

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Canto One

With the
Sārārtha-darśinī commentary

by

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Canto One – Chapter Three

List of the Avatāras

**Kṛṣṇa Is the Source of All
Incarnations**

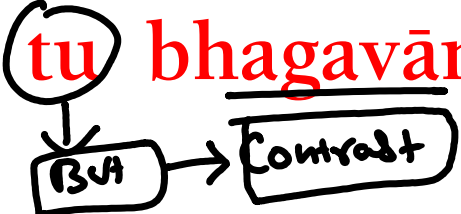
Section – III

Kṛṣṇa is Their fountainhead and is
the Supreme Personality of
Godhead (28-29)

|| 1.3.28 ||

ete cāmśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ
kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam
indrāri-vyākulaṁ lokaṁ
mṛdayanti yuge yuge

All avatāras mentioned (ete) and not mentioned here (ca), who are portions of Mahāviṣṇu (puṁsaḥ aṁśaḥ) or empowered jīvas (kalāḥ), create happiness in the world (mṛdayanti lokaṁ) whenever (yuge yuge) it is afflicted by the demons and their ideas (indrāri-vyākulaṁ). But Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate form of Bhagavān (kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam).



Are all these avatāras equal or are they graded?

This verse answers.

Those avatāras previously described (ete) and those not described (ca), are amśas (Matsya, Kūrma etc.) and some of whom are kalā (Kumāras, Nārada, etc., āveśāvatāras) of the first puruṣa described (Mahā-viṣṇu).

Thus it is said in Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta

jñāna-śakty-ādi-kalayā yatrāviṣṭo janārdanaḥ |
ta āveśā nigadyante jīvā eva mahattamāḥ ||
vaikuṅṭhe'pi yathā śeṣo nāradaḥ sanakādayaḥ |:

Exalted jīvas (jīvā eva mahattamāḥ) empowered by the Lord (yatrāviṣṭo janārdanaḥ) with portions of his powers such as knowledge (jñāna-śakty-ādi-kalayā) are called āveśa forms (ta āveśā nigadyante). Examples existing even in Vaikuntha (yathā vaikuṅṭhe api) are Śeṣa, Nārada and the Kumāras (śeṣaḥ nāradaḥ sanakādayaḥ). (Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta 1.1.18-19)

Padma Purāṇa says:

āviṣṭo bhūt kumāreṣu nārade ca harir vibhuḥ |

The Supreme Lord (harir vibhuḥ) invested his powers (āviṣṭah abhūt) in the Kumāras and Nārada (kumāreṣu nārade ca).

āviveśa pr̥thum devaḥ śaṅkhī cakrī caturbhujah ||

The Lord with four hands (caturbhujah devaḥ) holding the conch and cakra (śaṅkhī cakrī) entered into Pr̥thu (āviveśa pr̥thum). Laghubhāgavatāmṛta 1.4.37

etat te kathitam devi jāmadagner mahātmanah |
śaktyāveśāvatārasya caritam śārṅginah prabhoh ||

O goddess (devi)! The activities (caritam) of the great soul Parāśurāma (jāmadagner mahātmanah), a śaktyāveśāvatāra of the Supreme Lord (prabhoh śaktyāveśāvatārasya), holder of the bow (śārṅginah), has been described (etat te kathitam). 1.4.39

kaler ante ca samprāpte kalkinaṁ brahma-vādinam |
anupraviśya kurute vāsudevo jagatsthitim ||

At the end of Kali-yuga (kaler ante ca samprāpte) Vāsudeva (vāsudevah) enters into (anupraviśya kurute) Kalki (kalkinaṁ), a teacher of spiritual matters (brahma-vādinam), and protects the world (jagatsthitim). Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta 1.4.42

The Kumāras and Nārada are invested with śakti of jñāna and bhakti.
↓
Jñāna śakti
↓
Bhakti śakti

Prthu and others are invested with kriyā-śakti--action.

Some are invested with great powers and others with little power.

