimes, which she supposed must be more excellent than the majestic kingdom of God, Vaikuṅṭha.

Confident of her son's ability to resolve her doubt, she unhesitatingly submitted to him this question.

2.1.10

śrīmad-uttarovāca

kāminām puṇya-kartṛṇām
trai-lokyam grhiṇām padam
agrhanām ca tasyordhvaṁ
sthitam loka-catustayam

Text 2.1.10-20

↓
① setting up the context
Q key question.
↓
By setting up this context
she wants to ask about
the destination or the course
of Gopīnath.

Attached
householders
↓
offer the 3 worlds
↓
But renouncing by work
the 4 worlds beyond it

Śrīmatī Uttarā said: By performing auspicious duties (puṇya-kartṛṇām), householders with material desires (kāminām grhiṇām) can achieve the three celestial worlds (trai-lokyam padam), and persons who have renounced their homes (agrhanām) can reach the four worlds (loka-catustayam) still beyond those (tasya ūrdhvaṁ sthitam).

Uttarā has some doubts about the identity of the personal abode of Śrī Gopīnātha, but she does understand that the devotees whose love is focused on Gopīnātha's lotus feet deserve to be elevated to the most excellent destination, a place better than all others.

To express this understanding to her son and properly establish the context for her inquiry, she speaks eleven verses (texts 10 through 20) describing the various destinations of different grades of progressive souls.

First she mentions the destinations of persons involved in material work, who are divided into two categories—the attached and unattached.

“Auspicious duties” are those prescribed by the Vedas; they include duties performed as regular obligations (nitya-karma), duties stipulated for exceptional circumstances (naimittika-karma), and duties performed as optional work for the fulfillment of personal desires (kāmya-karma).

The performers of these material activities are generally in the gr̥hasthāśrama, family men with many desires.

The destinations for such regulated enjoyers of the fruits of work are within the three planetary systems Bhūr, Bhuvar, and Svar.

The karmīs being described by Uttarā are not ordinary modern materialists; rather, these karmīs satisfy their material desires through the auspicious

The karmīs being described by Uttarā are not ordinary modern materialists; rather, these karmīs satisfy their material desires through the auspicious ritual duties of the Vedas.

By virtue of strict celibacy, the perpetual brahmacārīs, the vānaprasthas, and the sannyāsīs are qualified to reach the four highest material planets, namely Mahar, Janas, Tapas, and Satya.

As stated by[out] Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī states in the Second Canto of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam (2.6.20):

Proof for this statement of
Uttarā from SB

pādās trayo bahiś cāsann

aprajānām ya āśramāḥ

tri-lokyā bahiś.

(antas tri-lokyās) tv aparō
(gr̥ha-medho) (br̥had-vrataḥ)

gṛhīṇān

kāṇīṇān.

• Beyond the material realm (bahih) lies the spiritual realm (pādās trayo ca āsann) with the abodes of the liberated souls (aprajānām ya āśramāḥ). In the material realm of the three guṇas (antas tri-lokyāḥ tu) the materialists devoid of bhakti to the Lord reside (aparō gr̥ha-medhah abṛhad-vrataḥ).

In other words, those who vow never to create offspring are granted for their subtle enjoyment the worlds beyond the three systems Bhūr, Bhuvar, and Svar.

- ① attached householders → bhuh, bhuv & svarga
- ② detached renunciates → Malas, Jala, tala & Seta
- ③ Aspirants of liberation → BJ / vaikuntha.

Everyone else is entangled in household life; instead of adhering to the “great vow” of celibacy, they remain addicted to sex.

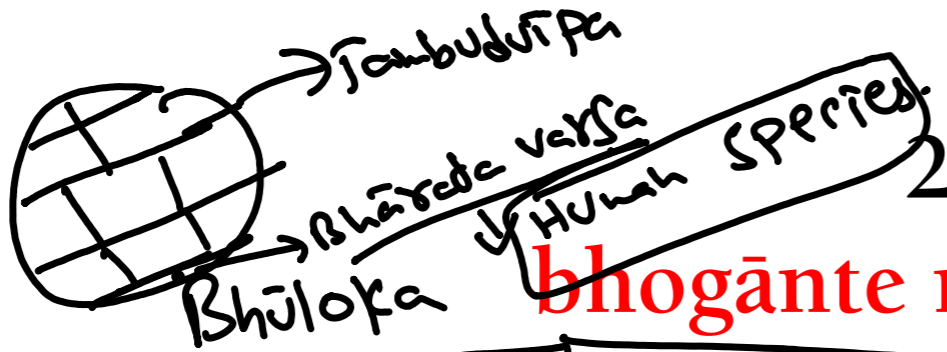
Householders who are free from material desires and whose only ambition is to execute their prescribed duties can also reach the higher planets of Mahar and beyond, and those who sufficiently purify their consciousness can even attain liberation. As Lord Rudra says in the Fourth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.24.29):

sva-dharma-niṣṭhaḥ śata-janmabhiḥ pumān
virīñcatām eti tataḥ param hi mām
avyākṛtam bhāgavato 'tha vaiṣṇavam
padam yathāham vibudhāḥ kalātyaye

A person fixed in dharma (sva-dharma-niṣṭhaḥ pumān) attains the post of Brahmā (virīñcatām eti) after a hundred births (śata-janmabhiḥ), and by more pious acts than that a person attains me, Śiva (tataḥ param hi mām). But the devotee (bhāgavataḥ) attains the abode of Vaikuṅṭha (vaiṣṇavam padam) beyond the material world (avyākṛtam) after leaving the body (kalātyaye). Similarly I in another form reside there (yathā aham), and the devatās who are qualified go there (vibudhāḥ) after destroying their subtle bodies (kalātyaye).

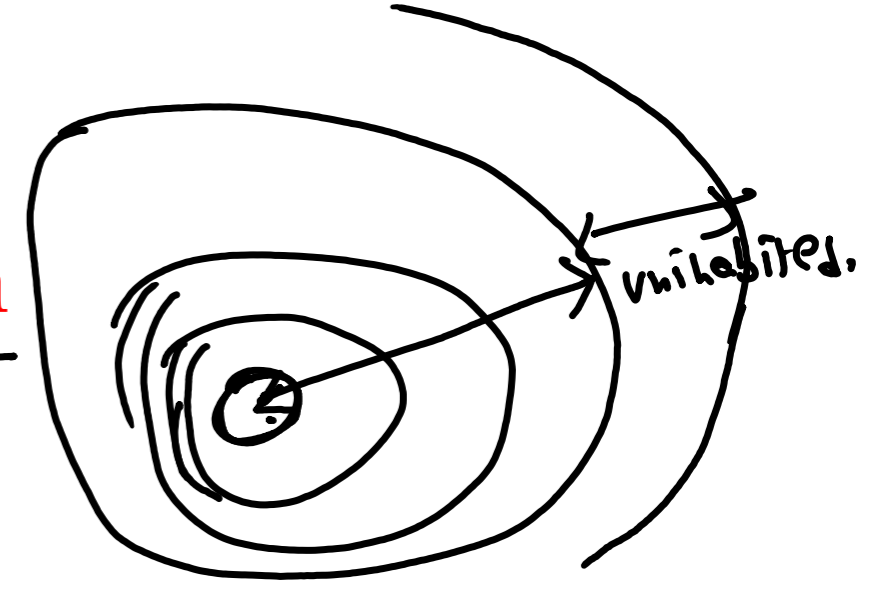
But a person directly surrendered to Lord Kṛṣṇa, or Viṣṇu, in unalloyed devotional service is at once promoted to the spiritual planets.

I and other demigods attain those planets after the destruction of the material world.”



2.1.11

**bhogānte muhur āvṛttim
ete sarve prayānti hi
mahar-ādi-gatāḥ kecin
mucyante brahmaṇā saha**

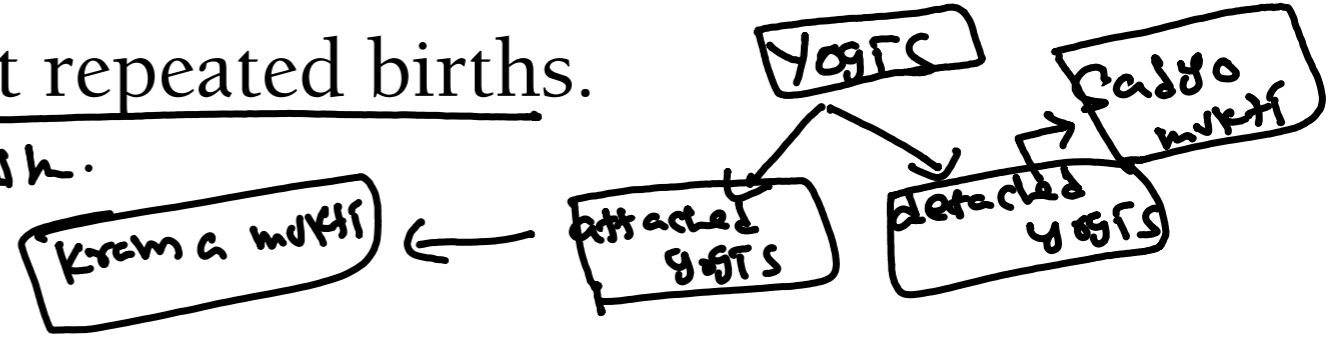


Of all these people who go to these 7 planetary systems most return back after enjoying. Only a select few in Mahar - Setya → attain liberation with Brahmā -

But when their enjoyment ends (**bhogānte**), all these persons (**ete sarve**) must return to this mundane **earth** (**muhur āvṛttim prayānti hi**). Only a select few (**kecin**) of those who have reached the planets of Mahar and beyond (**mahar-ādi-gatāḥ**) are liberated along with Brahmā (**mucyante brahmaṇā saha**).

Materially ambitious people must accept repeated births.

① veda-veda - satya
↳ ~~return~~ never leave material realm.



Among them, persons dedicated exclusively to prescribed Vedic duties can achieve liberation when they finish enjoying the results of their good works.

② attached YOGIS → Krama-mukti

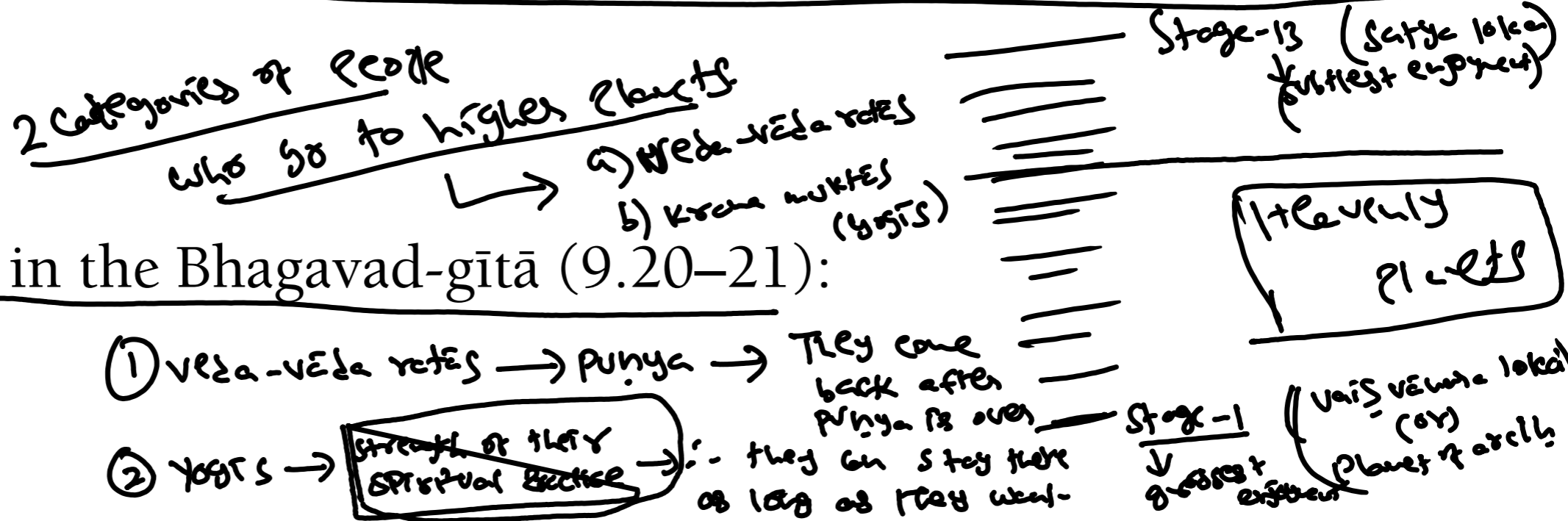
For persons whose renunciation is incomplete, one path of gradual liberation is to enjoy subtle pleasures on the Mahar, Janas, Tapas, and Satya planets for a long time and then become liberated along with Lord Brahmā when the universe is finally destroyed.

↳ Krama mukti

Another gradual path, described in the Upaniṣads and Vedānta-sūtra, is known as Arcir-ādi.

On this path the progressing candidate travels one last time through the higher regions of the universe, enjoying in each of several intermediate stages in bodies more and more subtle, until he attains liberation.

Karmīs who do not progress toward liberation enjoy heavenly pleasures temporarily and then come back down to material endeavors on lower planets.



As Śrī Kṛṣṇa says in the Bhagavad-gītā (9.20-21):

Karunā & bhakti
Svarga

|| 9.20 ||

traī-vidyā mām soma-pāh pūta-pāpā
yajñair iṣṭvā svar-gatiṁ prārthayante
te puṇyam āsādyā surendra-lokam
aśnanti divyān divi deva-bhogān

known only
the name - kanda
pariṣit

not about liberation.

(Knowers) of the three Vedas (traī-vidyā), worshipping Me indirectly (mām iṣṭvā) through sacrifice (yajñair), drinking soma (soma-pāh) and becoming purified (pūta-pāpā), pray for Svarga (svarg-gatiṁ prārthayante). Attaining puṇya in the form of the planet of Indra (puṇyam āsādyā surendra-lokam), they enjoy (te aśnanti) in heaven the celestial pleasures of the devas (divyān divi deva-bhogān).

|| 9.21 ||

(te tam bhuktvā) (svarga-lokaṃ viśālam)
(kṣiṇe punye) (martya-lokaṃ viśanti)
evam trayī-dharmam anuprapannā
gatāgataṃ kāma-kāmā labhante

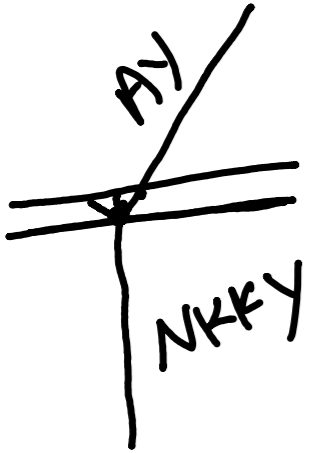
Having enjoyed the vast pleasures of Svarga (**taṃ viśālam svarga-lokaṃ bhuktvā**) and exhausting their merit (**kṣiṇe punye**), they return to this planet (**te martya-lokaṃ viśanti**). Following the rites of the three Vedas (**evam** ^{trayī-dharmam} **trayī-dharmam** **anuprapannā**), desiring objects of enjoyment (**kāma-kāmā**), they take repeated birth and death (**gatāgataṃ labhante**).

Mere elevation to the highest planets in the universe cannot assure one liberation from birth and death. One must give up all material desires.

As Śrī Kṛṣṇa states in Bhagavad-gītā (8.16), ā-brahma-bhuvanāl lokāḥ/ punar-āvartino 'rjuna: "From the highest planet in the material world down to the lowest, all are places of misery wherein repeated birth and death take place."

Only persons fully dedicated to selfless work can join Lord Brahmā in attaining liberation:

Destruction of the *kye-muktāḥ* (or) Slightly attached yogis



brahmaṇā saha te sarve
samprāpte pratisaṅcare
parasyānte kṛtātmānaḥ
praviśanti paraṁ padam

“The fully successful transcendentalists (te sarve kṛtātmānaḥ) enter the supreme abode (praviśanti paraṁ padam) along with Brahmā (brahmaṇā saha) during the final annihilation (samprāpte pratisaṅcare) at the end of Brahmā’s life (parasyānte).”

- 2 kinds of yogis
- The attached yogis attain liberation through krama-mukti
 - The detached yogis attain liberation through Sadyo-mukti

2.1.12
 gradually get liberated
 kecit kramena mucyante
 after enjoying pleasures
 (bhogān bhuktvārcir-ādisu)
 labhante yatayah sadyo
 muktim jñāna-parā hi ye

ascetic is the ISI of the
 ↑ IS destructions.
 (arcirādi) mārga
 ↓
 krama-mukti
 ↓
 Primary abhilāṣā → Liberation
 Secondary abhilāṣā → material
 pleasure

Some persons (kecit) enjoy pleasures (bhogān bhuktvā) in upper regions like the realm of fire (arcir-ādisu) and attain liberation gradually, in stages (kramena mucyante). And ascetics (ye yatayah) fully devoted to spiritual knowledge (jñāna-parā hi) quickly obtain liberation (sadyo muktim labhante).

Expert practitioners of yoga can follow the Arcir-ādi path.

The first destination on this path is Arcis, or the region ruled by the god of fire.

↓
Vaiśvānara-loka
↓
Arcis

Beyond Arcis are other regions, such as the circle of Śiśumāra. In the Second Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam(2.2.24–31) Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī elaborates on the yogī's progress on the Arcir-ādi path:

Blajavakula Legor?ran
of Krcna-mukhi

vaiśvānaram yāti vihāyasā gataḥ
suṣumṇayā brahma-pathena śociṣā
vidhūta-kalko 'tha harer udastāt
prayāti cakram nrpa śaiśumāram

Path is called
brahma-patha.
↓
because → the 15th letter
is Brahma's planet.

O King (nrpa)! The yogī, having gone by the path of Brahma-loka (brahma-pathena) goes to Vaiśvānara (vaiśvānaram yāti) by means of the ether (vihāyasā gataḥ), through the luminaries of the suṣumna-nāḍī (suṣumṇayā śociṣā). Being free of all desires (vidhūta-kalko), he then approaches the Śaiśumāra constellation (atha prayāti śaiśumāram cakram) above (udastāt), which is related to the Lord (hareh).

tad viśva-nābhim tv ativartya viṣṇor
aṇīyasā virajenātmanaikah
namaskṛtaṁ brahma-vidāṁ upaiti
kalpāyuso yad vibudhā ramante

Surpassing (ativartya) the navel of Viṣṇu, the area of Svarga (viṣṇoh tad viśva-nābhim), with his (very subtle) pure body (aṇīyasā virajena ātmanā), he alone (ekah) arrives at the worshipable Mahar-loka (namaskṛtaṁ brahma-vidāṁ upaiti), in which sages who live for a *mahā-kalpa* enjoy (kalpāyuso yad vibudhā ramante).

atho anantasya mukhānalena
dandahyamānam sa nirīkṣya viśvam
niryāti siddheśvara-juṣṭa-dhiṣṇyam
yad dvai-parārdhyam tad u pārameṣṭhyam

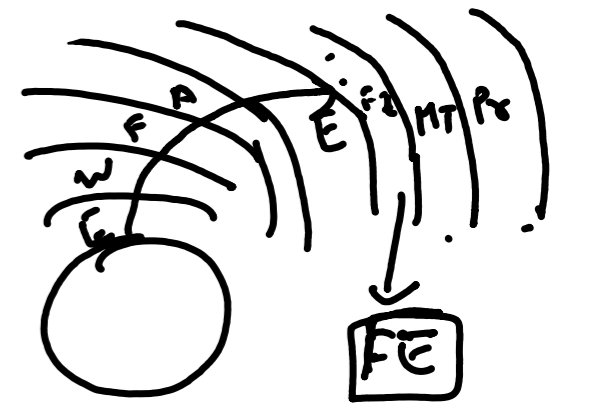
After this (athah), seeing the three worlds (including Svarga)
(nirīkṣya viśvam) burning because of the fire emanating from the
mouth of Ananta (dandahyamānam anantasya mukha analena), he
departs for Brahma-loka (sah niryāti tad u pārameṣṭhyam) which
lasts two parārdhas (yad dvai-parārdhyam), and where there are
flying vehicles used by perfected beings (siddheśvara-yuṣṭa-
dhiṣṇyam).

Description of
Brahma-loka

na yatra śoko na jarā na mṛtyur
nārtir na codvega ṛte kutaścit
yac cit tato 'daḥ kṛpayānidaṁ-vidāṁ
duranta-duḥkha-prabhavānudarśanāt

In Brahma-loka (yatra) there is no lamentation, old age, death (na śoko na jarā na mṛtyur), suffering or fear (na ārtir na ca udvega), except suffering in the mind (ṛte kutaścit yat cittato), because of their compassion (adaḥ kṛpayā) on seeing the influence of insurmountable suffering (duranta duḥkha prabhava anudarśanāt) on the living entities ignorant of the path of Vaiṣṇava-yoga (an-idaṁ-vidāṁ).

tato viśeṣaṁ pratipadya nirbhayaś
tenātmānāpo 'nala-mūrtir atvaran
jyotir-mayo vāyum upetya kāle
vāyv-ātmanā khaṁ brhad ātma-liṅgam

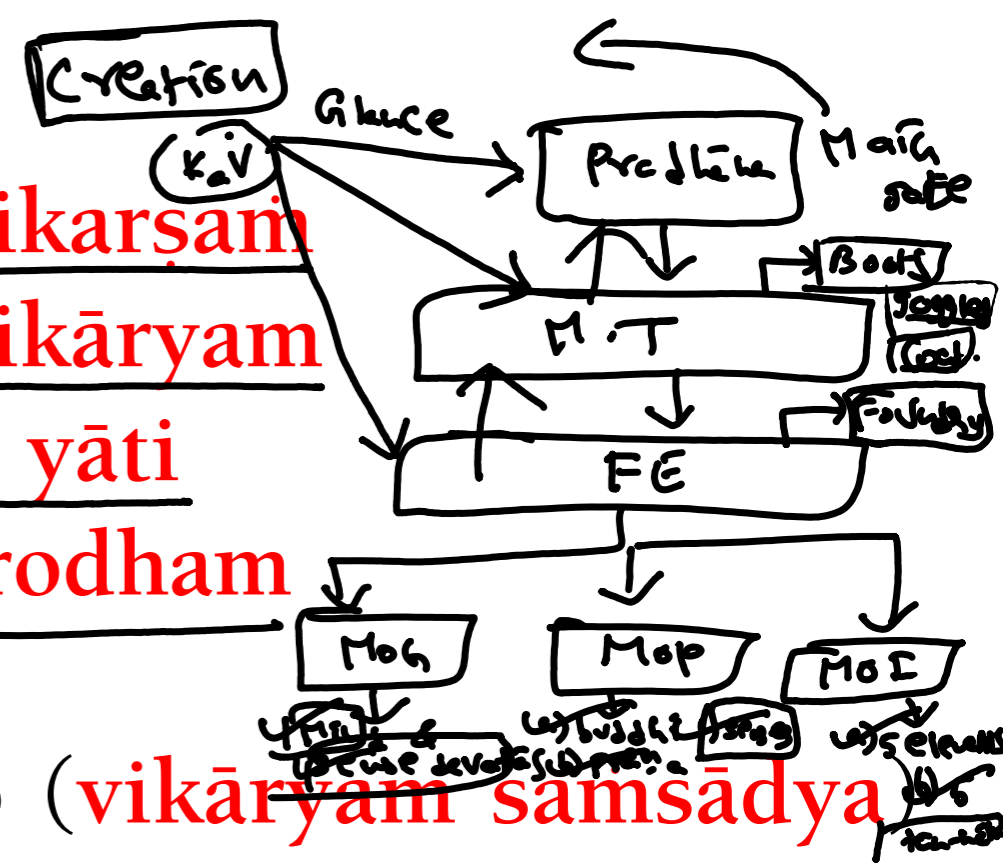


Then (tatah) he attains (pratipadya) the layer of earth (viśeṣaṁ) without fear (nirbhayaś) with a body of earth (tena ātmanā), then (atvaran) the layer of water (āpah), with a body of water (implied), and then the layer of fire (anala-mūrtih) with a body of fire (jyotirmayah). In time (kāle) he attains layer of air (vāyum upetya) with an air body (vāyv-ātmanā) and then the layer of ether (khaṁ), which is worshipped as a form of Paramātmā (brhad ātma-liṅgam).

ghrāṇena gandham rasanena vai rasam
rūpam ca dṛṣṭyā śvasanam tvacaiva
śrotreṇa copetya nabho-guṇatvam
prāṇena cākūtim upaiti yogī

The yogī attains (upaiti yogī) smell (ghrāṇena gandham), taste (rasanena vai rasam), form (rūpam ca dṛṣṭyā), touch (śvasanam tvacā eva), and sound (śrotreṇa ca upetya nabho-guṇatvam), as well as the actions of the various action senses (prāṇena ca ākūtim upaiti).

sa bhūta-sūkṣmendriya-sannikarṣaṁ
mano-mayaṁ deva-mayaṁ vikāryaṁ
samsādyā gatyā saha tena yāti
vijñāna-tattvaṁ guṇa-sannirodham



The yogī (**sah**) attains the layer of false ego (**vikāryaṁ samsādyā**) in which the sense objects, senses (**bhūta-sūkṣma indriya**), mind and sense devatās (**manomayaṁ devamayam**) are merged into the guṇas of tamas, rajas and sattva (**sannikarṣam**). He merges the false ego into the mahat-tattva layer (**saha tena yāti vijñāna-tattvaṁ**). He then merges the mahat-tattva into the pradhāna, in which the guṇas have stopped functioning (**guṇa-sannirodham**).

tenātmanātmānam upaiti śāntam
ānandam ānanda-mayo 'vasāne
etām gatim bhāgavatīm gato yaḥ
sa vai punar neha viṣajjate 'ṅga

O King (aṅga)! He merges (upaiti) his svarūpa (ātmanā) along with pradhāna (tena) into the blissful, unchanging form of Mahā-viṣṇu (ānandam śāntam ātmānam). With that termination, he remains blissful (ānandamayo avasāne). He who has attained this goal (etām gatim bhāgavatīm gato yaḥ) does not return to the material world (sa vai punar na iha viṣajjate).

Krama-mukti

This is the gradual way of liberation.

Sadyo-mukti

Paramahansas, however, are liberated immediately at the end of their current life.

2.1.13

bhaktā bhagavato ye tu
sa-kāmāḥ svecchayākhilān
bhuñjānāḥ sukha-bhogāms te
viśuddhā yānti tat-padam

Sakāma bhakte

Material desires
as his abilities/
(cherished goal)

performing D-s for
fulfilling his M-desires

Vafli Sthok

Material
desires as
his **enemies**
(obstacles)

Performs D-s
while being
embraced

But even devotees
who may still have
material desires, they can
enjoy pleasure & become purified
& then go to Lord's abode

But even the devotees of the Personality of Godhead (ye bhagavato bhaktā tu) who still have material desires (sa-kāmāḥ) can enjoy (bhuñjānāḥ) the pleasures (akhilān sukha-bhogān) they wish (svecchayā) and then become fully purified (viśuddhā) and go to the Lord's abode (yānti tat-padam).

blakti is 10 spoon salt in water

Vaiṣṇava devotees are more elevated than nondevotee paramahāṁsas.

pradhāni bhūta bhakti

guṇi bhūta bhakti

blakti - 2

Element of bhakti is minimal

Jñāna-yogī, Aṣṭāṅg-yogī

wet salt

Even a devotee burdened by material desires is in a better position than an impersonalist free from such desires.

Sādhyā

Anyā abhilāṣi

Sādhāṇā ← pure (jñāna manādi anāyika)

Mixed devotees (pradhāni bhūta bhakti)

Anyā abhilāṣi → Sādhāṇā

Bhakti + (k + j + y) → Sādhāṇā

Still, just as both karmīs and jñānīs are distinguished in terms of their relative freedom from ulterior desires, so also are bhaktas.

śānta mukti

Jñāna-yogī without m/l desires

Bhakti-yogī with material desires

(Most karmīs and jñānīs can approach perfection only gradually) only a few paramahāṁsa-jñānīs achieve immediate liberation.

Sadyo mukti

Similarly, though all Vaiṣṇavas are sure candidates for ultimate perfection, the sakāma-bhaktas, those whose devotion to the Personality of Godhead is mixed with desires to control and enjoy, must first become purified.

Still, although sakāma-bhaktas need further purification to qualify for entry into the kingdom of God, they should never be considered subject to the laws of material nature like the karmīs and jñānīs.

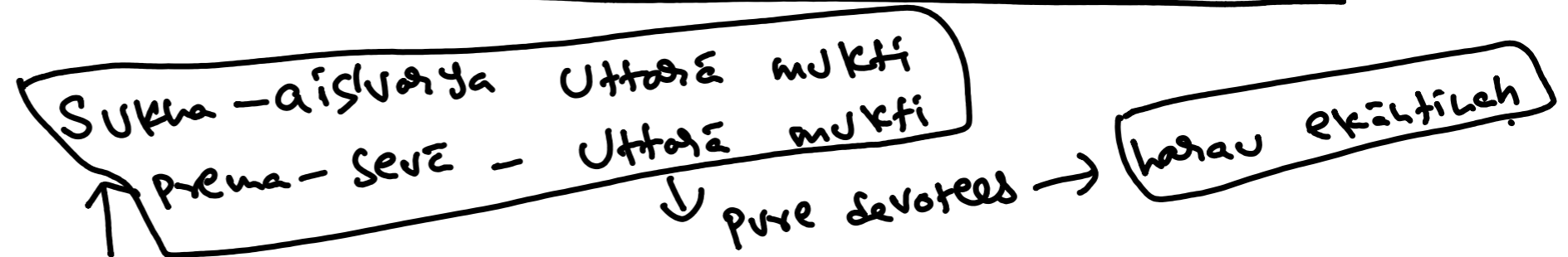
As stated here, sakāma-bhaktas live happily in this world, free from material restraints (svecchayā).

They are at liberty to visit all the regions of this world, including the highest planets, beginning with Mahar, they can reach the subtlest stages on the Arcir-ādi path, and they can attain the Vaikuntha realms within this universe like Śvetadvīpa and Ramāpriya.

↓ सुख - असुखोपशान्ते नुक्ति

Avoiding frustration from the deficiencies and miseries that taint every material situation, sakāma-bhaktas find happiness in this world (sukha-bhogān).

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī uses the word bhuñjānāḥ (“enjoying”) in a form of the present tense to indicate that even while Vaiṣṇavas are finishing up their last enjoyment of the material world the power of the Lord’s devotional service purifies them enough to demolish all obstacles in their hearts.



Their material business finished, they then achieve the Supreme Lord’s eternal abode.

The abode of ①
difficult to attain even for
liberated souls but for
blatant reach it @ once

2.1.14

vaikunṭham durlabham muktaiḥ
sāndrānanda-cid-ātmakam
niṣkā mā ye tu tad-bhaktā
labhante sadya eva tat

That abode, Vaikuntha (vaikunṭham), is made of concentrated
ecstasy and pure consciousness (sāndrānanda-cid-ātmakam). Even
for liberated souls (muktaiḥ) it is difficult to attain (durlabham). But
the Lord's devotees (ye tu tad-bhaktā) who are free from selfish
desires (niṣkā mā) reach it at once (labhante sadya eva tat).

Mother Uttarā now tells her son, Parīkṣit, what she understands about the transcendental nature of Vaikuṅṭha.

Parīkṣit has heard similar general descriptions of the ~~Vaikunṭha atmosphere~~ from Śukadeva Gosvāmī in the Second and Tenth Cantos of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam:

|| 2.2.17 ||
(na yatra kālo) ^{devatās} (nimīṣām) (paraḥ prabhuḥ)
(kuto nu devā jagatām ya īsire)
(na yatra sattvaṁ) (na rajas tamaś ca)
(na vai vikāro) (na mahān pradhānam) ||

In this person (**yatra**), time, the controller of the *devatās* (**kālah** 'nimīṣām **paraḥ**), has no influence (**na prabhuḥ**). What influence can the *devatās* (**kuto nu devā**), who control the material realm, have over him (**jagatām ya īsire**)? In him (**yatra**) there is not *sattva*, *rajas* or *tamas* (**na sattvaṁ na rajas tamaś ca**), no false ego (**na vai vikāro**), no *mahat-tattva*, and no *prakṛti* (**na mahān pradhānam**).

|| 2.2.18 ||

param padam vaiṣṇavam āmananti tad
yan neti netīy atad utsisṛkṣavaḥ
visṛjya daurātmyam ananya-sauhrdā
hr̥dopaguhyārha-padam pade pade ||

The yogīs, desiring to give up the world which is not *brahman* (atad utsisṛkṣavaḥ), thoroughly know that impersonal aspect of Viṣṇu (tad param padam vaiṣṇavam āmananti), defined as “not this,” (yad na iti na iti ity) by avoiding erring intelligence concerning the Lord’s nature (visṛjya daurātmyam) and avoiding everything not related to the Lord (ananya-sauhrdā), while embracing (upaguhya) at every moment (pade pade) the worshippingable lotus feet of the Lord (arha-padam) with their whole heart (hr̥dā).

|| 2.9.9 ||

(tasmai) (sva-lokaṁ) (bhagavān) (sabhājitaḥ)
(sandarśayām āsa) (param na yat-param) |
(vyapeta) (saṅkleśa) (vimoha) (sādhvasaṁ)
(sva-dr̥ṣṭavadbhir) (vibudhair) (abhiṣṭutam) ||

The Lord, gratified by his worship (**bhagavān sabhājitaḥ**), showed Brahmā Mahā-vaikuṅṭha (**tasmai sva-lokaṁ sandarśayām āsa**), to which nothing is superior (**param na yat-param**), which is free (**vyapeta**) of suffering (**saṅkleśa**), confusion (**vimoha**) and fear of offenses (**sādhvasaṁ**) and which is praised by the devatās (**vibudhair abhiṣṭutam**) who constantly see the self (**sva-dr̥ṣṭavadbhir**).

|| 2.9.10 ||

pravartate yatra rajas tamas tayoh
sattvam ca misram na ca kala-vikramah |
(na yatra mayā) (kim utāpare harer)
anuvratā yatra surāsūrcitāḥ ||

In Vaikuṅṭha (**yatra**) there is no (**na pravartate**) rajas or tamas (**rajas tamas**), and no sattva mixed with rajas and tamas (**sattvam ca tayoh misram**). There is no influence of time (**na ca kala-vikramah**). There is no influence of māyā at all (**na yatra māyā**), what to speak of its products such as material elements (**kim uta apare**). In Vaikuṅṭha the inhabitants are fully dedicated to the Lord (**yatra harer anuvratā**) and are worshipping by the devas, asuras and devotees (**sura asura arcitāḥ**).

iti sañcintya bhagavān
mahā-kāruṇiko hariḥ
darśayām āsa lokam svam
gopānām tamasah param

“After deeply considering (iti sañcintya), the all-merciful Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari (mahā-kāruṇiko bhagavān hariḥ) revealed (darśayām āsa) to the cowherd men (gopānām) His abode (lokam svam), which is beyond material darkness (tamasah param). (Bhāgavatam 10.28.14)

satyaṁ jñānam anantaṁ yad
brahma-jyotiḥ sanātanam
yad dhi paśyanti munayo
guṇāpāye samāhitāḥ

Lord Kṛṣṇa revealed (**implied**) the indestructible spiritual effulgence (**brahma-jyotiḥ sanātanam**), which is unlimited, conscious, and eternal (**yad satyaṁ jñānam anantaṁ**). Sages (**munayo**) see (**paśyanti**) that spiritual existence (**yad dhi**) in trance (**samāhitāḥ**), when their consciousness is free of the modes of material nature (**guṇāpāye**).” (Bhāgavatam 10.28.15)

Now, in texts 14 through 19, Uttarā similarly explains in a general way the transcendental existence of Vaikuṅṭha.

The Lord's impersonal effulgence faintly reflects the spiritual atmosphere of Vaikuṅṭha, which is the fullest manifestation of the Absolute Truth.

Having reestablished a personal relationship with the Lord, pure Vaiṣṇavas attain Vaikuṅṭha.

Impersonalists, however, at best attain the brahma-jyoti effulgence, where they realize their eternal existence without knowing their relationship with the Lord or the ecstatic pleasure that comes from serving Him in that relationship.

In other words, the Vaikuṅṭha atmosphere is a super-intensified version of the brahma-jyoti sky, and thus the life enjoyed by the Lord's devotees in Vaikuntha is much more wonderful than the comparatively insignificant pleasure of merging into the brahma-jyoti.

