

TEXTS 45-46: THOUGH ETERNAL, ALL-PERVADING & INVISIBLE, THE DEVOTEES CAN SEE THE LORD BY HIS MERCY

LESSON 11 THEMES

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TEXTS 45-46: THOUGH ETERNAL, ALL-PERVADING & INVISIBLE, THE DEVOTEES CAN SEE THE LORD BY HIS MERCY

TEXT 45: THE LORD'S BODY IS ETERNAL & ALL-PERVADING

- Key verses with Śrīdhara Svāmī's comments (8.6.8-9; 8.3.24; 8.3.30)
- The verses 8.6.8-9 are from Brahmā's prayers to Lord Viṣṇu ⇒ spoken following Indra having puffed up by his opulence and then arrogantly offended Durvāsā Muni, who in turn cursed him to lose all his opulence and heavenly kingdom.

TEXT 46: THOUGH THE LORD'S FORM IS NOT MATERIAL, THUS INVISIBLE, CAN BE SEEN BY HIS DEVOTEES

- Key verses from SB (10.64.26) and MB

अजात-जन्म-स्थिति-संयमाय-अगुणाय निर्वाण-सुख-अर्णवाय
अणोर अणिम्ने अपरिगण्य-धाम्ने महा-अनुभावाय नमो नमस्ते

“I offer repeatedly bow down to You, who are most exalted, who have never been subject to birth, continuance or destruction, who is w/out material qualities, but full of auspicious qualities as Bhagavān, whose ocean of bliss is greater than liberation, who is Paramātmā, smaller than an atom, and who has an immeasurable form.” [8.6.8]

अनाविराविरासेयं नाभूताभूदिति ब्रुवन् ब्रह्माभिप्रैति नित्यत्वविभुत्वे भगवत्तनौ

“Brahmā establishes that the Lord’s body is eternal and all-pervading by saying “It is not that the Lord’s body did not exist previously and has appeared now, but it existed before and has only now become visible.” [*Bhāvārtha-dīpikā* 8.6.8]

- Dhruva Mahārāja also confirms this [4.9.10]
- The Lord’s form is “अणोर अणिम्ने, or finer than the atom,” and “अपरिगण्य-धाम्ने, or immeasurable” ⇒ By His supreme opulence, or inconceivable magnificence (महानुभावाय), His form is the basis of all measurement. This unique feature of His form should also be understood. [JīvaG]

रुपं-तव-एतेत पुरुष-ऋसभ-इज्यं श्रेयो अर्थिभिर वैदिक-तान्त्रिकेण
योगेन धातः सह नस-त्रिलोकान् पश्यामि अमुश्मिन्न-उ ह विश्व-मूर्तौ

“O Lord! O Supreme Person! This form of Yours is worthy of worship by all seekers of ultimate good, by the means described in the Vedas or the Tantras. O Lord, O Creator, in this universal form of Yours I clearly see us (gods) along with the three planetary systems.” [8.6.9]

स वै न देवासुर-मर्त्य-तिर्यङ्ग न स्त्री न षण्ढो न पुमान् न जन्तुः
नायं गुणः कर्म न सन् न चासन नेषेधशेषो जयताद-अशेषः

“He is neither a demigod, nor a demon; neither a human being, nor a lower creature. He is not female, male, eunuch or an embodied being of any kind. He is not a constituent quality of nature nor the mechanism of action; neither is He cause or effect. He is unlimited and remains when everything is negated. May He be ever glorious.” [8.3.24]

एवं गजेन्द्रं उपवर्णित-निर्विशेषं ब्रह्मादयो विविध-लिङ्गभिदाभिमानाः
नैते यदोपसस्रुपुर निखिलात्मकत्वात् तत्राखिलामरमयो हारिराविरासीत्

“Because Gajendra, the king of the elephants, had described the Absolute in non-specific terms, the demigods, headed by Brahmā, who identify themselves with particular names and forms, did not come to his aid. At that moment, Śrī Hari, the embodiments of all the demigods, appeared there, since He is the Self of them all.” [8.3.30]

- The Lord is absolutely free from all material limitations. This does not mean, however, that He has no form or personality. To further clarify this, JīvaG cites these the two relevant verses from Gajendra's prayers to the Lord [8.3.24 & 8.3.30]
 - Gajendra mentions no names or personal features of the Lord, as if apparently he was praying to unqualified Brahman, but in reality he prayed for the Supreme Person.
 - Hence, Lord Viṣṇu appeared and severed the crocodile's head with His discus. This indicates that Bhagavān is free from all material designations.
 - The Lord is neither the modes of material nature nor their effect.
 - However, He is still a person devoid of material forms ⇒ the significance of **नेषेधशेषो** ⇒ And yet, by His grace, He can be seen by His unalloyed devotees [**TEXT 46**]

