# Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā

## The Hymn of the Creator

with commentaries by

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura



Translation & Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

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&

*Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī*

by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Translation & Annotations

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# Introduction

The *Brahma-saṁhitā*, Brahmā's hymn in praise of Govinda, occupies a unique place within the sacred literature of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition. It describes how, at the beginning of creation, Brahmā appeared from the lotus arising from Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu's navel. Confused and seeking to understand his purpose and the source of everything, he received divine instruction, performed austerity and meditation, and ultimately attained direct vision of Govinda in His transcendental form, whereupon he offered prayers in glorification.

The episode unfolds at the dawn of the creation of the fourteen worlds. The secondary creator beholds the primary creator and ultimate source of everything and exults in wonder, offering praise in some of the most exquisite Sanskrit poetry known to humankind, still chanted today by devotees throughout the world. Thus the text is not merely a philosophical treatise but a record of divine revelation born from devotional realization.

Brahmā's prayers were among the favorites of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, who called them the *Cintāmaṇi Prayers* and regularly sang them as a devotional practice. He knew them by heart and frequently quoted them in his lectures and conversations.

Although only the Fifth Chapter of the *Brahma-saṁhitā* is now extant, its verses contain a philosophical and poetic vision of extraordinary depth, elucidating the nature of the Absolute Truth, the origin of all worlds, the mystery of divine beauty, the spiritual realm of Goloka, and the eternal form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Govinda, the primeval Lord and cause of all causes.

For centuries, the Fifth Chapter of the *Brahma-saṁhitā* remained outside the purview of Vaiṣṇava literature. It was Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu who, during His travels in South India, discovered a manuscript at the Ādi-keśava temple and recognized it as a text of immense philosophical importance. From that time onward, it became treasured among Vaiṣṇavas as a concise yet profound expression of the deepest philosophical conclusions.

The principal commentaries presented in this edition are Jīva Gosvāmī's (1513–1598) *Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā* ("The Commentary That Points the Way")

and Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's (1838–1914) *Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī* ("The Illuminating Commentary on the *Brahma-saṁhitā*"). Jīva Gosvāmī's penetrating analysis reveals the philosophical structure underlying the verses, while Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's Bengali commentary, published in 1897, builds on his explanations, providing Bengali translations of the verses and further illuminating observations.

The first English edition of Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's *Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī* was published by the Gauḍīya Math in 1932 under the direction and supervision of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura. Its language exemplifies a highly formal, Victorian-influenced philosophical English, characteristic of some early twentieth-century Indian intellectual writing under British education. This register is marked by complex, multiclause sentences; inverted syntax that often follows the original Sanskrit or Bengali word order; archaic pronouns and verb constructions; and a specialized philosophical vocabulary employing terms such as "infinitary aspect" and "regulatrix," which even many native English speakers find difficult to understand.

The work was later republished by the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust. In the BBT edition, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī's highly technical and sometimes difficult English prose was left untouched in accordance with Śrīla Prabhupāda's instruction, because he was concerned that grammatical or stylistic editing might inadvertently alter the meaning. As a result, the text has remained difficult for many modern readers.

When I translated this work into German twenty years ago, it was an extremely challenging assignment. Sometimes I spent hours pondering a single sentence, trying to determine its meaning and how to express it in my own language. At that time, I wished I had access to the original Bengali text for comparison.

Today, the situation is very different. Both Jīva Gosvāmī's Sanskrit commentary and Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's Bengali commentary are readily accessible, and digital translation tools have improved greatly. Such tools remain dependent upon human supervision, careful source checking, and specialist knowledge, especially when the subject is as complex as Vaiṣṇava philosophy, but they can be valuable aids in comparative translation work.

For this edition of the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, I used five different digital tools to assist in producing and comparing preliminary renderings of Jīva Gosvāmī's and Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's commentaries. I then checked the translations against the original Sanskrit and Bengali, compared alternative renderings and existing translations, examined the use of philosophical terminology, and revised the English for accuracy, consistency, and readability. Throughout this process, the original Sanskrit and Bengali texts remained the final authority.

Sanskrit narration moves freely between past and present tenses, and Jīva Gosvāmī's *Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā* is highly technical and at times cryptic, often presupposing considerable philosophical knowledge of other Vaiṣṇava Scriptures.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's later *Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī* makes these subjects more accessible by explaining them in greater detail. He not only comments upon the verses but also provides Bengali renderings that sometimes expand the terse Sanskrit by naming implicit referents or incorporating explanatory interpretation. For example, his Bengali rendering of Verse 5 explicitly names what the Sanskrit indicates only by number: the four expansions, the four goals of life, the four *Vedas*, and other groups.

This edition distinguishes carefully between translation and explanation. Sanskrit verses are extraordinarily condensed, and natural English sometimes requires the explicit expression of a grammatical object or referent that remains implicit in Sanskrit. A term such as *sahasra-sūḥ* in Verse 11, for example, literally means "begetting thousands"; in context, the translation supplies "living beings," a referent confirmed by the commentarial tradition. Such supplements have been kept to what the grammar and immediate context support. Interpretative explanations, however, have not been silently incorporated into the translation but have been placed in the commentaries or Annotations. The word-for-word section preserves the lexical structure of the original, allowing the reader to see clearly both the wording of the text and the basis of the English translation. Where a significant textual or interpretative issue requires further explanation, it is discussed separately.

Śrīla Prabhupāda explained to us translators that there are two approaches to translation: a strictly literal rendering and *bhāvārtha*, which seeks to convey

the intended meaning. He frequently employed *bhāvārtha* in his own translations, supplying what the compressed Sanskrit leaves unstated when this was necessary to communicate the intended sense. One of many examples occurs in Text 18 of the Second Chapter of the First Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, where he translates *nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā*, literally "by constantly serving the *bhāgavata*," as: "By regular attendance in classes on the *Bhāgavatam* and by rendering of service to the pure devotee..."

In the present edition, however, I have sought wherever possible to keep such interpretative expansion visibly distinct from the translation itself by placing fuller explanation in the commentaries or annotations. The aim has been to translate faithfully before interpreting, while still producing English that can be read naturally and understood without unnecessarily reproducing the compressed structure of the original languages.

My purpose in presenting both commentaries together in a fresh translation, along with annotations, is to make the *Brahma-saṁhitā* accessible to a wider audience. The value of this text can hardly be overestimated. As Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes in his commentary to Verse 28: "When all the statements of the *Vedas* became manifest within Brahmā, he composed this hymn using those utterances that constitute the essence of all the *Vedas*. Because this hymn fully contains *vaiṣṇava-siddhānta*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught it to His devotees. Therefore, readers should daily recite and relish this hymn with the greatest care."

The verses of the *Brahma-saṁhitā* invite the reader into a vision of reality in which consciousness, beauty, love, and transcendence are united in the most exquisite way. The Absolute Truth is not presented here as ultimately an impersonal force, but as the supremely beautiful person, eternally youthful, playing upon His flute amid the forests of Goloka and surrounded by loving devotees.

This edition is also conceived as a visual presentation of the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. Each verse is accompanied by a color illustration intended to give visual form to its descriptions of creation, the manifestations of the Divine, the spiritual realm of Goloka, and the beauty and pastimes of Govinda. These images are not intended as substitutes for the text, but as contemplative aids, inviting the reader to dwell more deeply upon its philosophical vision.

The book concludes with *Govinda, the Primeval Lord*, a selection of verses containing the refrain *govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*, adapted into English poetry and set to music. In this final section, too, each poetic rendering is accompanied by a corresponding full-color illustration. The song itself is available on www.spiritualsound.space, allowing these celebrated prayers to be approached not only through study and contemplation, but also through poetry and sound.

Whether approached devotionally, philosophically, or poetically, the *Brahma-saṁhitā* rewards deep contemplation. It is my hope that this work may help modern readers encounter something of the wonder experienced by Brahmā himself when, after his long quest for understanding, he finally beheld Govinda, the enchanting primeval Lord.

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami
April 30, 2026
Nṛsiṁha-caturdaśī, the Advent of Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva

# Feelings of Appreciation

*All Glories to Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga*

## Realization of One Who Has Been Attracted

It is evident that prior to Śrī Gaurasundara's discovery, the propagation of the *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā* was not present within Āryāvarta.[1] This is what is being revealed. In Āryāvarta, it was instead the Naimiṣa literature, the *Sātvata-saṁhitā*[2], that was widely circulated. The word *brahma* refers to both the *Veda* and the ultimate reality established by the *Veda*. That reality established by the *Veda* is the Supreme Person (Puruṣottama). Wherever the *apauruṣeya* sound of revelation is employed to negate matter without aiming at the Supreme Person, such realization remains situated only in a secondary, indirect capacity.

Four-headed Brahmā, having abandoned inquiry into the non-self within the *apauruṣeya saṁhitās*, attained within his heart the teachings of devotional service to the Supreme Lord, Bhagavān Himself.