There, the NISRE
blotting enjoy the
bliss of serving the
feet in comparison to which
the bliss of liberation seems insignificant

2.1.15

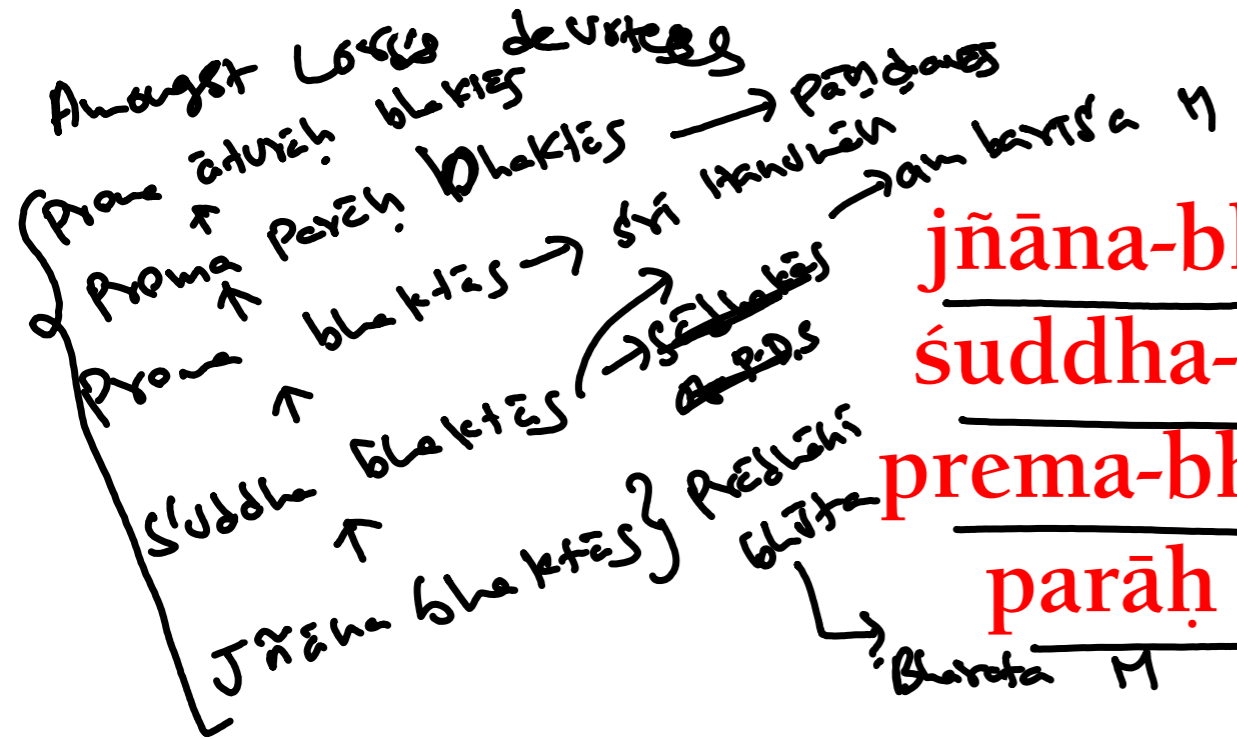
tatra śrī-kṛṣṇa-pādābja-
sākṣāt-sevā-sukhaṁ sadā
bahudhānubhavantas te
ramante dhik-kṛtāmṛtam

The pure devotees living in Vaikuntha (tatra te) enjoy forever (sadā ramante) in varied ways (bahudhā anubhavantah) the happiness (sukhaṁ) of directly serving (sākṣāt-sevā) Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet (śrī-kṛṣṇa-pādābja). In comparison, the nectar of liberation appears condemned (dhik-kata amṛtam).

For the residents of Vaikuṅṭha, God is not a distant abstraction.

They see Him always and serve Him directly.

For them that service is never tedious or degrading, but is always sheer enjoyment.



2.1.16

jñāna-bhaktās tu teṣv eke
śuddha-bhaktāḥ pare 'pare
prema-bhaktāḥ pare prema-
parāḥ premāturāḥ pare

Among the Supreme Lord's devotees (teṣv), some are devotees attached to knowledge (~~jñāna-bhaktās~~ jñāna-bhaktās tu eke), and others are pure (śuddha-bhaktāḥ pare). Still others are situated in love of God (apare prema-bhaktāḥ), others are immersed in love of God (pare prema-parāḥ), and yet others are painfully overwhelmed by love of God (premāturāḥ pare).

Vaisnavas develop their love of God to different extents and thus in any given lifetime attain different destinations.

→ *pradhāni bhūta bhaktas (mixed devotees)*

Jñāna-bhaktas cultivate devotional service mixed with the pursuit of knowledge.

Their interests focus on subjects such as the greatness of devotion to the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord.

For them devotional service consists of activities within the ninefold practice of sādhana-bhakti.

An example of such a Vaiṣṇava is Lord Rṣabhadeva's son Bharata Mahārāja.

Next, śuddha-bhaktas want only devotional service to the Personality of Godhead, without any mixture of fruitive work, knowledge, or renunciation.

Ambarīṣa Mahārāja is a typical śuddha-bhakta.

Prema-bhaktas like Śrī Hanumān are endowed with mature ecstatic love.

They perpetually serve the Lord with full-hearted enthusiasm, being interested only in the loving affection, intimate association, and opportunities for service that they find at the lotus feet of their beloved supreme master.

Still other devotees are prema-para-bhaktas, like Śrīmān Arjuna and his brothers.

They are not interested in the process of bhakti itself, but only in prema, ecstatic love.

सर्ववित्ता बलवत्

dhūmeyṛta

↓
Jvalita

↓
stṛpta → uḍḍṛpta.

By the causeless mercy of the Lord, entirely pure prema of the highest quality has arisen in their hearts, binding them by ropes of eagerness to see the Lord and enjoy friendly talks and other intimate dealings with Him.

Finally, premātura-bhaktas, such as the Yādavas, headed by Śrīmān Uddhava, are overwhelmed by the incessant bliss of prema and the intense desire to relish all the transformations of that prema and its related ecstasies.



Although everyone in Vaikuṅṭha has prema, we must recognize different degrees of prema.

The natural perfection of śuddha-bhakti is prema-bhakti, which is higher because devotees who have reached prema have special qualities not found in those who have attained only śuddha-bhakti.

And beyond prema-bhakti, the prema-para devotees are more elevated, and the premātura devotees still more.

Since there is
a gradation in
the levels of these
devotees, it is unfitting
that they achieve the same result.
But, in vaikunṭha no hierarchy
exists.

2.1.17

tāratamyavatām eṣām
phale sāmyaṁ na yujyate
tāratamyam tu vaikunṭhe
kathañcid ghaṭate na hi

Since the levels of these devotees are various (eṣām tāratamyavatām), it seems unfitting (na yujyate) that the results they achieve be the same (phale sāmyaṁ). But in Vaikunṭha (vaikunṭhe tu) no hierarchies exist (tāratamyam na hi ghaṭate).

Without higher and higher levels of enjoyment and realization of the greatness of God, the five different levels of bhakti would be incomplete.

- ① jñāna parā
- ② sthāyā bhakti
- ③ preme bhakti
- ④ preme parā
- ⑤ preme ātura.

To award the same results to devotees of differing levels of attraction would not benefit the perfect and all-compassionate Personality of Godhead.

And how could all the Lord's devotees be satisfied by only one kind of reciprocation?

Thus there is a need for hierarchy in the varieties of devotion and the corresponding moods in which the Lord reciprocates.

In Vaikuṅṭha, however, such a hierarchy is impossible to find, because the atmosphere of that place is purely spiritual.

2.1.18

paryavasyati sārūpya-
sāmīpyādau ca tulyatā
na śrūyate param prāpyam
vaikuṅṭhād adhikam kiyat

In Vaikuṅṭha everyone
seems to experience
same level of perfection
& a place higher than
never heard of

It follows that among devotees in Vaikuṅṭha there is equality even in
the special Vaikuṅṭha perfections (paryavasyati tulyatā), such as
living near the Supreme Lord (sāmīpya ādau) or attaining a form
like His (sārūpya). And a goal (prāpyam) higher than Vaikuṅṭha
(vaikuṅṭhād adhikam param) is unheard of (kiyat na śrūyate).

Someone might think that even though all devotees in Vaikunṭha share equally in the bliss of serving the Personality of Godhead, some hierarchy of greater and lesser engagements can be discerned.

Indeed, it seems that in Vaikunṭha the Lord's pastimes of supreme rulership and opulence are manifest more fully to some devotees than to others, just as in the material world the Lord is more intimately revealed to devotees who worship Him by brahma-satra (the sacrifice of transcendental knowledge) than to those who worship Him at the grosser level of karma-satra (mere ritual sacrifice).

In Vaikuṅṭha some devotees, such as those stationed as doorkeepers at the boundaries of the Lord's kingdom, seem to be relative outsiders compared to devotees who have more intimate services, such as (massaging the Lord's lotus feet.)

Ultimately, however, in Vaikuṅṭha all these varieties of devotional service are equal, displaying but minor variations in the mood of dāsyā-rasa in reverence.

The many kinds of Vaikuṅṭha perfection are equal manifestations of the same basic servitude.

Those perfections include sārūpya (having a transcendental body with four arms and other features like the Lord's) and sāmīpya (living close to the Lord as one of His associates or servants).

There are also other such perfections.

Those “others,” implied in this verse by the ending -ādaḥ in the word sāmīpyādaḥ, are attainments such as being posted as commander of the Lord’s army or as a personal servant massaging the Lord’s feet or dressing His hair.

The perfection of sāyujya, merging into the existence of God, is prized by impersonalists but is not found in Vaiḥṇava.

Rather than a devotional perfection, sāyujya is a form of impersonal liberation.

Even demons who hate the Personality of Godhead are sometimes given sāyujya as a reward for constantly meditating on the Lord as an enemy.

But anyone who has tasted devotional service to the Supreme Lord
rejects sāyujya.

Someone might ask, “But can’t a devotee in Vaikunṭha achieve some
special perfection by virtue of being exceptionally qualified?”

No, this verse replies.

Since Vaikunṭha is a place in which all desires are fulfilled, nothing
there beyond the perfections already easily available remains to be
achieved.

Of course, all
these devotees in their
portion of (V) are completely
happy as they have attained
what they desired according to
their nature

2.1.19

tat-pradeśa-viśeṣeṣu
sva-svabhāva-viśeṣataḥ
sva-sva-priya-viśeṣāptyā
sarveṣām astu vā sukham

Of course, all the devotees (sarveṣām) in each distinct region of Vaikunṭha (tat-pradeśa-viśeṣeṣu) are completely happy (sukham astu vā), for they have all achieved (āptyā) what by their own specific natures (sva-svabhāva-viśeṣataḥ) they desire (sva-sva-priya-viśeṣā).

Granting that devotees in select parts of Vaikuṅṭha are empowered to enjoy special privileges according to their unique devotional moods, there may still remain doubt about where the most confidential devotees of the Lord reside.

Within the realm of Vaikuṅṭha a few special places do exist, such as Ayodhyā and Dvārakā, where more intimate forms of pure devotional service are manifest.

For each replica abode of the Lord on earth there is an original abode in Vaikuṅṭha.

As stated in scripture,

yā yathā bhuvī vartante pur̥yo bhagavataḥ priyāḥ
tās tathā santi vaikuṅṭhe tat-tal-līlārtham adṛtāḥ

“On this earth (bhuvi) there are many sacred cities (pur̥yah vartante) dear to the Personality of Godhead (yā yathā bhagavataḥ priyāḥ), and all of them also exist in Vaikuṅṭha (tās tathā santi vaikuṅṭhe), where they are revered (ādṛtāḥ) for their importance in the Lord’s various pastimes (tat-tal-līlā artham).”

Mother Uttarā is speaking as if the liberated devotees of Vaikuṅṭha represent all five varieties of Vaiṣṇavas—jñāna-bhaktas, śuddha-bhaktas, prema-bhaktas, prema-para-bhaktas, and premātura-bhaktas.



In fact, however, she speaks without much conviction, because as far as she understands, the devotees of Vaikuṅṭha are not divided into such categories.

2.1.20

parām kāṣṭhām gatam tat-tad-
rasa-jātīyatocitam
athāpi rāsa-kṛt-tādr̥g-
bhaktānām astu kā gatiḥ

Every devotee is
perfectly satisfied in
his/her relationship with K.
BUT
What is the destination of the devotees
of rāsavilāsi?
Devotees of
Valkyrie

(They) have all attained the ultimate limit of happiness (parām kāṣṭhām gatam), each in his own kind of ecstatic reciprocation with the Lord (tat-tad-rasa-jātīyatā ucitam). But (athāpi) what place is destined (kā gatiḥ astu) for the exceptional devotees of the performer of the rāsa dance (rāsa-kṛt-tādr̥g-bhaktānām)?

“Well,” someone might ask, “if there is a hierarchy of greater and lesser devotees in Vaikuntha, then only some of them are fully happy. Is that proper? Aren’t devotees of the Supreme Lord, especially those who have attained Vaikuntha, greater than mere liberated souls? Don’t they enjoy the highest happiness, above that of liberation?”

The current verse clears this doubt.

All the residents of Vaikuntha enjoy incomparable happiness, but some gradation of happiness still exists because each devotee relishes a mixture of ecstasies that make up his individual devotional mood, or rasa.

It is natural, therefore, that according to a devotee's sthāyi-bhāva, the predominating mood of his ecstatic rasa, he receive a particular degree and kind of happiness.

Degree & kind
of happiness

śānta rati
dasya
sakhye
vātsalye
mellāyā

Nonetheless, each devotee thinks that his happiness is perfect and complete, because it exactly suits his personality.

Having acknowledged this, Mother Uttarā next expresses her own doubt about the devotees of Kṛṣṇa, whose spontaneous love for the Lord is greater than all other varieties of prema.

In Vaikuṅṭha is there a special place where those devotees can enjoy the supreme happiness they deserve?

Within Uttarā's question are the following implications: ^① The śuddha-bhaktas, in their worship of the Supreme Lord, enjoy greater ecstasy than the jñāna-bhaktas.

But although the devotees in Vaikuṅṭha find themselves in a hierarchy that would normally cause envy, quarrel, and other kinds of conflict, those devotees are free from jealousy and other faults, which are the root causes of pain and lamentation.

Without this purity they could not reside in Vaikuṅṭha.

Being affectionately attached to one another in sublime prema, they all feel ever-increasing happiness in their worship of the Lord.

As already mentioned, the śuddha-bhaktas, whose devotion to the Lord does not depend on the pleasure of life in Vaikuṅṭha, are higher than the more conditional jñāna-bhaktas.

That being so, what about the status of devotees still more elevated?

What about the Lord's best servants, the prema-bhaktas, who are indifferent to all possible selfish concerns?

What about the Lord's supreme friends, the prema-para-bhaktas, who receive His unconditional special favor?

And what about His closest loved ones, the premātura-bhaktas, who are bound by the most intimate relationships with the Lord and who live only for His satisfaction?

What special place can be found in Vaikuṅṭha for those superexcellent devotees?

The Skanda Purāṇa explains that exceptional regions do exist in Vaikuṅṭha.

Vaikuṅṭha has transcendental cities such as Ayodhyā and Dvārakā, which, like their counterparts on earth, are filled with the Supreme Lord's personal associates and paraphernalia.

In those supreme places the Lord is always present in His most attractive forms.

Thus, for example, ^{योग भक्ता} in the Ayodhyā region of Vaikuntha devotees of the standard of Hanumān constantly see the Lord of the Raghus, Lord Rāmacandra, attended by Śrī Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa, and the rest of His entourage.

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2.1.21

ye sarva-nairapekṣyena
rādhā-dāsyecchavaḥ param
saṅkīrtayanti tan-nāma
tādṛśa-priyatā-mayāḥ

They chant His names (saṅkīrtayanti tan-nāma) and are full of unique love for Him (tādṛśa-priyatā-mayāḥ). Indifferent to everything else (sarva-nairapekṣyena), they want only to become servants of Śrī Rādhā (ye rādhā-dāsyā icchavaḥ param).

They chant His
names & have unique
love for Him. They are
indifferent to everything else
& they want only rādhā-dāsyam

The devotees of Śrī Rādhā, who is the dearmost beloved of Lord Madana-gopāla, are not impersonalists void of desires.

They are fully confident that if Śrī Rādhikā accepts them as Her servants, everything they desire will be achieved, and more.

The privilege of serving Śrī Rādhā is the rarest goal of life, and it is fitting that this privilege be attainable only by executing the most excellent of sādhanas.

That is to say, one can please Her Divine Grace only by the sacrifice of purely chanting the names of Śrī Rāsa-rasika, the hero of the rāsa dance. In sweet voices the servants of Śrī Rādhā always melodiously and loudly chant Kṛṣṇa's names.

Such devotees are worthy to engage in such elevated service because their hearts are filled with the supreme variety of spontaneous ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa.

2.1.22

anyeṣām iva teṣām ca
prāpyam ced hṛn na tṛpyati
aho nanda-yaśodāder
na sahe tādrśīm gatim

I cannot tolerate
if you tell me that
these special devotees would
also attain the same perfection
as the vaikunthasīs

If those special devotees (teṣām ced) attain (prāpyam) only the same perfection as others (anyeṣām iva), my heart will be left discontent (hṛd na tṛpyati). For such devotees as Nanda and Yaśodā (nanda-yaśodā ādeh) to reach only the same destination (tādrśīm gatim)—to me the very thought is intolerable (aho na sahe).

Someone might propose that Śrī Mathurā-purī, like Ayodhyā and Dvārakā,
may be located in Vaikuṅṭha.

↓
वृन्दापुर

The devotees of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa may thus have their Vaikuṅṭha Gokula
where they can enjoy pastimes with the Lord and feel happiness greater than
that of the Yādavas, just as the Yādavas enjoy happiness greater than that of
the Pāṇḍavas.

Uttarā, however, is not satisfied with this proposal.

She cannot tolerate having the devotees of Gokula categorized with other,
ordinary Vaiṣṇavas.

These devotees
are unlicitely super
excellent

2.1.23

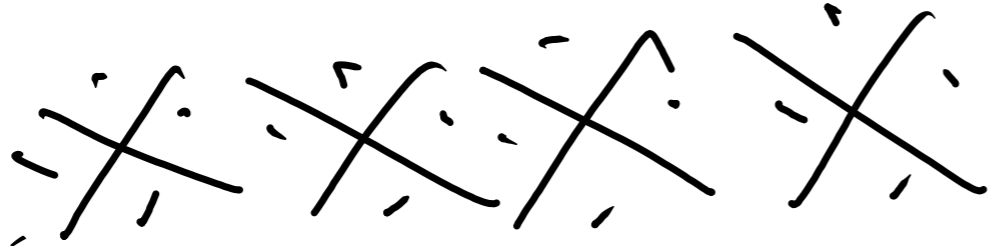
vividhānām mahimnām hi
yatra kāṣṭhāḥ parāḥ parāḥ
koṭīnām paryavasyanti
samudre sarito yathā

Varied (vividhānām) and countless (koṭīnām parāḥ parāḥ kāṣṭhāḥ)
excellences (mahimnām) flow (paryavasyanti) into those devotees
(yatra), like rivers into the ocean (samudre sarito yathā).

All varieties of perfection are fully manifest in the devotees of Gokula.

Those devotees are perfectly beautiful, charming, and graceful, and they are endowed with the valuable assets of religious duty, economic development, sense gratification, renunciation, knowledge, realization, devotion, and pure love of God.

All these perfections are present within them to the utmost degree possible for finite living beings.



Whenever Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta depicts the glories of devotees
lesser than the residents of Gokula, its purpose is to highlight the
greater glories of the Gokula-vāsīs and demonstrate that all varieties
of excellence flow ultimately into the residents of Gokula, just as
the waters of all rivers flow at last into the ocean.

... I am convinced
that there must be a place
beyond Vaikuntha. PLS reveal it

2.1.24

tad-artham ucitam sthānam
ekam vaikunṭhataḥ param
apekṣitam avaśyam syāt
tat prakāśyoddharasva mām

Therefore (tad-artham) a suitable place (ucitam sthānam ekam) must surely exist for them (avaśyam apekṣitam syāt), beyond Vaikunṭha (vaikunṭhataḥ param). Please reveal it to me (tat prakāśya) and rescue me (uddharasva mām).

In this verse Mother Uttarā sums up her inquiry.

She reasons that there must be some place even greater than Vaikuṅṭha, a place suitable for the enjoyment of devotees like Śrī Nanda and Yaśodā.

That place should have certain qualifications.

Qualifications for an abode that is fit
for the vrajavāsīs

It 1 should be devoid of thought that the Lord is the supreme all-powerful controller (in other words, it should be free from awe and reverence).

②

It should be untainted by flaws that impede the growth of ecstatic love.

③

It should be invisible to those who are addicted to dry knowledge.

④

And it should be approachable only by those dearest servants of the Lord who delight in being caught under the sway of a prema untasted in this world or any other.

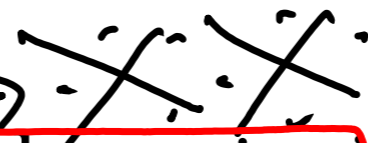
⑤
That place should be the quintessence of attractiveness, a place fully enriched with the unique, indescribable bliss of transcendental rasa.



⑥
It should be sweeter than the sweet, superior to the superior, describable only by great saints who forever relish the taste of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, saints like Nārada, for surely he must sing the glories of that place with his vīṇā.



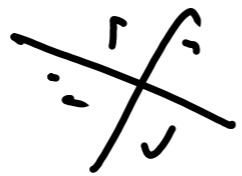
“Such a unique place must certainly exist.” Uttarā thinks, “but because it is most confidential and I am not very intelligent I am unable to ascertain its identity.”



Therefore, lost in an ocean of sadness, in waves of doubt, in deep currents of confusion, she asks her son, Parīkṣit, to reveal that place to her by describing it in words.

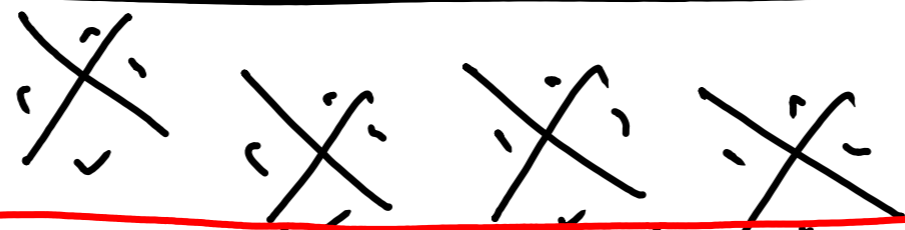
By doing this he will lift her out of the ocean of sorrow.

Of course, the blessed district of Mathurā, the best of all places, is already manifest on earth and can most certainly provide Śrī Nanda and others the exceptional happiness of taking part in the Lord's wonderful pastimes.



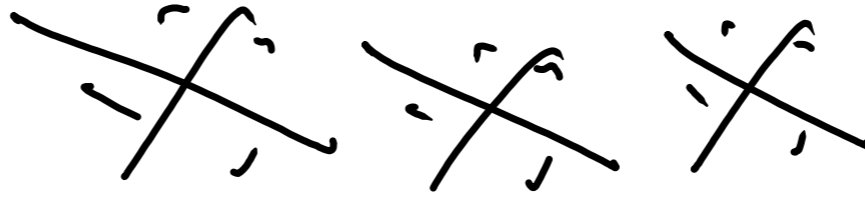
But Uttarā has doubts because that Mathurā is within the material world.

Thus she is asking whether another transcendental location exists for the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and His favorite devotees.

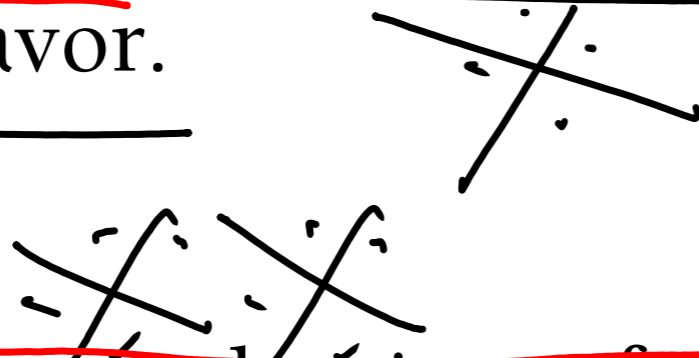


(To external vision) the modern residents of the earthly Mathurā seem subject to the bodily transformations of disease, old age, and death and so appear entangled in mundane illusion.)

Unlike the Lord's abode in Vaikuṅṭha, the Mathurā on earth does not seem to award immediate perfection to everyone who merely steps into it.



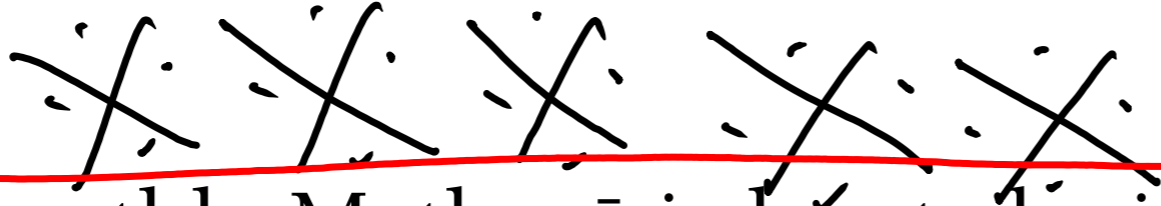
So Uttarā doubts whether the earthly Mathurā is in fact the ultimate goal of human endeavor.



And she suspects that at the time of the universal annihilation or of the partial annihilation of the three middle planetary systems, the district of Mathurā may disappear.

This question raised by Mother Uttarā, although subtle and therefore difficult, will gradually be answered by Parīkṣit through the story of Gopa-kumara.

First Parīkṣit will describe Śrī Goloka in the spiritual world as the destination of Kṛṣṇa's most intimate devotees, and then he will speak about the pleasure pastimes Kṛṣṇa performs both there and in the Mathurā on earth.



Although the earthly Mathurā is located within the material realm, it remains untouched by the influence of illusion, just as the Supreme Lord Himself, His devotees, and His pastimes remain unaffected by illusion when they descend to the material world.

As Śrī Nārada Muni will state later in Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta (2.5.55):

nānā-vidhās tasya paricchadā ye
nāmāni līlāḥ priya-bhūmayaś ca
satyāni nityāny akhilāni tadvad
ekāny anekāni ca tāni viddhi

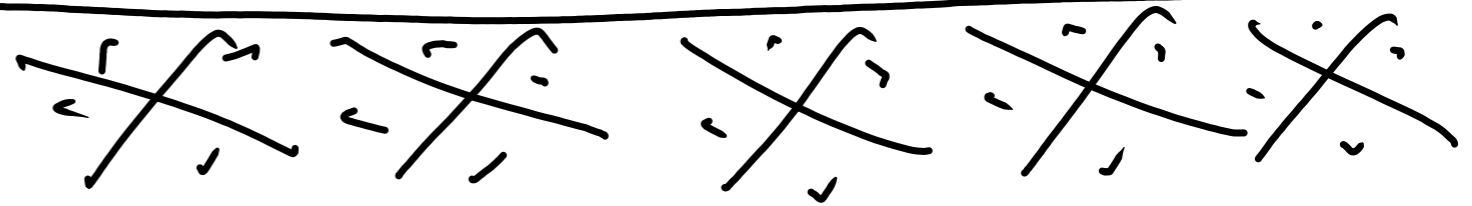
“All the paraphernalia of the Lord’s service (tasya paricchadā ye), including His names, His pastimes, and His favorite abodes (nāmāni līlāḥ priya-bhūmayaś ca), assume various forms (nānā-vidhāḥ). You should understand (tadvad viddhi) that just as each of these forms is eternally real (tāni akhilāni satyāni nityāny), each is simultaneously one and many (ekāny anekāni ca).”

Yogamāyā, the spiritual energy of the Lord, arranges for the present-day residents of Mathura to appear to undergo material transformations.



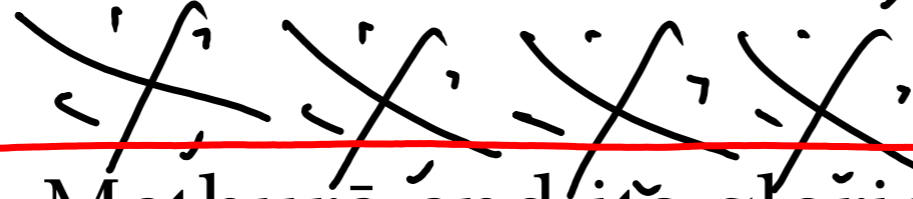
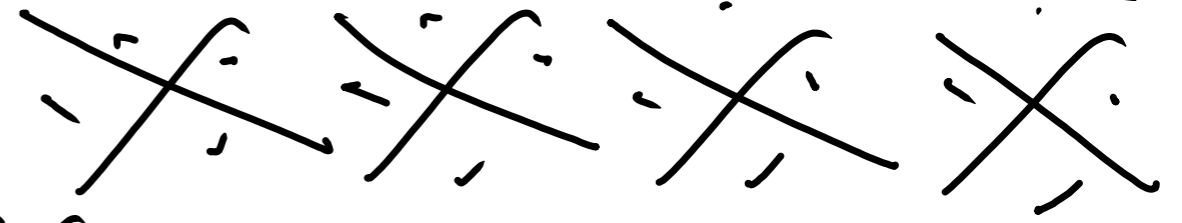
Why?

The Lord's spiritual energy does this to delude the nondevotees and satisfy the Lord's devotees, just as she prevents nondevotees from feeling ecstasy even after having personal audience of the Lord, the embodiment of highest bliss.

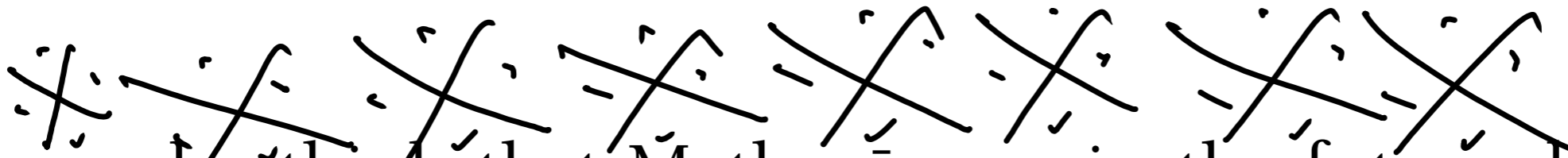


This subject will be explained later, in the narration of Gopakumāra's sojourn in Tapoloka.

That the glories of earthly Mathura are hidden from ordinary eyes indicates the greatness of that abode.

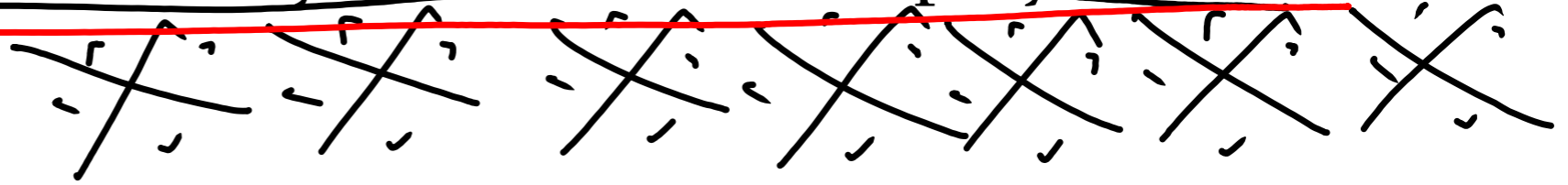


Indeed, the earthly Mathurā and its glories are eternal; they are not destroyed even when the universe is annihilated.

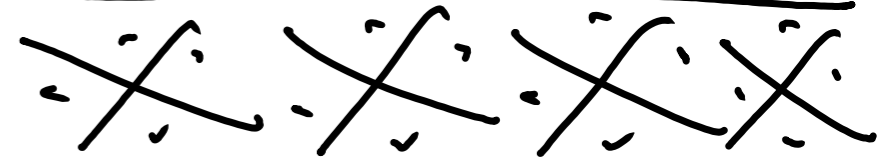


Devotees who think that Mathurā may in the future disappear are mistaken, because in fact Mathurā is beyond destruction, even by the Lord's ultimate divine weapon, the Sudarśana disc, which is the governing force underlying material time, the destroyer of the worlds.

All the same, Mother Uttarā is asking about some other supreme place because the greatness of earthly Mathurā is not at once perceived and because many people have not heard about the wonderful activities the Personality of Godhead displays there.

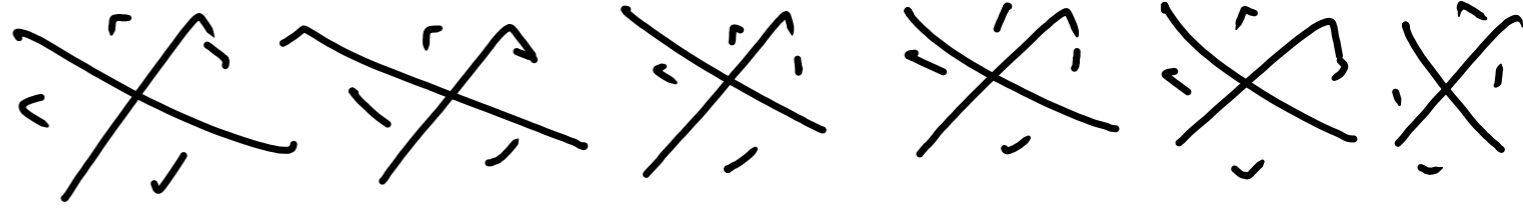


In fact the glories of the earthly Mathurā in some ways surpass those of the spiritual planet Goloka, and Śrī Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta, therefore, will describe how Gopa-kumāra, after realizing the glories of Goloka, learned about this from Śrī Nārada.



The original Personality of Godhead Śrī Kṛṣṇa descends to Mathurā in this world with all His beauty and other attributes to exhibit unprecedented playful activities.

And when the entire universe or the three middle planetary systems are destroyed, the earthly Mathura becomes invisible and merges back into Śrī Goloka.



In other words, Mathurā is not destroyed; it remains unchanged, above the wheel of time.



But because the Lord's pastimes are then no longer perceivable in Mathurā on earth, it seems that the Personality of Godhead continues to enjoy Himself only in the corresponding spiritual realm, Goloka.

Reasons of our imperfect understanding of the real glory of bhakti

And so Śrī Goloka is considered the ultimate destination of spiritual endeavor.



Śrī Nārada may sometimes ascribe to Mathura on earth glories even greater than those of Goloka, but that is not contradictory.



Since the two places are in essence nondifferent, whatever is said about one of them is true of the other.

2.1.25

śrī-jaiminir uvāca

mātur evaṁ mahā-ramya-

praśnenānanditaḥ sutah

tāṁ natvā sāśru-romāñcam

ārebhe pratibhāṣitum

PM day very
pleas with his
he started to reply wife
wondering excellent

Śrī Jaimini said: Delighted (ānanditaḥ) by this most pleasing inquiry (evaṁ mahā-ramya-praśnena) from Mother Uttarā (mātuḥ), her son, Parīkṣit (sutaḥ), bowed down to her (tāṁ natvā) and began his reply (pratibhāṣitum ārebhe). Tears poured from his eyes (sāśru), and his bodily hairs stood on end (romāñcam).

Parīkṣit will begin his reply by complimenting his mother for her excellent question and by offering respects to his worshipable Lord.

2.1.26

śrī-parīkṣid uvāca

śrī-kṛṣṇa-jīvite mātā

tadīya-virahāsahe

tavaiva योग्यं प्राश्नो 'यम्

na kṛto yaś ca kaiścana

Śrī Parīkṣit said: My dear mother (mātā), for you, who live only for Śrī Kṛṣṇa (śrī-kṛṣṇa-jīvite), separation from Him is intolerable (tadīya-viraha asahe). This question of yours is most praiseworthy. No one has ever asked this question before.

My dear Qualified
mother, for whom
separation from Him is
intolerable. This question
is most praiseworthy &
has never been asked before

Parīkṣit wishes to encourage his mother so that her mind will easily focus on what he is about to say.

He calls her śrī-kṛṣṇa-jīvitā, which means either “one who lives only for Śrī Kṛṣṇa” or “one whom Śrī Kṛṣṇa brought back to life,” the second meaning alluding to Kṛṣṇa’s saving the life of Uttarā by stopping the brahmāstra of Aśvatthāmā.

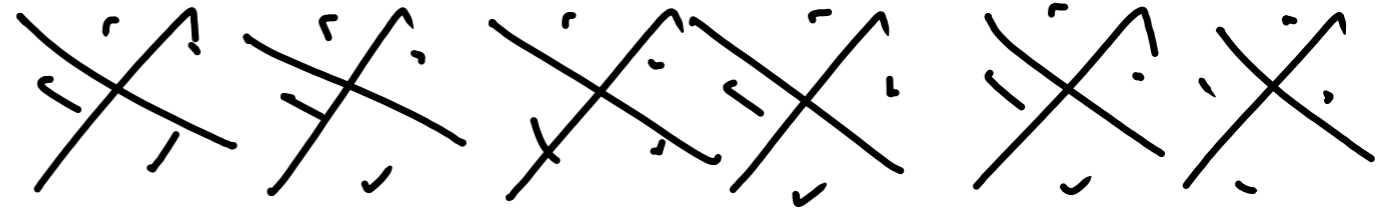
Uttarā is known for having suffered greatly in separation from Kṛṣṇa. As Sūta Gosvāmī described in the First Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.10.9-10):

King Virāṭa, the father of Uttarā, was adopted along with his sister, Satyavatī, by a fisherman (Matsya).

Since Virāṭa was also called Matsya, the name Matsya-sutā (“daughter of a fisherman”) can indicate either Satyavatī or her niece Uttarā.

~~the first~~ ~~the second~~ ~~the third~~ ~~the fourth~~ ~~the fifth~~
If we take the second of these alternatives, Uttarā is mentioned twice in these two verses, indicating that she hankered for Kṛṣṇa in separation even more intensely than the others.

Therefore it is quite appropriate for her to ask so confidentially
about Kṛṣṇa's devotional service.



Tavaiva योग्यं प्राश्नां means “The only relevant question is
yours [tava eva].”

Few other persons would have had the proper devotional attitude
to ask such a question.

