

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Canto One

With the
Sārārtha-darśinī commentary

by

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura

Canto One – Chapter One

Questions by the Sages

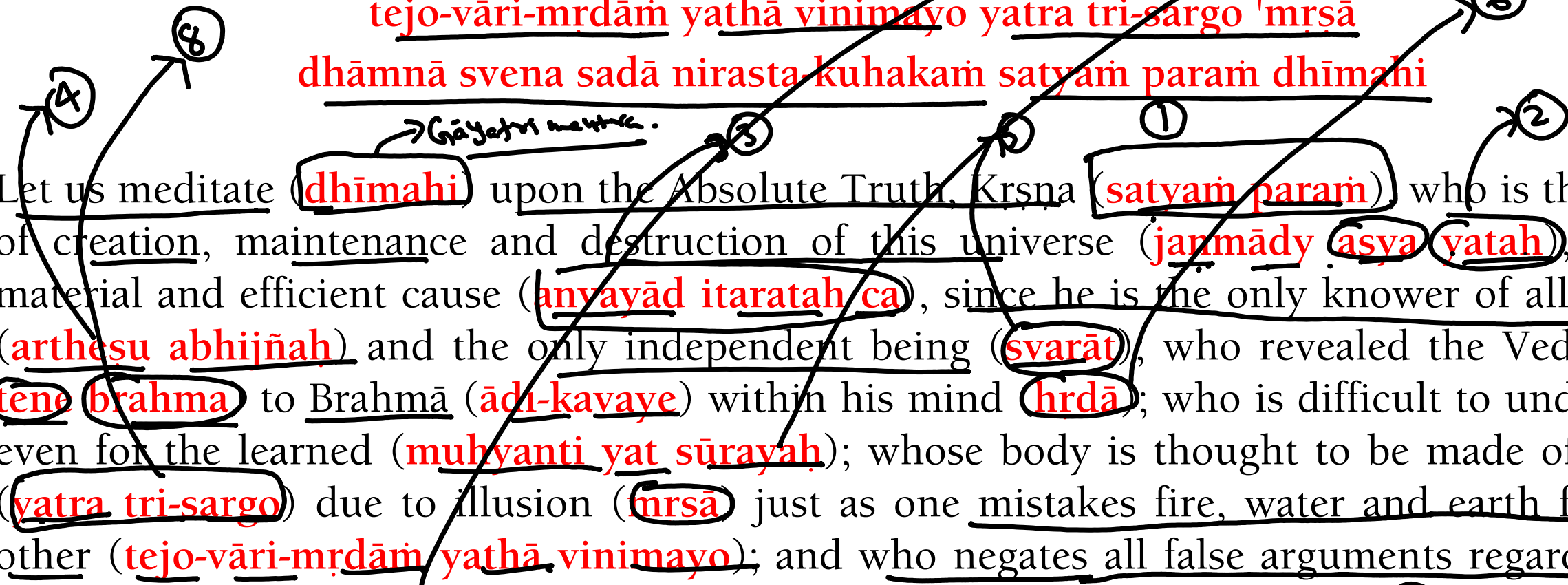
Section – I

Vaśīṣṭh nirdeśya vage
ascertaining the subject
matter of a book.

|| 1.1.1 ||

om namo bhagavate vāsudevāya
janmādy asya yato 'nvayād itarataś cārthesv abhijñāḥ svarāt
tene brahma hrdā ya ādi-kavaye muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ
tejo-vāri-mrdām yathā vinimayo yatra tri-sargo 'mrsā
dhāmnā svena sadā nirasta-kuhakaṁ satyaṁ param dhīmahi

Let us meditate (dhīmahi) upon the Absolute Truth, Kṛṣṇa (satyaṁ param) who is the cause of creation, maintenance and destruction of this universe (janmādy asya yataḥ), as the material and efficient cause (anyayād itarataḥ ca), since he is the only knower of all objects (arthesu abhijñāḥ) and the only independent being (svarāt), who revealed the Vedas (yah tene brahma) to Brahmā (ādi-kavaye) within his mind (hrdā); who is difficult to understand even for the learned (muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ); whose body is thought to be made of matter (yatra tri-sargo) due to illusion (mrsā) just as one mistakes fire, water and earth for each other (tejo-vāri-mrdām yathā vinimayo); and who negates all false arguments regarding his existence (nirasta-kuhakaṁ) by possessing a transcendental, inconceivable form, and by the strength of devotees' experiencing him though his (svarūpa-śakti) (sadā svena dhāmnā).