Those teachings were expressed in one hundred chapters as the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. Among them, this Fifth Chapter has become especially worshipable for the Gauḍīyas because it is supremely beneficial for the *jīva*. Particularly according to the understanding of the Brahma-sampradāya, the essential truth of reality was revealed through divine grace within the original four verses *(catuḥ-ślokī)* of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

The Supreme Being known as Puruṣottama must never be placed upon the same level as ordinary worldly persons. The distinction is this: Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord of *prakṛti*, is the controller of material nature, whereas the *jīva* is subordinate to nature. Thus, in relation to the realization of Bhagavān, the

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[1] An ancient Sanskrit geographical and cultural term referring to "The land of the Āryas," the sacred heartland of Vedic civilization in India.

[2] *Sātvata-saṁhitā* is an epithet for the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, a usage rooted in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.7.6, where Vyāsadeva is described as having compiled the *sātvata-saṁhitā*. It is called "Naimiṣa literature" because the *Bhāgavatam* was first spoken by Sūta Gosvāmī to the sages assembled at Naimiṣāraṇya.

term *apauruṣeya* is used only with reference to the *jīva*'s material identity as a person.

The mention of the divine abode *(dhāma)* found in the opening verse of the *Sātvata-saṁhitā* does not refer to anything connected with material existence. The word *dhāma* means both "abode" and "effulgence." Without light, vision is impossible. The object of worship perceived in vision stands established in personal form within that spiritual radiance.

The temporary and relative relationships seen among persons within material nature do not apply there. Beyond such relationships, within the transcendental sky, the foundation of spiritual light exists eternally. According to impersonal reasoning, the distinction between seer and seen becomes merged within light, but such a conception rests only upon incomplete and inadequate material estimation.

*Māyā-śakti* can never diminish the Vaikuṇṭha nature of the limitless Supreme Lord, Maheśvara (Viṣṇu). The subjects described in the Fifth Chapter of this work entirely refute impersonalistic material judgment.

In worldly analysis, when one describes the efficient and material causes, accusations of obscenity are sometimes leveled. To dispel such misconceptions, the intended conclusions of the *Brahma-saṁhitā* must properly be understood. This work was not composed merely to excite the minds of degraded persons through vulgar imagery. Rather, it was intended to grant strength to weak souls susceptible to corruption through lustful perception.[3] When the reality of Bhagavān is falsely perceived, and when through such false perception the other four types of philosophical analysis become fully consolidated, then that false perception gives rise to the various systems of *pañcopāsanā* worship.[4] This is what must be properly understood. To explain this clearly, five concluding verses have been inserted into this chapter. Whoever studies them receives, by the mercy of Sudarśana, eternal realization. Then one will no longer promote impersonalism in opposition to the divine abode.

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[3] Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī refers to a description in Verses 8-15.

[4] Impersonalists install deities of Viṣṇu, Śiva, the sun-god, Durgā, Gaṇeśa, and sometimes Brahmā in their temples, and worship them as temporary manifestations of Brahman.

Beyond Devī-dhāma and Maheśa-dhāma shines the transcendental spiritual sky, free from illusion. The distinctive nature of that supreme abode is revealed only by great fortune. Since it rests upon no relative or deceptive support within its realization of the Supreme Absolute Bliss, it belongs entirely beyond material nature. Descriptions concerning it are therefore known as *apauruṣeya* revelation.

By the influence of devotional practice *(abhidheya-sādhana-bhakti)*, materially contaminated souls may become free from gross material enjoyment. Those deeply addicted to material pleasure are unable to take shelter of devotional service. Their only qualification is to suffer while bound to the stake of *karma*.

Without singing the glories of Kāmadeva [Kṛṣṇa, the original source of divine attraction], the lust arising from the soul's desire for enjoyment cannot be eliminated. Yet if one places the transcendental Kāmadeva on the same level as mundane lust, the result will be contrary to true welfare.

When, following in the footsteps of four-headed Brahmā, we attain the mercy of Bhagavān and become recipients of His pleasure through singing Kṛṣṇa's praises, then our study of the *Brahma-saṁhitā* will achieve success.

At that time we shall understand that, at the highest stage of service to the true Puruṣottama in whom divine majesty predominates, the sweetness-filled form of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda is manifested as Gaura. In the lower region of that transcendental realm lies Vaikuṇṭha, where two and a half kinds of *rasa* prevail. Below it lies Maheśa-dhāma, and beneath that is Devī-dhāma consisting of the fourteen material worlds.

The desires of the wandering souls within Devī-dhāma become dissolved in Maheśa-dhāma. The desireless conception of Maheśa-dhāma is eternally honored by hundred-faced [many-branched] service. The hundred-faced [hundred-chaptered] *Brahma-saṁhitā*, in its description of the fifth *puruṣārtha*, has revealed the ultimate limit of the nectar of love for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govinda. And Śrī Gaurasundara, who gathered that nectar, distributed it to the souls of the universe, thereby revealing His supreme magnanimity and His pastime of bestowing love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

—Śrī Siddhānta Sarasvatī

# For the Reader's Appreciation

All glories to Śrī Śrī Māyāpura-candra

To attract the reader's attention: In the Ninth Chapter of the *Madhya-līlā* (234–242) of the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, the following is written:

*sei dina cali' āilā payasvinī-tīre*
*snāna kari' gelā ādi-keśava-mandire*

*mahā-bhakta-gaṇa-saha tāhā goṣṭhī haila*
*'brahma-saṁhitādhyāya' pūṅthi tāhā pāila*

*pūṅthi pāñā prabhura haila ānanda apāra*
*kampa-aśru-sveda-stambha-pulaka-vikāra*

*siddhānta-śāstra nāhi 'brahma-saṁhitā'-samāna*
*govinda-mahimā-jñānera parama kāraṇa*

*alpa akṣare kahe siddhānta apāra*
*sakala-vaiṣṇava-śāstra-madhye ati sāra*

*bahu yatne sei puṅthi nila lekhāiyā*
*'ananta padmanābha' āilā haraṣita hañā*

That day the Lord proceeded to the bank of the Payasvinī River. After bathing, He went to the temple of Ādi-keśava.

There, in the company of great devotees, discussion took place, and He discovered a manuscript containing a chapter of the *Brahma-saṁhitā*.

Upon obtaining that manuscript, the Lord experienced boundless joy. Trembling, tears, perspiration, stunned ecstasy, and horripilation arose within Him.

No Scripture of conclusive spiritual truth equals the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. It is the supreme source of knowledge concerning the glories of Govinda.

In but few words it expresses limitless philosophical truth. Among all Vaiṣṇava Scriptures, it is the very essence.

Taking great care, the Lord had the manuscript copied and then joyfully arrived at Ananta Padmanābha.

I have little more to say beyond this. I shall simply state the following: If this Scripture is indeed counted among the most ancient *śāstras*, then it stands as an extraordinarily wonderful testimony to *kṛṣṇa-bhakti*. And if someone argues that this Scripture was unknown in this region and was therefore composed by Śrīman Mahāprabhu Himself, then what could be a greater cause for happiness? For if even a single conclusive philosophical work composed directly by Śrī Mahāprabhu were obtained, all doubts within the Vaiṣṇava world would immediately vanish.

In whatever way one may judge the matter, this *Brahma-saṁhitā* is worthy of worship by all devotees.

—Śrī Bhaktivinoda

# Invocation

All glories to Śrī Śrī Guru and Gaurāṅga

Gathering with great care an abundance of jeweled philosophical truths, Brahmā offered his hymn of praise to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. That hymn, a great treasure of humankind, is contained in the Fifth Chapter of this book, the *Brahma-saṁhitā*.

Śrī Gaurāṅga, that ocean of mercy and sole friend of the souls of this age of Kali, while wandering through South India, recovered this treasure in order to deliver the souls of Gauḍa.[5]

The venerable Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, having carefully considered many Scriptures, composed his commentary upon it, and with a heart full of great mercy, that most benevolent soul presented this work to the Gauḍīya devotees.[6]

My master, Vipina-vihārī, commanded this insignificant servant to say something further, following that same explanation; and so, with a joyful heart, this servant has spoken these few words.

If the devotees, having distinguished the material from the transcendental,[7] reflect upon this with purified intelligence, then this servant's aim will be fulfilled, the heart's longing satisfied, and pure devotion will spread abroad.

The inner purport of Jīva Gosvāmī's commentary is profound; grant me, a fool, the power to understand it.

Having carefully brought to blossom Śrī Jīva's words, beautiful as flower buds, and offering obeisance to Guru and Kṛṣṇa, I shall consider myself blessed to place them in the hands of pure devotees. This is my heart's desire.

—Śrī Bhaktivinoda

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[5] Bengal

[6] Bengali Vaiṣṇavas

[7] This is Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's own footnote:

"Only those in whom, by the strength of devotion, the capacity has arisen to distinguish between the material and the transcendental are qualified to receive this *Prakāśinī* commentary in the Bengali language."