Ⓟ Himself granted me
the privilege to be born
from your womb as a grandson
of His dear friend (A)

2.1.27

27-31 : → PM will carry
the favours that he
received from Ⓟ.

nija-priya-sakhasyātra
śrī-subhadrā-pater aham
yena pautratayā garbhe
tava saj-janma lambhitaḥ

Kṛṣṇa Himself granted me (aham lambhitaḥ) the fortunate privilege
to be born here (atra saj-janma), from your womb (tava garbhe) as a
grandson of His dear friend Arjuna (nija-priya-sakhasya pautratayā),
the husband of Śrī Subhadrā (śrī-subhadrā-pateḥ).

Parīkṣit realizes that only by the special mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa will he be able to answer his mother's question, and accordingly he offers his homage to Kṛṣṇa.

In texts 27 through 31 he first describes the favors Kṛṣṇa showed him throughout his life

In this verse the word atra (“here”) has several related meanings:
Parīkṣit was born in the holy land of Bhārata-varṣa, in its most pious
central region, in the human species, in a dynasty of great kṣatriyas,
and from the womb of Uttarā as the grandson of Kṛṣṇa’s friend
Arjuna.

↓ 1st meaning of atra

His birth was sat, auspicious, because it was connected with Kṛṣṇa.
Kṛṣṇa protected Parīkṣit’s unborn body from mutilation by the
weapon of Aśvatthāmā. And Parīkṣit’s grandmother was Subhadrā,
Kṛṣṇa’s sister, not any other of Arjuna’s wives.

2.1.28

2nd form of mercy to
PM

↓
Receiving the most
worthy

form of meditation

from P right
from birth

garbhāntare ca dhṛta-cakra-gadena yena
brahmāstrato 'ham avitaḥ sahito bhavatyā
bālye nareṣu nija-rūpa-parīkṣaṇam ca
nīto muhuḥ parama-bhāgavatocitaṁ yat

To protect both me and you (avitaḥ aham sahito bhavatyā) from the brahmāstra weapon (brahmāstrato), Kṛṣṇa appeared within your womb (yena garbhāntare ca) holding His disc and club (dhṛta-cakra-gadena). In my childhood (bālye) He led me (nītaḥ) to search constantly (muhuḥ parīkṣaṇam ca) among men (nareṣu) for His own form (nija-rūpa), a meditation worthy of the most exalted Vaiṣṇavas (parama-bhagavata ucitaṁ yat).

To protect both of us
from the brahmāstra
And I appeared within your womb.
Among men I should search for Him
I meditated after my birth

When Lord Kṛṣṇa entered the womb of Uttarā to protect her embryo, He assumed His four-armed form and used both His disc and His club to dispel the brahmāstra.

This pastime is described in the First and Tenth Cantos of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam:

śrīmad-dīrgha-catur-bāhum
tapta-kāñcana-kuṇḍalam
kṣatajākṣam gadā-pāṇim
ātmanaḥ sarvato diśam
paribhramantam ulkābhām
bhrāmayantaṁ gadāṁ muhuḥ

“With four long, beautiful arms (śrīmad-dīrgha-catur-bāhum), earrings of fiery gold (tapta-kāñcana-kuṇḍalam), eyes blood red with fury (kṣatajākṣam), and His club constantly encircling Him (gadā-pāṇim gadāṁ muhuḥ ātmanaḥ sarvato diśam paribhramantam) like a shooting star (ulkābhām), the Lord whirled about the child.” (Bhāgavatam 1.12.9)

drauṇy-astra-vipluṣṭam idaṁ mad-aṅgam
santāna-bījam kuru-pāṇḍavānām
jugopa kuṣim gata āta-cakro
mātuś ca me yaḥ śaraṇam gatāyāḥ

Because my mother surrendered unto Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet (mātuś ca me yaḥ śaraṇam gatāyāḥ), the Lord, Sudarśana-cakra in hand (āta-cakro), entered her womb (kuṣim gataḥ) and saved my body (idaṁ mad-aṅgam jugopa), the body of the last remaining descendant of the Kurus and the Pāṇḍavas (santāna-bījam kuru-pāṇḍavānām), which was almost destroyed by the fiery weapon of Aśvatthāmā (drauṇy-astra-vipluṣṭam). (Bhāgavatam 10.1.6)

The sight of the Lord's beautiful form within his mother's womb greatly impressed the unborn Parīkṣit:

aṅguṣṭha-mātram amalam
sphurat-puraṭa-maulinam
apīvya-darśanam śyāmam
tadid vāsasam acyutam

That pure (**amalam**), indestructible (**acyutam**), beautiful form (**apīvya-darśanam**) was the size of a thumb (**aṅguṣṭha-mātram**), dark in complexion (**śyāmam**), wearing cloth flashing like lightning (**tadid vāsasam**), with a shining gold crown (**sphurat-puraṭa-maulinam**). (Bhāgavatam 1.12.8-9)

All through his childhood, Parīksit tried to find the same Lord he had seen in the womb.

Whenever he saw a similar-looking person he would ask himself, “Is this the same one?”

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.12.30) describes the origin of his name:

sa eṣa loke vikhyātaḥ
parīkṣid iti yat prabhuḥ
pūrvam dr̥ṣṭam anudhyāyan
parīkṣeta naresv iha

Because he constantly remembered the Lord (yat saḥ prabhuḥ
anudhyāyan) whom he had seen in the womb (pūrvam dr̥ṣṭam) and
searched for him among all men (parīkṣeta naresv iha), he was
famous (vikhyātaḥ) as Parīkṣit (parīkṣid iti) in this world (eṣa
loke).

2.1.29

yenānuvartī mahatām guṇaiḥ kṛto
vikhyāpito 'ham kali-nigraheṇa
sampādya rājya-śriyam adbhutām tato
nirvedito bhūsura-śāpa-dāpanāt

Further

forms of mercy to

PM

3. Qualities of great saint
4. Empowered to subdue Kali
5. Gained royal opulences
6. Renounced through Brāhmaṇā's curse.

By Him (yena) I (aham) was endowed with the qualities of great saints (mahatām guṇaiḥ kṛtaḥ) and made famous (vikhyāpitaḥ) for subduing Kali (kali-nigraheṇa). By faithfully following Him (yena anuvartī) I gained (sampādya) wonderful royal opulences (rājya-śriyam adbhutām). Then (tataḥ), through a brāhmaṇa's curse (bhūsura-śāpa-dāpanāt), He made me renounce everything (nirveditaḥ).

By Śrī Kṛṣṇa's blessings, Parīkṣit had many saintly qualities, like selfless care for the people, respect for brahminical authority, and strict adherence to his promises.

These qualities he inherited from his ancestors, who were pious kings.

As the brāhmaṇa astrologers told Yudhisthira Mahārāja at the time of Parīkṣit's birth:

pārtha prajāvitā sāksād
ikṣvākur iva mānavaḥ
brahmaṇyaḥ satya-sandhaś ca
rāmo dāśarathir yathā

“O son of Prthā (**pārtha**), this child will be exactly like King
Ikṣvāku, son of Manu (**sāksād ikṣvākur iva mānavaḥ**), in
maintaining all those who are born (**prajāvitā**). And in following the
brahminical principles (**brahmaṇyaḥ**), especially in being true to his
promise (**satya-sandhaś ca**), he will be exactly like Rāma, the
Personality of Godhead, the son of Mahārāja Daśaratha (**rāmo**
dāśarathir yathā).

eṣa dātā śaraṇyaś ca
yathā hy auśīnaraḥ śibiḥ
yaśo-vitanitā svānām
daṣyantir iva yajvanām

“This child (**eṣa**) will be a munificent donor of charity (**dātā**) and protector of the surrendered (**śaraṇyaś ca**), like the famous King Śibi of the Uśīnara country (**yathā hy auśīnaraḥ śibiḥ**). And he will expand the name and fame of his family (**yaśo-vitanitā svānām**) like Bharata, the son of Mahārāja Duṣyanta (**daṣyantir iva yajvanām**).

dhanvinām agrāṇīr eṣa
tulyaś cārjunayor dvayoḥ
hutāśa iva durdharaḥ
samudra iva dustarah

“Amongst great bowmen (agraṇīh dhanvinām), he will be as good as (eṣa tulyah) the two Arjunas [Pāṇḍava Arjuna and Kārtavīrya Arjuna] (arjunayor dvayoḥ). He will be as irresistible as fire (hutāśa iva durdharaḥ) and as unsurpassable as the ocean (samudra iva dustarah)).

mṛgendra iva vikrānto
niṣevyo himavān iva
titikṣur vasudhevāsau
sahiṣṇuḥ pitarāv iva

“He will be as strong as a lion (**mṛgendra iva vikrānto**), and as worthy a shelter as the Himālaya Mountains (**niṣevyo himavān iva**). He will be forbearing like the earth (**titikṣur vasudhā iva asau**), and as tolerant as his parents (**sahiṣṇuḥ pitarāv iva**).

pitāmaha-samaḥ sāmye
prasāde giriśopamaḥ
āśrayaḥ sarva-bhūtānām
yathā devo ramāśrayaḥ

“In equanimity of mind he will be like his grandfather Yudhiṣṭhira or Brahmā (pitāmaha-samaḥ sāmye). He will be munificent like Śiva, the lord of the Kailāsa Hill (prasāde giriśopamaḥ). And he will be the resort of everyone (āśrayaḥ sarva-bhūtānām), like the Supreme Personality of Godhead Nārāyaṇa, who is even the shelter of the goddess of fortune (yathā devo ramāśrayaḥ).

sarva-sad-guṇa-māhātmye
eṣa kṛṣṇam anuvrataḥ
rantideva ivodāra
yayātir iva dhārmikah

“The child will be almost as good as Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa (**eṣa kṛṣṇam sarva-sad-guṇa-māhātmye**) by following in His footsteps (**anuvrataḥ**). In magnanimity he will become as great as King Rantideva (**rantideva iva udārah**), and in religion like Mahārāja Yayāti (**yayātir iva dhārmikah**).

**dhṛtyā bali-samaḥ kṛṣṇe
prahrāda iva sad-grahaḥ**

“He will be like Bali Mahārāja in patience (**dhṛtyā bali-samaḥ**) and a staunch devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa (**kṛṣṇe sad-grahaḥ**) like Prahlāda Mahārāja (**prahrāda iva**).” (Bhāgavatam 1.12.19–25)

While on a victory tour of his kingdom, Parīkṣit came to Kurukṣetra, on the shore of the east-flowing Sarasvatī, and there confronted Kali, the personification of the modern age.

Kali, in the form of a śūdra, was committing violence against a cow and a bull, who were actually the goddess Earth and personified Religion.

Parīkṣit subdued Kali, and thus for the duration of his own reign he limited the spread of Kali's influence.

For this accomplishment he became world-famous.

By Kṛṣṇa's grace Parīkṣit's rule was a source of amazement to everyone.

The kingdom was free from disturbance and abundant in wealth.

But Parīkṣit lost interest in his royal opulence in a moment, when cursed by Śṛṅgi, the son of the sage Samīka.

The brāhmaṇa's son cursed the king thus:

iti laṅghita-maryādam
takṣakaḥ saptame 'hani
daṅkṣyati sma kulāṅgāram
codito me tata-druham

“On the seventh day from today (saptame ahani) a snake-bird (takṣakaḥ) will bite (daṅkṣyati sma) that most wretched member of the dynasty (kulāṅgāram) because of his having broken the laws of etiquette (iti laṅghita-maryādam) by insulting my father (codito me tata-druham).” (Bhāgavatam 1.18.37)

Parīkṣit understood, however, that this curse was also Kṛṣṇa's arrangement for his benefit; otherwise, the king^① would never have committed such an offense against a pure sage, the young son of the sage^② would never have cursed the king, or Kṛṣṇa would have empowered the king^③ to neutralize the curse.



The immediate effect of the curse was to awaken Parīkṣit's sense of renunciation:

tasyaiva me 'ghasya parāvarešo
vyāsakta-cittasya gr̥heṣv abhīkṣṇam
nirveda-mūlo dvija-śāpa-rūpo
yatra prasakto bhayam āśu dhatte

For me (**me**), whose impure action was the sin of disrespecting an innocent brāhmaṇa (**tasya eva aghasya**), and whose heart was very attached to family life (**gr̥heṣv abhīkṣṇam vyāsakta-cittasya**), the Lord (**parāvareśah**) has come in the form of the brāhmaṇa's curse (**dvija-śāpa-rūpo**), which has become the cause of detachment from material life (**nirveda-mūlo**). By the Lord's presence the attached person quickly becomes fearless (**yatra prasakto bhayam āśu dhatte**). (Bhāgavatam 1.19.14)

Because Parīkṣit was engrossed in household obligations, he considered himself sinful.

But he was grateful that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, just to draw him close, appeared to him in the form of the brāhmaṇa's curse.

When an attached person in family life receives such a curse, he naturally becomes frightened.

This is auspicious for the conditioned soul because fear can help inspire renunciation and in renunciation Kṛṣṇa can be achieved.

Therefore Kṛṣṇa arranged for the brāhmaṇa boy to curse Parīkṣit.

2.1.30

tac-chiṣya-rūpeṇa ca mat-priyaṁ taṁ
saṁśrāvya śāpaṁ nilayāndha-kūpāt
śrī-vāsudevena vikṛsya nītaḥ
prāyopaveśāya matim dyu-nadyām

7. Gave the form of
curse to ~~me~~ pull
me out of family life
8. Inspired me to
fast till death on
the banks of
Gaṅgā.

When I heard of that curse (taṁ śāpaṁ saṁśrāvya), I took it as most welcome (mat-priyaṁ). Śrī Vāsudeva (śrī-vāsudevena), in the form of a brāhmaṇa's disciple (tac-śiṣya-rūpeṇa), was dragging me out (vikṛsya) of the blind well of family life (nilaya andha-kūpāt) and guiding me to choose to fast till death (prāyopaveśāya matim nītaḥ) on the shore of the celestial Gaṅgā (dyu-nadyām).

When I heard this
curse, I welcomed it &
saw the it was @ the
form of string cursing me to
pull me out of the blind well of
family life & getting
me to fast till death
on the banks of Gaṅgā

By another fortunate circumstance, someone informed Parīkṣit that he was cursed to die in seven days.

Had Parīkṣit remained unaware of this news, he would never have gone to the bank of the Gaṅgā to fast in preparation for death.

Although Parīkṣit has poetically described the brāhmaṇa's curse as a cause of fear, the truth is that when Parīkṣit learned of the curse he was unfearing and even pleased.

He was already hoping for such a reaction to his offense.

Thus he says here, mat-priyaṁ tam: “I took it as most welcome.”

In the last chapter of the First Canto of Śrīmad Bhāgavatam (1.19.2), just before hearing of the curse, Parīksit expressed his mind:

(dhruvaṁ tato me kṛta-deva-helanād)
(duratyayaṁ vyasaṇam) (nāti-dīrghāt)
(tad astu kāmaṁ) hy (agha-niṣkṛtāya me)
(yathā) (na kuryām punar evam addhā)

Because of my disrespect for this godly person (**me kṛta-deva-helanād**) it is certain (**dhruvaṁ**) that unpreventable misfortune (**tato duratyayaṁ vyasaṇam**) will come very soon (**na ati-dīrghāt**). Let that be direct atonement for my sin in full force (**tad astu kāmaṁ hy agha-niṣkṛtāya me**), so that I will not commit (**yathā na kuryām**) such an act again (**punar evam addhā**).

He wanted the reaction to come immediately, without delay (nāti-dīrghāt).

And he wanted the punishment to fall directly on himself (addhā), rather than on one of his sons or someone else.

Here Parīkṣit calls his family life a blind well, a well from which he was incapable of lifting himself.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa very kindly pulled him out of that well and brought him to the shore of the celestial river Gaṅgā.

Kṛṣṇa, as Lord Vāsudeva, the presiding Deity of consciousness, also attracted Parīksit's mind to the idea of fasting from food and drink until death.

Because the Lord personally took control of him, Parīksit did not remain in his palace and try to counteract the curse by performing yajña (sacrifice) and prāyaścitta (atonement for an accidental fall into sinful activity).

Kṛṣṇa is Vāsudeva, the Supersoul of all, and He is the son of Śrī Vasudeva, who is a reservoir of supreme compassion and gentleness.

Therefore it was only natural for Kṛṣṇa to favor His dear devotee Parīkṣit by arranging such a circumstance.

2.1.31

munīndra-goṣṭhyām upadeśya tattvaṁ
śukātmanā yena bhayaṁ nirasya
pramodya ca sva-priya-saṅga-dānāt
kathāmṛtaṁ samprati ca prapāyye

⑨ He dispelled my fear by explaining SB through S'G.

⑩ He arranged for wonderful association for me.

In the assembly of most eminent sages (munīndra-goṣṭhyām), the Lord dispelled my fear (yena bhayaṁ nirasya) by explaining the truth (upadeśya tattvaṁ) through Sukadeva (śukātmanā). And the Lord delighted me (pramodya ca) by granting the association of His dear devotees (sva-priya-saṅga-dānāt). Now I shall help you drink (samprati ca prapāyye) the nectar of topics about the Lord (kathāmṛtaṁ).

Many eminent sages like Vasistha, Parāśara, Vyāsa, and Nārada assembled to witness Parīkṣit's passing away.

The word goṣṭhyām, which sometimes means “in a discussion,” indicates that first there was some debate among the sages, as described in Śrī Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya:

tena te devatā-tattva prṣṭā vādān vitenire
nānā-śāstra-vido viprā mithaḥ sādhana-dūṣaṇaiḥ

harir daivam śivo daivam bhāskaro daivam ity uta
kāla eva svabhāvas tu karmaiveti prthag jaguḥ

“Having been asked (tena prṣṭā) the truth about the Supreme Lord (devatā-tattvam), the sages (te viprā), who were expert in many scriptures (nānā-śāstra-vidah), expounded a number of different theories (vādān vitenire). Each sage tried to refute the validity of what the others recommended for spiritual practice (mithaḥ sādhanadūṣaṇaiḥ). They made various opposing claims (prthag jaguḥ): ‘Hari is the Supreme Lord.’ ‘Śiva is the Supreme Lord (harir daivam śivo daivam).’ ‘The sun is the Supreme Lord (bhāskaro daivam ity uta).’ ‘Time is the Supreme (kālah eva).’ ‘Man’s nature is supreme (svabhāvas tu).’ ‘Karma is supreme (karma eva iti).’ ”

The word goṣṭhyām can also mean “in the assembly.”

Taken that way, it indicates that what Śukadeva told Parīksit was irrefutably authoritative because the greatest sages of the universe unanimously approved it.

The philosophical disagreements ended with the arrival of Śukadeva. Through Śukadeva, the son of Vyāsa, Kṛṣṇa Himself imparted to Parīksit the essential spiritual instructions of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

Śukadeva enlightened Parīksit in two ways.

2 ways in which ŚG enlightened PM

① By teaching the factual nature of the body and the soul, he removed Parīksit's fear—his fear of the bite of the snake-bird Takṣaka and of the cycle of birth and death.

② And by teaching about transcendental topics such as the glories of devotional service to the Personality of Godhead, Śukadeva filled Parīksit with joy.

By the time Parīkṣit spoke this verse to his mother, his divine spiritual master had already gone away, and the time for death had arrived.

But Kṛṣṇa continued to favor Parīkṣit by again blessing him with the association of a saintly Vaiṣṇava, namely his own mother.

Parīkṣit therefore says to her, “Now let me serve you hari-kathāmṛta, the excellent nectarean topics of the Lord.”

To be able to drink hari-kathāmṛta in the company of the Lord’s beloved devotees is the most desirable achievement in life.

Q has delayed my
time of demise so that
I can describe to
you the essence of
all Vaisnava scriptures

kṛṣṇam praṇamya nirupādhi-kṛpākaram tam
saṁvardhya vipra-vacanādarato grhītam
svasyānta-kālam idam eka-manā bruve te
praśnottaram sakala-vaiṣṇava-śāstra-sāram

11. By delaying his
passing away
& giving him
time to narrate
BBA to U

I bow down to Him, Śrī Kṛṣṇa (tam kṛṣṇam praṇamya), the reservoir of causeless mercy (nirupādhi-kṛpākaram). Out of respect for the words of the brāhmaṇa (vipra-vacana ādarato), I have accepted (grhītam) the appointed time for my demise (svasya anta-kālam). That time being momentarily delayed (idam saṁvardhya), I shall answer your question (te praśna uttaram) with one-pointed attention (eka-manā) by describing the essence of all Vaisṇava scriptures (sakala-vaiṣṇava-śāstra-sāram bruve).

Someone might suggest it inappropriate for a saintly person like Parīkṣit Mahārāja to advertise his own good qualities.

Anticipating such a doubt, Parīkṣit explains that everything praiseworthy he has said about himself is due only to the causeless mercy of Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa is the source of all undeserved mercy; if we see a generous person act kindly to someone undeserving, that kindness is but a small portion from the original, infinite repository of causeless mercy.

“Thus,” Parīksit submits, “even though I am the most fallen and unworthy soul, devoid of good qualities, many excellences have appeared in me, and these are nothing other than excellences of Kṛṣṇa.

My speaking praise of myself, therefore, is faultless.”

These moments are supposed to be the last of King Parīksit’s life, but somehow they are being extended so that he has time to satisfy his mother, who wants to hear the essence of the nectar of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

Parīkṣit thus intends to give full attention to his answer, even at the cost of the yogic meditation he should perform while preparing for death.

Parīkṣit thus intends to give full attention to his answer, even at the cost of the yogic meditation he should perform while preparing for death.

I. Could satisfy you
by quoting śrutis &
smṛtis both directly &
by giving purport

2.1.33

śruti-smṛtīnām vākyāni
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 vākyāni), both in their literal
meaning and in their implications (sākṣāt tātparyato apy).

One way to answer his mother's inquiry would be to systematically explain the authoritative philosophical statements of revealed scriptures.

To do this, he would carefully have to discern which scriptural passages should be accepted literally and which need to be interpreted conditionally or figuratively to agree with what has already been established as real.

But I prefer to
clarify this subject by
quoting a history that
I got from my SM. This
history will dispel your doubts

2.1.34

tathāpi sva-guroḥ prāptam
prasādāt saṁśaya-cchidam
atretihāsam ādau te
vyaktārtham kathayāmy amum

But (tathāpi) I prefer to clarify this subject for you (atra te
vyaktārtham) by first (ādau) relating a history (kathayāmy ihāsam) I
learned (prāptam) by the mercy of my spiritual master (sva-guroḥ
prasādāt). This narration (amum) will dispel your doubts (te
saṁśaya-cchidam).

Vyāsa never formally initiated his son Śukadeva Gosvāmī, and Śukadeva never formally initiated his student Parīkṣit.

Nonetheless, the entire tradition of hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in the transcendental bhāgavata line of disciplic succession rests on the foundation of the relationship between Śukadeva and Parīkṣit as guru and disciple.

Parīksit will recount in his own words the essence of what he heard from his guru, taking care to present the literal facts in the most straightforward way.

He does not want his mother to suffer any confusion or doubt.

Long ago these lived
a poor brāhmaṇa, who was
ignorant of scriptures & who
hankered after abundant wealth

2.1.35

vipro niṣkiñcanaḥ kaścit
purā prāgjyotiṣe pure
vasann ajñāta-śāstrārtho
bahu-draviṇa-kāmyayā

Long ago (purā) in the city of Prāgjyotiṣa (prāgjyotiṣe pure) there lived (vasann) a poor brāhmaṇa (kaścit niṣkiñcanaḥ viprah). He was ignorant of the teachings of scripture (ajñāta-śāstrārtho), and he hankered after abundant wealth (bahu-draviṇa-kāmyayā).

2.1.36 -37

tatratya-devīm kāmākhyām śraddhayānu-dinaṁ bhajan

tasyāḥ sakāśāt tuṣṭāyāḥ svapne mantram daśākṣaram

lebhe madana-gopāla- caranāmbhoja-daivatam

tad-dhyānādi-vidhānādhyam sākṣād iva mahā-nidhim

Every day (anu-dinaṁ) he would faithfully worship Kāmākhyā (kāmākhyām śraddhayā bhajan), the goddess of that place (tatratya-devīm). And when she became satisfied (tuṣṭāyāḥ) he received from her (tasyāḥ sakāśāt lebhe) in a dream (svapne) the ten-syllable mantra (daśākṣaram mantram) for worshiping the lotus feet of Madana-gopāla (madana-gopāla- caranāmbhoja-daivatam). The goddess also gave him instructions on how to meditate upon the mantra and perform various details of practice (tad-dhyānādi-vidhāna ādhyam). The mantra manifested itself before him like a valuable treasure-chest opened right before his eyes (sākṣād iva mahā-nidhim).

Everybody he used
to worship Kāmākhyā devi
One day she gave him a 10 syllabled
mantra to worship Lord Madana Gopāla
She also instructed in
on how to meditate &
details of practice
↳ Mantra manifested
before his eyes

This brāhmaṇa lived in the northeast of India, in what is now the state of Assam.

His city, Prāgjyotiṣa, had been the capital of Bhaumāsura during the time of the advent of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

The brāhmaṇa had never studied the scriptures properly and had never heard a basic explanation of their message from authorized teachers.

That such an unfortunate fool achieved all his ambitions is proof of the potency of the mantra he received.

The ten-syllable gopāla-mantra is defined in esoteric terms in the book Krama-dīpikā, an old Vaiṣṇava tantra by Keśava Ācārya.

Vedic and tantric mantras should be chanted only by qualified persons who have received them through proper initiation.

Therefore, when books discuss these mantras, special efforts are made to disguise the exact syllables of the mantra.

Sometimes a few syllables are changed or inverted in the description, or sometimes, as in the Krama-dīpikā's presentation of this gopāla-mantra, the explanation is impossible to understand by those who are unfamiliar with the cryptic code being used.

Thus Krama-dīpikā describes the ten-syllable gopāla-mantra as follows: śārṅgī sottara-dantaḥ śūro vāmākṣi-yug-dvitiyo 'rṇaḥ, śūlī śaurir bālo balānuja-dvayam athākṣara-catuṣkam.

“The holder of the bow Śarṅga, the upper teeth, then Śūra, and the second letter conjoined with the goddess Vānākṣī, then the bearer of the trident, and Śauri, and Bāla, and twice the younger brother of Bala, and four more syllables.”

The Deity worshiped by this mantra is Śrī Madana-gopāla, who happens to be the worshipable Deity of Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī.

Kāmākhyā Devī gave the brāhmaṇa not only the mantra but also the method for meditating on the mantra's Deity; and, as implied by the word ādi ("and so on"), she also told him how to touch one's body to sanctify it with the syllables of the mantra and how to worship the Deity through various means, including appropriate hand gestures.

How was the brāhmaṇa's attention attracted away from his worship of Devī?

The gopāla-mantra made such a vivid impression on him that he completely forgot his other religious activities.

On the order of the
devī he chanted the mantra
& gradually lost all interest
for wealth & he became satisfied

2.1.38

devy-ādeśena taṁ mantraṁ
vivikte satataṁ japan
dhaneccchāyā nivṛtto 'bhū
lebhe ca hr̥di nirvṛtim

On the order of the goddess (devy-ādeśena), he chanted the mantra (taṁ mantra japan) constantly (satataṁ) to himself in a secluded place (vivikte). Gradually he gave up his desire for wealth (dhana icchāyā nivṛttah abhūt), and his heart became satisfied (lebhe ca hr̥di nirvṛtim).

The brāhmaṇa was ^{insight} so foolish that he ignored the advice of the goddess and dismissed the mantra as the false creation of a dream.

She then appeared to him in a second dream to repeat her instructions.

He could not
understand the relevance
of this mantra
↓
He thought that there must be
some other sādhana to achieve some
other sādhya


2.1.39

vastu-tattvānabhijño 'nyat
sa kiñcit pāra-laukikam
sādhanam kila sādhyam ca
vartamānam amanyata

Ignorant of the real facts (vastu-tattva anabhijñah), he thought (sah amanyata) that something other than this mantra (anyat kiñcit), something in the next life (pāra-laukikam), must be his means of success and the goal of his endeavors (sādhanam kila sādhyam ca vartamānam).

Lacking discrimination, the brāhmaṇa was unable to recognize the value of the mantra relative to other things in his life; his judgment of what to accept and what to reject was impaired.

But by the grace of the mantra, his mind, previously uninterested in the next life, now began to turn in that direction.

 → *kāśhākyē devā vīkṣya* from the Brāhmaṇa the knowledge of the full power of the mantra.

The goddess had withheld from him knowledge about the full power of this mantra, and so he was imagining other goals and means of success.

But as we shall see later in this narration, the effectiveness of the gopāla-mantra, even when knowledge about it is lacking, is evidence of its great potency.

The mantra bestows all benefits even when chanted without faith or understanding.

He left home &
went to holy places
maintaining himself by begging.
He finally reached Gaṅgā saṅgamam

2.1.40

grhādikaṃ parityajya
bhramams tīrtheṣu bhikṣayā
gato nirvāhayan dehaṃ
gaṅgā-sāgara-saṅgamam

He left his home and other connections (grhādikaṃ parityajya) and began wandering among pilgrimage places (bhramams tīrtheṣu), maintaining his bodily needs by begging (bhikṣayā nirvāhayan dehaṃ). And thus he traveled to the place where the Gaṅgā meets the ocean (gatah gaṅgā-sāgara-saṅgamam).

The brāhmaṇa's chanting gradually increasing its effect, he soon gave up sinful activities and needless sense gratification and took up a renounced life.

There, he saw
many brahmins
to the left of Kaṣṭhā

2.1.41

viprān gaṅgā-taṭe 'paśyat
sarva-vidyā-viśāradān
sva-dharmācāra-niratān
prāyaśo grhiṇo bahūn

There on the shore of the Gaṅgā (gaṅgā-taṭe) he saw many
brāhmaṇas (apaśyat bahūn viprān), mostly family men (prāyaśo
grhiṇah), who were expert in all fields of knowledge (sarva-vidyā-
viśāradān) and devoted to performing their prescribed duties (sva-
dharmācāra-niratān).

Since the tīrtha he was visiting, Gaṅgā-sāgara, was in southern Bengal at the confluence of the Gaṅgā and the sea, the brāhmaṇas he met were Bengalis.

They were expert in the fourteen Vedic departments of learning enumerated in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa (3.6.27):

aṅgāni vedāś catvāro
mīmāṃsā nyāya-vistarahaḥ
dharma-śāstram purāṇam ca
vidyā hy etāś caturdaśa

“The four ^④ Vedas (vedāś catvāro), their six supplements, ^⑤ the Purāṇas, ^⑪ the Dharma-śāstras (^⑫ dharma-śāstram purāṇam ca), the Mīmāṃsā ^⑬ interpretation of the Vedas (mīmāṃsā), and the elaborate science of Nyāya logic (^⑭ nyāya-vistarahaḥ)—these are the fourteen departments of learning (etāh hy caturdaśa vidyā aṅgāni).”

He heard from
them about the
subject of kosha &
Kosha-phala

2.1.42

tair varṇyamānam ācāram
nitya-naimittikādikam
āvaśyakam tathā kāmyam
svargam śuśrāva tat-phalam

He heard (śuśrāva) them describe (tair varṇyamānam) regular and occasional duties (nitya-naimittikādikam ācāram) one is obliged to perform (āvaśyakam), optional duties for particular desires (tathā kāmyam), and the fruit of these acts (tat-phalam)—attainment of heaven (svargam).

Brāhmanas initiated into the Vedic rituals are expected to perform certain sacrifices regularly as a matter of duty, sacrifices like the Agnihotra yajña, which must be done twice every day, at sunrise and sunset.

↓ Nitya Karma

Such brāhmanas may also be obliged to execute other rituals because of special circumstances in their lives, when, for example, they must perform the śrāddha memorial on the anniversary of an elder's death.

↓ Naimittika

Besides these obligatory nitya (and naimittika) duties, a brāhmaṇa may also elect to undertake certain sacrifices and vows, called kāmya rituals, to fulfill personal ambitions.

→ Kāmya Karma

Thus there are three kinds of duties for Vedic brāhmaṇas

The brāhmaṇa from Prāgjyotiṣa-pura (may have heard) the local
brāhmaṇas of Gaṅgā-sāgara thus glorify the principles of dharma:

ācāra-prabhavo dharmo
dharmasya prabhur acyutaḥ

“Dharma arises from proper behavior (ācāra-prabhavo dharmo),
and the Lord of dharma is the infallible Personality of Godhead
(dharmasya prabhur acyutaḥ).”

sad-ācāravatā puṁsā
jitau lokāṁ ubhāv api

“A person who possesses good behavior (sad-ācāravatā puṁsā) has
conquered both this world and the next (jitau lokāṁ ubhāv api).”

The local brāhmaṇas may have also glorified heaven as the fruit of dharma with such words as these:

yan na duḥkhena sambhinnaṃ
na ca grastam anantaram
abhilāṣopanītaṃ ca
sukhaṃ tat svar

“The happiness of the residents of heaven (sukhaṃ tat svar) is untainted (na ca grastam anantaram), never consumed by misery (yan na duḥkhena sambhinnaṃ), and it comes to them just as they desire (abhilāṣopanītaṃ ca).” (Vādārtha of Gadādhara Bhaṭṭa)

He was very
impressed with their
Karma-śraddhā & began to
follow the same under their
instructions

2.1.43

nānā-saṅkalpa-vākyaiś ca
tad-anuṣṭhāna-niṣṭhatām
dr̥ṣṭvā tatrodita-śraddhaḥ
pravṛttaḥ śikṣitaḥ sa taiḥ

From the various words they spoke to express their determined vows (nānā-saṅkalpa-vākyaiś ca), he saw (dr̥ṣṭvā) how firm the brāhmaṇas were in their intentions to perform these duties (tad-anuṣṭhāna-niṣṭhatām). His faith aroused (tatra udita-śraddhaḥ), he began to follow (pravṛttaḥ) this process (sah) according to their instructions (taiḥ śikṣitaḥ).

The brāhmaṇa not only heard the glories of dharma in theory but saw exemplars practicing what they preached. *personal example.*

He heard them declare their intentions (saṅkalpas) to perform such duties as bathing daily in the Gaṅgā and then watched as they diligently carried these duties out.

Although in all his life he had received no useful spiritual education, these brāhmaṇas were now carefully teaching him the principles of dharma according to their understanding.

Out of respect
by the deity's instruction,
he counter the worldly regularly.
And by that influence → he felt
no inner satisfaction ever to
those rituals

devy-ājñādarato mantram
api nityam raho japan
tat-prabhāvān na lebhe 'ntaḥ
santoṣam teṣu karmasu

Out of respect for the goddess's order (devy-ājñā ādarato), he regularly continued to chant his mantra quietly in private (mantram api nityam raho japan). And by the influence of the mantra (tat-prabhāvāt), he felt no inner satisfaction (na lebhe antaḥ santoṣam) from those rituals (teṣu karmasu).

Attraction to worshiping the Supreme Lord defeats attraction to lesser religious practices.

He lost interest &
went to Kāśī
He saw many sannyāsīs
Propounding Advaita Ved.

2.1.45

sa nirvidya gataḥ kāśīm
dadarśa bahu-deśa-jān
yati-prāyān janāms tatrā-
dvaita-vyākhyā-vivādinah

He therefore lost interest (sah nirvidya) and went to Kāśī (gataḥ kāśīm), where he saw (tatra dadarśa) people from many different regions (bahu-deśa-jān), especially sannyāsīs (yati-prāyān janān) propounding the theory of monism (advaita-vyākhyā-vivādinah).

2.1.46

viśveśvaram pranamyādau
gatvā prati-maṭham yatīn
natvā sambhāṣya viśrāmaṁ
teṣāṁ pārśve cakāra saḥ

He first offered
obeisances to Lord Śiva
& visited various mathas
& had conversations with
the sannyāsīs

He first offered his obeisances (saḥ ādau praṇamya) to Lord Viśveśvara (viśveśvaram) and then visited the various āśramas (gatvā prati-maṭham), where he bowed down to the sannyāsīs (yatīn natvā), had discussions with them (sambhāṣya), and rested in their company (teṣāṁ pārśve viśrāmaṁ cakāra).

As the deity Viśveśvara, Lord Śiva presides over his sacred abode of Kāśī, also known in Sanskrit as Vārāṇasī and known popularly as Benares.

2.1.47

vādeṣu śuddha-buddhīnām
teṣām paṇi-tala-stha-vat
mokṣam bodhayatām vākyaibh
sāram mene sa tad-matam

From their words
It seemed that their
intelligence was pure &
They spoke clearly about
Mokṣam.
He thought that their opinions
were perfect.

The intelligence of these sannyāsīs was pure (śuddha-buddhīnām), or at least it seemed so from their philosophical talks (teṣām vādeṣu). Their words described liberation (mokṣam bodhayatām vākyaibh) as something readily available, as if held in the palm of one's hand (paṇi-tala-stha-vat), and this inspired him to accept their opinions as perfect (sāram mene sa tad-matam).

The intelligence of these sannyāsīs was pure, or at least it seemed so
from their philosophical talks.

Their words described liberation as something readily available, as if
held in the palm of one's hand, and this inspired him to accept their
opinions as perfect.