Explanation-II

Establishing Krsna as the Vastu of
the Book

Let us meditate (dhīmahī) on Kṛṣṇa who is known as Satya (satyaṁ param),

who (yah) — through his abode Mathurā and by revelation of his form to his devotees (svena dhāmnā) — destroys ignorance concerning himself (sadā nirasta-kuhakaṁ);


whose body (yatra), though appearing to be material to the demons (tri-sargo tejo-vāri-mṛdām yathā vinimayo), is not temporary at all (amṛṣā);

who, after appearing in Vasudeva's house (asya janma ādy yatah)
went to Nanda's house (itaratah cā anū ayāt),

→ Vrndaavan

↑ prison house

knowing how to cheat Kamsa and who, knowing the appearance of his devotee's prema in Vraja (arthesv abhijñah), remained there because of his own people (svarāt), though he is in all cases independent (svarāt);



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graph TD; A[Subject matter] --> B[knowing the appearance of his devotee's prema in Vraja]; C[Knowing] --> D[arthesv abhijñah];
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and who revealed (yah tene) that the cows and calves were actually the supreme brahman (brahma) to Brahmā (ādi-kavaye) by his will (hrdā) —

which bewilders even persons such as Nārada (muhyanti yat sūrayah).

It is said in Bhāgavatam:

daśamasya viśuddhy-artham navānām iha lakṣaṇam
varṇayanti mahātmānaḥ śrutenārthena cāñjasā

The great devotees such as Vidura and Maitreya describe
properly (mahātmānaḥ varṇayanti añjasā) the nine topics
(navānām iha lakṣaṇam) in order to impart the highest
knowledge of the tenth topic (daśamasya viśuddhy-artham),
through the words of the scripture and stories to illustrate
their meaning (śrutena ca arthena). (SB 2.10.2)

Since the Supreme Lord is the aṅgi in relation to all other topics, and since Kṛṣṇa is the chief form of the Lord, and since there is praise for his extraordinary qualities, Kṛṣṇa should be indicated in the first verse.

↓
possessor of limbs

Thus a second explanation of the first verse has arisen devoted only to Kṛṣṇa.

This is indicated at the beginning with the description of Kṛṣṇa's birth. (Satyam param dhīmahī is explained as Kṛṣṇa.)

satya-vratam satya-param tri-satyam
satyasya yonim nihitam ca satye
satyasya satyam ṛta-satya-netram
satyātmakam tvām śaraṇam prapannāḥ

O Lord, You never deviate from Your vow (satya-vratam), which is always perfect because whatever You decide is perfectly correct and cannot be stopped by anyone (satya-param). Being present in the three phases of cosmic manifestation-creation, maintenance and annihilation (tri-satyam)—You are the Supreme Truth (satyasya yonim). Indeed, unless one is completely truthful, one cannot achieve Your favor, which therefore cannot be achieved by hypocrites (nihitam ca satye). You are the active principle, the real truth, in all the ingredients of creation, and therefore you are known as antaryāmī, the inner force (satyasya satyam). You are equal to everyone, and Your instructions apply for everyone, for all time (ṛta-satya-netram). You are the beginning of all truth (satyātmakam). Therefore, offering our obeisances, we surrender unto You. Kindly give us protection (tvām śaraṇam prapannāḥ). (SB 10.2.26)

Sañjaya, explaining the derivation of Kṛṣṇa's names, explains why Kṛṣṇa is addressed as Satya:

satye pratiṣṭhitah kṛṣṇah satyam atra pratiṣṭhitam |
satyāt satyam ca govindas tasmāt satyo hi nāmataḥ ||

Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇah) is fixed in the highest truth (satye pratiṣṭhitah), and truth is fixed in him (satyam atra pratiṣṭhitam). Because all truth arises from him (satyāt satyam ca), Govinda (tasmāt govindah) is respected as truth or satya (satyo hi nāmataḥ). (Mahābhārata 5.68.12)

Brahmāṇḍa Purāna also says

satyaṁ śrī-kṛṣṇaṁ dhīmaḥi param brahma narākṛtī

We meditate upon Kṛṣṇa (satyaṁ śrī-kṛṣṇaṁ dhīmaḥi), the supreme brahman (param brahma) with human form (narākṛtī).

And Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad says

tasmāt kṛṣṇa eva paro devas taṁ dhyāyet

Therefore (tasmāt) Kṛṣṇa is the supreme Lord (kṛṣṇa eva paro devah), and one should meditate on him (taṁ dhyāyet).

Let us meditate on Kṛṣṇa, the jīvas' ignorance of whom (kuhakam) is always destroyed by his abode called Mathurā and by his form (svena dhāmnā) which can be seen by mercy even today.

The two causes are illustrated by the following two verses.

ability of Kṛṣṇa to destroy ignorance

mathyate tu jagat sarvaṁ brahma-jñānena yena vā |
tat-sāra-bhūtaṁ yad yasyām mathurā sā nigadyate ||

Mathurā is defined as that place (mathurā sā nigadyate) which excites the whole world (mathyate tu jagat sarvaṁ) as it is non-different from the Lord (implied), or that place (yad yasyām) in which (yena vā) the essence (tat-sāra-bhūtaṁ) of spiritual knowledge (brahma-jñānena) is extracted (mathyate).

ability of @s from to destroy ignorance

śravanāt kīrtanād dhyānāt pūyante 'nte-vasāyinaḥ
tava brahma-mayasyeśa kim utekṣābhimarśinaḥ

O Lord (īśa), even outcastes (ante-vasāyinaḥ) are purified (pūyante) by hearing and chanting your glories and meditating upon you (tava śravanāt kīrtanād dhyānāt), the Absolute Truth (brahma-mayasa). What then to speak of (kim uta) those who see and touch you (ikṣā abhimarśinaḥ)?
(SB 10.70.43)

According to Amara-koṣa, dhāma means house, body, effulgence and influence.

pūrva - pakṣa argument

“Whatever is seen by the material eye is temporary. Because Kṛṣṇa’s form can be seen in the material world it must be temporary.”

The bodies made of the three guṇas (tri-sargaḥ) by the combination of three visible elements earth, water and air, are false (temporary).

But the form which created those ~~three gunas~~ is not false (not temporary).

The transcendental body of the Lord, though seen by the demons with material bodies, is seen by them without realization of its sweetness, just as sugar candy has no sweet taste when eaten by a person afflicted with jaundice.

This is because of the will of the Lord, arising from him inconceivable svarūpa, which accomplished his various pastimes.

The devotees, however, can realize that form of sweetness by
the influence of the Lord's inconceivable mercy.

ānarta-dhanva-kuru-jāṅgala-kaṅka-matsya-
pāñcāla-kunti-madhu-kekaya-kośalārṇah
anye ca tan-mukha-sarojam udāra-hāsa-
snigdheksaṇam nrpa papur drśibhir nr-nāryaḥ

tebhyah sva-vīkṣaṇa-vinaṣṭa-tamisra-dṛgbhyaḥ
kṣemaṁ tri-loka-gurur artha-drśam ca yacchan
śrṇvan dig-anta-dhavalam sva-yaśo 'śubha-ghnam
gītam surair nr̥bhir agāc chanakair videhān

The men and women (**nr-nāryaḥ**) of Ānarta, Dhanva, Kuru-jāngala, Kaṅka, Matsya, Pañcāla, Kuntī, Madhu, Kekaya, Kośala, Arṇa and many other kingdoms (**anye ca**) drank with their eyes (**papur dṛśibhir**) the nectarean beauty of Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotuslike face (**tan-mukha-sarojam**), which was graced with generous smiles (**udāra-hāsa**) and affectionate glances (**snigdha īkṣaṇam**). Simply by glancing (**dṛgbhyaḥ**) at those who came to see him (**tebhyaḥ sva-vīkṣana**), Lord Kṛṣṇa, the spiritual master of the three worlds (**tri-loka-gurur**), delivered them from the blindness of materialism (**vināṣṭa-tamisra**). As he thus endowed them (**yacchan**) with fearlessness (**kṣemaṁ**) and divine vision (**artha-dṛśam**), he heard (**śṛṇvan**) demigods and men (**surair nṛbhir**) singing his glories (**sva-yaśo gītaṁ**), which purify the entire universe (**dig-anta-dhavalam**) and destroy all misfortune (**aśubha-ghnam**). Gradually, he reached Videha (**śanakair videhān agāt**). (SB 10.86.20-21)