Included in the first type with great powers are Kumāras and Nārada.

They are called avatāras.

Others with less power such as Marīci, and the Manus, are called vibhūtis.

But he who was called the twentieth avatāra, Kṛṣṇa is
bhagavān, not an aṁśa.

Nor is he an aṁśī puruṣāvatāra.

He is bhagavān.

The avatārī, bhagavān is the source of the puruṣa was already stated in the verse jagrhe pauruṣam rūpam bhagavān mahad-ādibhiḥ: Bhagavān accepted the form of the puruṣa. (SB 1.3.1)

Thus bhagavān is different from the puruṣa.

It is said:

anuvādam anuktvā tu na vidheyam udīrayet
na hy alabdhaspadam kiñcit kutracit pratitiṣṭhati

One ~~should not state a predicate~~ (na vidheyam udīrayet) before its subject (anuvādam anuktvā), for it cannot thus stand (na hy kutracit pratitiṣṭhati) without proper support (alabdha āspadam kiñcit).
(Ekādaśī-tattva)

Thus kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān means that Kṛṣṇa (the subject) fulfills completely the qualities inherent in bhagavān, the predicate.

It does not mean that Kṛṣṇa is another form of bhagavān.

Thus it means that Kṛṣṇa alone is bhagavān, the basis of every other form.

This is made clear by the word **svayam**.

This means that Kṛṣṇa is superior to the puruṣāvatāra called bhagavān and even to Mahā-nārāyaṇa.

Thus in the Chāndogya Upanisad it is said jyāyānś ca
pūruṣaḥ: the puruṣa is greater than that; sarvaṁ khalv idam
brahma: everything is brahman; yat prāṇā ādityā: the prāṇas
are the Ādityas.

Having said this, everything is summarized by saying kṛṣṇāya
devakī-putrāya: this puruṣa sacrifice is subservient to Kṛṣṇa,
the son of Devakī. (Chāndogya Upaniṣad 3.17.6)

By this it is understood that Kṛṣṇa is superior to the puruṣa.

But Kṛṣṇa is counted among the avatāras, because he appears
in Mathurā and other places situated on the earth planet,
performs pastimes like a human, shows mercy to the people of
the material world, and appears and disappears.

Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad thus says:

sa hovācābja-yonir yo 'vatārāṇām madhye śreṣṭho 'vatārah ko bhavati yena lokās tuṣṭā bhavanti, yaṁ smṛtvā muktā asmāt saṁsārāt taranti | katham āsyāvatārasya brahmatā bhavati

Brahmā said (**sa hovāca abja-yonih**): who is the best among all the avatāras (**yah avatārāṇām madhye śreṣṭho avatārah kah bhavati**), by which all the people are satisfied (**yena lokās tuṣṭā bhavanti**), whom remembering (**yaṁ smṛtvā**), they become liberated from this world (**muktā asmāt saṁsārāt taranti**)? How is this avatāra (**katham asya avatārasya**) the supreme brahman (**brahmatā bhavati**)?

purva - Parśa argument

“But how can you establish that Kṛṣṇa is the complete form of God on the basis of this one statement, **kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam?**”

There are countless statements which refute this such as the following:

yadoś ca dharma-śīlasya nitarām muni-sattama
tatrāmśenāvatīrṇasya viṣṇor vīryāṇi śaṁsa naḥ

O best of munis (~~muni-sattama~~), you have also described the
descendants of Yadu, who were very pious and strictly
adherent to religious principles (yadoś ca nitarām dharma-
śīlasya). Now, if you will, kindly describe (śaṁsa naḥ) the
wonderful, glorious activities of Lord Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa (viṣṇor
vīryāṇi), who appeared in that Yadu dynasty with Baladeva,
His plenary expansion (tatra amśena avatīrṇasya). (SB 10.1.2)

diṣṭyāmba te kukṣi-gataḥ paraḥ pumān
aṁśena sākṣād bhagavān bhavāya naḥ
mābhūd bhayaṁ bhoja-pater mumūrṣor
goptā yadūnām bhavitā tavātmajaḥ

