

Laghu-Bhāgavatāmṛtā

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Part 1: The sweetness of Kṛṣṇa

Chapter 2 :
Description of the Puruṣāvatāras and
Guṇāvatāras

The Guṇāvatāras - Viṣṇu

4 abodes of KṣV within the universe :

according to Viṣṇu-dharmottara

Abode 1

Text 36

1. above Shiva's abode
2. 50 thousand yojanas

Abode 2

Text 37, text 38

1. east of Meru
2. in the centre of salt ocean
3. Lord sleeps there at the end of summer season

Abode 3

Text 39, text 40

1. east of Meru
2. in the centre of milk ocean
3. called Śubhrā
4. Lord sleeps there for the 4 months of caturmasya

Abode 4

Text 41, text 42

1. South of Śubhrā
2. in the centre of milk ocean
3. 25 thousand yojanas
4. called Śvetadvīpa
5. residents shine like the sun and are as beautiful as the moon

Proof for the existence of Śvetadvīpa from Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa:

Text 43

Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa says:

There is a place called Śvetadvīpa surrounded by the milk ocean. It is a hundred thousand yojanas in breadth, very pleasant, and completely golden.

Text 44

Surrounded by the milk ocean, piled with spotless stones, the island is washed by the restless waves which shine like the jasmine flower, the moon or the lotus.

Other opinions on the location of Śvetadvīpa:

Text 45

Moreover in the Viṣṇu Purāṇa and Mokṣa-dharma it is said: Śvetadvīpa lies on the northern shore of the milk ocean.

It should be understood the location will differ in different kalpas.

Text 46

According to Padma Purāṇa, Śvetadvīpa is north of the ocean of sweet water.

Why is Viṣṇu known as sattva-tanu?

Text 47

1. Because Viṣṇu distributes sattva, he is known as sattva-tanu. His avatāras are also known as sattva-tanu for this reason.

2. Or sattva-tanu can mean that the Lord resides in those who have sattva-guṇa bodies in the material world.

sattva-tanu - having a body of sattva

Does that mean Visnu has a body made of material sattva guna?

No.

If that were so, worshipping him would not give liberation

1. He is called sattva-tanu because he distributes sattva.

2. The avatāras of Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu are also called sattva-tanu because they also distribute sattva-guṇa.

Sattva body is Lord's abode... what does this mean?

sattvaṁ yad brahma-darśanam

ŚB 1.2.24

Through sattva one can realize brahman.

When the heart becomes pure and peaceful (in sattva), the Lord reveals himself there through knowledge arising from such purity.

tadā rajas-tamo-bhāvāḥ
kāma-lobhādayaś ca ye
ceta etair anāviddham
sthitaṁ sattve prasīdati

ŚB 1.2.19

As soon as irrevocable loving service is established in the heart, the effects of nature's modes of passion and ignorance, such as lust, desire and hankering, disappear from the heart. Then the devotee is established in goodness, and he becomes completely happy.

By the practice of devotional service, when one crosses the anartha nivṛtti stage, the heart becomes purified of the influence of tamās and rajas and there is predominance of sattva,

for such a person his level of realisation of the Absolute Truth is much more distinct than one who is at the stage of anartha nivṛtti.

That body is Lord's abode means that person (sattva body) is more capable of realising the presence of the Lord.

Lord is present in everyone's heart as Paramatma but the realisation of the presence of Lord is possible only when the influence of rajo and tamo guna is destroyed.