स त्वं कथं मम विभो 'क्षिपथः परात्मा योगेश्वरैः श्रुति-द्रशामल-हृदिविभाव्यः
साक्षादधोक्षज उरु-व्यवसनान्ध-बूद्धेः स्यान् मे 'नुद्गुश्य इह यस्य भवापवर्गः

“O all-pervading Lord! You are the Transcendental Self, contemplated through the eye of the Upaniṣads by the masters of yoga in their pure hearts. How is it that You, who are beyond sense perception, have become visible to my eyes when my intellect is so blinded by deep attachment? You should be seen here only by one who is liberated from material bondage.” [10.64.26]

- King Nṛga, the son of king Ikṣvāku of the Sun Dynasty, also describes the Lord’s imperceptible nature as Paramātmā.
- “This is most astonishing that despite You being all-pervading have now become visible to my eyes and are being directly perceived by me. Only those who are free from material bondage should be able to see You. Owing to the material misery of this lizard body, my intelligence has been blinded; thus, Your appearance before me is highly surprising.”

- “Although the Lord is always invisible, He can be seen by His own power, Without that power, who could ever see the immortal Supreme Lord, who is the Supreme Self of all beings?”
(*Nārāyaṇādhyātma*)
- Bhagavān’s mercy is the only reason that this power is activated (श्रुती-शास्त्र)
- Kṛṣṇa says to Nārada in *Mahābhārata*, “You should not think that just as other objects have forms and thus visible, this body of Mine is similarly visible just because it has form \Rightarrow I could disappear in a moment if willed it.”
- In an assembly, the Lord could allow Himself to be visible to only those He favors, while to others he may remain invisible.

- A doubt may occur: The eyes and other senses of all material beings are material and can only perceive material objects. Indeed, Brahmā designed the senses in that way. As such, if Gajendra saw the Lord, then His body must be material. Moreover, if He is all-pervading, He cannot be visible, and vice versa. Objects that are subatomic in size also cannot be seen by human eyes (अणोर अणिम्ने).
- JīvaG explains that although the form of the Lord is within, it can be made visible by His mercy.
- “I, who am the Supreme Self (Paramātmā) and the most beloved of all, am attainable for those established in truth only through unalloyed devotion undertaken with full faith. Moreover, *bhakti* performed with exclusive fixation upon Me purifies even the outcast dog-eaters.” [Krsna to Uddhava, 11.14.21]
- **How do we understand then that when Krsna appeared on this planet, He was visible to practically everyone? Any volunteer care to answer this question, before I reveal mine?**

TEXTS 47-48: HIS NAME, FORM, ACTIONS & ATTRIBUTES ARE TRANSCENDENTAL

- Having already established that Bhagavān’s forms are not material, JīvaG now explains that so are the Lord’s other features [The prayers of Gajendra, 8.3.8]

न विद्यते यस्य च जन्म कर्म वा न नामरूपे गुणदोष एव वा
तथापि लोकाप्यय-सम्भवाय यः स्वमायया तानि अनुकालमृच्छति

“Bhagavān has no birth, action, name, form, virtues or vices. However, for the purpose of creating and destroying this material world, He accepts these perpetually by His internal potency.”

- “Because the Lord is endowed with His supreme magnificence, He is called “**विरुद्धार्थ**,” or one who has contradictory qualities. But although all opposing qualities exist in Him, one should never assume Him to have defects. All the virtues, even contradictory ones, exists in Him.”
[*Kūrma-Purāṇa*]
- The senses of a dead body are not actually the senses, but just their respective seats. They are subtle; though residing within the gross body, they are beyond sense perception. Since the Lord never leaves His body, there is no possibility for Him to take conventional birth.
 - He is not the result of conception involving a male sperm fertilizing a female egg ⇒ neither male, female or hermaphrodite.
- *Karma* = endeavor to fulfill one’s desires ∴ the Lord is free from such *karma* because He never has any material desires to fulfill.
- He makes rules, yet He is beyond them. He is always in His *svarūpa*.