# Verse 1



ईश्वरः परमः कृष्णः सच्चिदानन्दविग्रहः ।
अनादिरादिर्गोविन्दः सर्वकारणकारणम् ॥ १ ॥

*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*
*anādir ādir govindaḥ sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*

**Kṛṣṇa is the supreme controller. His form is eternity, consciousness, and bliss. He is Govinda, without beginning, the origin of all, and the cause of all causes.**

*īśvaraḥ*—the controller; *paramaḥ*—supreme; *kṛṣṇaḥ*—Kṛṣṇa; *sac-cid-ānanda*—of eternity, consciousness, and bliss; *vigrahaḥ*—whose form; *anādiḥ*—without beginning; *ādiḥ*—the origin; *govindaḥ*—Govinda; *sarva-kāraṇa*—of all causes; *kāraṇam*—the cause.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

### Maṅgalācaraṇa

(Auspicious Invocation)

I offer my humble obeisances unto Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

May the glory of the form of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, by whose mercy I desire to explain the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, become magnified within my heart.

Even a statement of a sage that is difficult to construe reveals its coherent meaning through careful deliberation. But as I undertake this deliberation, may that Sage who is the refuge of all sages be my guide. Although this *Saṁhitā* consists of one hundred chapters, still, because this chapter is in the form of aphorisms, it has attained the status of comprising all the limbs of that work.

That which is seen by those of pure intelligence in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other *vaiṣṇava-śāstras*, that very same thing is described here. Therefore my mind is delighted.

Whatever has been elaborately ascertained in my *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha*, that same subject is here again reconsidered, and I now endeavor to explain it.

In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.3.28) it is stated: *ete cāṁśakalāḥ puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇastu bhagavān svayam.* "All these are plenary portions or portions of plenary portions of the Supreme Person, but Kṛṣṇa is Bhagavān Himself." This very same point is first declared here in this verse with the word *īśvaraḥ*.

### Explanation of the name Kṛṣṇa

Here, Kṛṣṇa is the principal subject qualified by all the other terms. That very name is primary. This is established by the widely known declarations of great authorities such as Śrī Śuka, as in "the festival of Kṛṣṇa's descent"

*(kṛṣṇāvatārotsava)*, and also because in the *Sāmopaniṣad*, the phrase "to Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva, the delight of Devakī" *(kṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya devakīnandanāya)* is first understood. Furthermore, Garga Muni explicitly uttered that name while revealing the syllables of the *mantra*. And because, according to the principle that "one fills a pot with milk", meaning the primary substance named first defines the whole, the foremost name mentioned in a sequence is regarded as the original form, this name is primary. Thus it is said in the *Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa* of the *Padma Purāṇa*, in the dialogue between Nārada and Kuśadhvaja, spoken by Bhagavān Himself: "The foremost among all My names is the name Kṛṣṇa, O scorcher of enemies."

Therefore also, in the hymn of one hundred and eight names of Kṛṣṇa spoken in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, it is said: "The merit obtained by reciting a thousand sacred names three times is attained simply by uttering once the name Kṛṣṇa."

Here specifically the name Kṛṣṇa alone is mentioned. Here, Kṛṣṇa is the principal subject qualified by all the other terms. Thus, by the force of usage and primacy, the adjectives beginning with *īśvaraḥ* apply specifically to Him alone.

**Garga Muni's Statement**

Now this is also seen through His qualities. While speaking with Nanda Mahārāja, Garga Muni states in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.8.13-15),: "In every age your son assumes forms of different colors—white, red, and yellow—and now He has appeared in a dark complexion. Your son has many names and forms according to His qualities and activities. I know them, though common people do not."

The meaning is: Of Him who is now visible as Kṛṣṇa, who manifests various *avatāra*-forms in every age, the three colors beginning with white previously became manifest. Now, at the time of this appearance, He has assumed a dark hue. All those forms are included within this very Kṛṣṇa-form.

Therefore, because Kṛṣṇa is the one who manifests these forms and is supreme above all, Kṛṣṇa is His principal name. Thus Garga says, "many"; those forms belong to Him alone. Therefore, through His qualities also, the preeminence of the name Kṛṣṇa is indicated.

**Etymological Meaning of Kṛṣṇa**

Even according to etymological derivation, His nature is obtained: "The syllable *kṛṣ* means 'existence,' and *ṇa* means 'bliss.' The combination of these two syllables indicates the Supreme Brahman, Parabrahman, which is called Kṛṣṇa." Thus even by etymological interpretation, this meaning is obtained. And this verse does not refer to anyone else.

In the *Gautamīya-tantra*, in the explanation of the eighteen-syllable *mantra (aṣṭādaśākṣara-mantra-vyākhyāyām)*, a nearly identical verse is found:

*kṛṣi-śabdaś ca sattārtho ṇaś cānanda-svarūpakaḥ*
*sukha-rūpo bhaved ātmā bhāvānandamayas tataḥ*

"The word *kṛṣ* means 'existence *(sattārthaḥ)*,' and *ṇa* is of the nature of bliss *(ānanda-svarūpakaḥ)*. The self *(ātmā)* becomes of the nature of happiness *(sukha-rūpaḥ)*, and then full of the bliss of love *(bhāvānanda-mayaḥ)*."

Thus the meaning is as follows: "From Him all entities come into being." This is the meaning of the verbal root *bhū*, just as in the word *bhāva*. And here this meaning belongs specifically to the root *kṛṣ*, "to attract."

Even though in the *Gautamīya* the word *bhū* signifies existence, still the meaning of the root itself is "existence" alone. Since the word "pot" cannot stand in apposition with that which it denotes, a figurative identification through causal relation must be understood. This indeed implies "attraction." When it is said "pot-ness *(ghaṭatva)* signifies existence," what is understood is the existence of the pot itself, not the existence of cloth, nor generic existence.

*Nirvṛti* means "bliss." Their unity is expressed through grammatical apposition. That which is the Supreme Brahman, the greatest of all realities and the source of the expansion of everything, is called Kṛṣṇa. Another reading says "is proclaimed."

However, because the root *kṛṣ* merely indicates attraction, and because the syllable *ṇa* cannot literally stand in apposition with bliss as the thing denoted, a figurative identification of non-difference between cause and effect must be accepted. This is done in order to express the fullness and predominance of His attractive power, just as in the expression "ghee is long life" *(āyur ghṛtam)*.

## Explanation of *Paraṁ brahma*

The meaning of the words *paraṁ brahma* (Parabrahman) is explained in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (1.12.57): "Because of greatness and because of causing growth, that which the wise know as supreme *(paramaṁ)* is Brahman."

And also in the *Śruti,* in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*, it is said: "Brahman grows *(bṛṁhati)* and causes growth *(bṛṁhayati).*"

Similarly, it is said in the *Bṛhad-Gautamīya:* "The word *kṛṣ* indeed means 'existence,' and *ṇa* means 'of the nature of bliss.' From the union of existence and bliss, that Supreme Brahman is designated."

## Refutation of *Advaita* Interpretation

Even those who propound the doctrine of nondual Brahman *(advaitavādinaḥ)* must understand existence and bliss in this way. Grammarians perceive them as possessing distinct denotations. And by the word "existence" here is meant that supreme existence which is the cause of the functioning of all existing things, as declared in the *Śruti (Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.2.1): *sadeva saumyedam agra āsīt.* "O good student, only existence was here in the beginning."

If they were completely identical in denotation, then—like in the statement "a tree is a tree" *(vṛkṣaḥ taruḥ)*—they could not function as qualifier and qualified, and one of them would be redundant.

The previously cited verse from the *Gautamīya* should therefore be understood thus: In the first half *(kṛṣi-śabdaś ca sattārtho ṇaś cānanda-svarūpakaḥ)*, Kṛṣṇa is the blissful self endowed with the power to attract everything. In the second half *(sukha-rūpo bhaved ātmā bhāvānandamayas tataḥ)*, because He is thus of the nature of all-attracting happiness, therefore the self and the living entity become of the nature of happiness in Him. The reason is that *bhāva* means *prema*, because such bliss consists of that love.

Thus it should be understood that the word *kṛṣṇa* denotes the supreme greatest, all-attracting bliss, characterized by both intrinsic nature and qualities. And this word is conventionally established specifically in relation to the son of Devakī.

That He alone gives bliss to all is seen in the *Vāsudeva Upaniṣad*: "The son of Devakī gives bliss to the entirety of existence."

And the bliss here is without transformation and not dependent on anything else. Therefore this word cannot properly be transferred to another object. As Bhaṭṭa[8] says: "Usage that has attained its own nature overpowers the etymological meaning. A merely imagined meaning does not attain its own nature because the etymological meaning is obstructed."

And Kṛṣṇa's status as the Supreme Brahman is declared in the *Bhāgavatam* (7.10.48): "The hidden Supreme Brahman in human form," and also: "That friend who is supreme bliss, the eternal complete Brahman."

In the *Śrī Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (4.11.2) it is said: "That Supreme Brahman named Kṛṣṇa descended in human form."

In the *Gītā* (14.27) Kṛṣṇa says: "I am the foundation of Brahman."

And in the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* we find: "That Supreme Brahman is Gopāla."