He could constantly
hear vedānta & about
mokṣa & sanyāsa from them
& seeing their lifestyle he
developed a desire to become a sanyāsī

2.1.48-49

śṛṅvann avirataṃ nyāsa- mokṣotkarṣa-parāṇi sah
tebhyo vedānta-vākyāni maṇikarṇyām samācaran

snānaṃ viśveśvaram paśyaṃs teṣāṃ saṅge 'prayāsatah
miṣṭeṣṭa-bhogān bhuñjānaḥ sannyāsaṃ kartum iṣṭavān

He would constantly hear (saḥ śṛṅvann avirataṃ) from them (tebhyo) descriptions of the Vedānta doctrine (vedānta-vākyāni), glorifying renunciation and liberation (nyāsa-mokṣotkarṣa-parāṇi). He would bathe at Maṇikarṇikā-ghāṭa (maṇikarṇyām snānaṃ samācaran) and have darśana of Lord Viśveśvara (viśveśvaram paśyan), and, without having to work for his meals (aprayāsatah), he would enjoy tasty food to his liking (miṣṭa iṣṭa-bhogān bhuñjānaḥ) in the company of the sannyāsīs (teṣāṃ saṅge). He thus developed the desire to become a sannyāsī himself (sannyāsaṃ kartum iṣṭavān).

Still out of respect
for the Devi & his
of feeling internal pleasure,
he never gave up chanting the mantra.
one day in his dream he saw the deity
of the mantra

2.1.50

sva-japyam gauravād devyās
tathāntaḥ-sukha-lābhataḥ
atyajann ekadā svapne
'paśyat tan-mantra-devatām

Still, out of respect for the goddess (gauravād devyāḥ), and because it gave him pleasure within (tathā antaḥ-sukha-lābhataḥ), he never gave up chanting his mantra (sva-japyam atyajann). And one day (ekadā) he saw (apaśyat) the Deity of his mantra (tan-mantra-devatām) in a dream (svapne).

The Prāgjyotisa-pura brāhmaṇa's faith was damaged by the impersonal propaganda he heard in Kāśī, by which his hope to meet the Lord of the universe was replaced with a false hope to merge into oneness.

Nonetheless, he went on with his mantra-japa because he held the goddess Kāmākhyā in awe and was unwilling to violate her order.

Despite his weakened faith in the mantra, it continued to exert its transcendental influence.

His heart could derive no substantial contentment from the promises of the Vedānta texts, because he spontaneously felt more gratification from chanting Lord Gopāla's mantra.

Perhaps the brāhmaṇa's attraction to liberation could never have been dispelled had Śrī Gopāla, the Deity of his mantra, not personally appeared in his dream.

Or perhaps his hope for liberation would have dissipated anyway by the power of the mantra.

In any case, his heart changed.

2.1.51

tan-mahā-ramyatākṛṣṭaḥ
paramānanda-gocaraḥ
taj-japānya-pravṛttau hi
na lebhe sa mano-balam

The Charm of
Gopāla attracted him
& gave him greatest ecstasy.
he could not find any taste
in other practices

The charm of Śrī Gopāla attracted him (tad-mahā-ramyatā ākrṣṭaḥ) and gave him the greatest ecstasy (paramānanda-gocaraḥ). And thereafter he could no longer find the mental strength (na lebhe sa mano-balam) to engage in anything other than chanting his mantra (taj-japānya-pravṛttau hi).

He no longer felt any enthusiasm for sannyāsa or liberation, what to speak of sacred baths and other rituals.

HE WAS CONFUSED ABOUT
WHAT TO DO. THEN IN THE
4TH DREAM ŚIVA & PARVATI CAME
TO INSTRUCT HIM

2.1.52

iti-kartavyatā-mūḍho
dīnaḥ san svapnam āgataḥ
tayā devyā sahāgatya
tatrādiṣṭaḥ śivena saḥ

Confused about what he should do (iti-kartavyatā-mūḍho), he became depressed (dīnaḥ san). Then, in another dream (svapnam āgataḥ), Lord Śiva came to him, along with the goddess (śivena tayā devyā sahāgatya), to instruct him (saḥ tatra ādiṣṭaḥ).

His heart was drawn to Lord Gopāla, but his mind was in a dilemma: “Should I take sannyāsa and strive for liberation, or should I just chant my mantra?”



Such is the likely result of fellowship with impersonalists: one's determination becomes fickle, and one cannot choose the right thing to do.

In this third appearance in the brāhmaṇa's dreams, the goddess Kāmākhyā brought along her husband, the lord of Kāśī, to make her presentation more convincing.

Śrīve Śrīve
Oh foolish man, don't
take sannyāsa. Go to
Mathurā & there in vṛndāvan
all your desires will be
fulfilled

2.1.53

mā mūrkhā kuru sannyāsam
drutaṁ śrī-mathurām vraja
tatra vṛndāvane 'vaśyaṁ
pūrṇārthas tvam bhaviṣyasi

[Lord Śiva said:] Foolish man (mūrkhā), don't take sannyāsa (mā kuru sannyāsam)! Go at once to Śrī Mathurā (drutaṁ śrī-mathurām vraja). There in the Vṛndāvana forest (tatra vṛndāvane) you will surely (avaśyaṁ tvam) fulfill all your desires (pūrṇārthas bhaviṣyasi).”

2.1.54

Eager to go to
Mathurā, he chanted in
that direction all the while
chanting its glories. On the
way he reached Prayāga

sotkaṅṭho mathurām gantum
muhus tām kīrtayams tataḥ
sa tad-deśa-diśam gacchan
prayāgam prāpa vartmani

Eager to go to Mathurā (mathurām gantum utkaṅṭhaḥ), the brāhmaṇa set off toward that district (sah tad-deśa-diśam gacchan tataḥ), all the while chanting its glories (muhuh tām kīrtayams). On the way he came to Prayāga (prayāgam prāpa vartmani).

The brāhmaṇa headed west, repeatedly chanting, “Mathurā! Mathurā!”

There in Prayāga
he saw many Brahmanas
who had assembled there
to bathe
in Holy Ganges

2.1.55

tasmil lasan-mādhava-pāda-padme
gaṅgāśrita-śrī-yamunā-manojñe
snānāya māghoṣasi tīrtha-rāje
prāptān sa sādihūn śataśo dadarśa

In Prayāga

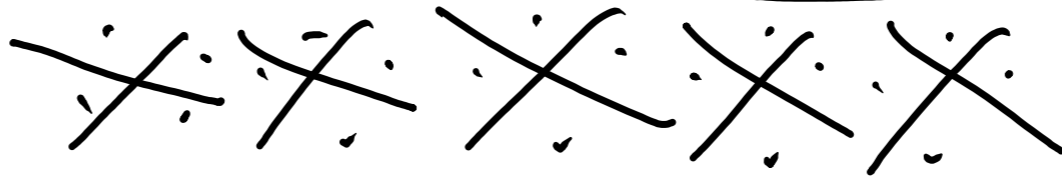
There (tasmil) at the king of holy places (tīrtha-rāje), by the charming Yamunā (śrī-yamunā-manojñe) within the Gaṅgā (gaṅgāśrita), he found (sah dadarśa) hundreds of saints (sādihūn śataśo) who had gathered (prāptān) near the ~~effulgent lotus feet~~ of Lord Mādhava (lasan-mādhava-pāda-padme) to bathe (snānāya) at dawn in the month of Māgha (māghoṣasi).

Prayāga is called the king of tīrthas because there one discovers one's heart's devotion for the Personality of Godhead.



At Prayāga the Gaṅga and Yamunā unite, and downstream from their confluence the Yamunā is considered present on one side of the Gaṅga.

This is “the Yamunā within the Gaṅga.” Gaṅgā and Yamunā are not only physically united at Prayāga—they also share an intimate bond of love for Kṛṣṇa.



Then he saw
them performing a
great festival to worship
the Lord with singing,
dancing, crying etc.

teṣāṃ sadā-gīta-nati-stavādibhiḥ
śrī-viṣṇu-pūjotsavam aikṣatābhitaḥ
tan-nāma-saṅkīrtana-vādyā-nartanaiḥ
premnārta-nāдай ruditaiś ca śobhitam

On every side before him (abhitāḥ), he saw (aikṣata) them conducting a great festival of worship for Śrī Viṣṇu (teṣāṃ śrī-viṣṇu-pūjotsavam), with expressions of joyous devotion like constant singing, offering of obeisances, and recitation of prayers (sadā-gīta-nati-stavādibhiḥ). The loud congregational chanting of the Lord's names (tan-nāma-saṅkīrtana), along with music, dancing (vādyā-nartanaiḥ), sobbing (ruditaiḥ), and plaintive cries of love (premnārta-nāдай), was attractive (śobhitam).

In addition to what the verse specifically mentions, the brāhmana saw the elaborate arrangements for feeding and worshiping the Lord in His Deity form.

This same Deity, Bindu Mādhava, was seen by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu when He visited Prāyaga.

Being ignorant &
amazed he addressed
them → he gāyaka, vandino re,
danḍavat pātino bhūvi

2.1.57

so 'budho vismayam prāpto
vaiṣṇavān pṛcchati sma tām
he gāyakā vandino re
danḍa-vat pātino bhūvi

(Innocent, ignorant) and (amazed) (abudhah vismayam prāpto), he said to those Vaiṣṇavas (sah tām vaiṣṇavān pṛcchati sma), “Excuse me, you singers (he gāyakā), you reciters of prayers (vandino re), and you who are falling on the ground like rods (danḍa-vat pātino bhūvi).

Never before having seen such behavior or even heard of it, the brāhmaṇa didn't know what to think.

He was unaware of Vaiṣṇava etiquette and unable to distinguish the Vaiṣṇavas from ordinary stage performers and court reciters.

And so he naively interrupted the saṅkīrtana and addressed the Vaiṣṇavas disrespectfully.

He could see only their external behavior but not their internal spiritual status.

2.1.58-59

bho vādakā nartakā re rāma-kṛṣṇeti-vādinah
rodakā ramya-tilakāś cāru-mālā-dharā narāh

bhavataikam kṣaṇam svasthā na kolāhalam arhatha
vadatedam vidhaddhve kim kaṁ vārcayatha sādaram

Oh Musicians, Chanters etc,
Pls Gm down & tell me,
What are you doing here?
When are you
observing off so
much reverence?

“My dear musicians, dear chanters and dancers (bho vādakā nartakā re), loudly crying out ‘Rāma Kṛṣṇa (rāma-kṛṣṇeti-vādinah rodakā),’ you men adorned with beautiful tilaka (ramya-tilakāh) and attractive garlands (cāru-mālā-dharā narāh), please calm down for a moment (bhavatā ekam kṣaṇam svasthā) and stop making such a racket (na kolāhalam arhatha)! What is this ceremony you are observing (vadata idam vidhaddhve kim)? Whom are you so reverently worshiping (kaṁ vārcayatha sādaram)?”

He mistook some of the Vaiṣṇavas for ordinary musicians, dancers, and chanters of mundane slogans, but at least he admired the beauty of their viṣṇu-tilaka, which resembled in form a temple of Viṣṇu.

Since he was unaware of the transcendental value of the sound of the Supreme Lord's names sung loudly in public congregation, he judged the saṅkīrtana to be needless noise.

He assumed that these people had meaningful work to do and wondered why they were neglecting their duties to indulge in frivolity.

Or, as he suggested in his questions, he thought this might be some strange kind of ritual duty or even the unusual worship of some deity.

Some of them laughed
Some of them chastised &
asked him to keep quiet &
some compassionately spoke to him

2.1.60

tac chrutvopahasanti sma
kecit tam kecid abruvan
re mūdha tūṣṇīm tiṣṭheti
ke 'py ūcur dīna-vatsalāḥ

Some of the Vaiṣṇavas (kecit) simply laughed (upahasanti sma) at hearing this (tac śrutvā). Others told him (tam kecid abruvan), “You fool (re mūdha), just be quiet (tūṣṇīm tiṣṭha iti)!” Yet others, compassionate to fallen souls, said to him something else (ke 'py ūcur dīna-vatsalāḥ).

Some participants in the saṅkīrtana festival who were newcomers to devotional service began ridiculing the brāhmaṇa:

“Oh, you are the best of sages, the most learned scholar! Yes, you are right, we are all out of our wits, and this noise is a public nuisance.”

neophytes → Sarcastic
madhyama → angered
uttama → spoke @-passionately.

Some of the intermediate sādhakas in the group were angered by his comments.

Others, the fully self-realized devotees in the assembly, showed him the same compassion they felt for all living beings.

As real friends of the conditioned souls, they frankly told him what he needed to hear.

Oh foolish brāhmaṇa!
Never over speak to
Vaiṣṇavas like this.

2.1.61

śrī-vaiṣṇavā ūcuḥ
aye vipra-ja jānāsi
na kiñcid bata mūdha-dhīh
viṣṇu-bhaktān punar maivam
sambodhaya na jalpa ca

The holy Vaiṣṇavas said: Hey, bewildered son of a brāhmaṇa (aye mūdha-dhīh vipra-ja), don't you understand anything (na kiñcid bata jānāsi)? Don't ever again address (mā punar sambodhaya) devotees of Viṣṇu (viṣṇu-bhaktān) like that (evam) and speak to them such nonsense (na jalpa ca)!

The paramahamsas were obviously disappointed that despite his birth in a brāhmaṇa family he was such a fool.

Out of kindness they advised him to refrain from treating Vaisṇavas like materialistic people; he should never again ask them to stop making noise as if they were ordinary singers and reciters.

Initiated by our gurus
we always worship Lord V
according to the mantras & vidhi

2.1.62

bhagavantam ime viṣṇum
nityam vayam upāsmāhe
guror gr̥hīta-dīkṣākā
yathā-mantram yathā-vidhi

Initiated by our gurus (guror gr̥hīta-dīkṣākā), we always worship (nityam vayam upāsmāhe) the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu (bhagavantam ime viṣṇum) with the mantras (yathā-mantram) and methods they have given us (yathā-vidhi).

What distinguished the saṅkīrtana devotees from the Prāgjyotisa-pura brāhmaṇa was that they had accepted Vaiṣṇava initiation from authorized ācāryas and were practicing devotional service according to the instructions of their spiritual masters.

~~Because the (brāhmaṇa lacked the mercy) of a pure devotee, his chanting of the gopāla-mantra was bearing undeveloped results instead of mature fruit. Real spiritual knowledge had eluded him.~~

↓ @ Prema

Some worship the
Lord in His form of
Nṛsiṁha, some as Raghunātha &
some

2.1.63

śrī-nṛsimha-tanūm kecid
raghunātham tathāpare
eke gopālam ity evaṁ
nānā-rūpaṁ dvijottama

O best of brāhmaṇas (dvijottama), we are worshiping the Lord in
various forms (evaṁ nānā-rūpaṁ). Some of us worship Him in His
feature as Nṛsimha (śrī-nṛsimha-tanūm kecid), some as Lord
Raghunātha (raghunātham tathā apare), and others as Śrī Gopāla
(eke gopālam ity).

Hearing this the
Brahmana became ashamed but
joyful. He asked them:
① Where does He live?
② What is He like?
③ What benefits
can He grant?

2.1.64

śrī-parīkṣid uvāca
tato 'sau lajjito vipro
'prcchat sa-praśrayaṁ mudā
kuto vasati kīdrk sa
kiṁ vārthaṁ dātum īśvaraḥ

Śrī Parīkṣit said: Hearing this (**tato**) made the brāhmaṇa feel ashamed (**asau viprah lajjitah**). With great humility (**sa-praśrayaṁ**) but with joy (**mudā**) he asked them (**aprcchat**), “Where does this Lord live (**kuto vasati**)? What is He like (**kīdrk sah**)? What benefits is He able to grant (**kiṁ vā arthaṁ dātum īśvaraḥ**)?”

This Lord the devotees called Visnu was unknown to the
brāhmaṇa, who was curious whether the Lord lived in a village, a
city, or somewhere else.

What god, human, or animal did His form resemble?

What special powers did He have, and what wealth could He give
to His devotees?

① Koto vasati → Sadā sarvatra vasati
→ bahiś 6 antah ca
② No one compares to Him in any way.

2.1.65

śrī-vaiṣṇavā ūcuḥ
sadā sarvatra vasati
bahiś cāntaś ca sa prabhuḥ
kaścin na sadṛśas tena
kathañcid vidyate kvacit

The holy Vaiṣṇavas said: He is the supreme master (sah prabhuḥ), and He always lives everywhere (sadā sarvatra vasati), both within and without (bahiś ca antah ca). No one (na kaścid) anywhere (kvacit) compares to Him (tena sadṛśah) in any respect (kathañcid).

Lord Viṣṇu, however, is not an ordinary person limited in these or other ways.

He pervades all time and space, and all other individual people and things are also part of Him.

This answers the question “Where does He live?”

In reply to the question “What is He like?” the Vaiṣṇavas say that
He is unique and incomparable.

No one's beauty or other personal qualities are equal to His, neither within this material world nor outside it.

In the material world, all things are limited in time, space, and substance.

A person in a particular body, for example, has only a certain life span.

Before and after, he is absent from that body.

His bodily existence occupies but a small space within the universe;
he may move from one place to another, but only within strict
limits.

And his identity is separate from that of any other person or thing.

- ① yah sarva antar-ātmā
- ② jagad-īśvara-īśvara
- ③ mano-ramah
- ④ sac-cid-ānanda-ghanah
- ⑤ Vaikunṭha-loke prakatah
- ⑥ sadā vased
- ⑦ sevakebhyah svam api prayacchati

sarvāntar-ātmā jagad-īśvareśvaro
yah sac-cid-ānanda-ghano mano-ramah
vaikunṭha-loke prakatah sadā vased
yah sevakebhyah svam api prayacchati

He is the Supersoul within the heart of every living being (yah sarva antar-ātmā), the Lord of all lords of the universe (jagad-īśvara īśvarah), the all-attractive (mano-ramah) concentrated embodiment of eternity, knowledge, and bliss (sac-cid-ānanda-ghanah). He dwells in the world of Vaikunṭha (vaikunṭha-loke prakatah), where He always can be seen (sadā vased). And to His servants (sevakebhyah) He gives His very self (yah svam api prayacchati).

Ignorant of the many aspects of the Supreme Lord's personality, the brāhmaṇa might doubt how one could devote oneself to a person who has no particular identity or location.

Here the Vaiṣṇavas assure the brāhmaṇa that the Lord does have His own manifold identities and locations.

He is the Supersoul both of the entire universe and of each individual living being.

Thus His greatness manifests itself within and without.

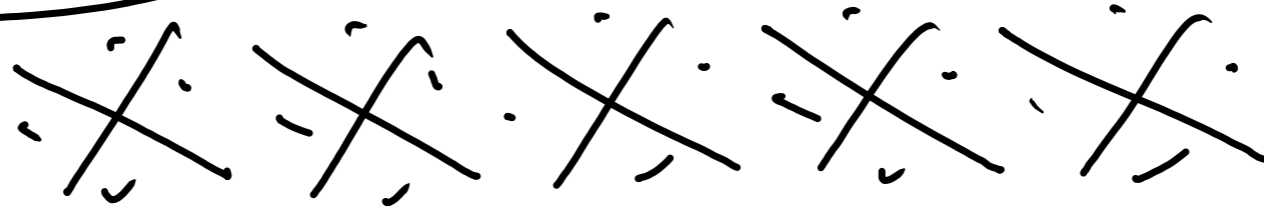
He is the ruler of all lords of the many universes; whatever powers and assets other rulers possess He has also, but in quantity without limit.

He is the Supreme Absolute Truth in person, and His primary location is Vaikuṅṭha.

Even though as the indwelling Supersoul He is hidden, His opulences are fully visible in His form as the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, whom His devotees can see to their heart's delight.

His beauty, charm, and countless other transcendental qualities are all-attractive.

And in answer to the question “What is He capable of giving?” the answer is “His own self.”



By this the Vaiṣṇavas imply that He can easily bestow pure devotion and eternal residence in Vaikunṭha, what to speak of the four goals of material life.

As expressed by the prefix pra- in the verb prayacchati, He liberally gives all this plus Himself, which further implies that He and His servants share a flood of boundless ecstasy.

The śrutis & smṛtis
glorify Him. No one
can fully describe His glories.
Pis listen about His glories
while you are here

2.1.67

śruti-smṛti-stūyamānaḥ
kenāsyā mahimocyatām
tad atra vācyamānāni
purāṇāni muhuḥ śṛṇu

The śrutis and smṛtis glorify Him (śruti-smṛti-stūyamānaḥ). Who can describe His greatness (kena asya mahimā ucyatām)? But while you are here (tad atra), please listen (śṛṇu) to the profuse histories spoken about Him from the Purāṇas (muhuḥ purāṇāni vācyamānāni).

This holy pilgrimage site Prayāga, the king of tīrthas, is a most suitable place for hearing the glories of the Supreme Lord from the authoritative histories recorded in the Purāṇas.

Just bow down to
& behold Mādhava & say
Soon you will understand
all these things & more

2.1.68

mādhavaṁ nama cālokya
pratirūpaṁ jagat-prabhoḥ
tato 'cirād idam sarvaṁ
paraṁ ca jñāsyasi svayam

Just bow down to Lord Mādhava (mādhavaṁ nama) and behold Him (ca ālokya), the direct manifestation of the Lord of the universe (pratirūpaṁ jagat-prabhoḥ). And soon (tato acirād) you will understand for yourself (svayam jñāsyasi) all this (idam sarvaṁ) and much more (paraṁ ca).

The Lord of Vaikuṅṭha can be seen directly in His image as Mādhava, the presiding Deity of Daśāśvamedha-ghāṭa at Prayāga.

In the short time the Vaiṣṇavas were speaking to the Prāgjyotiṣa-pura brāhmaṇa, they could only hint at the glories of Lord Viṣṇu, but if the brāhmaṇa were to follow their advice by hearing from them the Purāṇas, bowing down to Lord Mādhava, and meditating on the Deity's beautiful form, more realization would automatically be revealed within his heart.

By taking darsana of śrī Mādhava
 he notices some similarity in appearance
 b/w Mādhava & śrī Madhugōṣṭhī

śrī-parīkṣid uvāca
 tatah śrī-mādhavaṁ vīkṣya
 namaṁs tasmin vyacaṣṭa saḥ
 sārūpyaṁ sva-jape cintya-
 māna-devasya kiñcana

Śrī Parīkṣit said: Thus (tatah), while looking at Śrī Mādhava (śrī-mādhavaṁ vīkṣya) and bowing down to Him (namaṁs tasmin), the brāhmaṇa noticed (saḥ vyacaṣṭa) some likeness in appearance (kiñcana sārūpyaṁ) between Śrī Mādhava and the Lord on whom he meditated while chanting his mantra (sva-jape cintya- māna- devasya).



Just as the Vaiṣṇavas had predicted, by associating with Lord Mādhava the brāhmaṇa began to realize transcendental knowledge.



He noticed that certain features of the Deity, like the shape of His mouth and eyes, were similar to the features of the Lord whom he sometimes envisioned while chanting his mantra.

There he heard some
passages from śrīmad-Bhāgavatam in the
company of also fools darśan
of their deity

2.1.70

tatra kiñcit purāṇam sa
śr̥ṇoti saha vaiṣṇavaiḥ
tair arcyamānā vividhā
viṣṇu-mūrtīś ca paśyati

There at Daśāśvamedha-ghāṭa (tatra) he heard (śr̥ṇoti) some passages from the Purāṇas (kiñcit purāṇam) in the company of the Vaiṣṇavas (saha vaiṣṇavaiḥ), and he saw (paśyati) various Deities of Viṣṇu (vividhā viṣṇu-mūrtīḥ) they worshiped (tair arcyamānā).

In the presence of Lord Mādhava he listened to discussions on such portions of the Purānas as the Māgha-māhātmya of Śrī Padma Purāṇa (Uttara-khaṇḍa), which praises bathing at Prayāga in the month of Māgha.

By hearing in the company of pure devotees, he became affected by their strong faith and ecstatic mood.

Still he could not
identify Lord Mādhava to
be the same as his worshipable
deity

2.1.71

tathāpi pratyabhijñeyam
tasya na syād acetasaḥ
mad-devo jagad-īśo 'yam
mādhavo 'pi satām prabhuḥ

Nonetheless (**tathāpi**) he remained ignorant (**acetasaḥ**), unable to
recognize his own worshipable Deity (**tasya iyam mad-devah na**
pratyabhijñā syād) to be the same Lord Mādhava (**mādhavaḥ**), the
ruler of the universe (**jagad-īśah**) and master of the saintly devotees
(**satām prabhuḥ**).

devotional

IQX
SQ

Sukṛti Quṣṭhant

Anyone with good discrimination would have been able to deduce from the similarities between Lord Mādhava and Lord Gopāla that the Deity of the brāhmaṇa's mantra was the very same Lord of the universe appearing at Daśāśvamedha-ghāṭa.

The brāhmaṇa, however, was too foolish.

Lacked the sukṛti

He was thinking
that Binku Mādhava was the
object of worship & his own
worshipable lord was different

2.1.72

idaṁ sa vimṛśaty eṣāṁ
upāsyo jagad-īśvaraḥ
sa eva mādhaveś cāyaṁ
mayānyaḥ ko 'py upāsyate

He continued to think (sah vimṛśaty idaṁ) that this Mādhava (ayaṁ mādhavaḥ), the Lord of the universe (jagad-īśvaraḥ), was the object of worship for these Vaiṣṇavas (kaḥ apy upāsyate), and that his object of worship was someone else (mayā nyaḥ upāsyah).

- ① Satam kṛpā
- ② mahat sevā
- ③ Ajñāta sukṛti
- ④ S'raḍhā

→ He receives
Sufficient

some sukṛti from them, but it was not

The brāhmaṇa had enough trust in the words of the Vaiṣṇavas to be convinced that the Deity of Mādhava was indeed the Supreme Lord, but he hadn't accepted enough of their mercy to understand that all along he had been worshiping with his mantra the same Lord.

This Mādhava is
4 handed & has 4 arms
But why is he looking like
my Lord

2.1.73

śaṅkha-cakra-gadā-padma-
vibhūṣita-catur-bhujah
na mad-devas tataḥ kasmāt
pratiyeta sa mādhaveḥ

“Lord Mādhava (mādhaveḥ) has four arms (catur-bhujah),” he thought, “and is decorated with a conchshell, disc, club, and lotus (śaṅkha-cakra-gadā-padma-vibhūṣita). This is not my Deity (na mad-devas). Why should my Lord look like this (tataḥ kasmāt sa pratiyeta)?”

The Pañcarātras describe the form of Lord Mādhava among the
twenty-four vyūha expansions of Nārāyaṇa.

Gadā-śaṅkha-cakra-padman bibhran mādhava ucyate:

“When the Lord is holding His club, conchshell, disc, and lotus [in
that order, clockwise, from His lower right hand], He is called
Mādhava.”

My Lord does not
look like any of the
avatars like natsya, kṛka etc

2.1.74

nāyaṁ narārdha-simhārdha-
rūpa-dhārī ca mat-prabhuḥ
na vāmano 'py asau mīna-
kūrma-kolādi-rūpavān

“My Lord (mat-prabhuḥ) doesn't appear as half man, half lion
(narārdha-simhārdha-rūpa-dhārī). He doesn't become a dwarf (na
asau vāmano apy) or take the forms of a fish, a turtle, a hog, and the
like (mīna-kūrma-kolādi-rūpavān).

But He does
seem to look like
the form of Gopāla
worshipped by some of these
devotees

2.1.75

nāpi kodanda-pāṇih syād
rāghavo rāja-lakṣaṇah
keṣāñcid eṣām pūjyena
gopālenāstu vā sadṛk

“Nor does He become the Lord of the Raghus (nāpi rāghavah syād), with the signs of a king (rāja-lakṣaṇah) and a bow in His hand (kodanda-pāṇih). But maybe my Deity does somewhat resemble (sadṛk āstu vā) the Gopāla (gopālena) worshipped by some of these devotees (keṣāñcid eṣām pūjyena).

The brāhmaṇa could not identify the Deity of His mantra with Lord Rāmacandra, who appeared as a great king with the royal symbols of throne, cāmaras, and white umbrella.

2.1.76

I cannot believe
that my worshippable
God could be the Lord
of the universe as he doesn't
seem to have the characteristics
of that being about whom I have
heard in the scriptures

manye 'thāpi mādiyo 'yam
na bhaved jagad-īśvaraḥ
nāsti tal-lakṣaṇam māgha-
māhātmyādau śrutam hi yat

“Still (**athāpi**), I cannot imagine (**na manye**) that my Deity (**ayam mādiyah**) is the Lord of the universe (**jagad-īśvaraḥ bhaved**). My Deity doesn't have the characteristics (**nāsti tal-lakṣaṇam**) I have heard (**śrutam**) described in 'The Glorification of the Month of Māgha' and other scriptural texts (**yat māgha-māgha- māhātmyā ādau**).

Lord Mādhava of Prayāga is described in the story of Devadyuti,
which is included in the Māgha-māhātmya of the Padma Purāna
(Uttara-khaṇḍa 128.202, 129.44):

taṁ dr̥ṣṭvā garuḍārūḍham
pratyagra-jalada-cchavim
catur-bāhum̐ viśālākṣam̐
sarvālaṅkāra-bhūṣitam

“He saw the Lord seated on Garuda (**taṁ dr̥ṣṭvā garuḍa ārūḍham**).
The Lord’s complexion was the color of a new rain cloud (**pratyagra-**
jalada-cchavim). He had four arms and broad eyes (**catur-bāhum̐**
viśālākṣam̐), and He was decorated with all kinds of ornaments
(**sarvālaṅkāra-bhūṣitam**).”

brahmādayaḥ surāḥ sarve
yoginaḥ sanakādayaḥ
tvāṁ sāksāt-kartum icchanti
siddhāś ca kapilādayaḥ

“All the demigods led by Brahmā (**brahmādayaḥ surāḥ sarve**), the yogīs led by Sanaka (**yoginaḥ sanakādayaḥ**), and the perfected mystics led by Kapila (**siddhāś ca kapilādayaḥ**) want to see You in person (**tvāṁ sāksāt-kartum icchanti**).”

The current verse says that the brāhmana heard from māgha-
māhātmyādau, “the Māgha-māhātmya and other texts.”

Those other texts may have included the section of Śrī Skanda
Purāṇa that glorifies Prayāga-tīrtha.

Description of Gopāla

- ① herding cows
- ② holds a flute to his mouth
- ③ dressed in forest ornaments
- ④ He transgresses religious principles like an ordinary person.

2.1.77

gopārbha-vargaiḥ sakhibhir vane sa gā
vaṁśī-mukho rakṣati vanya-bhūṣaṇaḥ
gopāṅganā-varga-vilāsa-lampāṭo
dharmam satām laṅghayatītarō yathā

“My Lord (sah) takes care (rakṣati) of the cows in the forest (gāh vane) along with His many cowherd friends (gopārbha-vargaiḥ sakhibhir). He holds a flute to His mouth (vaṁśī-mukho) and is decorated with forest ornaments (vanya-bhūṣaṇaḥ). Just like an ordinary person (itarō yathā), He transgresses the religious principles of saints (satām dharmam laṅghayati), being always addicted to playful sports (vilāsa-lampāṭo) with all the cowherd girls (gopāṅganā-varga).



Arguing on the strength of the evidence he has gathered about his Gopāla from meditating on the mantra, the brāhmaṇa here tries to prove that the Deity of his own mantra cannot be the Lord of the universe.

The brāhmaṇa's worshipable Gopāla is always in the forest with His friends, busy taking care of His cows. His flute is usually near His mouth because He very much likes playing on it.

He also likes to decorate Himself with forest items like peacock feathers, garlands of kadamba flowers, red oxide tilaka for His forehead, and rings of guñja berries for His ears.

Like a wayward materialist, He violates the laws of cultured behavior by consorting with other men's wives and behaving in other socially forbidden ways, none of which suits the character of the Supreme Lord of the universe.

Even if in some features the brāhmaṇa's Gopāla resembles the Gopāla worshiped by some of the local Vaiṣṇavas—the Nārāyaṇa expansion called Gopāla—that Gopāla Nārāyaṇa cannot be the same person.

Lord Nārāyaṇa could hardly go wandering in the forest tending cows, nor habitually break the principles of religion.

Only because of
power of Kanakhye devi
I am feeling bliss in worshipping
Goddess. I will not abandon His
abode (by chanting of His mantra)

2.1.78

devyāḥ prabhāvād ānandam
asyāpy ārādhane labhe
tan na jahyām kadāpy enam
etan-mantra-japaṁ na ca

“By the power of the goddess (devyāḥ prabhāvād) I have felt bliss (ānandam labhe) in worshipping Him (asyāpy ārādhane). Therefore I shall never abandon Him (tad na jahyām kadāpy enam) or my chanting of His mantra (etan-mantra-japaṁ na ca).”

Vaiṣṇavas may question how one can realize ecstasy in worshiping anyone other than the Supreme Lord, but the brāhmaṇa counters that it is possible by the potency of the goddess Kāmākhyā.

Since she ordered him to always chant this mantra and since he feels such pleasure in chanting, why should he give it up?

Thus he continued to
chant the mantra & by
the power of Sat-Saṅgha he
would see his Lord, as if directly in
person

2.1.79

evam sa pūrva-van mantram
taṁ japan nirjane nijam
devam sāksād ivekseta
satām saṅga-prabhāvataḥ

Thus the brāhmaṇa continued chanting his mantra (evam taṁ nijam
mantra japan) in seclusion (nirjane) as before (pūrva-vat). And by
the power of the saintly company of the Vaiṣṇavas (satām saṅga-
prabhāvataḥ), he would see his Lord (devam ikṣeta), as if directly in
person (sāksād iva).

Since the ignorant brāhmaṇa lacked the instructions and blessings of a pure devotee spiritual master, he had not yet developed true knowledge and faith.



But still he was reaping the benefits of sādhu-saṅga in Prayāga.

Even without the support of guru and śāstra, he was making some advancement by associating favorably with Vaiṣṇavas.

↓ gathering of devotees sukṛti

He kept chanting the ten-syllable Gopāla mantra, renowned among all mantras as the most excellent, and as his heart became more and more cleansed he entered into an intense meditation in which he saw His Lord as vividly as if the Lord were physically present.

to sometimes, because of
his nature of the object of
his meditation, he would faint
in ecstasy, & when he would
wake up & noticed that japa-time had been
lost, he would lament

2.1.80

vastu-svabhāvād ānanda-
mūrchām āpnoti karhicit
vyutthāya japa-kālāpa-
gamam ālakṣya śocati

Because of the nature of the object of his meditation (vastu-svabhāvād), he sometimes (karhicit) fainted in ecstasy (ānanda-mūrchām āpnoti), and when he woke up (vyutthāya) and noticed (ālakṣya) that the time for chanting his mantra had been lost (japa-kāla apa-gamam) he would lament (śocati).

Sometimes the ecstasy of his meditation made all the external functions of his senses stop, as if he had achieved samādhi.

ābhāsa

This symptom was but a superficial reflection of the advanced conditions of bhāva and prema.

śrī - ābhāsa

Vāsta - Svabhāva

It arose not from mature understanding of the object of meditation but from the transcendental influence of the object Himself.

I am in great
trouble. I have not
completed my japa & the
Sanskrit has fallen

2.1.81

upadravo 'yam ko me 'nu-
jāto vighno mahān kila
na samāpto japo me 'dya-
tano rātrīyam āgatā

“What is the cause of this disturbance (kaḥ ayam upadravaḥ)? Now
I am in great trouble (me kila mahān vighnaḥ anu jātaḥ)! Night has
fallen (rātrīyam āgatā) before I could finish today's chanting (na
samāpto japo me adyatanah).

That night had come before he could finish his chanting was an upadrava, or cause of pain, as well as a vighna, an obstruction to fulfilling his vow to chant a prescribed number of mantras daily.

Did I fall
asleep (or) did
a ghost haunt me?
Or am so wicked that
I'm feeling joy in my heart

2.1.82

kim nidrābhibhavo 'yaṁ me
kim bhūtābhibhavo 'tha vā
aho mad-duḥsvabhāvo yac
choka-sthāne 'pi hṛt-sukham

“Have I fallen asleep (kim nidrā abhibhavo ayam me)? Or become haunted by a ghost (kim bhūta abhibhavo atha vā)? Oh, I am so wicked (aho mad-duḥsvabhāvo) that even when I have reason to be sad I feel happiness in my heart (yad śoka-sthāne 'pi hṛt-sukham)!”

Trying to answer his own question about the cause of the problem,
the brāhmaṇa guessed that he might have fallen asleep.

But since he didn't feel tired, he guessed again that something else
might have happened, like having been attacked by a ghost.

One day, while
lamenting & feeling
drowsy, Lord Mādhava
& consoled him & spoke to
him

2.1.83

ekadā tu tathaiivāsau
śocann akṛta-bhojanah
nidrāṇo mādhavenedam
samādiṣṭaḥ sa-sāntvanam

One day, however (ekadā tu), while lamenting in this way (asau tathaiiva śocann), as he began to feel drowsy from fasting (akṛta-bhojanah nidrāṇo) he saw Lord Mādhava (mādhavena), who consoled him (sa-sāntvanam) and gave him this instruction (idam samādiṣṭaḥ):

Once again the brāhmaṇa had fallen into a trance of ecstasy and upon waking had become upset with himself.

This time he felt so discouraged that he finished the day without eating, which made him feel sleepy.

Lord Mādhava, the Deity of Daśāśvamedha-tīrtha, then appeared to him in this sleeplike state and said something like this:

“Why are you lamenting for no good reason? And why are you causing distress to Me, your worshipable Deity? I assure you that all your ambitions will soon be achieved.”