- Possible doubt: While Gajendra says that the Lord has no attributes or defects [गुणदोष], but He accepts them perpetually [अनुकालमृच्छति], implying that He too accepts defects.
- JīvaG explains that the Lord is transcendental to the material *guṇas* ⇒ there is no possibility of Him accepting any material quality, good or bad. ∴ In His earthly pastimes, He enacts human-like pastimes displaying apparent defects from the material viewpoint. But there can be no material defects in Him ⇒
- स्वमायया, or His internal potency—external *māyā* cannot influence Him. However, by His *yoga-māyā*, or internal potency, He performs Human-like pastimes, though He is not an ordinary human being.
 - “The Lord took shelter of the semen (*virya*) of the sage Kardama.” [3.24.6] JīvaG explains this to mean that the Lord came under the powerful influence (*virya*) of the sage’s *bhakti*—The word “*virya*, or vitality ” doesn’t necessary mean only semen.

- Just as Kṛṣṇa’s “birth” is transcendental and eternal, so are His names—non-different from Him
 - His names may convey an attribute He possesses.
 - If the Lord’s name is transcendental, how can it be chanted with our material tongue? JīvaG defends by saying that the holy name is not vibrated with the tongue. It is self-manifest. Bharata Mahārāja, even in the body of a deer when faced with death, chanted the names of Hari (normally a deer has no capability to articulate sound). [5.14.45]
 - If the holy name is so powerful and glorious, then why do people in general not feel its potency, even after daily chanting thousands of times over many years? The chanting must be free from the offenses, which displeases the Lord, especially at the time of service, and against a Vaiṣṇava.
- His body is all-spiritual, and is constituted purely of consciousness and is non-different from Him. [10.3.20-21]

TEXT 48: THE LORD'S SENSES ARE TRANSCENDENTAL

- The Vedic verses describing the Lord as not having hands or feet are in reference to Him with an infinite form of self-manifesting bliss. The personified Vedas establish that the statement does not intend that the AT is formless and unqualified:

त्वं अकरणः स्व-राड अखिल-कारक-शक्ति धरस्
तव बलिम उद्धहन्ति समदन्ति अजयानिमिषाः
वर्षभुजो 'अखिल-क्षिति-पतेर इव विश्वसृजो
विदधति यत्र ये त्व अधिक्रता भवतश् चर्किताः

“Though You have no material senses, You are the self-effulgent sustainer of everyone’s sensory powers. The demigods and material nature herself offer You tribute, while also

enjoying the tribute offered them by their worshipers, just as subordinate rulers of various districts in a kingdom offer tribute to their lord, the ultimate proprietor of the land, while also enjoying the tribute paid them by own subjects. In this way the universal creators faithfully execute their assigned services out of fear of You.”

[10.87.28]

यत् काय एष भुवन-त्रय संनिवेशो यस्येन्द्रियैस तनु-भृतां उभयेन्द्रियाणि
ज्ञानं स्वतः श्वसनतो बलम ओज ईहा सत्वादिभिः स्थिति-लयोद्भवः आदिकर्ता

“Though His senses arise the twofold (working- and knowledge-gathering senses) senses of all beings, He Himself is consciousness. His breadth is the source of bodily strength, sensory power and the actions of all embodied beings.” [11.4.4]

- Alternative explanation by JīvaG: “Although You are the self-effulgent upholder of everyone’s sensory power (अखिल-कारक-शक्ति-धरस्), You are w/out any senses (अकरणः).”
- Why? Because You are supremely independent (स्व-राड). And because Your magnificence is supremely distinguished beyond all, the demigods, headed by Indra, and even the higher dimensional beings worthy of their worship, such as Brahmā, also carry their offerings to You upon their heads.”
- The Lord is not only the fountainhead of potency for all the senses, but He is the controller of their deities as well.
- The other meaning of अकरणः (w/out senses): Paramātmā, present in everyone’s hearts, witnesses directly, w/out depending on the material senses of the Jīvas’ body-mind, and hence the Supersoul is अकरणः
- Next, JīvaG will further explain that the Lord’s senses are transcendental because they are different from the material senses.