**Explanation of *Īśvara*, *Parama*, *Ādi*, *Anādi*, *Sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam***

Now let us follow the root text. Because the word *kṛṣṇa* signifies such a being, therefore He is *īśvaraḥ*, the supreme controller of all. This is also indicated in the *Bṛhad-Gautamīya* through another explanation of the word *kṛṣṇa*: "Because Bhagavān draws toward Himself *(karṣayet)* the entire universe of moving and nonmoving beings in the form of time *(kṛṣṇa kāla-rūpeṇa)*, therefore He is called Kṛṣṇa." The word *kāla* means: "He calculates *(kalayati)* and regulates *(niyamayati)* everything."

Thus in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.2.21), Uddhava gives his conclusive determination about Him as follows:

> You alone are without equal or superior, O master of threes *(tryadhīśaḥ)*, having attained all desires through the wealth of sovereignty. The helmets of the eternal guardians of the worlds strike against Your foot-rest as they bow in tribute.

[8] Jīva Gosvāmī refers here to Kumārila Bhaṭṭa, the most famous proponent of the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā school of philosophy, which focuses on the exegesis and interpretation of the *Vedas*. He quotes him because the Mīmāṃsā school was accepted as the supreme authority in the philosophy of language and scriptural interpretation.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.42) Kṛṣṇa proclaims: "Sustaining this entire universe with but one portion of Myself, I remain." And in the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* (1.19) it is said: "The one controller, all-pervading Kṛṣṇa, is worthy of worship."

Because He is such an *īśvara*, therefore He is *paramaḥ*, the supreme—the one in whom the supreme *(parāḥ)* potencies *(mā)*, the *lakṣmīs*, most exalted of all potencies, reside *(parā-māḥ)*. Thus it is said in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.59.43): "He sported with the goddesses of fortune, fully immersed in His desires." And also (SB 10.47.60): "O dear one, this favor is not easily obtained even by Lakṣmī," and further (SB 10.32.10): "Bhagavān, the son of Devakī, shone exceedingly among them." Later in this very text (*Brahma-saṁhitā*, Verse 56) it will be said: "The *lakṣmīs* are His beloveds, and He is the supreme person." And the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* (1.3) confirms: "Kṛṣṇa indeed is the supreme divinity."

Because He is such a supreme being, therefore He is also the origin, *ādiḥ*. Thus in the Tenth Canto (SB 10.72.15) it is said: "Hearing of Jarāsandha, Hari contemplated the king's situation and immediately spoke the very strategy that Uddhava had proposed." And the commentary says: "The original Hari *(ādyo hariḥ)* is Śrī Kṛṣṇa." In the Eleventh Canto (SB 11.29.49), both His supremacy and primacy are declared together: "I bow to that primal supreme person known as Kṛṣṇa."

Nor is this primacy dependent upon His *avatāras*. Rather, He is *anādiḥ*, one who Himself has no beginning. Thus in the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad*, after stating "The one controller, all-pervading Kṛṣṇa," it is said: "The eternal among eternals."

Because He is thus the origin, therefore He is *sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*—the cause of all causes, even the cause of the *puruṣa* who creates the *mahat-tattva*.

Thus Devakī prays to Him in the Tenth Canto (SB 10.85.31):

> "By a portion of a portion of a portion of You, the creation, maintenance, and dissolution of the universe take place. O Soul of the universe, I have taken shelter of You, the original refuge."

Śrīdhara Svāmī explains in his commentary *Bhāvārtha-dīpikā*:

> "The *puruṣa* is a portion of Him; *māyā* is a portion of the *puruṣa*; and the *guṇas* are portions of *māyā*. By a portion of these—that is, by an

> infinitesimal fragment the size of an atom—the creation of the universe and its other functions take place. 'I have taken shelter of You' means, 'I have accepted You as my refuge.'"

Similarly, Brahmā says in his prayers (SB 10.14.14): "Nārāyaṇa is Your limb *(aṅgam)*, because the waters arise from *nara*, the primeval Lord *(nara-bhū-jalāyanāt)*." And: "The wise know the elements born from the primeval Lord to be called *nārāṇī*. Since they were formerly His resting place *(ayana)*, He is remembered as Nārāyaṇa." By this, Nārāyaṇa is described as His expansion, while He is the possessor of that expansion *(tvam punar aṅgī)*. In the *Gītā* (10.42), Kṛṣṇa says: "Sustaining this entire universe with but one portion of Myself, I remain."

Thus the etymological meaning of the word *kṛṣṇa* has also been established. And those who explain the word *kṛṣṇa* merely as supreme bliss through the syllables *kṛṣ* and *ṇa* must still admit within that bliss the inherent potency indicated by qualifiers such as *īśvaraḥ*. Otherwise, since there can be no second reality separate from Him, and since He is the cause of all causes, no external power can be superimposed upon Him.

Thus the *Śruti (Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 2.7.1) says: "Bliss is Brahman." And: "Who could breathe or live if this bliss were not present in the sky?" And: "From bliss all beings are born." And *(Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 6.8*):* "He has neither work nor any instrument."[9] And: "No one equal or greater than Him is seen." And: "His supreme potency is heard of as manifold, natural *(svābhāvikī)* knowledge, strength, and action."

### Objection and Answer Regarding *Vigraha*

Someone may object: "According to your view and the etymological interpretation, since Kṛṣṇa is described as all-attracting, the supreme greatest bliss, it is understood that He is formless *(avigraha eva)*, because bliss is not understood to have a form *(vigraha)*."

True. But His form is a wonderful, unprecedented reality: an eternally perfected form of bliss *(pūrva-siddha-ānanda-vigrahaḥ)*. Therefore it says:

[9] Instrument *(karaṇa)* refers not only to external "tools" but also to the senses, mind, and all means of action and perception. Unlike conditioned souls, Bhagavān does not depend upon any external factor to know, act, or create.

*sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*. "He whose form is characterized by eternity, consciousness, and bliss."

Similarly, Brahmā says in the Tenth Canto (SB 10.14.22): "Your body is eternal happiness and knowledge" *(tvayy eva nitya-sukha-bodha-tanau)*. And in the *Tāpanī* and *Hayasīrṣa-pañcarātra* it says: "I offer my obeisances unto Kṛṣṇa, whose form is eternity, consciousness, and bliss, and whose actions are effortless."

And in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, in the hymn of one hundred and eight names, it is stated: "He delights the inhabitants of Nanda's Vraja, and His form is eternity, consciousness, and bliss."

### Explanation of *Sat*

The intended meaning is this: *Sat* means "unfailing existence." And His possession of such a nature is clearly expressed in statements by Brahmā and others in the Tenth Canto, such as (SB 10.2.26): "He whose vow is truth, whose nature is truth, who is the threefold truth" *(satya-vrataṁ satya-paraṁ trisatyam)*. And in Devakī's words (SB 10.3.25) in her prayers to Kṛṣṇa:

*naṣṭe loke dvi-parārdhāvasāne mahā-bhūteṣv ādi-bhūtaṁ gateṣu*
*vyakte 'vyaktaṁ kāla-vegena yāte bhavān ekaḥ śiṣyate 'śeṣa-saṁjñaḥ*

"At the end of two *parārdhas*, when the cosmos is destroyed, when the gross elements enter their subtle cause, and when the manifest enters the unmanifest under the force of time, You alone remain, known as Ananta Śeṣa."

She continues (SB 10.3.27):

*martyo mṛtyu-vyāla-bhītaḥ palāyan lokān sarvān nirbhayaṁ nādhyagacchat*
*tvat pādābjaṁ prāpya yadṛcchayādya susthaḥ śete mṛtyur asmād apaiti*

"No one in this material world has become free from the four principles birth, death, old age and disease, even by fleeing to various planets. But now that You have appeared, My Lord, death is fleeing in fear of You, and the living entities, having obtained shelter at Your lotus feet by Your mercy, are sleeping in full mental peace."

Brahmā prays (SB 10.14.18): "You alone existed in the beginning."

And: "Then this nondual Brahman alone remains."

In the *Gītā* (14.27, 15.18), Kṛṣṇa says: "I am the foundation of Brahman. Because I transcend the perishable and am even higher than the imperishable, I am celebrated in the world and in the *Vedas* as the Supreme Person."

And in the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* we find: "He is beyond birth and old age, steadfast and indestructible. He dwells in the land of Vṛndāvana near the Yamunā *(saurye)*, among the cows and the cowherds, and He protects the cows." Here *saurye* means "Vṛndāvana, the region situated near the Yamunā, who is called Saurī because she is the daughter of Sūrya, the sun-god."

And it also says there: "Death fears Govinda."

### Explanation of *Cit*

The Lord's conscious nature consists in self-luminosity and the power to illuminate all else. This is declared by Brahmā in his prayers (SB 10.14.23): "You alone are the Self" *(ekas tvam ātmā)* and "self-luminous" *(svayaṁ jyotiḥ)*.

And in the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* (1.26) it is stated: "Kṛṣṇa, who formerly instructed Brahmā and imparted spiritual knowledge to him, protects the cows. The seeker of liberation should take shelter of that divine being who reveals the functions of the self by its own nature."

