

Laghu - Bhāgavatāmṛta

Part-1

The Sweetness of Kṛṣṇa

Chapter-5

Discussion of the Parāvasthā forms

Next Puruṣa Paśa Sa
argument

Text:194-195

nanu śraīṣṭhyaṁ mukundasya brahmato yujyate katham |
yad brahma śrībhāgator aikyam eva prasidhyate

puruṣaṁ paramātmā ca brahma ca jñānam ity api |
sa eko bhagavān eva śāstreṣu bahudhocyate

How can you say (nanu katham yujyate) that Kṛṣṇa is superior to Brahman (mukundasya brahmato śraīṣṭhyaṁ), because the scriptures say (yad prasidhyate) that brahman and bhagavān are identical (brahma śrībhāgator aikyam eva). In many places in the scriptures it is said (śāstreṣu) that bhagavān (sa eko bhagavān eva) is called variously (bahudhā ucyate) the puruṣa, paramātmā (puruṣaṁ paramātmā ca), brahman and jñāna (brahma ca jñānam ity api).

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- Keeping in mind the saying that if one cannot cross a small pond, what chance has one to cross the ocean, some people, unable to tolerate the superiority of Kṛṣṇa to Brahman, give opposing arguments.
- Saying the two are equal means that they do not accept Kṛṣṇa as superior to brahman.
→
- They justify non-difference by saying that brahman, paramātmā and bhagavān are synonyms like the words ghaṭa, kalaśa and kumbha used to denote one object, a pot.
- They do not denote different objects.

Proof for
The Pūrva Purāṇa

Text-196

tathā ca skānde –
bhagavān paramātmēti
procyate 'ṣṭāṅga-yogibhiḥ |
brahmety upaniṣan-niṣṭhair
jñānam ca jñāna-yogibhiḥ

Thus Skanda Purāṇa says (**tathā ca skānde**):

Bhagavān is called paramātmā (**bhagavān paramātmā iti procyate**) by the yogīs (**aṣṭāṅga-yogibhiḥ**). He is called Brahman (**brahma ity**) by those who study the Upaniṣads (**upaniṣad-niṣṭhaiḥ**) and he is called jñāna by the jñāna-yogīs (**jñānam ca jñāna-yogibhiḥ**).

Text-197

śrī-prathame ca –
vadanti tat tattva-vidas
tattvaṁ yaj jñānam advayam |
brahmeti paramātmēti
bhagavān iti śabdyate

In the First Canto it is said (śrī-prathame ca):

The Absolute Truth (tat tattvaṁ) is called (vadanti) brahman, paramātmā, and bhagavān (brahmeti paramātmēti bhagavān iti śabdyate) by the knowers of the Absolute Truth (tattva-vidas), and ~~all of them are identical~~ (yaj jñānam advayam). SB 1.2.11

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- The one truth is called Brahman by the Vedantists, paramātmā by the yogīs and bhagavān by the devotees.
- In the quote from Skanda Purāṇa, various names are said to be the same knowledge and in the quote from Bhāgavatam, jñāna is known by different names.
- By the interchange of terms it is understood that there is no difference between them.

Text-198

satyam uktam śrnu tatas tṛtīye kāpilaṃ vacaḥ

What has been said is true (satyam uktam). Please listen (tataḥ śrnu) to the words of Kapila from the Third Canto (tṛtīye kāpilaṃ vacaḥ).

Text-199

yathā –
yathendriyaiḥ prthag-dvārain artho bahu-guṇāśrayaḥ |
eko nāneyate tadvad bhagavān śāstra-vartmabhiḥ

There it says:

Just as one object (yathā eko arthah), the substrate of many qualities (bahu-guṇa āśrayaḥ) is perceived (īyate) by the various senses (nānā indriyaiḥ) in various ways (prthag-dvārain), so Bhagavān is perceived variously (tadvad bhagavān) by the various scriptural practices (śāstra-vartmabhiḥ). SB 3.32.33

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- The author speaks, accepting half the argument.
- “But if you accept, why do you say that they have differences?” Please listen.
- The scriptures declare difference.
- Just as milk, which is one substance, is perceived differently by different senses such as the eye, so bhagavān is perceived in different ways through different types of worship.

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- The worshipper who does not accept qualities in the Lord speaks of the (Lord actually having qualities) (as if he has no qualities.)
- Similarly the eye can perceive that milk is white but cannot taste its sweetness, and the tongue can taste sweetness of milk but cannot perceive its white color.
- Just as the mind can understand that milk has all the qualities perceived by all the senses, such as sweetness and whiteness, so bhakti alone can accept that the Lord has all qualities and bhakti also understands the Lord as Brahman.

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- Thus bhakti is the best.
- Even though Kṛṣṇa without qualities as Brahman is non-different from Kṛṣṇa (with qualities), there is unavoidable difference between the form when it manifests qualities and when it does not.
- Thus, the statement about difference is correct. Previously, the example of seeing from far off by other methods and seeing close up by bhakti was given.
- Now seeing the Lord with external senses by other methods and seeing the Lord by the internal (spiritual) sense by bhakti is shown.