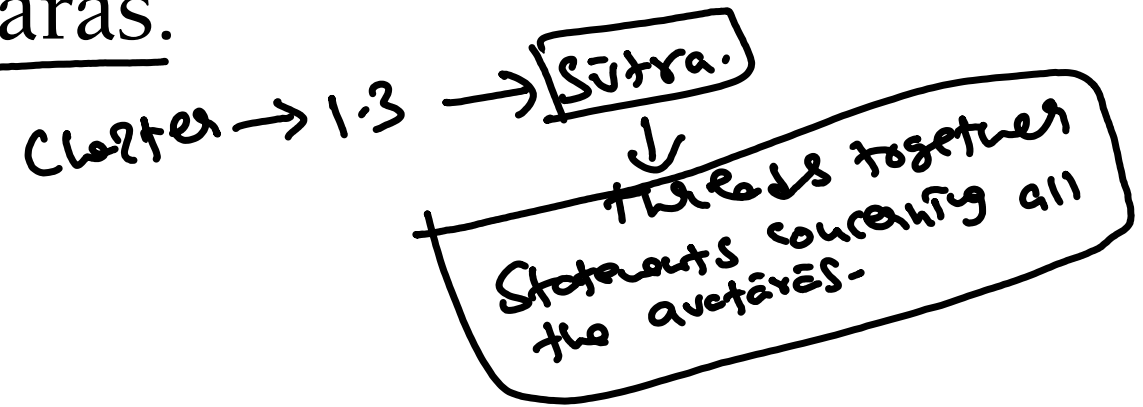
O mother Devakī, by your good fortune and ours (diṣṭyā amba naḥ bhavāya), the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself (sākṣād bhagavān paraḥ pumān), with all His plenary portions, such as Baladeva (aṁśena), is now within your womb (te kukṣi-gataḥ). Therefore you need not fear Kāmsa (mābhūd bhoja-pater bhayaṁ), who has decided to be killed by the Lord (mumūrṣor). Your eternal son, Kṛṣṇa (tavātmajaḥ), will be the protector of the entire Yadu dynasty (yadūnām goptā bhavitā). (SB 10.2.41)

tāv imau vai bhagavato harer amśāv ihāgatau
bhāra-vyayāya ca bhuvah kṛṣṇau yadu-kurūdvahau

↑
Nava - Nārāyaṇā

These two (tāv imau) ~~portions of the Lord~~ (bhagavato harer amśāv) have entered Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna (iha kṛṣṇau āgatau), best of the Yadu and Kuru dynasties (yadu-kurūdvahau) for relieving the earth of its burden (bhuvah bhāra-vyayāya). (SB 4.1.59)

In the beginning of Bhāgavatam, this chapter concerning the mysterious appearance of the Lord (janma guhyaṁ bhagavato, SB 1.3.29) is called a sūtra, since it threads together (sūc) statements concerning all the avatāras.



And in this chapter, ete cāṁśa-kalāḥ puṁśaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam is a paribhāṣā-sūtra, which supplies a general definition for the whole work.

Thus, wherever avatāras are described in the Bhāgavatam,
others should be known as expansions of the puruṣāvatāra,
but Kṛṣṇa should be known as svayam bhagavān.

This conclusion is prevalent everywhere in the Bhāgavatam.

It has been said:

paribhāṣā hy eka-deśasthā sakalam
śāstram abhiprakāśayati yathā veśma-pradīpa

The paribhāṣā statement (paribhāṣā hy), situated in one place (eka-deśasthā), lights up (abhiprakāśayati) the whole scripture (sakalam śāstram), just as a lamp lights up the whole house (yathā veśma-pradīpa).

This sūtra appears once in the work and is not continually repeated.

Though there are millions of statements in the scripture, this sūtra controls them all like a king.