As the *Śruti (Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 3.2.4) says: "One does not see His form with the eyes. He is attained only by one whom He chooses. To such a person He reveals His form."

### Explanation of *Ānanda*

His blissful nature *(ānanda-rūpatva)* means that He is the abode of supreme love without any limitation and in all respects. This is clearly revealed just after Brahmā's prayers in the Tenth Canto (SB 10.14.49–55), in the exchange between King Parīkṣit and Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Mahārāja Parīkṣit asks (SB 10.14.49):

*brahman parodbhave kṛṣṇe iyān premā kathaṁ bhavet*
*yo 'bhūta-pūrvas tokeṣu svodbhaveṣv api kathyatām*

"O *brāhmaṇa*, how could the cowherd women have developed for Kṛṣṇa, someone else's son, such unprecedented pure love—love they never felt even for their own children? Please explain this."

And Vasudeva also experienced this (SB 10.3.13): "My Lord, You are the Supreme Person, beyond material existence, and You are the Supersoul. Your form can be perceived by transcendental knowledge, by which You can be understood as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I now understand Your position perfectly."

As another *Śruti* says: "Bliss is the form of Brahman."

Thus, once it is established that Kṛṣṇa's form is eternity, consciousness, and bliss, it follows that His form itself is His self, and His self itself is His form *(vigraha evātmā, ātmā eva vigrahaḥ)*. Therefore it is concluded that He does not possess a body in the way ordinary living beings do.

As Śrī Śuka says to Mahārāja Parīkṣit (SB 10.14.55):

*kṛṣṇam enam avehi tvam ātmānam akhilātmanām*
*jagad-dhitāya so 'py atra dehīvābhāti māyayā*

"You should know Kṛṣṇa to be the original soul of all living entities. For the benefit of the whole universe, He has, out of His causeless mercy, appeared as an ordinary human being. He has done this by the strength of His internal potency."

The meaning is that His embodied pastimes are enacted solely due to His being moved by compassion. The *Viśva-prakāśa* states: "*Māyā* means both deception *(dambha)* and mercy *(kṛpā)*."

**Explanation of Govinda**

Thus, since His form possessing these characteristics is established as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, and since He is absorbed in both types of pastimes, He is sometimes seen as the chief of the Vṛṣṇis and sometimes as Govinda.

Thus Sūta says in the Twelfth Canto (SB 12.11.25): "O Śrī Kṛṣṇa, O friend of Arjuna, O chief of the Vṛṣṇis, O annihilator of the enemies of the saintly kings, whose heroic power grants liberation; O Govinda, whose glories are sung by the cowherd women, the people of Vraja, and Your servants, hearing of You sanctifies the hearer, please protect Your servants."

Because He is endowed with His desired form, pastimes, and associates, He employs the name Govinda as His worshipable form. As it will later be

praised here: "In abodes built of *cintāmaṇi* gems, surrounded by millions of wish-fulfilling trees..."

And in the Tenth Canto (SB 10.27.23), at the beginning of Govinda's coronation, the *surabhi* cow says: "O Lord of the universe, please become our Indra." And after the coronation it is said: "She addressed Him as Govinda."

At the conclusion of that section Śrī Śuka prays: "May the Lord of the cows be pleased with us."

Because He is the Lord of the cows *(gavendratva)*, and since the cows are the shelter of all *(gavāṁ sarvāśrayatvāt)*, His status as the Lord of all *(sarvendratva)* is established.

Nor should this be considered inferior. For the *Go-sūkta* states: "From cows all sacrifices proceed; from cows the gods arise; from cows the *Vedas* with their six *aṅgas* and *pada-kramas* are proclaimed."

Even granting that these cows descended from the supreme Goloka, His lordship over them—and through them, lordship over all—is fully established. And in the *Tāpanī*, Brahmā himself reveals the object of his worship: "I continually worship Govinda, whose form is eternity, consciousness, and bliss, seated beneath the *kalpa-vṛkṣa* tree, together with the hosts of gods."

Likewise in the Tenth Canto (SB 10.14.34) Brahmā says: "How greatly fortunate is birth in this forest of Gokula..."

And this fortune is obtained specifically because He is the son of Nanda. Therefore Brahmā prays (SB 10.14.1): "I bow to You whose complexion is like a raincloud and whose garments flash like lightning..." and specifically: "to the son of the cowherd chief."

Thus the full significance of names such as Govinda, rich with supreme majesty, is also accepted by Him.

### The *Gautamīya-tantra* on the Ten-Syllable *Mantra*

Accordingly, after reiterating His status as Īśvara and Parameśvara, the *Gautamīya-tantra*, in bringing its explanation of the meaning of the revered ten-syllable *mantra* to its conclusion, states:

> *Gopī* should be understood as *prakṛti*, and *jana* as the aggregate of *tattvas*. Īśvara is the support of both, because He pervades them and is

> their cause. By the word *vallabha* He is described as the supreme effulgence of condensed bliss.
>
> Alternatively, *gopī* is *prakṛti*, and *jana* is the circle of her expansions. Their *vallabha* is said to be the master, the Lord named Kṛṣṇa. Therefore the *Śrutis* sing of Him as the Lord of both cause and effect.
>
> Or, He is the husband of the *gopīs* who have attained perfection through many births. He is known as the son of Nanda and increases the bliss of the three worlds.

Here *prakṛti* means the potency called *māyā*, the causal power of the universe. "The aggregate of *tattvas*" means the *mahat-tattva* and the principles beginning with it.

"The support of both" is Īśvara, the supreme effulgence of condensed bliss, who is expressed by the word *vallabha*. The reasons for His being Īśvara are that He pervades them and is their cause.

In the alternative explanation, *prakṛti* means the potency intrinsic to His own nature, beyond *māyā*, known as Mahālakṣmī and manifest in Vaikuṇṭha and elsewhere. "The circle of her expansions" means the triad beginning with Saṅkarṣaṇa.[10]

In the phrase "the *gopīs* who have attained perfection through many births," the intended meaning is a beginningless succession of births, as indicated by the statement of the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.5): "Many births of Mine and yours have passed, O Arjuna."

Thus here also He is intended specifically as the son of Nanda.

Garga Muni likewise says (SB 10.8.14): "Formerly this son of yours was born as the son of Vasudeva."

And this is appropriate. For even in the case of Śrī Vāsudeva, the son of Vasudeva, His sonship is understood only as His manifestation within

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[10] The familiar *catur-vyūha* consists of Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha. In this passage, however, Kṛṣṇa Himself is the Lord designated by *vallabha*, and thus Vāsudeva is represented by Him. The "circle of expansions beginning with Saṅkarṣaṇa" therefore refers to the remaining three members of the *catur-vyūha*—Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha—who are here referred to as a triad.

Vasudeva's mind, as stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.2.16): "He entered the mind of Ānakadundubhi by a portion of Himself."

The same was true for the king of Vraja, for such manifestations are seen everywhere immediately preceding the appearance of Bhagavān.

Yet even when He manifests within a person, the determining cause of His appearing as that person's son is pure, great love imbued with the mood of fatherhood. Just as when Varāhadeva appeared from Brahmā, neither Brahmā nor the world considered Brahmā to be His father.

But such pure love existed fully only in the king of Vraja. In Vasudeva there remained an obstruction in the form of knowledge of opulence *(aiśvarya-jñāna-pratibandha)*. Therefore Garga Muni rightly said: "Formerly this son of yours was born as the son of Vasudeva."

Thus even in the application of the sacred ten-syllable *mantra*, He is seen as being absorbed in that mood *(tanmaya eva dṛśyate)*.[11]

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 1

**Govinda Kṛṣṇa, whose form is eternity, consciousness, and bliss, is the Supreme Lord. He is without beginning, the origin of all, and the cause of all causes.**

Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone, with His eternal name, eternal form, eternal qualities, and eternal pastimes, is the Supreme Lord eternally existing above all. The name Kṛṣṇa itself is His eternal name, the signifier of the supreme reality *(parama-sattā)* characterized by the power to draw forth love *(premākarṣaṇa-lakṣaṇa)*. His eternal form is the two-armed, dark-hued, beautiful form of Śyāmasundara, the flute-player, who is the very condensation of eternity, consciousness, and bliss.

By the power of His inconceivable spiritual potency, although He possesses omnipresence, His supreme personhood, endowed with

[11] See *Annotations* for a detailed clarification of the meaning.

transcendental qualities and senses that wonderfully attract all beings while He remains in a form of human proportions, is manifest with perfect harmony within that eternal form. Existence, consciousness, and bliss are fully condensed and beautifully present within Him. The aspect of that original form which manifests in relation to the worlds is known as "Paramātmā," "Īśvara," or "Viṣṇu." Therefore Kṛṣṇa alone is the one Supreme Lord.