Text-200

atra kārīkāḥ –

tat tat śrī-bhagavaty eva svarūpaṁ bhūri vidyate |
upāsanānusāreṇa bhāti tat-tad-upāśake

An explanatory verse (atra kārīkāḥ):

The form of bhagavān (śrī-bhagavaty eva svarūpaṁ)
appears as many (bhūri vidyate). According to the type
of worship (tat tat upāsanā anusāreṇa) various forms
appear to the worshipper (tat-tad-upāśake bhāti).

Text:201-202

yathā rūpa-rasādīnām guṇānām āśrayaḥ sadā |
kṣīrādir eka evārtho jñāyate bahudhendriyaiḥ ||

dr̥śā śuklo rasanayā madhuro bhagavāms tathā |
upāsanābhir bahudhā sa eko 'pi pratīyate ||

Just as (yathā) one substance (eka eva arthah) such as milk (kṣīra ādih) is the shelter of many qualities (guṇānām āśrayaḥ sadā) such as form and taste (rūpa-rasādīnām) as perceived through various external senses (jñāyate bahudhā indriyaiḥ), such as white color by the eye (dr̥śā śuklo) and sweet taste by the tongue (rasanayā madhuro), so bhagavān (tathā bhagavān), though one entity (eko 'pi), appears as many different forms (bahudhā pratīyate) according to the type of worship (upāsanābhir).

Text:203-204

jihvayaiva yathā grāhyam mādhyam tasya nāparaiḥ |
yathā cakṣur-ādīni grhṇanty artham nijam nijam ||
tathānyā bāhya-karaṇa-sthānīyopāsanākhilā |
bhaktis tu cetaḥ sthānīyā tat tat sarvārtha-lābhataḥ ||

As the tongue alone (yathā jihvayā eva) and no other sense (na aparaiḥ) can perceive (grāhyam) the sweet taste (mādhyam) and as the eye or any other sense (yathā cakṣur-ādīni) can perceive (grhṇanty) only its specific sense object (artham nijam nijam), so (tathā) the different types of worship (anyā upāsanā akhilā) depending on the external senses perceive limited aspects of the Lord (bāhya-karaṇa-sthānīya), and bhakti (bhaktis tu) depending on the heart (cetaḥ sthānīyā) perceives all qualities in the Lord (tat tat sarvārtha-lābhataḥ)

Text-205

iti pravara-śāstreṣu tasya brahma-svarūpataḥ |
mādhuryādi-guṇādhikyāt kṛṣṇasya śreṣṭhatocyate

Thus, the best of scriptures (iti pravara-śāstreṣu) explain (ucyate) the superiority of Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇasya śreṣṭhatā) over the Brahman aspect of Kṛṣṇa (tasya brahma-svarūpataḥ) because of his full manifestation of qualities such as sweetness (mādhuryādi-guṇādhikyāt)

Proof for
Kṛṣṇa being superior
to Brahmā.

① tathā ca śrī-daśame
tathāpi bhūman mahimā guṇasya te
viboddhum arhaty amalāntar-ātmabhih
avikriyā svānubhavād arūpato
hy ananya-bodhyātmatayā na cānyathā

Thus the Tenth Canto says:

Nondevotees, however (tathāpi), cannot realize (na viboddhum arhaty). You in Your full personal feature (mahimā guṇasya te). Nevertheless, it may be possible for them to realize Your expansion as the impersonal Supreme by cultivating direct perception of the self within the heart. But they can do this only by a mind devoid of change and capable of focusing on the formless. Only in this way will Your impersonal feature manifest itself to them. SB 10.14.6

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- Two verses are now given to clarify the meaning of the previous quotation from Bhāgavatam (3.32.33 in verse 199).
- O powerful lord (bhūman)! (Though you are endowed with qualities—implied but not directly stated) still (tathāpi) it is possible to understand your glories as the form of Brahman which does not manifest your qualities.
- Just as a reflexive verb such as “rice cooks itself” indicates self-action, in this verse the mind is said to realize the Lord on its own.

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- What is the cause?
- Pure internal functioning is the cause, produced by itself (amalāntar-ātmabhiḥ).
- ?
- But how is it possible to concentrate on the brahman which is devoid of change, by using the internal functions which are subject to change, in order to attain realization?
- This realization does not have the quality of change (avikriyāt).

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- By association with the changeless Brahman, the internal organ also loses all change, like the dissolution of salt in water.

Argument

- “But the mind fixes itself on objects with form.
- How can it concentrate on Brahman which has no form?”
- The mind is capable of concentrating on objects without form.

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- The eye can perceive objects with form, but also can perceive objects without form.
- This is explained in another way.
- He who possess the ātmā, which is self-conscious, is able to perceive that formless Brahman.
- It cannot be otherwise.

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- There is no other way of perceiving it.
- The Brahman can be perceived by the internal organ endowed with these properties.
- It is realized as the substance of knowledge which has no form and no change.
- It is like understanding the sun through the effulgence of the sun.
- It is not difficult.