- Contradiction
- ① Paribhāṣā sūtra to correct.
 - ② Let me try to understand everything about the other statement and try to see why I see the contradiction.

Thus statements which contradict the sūtra must be explained so that they agree with the sūtra.

That is because these contrary statements are weak, since they belong to secondary subjects in the work, and because the sūtra's statement is strong, being supported by śruti.

Thus these statements should be harmonized with the sūtra by giving them another meaning, according to the rule

śruti-līṅga-vākya-prakaraṇa-sthāna-samākhyānām
samavāye pāradaurbalyam artha-viprakarṣād

Where there is a combination (samavāye) of direct statements, inference, rules (śruti-līṅga-vākya), discussion, philosophical stances, and interpretations (prakaraṇa-sthāna-samākhyānām), the later statements are considered progressively weaker in authority (pāradaurbalyam), because of their possibility of contrary meaning (artha-viprakarṣād). (Jaiminī-sūtra 3.3.14)

This is not just deference to a rule.

Śrīdhara Svāmī has reconciled things in this way in many places.

Since there are many different avatāras such as Matsya and Kūrma, and Kṛṣṇa himself has two-armed and four-armed forms, and as well displays ages such as kaumāra and kaiśora, and they are all said to be eternal, does that mean that there are many Gods.

No. The Tenth Canto says bahu-mūrty-eka-mūrtikam: he is
one God manifested as many. (SB 10.40.7)

The jīva at different times shows different temporary forms
with less or more power, but the one Supreme Lord who
pervades everything, by his inconceivable energy, can
simultaneously have infinite eternal forms which are not
different from him.

The jīvas show infinite variety simply because there are infinite jīvas.

The Lord shows infinite variety of forms by being one person.

Thus when the jīva sees the Lord he perceives the Lord as if there are many Lords, like jīvas.

The supreme lord, bliss alone, knowledge alone, and all
pervading, manifests aṁśī and aṁśa.

↓
Kṛṣṇa

↓
Ratnas, Varāha

Is it possible for the indivisible Lord to be divided and
subdivided?

Mahā-varāha Purāṇa says:

sarve nityāḥ śāśvatāś ca
dehās tasya parātmanah
hānopadāna-rahitā
naiva prakṛti-jāḥ kvacit

“All the bodies (sarve dehāḥ) of the Supreme Soul (tasya parātmanah) are eternal and unchanging (nityāḥ śāśvatāś ca). They never undergo loss or gain (hāna upadāna-rahitā), and they are never creations of material nature (naiva prakṛti-jāḥ kvacit).

paramānanda-sandohā
jñāna-mātrās ca sarvataḥ
sarve sarva-guṇaiḥ pūrṇāḥ
sarva-doṣa-vivarjitāḥ

“In all conditions (**sarvataḥ**) they are full of the greatest
intense bliss (**paramānanda-sandohā**) and pure
consciousness (**jñāna-mātrās ca**), endowed with all
auspicious qualities (**sarve sarva-guṇaiḥ pūrṇāḥ**) and devoid
of all faults (**sarva-doṣa-vivarjitāḥ**).

This is true, but though the amśa forms are perfect and complete, they are called amśa because they display only various degrees of the lord's qualities such as sweetness, power, and mercy.

According to the particular goal, lesser powers are shown, in the forms known as amśa.

Real completeness means fully displaying all the powers in full.

This takes place in the  amśī.

श्रीशुक उवाच

In Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta it is said:

1.5.90-91

śakter vyaktis tathāvyaktis tārataṃyasya kāraṇam
śaktiḥ samāpi pūryādi-dāhe dīpāgni-puñjayoḥ |
śītādy-ārti-kṣayenāgni-puñjād eva sukhaṃ bhavet

The manifestation and non-manifestation of śakti (śakter vyaktiḥ tathā avyaktiḥ) is the cause of grading the aṃśī and the aṃśa (tārataṃyasya kāraṇam). Though the śakti (śaktiḥ) of the lamp and the bonfire (dīpa agni-puñjayoḥ) is the same (samāpi) in that both can burn down a town (pūryādi-dāhe), only from the bonfire (agni-puñjād eva) one obtains comfort (sukhaṃ bhavet) because it destroys cold and other types of suffering (śīta ādy-ārti-kṣayena).