Although His infinite transcendental senses and qualities are distinct from one another, by the arrangement of His inconceivable potency each is perfectly and harmoniously disposed in its proper place, and they are eternally manifest as one supremely beautiful, incomparable spiritual form. That divine form itself is Kṛṣṇa's very self, and Kṛṣṇa's self is that very form. The concentrated principle of eternity, consciousness, and bliss is that divine form itself. Therefore the impersonal, formless Brahman, which is merely the diffuse condition of the principle of eternity, consciousness, and bliss, is only the effulgence emanating from the limbs of that condensed supreme being. The condensed form of Kṛṣṇa composed of eternity, consciousness, and bliss is the original form without beginning and is the source of both Brahman and Paramātmā.

Kṛṣṇa, served by Śrī, and manifest through His pastimes as the Lord of the cows, the Lord of the cowherds, the Lord of the cowherd girls, the Lord of Gokula, and the Lord of Goloka, is Govinda. He alone is the cause of all causes, including *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*.

His inferior potency gives birth to the material world after being impelled by the glance of His plenary expansion, the Paramātmā Puruṣa-avatāra. The rays manifested from the marginal potency *(taṭastha-śakti)* of that Paramātmā are the innumerable living entities *(jīvas)*.

This work, the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, establishes that Kṛṣṇa alone is the Supreme Person; therefore the utterance of His name itself constitutes the auspicious invocation of this text.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

*Īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ...* is arguably the most important verse in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, because it establishes Kṛṣṇa's identity from the beginning and thus leaves no doubt that the Supreme Absolute Truth is personal, and not an impersonal "something."

For this reason, Jīva Gosvāmī's very first words in his commentary are: *śrī kṛṣṇa-rūpa-mahimā mama citte mahīyatām*. "May the glory of Kṛṣṇa's form be magnified within my heart."

He then dedicates a substantial portion of his commentary to refuting the Māyāvādī misconception that the Absolute Truth is impersonal. Counteracting this false idea is the special mission of all Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura was well known for his strong preaching against impersonalism. Śrīla Prabhupāda, then known as Abhay Charanaravinda, recognized this essential quality in his spiritual master and immortalized it in one of his Vyāsa-pūjā offerings:

> Absolute is sentient
> Thou hast proved.
> Impersonal calamity
> Thou hast removed.
> This gives us a life
> Anew and fresh.
> Worship thy feet
> Your Divine Grace.

Here he describes the conception that the cause of all causes is an impersonal substance as a calamity leading to spiritual death. The idea that ultimately reality is void of qualities and that all personal interactions are illusions deprives the *jīva* of the possibility to experience the highest form of joy that comes from loving relationships. *Premā pumartho mahān*. According to Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the highest perfection of life is to revive our lost loving relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Consequently, impersonalism is the greatest obstacle to achieving this goal.

To counteract this tendency is the mission of every devotee who claims to be a follower of Śrī Caitanya and the previous *ācāryas*. It is so vital that Prabhupāda immortalized it for all his followers in his second *praṇāma* prayer, which he composed himself in the early days of ISKCON:

*namas te sārasvate deve gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe*
*nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe*

"Our respectful obeisances unto you, O spiritual master, servant of Sarasvatī Gosvāmī. You are kindly preaching the message of Lord Caitanyadeva and delivering the Western countries, which are filled with impersonalism and voidism."

In the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Ādi 10.84), he therefore writes:

> As members of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement we belong to the family, or disciplic succession, of Sarasvatī Gosvāmī, and thus we are known as Sārasvatas. Obeisances are therefore offered to the spiritual master as *sārasvata-deva*, or a member of the Sārasvata family *(namas te sārasvate deve)*, whose mission is to broadcast the cult of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu *(gaura-vāṇī-pracāriṇe)* and to fight with impersonalists and voidists *(nirviśeṣa-śūnyavādi-pāścātya-deśa-tāriṇe)*.

***

Jīva Gosvāmī says at the end of his commentary: "Thus even in the application of the sacred ten-syllable *mantra*, He is seen as being absorbed in that mood *(tanmaya eva dṛśyate)*."

One may raise the question: "What is that mood Kṛṣṇa is seen to be absorbed in?" The implied meaning is that, although Garga Muni's words could be taken to acknowledge Vasudeva's claim as father, Kṛṣṇa, even in the true application of the sacred ten-syllable *mantra*, is understood to remain immersed in that same mood of pure parental love found only in Nanda.

The reasoning is that Kṛṣṇa's "sonship" is caused by love, not biology. He appears as a son wherever there exists pure, unobstructed parental love. Such love draws Him to manifest that way, just as Varāha appeared from Brahmā without Brahmā being His actual father.

Nanda's love was completely pure in the sense that it was not mixed with the awareness that he was raising God.

Vasudeva's love was also real, but it was not unobstructed in that same sense, because it was affected by knowledge of Kṛṣṇa's divine opulence *(aiśvarya-jñāna-pratibandha).* He knew, on some level, that this child was the Supreme Lord, and that awareness gets in the way of simple, unselfconscious parental intimacy.

The conclusion is that the specific relishing of pure parental love that the ten-syllable *mantra* of the *Gautamīya-tantra* points to, namely Kṛṣṇa fully immersed in being someone's beloved child, is realized only with Nanda Mahārāja and his wife Yaśodā. Only in Vraja does Kṛṣṇa get to simply be someone's son, without that relationship being shadowed by His parent's awareness of who He is.

# VERSE 2



सहस्रपत्रकमलं गोकुलाख्यं महत्पदम् ।
तत्कर्णिकारं तद्धाम तदनन्तांशसम्भवम् ॥ २ ॥

*sahasra-patra-kamalaṁ gokulākhyaṁ mahat-padam*
*tat-karṇikāraṁ tad-dhāma tad-anantāṁśa-sambhavam*

**The supreme abode, a lotus with a thousand petals, is known as Gokula. The pericarp of that lotus is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's abode, and that realm is manifested through a portion of Ananta.**

*sahasra-patra*—of a thousand petals; *kamalam*—lotus; *gokulākhyam*—known by the name Gokula; *mahat-padam*—the supreme, most excellent abode; *tat-karṇikāram*—whose pericarp is that; *tad-dhāma*—His abode; *tat*—that realm; *ananta-aṁśa*—through a portion of Ananta; *sambhavam*—manifested.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

Now, beginning with the words *sahasra-patram* and so on, Brahmā describes the eternal abode that substantiates Kṛṣṇa's nature as just described.

The lotus whose petals number in the thousands is itself composed of *cintāmaṇi* gems, as will later be stated in the words *bhūmiś cintāmaṇi-gaṇamayī*, "the ground is composed of multitudes of *cintāmaṇi* gems." This is its form. And it is the *mahat-padam*, the greatest and most excellent abode. The meaning is that it is the abode of the great Śrī Kṛṣṇa or the great devotees *(mahā-bhāgavatas)*, and is of the nature of Mahā-Vaikuṇṭha[12].

Since various kinds of such abodes are heard of, he specifies it by means of a distinguishing qualifier: *gokulākhyam*. The name *gokula* is a conventional designation, whose meaning is "the place where the cowherds reside." According to the principle that conventional meaning overrides etymological meaning, the conventional meaning is understood here.

With this intention it is said in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.10.39*)*: *bhagavān gokuleśvaraḥ*. "Bhagavān is the Lord of Gokula." Consequently, the later portions of this work should also be explained in a manner consistent with this understanding. This is the great abode suitable for the residence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa together with Śrī Nanda, Yaśodā, and the others. Their dwelling together with Him will be described further ahead.

Now the nature of that abode is stated beginning with *tat*. It is that realm whose eternal manifestation arises through a portion of Ananta, understood as a particular division of effulgence belonging to Baladeva.

[12] Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura later distinguishes Mahā-Vaikuṇṭha from Goloka. Here the phrase "of the form or nature of Mahā-Vaikuṇṭha" indicates that Gokula possesses the fully transcendental nature of the spiritual realm, while the following word *gokulākhyam* identifies its particular character as Kṛṣṇa's abode where the cowherds reside.

This is also to be understood through the *Tantra*.

Alternatively, it is that realm where Śrī Baladeva, of whom Ananta is a portion, has His own manifestation and dwelling place.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

(Here the transcendental Gokula-dhāma, the abode of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's spiritual pastimes, is being described.)

**Verse 2**

**Gokula is Kṛṣṇa's supreme abode. It is eternally manifest through a portion of Ananta. That Gokula is a transcendental lotus possessing thousands of petals, and within it the whorl is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's residence.**

Goloka-dhāma, also known as Gokula, is not a created or temporary place. It is eternal and transcendental by nature, existing before, during, and after any material manifestation. The expression *anantāṁśa-sambhavam* indicates that the principle of infinitude *(ānantya-dharma)* is Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *śaiṣī-śakti*,[13] and Śrī Baladeva, who embodies Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, is the shelter of that potency. The manifestation of Ananta or Śeṣa Bhagavān is one expression of this potency. Both the spiritual and material worlds are manifested through it.

