

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

Canto Three

With the

Sārārtha-darśinī commentary

by

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Canto Three – Chapter Five

Maitreya Describes Creation

Vidura's Talks with Maitreya

Section – IV

**Maitreya Rsi described the process
of creation (22-38)**

|| 3.5.22 ||

atha te bhagaval-līlā
yoga-māyorubr̥mhitāḥ
viśva-sthity-udbhavāntārthā
varṇayāmy anupūrvaśaḥ

I will describe to you (te varṇayāmi) the pastimes of the Lord (bhagavat līlā) in creating, maintaining and destroying the universe (viśva-sthiti-udbhava-anta-ārthāḥ), nourished by his energy of māyā (yoga-māya uru-br̥mhitāḥ), in sequence (anupūrvaśaḥ).

First I will begin to describe the pastimes of the puruṣāvatāras in answer to your question in verse 5.

I will describe the subjects of creation, maintenance and destruction, which are made powerful by the Lord's material māyā, a special aspect of the Lord's svarūpa-śakti (yogamāyā).

It is explained in the Nārada-pañcarātra that māyā arises as a ^{mahe-}portion of the yogamāyā.

|| 3.5.23 ||

bhagavān eka āsedam
agra ātmātmanām vibhuḥ
ātmecchānugatāv ātmā
nānā-maty-upalakṣaṇaḥ

Bhagavān (bhagavān), who exists (upalakṣaṇaḥ) in the form of Paramātmā (ātmanām ātmā) and Brahman (vibhuḥ) according to the viewpoint (nānā mati), alone existed before the creation of the universe (eka āsa idam agre), when the desire (ātma icchā) to create bodies of the jīvas (ātmā) was absent (anugatāu).

In order to describe creation, the prior state is first described.

Before the creation of the universe (**idam agre**), Bhagavān, full of six powers, existed alone, since everything was merged in him.

This means that the Lord acted as the adhiṣṭhana-kāraṇa, the basis of everything and that all his energies, which still existed at that time, are considered the effect.

He is the Paramātmā, (**ātmātmanām**), worshipped by the yogīs, and he is the all-pervading Brahman worshipped by the jñānīs (**vibhuḥ**).

He is thus described differently because of the differing views the differing worshippers—bhaktas, yogīs and jñānīs.

Even the śrutis describe this.

Vāsudevo vā idamagra āsīna brahmā na ca śaṅkara: in the beginning, before the creation of the universe Vāsudeva alone existed, and not Brahmā or Śiva.

Eko nārāyaṇa evāsīna brahmā neśāna: Only Nārāyaṇa exists, and not Brahmā or Śiva.

Ātmaivedamagra āsīd: the Lord alone existed in the beginning.

Sadevāsīt: the Lord always existed.

Before the creation, for how long was he alone?

It started from the previous destruction of matter, when there was disappearance (**anugatau**) of the desire to create (**icchā**) bodies for the jīvas (**ātmā**).

|| 3.5.24 ||

sa vā eṣa tadā draṣṭā
nāpaśyad drśyam ekarāt
mene 'santam ivātmānam
supta-śaktir asupta-drk

^{ka}
The one puruṣa (sah), who glances over prakṛti (drśyam draṣṭā), at the beginning of creation (tadā), could not see her (na apaśyat). He, the possessor of māyā (eka-rāt), who was sleeping (supta-śaktih), and the possessor of spiritual consorts, who were awake (asupta-drk), considered himself non-existent without her (mene ātmānam asantam iva).

The puruṣa is certainly (**vai**) the glancer over prakṛti (**draṣṭā**).

At the beginning of creation (**tadā**), he did not see what should be
glanced on for creation, the pradhāna (**dṛśyam**).

He considered himself (**ātmānam**) as if not existing (**asantam**).

This is a poetic convention, like the householder feels non-existent
without a wife.

This can also refer to the collective jīvas who existed only in subtle form (ātmānam) within himself and would later become visible.

Though they existed, he considered them non-existent at that time.

With glancing over prakṛti, it was impossible for the Lord to manifest the worlds (but prakṛti was invisible).

In what state was his dear māyā who was to receive his glance? Māyā (śakti) was sleeping.

A sleeping lover cannot be enjoyed.

But there were many lovers willing to give the Lord bliss who were
awake.

He had many consorts such as Lakṣmī, functions of his cit-śakti
(**asupta-dr̥k**).

However, for creating the universe, the Lord at that time needed the
external energy, māyā-śakti, though she is inferior.