Thus the difference between different forms because of display of complete or partial features has been experienced by the great realized devotees.

|| 3.8.3 ||

āsīnam urvyām bhagavantam ādyam
saṅkarṣaṇam devam akuṅṭha-sattvam
vivitsavas tattvam ataḥ parasya
kumāra-mukhyā munayo ’nvapṛcchan

One time the sages headed by Sanat-kumāra (kumāra-mukhyā munayah), being philosophically inquisitive (tattvam vivitsavaḥ), with a desire to know the nature of Vāsudeva (parasya bhagavantam ādyam), asked questions to Saṅkarṣaṇa (saṅkarṣaṇam devam anvapr̥cchan) who has indestructible knowledge (akuṅṭha-sattvam), who was situated below Pātālaloka (āsīnam urvyām).

|| 3.8.4 ||

svam eva dhiṣṇyaṁ bahu mānayaṅtaṁ
yad vāsudevābhidham āmananti
pratyag-dhṛtākṣāmbuja-kośam iṣad
unmīlayaṅtaṁ vibudhodayāya

Worshipping the form of Vāsudeva (yad vāsudeva abhidham), his own shelter (svam eva dhiṣṇyaṁ), who is praised by the wise (mānayaṅtaṁ bahu āmananti), Śaṅkarṣaṇa slightly opened (iṣad unmīlayaṅtaṁ) his lotus eyes (ambuja-kośam) concentrated deep in meditation (pratyag-dhṛta akṣa), for giving benefit to the sages (vibudha udayāya).

There is nothing contradictory if there are differences between the amśī and amśa, since the Lord is spiritual substance.

Varāha Purāṇa says svāmśaś cātha vibhinnāmśa iti dvedhāmśa iṣyate: there are two types of amśas, the expansions of the Lord and the jīvas.

Śrīdhara Svāmī says, “Though the forms such as Matsya possess all powers and all knowledge since they are avatāras, according to the circumstances they display certain amounts of knowledge and action, and the Lord enters into the Kumāras, Nārada and others by his expansions or parts of his expansions.

There is an ancient explanatory verse:

nṛsimho jāmadagnyaś ca kalkiḥ puruṣa eva ca |
bhagavattve ca tatrāder aiśvaryaprakāśakāḥ ||
nārado 'tha tathā vyāso varāho buddha eva ca |
dharmāṇām eva vaividhyād amī dharmā-pradarśakāḥ ||
rāmo dhanvantarir yajñah pṛthuh kīrti-pradarśinah |
balarāmo mohinī ca vāmanah śrī-pradhānakāḥ ||
dattātreyāś ca matsyaś ca kumārah kapilas tathā |
jñāna-pradarśakā ete vijñātavyā manīṣibhiḥ ||
nārāyaṇo naraś ceti kūrmaś ca ṛṣabhas tathā |
vairāgya-darśino jñeyās tat-tat-karmānusārataḥ ||
krṣṇah pūrṇa-ṣad-aiśvarya-mādhuryāṇām mahodadhiḥ |
antarbhūta-samastāvatāro nikhila-śaktimān ||

Nṛsimha, Parāśurāma, Kalki, and the puruṣāvatāras show the power of the Lord. Nārada, Vyāsa, Varāha, and Buddha show dharmā, because they preach various paths of dharmā. Rāma, Dhanvantari, Yajña and Prthu display fame. Balarāma, Mohini and Vāmana display beauty. Dattātreya, Matsya, the Kumāras and Kapila display knowledge which should be known by the wise. Nara-nārāyana, Kūrma and Ṛṣabha display detachment by their respective actions.

Kṛṣṇa is the great ocean of complete sweetness and complete display of the six aiśvaryas mentioned in the other forms above.