Śrī Baladeva's unlimited nature reveals itself in two ways. The first is spiritual infinity, manifest as unlimited transcendental abodes. The second is mundane infinity, manifest as unlimited inert material worlds. The material infinity, constituting the one-quarter manifestation, will be discussed later in its proper place. The infinite spiritual realm, comprising three quarters of Bhagavān's opulence, is beyond all lamentation, mortality, and fear. It is fully self-luminous and composed entirely of pure conscious existence. This vast spiritual realm is also known as Mahā-Vaikuṇṭha or Paravyoma-dhāma.

Within that same spiritual infinity, in its most beautiful manifestation, Gokula or Goloka is eternally manifest as the abode of supreme sweetness.

Mahā-Vaikuṇṭha and Goloka are thus distinct manifestations of the one spiritual potency. Manifest through gradations of spiritual effulgence, this divine abode is of unsurpassed beauty and charm. It is sometimes called Mahā-

[13] The potency of Śeṣa who is also known as Ananta (infinite).

Nārāyaṇa-dhāma or Mūla-Nārāyaṇa-dhāma. Thus Gokula, within Goloka, is the most excellent of all abodes.

This one abode exists simultaneously in two manifestations. In the spiritual realm it is resplendently present as Goloka, and within the material universe it appears as Gokula, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's place of earthly pastimes. There is no fundamental difference between these two. As Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī writes in his *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta*:

*yathā krīḍati tad-bhūmau goloke'pi tathaiva saḥ*
*adha urddhatayā bhedo'nayoḥ kalpate kevalam*

"Just as Kṛṣṇa performs His playful pastimes in Gokula within the material universe, so also He performs the same pastimes in Goloka above."

The only difference between Goloka and Gokula is conceived in terms of higher and lower situation. In all other respects they are one. Whatever exists in Goloka-dhāma in the spiritual realm is equally and splendidly present in Gokula, Śrī Kṛṣṇa's place of earthly pastimes.

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī confirms this in the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbha*: Goloka and Gokula are non-different, but by the influence of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's inconceivable potency, *acintya-śakti*, Goloka is situated in the highest territory of the spiritual realm, while the Gokula of Mathurā-maṇḍala is situated in the material universe of the one-quarter manifestation.

How the transcendental abode of the three-quarter manifestation can be simultaneously present in the inferior material world of the one-quarter manifestation lies beyond the capacity of the conditioned soul's ordinary intelligence. It can only be understood through the grace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *acintya-śakti*. Since Gokula is a transcendental abode, even though it appears within the universe of five material elements, it is not subject to any limitation imposed by mundane time and space. It remains in an unobstructed state as the supreme Vaikuṇṭha reality *(parama-vaikuṇṭha-tattva)*. However, the conditioned soul, whose senses are absorbed in inert material nature, perceives the transcendental Gokula through material eyes.

A cloud may cover the eyes of an observer, but it cannot cover the Sun. The person standing in the shadow of that cloud sees, with ordinary vision, that the Sun appears to be covered. In the same way, the conditioned soul,

whose senses and intelligence are veiled by material defects, inevitably superimposes the qualities of material nature upon the transcendental abode of Gokula. Only one whose consciousness has been purified through devotional service can perceive Gokula as it truly is.

The knowledge that produces a state of self-satisfaction *(ātmāramatā)* by negating material superimposition can never reveal the Vaikuṇṭha principle situated above the impersonal Brahman of diffused eternal existence, consciousness, and bliss.

Therefore there is no possibility of beholding Goloka or Gokula through the effort of *jñāna* alone, for those who pursue knowledge rely upon their own subtle vision in their search for truth and do not seek the grace of Kṛṣṇa, who possesses inconceivable potency. Efforts to attain Goloka-Vṛndāvana through such spiritual knowledge centered upon the self are therefore futile. Likewise, the endeavor of *yoga*, which belongs to the path of regulated action, does not qualify one for such grace. Consequently, these paths cannot carry one beyond *kaivalya*, the state of undifferentiated liberation, to seek the spiritual pastimes that exist above it.

Those who take shelter of pure devotion *(śuddha-bhakti)* alone receive the grace of Kṛṣṇa, who is endowed with inconceivable potency. Through Kṛṣṇa's grace, the bondage of material nature is removed and the good fortune of beholding Gokula arises. Within this, perfection through devotion *(bhakti-siddhi)* is of two kinds: *svarūpa-siddhi*, the perfection of one's eternal spiritual identity, and *vastu-siddhi*, the perfection of attaining the actual spiritual reality. At the time of *svarūpa-siddhi*, Goloka is beheld within Gokula, and at the time of *vastu-siddhi*, Gokula is beheld within Goloka. This reciprocal vision is a profound mystery. The attainment of pure love *(prema)* is *svarūpa-siddhi*; thereafter, when by Kṛṣṇa's will both the gross and subtle material coverings of the conditioned soul are removed, *vastu-siddhi* takes place. In any case, until *bhakti-siddhi* is attained, Gokula appears distinct from Goloka in the realm of conceptual understanding.

Gokula, the eternal abode of Kṛṣṇa, is His eternal dwelling, manifest as a transcendental thousand-petaled lotus of endless spiritual variety.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana today appear very different from the Māyāpur and Vṛndāvana of the time of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Six Gosvāmīs. Much of their former rural simplicity has given way to high-rise buildings and relentless traffic, often creating the impression that the veil concealing the true nature of the *dhāma* from our vision has grown denser.

Yet beyond these external changes, that veil may seem denser still because of the inner condition we bring with us when we visit the *dhāma*. The modern pilgrim often arrives with a mind and senses overwhelmed by the ceaseless noise of the digital age and by countless distractions and temptations unknown to earlier generations.

As Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura points out in his commentary, "the conditioned soul, whose senses and intelligence are veiled by material defects, inevitably superimposes the qualities of material nature upon the transcendental abode of Gokula." If this was true in Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's time, what to speak of those living in the twenty-first century, whose senses and intelligence are continually subjected to myriad forms of distraction.

But Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura does not leave us in despair. He assures us that the *dhāma* itself remains eternally pure and untouched, and that "one whose consciousness has been purified through devotional service can perceive Gokula as it truly is." However dense the modern veil may appear, the remedy remains the same: *śuddha-bhakti*, pure devotional service.

# VERSES 3-4




कर्णिकारं महद्यन्त्रं षट्कोणं वज्रकीलकम् ।
षडङ्गषट्पदीस्थानं प्रकृत्या पुरुषेण च ॥
प्रेमानन्दमहानन्दरसेनावस्थितं हि यत् ।
ज्योतीरूपेण मनुना कामबीजेन सङ्गतम् ॥ ३ ॥

तत्-किञ्जल्कं तद्-अंशानां तत्-पत्राणि श्रियाम् अपि ॥ ४ ॥

*karṇikāraṁ mahad-yantraṁ ṣaṭ-koṇaṁ vajra-kīlakam*
*ṣaḍ-aṅga-ṣaṭ-padī-sthānaṁ prakṛtyā puruṣeṇa ca*
*premānanda-mahānanda-rasenāvasthitaṁ hi yat*
*jyotī-rūpeṇa manunā kāma-bījena saṅgatam*

*tat-kiñjalkaṁ tad-aṁśānāṁ tat-patrāṇi śriyām api*

3

*karṇikāram*—the pericarp, the central portion of that thousand-petaled lotus which is the heart of Vraja; *mahad-yantram*—a great and unique mystical diagram; *ṣaṭ-koṇam*—having six corners; *vajra-kīlakam*—having a diamond-like pivot; *ṣaḍ-aṅga-ṣaṭ-padī-sthānam*—the seat of the six-limbed, six-part *mantra*; *prakṛtyā*—by *prakṛti*, here denoting Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself in His aspect as the causal ground of the *mantra; puruṣeṇa ca*—and by *puruṣa,* here denoting Śrī Kṛṣṇa as the presiding deity of the *mantra*; *premānanda*—of the bliss of pure spiritual love; *mahānanda*—of supreme transcendental joy; *rasena*—by the mellow, the concentrated spiritual flavor; *avasthitam*—pervaded and established; *hi yat*—that which indeed; *jyotī-rūpeṇa*—in the form of self-luminous effulgence; *manunā*—in the form of *mantra*; *kāma-bījena*—by the *kāma-bīja*; *saṅgatam*—endowed, accompanied.

4

*tat-kiñjalkam*—the filaments of that lotus; *tad-aṁśānām*—of His portions, the intimate associates who are of His own nature; *tat-patrāṇi*—the petals of that lotus; *śrīyām api*—belong to the divine consorts of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, headed by Śrī Rādhā.

**The pericarp of that transcendental lotus—the innermost heart of Gokula—is a great mystical *yantra* of six points, whose central pivot is diamond-like and situated in the form of the seed. In that six-pointed realm, the seat of the six-limbed, six-part *mantra* is established, presided over by Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself as both *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. The entire abode is established in the *rasa* of *premānanda* and *mahānanda*, and is endowed with the self-luminous *mantra* together with the *kāma-bīja*. The filaments of that lotus are the abodes of Kṛṣṇa's intimate associates, who possess supreme love and are of His nature. The petals of the lotus belong to the divine consorts headed by Śrī Rādhā.**

## DIG-DARŚINĪ-ṬĪKĀ

Jīva Gosvāmī

In these two verses beginning with *karṇikāram*, Brahmā describes the principal seat of the great king of *mantras* known as the glorious eighteen-syllable *mantra*[14], which is served by all groups of *mantras*.