Ma dhateh Sat:
Remember the words of
Lord Shiva. Go to Vrindavan

2.1.84

vipra viśveśvarasyānu-
smara vākyaṃ umā-pateh
yamunā-tīra-mārgeṇa
tac chrī-vṛndāvanam vraja

“Dear brāhmaṇa (vipra), please remember (anusmara) the words (vākyaṃ) of Viśveśvara, the husband of Umā (umā-pateh viśveśvarasya). Go (vraja) by the path along the shore of the Yamunā (yamunā-tīra-mārgeṇa) to Śrī Vṛndāvana (tac Śrī-vṛndāvanam).

While reminding the brāhmaṇa of Lord Viśveśvara's instruction,
Lord Gopāla repeated it from His own mouth and in His own
words, thus making it His direct order also.

Apart from this, Viśveśvara (Lord Śiva) is the husband of the
goddess Kāmākhyā, the spiritual authority who gave the brāhmaṇa
his mantra, so the brāhmaṇa should not neglect the instruction.

2.1.85

tatrāsādhāraṇam harṣam
lapsyase mat-prasādataḥ
vilambam pathi kutrāpi
mā kuruṣva kathañcana

“By My mercy (mat-prasādataḥ), there (tatra) you will obtain (lapsyase) extraordinary pleasure (asādhāraṇam harṣam). Go, and don't delay (vilambam mā kuruṣva) anywhere on the road (pathi kutrāpi) for any reason (kathañcana).”

By My mercy
In vṛndāvan you will
obtain extraordinary pleasure.
... do not delay.

The pleasure to be had in Śrī Vr̥ndāvana is incomparable, superior to all four kinds of success in worldly endeavor—religiosity, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation.

The br̥hmaṇa should be undistracted while on the road to Vr̥ndāvana.

He shouldn't stray from devotional service onto the side roads of jñāna and karma.

Lord Mādhava here advises the brāhmaṇa that good fortune will arise by His mercy alone, the Lord's mercy, not that of anyone else.

But that mercy of Lord Mādhava will appear especially in certain places, at certain times, and in certain company

2.1.86

He he woke up
with joy & set out
to Mathura & gradually
reaches there. He took
bath @ Viśrānti-glāṅṅ

tataḥ sa prātar utthāya
hr̥ṣṭaḥ san prasthitaḥ kramāt
śrīman-madhu-purīm prāptaḥ
snāto viśrānti-tīrthake

Thus the brāhmaṇa arose early in the morning (tataḥ sa prātar utthāya) and happily set out on his journey (hr̥ṣṭaḥ san prasthitaḥ). Gradually (kramāt) he came to blessed Madhupurī (śrīman-madhu-purīm prāptaḥ) and bathed at Viśrānti-tīrtha (snāto viśrānti-tīrthake).

Obeying the Lord's order, the brāhmaṇa at once started for Vr̥ndāvana. And when he entered the holy dhāma, he came first to Mathurā City.

Following the standard custom of pilgrims, he first visited the bathing place on the Yamunā known as Viśrānti-tīrtha (Viśrāma-ghāṭa).

2.1.87

In Vṛndāva he
felt enlivened @ every
moment. & while chanting
his mantra, in meditation
he would see all the surroundings
& the pastime things

gato vṛndāvanam tatra
dhyāyamānam nije jape
taṁ taṁ parikaram prāyo
vikṣyābhikṣṇam nananda saḥ

He went on to Vṛndāvana (gato vṛndāvanam) and there (tatra) felt enlivened at every moment (abhikṣṇam nananda saḥ), for while chanting his mantra (nije jape) he saw in meditation (dhyāyamānam vikṣya) most of the companions (parikaram prāyah) and surroundings from Kṛṣṇa's pastimes (taṁ taṁ).

He saw Kṛṣṇa's supremely beautiful cows, cowherds, kadamba trees, and so on, which, although famous, are beyond the power of unqualified people to describe.

Itaṁ vāṅ
wandering, here here glāṅ
he heard someone crying

2.1.88

tasmin go-bhūṣite 'paśyan
kam apītas tato bhraman
keśī-tīrthasya pūrvasyām
diśi śuśrāva rodanam

He wandered here and there (itas tato bhraman) in that cow-adorned land (tasmin go-bhūṣite), without meeting any people (kam api apaśyan). But at one place on the eastern side of Keśī-tīrtha (keśī-tīrthasya pūrvasyām diśi), he heard someone crying (śuśrāva rodanam).

At the holy place where Kṛṣṇa had once killed the horse demon,
Keśī, the brāhmaṇa met the first human being he was to encounter
in Vṛndāvana.

This sacred place Keśī-tīrtha is described in the Mathurā-māhātmya
of the Varāha Purāṇa (152.30-31):

gaṅgā śata-guṇā proktā māthure mama maṇḍale
yamunā viśrutā devi nātra kāryā vicāraṇā

tasyāḥ śata-guṇā proktā yatra keśī nipātitaḥ
keśyāḥ śata-guṇā proktā yatra viśramito hariḥ

“One hundred times more sacred than the Gaṅgā (gaṅgā śata-guṇā proktā), O goddess Earth (devi), is the Yamunā (yamunā viśrutā) in My own abode, Mathurā (māthure mama maṇḍale). No one need doubt this (na atra vicāraṇā kāryā). More sacred than Mathurā by a hundred times (tasyāḥ śata-guṇā proktā) is the place on the Yamunā where the Keśī demon fell (yatra keśī nipātitaḥ), and one hundred times more sacred than that Keśī-tīrtha (keśyāḥ śata-guṇā proktā) is the spot nearby where Kṛṣṇa rested after the demon was killed (yatra viśramito hariḥ).”

2.1.89

With the + sound
Sound he also heard
Nāma-Saṅkīrtan in pure love.
He started looking for that
reason

tad-dig-bhāgam gataḥ premṇā
nāma-saṅkīrtanair yutam
tad ākarṇya muhus tatra
taṁ manuṣyam amārgayat

Heading in the direction of that sound (tad-dig-bhāgam gataḥ), he heard (ākarṇya) it mingled with constant nāma-saṅkīrtana (tatra muhuh nāma-saṅkīrtanair yutam) performed in pure love (premṇā). And so he looked for the person chanting (taṁ manuṣyam amārgayat).

From a distance he recognized only the sound of crying, but as he approached he heard the names of the Supreme Lord being sweetly chanted with great affection, with syllables drawn out long and melodious, by someone whose heart seemed completely softened by love of God.

He became intent upon finding the person chanting.

He entered a dense dark
forest following the sound
& reached the bank of Yamunā

2.1.90

ghanāndhakārāraṇyāntaḥ
so 'paśyan kañcid unmukhaḥ
nirdhārya tad-dhvani-sthānam
yamunā-tīram avrajat

He entered a dense, dark forest (ghana andhakāra āraṇya antaḥ)
where he couldn't see anyone (sah kañcid apaśyan). But he
discerned the place from which the sound came (nirdhārya tad-
dhvani-sthānam), and he eagerly went there, to the bank of the
Yamunā (unmukhaḥ yamunā-tīram avrajat).

So thick was the forest that the leaves of the trees left no space for the light of the sun to enter.

The brāhmaṇa saw no one but could still hear the sound of nāma-
saṅkīrtana, which drew him further on.

There in a grove
of kadamba trees, he
saw a beautiful cowherd boy

2.1.91

tatra nīpa-nikuñjāntar
gopa-veśa-paricchadam
kiśoram su-kumārāṅgam
sundaram tam udaikṣata

There (tatra), in a grove of kadamba trees (nīpa-nikuñja antah), he found (udaikṣata) a handsome young man (tam sundaram kiśoram) whose body was very tender (su-kumārāṅgam), with the dress and accouterments of a cowherd (gopa-veśa-paricchadam).

The person the brāhmaṇa discovered was dressed like a cowherd boy, with a flute, buffalo horn, and herding stick and with a peacock feather on his head.

Every part of his body appeared auspicious.

Mistaking him to be
his worshipping deity,
he called out Oh Gopāla!
offered daṇḍavat in great
joy

2.1.92

nijeṣṭa-devatā-bhrāntyā
gopāleti mahā-mudā
samāhvayan praṇāmāya
papāta bhuvī daṇḍa-vat

Mistaking this person for his worshipable Deity (nijeṣṭa-devatā-bhrāntyā), the brāhmaṇa joyfully (mahā-mudā) called out (samāhvayan) “O Gopāla (gopāla iti)!” and fell to the ground like a rod (papāta bhuvī daṇḍa-vat) to offer respects (praṇāmāya).

Because the cowherd sitting before the brāhmaṇa was dressed and ornamented just like Madana-gopāla, the brāhmaṇa thought that this was the Deity in person.

The brāhmaṇa wanted to offer a fitting salutation, so he at once fell flat on the ground and with spontaneous enthusiasm sweetly called out, “O Gopāla!”

The offering of these three syllables go-pā-la was his way of properly honoring the Lord.

The cowherd boy
 who was all knowing
 understood the
 Brāhmaṇa to
 be a worthy
 of Madanagopāla.
 So, he came out of the grove
 & bowed down
 & embraced him

tato jāta-bahir-dr̥ṣṭiḥ sa sarva-jñā-śiromaṇiḥ
jñātvā taṁ māthuram vipraṁ kāmākhyā-deśa-vāsinam

śrīman-madana-gopālo-pāsakaṁ ca samāgatam
niḥsr̥tya kuñjād utthāpya natvāliṅgya nyaveśayat

This young man was the crest jewel of those who know everything (sah sarva-jñā-śiromaṇiḥ). As he regained external consciousness (tato jāta-bahir-dr̥ṣṭiḥ), he recognized his visitor as a Mathurā brāhmaṇa (jñātvā taṁ māthuram vipraṁ) living in the district of the goddess Kāmākhyā (kāmākhyā-deśa-vāsinam) and worshiping Śrīman Madana-gopāla (śrīman-madana-gopāla upāsakaṁ). The young cowherd stood up (utthāpya) and came out of the grove (niḥsr̥tya kuñjād), bowed down to the brāhmaṇa and embraced him (samāgatam natvā āliṅgya), and made him sit down (nyaveśayat).

The cowherd knew without being told that his guest was a brāhmaṇa who had traveled to Vṛndāvana from a long distance.

More specifically he knew that his visitor was the child of a brāhmaṇa family of Mathurā who had moved to the Kāmarūpa district in Assam to worship the presiding goddess Kāmākhyā.

Furthermore, the young cowherd knew that this brāhmaṇa was now
worshiping the lotus feet of Śrīmān Madana-gopāla and had come for
some special purpose of the Lord's.

Actually, Śrī Rādhā-devī had ordered the cowherd to go to the grove
that morning.

So he bowed down to his guest, raised him from the ground,
embraced him, and invited him to sit down.

To further gain the
Brahmanā's confidence, he pleased
him with hospitality, then smiled &
revealed something abt the Brahmanā's
life

2.1.95

athātithyena santosya
viśvāsoṭpādanāya saḥ
kiñcit tenānubhūtaṃ yad
vyañjayām āsa sa-smitam

To further gain the brāhmaṇa's confidence (saḥ viśvāsa utpādanāya), the cowherd pleased him with hospitality (athātithyena santosya) and then smiled (sa-smitam) and revealed (vyañjayām āsa) something (kiñcit) about the brāhmaṇa's life (tena anubhūtaṃ yad).

The young cowherd, Gopa-kumāra, greeted his brāhmaṇa guest in a manner befitting the time and place and then briefly recounted what had happened in the brāhmaṇa's life, beginning with his worship of the goddess Kāmākhyā and leading up to his coming to this place on the shore of the Yamunā.

The cowherd expertly revealed things hidden in the brāhmaṇa's heart that no one else could have known.



Why did he do this?

He wanted to win the brāhmaṇa's trust so that the brāhmaṇa would believe what he was about to be told.

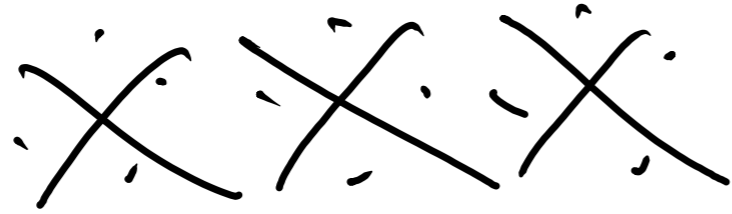
Otherwise, the brāhmaṇa might be skeptical about Gopa-kumāra's fantastic story

Accepting Goḍa Kumāra
as his friend & trusting
him, the brāhmaṇa revealed
his life story to Goḍa Kumāra

2.1.96

buddhvā gopa-kumāraṁ taṁ
labdhvevātma-priyaṁ mudā
viśvasto 'kathayat tasmin
sva-vṛttaṁ brāhmaṇo 'khilam

The brāhmaṇa now understood that this was a young cowherd boy (buddhvā gopa-kumāraṁ taṁ) and accepted him (labdhvā) as if the boy were a dear friend (ātma-priyaṁ iva). Happily trusting him (mudā viśvasto), the brāhmaṇa then recounted (brāhmaṇah akathayat) his own entire life story (tasmin sva-vṛttaṁ akhilam).



When the brāhmaṇa understood that this was not his worshipable
Lord but a cowherd with all good qualities, the brāhmaṇa relaxed.

Then, with grh humility,
considering gopa-kuare to be
a great seikh, he submissively
inquired

2.1.97

sa-kārpaṇyam idaṁ cāsau
praśritaḥ punar abravīt
taṁ sarva-jña-varam matvā
sat-tamaṁ gopa-nandanam

Then with great humility (sa-kārpaṇyam), considering (matvā) this young child of the cowherds (taṁ gopa-nandanam) the best of wise men (sarva-jña-varam) and a great saint (sat-tamaṁ), the brāhmaṇa (asau) submissively added an inquiry (praśritaḥ idaṁ punar abravīt).

I have heard about
many śādhanaś & śākyat.
But I am not able to decide
what is best for me.

2.1.98

śrī-brāhmaṇa uvāca

śrutvā bahu-vidham śādhyam

sādhanaṁ ca tatas tatah

prāpyam kṛtyam ca nirṇetum

na kiñcic chakyate mayā

The brāhmaṇa said: From various sources (tatas tatah) I have heard (śrutvā) of various goals (bahu-vidham śādhyam) and various methods to achieve them (sādhanaṁ ca), but still I cannot definitely decide (na kiñcic mayā nirṇetum śakyate) what goal I should strive for and what I should do to reach it (prāpyam kṛtyam ca).

On the bank of the Gaṅgā, at Kāśī and elsewhere, the brāhmaṇa
had heard various kinds of spiritual advice.

He had heard in one place that heaven is the ultimate goal of life,
and in another that liberation from the cycle of birth and death is
the goal.

And as for means of success he had heard claims that karma was
the means, or jñāna, or other methods.

No wonder he was confused.

I am also doing whatever
the devi told me. But I have
no idea about what is the
fruit of those activities & what
kind of activity it is

2.1.99

yac ca devy-ājñayā kiñcid
anutīṣṭhāmi nityaśah
tasyāpi kiṁ phalam tac ca
katamat karma vedmi na

Whatever the goddess ordered me (yac ca devy-ājñayā kiñcid), I regularly do (anutīṣṭhāmi nityaśah). But I have no idea (na vedmi) about the results of those duties (tasyāpi kiṁ phalam), or even what kind of acts they are (tac ca katamat karma).

If the brāhmaṇa did not know what the goal of his endeavor was and how he might achieve it, why was he continuing to chant his mantra?

He was doing so because he had respect for the order of the goddess Kāmākhyā.

The little she had asked him to do, namely chant this mantra, was not much compared to the complex duties of householders and sannyāsīs that he had learned about from others.

He continued chanting out of reverence for the goddess, not because he understood the essence of what he was doing.

He was even unaware whether this chanting belonged to the category of ritual duties, cultivation of knowledge, or devotional service.

Therefore, he thought, since his practice was not based on definite knowledge and faith, it had no real value for his spiritual advancement.

I think
my life worthless
By I simply want to die.
to the mercy of
① Mādhava
② Śiva
③ K. Devī

2.1.100

tenedaṁ viphalam janma
manvānaḥ kāmāye mṛtim
param jīvāmi kṛpayā
śivayor mādhasya ca

I therefore think (tena manvānaḥ) my life worthless (idaṁ janma viphalam), and I simply want to die (mṛtim kāmāye). I continue to live (jīvāmi) only by the mercy (param kṛpayā) of Lord Mādhava (mādhasya), and Lord Śiva and his wife (śivayor ca).

It was at Prayāga that the brāhmaṇa had reached this point of crisis in his spiritual life.

There also, however, he had received the grace of Lord Viṣṇu in the form of Śrī Mādhava and of Lord Viśveśvara and his wife Kāmākhyā-devī, who had all appeared in dreams to give him guidance.

It is only by
their mercy that I
have met you today.
Can you pls deliver me?

2.1.101

tayaivātrādyā sarva-jñāṁ
dayāluṁ tvāṁ sva-deva-vat
prāpya hr̥ṣṭaḥ prasanno 'smi
kr̥paṇaṁ mām samuddhara

Only by their mercy (tayā eva) have I met you here today (atra adya
prāpya tvāṁ), a compassionate and all-knowing person (sarva-jñāṁ
dayāluṁ). You are just like my worshipable Deity (sva-deva-vat),
and I am very happy and satisfied to meet you (prāpya hr̥ṣṭaḥ
prasanno 'smi). Now please deliver this wretched soul (kr̥paṇaṁ
mām samuddhara).

At Prayāga the brāhmaṇa received the mercy of Śrī Mādhava,
Viśveśvara, and Kāmākhyā-devī, but only in Vṛndāvana could he
understand the inestimable value of that mercy.

Now he is confident that Gopa-kumāra is as good as Lord Madana-
gopāla; in other words, Gopa-kumāra's transcendental instructions
can easily lift him out of the ocean of his doubts and out of the vast
ocean of material existence.

Having heard his
Gok felt that "he has
done everything & his life
is a complete success."

2.1.102

śrī-parīksid uvāca
niśamya sādaram tasya
vacanam sa vyacintayat
etasya kṛta-kṛtyasya
jātā pūrṇārthatā kilav

102-108

↓
Gok's thoughtful concern
for the Brāhmanā

Śrī Parīksit said: Respectfully having heard (sādaram niśamya) the brāhmaṇa's words (tasya vacanam), the young cowherd thought (sa vyacintayat), "This person has done everything he needs to do (etasya kṛta-kṛtyasya). Indeed, his life is a complete success (jātā pūrṇārthatā kila).

The word ādara is usually understood to mean “respect,” but it can also mean “affection.”

With respect for the brāhmaṇa’s status as a Mathurā brāhmaṇa and with special affinity for him as a fellow worshiper of Śrī Madana-gopāla, Gopa-kumāra heard him out.

Texts 102 through 108 describe Gopa-kumāra’s thoughtful concern for the brāhmaṇa.

All that remains to
be achieved is for him
to have the direct vision
of the Lord.
↓
But he needs to be little bit detached
from his śara & attached to
nāma śaṅkīrtan

2.1.103

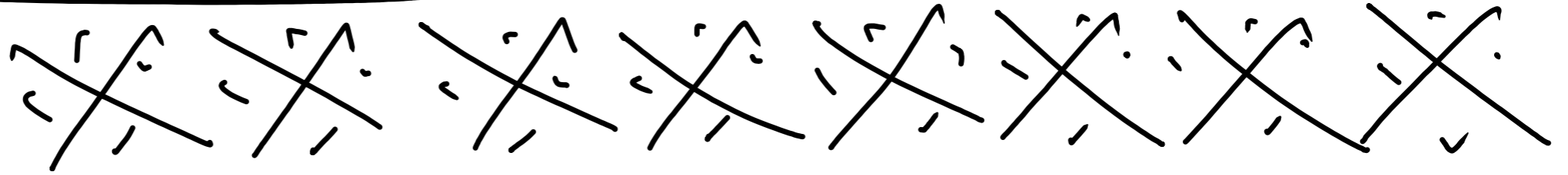
kevalam tat-padāmbhoja-
sākṣād-ikṣāvaśiṣyate
taj-jape 'rhati nāsaktim
kintu tan-nāma-kīrtane

“All that remains for him to achieve (kevalam avaśiṣyate) is to see directly the lotus feet of the Lord (sākṣād tat-padāmbhoja-ikṣā). He needs to become attached not so much to the solitary chanting of the Lord’s mantra (taj-jape na āsaktim arhati) but to the saṅkīrtana of His names (kintu tan-nāma-kīrtane).

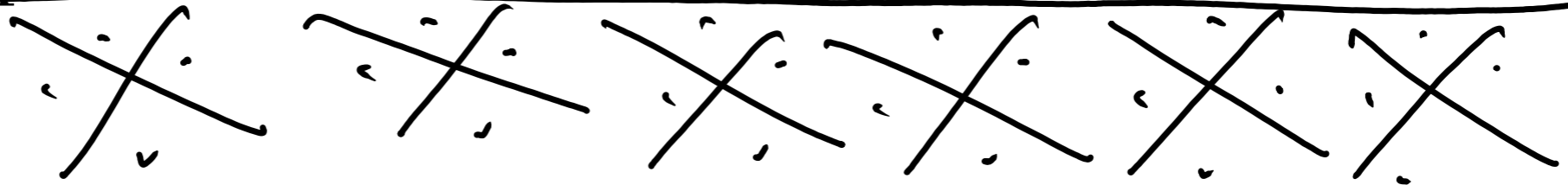
When received by Pañcarātric initiation in a Vaiṣṇava sampradāya,
viṣṇu-mantras deliver the chanter from illusion and provide him
liberation and entrance into the divine life of devotional service.

But the highest standard of pure love of God is obtainable not by the
pāñcarātrika-vidhi but by the bhāgavata-vidhi of nāma-saṅkīrtana,
worship of Kṛṣṇa's names without material motives.

The Prāgjyotiṣa-pura brāhmaṇa had been chanting the ten-syllable Gopāla mantra for some time with good effect, but only after he heard the śuddha-nāma from Gopa-kumāra was he able to chant the same names of Lord Gopāla in the perfect consciousness of saṅkīrtana.



Offenseless saṅkīrtana with concentrated attention naturally develops into spontaneous attraction to Kṛṣṇa and His loving service.



There is no means of perfection superior to worship of Madana-gopāla's lotus feet. 2.1.104-105
It could be performed ~~although~~
Name-scholarship ~~along with reverence~~
& affection for ~~his lotus-feet~~

śrīman-madana-gopāla-pādābjopāsanāt param
nāma-saṅkīrtana-prāyād vāñchātīta-phala-pradāt
tal-līlā-sthala-pālinām śraddhā-sandarśanādaraiḥ
sampādyamānān nitarām kiñcin nāsty eva sādhanam

“Certainly no means of perfection is superior (kiñcin nāsty eva param sādhanam) to the worship of Śrīman Madana-gopāla’s lotus feet (śrīmad-madana-gopāla-pādābja upāsanāt). That worship yields results far beyond what one could expect (vāñchātīta-phala-pradāt). It should be performed mainly through nāma-saṅkīrtana (nāma-saṅkīrtana-prāyād), along with reverence and affection (śraddhā-sandarśana ādaraiḥ) for the many places of Śrī Gopāla’s pastimes (tal-līlā-sthala-pālinām), places one should regularly visit (nitaram sampadyamānān).

How then had the brāhmaṇa already made so much spiritual advancement?

He had done so by worshiping Śrī Kṛṣṇa, although irregularly.

He had been worshiping without the complete faith and understanding that come only from the special mercy of Kṛṣṇa's pure devotees.

But any contact with Kṛṣṇa, the supreme goal of all existence, assures absolute perfection, and so also does any contact with His names, for hearing and chanting of His names is the supreme method for attaining kṛṣṇa-prema.



Even offensive chanting of Kṛṣṇa's names, if continued long enough, will free one from disqualifications, and even nāmābhāsa, offenseless chanting without real attachment, will quickly lead to liberation and the rise of transcendental attachment and taste.

Thus for spiritual upliftment there is no better practice than worship of the divine lotus feet of Lord Madana-gopāla.

In this verse the Lord's feet are described as śrīmān, indicating that they fully possess all types of wealth and splendor.

They have the potency to satisfy all the heartfelt desires of a devotee and to delight him in ways unanticipated by his conscious, and even subconscious, desires.

The principal activity of this worship is saṅkīrtana, chanting out loud in melodious song the Lord's names, like Kṛṣṇa, Govinda and Gopāla.

Śrī Parīksit further suggests that the effects of hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana are enhanced by visiting the sacred places in Vraja-bhūmi where Kṛṣṇa enjoyed pastimes with His gopas and gopīs.

As much as other obligations in devotional service allow, Vaiṣṇavas should wander about these places and see them with their own eyes.

If they do this with love and respect, their nāma-bhajana will soon bear fruit.

There is no greater desire
than prema, as it merges
the 4 puruṣārthas due to
its ability to bring them
under control

2.1.106

sañjāta-premakāc cāsmāc
catur-varga-vidāmbakāt
tat-pādābja-vaśī-kārād
anyat sādhyam na kiñcana

“There is no other final goal (anyat sādhyam na kiñcana) than that in which pure love of God appears (sañjāta-premakāt ca asmāt), mocking the four lesser aims of life (catur-varga-vidāmbakāt) and bringing the Lord’s lotus feet under one’s control (tat-pādābja-vaśī-kārād).

In comparison to kṛṣṇa-prema, the four goals religiosity, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation appear insignificant.

Only prema-bhakti can bring the Personality of Godhead under control: śrī-kṛṣṇākarṣiṇī ca sā. (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.17)

∴ I must narrate
my full history to him
so that all his doubts are
cleared & he comes to the
same conclusion

2.1.107

iti bodhayitum cāsyā
sarva-saṁśaya-nodanam
sva-vṛttam eva nikhilam
nūnam prāk pratipādaye

“To bring him to this realization (iti ca asyā bodhayitum), first I must tell him (nūnam prāk pratipādaye) my own history in full (sva-vṛttam eva nikhilam). That will clear away all his doubts (sarva-saṁśaya-nodanam).

The brāhmaṇa needs to be informed that Kṛṣṇa is the goal of his endeavors and that nāma-saṅkīrtana is the means to achieve Kṛṣṇa.

But if Gopa-kumāra were to say this from the start, the brāhmaṇa, his mind ruled by doubts and misconceptions, might not grasp the full import of the advice.

Therefore, to win the brāhmaṇa's trust, Gopa-kumāra first needs to describe his own experiences, beginning from when he also received the same gopāla-mantra and continuing up to the present moment.

That will drive away the brāhmaṇa's doubts and wrong ideas.

It will also allow the brāhmaṇa to drink the nectar of śrī-bhagavat-
kathā, which will render his heart pure enough to assimilate the
transcendental knowledge he requires.

In fact, that knowledge should then manifest itself automatically,
even without needing to be explicitly stated.

own speaking about
own stories is not good.
But this is what is
needed to bring good fortune
to the brahmana

2.1.108

svayam eva sva-māhātmyam
kathyate yan na tat satām
sammataṁ syāt tathāpy asya
nānyākhyānād dhitaṁ bhavet

“Describing (kathyate) one’s own glories (svayam eva sva-māhātmyam) is disapproved by spiritual authorities (na tat satām sammataṁ syāt). But (tathāpy) nothing else I could tell (na anya ākhyānād) will bring about his good fortune (asya hitaṁ bhavet).”

As the saying goes, sva-praśamsā dhruvo mrtyuh: “Self-praise is as good as death.”

All the same, Gopa-kumāra understands that nothing but his own story will dispel the brāhmaṇa’s doubts and give him tattva-jñāna.

Because Gopa-kumāra used his mystic power to describe the brāhmaṇa's past, the brāhmaṇa is already inclined to believe him.

So Gopa-kumāra should not hesitate to tell his own story and thereby make the brāhmaṇa fortunate, since his own story is very similar to that of the brāhmaṇa and will drive away all his doubts.

Śrī Rādhā's order will then be quickly carried out, and what would ordinarily have been a breach of etiquette will be perfectly acceptable behavior.

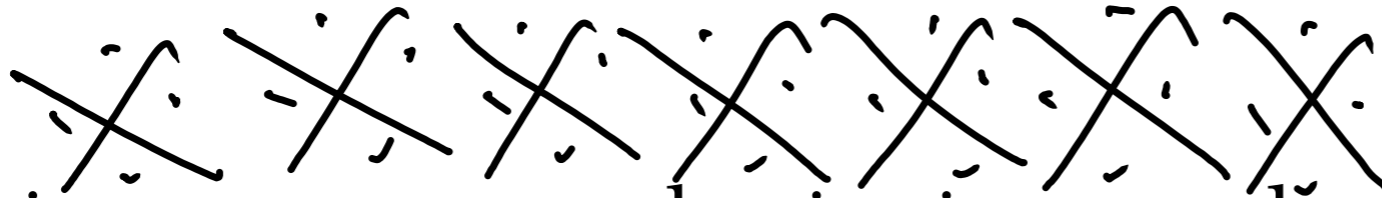
Deciding in this
way he started narrating
his own story

2.1.109

evam viniścitya mahānubhāvo
gopātmajo 'sāv avadhāpya vipram
ātmānubhūtaṃ gaditum pravṛttah
paurāṇiko yadvad ṛṣiḥ purāṇam

Thus the saintly son of the cowherds (asāv mahānubhāvo
gopātmajah) made up his mind (evam viniścitya). He asked the
brāhmaṇa for his attention (avadhāpya vipram) and began to speak
(gaditum pravṛttah) about his own life (ātmānubhūtaṃ), just as a
sage versed in the Purāṇas (yadvad paurāṇiko ṛṣiḥ) would speak an
epic (purāṇam).

Gopa-kumāra spoke with great authority; although he was just a young herdsman, anyone listening to him would think he was an ancient speaker of the Purāṇas like Romaharṣaṇa Sūta or his son Ugraśravā, or a seer of Vedic mantras like the ṛṣi Vāmadeva.



His narration was as authoritative as the Purāṇas and fully in accord with all śāstras.

The sage Devala has defined the characteristics of a ṛṣi:

ūrdhva-retās tapasy ugro
niyatāśī ca saṁyamī
śāpānugrahayoḥ śaktah
satya-sandho bhaved ṛṣiḥ

“A ṛṣi is one (ṛṣiḥ bhaved) whose semen flows upward (ūrdhva-retāḥ), who is fierce in observing austere vows (tapasy ugro), who eats moderately (niyatāśī), controls his senses (saṁyamī), is able to curse and bless (śāpa-anugrahayoḥ śaktah), and adheres firmly to the truth (satya-sandhah).”

⑥

2.1.110

Even though there
are many histories relevant
to this topic, I am going
to share my own story too

śrī-gopa-kumāra uvāca
atretihāsā bahavo
vidyante 'thāpi kathyate
sva-vṛttam evānusmṛtya
mohādāv api saṅgatam

Śrī Gopa-kumāra said: There are many historical accounts (itihāsā bahavo vidyante) relevant to this topic (atra), but (athāpi) I am going to tell you (kathyate) my own story (sva-vṛttam eva), including recollections (anusmṛtya) of what occurred at times when I was bewildered by ecstasy and other distractions (mohādāv api saṅgatam).

There are many ancient historical accounts about what certain people did and said to one another that may be useful in explaining how to determine the best goal of life and the means to achieve it.

These accounts are called Itihāsas:

dharmārtha-kāma-mokṣāṇām

upadeśa-samanvitam

pūrva-vṛtta-kathā-yuktam

itihāsam pracakṣate

“A text that consists of narrations of past events (pūrva-vṛtta-kathā-yuktam) and includes instructions (upadeśa-samanvitam) about religiosity, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation (dharmārtha-kāma-mokṣāṇām) is called an Itihāsa (itihāsam pracakṣate).”

Gopa-kumāra's plan, however, is to tell his own history instead.



Of all forms of evidence for establishing the truth, experience from one's own life is the strongest.

Thus when Gopa-kumāra frankly reveals the events of his life, the brāhmaṇa should be persuaded of the higher truth that Gopa-kumāra has grasped.

On occasions Gopa-kumāra was unaware of what was going on around him because the overflowing of his love for the Supreme Lord disturbed his external perception.

Even so, by virtue of his advanced self-realization he can now recollect even the details of events of which he was unconscious when they occurred.

Many of these personal events are also too confidential to discuss freely in public, and Gopa-kumāra may be somewhat embarrassed to mention them.

He feels obliged, however, to do everything he can to help enlighten the brāhmaṇa.

As Gopa-kumāra will tell the brāhmaṇa in the last chapter of this book:

paśya yac cātmanas tasya
tadīyānām api dhruvam
vṛttam parama-gopyam tat
sarvam te kathitam mayā

“Just see (paśya). I have told you everything (sarvam te kathitam mayā) that happened to me (yac ca ātmanah), and everything done by the Lord (tasya) and His devotees (tadīyānām), even that which is extremely confidential (tat dhruvam parama-gopyam api).”
(Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.7.4)

I am the son of
a Govardhan-nivāsi cowherd
& I used to tend my own
Cows

2.1.111

gopāla-vṛtter vaiśyasya
govardhana-nivāsinah
putro 'ham īdṛśo bālah
purā gāś cārayan nijāh

I am a son (putro 'ham) of a vaiśya (vaiśyasya) of Govardhana (govardhana-nivāsinah) who made his living as a cowherd (gopāla-vṛtter). As a young boy of that community (īdṛśo bālah), I used to tend my own cows (purā nijāh gāh cārayan).

I stayed in the
company of other boys @
Govardhan & @ other places in Mathurā

2.1.112

tasmin govardhane kṛṣṇā-
tīre vṛndāvane 'tra ca
māthure maṇḍale bālaiḥ
samaṁ vipra-vara sthitaḥ

O best of learned brāhmaṇas (vipra-vara), I stayed (sthitaḥ) in the
company of other boys (bālaiḥ samaṁ) there at Govardhana (tasmin
govardhane), here in Vṛndāvana (atra vṛndāvane), on the banks of
the Yamunā (kṛṣṇā-tīre), and at various other places in the district of
Mathurā (ca māthure maṇḍale).

Now Gopa-kumāra begins his story, which will continue till the end of the sixth chapter.

He was born in a vaiśya community, in a family of cowherds.

Many scriptures, including Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.24.21), describe that vaiśyas may engage in four occupations: trade, banking, farming, and cow protection (kṛṣī-vāṇijya-go-rakṣā kusīdam ca).

As this history unfolds, we shall find that although a long time has passed since Gopa-kumāra was an innocent boy at Govardhana, he has not aged at all.

As he explains later, this was due to a blessing given him by his spiritual master:

tvam etasya prabhāveṇa
cira-jīvī bhavānv-aham
īdṛg-gopārbha-rūpaś ca
tat-phalāpty-arha-mānasah

“By the potency of this mantra (etasya prabhāveṇa), may you live a long time (tvam cira-jīvī bhava), may you always have (anv-aham) the form of a cowherd boy (īdṛg-gopārbha-rūpaś ca), and may you develop the right mentality (arha-mānasah) for tasting the mantra’s fruit (tat-phala āpty).” (Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 2.1.191)

Gopa-kumāra's tending a herd of his own cows means that his family was relatively well-to-do and independent.

↓ twights

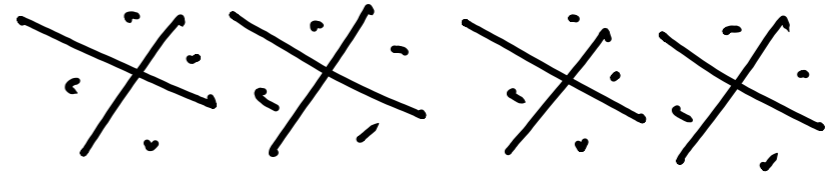
In the course of doing this work, he wandered over the area within the twenty-yojana circumference of Mathurā-mandala.

Among the places he used for cow herding, his special favorites were Govardhana, the forest of Vṛndāvana, and the shores of the Yamunā.

Sometimes he went to other locations in the dhāma, like Mahāvana,
but according to one transcendental opinion Vraja-bhūmi consists
of nothing but Govardhana, Vṛndāvana, and the Yamunā, since
these three places pervade the entire dhāma.



In any case, there is no place outside Vraja-dhāma where a cowherd
can get real benefit from his occupation.



Gopa-kumāra addresses his new student by saying “O best of
learned brāhmaṇas” because the student hails from the brāhmaṇa
community of Mathurā.

In the forest
we daily saw a very
renounced Brahmana

2.1.113

vana-madhye ca paśyāmo
nityam ekaṁ dvijottamam
divya-mūrtim virakty-ādhyam
paryaṭantam itas tataḥ

In the forest (vana-madhye) we regularly saw (nityam paśyāmah) a certain first-class brāhmaṇa (ekaṁ dvijottamam), wandering from place to place (paryaṭantam itas tataḥ). He was very renounced (virakty-ādhyam), and his body appeared like that of a god (divya-mūrtim).

This person the boys frequently saw was in truth the best of
brāhmaṇas.

His body was golden and very beautiful.

Sometimes he sang
dances (or) left feet laughing

2.1.114

kīrtayantaṁ muhuḥ kṛṣṇaṁ
japa-dhyāna-rataṁ kvacit
nṛtyantaṁ kvāpi gāyantaṁ
kvāpi hāsa-param kvacit

He was always chanting the glories of Kṛṣṇa (kīrtayantaṁ muhuḥ kṛṣṇaṁ). Sometimes he sang and sometimes danced (nṛtyantaṁ kvāpi gāyantaṁ). Sometimes, absorbed in meditation, he chanted his mantra to himself (japa-dhyāna-rataṁ kvacit), and sometimes he gave himself to laughter (kvāpi hāsa-param kvacit).