He contains all avatāras within himself, and is the possessor of all śaktis.

The verse mentions the goal common to all the avatāras.

The avatāras create happiness (**mṛḍayanti**) in the world
whenever (**yuge yuge**) it is afflicted (**vyākulam**) by the demons
(**indrāri**) and their ideas.

|| 1.3.29 ||

janma guhyaṁ bhagavato
ya etat prayato narah
sāyaṁ prātar gṛṇan bhaktyā
duḥkha-grāmād vimucyate

पुरीरेऽ

The pure person (yah etat prayatah narah) who chants (sāyaṁ prātar gṛṇan) with devotion (bhaktyā) the glories of the Lord's appearance (etat bhagavato janmah), which is mysterious (guhyaṁ), becomes free from all sorrows (duḥkha-grāmād vimucyate).

This describes the results of glorifying the avatāras.

Guhyam means very concealed or mysterious.

Gr̥ṇan means “glorifying.”

|| 1.3.30 ||

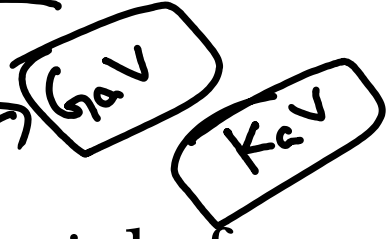
etad rūpaṁ bhagavato
hy arūpasya cid-ātmanah
māyā-guṇair viracitaṁ
mahadādibhir ātmani

This material realm (etad), composed of the material guṇas (māyā-guṇair viracitaṁ) and the elements from mahat-tattva to earth (mahad ādibhih) and with the Paramātmā as its basis (ātmani), is a material form of the Lord (bhagavato rūpaṁ) who has a spiritual form of consciousness (cid-ātmanah) and is devoid of a material form (arūpasya).

“The universal form of the Lord has been recommended as the first type of worship in the Second Canto and other places with such verses as **pātālam etasya hi pāda-mūlam**: Pātāla is the base of his feet. (SB 2.1.26) Why is this not considered an avatāra of the Lord?”

This verse answers.

This material realm, composed of collective and individual universes, is a material form of the Lord who has a spiritual form of consciousness (**cid-ātmanah**), and is devoid of a material form (**arūpasya**).



This material form is composed of the material guṇas and the elements from mahat tattva to earth (**mahādibhih**) situated on the paramātmā as its basis (**ātmani**).

In other words this universal form composed of matter is not counted among the avatāras such as Matsya and Kūrma composed of viśuddha-sattva.

|| 1.3.31 ||

yathā nabhasi meghaugho
reṇur vā pārthivo 'nile
evam draṣṭari drśyatvam
āropitam abuddhibhiḥ

Just as unintelligent people (yathā abuddhibhiḥ) attribute (āropitam) clouds (megha oghah) to be the sky (nabhasi) and particles of dust (pārthivo reṇur vā) are attributed to be the air (anile), so unintelligent people (evam abuddhibhiḥ) see (āropitam) the universe, the visible form of the Lord (drśyatvam) as the Lord (draṣṭari).

To what can this be compared?

Just as a group of clouds are attributed to the sky or particles of dust are attributed to the air, so this universal form is attributed to the Lord.

It is like a man on a pedestal being called “the pedestal.”

The universal form, situated in the Lord is called the Lord.

This is the meaning.

What is seen (**dr̥śyatvam**), what is controlled by the Lord, is attributed to be the seer or the controller, the Lord (**draṣṭari**) who is actually invisible, by foolish people (**abuddhibhiḥ**).

Though sky and air are invisible, we see the sky because it is blue or the air because it is dusty.

The adventitious qualities of cloud and dust which are visible are attributed to be the sky and air which are actually invisible, because they become visible through the clouds and dust.

Thus the meaning here is that the Lord, (visible as the universe), is thus worshipped by the yogīs situated at the beginning stage of practice.