

# Laghu - Bhāgavatāmṛta

## Part-1

### The Sweetness of Kṛṣṇa

#### Chapter-2

Description of the Puruṣāvatāras and  
Guṇāvatāras

# The Gunavataras

# The Gunavataras

Definition of  
Guṇāvatāras

Text-16

guṇāvatārās tatrātha  
kathyante puruṣād iha |  
viṣṇur brahmā ca rudraś ca  
sthiti-sargādi-karmaṇe

The guṇāvatāras (guṇāvatārāh), arising from Garbhodakaśāyī (tatrātha puruṣād), are now described (iha kathyante). Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva (viṣṇur brahmā ca rudraś ca) are involved in maintenance, creation and destruction (sthiti-sargādi-karmaṇe).

- Puruṣāt means from Pradyumna – Garbhodakaśāyī, who is a svāmīśa form arising from Mahāvisnu.

# The Gunavataras

Text-17

Proof for the  
Gunavataras being  
expansion of GaV

yathā prathame –

sattvaṃ rajas tama iti prakṛter guṇās tair  
yuktaḥ paraḥ puruṣa eka ihāsyā dhatte |  
sthity-ādaye hari-viriñci-hareti saṃjñāh

śreyāṃsi tatra khalu sattva-tanor nṛnām syuh

In the First Canto it is said (yathā prathame):  
The one supreme puruṣa (paraḥ puruṣa ekaḥ) accepting (dhatte)  
the guṇas of prakṛti known as sattva, rajas and tamas (sattvaṃ  
rajas tama iti prakṛter guṇāh), for creation, maintenance and  
destruction (sthity-ādaye), is called Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva (hari-  
viriñci-hareti saṃjñāh). The best results for the devotees will  
come (nṛnām śreyāṃsi syuh) from Viṣṇu with śuddha-sattva  
body (tatra khalu sattva-tanor). SB 1.2.23

→ Brahmā

→ Śivā

→ GaV

→ KsV

## Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana

- Parah-purusah here refers to Garbhodakaśāyī, who is one alone within the universe.
- For maintenance, creation and destruction (sthity-ādaye) of the universe (asya), he associates with the three gunas as the controller of each guṇa by accepting the forms of Viṣṇu, Brahmā and Śiva.
- The benefits of dharma, artha, kāma and moksā (śreyāṁsi) for humanity arise from the Visnu (sattva-tanoh) among the three.

# The Gunavataras

Text-18

|                       | Touch | Controlled by |
|-----------------------|-------|---------------|
| KSV                   | X     | X             |
| Śivā - īśvara         | ✓     | X             |
| Śivā Jīva             | ✓     | ✓             |
| B (īśvara)            | X     | X             |
| B (Jīva) P-Devotee    | ✓     | X             |
| B (Jīva) not pure Dev | ✓     | ✓             |

Kārikā verse explaining what it means when śāstrīs mention that "the puruṣa accepts guṇās"

KSV is not bound by the guṇās

atra kārikā -  
yogo niyāmakatayā guṇaiḥ  
sambandha ucyate |  
ataḥ sa tair na yujyate  
tatra svāmśaḥ parasya yah

An explanatory verse (atra kārikā).  
 The relationship of the (puruṣa) with the gunas (guṇaiḥ yogah) is that of being their controller (niyāmakatayā sambandha ucyate).  
 Among the three (tatra), he who is the svāmśa of svayaṁ-rūpa Kṛṣṇa (parasya svāmśaḥ yah), is not bound by the gunas (sah tair na yujyate).

## Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana

- How can there be a relation between the material gunas and the supreme lord, for it is said māyā paraity abhimukhe ca vilajjamānā: māyā cannot stand in front of the Lord. (SB 2.7.47)
- This verse answers.
- The guṇas are controlled and the puruṣa, among the three forms, is the controller of the guṇas. That is called yoga.
- He is not bound by the guṇas.
- Among the three forms (tatra) he who is the svāmī of Kṛṣṇa (parasya), Viṣṇu, is not in contact with the guṇas.

# Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana

- Drumila explains:

↑  
Proof for  
GalV → manifesting  
the 3 gunas  
- KLEVES  
- 3 gunas

ādāv abhūc chata-dhṛtī rajasāsyā sarge  
viṣṇuḥ sthitau kratu-patir dvija-dharma-setuḥ  
rudro 'pyayāya tamasā puruṣaḥ sa ādya  
ity udbhava-sthiti-layāḥ satataṁ prajāsu

In the beginning (ādāv), the purusa (sah ādyaḥ puruṣaḥ) appeared as Brahma (śata-dhṛtī abhūt) through rajoguna (rajasā) for creation (asya sarge), as Visṇu, the lord of sacrifice (viṣṇuḥ kratu-patir), and protector of dharma of the brāhmaṇas (dvija-dharma-setuḥ), for maintenance (sthitau), and as Śiva through tamo-guṇa (tamasā rudrah) for destruction (apyayāya). In this way creation, maintenance and destruction of the living entities takes place at all times (ity) prajāsu udbhava-sthiti-layāḥ satataṁ). SB 11.4.5



## Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana

- The lord by his will becomes Brahmā and Śiva by association with rajas and tamas.
- He becomes Buddha by association with pāsanda-dharma.
- He becomes Rṣabha by association with extreme renunciation.
- However, because he is the supreme lord, he does not become contaminated by this association.

## Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana

- By worship of such forms, dharma cannot be perfected and liberation cannot be achieved.
- In Hari-vamśa, Śiva himself says mukti-pradātā sarveṣāṃ viṣṇur eva na saṁśayaḥ: Viṣṇu is without doubt the giver of liberation to all beings.
- Viṣṇu is not even in contact with sattva-guna, but rather he simply controls it by his will.
- Thus it has been said that all benefits arise from him.

# Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana

- Vāmana Purāṇa says:

brahma-viṣṇvīśa-rūpāni  
trīni viṣṇor mahatmanah  
brahmaṇi brahma-rūpaḥ sa  
śiva-rūpaḥ śive sthitaḥ  
prthag eva sthito devo  
viṣṇu-rūpi janārdanaḥ

The three forms of Brahma, Viṣṇu and Śiva (brahma-visnu-īśa-rūpāni trīni) are actually forms of Viṣṇu, the great soul of all beings (viṣṇor mahatmanah). He is situated as the form of Brahmā in Brahmā (brahmaṇi brahma-rūpaḥ saḥ) and the form of Śiva in Śiva (śiva-rūpaḥ śive sthitaḥ). Janārdana takes a separate form as Viṣṇu (prthag eva sthito devo viṣṇu-rūpi janārdanaḥ).

- Though the controller of the guṇas is only one person, for action in relation to the guṇas, he takes these forms with various degrees of covering.

## Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana

pārthivād dāruṇo dhūmah  
tasmād agnis trayīmayah  
tamasas tu rajas tasmāt  
sattvaṁ yad brahma-darśanam

← dull wood → Tamas  
Smoke → Rajas  
Five → Sattva

Smoke is superior to dull wood (pārthivād dāruṇo dhūmah),  
and fire, sacred to the Vedas, is superior to smoke (tasmād  
agnis trayīmayah). Similarly rajas is superior to tamas (tamasas  
tu rajas tasmāt), and sattva is superior to rajas, since it is  
favorable for realizing the Lord (sattvaṁ yad brahma-  
darśanam). SB 1.2.24

## Srila Baladeva Vidyabhusana

- Wood, smoke and fire have natures of inactivity, slight action and manifest action, with no expectation of (performing) sacrifice in wood, slight expectation in smoke, and full expectation in fire.
- So tamas, rajas and sattva, have natures of ignorance, action and knowledge.
- Tamas yields no spiritual insight, rajas yields slight spiritual insight and sattva yields spiritual insight directly.
- Because tamas and rajas do not encourage spiritual vision of the Lord but sattva does, it is considered the best.