The outstanding characteristic of this brāhmaṇa was that he always vibrated Kṛṣṇa's glories, either with the two-syllable name Kṛṣṇa or with other names of the Personality of Godhead.

He would sing these names sweetly in various ways.

He sometimes appeared withdrawn into his private japa and dhyāna, which he dutifully performed daily even though he was already perfect in chanting the Lord's holy names.

As the tantras prescribe, even a person who has perfected the chanting of his mantra should continue to perform regular worship through japa and dhyāna to show gratitude to his spiritual benefactors:

siddha-mantra 'pi pūtātmā
tri-sandhyam devam arcayet
niyamenaika-sandhyam vā
japed aṣṭottaram śatam

“Even if one has perfected his mantra (**siddha-mantra 'pi**) and is completely pure in heart (**pūtātmā**), he should still worship the Lord (**devam arcayet**) at the three junctures of the day (**tri-sandhyam**) by the method prescribed (**niyamena**). Or at least at one of these three times he should do this worship (**eka-sandhyam vā**), and 108 times he should chant japa of his mantra (**japed aṣṭottaram śatam**).”

When the brāhmaṇa seemed withdrawn, intent on his prescribed chanting and meditation, in fact his outward senses were inactive not because he was controlling them out of duty but because ecstatic love was swelling up within him.

Sometimes he shouted
sobbed, stumbled & fell down
& slowed all such etc etc
Syllables →

2.1.115

vikrośantam kvacid bhūmau
skhalantam kvāpi matta-vat
luṭhantam bhuvi kutrāpi
rudantam kvacid uccakaiḥ

Sometimes he shouted (vikrośantam kvacid), or loudly sobbed
(rudantam kvacid uccakaiḥ), or stumbled and fell to the ground
(bhūmau skhalantam kvāpi), or rolled about on the ground
(luṭhantam bhuvi kutrāpi) like a madman (matta-vat).

Further e static
स्यु-१०-५

2.1.116

visamjñam patitam kvāpi
śleṣma-lālāśru-dhārayā
pañkayantam gavām vartma-
rajāmsi mṛta-vat kvacit

Sometimes he fell unconscious (**visamjñam patitam kvāpi**) and lay
still like a corpse (**mṛta-vat**), the flood of his mucus, saliva, and tears
(**śleṣma-lālā-aśru-dhārayā**) turning the dust on the cow path (**gavām**
vartma rajāmsi) into mud (**pañkayantam**).

Because the brāhmaṇa was practicing such intense chanting of the Lord's names, he would sometimes feel joy so immense that he would lose outward consciousness.

Sometimes he would collapse without wetting the ground as described here, and then he would appear to have died.

2.1.117

Out of curiosity we
would come to see him
by he would bow down to
us with devotion

kautukena vayaṁ bālā
yāmo 'mum vīkṣitum sadā
sa tu gopa-kumārān no
labdhvā namati bhaktiḥ

Out of curiosity (kautukena) we cowherd boys (vayaṁ bālā) would often come (sadā yāmo) look at him (amum vīkṣitum). But when he (sah tu) saw (labdhvā) us in front of him (nah gopa-kumārān) he would bow down to us with devotion (namati bhaktiḥ).

He apparently had great respect for the boys, despite their having no special respect for him.

He would heartily
embrace us & kiss us &
not be able to give up
our company

2.1.118

gāḍham āśliṣyati premṇā
sarvāṅgeṣu sa-cumbanam
parityaktum na śaknoti
mādrśān priya-bandhu-vat

He would heartily embrace us (gāḍham āśliṣyati) and affectionately cover us with kisses (premṇā sarvāṅgeṣu sa-cumbanam), as if we were his best friends (priya-bandhu-vat). He was unable to give up (parityaktum na śaknoti) our company (mādrśān).

Immersed in kṛṣṇa-prema, this brāhmaṇa was attracted to these
village boys because they resembled young Kṛṣṇa and His cowherd
friends. Priya-bandhu has several meanings: “best friends,” “close
relatives,” “most dear devotees of the Lord,” and “the Supreme
Lord, who is dear to His devotees.”

He was very pleased
with my services & one day
he embraced me & spoke thus

2.1.119

mayā go-rasa-dānādi-
sevayāsau prasāditaḥ
ekadā yamunā-tīre
prāpyāliṅgya jagāda mām

He was pleased (^{please} asau prasāditaḥ) with my services like giving gifts of milk products (go-rasa-dānādi-sevayā). One day (ekadā), meeting me on the shore of the Yamunā (yamunā-tīre prāpya), he embraced me and spoke in this way (āliṅgya jagāda mām):

Gopa-kumāra gave his new friend presents of milk, yogurt, and other milk products and would also carry his water pot and follow him around.

This kind of voluntary service pleased the great soul, who became disposed to give the boy his mercy.

If you want to
fulfill all your desires
Please bathe @ Keśi ghāṭa
& accept from me the mercy
of the Lord.

2.1.120

vatsa tvam sakalābhīṣṭa-
siddhim icchasi ced imam
prasādam jagad-īśasya
snātvā keśyām gṛhāṇa mat

“My dear child (vatsa), if you want (ced tvam) to fulfill all your desires (sakala abhīṣṭa-siddhim icchasi), please bathe at Keśi-ghāṭa (snātvā keśyām) and then accept from Me (mat gṛhāṇa) this mercy of the Lord of the universe (imam jagad-īśasya prasādam).”

Normally we consider the mercy of the Supreme Lord something intangible, but the saintly brāhmaṇa called it “this mercy” as if it were a tangible object in front of them.

He told Gopa-kumāra “Just take it from me” as if literally placing it in his hands.

After I bathed,
he imparted to me the
same Gopāla mantra

2.1.121

evam etam bhavan-mantram
snātāyopadideśa me
pūrṇa-kāmo 'napekṣyo 'pi
sa dayālu-śiromaṇiḥ

Thus, after I bathed (evam snātāya), he imparted to me (upadideśa me) the same mantra you are chanting (etad bhavad-mantram). Although he was fully satisfied in himself and indifferent to material things (pūrṇa-kāmah anapekṣyah api), he was the crest jewel of all compassionate souls (sah dayālu-śiromaṇiḥ).

Since Gopa-kumāra and his student have been initiated into the same mantra, their relationship should become very friendly.

When Gopa-kumāra got his mantra he should not have thought that this was his guru's way of reciprocating the gifts of buttermilk and yogurt.

His guru, being fully self-satisfied, did not need the service.

Only out of infinite compassion for the fallen souls did the guru show Gopa-kumāra his mercy.

2.1.122

pūjā-vidhiṃ śikṣayitum
dhyeyam uccārayan jape
premākulo gato moham
rudan virahiṇīva saḥ

He was going to
teach us the method of
worshipping along with the mantra.
But, as soon as he mentioned the
object of meditation → He was
lost in loving ecstasy

He was about to explain the method of worshipping (pūjā-vidhiṃ śikṣayitum) with the mantra (jape), but as soon as he mentioned the object of meditation (dhyeyam uccārayan) he was overcome by pure love of God (premākulah), became confused (gato moham), and started crying like a woman separated from her lover (rudan virahiṇīva).

→ Madan Gopā

Gopa-kumāra's guru had the instructions for properly using the mantra just on the tip of his tongue.

He was about to tell Gopa-kumāra how to mark the body with the syllables of the mantra, how to meditate systematically on the meaning of the mantra, and all the other details for reciting the mantra in worship.

But as soon as he started to describe the beautiful form of Śrīmān Madana-gopāla a sudden ecstasy caught hold of him, and, crying like a lovesick woman remembering her distant beloved, he lost his train of thought.

When he regained his
consciousness, I was afraid
to ask him anything.
He stood up & went away in a
distressed mood & was never to
be seen.

2.1.123

samjñām prāpto 'tha kiñcin na
praṣṭum śakto mayā bhiyā
utthāya vimanasko 'gāt
kvāpi prāptaḥ punar na saḥ

When he regained normal consciousness (atha samjñām prāpto) I was afraid (mayā bhiyā) to ask him anything (na kiñcit praṣṭum śaktaḥ). He stood up (utthāya) and went away (agāt), distressed (vimanasko). And after that he was nowhere to be found (kvāpi prāptaḥ punar na saḥ).

Having just received initiation, Gopa-kumāra felt deep reverence for his spiritual master, and without first being spoken to he dared not say anything.

He feared he might have done something offensive to upset his guru and thought that if he said anything wrong his guru might start crying again.

Why didn't the saintly brāhmaṇa give the missing instructions unasked?

In his ecstatic mood he was unhappy and distracted, so he went away saying nothing more.

And because he had no fixed residence he was not to be found again.

I had no idea
What this mantra was,
What is the fruit & how
it needs to be practiced

2.1.124

mayā tu kim idam labdham
kim asya phalam eva vā
mantraḥ katham sādhanīya
iti jñātam na kiñcana

I had no idea (mayā tu na kiñcana jñātam) what this mantra was
that I had received (kim idam labdham), what fruit its chanting
would bear (kim asya phalam eva vā), or even how the mantra was
to be practiced (mantraḥ katham sādhanīya iti).

Gopa-kumāra did not even know the name of this ten-syllable
mantra.

Was the mantra meant to be sung out loud?

Or chanted quietly?

Or was it a mantra at all?

If it was powerful, when chanted perfectly what fruit would it bear?

His guru had told him that the mantra would fulfill all his desires,
but that was vague.

Until now Gopa-kumāra had never thought seriously about his
ultimate desires and goals.

Simply out of
respect for the
brāhmaṇa's words
I constantly chanted the
in a secluded place
of curiosity

2.1.125

tad-vākya-gauravenaiva
mantram taṁ kevalam mukhe
kenāpy alakṣito 'jasram
japeyam kautukād iva

Simply out of respect for the brāhmaṇa's words (tad-vākya-gauravena eva), I constantly murmured this mantra (mantram taṁ ajasram kevalam mukhe) in secluded places, unseen by others (kenāpy alakṣito). I chanted it just out of curiosity (japeyam kautukād iva).

Gopa-kumāra, aware of his ignorance of the true nature of the
mantra, was embarrassed to chant it in public.

But it certainly fascinated him.

By the power of that
Brahmanā, even by such
aimless chanting, my mind
became purified & I developed
faith in the mantra

2.1.126

tan-mahā-puruṣasyaiva
prabhāvāt tādrśena ca
japena citta-śuddhir me
tatra śraddhāpy ajāyata

By the influence of that great person (tan-mahā-puruṣasyaiva
prabhāvāt), even such aimless chanting (tādrśena ca japena)
purified my mind (me citta-śuddhih), and I developed faith in the
mantra (tatra śraddhāpy ajāyata).

Without scientific knowledge of its practice and significance, the young sādḥaka Gopa-kumāra could hardly have solid faith in the mantra.

He was not firmly convinced of its efficacy, nor was he affectionately attracted to it.

Nonetheless, his naive chanting purified his mind of lust, envy, and greed.

Just by contemplating on
my guru's words, I understood
that the mantra is the sādhanā
to achieve the sākṣya of Jagad-īśa
∴ I became satisfied & absorbed in
Chanting

2.1.127

tad-vākyam cānusandhāya
jagad-īśvara-sādhakam
taṁ mantram manyamāno 'ham
tuṣyan japa-paro 'bhavam

Contemplating my guru's words (tad-vākyam ca anusandhāya), I understood the mantra (taṁ mantram manyamāno aham) to be the means for achieving the Lord of the universe (jagad-īśvara-sādhakam). Thus I became satisfied (tuṣyan) and absorbed in chanting (japa-paro abhavam).

Gopa-kumāra's guru had told him, "Accept the Supreme Lord's mercy."

Remembering this, Gopa-kumāra concluded that the mantra was meant for obtaining the favor of the Supreme Lord.

This was a satisfying reason to take enthusiastically to the chanting.

i became eager to
know this lord, please
to see him & with
this aspiration I left home
& came to the banks of Gaṅgā

2.1.128

kīdr̥śo jagad-īśo 'sau
kadā vā dr̥śyatām mayā
tad-eka-lālaso hitvā
gr̥hādīn jāhnavīm agām

I became eager to know who this Lord of the universe was (kīdr̥śo jagad-īśo asau) and when I might be able to see Him (kadā vā dr̥śyatām mayā). With this as my only aspiration (tad-eka-lālaso) I abandoned my home and other attachments (gr̥hādīn hitvā) and went to the bank of the Gaṅgā (jāhnavīm agām).

Wanting to identify the Lord of the universe, Gopa-kumāra compared Him to familiar people and things.

But he could find no clue in the place where he had been brought up, so he left home to wander in search of the Lord.

I heard the sound of
Conchshell & I followed it
& saw a learned brāhmaṇa
Śālagrāma-śilā worshiping

2.1.129

dūrāc chaṅkha-dhvanim śrutvā
tat-padam pulinaṃ gataḥ
vipraṃ vīkṣyānamam tatra
śālagrāma-śilārcakam

Hearing the distant sound of a conchshell being blown (dūrāc chaṅkha-dhvanim śrutvā), I followed that sound to its origin on a sandy bank of the river (tat-padam pulinaṃ gataḥ). There I saw a learned brāhmaṇa (vipraṃ vīkṣyānamam tatra) worshiping a Śālagrāma-śilā, and I bowed down (śālagrāma-śilārcakam).

2.1.130

kiṁ imaṁ yajasi svāminn
iti pṛṣṭo mayā hasan
so 'vadat kiṁ na jānāsi
bālāyaṁ jagad-īśvaraḥ

I asked him who
he was worshipping &
he laughingly replied
"Don't you know that this
Jagad-īśvaraḥ?"

I asked him (mayā pṛṣṭah), “Master (svāminn), what are you worshipping (kiṁ imaṁ yajasi)?” Laughing (hasan), he replied (sah avadat), “Dear boy (bāla), don't you know (kiṁ na jānāsi) that this is the Lord of the universe (ayaṁ jagad-īśvaraḥ)?”

The worshiper was surprised that anyone, even a child, would be ignorant that Śrī Śālagrāma is a direct incarnation of the Lord of the universe.

Hearing this I was
So happy like:
a) a poor man finding treasure
b) a family man reuniting with a
lost relative.

2.1.131

tac chrutvāham su-samprāpto
nidhim labdhveva nirdhanah
naṣṭam vā bāndhavo bandhum
paramām mudam āptavān

Hearing this (tac śrutvā) I felt unlimited happiness (aham paramām mudam āptavān), like a poor man (nirdhanah) finding (labdhvā) a welcome treasure (su-samprāpto nidhim iva), or a family man (vā bāndhavah) reuniting with a long-lost relative (naṣṭam bandhum).

2.1.132

jagad-īśam muhuḥ paśyan
daṇḍa-vac chraddhayānamam
pādodakam sa-nirmālyam
viprasya kṛpayāpnuvam

I gazed for a long time (muḥuḥ paśyan) at the Lord of the universe (jagad-īśam) and with faith bowed down to Him (śraddhayā naman), my whole body flat on the ground like a rod (daṇḍa-vat). By the brāhmaṇa's mercy (viprasya kṛpayā) I received (āpnuvam) some water that had washed the Lord's feet (pādodakam), and some remnants of offerings to Him (sa-nirmālyam).

a I gazed at Him for
a long time, bowed down to
Him.
By the brāhmaṇa's
mercy, I received
the remnants of offerings

With newborn faith and affection for the Lord in His Śālagrāma
form, Gopa-kumāra happily accepted the Lord's caraṇāmṛta, along
with remnants of tulasī leaves and other items earlier offered to the
Lord.

The brāhmaṇa prepared
to return home & put the Lord
to rest in a box.
Pained to see this GK started to
cry & complain

2.1.133

udyatena grhaṁ gantum
karāṇḍe tena śāyitam
jagad-īśam vilokyārto
vyalapaṁ sāsram īdrśam

Then the brāhmaṇa, preparing to return home (udyatena grhaṁ gantum), lay the Lord of the universe to rest (tena jagad-īśam śāyitam) in a box (karāṇḍe). Pained to see this (vilokya ārtah), I tearfully complained in this way (vyalapaṁ sāsram īdrśam):

You are putting
the Lord in a box
without feeling him?
How can He sleep hungry?

2.1.134

hā hā dhṛtaḥ karaṇḍāntar
asthāne parameśvaraḥ
kim apy asau na cābhuṅkta
nidrā tu kṣudhayā katham

“My God (hā hā), you are putting the Supreme Lord (parameśvaraḥ dhṛtaḥ) into a box (karaṇḍa antar)—such an unfit place (asthāne)! And He (hasn't even eaten) (asau na ca abhuṅkta)! How will He sleep (nidrā tu katham) if He is hungry (kṣudhayā)?”.

Gopa-kumāra thought the little box an ill-chosen place for the Lord of the universe.

→ flight

Told that being placed in such a box is what is done with the Deity after worship to Him is finished, Gopa-kumāra replied that he had not seen the brāhmaṇa make an offering of food substantial enough to satisfy the Lord's appetite and that the Lord should not be forced to sleep without first being fed.

Oh brahmana! Due to my
material conditioning, I could not
imagine that the Lord of the
universe could have a form so
different from us

2.1.135

prakṛtyaiva na jānāmi
māthura-brāhmaṇottama
asmād vilakṣaṇaḥ kaścit
kvāpy asti jagad-īśvaraḥ

O excellent brāhmaṇa from Mathurā (māthura-brāhmaṇottama),
because of my material conditioning (prakṛtyaiva) I was unaware
(na jānāmi) that the Lord of the universe (jagad-īśvaraḥ) is different
(vilakṣaṇaḥ asti) from everyone and everything (kaścit kvāpy) in
this world (asmād).

Gopa-kumāra was ignorant of the Supreme Person's transcendental nature.

The Lord can enjoy Himself everywhere simultaneously by expanding into an infinite number of forms.

There is no reason to worry that He will go hungry because of one devotee's neglect.

He may seem to be a small stone trapped in a box, but in fact the Lord is unlimited.

As I was complaining
& lamenting, the brāhmaṇa
tried to console me with humility
& shyness

2.1.136

ity akṛtrima-santāpam
vilāpāturam abravīt
brāhmaṇaḥ sāntayitvā mām
hrīṇa-vad vinayānvitaḥ

As I complained and suffered (vilāpa āturam) in my uncontrived lamentation (akṛtrima-santāpam), the brāhmaṇa tried to console me (brāhmaṇaḥ sāntayitvā mām). Full of humility (vinayānvitaḥ), he shyly spoke (hrīṇa-vad abravīt).

The saintly brāhmaṇa was ashamed of being too poor to feed even a human guest, what to speak of the Supreme Lord.

And in fact the place where he had now performed his worship simply had no facilities for cooking.

But the humility the brāhmaṇa felt was not caused by any external circumstance; it was a natural ecstasy of his individual type of love of God.

2.1.137

What can a boy
brāhmaṇa feel to
the Lord other than
what I cook for myself?

nava-vaiṣṇava kim kartum
daridraḥ śaknuyām param
arpayāmi sva-bhogyam hi
jagad-īśāya kevalam

“O new Vaiṣṇava (nava-vaiṣṇava),” he said, “what more can this poor man do (daridraḥ kim param kartum śaknuyām)? I can offer (arpayāmi) to the Lord of the universe (jagad-īśāya) only the meals I prepare for myself (sva-bhogyam hi kevalam).

The brāhmaṇa who lived near the Gaṅgā thought, “If this cowherd boy has never seen a brāhmaṇa like me worshiping Śālagrāma-śilā, he must be new to spiritual life.”

2.1.138-39

yadi pūjotsavam tasya vaibhavam ca didrksase
tadaitad-deśa-rājasya viṣṇu-pūjānurāgiṇaḥ

mahā-sādhoḥ purīm yāhi vartamānam adūrataḥ
tatra sākṣāt samīkṣasva durdarśam jagad-īśvaram

If you are eager to see
 the opulence of the Lord, then
 go to the capital
 city of the saintly
 king & behold the
 lot of the universe

“If you are eager to see (yadi didrksase) the Lord’s opulence (tasya vaibhavam) and a great festival of His worship (pūjā utsavam ca), please go (tadā yāhi) to the capital city (purīm) of this country’s very saintly ruler (etad-deśa-rājasya mahā-sādhoḥ). He is attached to the worship of Lord Viṣṇu in great love (viṣṇu-pūjā anurāgiṇaḥ). You will find his city not far away (vartamānam adūrataḥ), and there (tatra) you can behold (samīkṣasva) the Lord of the universe (sākṣāt jagad-īśvaram), who is so difficult to see (durdarśam).

The king of this district on the shore of the Gaṅgā was a sincere Vaiṣṇava, which made him a greater saint than any karmī, jñānī, or ordinary yogī.

He worshiped the Deity of Lord Viṣṇu with festive opulence.

If Gopa-kumāra liked, he could go to the capital and see for himself this king's wonderful worship.

He could see the Lord's beauty, the rich offerings made to the Lord, and His luxurious sleeping quarters.

The opulences of the king's Deity were much more readily visible than those of the poor brāhmaṇa's Sālagrāma-śilā.

You will feel great ecstasy
& all your desires will be
fulfilled.

↓
But, for now, come & honour
President @ my house

2.1.140

hṛt-pūrakam mahānandam
sarvathānubhaviṣyasi
idānīm etya mad-gehe
bhukṣva viṣṇu-niveditam

“You will feel great ecstasy (mahānandam anubhaviṣyasi), fulfilling all your heart’s desires (sarvathā hṛt-pūrakam). But for now (idānīm) please come have lunch in my house (etya mad-gehe bhukṣva) from the remnants of what has been offered to Lord Viṣṇu (viṣṇu-niveditam).”

Gopa-kumāra will certainly feel bliss if he witnesses the opulence of the Viṣṇu Deity in the royal city, hears the songs and prayers recited for the pleasure of the Lord, and tastes the remnants of food offered to the Lord.

The brāhmaṇa admits that devotees who have pure love for the Lord prefer to see Him worshiped with suitable opulence, opulence that he, a poor man, cannot provide for his own Deity.

Gopa-kumāra should therefore at once go to the capital, but before he goes he should have lunch at the brāhmaṇa's house, where he can taste what little rice and other items have been offered this morning to the brāhmaṇa's Śālagrāma Deity.

Delighted by the
brāhmaṇa's words, I immediately
set out to the capital city
without visiting his house

2.1.141

tad-vācānandito 'gatvā
kṣudhito 'pi tad-ālayam
taṁ praṇamya tad-uddiṣṭa-
vartmanā tāṁ purīm agām

Delighted by the brāhmaṇa's words (tad-vācā ānanditah), I offered him my obeisances (taṁ praṇamya) and without stopping at his house (tad-ālayam agatvā) (even though hungry (kṣudhito 'pi)), I set off for the capital (tāṁ purīm agām) by the road he pointed out (tad-uddiṣṭa-vartmanā).

Insight



Gopa-kumāra repeatedly prostrated himself before the brāhmaṇa with great devotion.

Insight



He did this partly to beg pardon for declining the brāhmaṇa's invitation and partly to beg blessings for an auspicious journey.

When I entered the
city I heard the tumultuous
sound of worship of the
Lord. I asked about it to
people nearby

2.1.142

antaḥ-pure deva-kule
jagad-īśārcana-dhvanim
apūrvam tumulam dūrāc
chrutvāṛccham amum janān

Within the inner precincts of the city (antaḥ-pure), from a distance (dūrāt) I heard (śrutvā) the sound (dhvanim) of temple worship (deva-kule arcana) of the Lord of the universe (jagad-īśa). I had never heard such a tumult (apūrvam tumulam), so I asked about it from people nearby (aṛccham amum janān).

The noise Gopa-kumāra heard came from the Lord's ārati ceremony
in the royal temple, where many devotees were chanting and
playing musical instruments.

The sound impressed Gopa-kumāra as very wonderful.

Understanding that the
 worshipped, I entered
 the temple eager to
 see Him. I saw
 the beautiful 4-armed
 form

vijñāya tatra jagad-īśvaram īkṣitum tam
kenāpy avārita-gatiḥ sa-javam praviśya
śaṅkhāri-pañkaja-gadā-vilasat-karābjam
śrīmac-catur-bhujam apaśyam aham samakṣam

Learning (vijñāya) that the Lord of the universe (jagad-īśvaram) was being worshiped (tatra), I wanted to see Him (tam īkṣitum). As I approached, no one stopped me (kenāpy avārita-gatiḥ), so I quickly entered the temple (sa-javam praviśya), where in front of me (samakṣam) I beheld (aham apaśyam) the beautiful four-armed form of the Lord (śrīmac-catur-bhujam), His hands resplendent with a conchshell, disc, lotus, and club (śaṅkhāri-pañkaja-gadā-vilasat-karābjam).

The guards at the door of the temple neither questioned Gopa-
kumāra nor blocked his entrance, so he eagerly ran inside.

There he saw the Deity of Viṣṇu, whose beauty and opulence more
than fulfilled the brāhmaṇa's predictions, and Gopa-kumāra's own
expectations.

The four arms of the Lord resembled the bodies of mighty serpents.

Exquisite beauty
of the Lord is
described

2.1.144

sarvāṅga-sundarataram̐ nava-megha-kāntim̐
kauśeya-pīta-vasanam̐ vana-mālayādhyam̐
sauvarṇa-bhūṣaṇam̐ avarṇya-kiśora-mūrtim̐
pūrṇendu-vaktram̐ amṛta-smitam̐ abja-netram̐

All the parts of His body were exquisitely attractive (sarvāṅga-sundarataram̐), and His complexion resembled a new rain cloud (nava-megha-kāntim̐). Words can hardly describe his youthful body (avarṇya-kiśora-mūrtim̐), dressed in yellow silk (kauśeya-pīta-vasanam̐), ornamented with gold (sauvarṇa-bhūṣaṇam̐), and garlanded with forest flowers that increased His beauty (vana-mālayādhyam̐). His face (vaktram̐), with its sweet nectarean smile (amṛta-smitam̐) and lotuslike eyes (abja-netram̐), appeared like the full moon (pūrṇa indu).

Beginning from His eyes and mouth, every part of Lord Viṣṇu's
body was enchanting.

Gopa-kumāra could only compare His beauty to that of the most
beautiful things he knew—a rain cloud, the moon, and lotus
flowers.

Many servants were
serving Him with valuable
items & He stood
on a throne and
watched the dancing
& other entertainment

sampūjita-vividha-durlabha-vastu-vargaih
sevānuṣakta-paricāraka-vṛnda-juṣṭam
nṛtyādikaṁ ca purato 'nubhavantam ārāt
tiṣṭhantam āsana-vare su-paricchadaugham

While many attendants (paricāraka-vṛnda-juṣṭam), fondly attached to serving Him (sevānuṣakta), worshiped Him (sampūjita) with various rare items (vividha-durlabha-vastu-vargaih), He stood (tiṣṭhantam) on an excellent throne (āsana-vare) and from a distance (ārāt) watched (anubhavantam) the dancing and other entertainment (nṛtyādikaṁ ca) presented before Him (purato). Every sort of wonderful paraphernalia was being engaged for His pleasure (su-paricchadaugham).

As the most precious items to be found were presented to the Lord,
one after another, His personal attendants waved cāmara fans
intently and offered Him betel nut and other refreshments.

In the midst of all this, He stood on His throne instead of coming
forward to meet the crowd and acknowledged the entertainment
going on further away by watching with unblinking eyes.

Filled with great
bliss, I offered dandavat
& thought → "today I
have seen what I always wanted
to see"

2.1.146

paramānanda-pūrṇo 'haṁ
praṇaman daṇḍa-van muhuḥ
vyacintayam idaṁ svasyā-
paśyam adya didṛkṣitam

Filled with supreme bliss (paramānanda-pūrṇah), I repeatedly fell flat on the ground (ahaṁ praṇaman daṇḍa-vat muhuḥ). "Today (adya)," I thought (vyacintayam), "I have seen (svasya apaśyam) what I always wanted to see (didṛkṣitam).

I thought → "Now my
life is a success & I shall not
leave this place!"
↓
By the mercy of Vaiṣṇavas
I began to live there happily

2.1.147

samprāpto janma-sāphalyam
na gamiṣyāmy atah kvacit
vaiṣṇavānām ca kṛpayā
tatraiva nyavasam sukham

“Now my life is a success (samprāpto janma-sāphalyam). I shall never go away from this place (na gamiṣyāmy atah kvacit).” And so, by the mercy of the Vaiṣṇavas (vaiṣṇavānām ca kṛpayā), I began to live there happily (tatraiva nyavasam sukham).

Gopa-kumāra had left his family and friends to wander in search of his worshipable Lord and now had found Him.

Although as a penniless beggar from a foreign country Gopa-kumāra could hardly expect to be allowed to stay in the neighborhood of the royal palace and dine on the remnants of the king's Deity, the local Vaiṣṇavas were kind to him.

They brought him mahā-prasāda and did everything possible to encourage and protect him.

While eating the
remnants, seeing the festival
& hearing the glories, I
continued to chant my mantra

2.1.148

bhuñjāno viṣṇu-naivedyam
paśyan pūjā-mahotsavam
śṛṇvan pūjādi-māhātmyam
yatnān mantram raho japan

I would eat (bhuñjāno) remnants of food offered to Lord Viṣṇu (viṣṇu-naivedyam), witness (paśyan) the great festivals of His worship (pūjā-mahotsavam), and hear (śṛṇvan) the glories of His worship and more (pūjādi-māhātmyam), all the while carefully chanting my mantra (yatnān mantram japan) in private (raho).

While residing with the Vaiṣṇavas who served the Deity of Lord Viṣṇu, Gopa-kumāra heard from them the glories of worship of Viṣṇu, as described in various Purāṇas and other scriptures.

He heard that worshiping Viṣṇu is the highest activity for human beings, and he heard specific instructions about various aspects of His worship.

He also heard about the glories of Lord Viṣṇu's prasāda:

ṣaḍbhir māsopavāsais tu
yat phalaṁ parikīrtitam
viṣṇor naivedya-sikthānam
bhuñjatām tat kalau yuge

“All the benefits ascribed to (yat phalaṁ parikīrtitam) the vow of fasting for six months (ṣaḍbhir māsa upavāsaih tu) are gained in Kali-yuga (tat kalau yuge) by those who eat (bhuñjatām) boiled rice (siktha annam) that has been offered to Lord Viṣṇu (viṣṇor naivedya).”

From all these instructions, however, Gopa-kumāra did not receive a complete, systematic spiritual education. ❌ ❌ ❌ ❌ ❌

No one told him, for example, about such basic matters as the existence of higher planets, like the Svarga of Lord Indra.

The Vaiṣṇavas were unaware that Gopa-kumāra, despite his saintly qualities, had never had any training.

Thus he remained naive about the complexities of the material world.

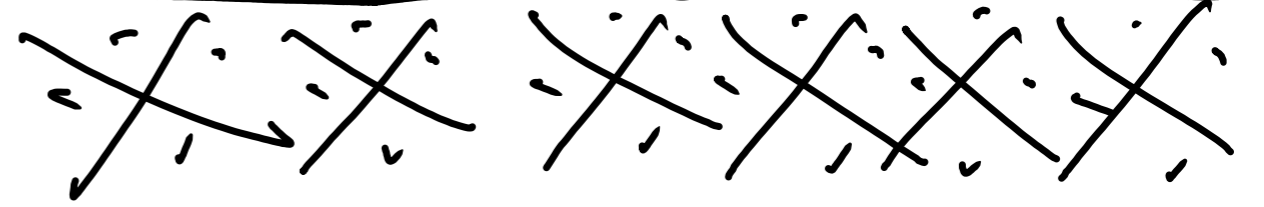
Despite the
blissful experience,
I could not forget
the beauty of this Vraja bhūmi
(The joy of playing here)

2.1.149

asyās tu vraja-bhūmeḥ śrīr
gopa-kṛīḍā-sukhaṁ ca tat
kadācid api me brahman
hṛdayān nāpasarpati

Yet my heart (me hṛdayān tu), O brāhmaṇa (brahman), never forgot (kadācid api nāpasarpati) the beauty of this Vraja-bhūmi (asyāh vraja-bhūmeḥ śrīr) and the joy of playing here as a cowherd (gopa-kṛīḍā-sukhaṁ ca tat).

Gopa-kumāra's indelible recollections of Vraja-dhāma, far from being just sentimental, were a sign that by chanting his mantra he was reaping transcendental results.



The public opulence of Lord Viṣṇu's worship did not attract him more than the simple happiness of wandering about the fields of Vraja.

While sleeping or awake, he could not forget Vraja.

Even while he took part in Lord Viṣṇu's festivals, thoughts of Vraja-bhūmi lingered in his mind.

2.1.150

evam dināni katicit
sānandaṁ tatra tiṣṭhataḥ
tādṛk-pūjā-vidhāne me
paramā lālasājani

After staying
here for a few days,
I developed great eagerness
to engage in that method
of worship.

Remaining thus (evam sānandaṁ tiṣṭhataḥ) for some days (dināni katicit) in that place (tatra), I developed great eagerness (me paramā lālasā ajani) to engage in that method of worship (tādṛk-pūjā-vidhāne).

Gopa-kumāra was eager to reciprocate in a personal way with the Lord of the universe, and the opulent worship in Viṣṇu's temple seemed such a way.

The king of that
country, being sonless,
seeing my good character,
adopted me as his son &
soon died.

2.1.151

athāputraḥ sa rājā mām
vaideśikam api priyāt
su-śīlam vīkṣya putratve
parikalpyācirān mṛtaḥ

The king of that country (atha sa rājā) was sonless (aputraḥ). And despite my being a foreigner (mām vaideśikam api), he noted (vīkṣya) my good character (su-śīlam), and he developed affection for me (priyāt). But soon after finally adopting me as his son (putratve parikalpya acirāt), he died (mṛtaḥ).

After I got the
kingdom, I arranged
to even more elaborate
worship of the Lord of
everyday for President to
many saints

2.1.152

mayā ca labdhvā tad-rājyaṁ
viṣṇu-pūjā mudādhikā
pravartitā tad-annaiś ca
bhojyante sādhave 'nv-aham

After inheriting his kingdom (mayā ca labdhvā tad-rājyaṁ), I arranged (pravartitā) even more elaborately the joyful worship of Lord Viṣṇu (viṣṇu-pūjā mudā adhikā). Every day (any-aham), saintly persons (sādhavaḥ) were fed (bhojyante) with remnants of food from this worship (tad-annaiś ca).



Simple soul that he was, Gopa-kumāra accepted his material elevation as a chance to increase his devotional service.

As king he saw to it that Lord Viṣṇu's worship was improved and that the Lord's mercy was distributed as widely as possible.

2.1.153

svayaṁ ca kvacid āsaktim
akṛtvā pūrva-vad vasan
japaṁ nirvāhayan bhujje
prasādānnaṁ prabhoḥ param

And always unattached to royal opulence (svayaṁ ca kvacid āsaktim akṛtvā), I continued living (vasan) just as before (pūrva-vad). I quietly chanted my mantra (japaṁ nirvāhayan) and ate (bhujje) only remnants of food left by the Lord as His mercy (prasāda annaṁ).

I remained unattached
to the royal opulence &
continued living as before.
I also continued to chant
mantra & ate only prasāda

Gopa-kumāra's mantra protected him from being corrupted by royal power.



Thus he was undistracted by sovereignty and wealth.

Retaining his unassuming simplicity, he went on chanting his mantra, satisfied with the gratification that his senses enjoyed from honoring Lord Viṣṇu's prasāda.

I divided the
kingly affairs &
handed over to the relatives
of the king. But still,
I was suffering due to my
connection with the kingdom

2.1.154

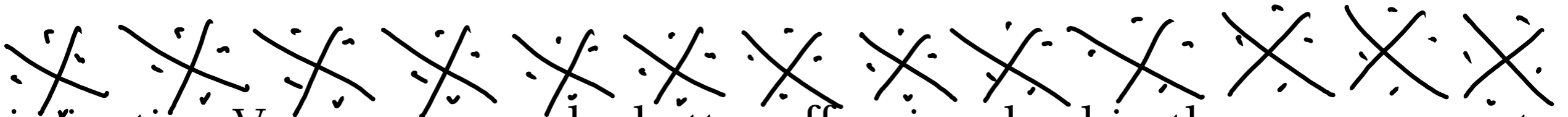
rājño 'sya parivārebhyaḥ
prādām rājyaṁ vibhajya tat
tathāpi rājya-sambandhād
duḥkhaṁ me bahudhodbhavet

I divided (vibhajya) the affairs of the kingdom (rājyaṁ) and handed them (prādām) over to the relatives (asya parivārebhyaḥ) and entourage of the deceased king (rājñah). But still (tathāpi) I suffered in various ways (me bahudhā duḥkhaṁ udbhavet) due to my connection with the kingdom (rājya-sambandhād).

To avoid being blamed for neglecting the kingdom while absorbed in private meditation, Gopa-kumāra delegated the practical affairs of ruling to the previous king's friends, ministers, in-laws, and immediate family.

He gave them the authority to make day-to-day decisions.

Nonetheless, various anxieties connected with the kingdom continued to be thrust upon him, and so a crisis gradually arose.



Discriminating Vaisṇavas may be better off uninvolved in the management of kingdoms.