॥ 3.5.25 ॥

sā vā etasya saṁdraṣṭuḥ
śaktiḥ sad-asad-ātmikā
māyā nāma mahā-bhāga
yayedam nirmame vibhuḥ

O great soul (mahā-bhāga)! That energy (sā śaktiḥ), composed of
cause and effect (sad-aṣad-ātmikā), which belongs to the glancing
Lord (etasya saṁdraṣṭuḥ), is called māyā (māyā nāma). By this
energy (yayā) the Lord (vibhuḥ) creates the universe (idam
nirmame).

kaV

By his will, māyā-śakti awoke.

That is explained here.

That energy (sā), certainly (vai) has the form of cause and effect (sad-asad-ātmikā).

By that energy the Supreme Lord (vibhuḥ) creates this universe (idam).

↓ Integration
A Pradhāna
Śānti-Śānti

|| 3.5.26 ||

kāla-vṛttyā tu māyāyām
guṇa-mayyām adhokṣajah
puruṣeṇātma-bhūtena
vīryam ādhatta vīryavān

Bhagavān, lord of Mahā-vaikunṭha (adhokṣajah), in his svāmśa expansion as the puruṣa (ātma-bhūtena puruṣeṇa), full of potency (vīryavān), at a certain moment of time (kāla-vṛttyā), placed the jīvas into māyā (vīryam ādhatta māyāyām) which became agitated by the guṇas (guṇa-mayyām).

Bhagavān, the Lord of Mahā-vaikuṅṭha, the source of the first puruṣa
who is the master of māyā, is shown as the cause of all causes, the
final shelter.

Then the beginning of creation is described.

“With the initial action of time (**kāla-vṛttyā**)” means “at the initial
moment of inhalation and exhalation of the mahā-puruṣa.

Adhokṣaja refers to the lord of Mahā-vaikuṅṭha, Bhagavān.

By his svāmśa portion, the first purusa, the controller of māyā, he placed the jīva-śakti, a semblance of consciousness (vīryam), in māyā, who was enjoyed from a distance by his glance.

mama yonir mahad brahma tasmin garbham dadhāmy aham: the great expanse of prakṛti is my womb and in that womb, I place the seed of all jīvas. (BG 14.3)

In the Gītā verse garbham refers to the mass of jīvas.

Śrīdhara Svāmī and Madhusūdana Sarasvatī explain it in this way: at the time of creation, I combine the jīvas who were merged in me at pralaya and attached to ignorance, lust and karma with the field meant for enjoying.

This action takes place because without the combination of prakṛti with the jīva, creation of the universe does not take place.

The Viṣṇu Purāṇa explains yayā kṣetrajñāśaktiḥ sa tāratamyena vartate: the jīva or kṣetra-jña is surrounded by this prakṛti in various degrees.

[Note: viṣṇuśaktiḥ parā proktā jñākhyā tathāparā /
avidyākarmasamjñānyā tṛtīyā śaktiriṣyate s
yayā kṣetrajñaśaktiḥ sāvēṣṭitā nṛpasarvagā ViP_6,7.61-62]

Because the jīva-śakti enters māyā-śakti, it becomes dependent on
māyā-śakti.

However, because there are unlimited jīvas, there are unlimited jīvas
who do not enter into māyā.

Such jīvas, like Visvaksena and others, are nitya-siddha, whether in manifested or unmanifested condition.

The word vīryavān indicates the Lord's capacity to place the jīvas in prakṛti.

It is well known among the common people that strong proof of a man's continued potency (vīryam) is his ability to impregnate a woman.

|| 3.5.27 ||

tato 'bhavan mahat-tattvam
avyaktāt kāla-coditāt
vijñānātmāma-deha-stham
viśvam vyañjams tamo-nudah

Impelled by time (tatah kāla-coditāt), from the invisible prakṛti (avyaktāt) arose mahat-tattva (mahat-tattvam abhavat), composed of knowledge, in sattva-guṇa (vijñāna-atmā). This manifests the universe (viśvam vyañjan) situated within itself (ātma-deha-stham), and destroys ignorance (tamah-nudah).

Among the twenty-three divisions of māyā which will appear by the influence of cause and effect, caused by the addition of consciousness through the power of the Lord, mahat-tattva first appears.

Pradhāna

From māyā (avyaktāt), impelled by time, undergoing transformation necessary for creation by the influence of time, mahat-tattva arose.

Mahān (without the word tattva) is then described: it is composed of knowledge (vijñānātmā), by predominance of sattva.

It is the form of excellent knowledge.

It exists in partial form as citta in all bodies.

It reveals (**vyañjayan**) the universe situated in its body, just as a seed sprouts and then manifests as a tree.

It removes darkness of ignorance caused by pralaya.

It should be understood (though not mentioned here) that it then becomes sūtra-tattva, differentiated from mahat-tattva by the kriya-śakti, with a predominance of rajas.