TEXTS 49: HIS BODILY LIMBS ARE NON-MATERIAL

Rukmiṇī devī speaks:

त्वक-शमश्रु-रोम-नख-केश-पिनद्धम् अन्तर मांसास्थि-रक्त-क्रमि-विट-कफ-पीत्त-वातं
जीवच-छवम भजति कान्त-मतिरविमूढा या ते पदाब्ज-मकरन्दं अजिग्रहती स्त्री

“This human bod, which is covered with skin, moustaches, nails, and hair on the body and head, and which is filled with flesh, bones, blood, parasites, feces, phlegm, bile, and wind, is a living corpse. Only a foolish woman who has never relished the fragrance of the honey of Your lotus feet would serve a husband who has such a body.” [10.60.45]

- She points out that the limbs and body of Bhagavān are distinct from the material limbs described here. Even His hair is *sat-cit-ānanda*. It is only through pronounced bewilderment (विमूढा) one would consider various foul odors emanating from the body of everyone to be beautiful—compared to the state of intoxication, under the influence of which, a man can take pleasure even in lying in the gutter.

- Finally, JīvaG offers a Vedic logic (*anumāna*) that the Lord has a body, and that, furthermore, it is eternal and transcendental.
 1. Proposition: Bhagavān must have form.
 2. Reason: Because He is the creator, and a possessor of knowledge, will and the capacity for action.
 3. Universal proposition: Whoever creates must have a body (ex: a potter)
 4. Application: Bhagavān created the universe.
 5. Conclusion: Therefore, He must have form.

- Same logical approach to prove that His body is spiritual and not material
 1. Proposition: Bhagavān's form is eternal.
 2. Reason: Because it is His instrument.
 3. Universal proposition: Whatever serves as Bhagavān's instrument, such as His knowledge, is eternal.
 4. Application: Bhagavān's body is His instrument in creation.
 5. Conclusion: Bhagavān's body is eternal.

TEXTS 50: CONTRADICTIONARY STATEMENTS RECONCILED

- In Vedic literature, there appears to be a dispute or controversy re: the Absolute, either affirming (*asti-iti—yoga*) or negating (*nāsti-iti—sāṅkhya*) the existence of name and form. This is logically inconsistent.
- JīvaG, nevertheless, shows how both these apparently opposing Vedic statements in reality describe one and the same Bhagavān. The goal of both of these paths is the same. There is no contradiction between them, only the means taken is different.
- JīvaG cites two key verses from Dakṣa's *Haṁsa-guhyā* prayers (6.4.32-33), and a verse spoken by Dhruva Mahārāja (4.9.13) confirms this reconciliation in the same manner.

अस्तीति नास्तीति च वस्तु-निष्ठयोर एक-स्थयोर भिन्न-विरुद्ध-धर्मणोः
अवेक्षितं किञ्चन योग-सान्ख्योः समं परं ह्यनुकूलम् बृहत् तत्
यो अनुग्रहार्थां भजतां पाद-मूलम अनामो-रूपो भगवान अनन्तः
नामानि रूपाणि च जन्म-कर्मभिर भजे स मह्यं परमः प्रसीदतु

“The adherents of *yoga* and *sāṅkhya* are intent on the Truth, which is One and the same Entity for both, but they attribute different and opposing characteristics to it, either by affirming or negating (its attributes). They both see that same something, which is transcendental, favorable (to their understanding) and (supremely) great. To bless those who worship His lotus feet, the unlimited Lord, who is complete with six opulences and devoid of material name and form, has assumed name and form along with His birth and activities. May that Transcendental One be gracious upon me.” [6.4.32-33]

- Dakṣa resolves these seemingly irreconcilable attitudes by stating that the Lord’s name and form are *para*, or transcendental. This means that the Lord’s name and form are different both from those accepted by the followers of *yoga* (those related to the Lord’s material universal form) and those rejected by the followers of *sāṅkhya*. The Lord is devoid of material name & form (अनामो-रूपो) but manifests transcendental name and form out of mercy for His devotees.

तिर्यङ्ग-नग-द्विज-सरीसृप-देव-दैत्य-मर्त्य-आदिभिः परिचितं सद-असद-विशेषं
रूपं स्थविष्ठं अज ते महद-आदि-अनेकं नातः परं परं वेद्मि न यत्र वादः

“O unborn Supreme Lord! I am able to know only this gross cosmic form that is full of animals, trees, mountains, birds, reptiles, demigods, demons, human beings and so on, and composed of many elements, like *mahat*, all intertwined in a chain of cause and effect. But until now, I did not know what lies beyond all this, wherein all controversies find resolution.” [4.9.13]

- Dhruva Mahārāja said that everything is properly reconciled if one considers the personal aspect of the Lord, which is the highest manifestation of the Absolute—नातः परं परं वेद्मि न यत्र वादः