Sometimes I feared
neighboring kingdoms & sometimes
the emperor.
BGS I had to follow his orders
→ I felt suffocated in my freedom

2.1.155

kadāpi para-rāṣṭrād bhīh
kadācic cakravartinah
vividhādeśa-sandoha-
pālanenāsvatantratā

Sometimes (kadāpi) I feared neighboring kingdoms (para-rāṣṭrād bhīh), and at other times the emperor (kadācic cakravartinah). Having to obey (pālanena) his various and abundant commands (vividha ādeśa-sandoha) stifled my freedom (asvatantratā).

Every king has enemies, including the unhappy citizens of his own state as well as the rulers of rival kingdoms.

If he is the vassal of a greater king, he must follow the overlord's whims and cannot act independently.

Gopa-kumāra felt all these anxieties.

If the prasada of
Lord is touched by an outsider
(or) carried outside temple
if there is a doubt about the
purity of the remnants, no
respectable person would eat them

2.1.156

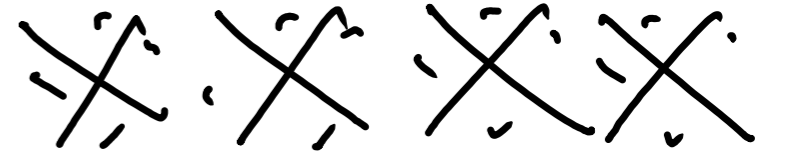
jagad-īśvara-naivedyam
sprṣtam anyena kenacit
nītam bahir vā sandigdho
na bhunkte ko 'pi saj-janaḥ

Gola Kumāra's real
problem was not even
the responsibilities of the
kingdom.

↓
But his real problem
were the brahmanas with
a predominantly Sattva
mentality or nyāyārtha
necessity.

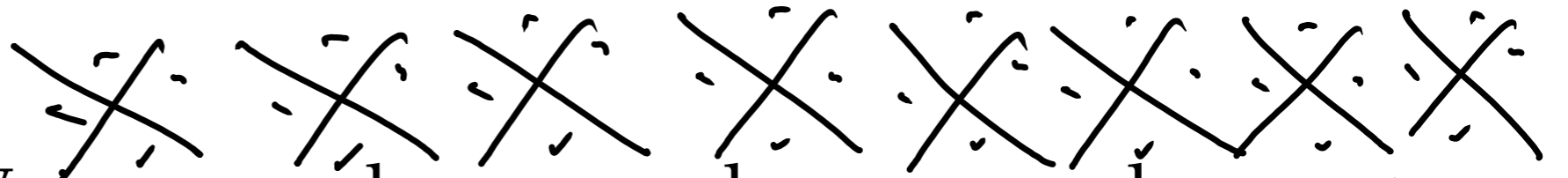
If the Supreme Lord's remnants (jagad-īśvara-naivedyam) were touched by an outsider (sprṣtam anyena kenacit), or carried outside the temple (nītam bahir vā), or if for any other reason a doubt arose about the purity of the remnants (vā sandigdho), no respectable person (na ko 'pi saj-janaḥ) would eat them (bhunkte).

Gopa-kumāra certainly should have tolerated any trouble arising from serving the Lord, but the serious obstructions that appeared in Gopa-kumāra's devotional service provoked him much more than the petty complications of royal politics.



The brāhmaṇas of this region were very strict about the food they accepted. They would not accept Lord Viṣṇu's prasāda if it had been touched by anyone other than appointed servants of the Deity or taken outside the sacred area of the temple.

These brāhmaṇas cited the tradition of cultured behavior as evidence to support their scruples: their predecessors had never accepted prasāda that had in these ways been contaminated.



Real brāhmaṇas and Vaiṣṇavas, however, become unhappy to see such behavior; for them it is difficult to live in a place where such disrespect of the Supreme Lord's prasāda is promoted.

Furthermore, their opinion on this matter is supported in scriptures such as Śrī Bṛhad-viṣṇu Purāṇa:

naivedyam jagad-īśasya anna-pānādikam ca yat
bhakṣyābhakṣya-vicāras tu nāsti tad-bhaksane dvija

brahma-van nirvikāram hi yathā viṣṇus tathaiva tat
vicāram ye prakurvanti bhakṣaṇe tad dvijātayaḥ

kuṣṭha-vyādhi-samāyuktā putra-dāra-vivarjitā
nirayam yānti te viprā yasmān nāvartate punaḥ

“O twice-born (dvija), one should never question (vicāras tu nāsti) whether remnants of food and drink (anna-pānādikam) offered to the Lord of the universe (naivedyam jagad-īśasya) are fit or unfit to eat (bhakṣya abhakṣya). One should never make such distinctions. The prasāda of the Lord (tad-bhaksane) is as incorruptible (nirvikāram hi) as the Vedic mantras (brahma-vad) and Lord Visnu Himself (yathā viṣṇus tathaiva). Those who consider (vicāram ye prakurvanti) whether the Lord’s prasāda is eatable or uneatable (bhakṣaṇe tad) will suffer leprosy (kuṣṭha-vyādhi-samāyuktā). They will lose their children and wives (putra-dāra-vivarjitā), O brāhmaṇa (viprā), and go to hell (nirayam yānti te), never to return (yasmāt nāvartate punaḥ).”

Such blow for
made me like give
up everything.
I had no desire But
the Lord whom I had long
hankered to see & whose association
I had now yearned for

2.1.157

marma-śalyena caitena
nirvedo me mahān abhūt
neśe didṛkṣitaṁ sāksāt
prāptaṁ tyaktuṁ ca tat-prabhum

Such darts, shot into my vital points (etena marma-śalyena), made me like giving everything up (nirvedo me mahān abhūt). But I had no desire to leave the Lord (tat-prabhum tyaktuṁ neśe), whom long I had hankered to see (didṛkṣitaṁ) and whose personal contact I had now obtained (sāksāt prāptaṁ).

To see the leaders of society refusing Viṣṇu's prasāda was more painful to Gopa-kumāra than the wounds of well-aimed arrows.

One who is cut at a major juncture of the subtle channels carrying prāṇa feels excruciating pain.

But the pain of having to watch and tolerate aparādhas in the service of Lord Viṣṇu was more painful for Gopa-kumāra than such a wound.

He lost whatever enthusiasm he had for continuing his involvement with ruling the kingdom, but he could not leave Lord Visnu.

At that time, some
saints from South India
visited there & told me
this

2.1.158

etasmin eva samaye
tatra dakṣiṇa-deśataḥ
samāgataiḥ sādhu-varaiḥ
kathitaṁ tairthikair idam

Just then (etasmin eva samaye), some venerable saints (sādhu-
varaiḥ) from the south (dakṣiṇa-deśataḥ) arrived (tatra samāgataiḥ)
on pilgrimage (tairthikair) and told me this (idam kathitaṁ):

The saintly pilgrims were Vaiṣṇavas from Jagannātha-purī.

For a while they had left that holy dhāma to see Lord Viṣṇu's Deities and devotees elsewhere, mostly in the various tīrthas.

2.1.159

dāru-brahma jagan-nātho
bhagavān puruṣottame
kṣetre nīlācale kṣārā-
rṇava-tīre virājate

“At Puruṣottama-kṣetra (**puruṣottame**), on the blue mountain (**kṣetre nīlācale**) on the shore of the salt ocean (**kṣārārṇava-tīre**), Jagannātha, the Lord of the universe (**jagan-nāthah**), the Personality of Godhead (**bhagavān**), is present (**virājate**) as the Absolute Truth manifest in wood (**dāru-brahma**).

Within the holy dhāma called Puruṣottama on the shore of the salt ocean is a district called Nīlācala, and there the Supreme Personality of Godhead is present as Lord Jagannātha.

He is called dāru-brahma because He is the Absolute Truth in wood (dāru), and because He destroys (dāraṇāt) the miseries of material existence.

He is described in a number of Purāṇas.

For example, in the Padma Purāṇa:

samudrasyottare tīre
āste śrī-puruṣottame
pūrṇānanda-mayaṁ brahma
dāru-vyāja-śarīra-bhṛt

“At Śrī Puruṣottama (śrī-puruṣottame), on the northern shore of the ocean (samudrasya uttare tīre), resides (āste) the Supreme Absolute Truth (brahma). Full of perfect ecstasy (pūrṇānanda-mayaṁ), He has assumed a transcendental body (śarīra-bhṛt) that appears wooden (dāru-vyāja).”

And in the Bṛhad-*viṣṇu Purāṇa*:

nīlādrau cotkale deśe
kṣetre śrī-puruṣottame
dāruṇy āste cid-ānando
jagannāthākhyā-mūrtinā

“In the land of Orissa (**utkale deśe**), on the blue mountain (**nīlādrau**) at Śrī Puruṣottama-kṣetra (**śrī-puruṣottame kṣetre**), the ecstatic and all-spiritual Lord (**cid-ānando**) is present (**āste**) in wood (**dāruṇy**) in His form known as Jagannātha (**jagannāthākhyā-mūrtinā**).”

2.1.160

mahā-vibhūtimān rājyam
autkalam pālayan svayam
vyañjayan nija-māhātmyam
sadā sevaka-vatsalah

“With infinite opulence (**mahā-vibhūtimān**), that Lord Himself rules (**pālayan svayam**) the kingdom of Utkala (**autkalam rājyam**). He displays (**vyañjayan**) His unique glories (**nija-māhātmyam**) and always takes affectionate care of His devotees (**sadā sevaka-vatsalah**).

Utkala is another name for Orissa. Lord Jagannātha Himself rules this kingdom by issuing various commands and guidelines for the citizens' conduct of business and personal affairs.

As the Tattva-yāmala states:

**bhārate cotkale deśe bhū-svarge puruṣottame
dāru-rūpī jagannātho bhaktānām abhaya-pradaḥ**

nara-ceṣṭām upādāya āste mokṣaika-kāraḥ

“In the Utkala kingdom (**utkale deśe**) in Bhārata-varṣa (**bhārate**) lies the earthly heaven of Puruṣottama (**bhū-svarge puruṣottame**). There Lord Jagannātha appears in a wooden form (**jagannāthah dāru-rūpī āste**). Taking up humanlike activities (**nara-ceṣṭām upādāya**), He bestows fearlessness on His devotees (**bhaktānām abhaya-pradaḥ**). He is the only giver of liberation (**mokṣa eka-kāraḥ**).”

Lord Jagannātha displays His own glories, such as His kind compassion on unfortunate souls.

Especially affectionate to His servants, He never takes their offenses seriously.

2.1.161

tasyānnaṁ pācitaṁ lakṣmyā
svayaṁ bhuktvā dayālunā
dattaṁ tena sva-bhaktebhyo
labhyate deva-durlabham

“After eating (**svayaṁ bhuktvā**) food cooked for Him (**tasya pācitaṁ annaṁ**) by His consort Lakṣmī (**lakṣmyā**), the all-merciful Lord (**dayālunā**) distributes (**tena dattaṁ**) to His devotees (**sva-bhaktebhyo**) His own remnants, which are available in Nīlācala (**labhyate**) even though by demigods they are rarely obtained (**deva-durlabham**).

The remnants from the plate of Lord Viṣṇu are extremely difficult to obtain.

But in Nīlācala, after the goddess Lakṣmī personally cooks for Lord Jagannātha, the Lord eats each preparation and then freely distributes His remnants to His devotees.

Being all-merciful, Lord Jagannātha sees to it Himself that all His devotees obtain His prasāda.

When everything cooked for the Lord is offered before Him in many clay pots, sometimes He eats only a little of each preparation, and sometimes He eats everything and then miraculously refills the pots.

2.1.162

mahā-prasāda-samjñam ca
tat spr̥ṣṭam yena kenacit
yatra kutrāpi vā nītam
avicāreṇa bhujyate

“That food is called His mahā-prasāda (**mahā-prasāda-samjñam ca**). Be it touched by anyone (**tat spr̥ṣṭam yena kenacit**) or brought anywhere (**yatra kutrāpi vā nītam**), without discriminating the devotees eat it (**avicāreṇa bhujyate**).

The mahā-prasāda of Lord Jagannātha is unique.

Because it has been touched by His nectarean lips, it can never be contaminated, even if touched by an unseeable or untouchable person or if carried to an unclean place.

No decent person ever refuses to eat Lord Jagannātha's mahā-prasāda, or complains that it might not be pure, or that the time is improper to accept it. It is said:

No decent person ever refuses to eat Lord Jagannātha's mahā-prasāda, or complains that it might not be pure, or that the time is improper to accept it.

It is said:

yad annam pācayet lakṣmī
bhoktā ca puruṣottamaḥ
spr̥ṣṭāspr̥ṣṭam na mantavyam
yathā viṣṇus tathaiva tat

“The food that Lakṣmī cooks (**yad annam pācayet lakṣmī**) and Lord Puruṣottama eats (**bhoktā ca puruṣottamaḥ**) should be accepted without consideration of its being touched or untouched by anyone (**spr̥ṣṭa aspr̥ṣṭam na mantavyam**). It is as pure as Lord Viṣṇu Himself (**yathā viṣṇus tathaiva tat**).”

The Skanda Purāṇa adds:

**cira-stham api samśuṣkaṁ
nītaṁ vā dūra-deśataḥ
yathāyathopabhuktaṁ sat
sarva-pāpāpanodanam**

“Even if Lord Jagannātha’s prasāda has completely dried up (**samśuṣkaṁ api**) from sitting for a long time (**cira-stham**) or has been carried to a far distant place (**nītaṁ vā dūra-deśataḥ**), if eaten in the proper spirit (**yathā ayathā upabhuktaṁ sat**) it will surely drive away all one’s sins (**sarva-papa apanodanam**).”

According to the Bhaviṣya Purāṇa:

**antya-varṇair hīna-varṇaiḥ
saṅkara-prabhavair api
spr̥ṣṭam jagat-pater annam
bhuktaṁ sarvāgha-nāśanam**

“Even if the food eaten by the Lord of the universe (**jagat-pater bhuktaṁ annam**) has been touched (**spr̥ṣṭam**) by outcastes (**antya-varṇair**), by those with no caste (**hīna-varṇaiḥ**), or by those born in mixed castes (**saṅkara-prabhavair api**), still it has the power to destroy all sins (**sarva agha-nāśanam**).”

And according to the Garuḍa Purāṇa:

na kāla-niyamo viprā
vrate cāndrāyaṇe yathā
prāpta-mātreṇa bhuñjīta
yadīcchen mokṣam ātmanaḥ

“O brāhmaṇa (**viprā**), there are no restrictions about when to accept this prasāda (**na kāla-niyamo**) as there are in the observance of vows like Cāndrāyaṇa (**vrate cāndrāyaṇe yathā**). Whenever one receives Lord Jagannātha’s prasāda (**prāpta-mātreṇa**) one should eat it at once (**bhuñjīta**) if one wants to attain liberation of the soul (**yadīcchen mokṣam ātmanaḥ**).”

EVER donkeys
living there have 4 arms.
district even entering that
will never take birth

2.1.163

aho tat-kṣetra-māhātmyam
gardabho 'pi catur-bhujah
yatra praveśa-mātrena
na kasyāpi punar-bhavaḥ

“Oh, that holy ksetra is so great (aho tat-kṣetra-māhātmyam) that even the donkeys living there have four arms (gardabho 'pi catur-bhujah)! Anyone who simply enters that district (yatra praveśa-mātrena) will never take birth again (na kasyāpi punar-bhavaḥ).

Some may doubt the claim that Lord Jagannātha's prasāda is so special.

Those doubters should be informed that Lord Jagannātha's abode is even more special.

Even lowly animals like donkeys who live there are four-armed, for they have automatically achieved the perfection of sārūpya, having bodily features just like the Lord's.

This is stated by Lord Brahmā in the Brahma Purāṇa:

aho kṣetrasya māhātmyam
samantād daśa yojanam
divi-ṣṭhā yatra paśyanti
sarvān eva catur-bhujāḥ

“Just see how great is this holy abode (aho kṣetrasya māhātmyam)!
The demigods in heaven see that in this kṣetra (divi-ṣṭhā yatra
paśyanti), for ten yojanas on all sides (samantad daśa yojanam),
everyone has four arms (sarvān eva catur-bhujāḥ).”

Śrī Veda-vyāsa says in the Garuda Purāṇa:

yatra sthitā janāḥ sarve
śaṅkha-cakrābja-pāṇayah
drśyante divi devāṁś ca
mohayanti muhur muhuḥ

“Everyone living there (yatra sthitā janāḥ sarve) appears (drśyante) with hands holding a conchshell, disc, and lotus (śaṅkha-cakrābja-pāṇayah). The demigods in heaven (divi devāṁś ca) are constantly bewildered to see this (mohayanti muhur muhuḥ).”

And Śrī Nārada says in the Bahvrca-pariśiṣṭa:

catur-bhujā janāḥ sarve
drśyante yan-nivāsināḥ

“All the residents there (yan-nivāsināḥ janāḥ sarve) are seen (drśyante) to have four arms (catur-bhujā).”

Furthermore, simply by setting foot in Puruṣottama-kṣetra, any living being coming from anywhere is freed from having to take another birth.

This is confirmed by Śrī Veda-vyāsa in the same Bahvrca-pariśiṣṭa:

sparśanād eva tat kṣetram nr̥ṇām mukti-pradāyakam
yatra sākṣāt param brahma bhāti dārava-līlayā

api janma-śataih sāgrair durtācāra-tatparaḥ
kṣetre 'smin saṅga-mātreṇa jāyate viṣṇunā saha

“This holy ksetra (**tat kṣetram**), where the Supreme Truth (**yatra sākṣāt param brahma**) is present in His pastime of having a wooden form (**bhāti dārava-līlayā**), bestows liberation upon all men (**nr̥ṇām mukti-pradāyakam**) who simply touch it (**sparśanād eva**). Even if someone has been dedicated to sinful behavior (**durtācāra-tatparaḥ**) for many hundreds of lives (**janma-śataih api**), by merely coming into contact with this ksetra (**kṣetre 'smin saṅga-mātreṇa**) he will take birth (**jāyate**) in the company of Lord Viṣṇu (**viṣṇunā saha**).”

"A mere glimpse of
Him awards ~~small~~ goals
of life" → such wonders
I heard from Him, which
I had never heard before

2.1.164

praphulla-puṇḍarīkākṣe
tasminn eva iksite janeḥ
phalaṁ syād evaṁ aśrauṣaṁ
āścaryaṁ pūrvam aśrutam

Jaganāte

“A mere glimpse of Him (tasminn eva iksite), whose eyes are like lotuses in full bloom (praphulla-puṇḍarīkākṣe), grants the ultimate goal of life (janeḥ phalaṁ syād).” Such wonders I heard (evam āścaryaṁ aśrauṣaṁ), which I had never heard before (pūrvam aśrutam).

The Personality of Godhead may be visible elsewhere in other Deity forms, as indeed He is on the shore of the Gaṅgā in the kingdom where Gopa-kumāra was now living.

But the beauty of Lord Jagannātha is unique.

So exquisitely charming is His beauty that by seeing Him merely once one feels relief from all miseries.

That a glimpse of Lord Jagannātha is enough to perfect one's life is stated by Śrī Nārada in his talks with Śrī Prahlāda in the Padma Purāṇa:

śravaṇādyair upāyair yaḥ kathañcid drśyate mahā
nīlādri-śikhare bhāti sarva-cākṣuṣa-gocaraḥ

tam eva paramātmānam ye prapaśyanti mānavāḥ
te yānti bhavanam viṣṇoḥ kim punar ye bhavādrśaḥ

“The glories of the Lord (mahā), which are partly perceived (yaḥ kathañcid drśyate) by methods like hearing (śravaṇādyair upāyair), are openly visible (bhāti sarva-cākṣuṣa-gocaraḥ) on the peak of the blue mountain (nīlādri-śikhare). Any human being (ye mānavāḥ) who sees (prapaśyanti) that Supreme Being (tam eva paramātmānam) will go to the abode of Viṣṇu (te yānti bhavanam viṣṇoḥ), what to speak of a great soul like you (kim punar ye bhavādrśaḥ).”

As Gopa-kumāra heard from his visitors these glories of Puruṣottama-kṣetra, and more, wonder arose in his heart because he had never before heard anything like those glories.

Although the form of the Lord that Gopa-kumāra was worshiping was the same Personality of Godhead, Lord Śrī Jagannātha is the origin of all such incarnations of the Lord.

From seeing the source of all incarnations, especially at such an exceptional place as Puruṣottama-kṣetra, one can gain greater benefit than from seeing a mere incarnation.

Gopa-kumāra had not heard such facts about the Lord in all the days he had been worshiping Lord Viṣṇu on the shore of the Gaṅgā, nor had he developed firm attachment to worshiping the Lord's Deity.

Lack of attachment to the deity:
① Influence of his SM ② SPG → MG

That this was the combined influence of his divine spiritual master and the divine Personality of Godhead will be explained more clearly later in this narration.

We shall see how Gopa-kumāra's guru and Gopa-kumāra's worshipable Lord continually exert their influence on his step-by-step spiritual progress.

Overcome by desire to see LTN,
In a moment I gave up everything
& went towards puri

2.1.165

tad-didrksābhibhūto 'ham
sarvaṁ santyajya tat-kṣaṇe
saṅkīrtayan jagannātham
auḍhra-deśa-diśam śritah

Overcome by desire to see Lord Jagannātha (tad-didrksa
abhibhūtah), in a moment (tat-kṣaṇe) I abandoned everything
(aham sarvaṁ santyajya) and set off in the direction of Orissa
(auḍhra-deśa-diśam śritah), chanting Lord Jagannātha's glories
(saṅkīrtayan jagannātham).

Gopa-kumāra was so inspired by the glories of Lord Jagannātha and the Lord's kṣetra that he gave up all external and internal affinity to the kingdom and everything related to it.

He at once began his journey to Jagannātha Purī, heading off in the general direction of Orissa.

While on the road he constantly chanted the four syllables of Lord Jagannātha's name.

I quickly reached puri
all & offered oblations to
enter the temple

2.1.166

tat kṣetram acirāt prāptas
tatratyān daṇḍa-van naman
antaḥ-puraṁ praviṣṭo 'ham
teṣāṁ karuṇayā satām

I quickly reached that holy district of the Lord (tat kṣetram acirāt prāptas). Bowing down to all the residents (tatratyān daṇḍa-vat naman), by the mercy of those saintly persons (teṣāṁ satām karuṇayā) I was able to enter the temple grounds (antaḥ-puraṁ praviṣṭas aham).

Since Gopa-kumāra was a foreigner and no one knew what his business was, his sudden appearance on the temple ground might have aroused suspicion.

The pure Vaiṣṇavas of Puruṣottama-kṣetra, however, welcomed him kindly; they recognized that he had come to receive Lord Jagannātha's mercy.

Beauty of Jagannāṭh
described

2.1.167

dūrād adarśi puruṣottama-vaktra-candro
bhrājad-viśāla-nayano mani-pundra-bhālah
snigdhabhra-kāntir aruṇādhara-dīpti-ramyo
'śeṣa-prasāda-vikāsat-smita-candrikādhyah

From a distance (dūrād) I saw (adarśi) the moonlike face (vaktra-candrah) of Lord Puruṣottama (puruṣottama), His broad eyes shining brilliantly (bhrājad-viśāla-nayano), His forehead decorated with tilaka made of gems (mani-pundra-bhālah). His complexion glowed like a cloud full of rain (snigdhabhra-kāntih), and the effulgence (dīpti) of His dawn-colored lips (aruṇadhara) was all-attractive (ramyah). Moonbeams (candrikā) of unlimited satisfaction (aśeṣa-prasāda) emanated (vikāsat) from His smile (smita), adding to His beauty (ādhyah).

The round face of Lord Jagannātha is easily recognizable, even from a distance.

It gives joy to everyone, just like the full moon.

Gopa-kumāra had been meditating on the general features of the Lord's face even before seeing Him and now could see the details of the Lord's beauty for the first time.

Struck by the ecstasy of
pure love → I could not
go forward even though my
heart was calling me.
↓
I somehow managed to reach the
Garuda stambha

2.1.168

tatrāgrato gantu-manāś ca neśe
premnā hato vepathubhir niruddhah
romāñca-bhinno 'śru-vilupta-drṣṭih
stambham suparnasya kathañcid āptah

Struck by the ecstasy of pure love (premnā hatah) and impeded by trembling in my body (vepathubhir niruddhah), I was unable to go forward (tatra agrato neśe) despite my desire (gantu-manāh). But somehow I reached (kathañcid āptah) Garuḍa's column (suparnasya stambham), my hair standing on end (romāñca-bhinnaḥ), my vision clouded by tears (aśru-vilupta-drṣṭih).

Gopa-kumāra was eager to enter Lord Jagannātha's temple but had difficulty proceeding, because his mind was overwhelmed by love and his body by the ecstasy of jāḍya, being stunned.

Unconscious of his own movements, only by the Lord's mercy did Gopa-kumāra reach the column on which Garuda sits before Lord Jagannātha's altar.

2.1.169-170

I saw Lord Jagannātha
wonderfully decorated, sitting & watching
His devotees
Bewildered
I fainted

divyāambarālaṅkaraṇa-srag-āvalī- vyāptam mano-locana-harṣa-vardhanam
simhāsanasyopari līlayā sthitam bhuktvā mahā-bhoga-gaṇān mano-harān

praṇāma-nṛtya-stuti-vādyā-gīta- parāms tu sa-prema vilokayantam
mahā-mahimnām padam īkṣamāṇo 'pataṁ jagannātham aham vimuhya

I saw Lord Jagannātha (jagannātham), bedecked (vyāptam) with jewelry (alaṅkaraṇa), divine garments (divya ambara), and flower garlands (srag-āvalī). The sight of Him increased the pleasure of my eyes and mind (mano-locana-harṣa-vardhanam). As He sat playfully (līlayā sthitam) on His lion throne (simhāsanasya upari), He ate (bhuktvā) the wonderful varieties of attractive food being offered to Him (mano-harān mahā-bhoga-gaṇān). With love He watched (sa-prema vilokayantam) His devotees busily singing, dancing, playing music, offering prayers, and bowing down to Him (praṇāma-nṛtya-stuti-vādyā-gīta- parān). Bewildered (vimuhya) by seeing (īkṣamāṇo) that supremely splendid pageant (mahā-mahimnām padam), I fainted and fell to the floor (aham apataṁ).

From his vantage point near the Garuda-stambha, Gopa-kumāra could see the details of Lord Jagannātha's beauty even more clearly.

It proved too much for him to experience all at once.

I came back to
my senses. I opened my
eyes & gazed at LN &
ran forward to embrace Him

2.1.171

samjñām labdhvā samunmīlya
locane lokayan punaḥ
unmatta iva taṁ dhartum
sa-vego 'dhāvam agrataḥ

I came to my senses (samjñām labdhvā), opened my eyes (samunmīlya locane), and gazed upon Him again (lokayan punaḥ). Like a madman (unmatta iva) I ran forward (adhāvam agrataḥ) quickly (sa-vego) to catch hold of Him (taṁ dhartum).

I cried out
"Today I am seeing
what I long wanted to see"
→ My life is successful as I
have obtained my master.

2.1.172

cirād didṛkṣīto dr̥ṣṭo
jīvitam̐ jīvitam̐ mayā
prāpto 'dya jagad-īśo 'yam
nija-prabhur iti bruvan

I cried out (bruvan), "Now (adya) I am seeing (dr̥ṣṭah) what for so
long I have wanted to see (cirād didṛkṣītah). From today my life is a
real life (jīvitam̐ jīvitam̐ mayā). I have obtained (prāptah) the Lord
of the universe (jagad-īśah ayam), my master (nija-prabhuh iti)!"

Previously Gopa-kumāra had never felt fully alive, but now, after seeing Lord Jagannātha, he considered himself delivered from the living death of material existence.

Repeating himself out of sheer joy, he declared that now he had not only seen the Lord of the universe but come into intimate contact with Him.

In Lord Jagannātha he perceived for the first time all the characteristics of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

I At that moment
I was stopped by blows
from the guards.
I understood this to be the Lord's
mercy, & gave out & then received
Mahā-prasāda

2.1.173

sa-vetra-ghātam pratihāribhis tadā
nivārito jāta-vicāra-lajjitah
prabhoḥ kṛpām tām anumānya nirgato
mahā-prasādānnam athāpnavam bahih

At that moment (tadā) I was stopped (nivāritah) by blows from the sticks (sa-vetra-ghātam) of the guards (pratihāribhih). Realizing what I had done (jāta-vicāra) I felt embarrassed (lajjitah). “This is the Lord’s mercy (prabhoḥ kṛpām tām),” I reasoned (anumānya), and went outside (nirgato bahih), where I received remnants of His mahā-prasāda (atha mahā-prasādānnam āpnavam).

Being struck by the sticks of the doorkeepers brought Gopa-kumāra out of his trance.

He thought, “Here I am, an insignificant foreigner, behaving with such impudence! What am I doing?”

But despite some physical pain, Gopa-kumāra was not at all unhappy.

He was still overjoyed to be in the realm of Lord Jagannātha.

The Lord was kind enough to arrange for the guards to stop him,
because had he embraced Lord Jagannātha as he had intended, he
would have committed a serious offense.

Calming himself down, Gopa-kumāra went outside, where a
compassionate person gave him mahā-prasāda from the Lord.

2.1.174-175

After eating, I entered the temple
again & continued taking the wonderful
prasāda → for the whole day.
↓
My happiness
knew no bounds

tad bhuktva satvaram brahman bhagavan-mandiram punaḥ
praviśyāścarya-jātaṁ yan mayā dr̥ṣṭam mudāṁ padam

hr̥di kartuṁ na śakyate tat katham kriyatām mukhe
evam tatra divā pūrṇam sthitvānando 'nubhūyate

O brāhmaṇa (**brahman**), after eating that mahā-prasāda (**tad bhuktvā**) I quickly (**satvaram**) reentered (**punaḥ praviśya**) the Lord's temple (**bhagavat-mandiram**). From the wonders (**āścarya-jātaṁ**) I then saw (**yad mayā dr̥ṣṭam**), I felt a reservoir of happiness (**mudāṁ padam**) I am unable to understand in my heart (**hr̥di kartuṁ na śakyate**), let alone describe with my mouth (**tat katham kriyatām mukhe**). I simply stood there all day (**evam tatra divā pūrṇam sthitvā**), relishing bliss (**ānando anubhūyate**).

Gopa-kumāra's heart could not assimilate everything he was relishing—one amazing thing after another without stop, and each wonder inconceivable.

How, then, could he properly describe what he saw?

The power of speech is usually slower and more limited than the power of the mind.

At night there was a
great festival & finally after
flower offerings it was time
to leave the temple

2.1.176

rātrau mahotsave vṛtte
br̥hac-chṛṅgāra-sambhave
nirgamyate tu nirvṛtte
puṣpāñjali-mahotsave

At night (rātrau) there was a great festival (mahotsave vṛtte), with the Lord dressed and ornamented in elaborate splendor (br̥hat-śṛṅgāra-sambhave). But finally, after a great ceremony with offerings of palmfuls of flowers (puṣpāñjali-mahotsave tu nirvṛtte), it was time to leave the temple (nirgamyate).

AS I ENJOYED NEW &
NEW FESTIVALS IN THE
COMPANY OF SAINTLY DEVOTEES,
I SEEMED TO FORGET THE PAIN
OF SEPARATION FROM VRAJA

2.1.177

nettham jñātaḥ satām saṅge
kālo nava-navotsavaiḥ
tadaivāsyā vraja-bhuvah
śoko me niragād iva →

As I thus enjoyed ever-new festivals (ittham nava-nava utsavaiḥ) in the company of saintly devotees (satām saṅge), time passed unnoticed (na jñātaḥ kālah). I seemed to forget the sorrow (tadā eva śoko me niragād iva) of my separation from this land of Vraja (asyāḥ vraja-bhuvah).

The pain Gopa-kumāra had been feeling from being outside Vraja
subsided in the presence of Lord Jagannātha, but it was never
uprooted completely from his heart.

Everywhere I could
receive LTN mercy on
His servants & their orders
that He gave them.

2.1.178

śrī-jagannātha-devasya
sevakesu kṛpottamā
vividhājñā ca sarvatra
śrūyate 'py anubhūyate

Everywhere (sarvatra), I heard about (śrūyate) and saw for myself (anubhūyate) the most exalted mercy (kṛpottamā) of Lord Śrī Jagannātha (śrī-jagannātha-devasya) on His servants (sevakesu) and perceived the various commands He gave them (vividha ājñā ca).

In reciprocating with His devotees, Lord Jagannātha often went out of His way to fulfill their various desires and would issue commands so as to give them opportunities for service.

Gopa-kumāra not only heard about this mercy from numerous sources but saw examples of it with his own eyes.

Nothing other than the
darśan of LKN attracted me.
I even lost interest in hearing about
His glories from the Purāṇas.

2.1.179

nānyat kim api roceta
jagannāthasya darśanāt
purāṇato 'sya mähātmya-
śuśrūṣāpi nivartate

Nothing other than (na kim api anyat) the sight of Lord Jagannātha (jagannāthasya darśanāt) attracted me (roceta). I even lost interest (nivartate) in hearing about His glories (asya mähātmya- śuśrūṣāpi) from the Purāṇas (purāṇato).

At first Gopa-kumāra was quite interested in the recitations by Purāṇic experts in the temple, in which the glories of Lord Jagannātha were read from the Brahma Purāṇa and other scriptures.

But as he became more and more attracted to the beauty of Lord Jagannātha's lotus face, he could no longer pay attention to those recitations.

That is one reason he remained ignorant about such basic facts as the existence of the heavenly planets.

Sometimes if I
underwent some physical or
mental distress, it would
vanish immediately after
taking darshan of the Lord

2.1.180

śārīraṃ mānaśaṃ vā syāt
kiñcid duḥkhaṃ kadācana
tac ca śrī-puṇḍarikākṣe
dr̥ṣṭe sadyo vinaśyati

And even if I sometimes (kadācana) underwent some physical or mental distress (kiñcid śārīraṃ mānaśaṃ vā duḥkhaṃ syāt), as soon as I saw (dr̥ṣṭe) the lotus-eyed Lord (śrī-puṇḍarikākṣe) the pain disappeared (tac ca vinaśyati).

It is to be expected that any embodied soul will often be distracted from the ecstasy of seeing Lord Jagannātha's lotus face by unavoidable physical and mental disturbances.

Diseases constantly threaten the bodies of conditioned souls, and all kinds of desires and vexations constantly pass through their minds.

Gopa-kumāra also felt these natural disturbances, but they at once disappeared whenever he came before Lord Jagannātha.

The bliss he felt from seeing the Lord made him forget his troubles and gradually diminished them almost to nil.

Thus, thinking that I had
attained the final result of
chanting, I became indifferent
to chanting also. For many
days I lived there in
perfect happiness.

2.1.181

phalam labdham japasyeti
matvodāse sma tatra ca
evam cira-dinam tatra
nyavasam paramaiḥ sukhaiḥ

Thus (evam), thinking (matvā) I had attained the final result of my chanting (japasya phalam labdham iti), I became indifferent even to chanting (udāse sma tatra ca). For many days (evam cira-dinam) I lived in the city of Lord Jagannātha (tatra nyavasam) in such perfect happiness (paramaiḥ sukhaiḥ).

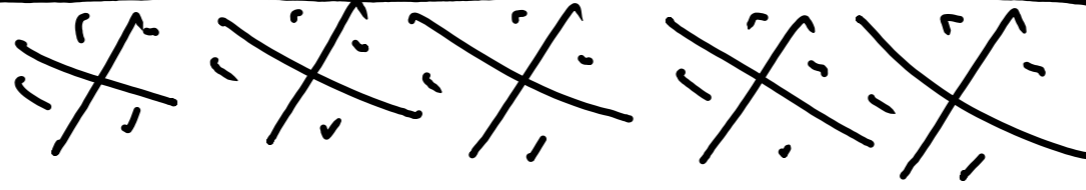
Then I developed a
great urge for more
intimate service. This
gave me great pain as
it remained unfulfilled

2.1.182

atha tasyāntarīṇāyām
sevāyām karhicit prabhoh
jātā rucir me tāpo 'pi
tasyā aghaṭanān mahān

Then (**atha**) I began to feel the urge (**me jātā rucih**) for more intimate service (**āntarīṇāyām sevāyām**) to the Lord (**tasya prabhoh**). But this desire (**tasyāh**) also brought me great pain (**me mahān tāpah api**) because it remained unfulfilled (**aghaṭanāt**).

Just living in Jagannātha Purī was a source of great bliss, but Gopa-kumāra began to feel attracted to the even greater bliss of rendering personal service to Lord Jagannātha.



This urge, first felt as a vague discomfort, gradually became a conscious desire.

Gopa-kumāra wanted to enter the inner rooms of the temple and approach the Lord as one of His personal attendants.

One might wonder whether this desire was no more practical than wanting to touch the moon with one's hand, but Gopa-kumāra refers to Lord Jagannātha as prabhu, indicating that the Lord can do anything.

2.1.183-184

yaś cakravartī tatradyah sa prabhor mukhya-sevakah
śrī-mukham vīkṣitum kṣetre yadā yāti mahotsave

saj-janopadravyāna-bhaṅgādau vārite 'py atha
mādrśo 'kiñcanāḥ svairam prabhum draṣṭum na śaknuyuh

On special
days, when the
king used to come to
Take darshan, Gaura 29/12
like we used to
forbid to take
darshan

On special festival days (yadā mahotsave) the Lord's chief servant (prabhor mukhya-sevakah), the mighty king who ruled that country (yah tatradyah cakravartī), came (yāti) to the holy city (kṣetre) to see the Lord's transcendental face (śrī-mukham vīkṣitum). To prevent problems (vārite) like disturbances to respectable people (saj-jana upadrava) and damage to the Lord's gardens (udyāna-bhaṅga ādau), unimportant people like me (mādrśo akiñcanāḥ) were then forbidden to freely see the Lord (svairam prabhum draṣṭum na śaknuyuh).

By the special mercy of Lord Jagannātha, the king of Purī at that time was a cakravartī, an overlord of several other kings.

By the privilege of his royal position he was officially the principal worshiper of the Lord.

His capital was elsewhere, but for major festivals like the Ratha-yātrā he would come to Śrī Jagannātha Purī.

On those occasions common people like Gopa-kumāra, without status and entourage, would be restricted from freely coming to see the Lord.

This prohibition was not offensive on the part of the king, who was a saintly devotee, because it was necessary to protect the Lord's property and service.

If everyone were allowed into the temple while the king was present, he and the respectable people with him would have difficulty taking darśana, and the Lord's flower gardens could be damaged or His ponds polluted by unruly mobs.

At the very least, the Lord's privacy would be threatened if too many people were allowed to converge on the temple.

Thus the poor people in the city had to tolerate having their movements restricted, and then too they were harassed by the presence of the king's large army, with its elephants, chariots, horsemen, and infantry soldiers.

One day when I was
sick @ heart, I saw
my guru taking display of
LN with great ecstasy

2.1.185

evam udbhūta-hṛd-rogo
'drākṣam sva-gurum ekadā
śrī-jagannātha-devāgre
parama-prema-vihvalam

One day (ekadā) when I thus felt sick at heart (evam udbhūta-hṛd-rogo), I saw (adrākṣam) my spiritual master (sva-gurum) standing in front of Śrī Jagannātha-deva (śrī-jagannātha-deva agre), overwhelmed by the highest ecstatic love of God (parama-prema-vihvalam).

Somehow the same great soul who had given Gopa-kumāra his
mantra in Śrī Vṛndāvana was now in Purī, taking darśana of Lord
Jagannātha.

But before I
could meet him → he
left somewhere else
I was absorbed taking
part of LIT

2.1.186

na sa sambhāṣitum śakto
mayā tarhi gataḥ kvacit
alakṣito jagannātha-
śrī-mukhākṛṣṭa-cetasā

But before I could speak with him (na sa sambhāṣitum śakto), he left to go somewhere (tarhi gataḥ kvacit), and my mind was so attracted (ākṛṣṭa-cetasā) to the beautiful face of Lord Jagannātha (jagannātha-śrī-mukha) that I didn't notice which way my guru went (mayā alakṣitah).

Gopa-kumāra made a serious mistake by neglecting to follow his
guru and meet him, but it was not offensive because he had
innocently fallen victim to Lord Jagannātha's beauty.

The next day →
found him ecstatically
dancing on the ocean shore
chanting the HṚ

2.1.187

itas tato 'mṛgyatāsau
dine 'nyasmims taṭe 'mbudheḥ
nāma-saṅkīrtanānandair
nṛtyal labdho mayaikalah

After searching here and there (itas tato amṛgyata), the next day (anyasmin dine) I found him (asau mayā labdhah) on the shore of the ocean (ambudheḥ taṭe), dancing alone (ekalah nṛtyan) in the ecstasies of nāma-saṅkīrtana (nāma-saṅkīrtana ānandair).

Seeing me offering
respects, he gave
me his blessings, embraced
me & told me this:

daṇḍa-vat praṇamantaṁ mām
dr̥ṣṭvāśīr-vāda-pūrvakam
āśliṣyājñāpayām āsa
sarva-jñō 'nugrahād idam

Seeing me (mām dr̥ṣṭvā) prostrating myself like a rod on the ground (daṇḍa-vat praṇamantaṁ), my all-knowing master (sarva-jñah) gave me his blessings (āśīr-vāda-pūrvakam). Then he embraced me (āśliṣya) and mercifully told me this (anugrahād idam jñāpayām āsa):

If Gopa-kumāra's guru knew everything, then surely he knew,
without being told, the desires Gopa-kumāra held in his heart.

Whatever you desire
& more, you will achieve
by chanting your mantra

2.1.189

yad yat saṅkalpya bho vatsa
nijaṁ mantram japiṣyasi
tat-prabhāveṇa tat sarvaṁ
vāñchātītaṁ ca setsyati

“My dear boy (bhoh vatsa), whatever you desire (yad yat saṅkalpya) while chanting your mantra (nijaṁ mantram japiṣyasi), by its power (tat-prabhāveṇa) you will fully achieve (tat sarvaṁ). Indeed, you will attain more than you desire (vāñchātītaṁ ca setsyati).

Before performing any religious ritual, including the chanting of mantras, one should solemnly formulate one's saṅkalpa ("intention"), either verbally or mentally.

In most Vedic sacrifices one can expect one's saṅkalpa to be fulfilled only in the indefinite future, most likely in the next life.

But by the blessing of his guru, Gopa-kumāra's specific saṅkalpas would all be quickly realized, as we shall see as his story continues.

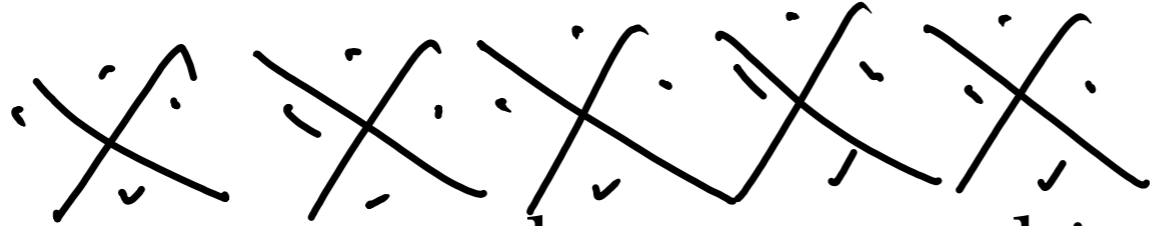
This japa is a form of
service to L.N. ∴ PTJ do not
give it up?

2.1.190

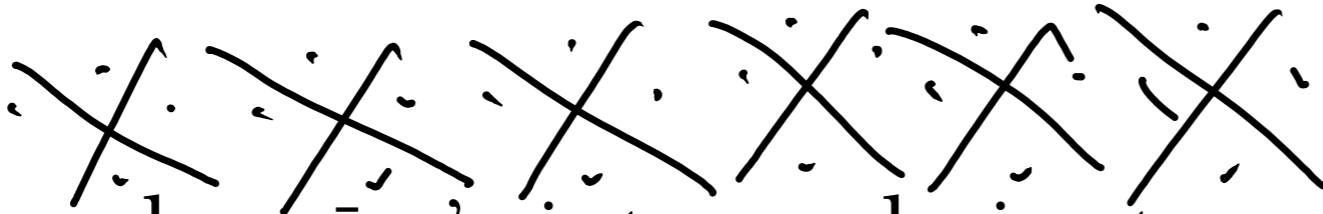
śrī-jagannātha-devasya
sevā-rūpaṁ ca viddhi tam
evaṁ matvā ca viśvasya
na kadācij japaṁ tyajeḥ

“This chanting (tam), please understand (tam viddhi), is another form of service (sevā-rūpaṁ ca) to Lord Śrī Jagannātha (śrī-jagannātha-devasya). Have faith in this (evaṁ matvā ca viśvasya) and never give up your japa (na kadācid japaṁ tyajeḥ).

Even if Gopa-kumāra has no other desire than to render personal service to Lord Jagannātha, he is here told to understand that chanting his mantra is intimate service to the Lord.



Gopa-kumāra may not have seen this for himself, but he should accept it out of confidence in the words of his guru.



Aware of Gopa-kumāra's intense desire to serve Jagannātha, the all-knowing guru also perceives that Gopa-kumāra is neglecting his mantra and so is helping him achieve his desire by correcting his neglect.

3 bevegāṅgaḥ

a) By the potency of the mantra:

b) may you live long

c) may you always have the form of a cowherd boy for right mentality to taste the fruit of the mantra.

2.1.191

tvam etasya prabhāveṇa
cira-jīvī bhavānv-aham
īdṛg-gopārbha-rūpaś ca
tat-phalāpty-arha-mānasah

“By the potency of this mantra (etasya prabhāveṇa), may you live a long time (tvam cira-jīvī bhava), may you always have (anv-aham) the form of a cowherd boy (īdṛg-gopārbha-rūpaś ca), and may you develop the right mentality (arha-mānasah) for tasting the mantra’s fruit (tat-phala āpty).”

To help Gopa-kumāra take advantage of the benediction that his mantra will fulfill all his desires, his guru gives him three more blessings.

First, Gopa-kumāra will live long enough to enjoy whatever he may desire, even if that involves traveling to higher planets, where life is much longer than on earth.

Second, he will avoid old age and its ailments, staying always a young cowherd boy.

In other words, throughout his life he will keep the same age and dress he has now, regardless of where he goes, be it Lord Brahmā's planet or Vaikuṅṭha.

Third, his mind will not become confused or agitated by the immediate fulfillment of his desires, because the mantra will keep his intelligence fixed on the final goal—to see with his own eyes Lord Madana-gopāla and join in the Lord's sporting pastimes.

And as a side result of this third benediction, even when Gopa-
kumāra achieves the posts of an emperor and of Lord Indra he will
remain ignorant of the planets he has not yet seen—Svarga-loka,
Mahar-loka, and so on.

This so-called ignorance will help him progress toward ultimate
happiness, as Śrī Nārada will later explain at the end of Chapter Five.

Sometimes you will
see me here & sometimes
in Vrndāvan. They instructing,
he left suddenly.

2.1.192

mām drakṣyasi kadāpy atra
vṛndāraṇye kadācana
evaṁ sa mām anujñāpya
kuṭrāpi sahasāgamat

“Sometimes (kadāpy) you will see me (mām drakṣyasi) here (atra), and sometimes in Vrndāvana (vṛndāraṇye kadācana).” Having thus instructed me (evaṁ mām anujñāpya), my guru suddenly left to go elsewhere (sah kuṭrāpi sahasā agamat).

✘ ✘ → insight.

Gopa-kumāra has still not received complete instructions on how to chant his mantra, but in his guru's opinion the time and place are not proper for divulging that information.

Instead, the guru promises that Gopa-kumāra will meet him again a few more times.

If Gopa-kumāra were to be given complete information about his sādhana, he might reach perfection quickly, but as fate would have it, he must first do some traveling around the universe.

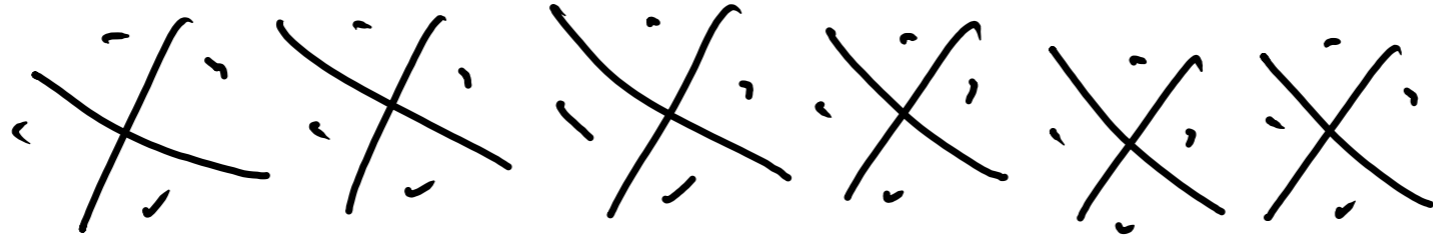
TK's desire

Feeling separated
from my guru I felt
greatly aggrieved.
But by devotion of LNU, I
became peaceful & made great
endeavor to chant my japa.

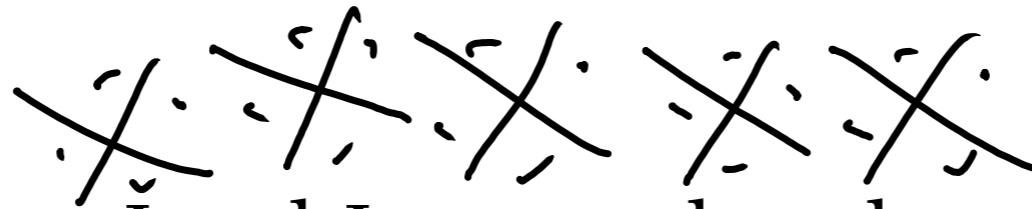
2.1.193

tad-viyogena dīnaḥ san
śrī-jagannātham īkṣitum
gataḥ śāntim ahaṁ prāpto
yatnaṁ cākaravaṁ jape

Separated from my guru (tad-viyogena) I felt very much aggrieved (dīnaḥ sat), but when I went to see Lord Jagannātha (śrī-jagannātham īkṣitum gataḥ) I regained my peace of mind (śāntim ahaṁ prāpto) and made a great endeavor to chant my japa (jape yatnaṁ cākaravaṁ).



The unfortunate can become free of distress simply by taking shelter of Śrī Jagannātha-deva; they need not resort to any other remedy.



And if they fail to see Lord Jagannātha, they can expect neither relief from suffering nor real happiness.

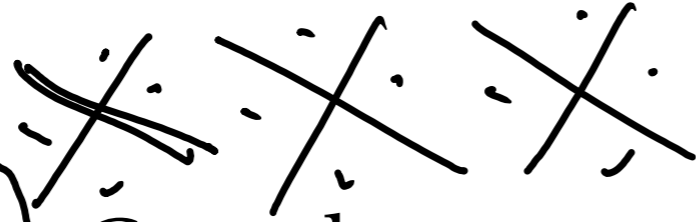
Whenever my eagerness to see Vraja before I'm by LIT way the day of the day of Vrindavan. ② area of Vrindavan ③ hillside of Govardhan

yadāsyā darśanotkaṅṭhā vraja-bhūmer abhūt-tarām
tadā tu śrī-jagannātha-mahimnā sphurati sma me

tat-kṣetropavana-śrenī vrndāraṇyatayāṇavaḥ
yamunātvena nīlādri-bhāgo govardhanātmanā

→ 1st benefit of reviving his chanting He could see the high-diffidence of Pūrī & Vrindavan.

Whenever (yadā) my eagerness to see Vraja-bhūmi (vraja-bhūmer darśana utkaṅṭhā) became intense (abhūt-tarām), on the strength of Śrī Jagannātha's glories (tadā tu śrī-jagannātha-mahimnā) the many gardens of His abode (tat-kṣetra upavana-śrenī) would appear to me (sphurati sma me) as Vrindavana (vrndāraṇyatayā), its sea as the Yamunā (aṇavaḥ yamunātvena), and the slope of Nīlādri Hill as Govardhana (nīlādri-bhāgo govardhanātmanā).



The first result Gopa-kumāra noticed after reviving the serious chanting of his mantra was that he saw certain special opulences of Lord Jagannātha.

In particular, he became aware of various ways in which Lord Jagannātha's abode, Purusottama-kṣetra, is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa's abode, Vraja-bhūmi.

Lord Jagannātha's various pleasure gardens reminded Gopa-kumāra of the Vrndāvana forest, the shore of the salt ocean reminded him of the Yamunā River, and the portion of Nīlādri Hill near the western side of Lord Jagannātha's temple reminded him of Govardhana.

Thus he was not as miserable as he would have been had he not been able to see Kṛṣṇa's abode.

In this way
I happily lived in
varanasi & after taking
chant my mantra I should
order of my guru & hope
to achieve perfection

2.1.196

evam vasan sukham tatra
bhagavad-darśanād anu
guru-pādājñayā nityam
japāmi sveṣṭa-siddhaye

In this way I continued living there happily (evam vasan sukham tatra). Every day (nityam) after taking darśana of the Lord (bhagavad-darśanād anu), I chanted my mantra (japāmi), following the order of my worshipable guru (guru-pādājñayā) and hoping to achieve my desired perfection (sva iṣṭa-siddhaye).

Each morning, after visiting Lord Jagannātha in His temple, Gopakumāra would return to his residence and sit in a quiet place to chant his mantra.

insight

He was meditating on the specific saṅkalpa of being allowed to join the temple service of Jagannātha.

As this verse indicates, he was no longer so obsessed with seeing Lord Jagannātha that he neglected his mantra, and he was beginning to develop both genuine devotion for his spiritual master and faith in the transcendental goal of life.

Then the King of Purī
passed away & his
eldest son / being very devoted,
refused to accept the kingdom.

2.1.197

atha tasmin mahā-rāje
kālam prāpte 'sya sūnunā
jyeṣṭhenāti-viraktena
rājyam aṅgī-kṛtaṁ na tat

Then (atha) the king of Purī (tasmin mahā-rāje) passed away (kālam prāpte), and his eldest son (asya jyeṣṭhena sūnunā), who was very renounced (ati-viraktena), refused to accept the kingdom (na tat rājyam aṅgī-kṛtaṁ).

Gopa-kumāra's guru had promised that the mantra would readily fulfill all of Gopa-kumāra's desires, and now the first of those desires was about to be realized.

↓
Insight
↑

Texts 197 through 202 describe how Gopa-kumāra became king of Purī and was able to enter Lord Jagannātha's intimate service.

The crown prince declined the throne because he wanted only to continue taking darśana of Lord Jagannātha's lotus face; he did not even want the privileged services granted to the king.

So, the ministers
consulted with LTV
& seeing the signs of
king in me, they
me as the king anointed

2.1.198

tatrābhiṣiktaḥ prṣṭasyā-
nujñayā jagad-īśituḥ
samparīkṣya mahā-rāja-
cihnāni sacivair aham

The ministers (**sacivaih**) consulted (**prṣṭasya**) the Lord of the universe (**jagad-īśituḥ**) and took His command (**anujñayā**), and after observing in me (**tatra samparīkṣya**) the signs of a mahārāja (**mahā-rāja-cihnāni**) they anointed me king (**aham abhiṣiktaḥ**).

Assembled before Lord Jagannātha, the ministers humbly submitted,
“The eldest prince is so attached to seeing Your lotus face that he has
no interest in ruling.

And as a matter of principle, none of the younger princes should
assume the throne as long as the eldest is alive.

None of the king’s other family members display the character of a
great ruler.

But if no one becomes king, law and order in the country cannot be maintained even for a short time.

Please tell us whom we should place on the throne.”

In reply Lord Jagannātha commanded them, “One of My devotees, a young cowherd born at Śrī Govardhana, has come here. You should crown him.”

Or else He told them, “Crown whomever you find has the signs of a mahārāja.”

In this way the Supreme Lord, the compassionate friend of the wretched, the most clever maker of all arrangements, ordered the ministers to look for a person with kingly symptoms, symptoms they duly found in Gopa-kumāra.

Thus neither the princes nor others had an opportunity to become envious of him.

Some of the marks of royalty are mentioned in reference to Emperor Bharata, the son of Śakuntalā, in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (9.20.24).

Cakraṁ dakṣiṇa-haste 'sya/ padma-kośo 'sya pādayoh: "He had the mark of Lord Kṛṣṇa's disc on the palm of his right hand and the mark of a lotus whorl on the soles of his feet."

As soon as
Gopakulā - before the
King, he performed the
worship standards & festival
standards

2.1.199

vividhā vardhitās tasya
mayā pūjā mahotsavāḥ
viśeṣato mahā-yātrā
dvādaśātrāpi guṇḍicā

I tried to improve (**mayā vardhitāḥ**) the worship and various festivals (**pūjā vividhā mahotsavāḥ**) of Lord Jagannātha in Purī (**tasya**), especially (**viśeṣato**) His twelve major festivals (**dvādaśa mahā-yātrā**), most important among them the Guṇḍicā Ratha-yātrā (**atrāpi guṇḍicā**).

In each of the twelve months, beginning with Phālguna, Lord Jagannātha enjoys a major festival in His temple, such as His swing festival, candana festival, bathing festival, Ratha-yātrā, and damanaka, “the festival of breaking the damanaka tree.”

As King of Purī, Gopa-kumāra increased the opulence of all these celebrations.

He gave the most attention to improving Lord Jagannātha’s Ratha-yātrā to the Guṇḍicā temple.

Saintly persons
had with love attended
these festivals

2.1.200

pr̥thivyāḥ sād̥havaḥ sarve
militā yatra vargaśaḥ
preṃṇonmattā ivekṣyante
nṛtya-gītādi-tatparāḥ

For these festivals (**yatra**), saintly persons (**sād̥havaḥ sarve**) gathered
in groups (**militā vargaśaḥ**) from around the world (**pr̥thivyāḥ**).
Absorbed in dancing, singing, and so on (**nṛtya-gītādi-tatparāḥ**), they
appeared (**īkṣyante**) as if insane with love of God (**preṃṇonmattā**
iva).

The sādhus who visited Puruṣottama-kṣetra belonged to many different sampradāyas, but they would all assemble happily, in their own saṅkīrtana groups, for Lord Jagannātha's festivals.

by accepting LTV
a still servant of
Gita Kurve ruled

2.1.201

rājyaṃ rājopabhogyam ca
jagannātha-padābjayoḥ
samarpyākiñcanatvena
sevām kurve nijecchayā

I offered (**samarpya**) the kingdom (**rājyaṃ**), with all its royal enjoyments (**raja upabhogyam ca**), at the lotus feet of Jagannātha (**jagannātha-padābjayoḥ**). In a completely dependent mood (**akiñcanatvena**), I took my pleasure (**nija icchayā**) in simply serving the Lord (**sevām kurve**).

Even as King of Purī, Gopa-kumāra retained his innocence.

He remained simple-hearted, as he had always been; but because he
was the ultimate authority among the servants of Lord Jagannātha,
he could serve the Lord whenever and however he wanted.

with his dearest
Permanent de Voteres
LN Enjoyed confidential
talks & loving pastimes

2.1.202

nijaiḥ priya-tamair nitya-
sevakaiḥ saha sa prabhuḥ
narma-goṣṭhīḥ vitanute
prema-kṛīḍāṁ ca karhicit

With (saha) His dearest (nijaiḥ priya-tamair) permanent servants (nitya-sevakaiḥ), the Lord (prabhuḥ) enjoyed confidential talks (narma-goṣṭhīḥ) and sometimes (karhicit) displayed (vitanute) intimate loving pastimes (prema-kṛīḍāṁ).

Now wanting Gopa-kumāra to make another change in his life, Lord Jagannātha arranged for a seed of discontent to be planted in his heart.

Texts 202 through 205 thus describe how Gopa-kumāra began to feel jealous of the hereditary Orissan servants of Jagannātha, to whom the Lord extended special privileges.

TE Fr. H. H. H. H. H.
devotees could be free
understand L/N mood
& moulded themselves accordingly
They can enjoy His all His

2.1.203

yadā vā līlayā sthānu-
bhāvaṃ bhajati kautukī
prīṇanty athāpi sāścaryās
te taḥ-līlānusāriṇaḥ

Or (vā) even when (yadā) the playful Lord Jagannātha (kautukī)
stood still (sthānu-bhāvaṃ bhajati) as His pastime (līlayā), His
closest devotees (te) gave themselves to His intimate mood (taḥ-līlā
anusāriṇaḥ), amazed at His greatness (sa-āścaryāḥ) and delighted in
love (prīṇanty).

In the private company of the Orissan pūjārīs, Lord Jagannātha would sometimes talk and engage in various personal exchanges.

But even when He remained motionless and silent on the altar, those most intimate devotees still had very special relationships with Him.

The Lord is not a lifeless log; He only pretends to be like that.

Every chance He gets, He indulges in all sorts of sports and tricks with His devotees.

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The pūjārīs were astonished to see how Lord Jagannātha at one moment acts like a naughty child and the next poses as an immobile Deity.

But rather than become morose when Jagannātha was not active and speaking to them, the pūjārīs were happy to go along with whatever pastime the Lord was playing at the moment, be it active or passive.

↑ also wanted
to join those special
pastimes, but
a) Being a newcomer
b) with out exclusive
How could I receive for LN
those pastimes?

2.1.204

mamāpi tatra tatrāśā
syād athāgantuko 'smy aham
tad-eka-niṣṭho nāpi syām
katham tat-tat-prasāda-bhāk

I also wanted (mamāpi āśā syād) to join in those special pastimes (tatra tatra), but being just a newcomer (atha āgantukah asmy), without exclusive devotion to Lord Jagannātha (tad-eka-niṣṭhaḥ nāpi), how could I receive His mercy in those special ways (katham tat-tat-prasāda-bhāk syāt)?

Gopa-kumāra thought himself unfit even to desire to join in Lord Jagannātha's intimate talks and pastimes with His servants.

In fact, he thought that the very desire arose in his heart from jealousy. No wonder, therefore, he felt distressed.

He had only recently entered Jagannātha's service and was not one of the hereditary pūjārīs.

Nor did he have fixed, unalloyed devotion to the Lord of Nīlācala, because his heart was still attracted to Śrī Vṛndāvana forest and the other places of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vraja-bhūmi.

Whenever I used
to see the great fortune
of Orissa devotees, I also
on my desire to be like these
devotees
I went through distress

2.1.205

tathāpy utkala-bhaktānām
tat-tat-saubhāgya-bhāvanaiḥ
sañjanyamānayā tat-tad-
āśayādhiḥ kilodbhavet

Even so (tathāpy), I went through anguish (ādhiḥ kila udbhavet) when I thought of the kinds of good fortune (tat-tat-saubhāgya-bhāvanaiḥ) the Orissan devotees enjoyed (utkala-bhaktānām sañjanyamānayā) and when I reflected in various ways on my desire to be like those devotees (tat-tad-āśayā).

When I heard the
Songs, Prayers etc
in front of LN →
I was disturbed
Reminded me of Mathurā

2.1.206

nāma-saṅkīrtana-stotra-
gītāni bhagavat-puraḥ
śrūyamāṇāni dunvanti
mathurā-smārakāṇi mām

When I heard (śrūyamāṇāni) the songs (gītāni), prayers (stotra), and congregational chanting of the Lord's names (nāma-saṅkīrtana) in front of Lord Jagannātha (bhagavat-puraḥ), I was disturbed (mām dunvanti) because they reminded me of Mathurā (mathurā-smārakāṇi).

In the presence of Lord Jagannātha, devotees would chant names of the Lord like Mathurā-nātha, Vṛndāvana-candra, and Govardhanoddhāraṇa.

They would recite ancient prayers from the Purāṇas and prayers by modern authors.

They would sing properly composed songs, with suitable melody and rhythm.

Hearing those auspicious sounds troubled Gopa-kumāra's mind because they made him more vividly remember Mathurā and started him thinking about going back.

Blessed by the
sādhu sense of love
& all my sorrow would dissolve.
↓
Thus, I never wanted to leave pīri

2.1.207

sādhu-saṅga-balād gatvā
dr̥ṣṭe rājīva-locane
sarvaḥ śoko vilīyeta
na syāj jīgamiṣā kvacit

Blessed by the strength of my closeness with saintly devotees (sādhu-saṅga-balād), I was able to go (gatvā) see (dr̥ṣṭe) the lotus-eyed Lord (rājīva-locane), and whenever I went to see Him all my sorrow would dissolve (sarvaḥ śoko vilīyeta). Thus I never wanted to go anywhere else (na syāt jīgamiṣā kvacit).

But still, due to my
involvement with ruling the
kingdom, I could not feel
the same ecstasy that I used
to feel before from seeing
the Lord.

2.1.208

tathāpi mama sāmrajya-
samparkeṇa hr̥di svataḥ
bhagavad-darśanānandaḥ
samyak nodeti pūrva-vat

But (tathāpi) because of my involvement with ruling the kingdom (mama sāmrajya-samparkeṇa), my heart (svataḥ hr̥di) could never feel (na udeti) the complete spontaneous ecstasy (samyak ānandaḥ) it used to feel (pūrva-vat) from seeing the Lord (bhagavad-darśana).

By the mercy of the great devotees of Purī, Gopa-kumāra got repeated darśana of the all-blissful Lord Jagannātha, and every visit destroyed his sorrow.

Only by the powerful mercy of the devotees was he able to relish the beauty of the Lord; on the strength of his own spiritual accomplishments alone he would never have overcome his distress.

Yet his happiness was never as full as before, because he was entangled in the management of the kingdom.

Despite having officially offered the kingdom at the feet of Lord Jagannātha, he was still burdened by the many anxieties of a king.

During yātrās &
festivals I would be
surrounded by royal entourage
& thus could not freely worship
LJN

2.1.209

yātrā-mahotsavāmś caham
āvṛto rāja-maṇḍalaiḥ
sukham kalayitum neśe
svecchayā bahudhā bhajan

At the Ratha-yātrā and other big festivals (yātrā-mahotsavāmś ca), I was surrounded (aham āvṛtaḥ) by my royal entourage (rāja-maṇḍalaiḥ) and unable to spend time enjoying the occasions (sukham kalayitum na īśe). And I could no longer worship Lord Jagannātha (na īśe bhajan) according to my own desire (svecchayā) in the various ways I had before (bahudhā).

As king, Gopa-kumāra had opportunities to sweep the road in front of Lord Jagannātha's cart, wipe the Lord's face, and offer betel nut to His mouth, but the pleasure he felt from these services was constrained by the presence of the crowds.

Finally I divided
the kingdom responsibility
between sons, ministers etc
& This gave up the throne

2.1.210

rājño 'patyeṣv amātyeṣu
bandhuṣv api samarpya tam
rājya-bhāraṁ svayaṁ prāg-vad
udāsīnatayā sthitaḥ

So I handed over (samarpya) the burden of ruling the kingdom (rājya-bhāraṁ) to the sons, ministers (apatyeṣu amātyeṣu), and relatives (bandhuṣv api) of the previous king (rājñah), and as before (prāg-vad) I became uninvolved and aloof (svayaṁ udāsīnatayā sthitaḥ).

At last he abdicated the throne.

I continued living
nearby, happily chanting
my mantra & offering service
which I liked

2.1.211

sukham raho japam kurvan
jagannātha-padābjayoḥ
samīpe svecchayā sevām
ācarann avasam tataḥ

I continued living nearby (samīpe avasan tataḥ), happily chanting my mantra (sukham japam kurvan) in private (rahaḥ) and offering service (sevām ācarann) at the lotus feet of Lord Jagannātha (jagannātha-padābjayoḥ) as I liked (svecchayā).

2.1.212

Still, because of
the honor & respect
I still no longer
feel happiness in Puri.
I lost interest in staying there.

tathāpi loka-sammānā-
daratas tādṛśam sukham
na labheya vinirviṇṇa-
manās tatrābhavam sthitau

But (**tathāpi**) because of the honor and respect I received from the populace (**loka-sammāna ādaratah**), I could no longer feel (**na labheya**) happiness in Puri (**tādṛśam sukham**). And so I lost interest (**vinirviṇṇa-manāh abhavan**) in staying there (**tatra sthitau**).

Gopa-kumāra tried to refuse formal worship from his former subjects, but even when they obliged him, dispensing with formalities, they still treated him with great respect.

Early in the morning
I went to LN to get
His order to go to Vṛndāvan.
But, as soon as I saw His face,
I forgot all my plans

2.1.213

gantum vṛndāvanam prātar
ājñārtham purataḥ prabhoḥ
gataḥ śrīman-mukham paśyan
sarvaṁ tad vismarāmy aho

Early in the morning (prātar), I went before Lord Jagannātha
(prabhoḥ purataḥ gataḥ) to ask His permission (ājñārtham) to leave
for Vṛndāvana (vṛndāvanam gantum); but oh (aho), when I saw His
beautiful face (śrīman-mukham paśyan) I forgot all my plans
(sarvaṁ tad vismarāmy).

Gopa-kumāra reasoned like this: “The Lord of the universe, for whose sake I left Vraja-bhūmi, I have obtained directly here.”

How is it right for me to abandon Him, and how can I find the power to do such a thing?

And even if the same Lord wants to bring me back to His favorite playground Vṛndāvana to show me some special mercy, I still cannot go away from here without first getting His express permission.”

But when Gopa-kumāra went before Lord Jagannātha in the temple,
as soon as he saw the Lord's divine face he forgot everything—his
mental pain, the remembrance of Vṛndāvana that caused the pain,
and his intention to ask the Lord's permission to go.

This pattern occurred day after day.

In this way one
 full year passed & one
 day I heard some detailed
 news from Mathurā by some
 visitors

evam saṁvatsare jāte
mayā tatraikadā śrutam
mathurāyāḥ prāyātebhyo
'tratyā-vṛttam viśeṣataḥ

Thus one year passed (evam saṁvatsare jāte), and then one day (ekadā) I heard (mayā śrutam) some detailed news of Mathurā (mathurāyāḥ vṛttam viśeṣataḥ) from visitors who had come from there (atratya prāyātebhyo).

Gopa-kumāra heard these visitors describe the splendor of the cows, cowherds, birds, trees, forest animals, and other residents of such neighborhoods as Srī Vṛndāvana and Govardhana.

That night of 1 day
lying in the bed tormented
by sorrow & pain, LN
a plea & gave me the order

2.1.215

śoka-duḥkhāturam rātrau
śayānam mām mahā-prabhuḥ
idam ājñāpayām āsa
para-duḥkhena kātaraḥ

That night (rātrau) as I was lying in bed (śayānam mām), tormented by sorrow and pain (śoka-duḥkha āturam), the Supreme Lord Jagannātha (mahā-prabhuḥ), who is pained by the suffering of others (para-duḥkhena kātaraḥ), gave me the following command (idam ājñāpayām āsa).

Mathurā is
even more dear to Me
than even Pūrī

2.1.216

bho gopa-nandana kṣetram
idaṁ mama yathā priyam
tathā śrī-mathurā 'thāsau
janma-bhūmir viśeṣataḥ

“As dear as this holy city is to Me (yathā idaṁ kṣetram mama priyam), O son of a cowherd (bho gopa-nandana), My birthplace (tathā asau janma-bhūmih), Śrī Mathurā (śrī-mathurā), is even more dear (viśeṣataḥ priyam).

By calling His devotee gopa-nandana, Lord Jagannātha subtly hinted that it was fitting for him to live in Vraja-bhūmi.

Mathurā is
adorned with many
bālyā-līlā-sthalibhiḥ.
I just stay in Purī, so do I in Mathurā.

2.1.217

bālyā-līlā-sthalībhiḥ ca
tābhis tābhir alaṅkṛtā
nivasāmi yathātrāham
tathā tatrāpi vibhraman

“Mathurā is adorned (alaṅkṛtā) with the various sites (tābhis tābhis) of My childhood pastimes (bālyā-līlā-sthalībhiḥ). Just as I live always here in Purī (yathā atra aham nivasāmi), wandering about everywhere (vibhraman), so do I in Mathurā (tathā tatra api).

Mathurā is even more dear to the Personality of Godhead than Purusottama-kṣetra because in Mathurā He displayed His birth and childhood pastimes.

Childhood technically means the years before maturity, which are divided into the three phases called kaumāra, pauganḍa, and kaiśora.

Many scriptural statements describe human life as passing through birth, youth, and old age. For example:

janma bālyam tataḥ sar
jantuḥ prāpnoti yauvana
avyāhataiva bhavati
tato 'nu-divasam jarā

“Every creature is born, is then a child, and then a youth. And if his life is not interrupted prematurely, he daily approaches old age.”

Gopa-kumāra might object that here in Purī the Lord is visible whereas in Mathurā He is not.

But Lord Jagannātha here answers that He certainly lives in Mathurā, wandering about and enjoying with His devotees.

Why do you lament
& waver between one
decision & another?

Just go to Mathurā & in time
you will surely see Me in the form
you desire

2.1.218

sadā dolāyamānātmā
katham tad anutapyase
tatraiva gaccha kāle mām
tad-rūpaṁ draśyasi dhruvam

“Why constantly lament (katham sadā anutapyase), waver
between one decision and another (dolāyamāna ātmā)? Just go to
Mathurā (tatraiva gaccha), and in time (kāle) you will surely see Me
(mām dhruvam draśyasi) in the form you desire (tad-rūpaṁ).”

The form of the Lord that Gopa-kumāra cherishes in his meditation
is that of Śrī Madana-gopāla-deva.

Lord Jagannātha assures Gopa-kumāra, “You will see Me in that form
at the proper time in Mathurā-bhūmi.

Thereafter, you will never again suffer sorrow or discontent.”

Early in the morning, I received the ajñā-mālā of LTN & I placed it on my neck, bowed down to the cakra & left to Mathurā

ājñā-mālām prātar ādāya pūjā-
viprair vāse me samāgatya dattām
kaṅṭhe baddhvā prasthito vīkṣya cakram
natvāthāpto māthuram deśam etam

Early that morning (prātar) at my residence (me vāse) I received (ādāya) a flower garland indicating the Lord's command (ājñā-mālām) from some pūjārī brāhmanas (samāgatya pūjā-vipraih dattām). I placed the garland on my neck (kaṅṭhe baddhvā) and departed (prasthitah), bowing down (natvā) to the cakra on top of the temple (cakram) as I saw it for the last time (vīkṣya). And in that way I came (atha āptah) to this land of Mathurā (etad māthuram deśam).

Just in case Gopa-kumāra might judge his dream false, Lord Jagannātha sent a garland from His morning pūjā as a sign of His approval.

This confirmed that the Lord wanted him to go to Mathurā.

Lord Jagannātha appeared on earth mainly to display His pastime of accepting [formal worship] in His temple, and His brāhmaṇa pūjārīs shared in this pastime.

The Lord ordered His pūjārīs to take the garland off His neck and bring it to Gopa-kumāra.

And rather than go to the temple to see the Lord's lotus face, Gopa-kumāra left at once for Mathurā.