*Mahad-yantram* means that its representation alone is everywhere drawn in the form of a *yantra* for the purpose of worship. He describes its nature as *ṣaṭkoṇaṁ vajra-kīlakam*. *Ṣaṭkoṇam* means that it has six angles. *Vajra-kīlakam* means that the pericarp is adorned with a diamond-like pivot in the form of the seed. And within the *mantra*, the four-syllabled *kīlaka*, indicated by the syllable *ca*, should be understood as being of the nature of the pivot.

Next he explains the purpose of the six-cornered form: *ṣaḍ-aṅga-ṣaṭpadī-sthānam prakṛtyā puruṣeṇa ca.* This means that the *yantra* is the seat of the glorious eighteen-syllable *mantra*, which possesses six limbs. *Prakṛti* refers to Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself in the form of the abode of the *mantra*, because He is of the nature of the cause. Thus it is stated in the remembrance of the *ṛṣi* and the others: "Kṛṣṇa is *prakṛti*." And *puruṣa* also refers to Him. He Himself exists as the presiding deity of that *mantra*. Thus that *yantra* is established and presided over by both of these.

Kṛṣṇa is understood in four ways: as the cause of the *mantra*, as the collection of syllables constituting the *mantra*, as the presiding deity of the *mantra*, and as the worshipable form.

Previously He was described as the worshipable Lord in the statement: *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ.* Later He will be described in the form of syllables beginning with: *kāmaḥ kṛṣṇāya.* As stated in the *Hayaśīrṣa Pañcarātra*: "O *brāhmaṇa*, knowers of truth declare the identity of the deity and the *mantra*, as the relationship between that which is denoted and that which denotes."

And in the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* it is said:

"Just as the one air, entering the world, assumes corresponding forms according to each form, so also Kṛṣṇa, though one, appears in fivefold form through sound for the welfare of the universe."

[14] Jīva Gosvāmī is referring to the Gopāla *mantra* of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition: *klīṁ kṛṣṇāya govindāya gopījana-vallabhāya svāhā*.

In some places Durgā is described as the presiding deity because the intention is to express the non-difference between the potency and the possessor of potency. Thus it is said in the *Gautamīya-kalpa:*

"Nārada is said to be its *ṛṣi*, and the meter is remembered as *virāṭ*. Śrī Kṛṣṇa is its deity, and Durgā is its presiding deity. He who is Kṛṣṇa is indeed Durgā, and she who is Durgā is indeed Kṛṣṇa. One who sees difference between these two is never liberated from material existence."

Thus Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, in the form of His intrinsic potency, is there called Durgā. Therefore this Durgā should not be understood to be a manifestation of Māyā. And the etymological explanation here is this: "She is known and understood only through great effort, difficult worship, and much endeavor."

Thus also in the *Śrī Nārada Pañcarātra*, in the dialogue between Śruti and Vidyā, it says:

> She alone, the supreme beloved, knows Him. She herself is Durgā, being of His very nature. She is the supreme transcendental potency, having the very nature of Mahā-Viṣṇu *(mahā-viṣṇu-svarūpiṇī)*. By knowledge of Her alone, attainment of the Supreme Lord of lords occurs within but a moment and not otherwise. She alone, whose nature is the entirety of divine love, is Gokuleśvarī, the Lady of Gokula. Through Her the original Lord, the Lord of all, is easily known. *Bhakti*, the wealth of worship, worships the beloved. She is known only with extreme difficulty; therefore She is called the *prakṛti* of the Lord. Saintly persons describe Her as Durgā, the beloved of indivisible *rasa*. The covering potency of this Lord of all is Mahāmāyā. By Her the entire world, whose inhabitants identify with their material bodies, is bewildered.

Similarly, in the *Sammohana Tantra*, Durgā says:

*yan nāmnā nāmni durgāhaṁ guṇair guṇavatī hy aham |*
*yad-vaibhavān mahālakṣmī rādhā nityā parādvayā ||*

"It is by His name that I am known as Durgā, and by His qualities that I possess all qualities. By His splendor I exist as Mahālakṣmī and as Rādhā, the eternal and supreme nondual reality."

Furthermore, the *premānanda* and *mahānanda rasas* mentioned in Brahmā's verse are of the nature of *prema* and differ according to degrees of maturation.

*Jyotīrūpeṇa* means "by self-luminous effulgence," and *manunā* means "in the form of *mantra*." Although the *kāma-bīja* is included within the root *mantra*, it is nevertheless mentioned separately because in some contexts it is regarded independently.

Having thus described that abode, Brahmā now describes its surrounding features with the half verse (4):

*tat-kiñjalkaṁ tad-aṁśānāṁ tat-patrāṇi śriyām api*

The filaments *(kiñjalkāḥ)* of that pericarp-like abode are rows of elevated peaks forming encircling ramparts. And these belong to His portions; they are the abodes of those intimate associates who possess supreme love and are of His kind. By the very use of the name Gokula, their similarity of nature to Him has already been indicated.

Thus Śrī Bādarāyaṇi himself says: "Having slain the demon Kakudmī, and being praised by His own people, Kṛṣṇa entered the cowherd settlement together with Balarāma, delighting the eyes of the *gopīs*."

Therefore the petals of that lotus are the abodes in the form of groves belonging to the beloveds of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, namely Śrī Rādhā and the other *gopīs*. Their identity as *gopīs* is indicated by the *mantra* itself through their names. Their identity as Rādhā and the others is established by statements such as this from the *Bṛhad-gautamīya*: "Rādhikā, the supreme goddess, is said to be wholly pervaded by Kṛṣṇa. She embodies all Lakṣmīs, all beauty, and the supreme power of enchantment." And by this fragment of the *Matsya Purāṇa*: "Rādhā in the forest of Vṛndāvana..." And by this one from the *Ṛk-pariśiṣṭa*: "By Rādhā, Mādhava is radiant; and by Mādhava, Rādhikā..."

At the junctions where the raised tips of the petals meet, pathways should be understood to exist, and beyond those junctions are the cowherd settlements. Because the entire lotus is itself Gokula, and because those settlements are included within Gokula, they too are of the same nature.

Another text states:

*sahasrāraṁ padmaṁ dala-tatiṣu devībhir abhitaḥ*
*parītaṁ go-saṅghair api nikhila-kiñjalka-militaiḥ*

*kavāṭe yasyāsti svayam akhila-śaktyā prakaṭita-*
*prabhāvaḥ śrī-parama-puruṣas taṁ kila bhaje*

"I worship that Supreme Person whose thousand-petaled lotus is surrounded on all sides by goddesses situated upon its rows of petals, and also by groups of *gopas* gathered among all the filaments. Within its inner gate, the glory of that Supreme Person is directly manifested through all potencies."

Here the reading *go-saṅghaiḥ* ("with groups of *gopas*") is more appropriate. The word *gosaṅkhyāḥ* means "cowherds," as stated in the *Amarakośa*[15]: *gopā gopāla-gosaṅkhya-godhug-ābhīra-vallavāḥ. "Gopā, gopāla, gosaṅkhya, godhuga, ābhīra,* and *vallava* are synonyms."

*Kavāṭe* means "within the gate," in the central region of the pericarp. The meaning is that the Supreme Person, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, manifests His glory there through all His potencies.

## Annotations 1

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The Absolute Truth is understood as consisting of two inseparable aspects: the *śaktimān*, the possessor of potencies, and the *śakti*, the potency itself. Just as fire cannot be separated from heat, or the Sun from its light, the Supreme Lord cannot be separated from His energy. Because His energy proceeds entirely from His own being and exists as His inherent potency, it is considered non-different from Him.

Vaiṣṇava philosophy distinguishes two principal expressions of the Lord's potency. The first is Mahāmāyā, the external material potency, which governs the world of matter and keeps the conditioned soul bound within the cycle of birth and death. The second is Yogamāyā, the internal spiritual potency, which governs the Lord's transcendental pastimes and is accessible only to those who have received Kṛṣṇa's grace. These two are never to be confused: Mahāmāyā binds, while Yogamāyā liberates and serves.

Here the name "Durgā" appears in both contexts. In the popular and scriptural usage familiar to most readers, Durgā is associated with Mahāmāyā, the governing power of material creation, maintenance, and dissolution. In

[15] A Sanskrit dictionary and thesaurus

this aspect she carries out the will of the Supreme Lord within the material universe, acting on His behalf as the divine energy described in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.14): *daivī hy eṣā guṇa-mayī mama māyā duratyayā*. "This divine energy of Mine, composed of the three modes of nature, is very difficult to overcome."

However, as Jīva Gosvāmī explains here, the name "Durgā" carries a deeper esoteric meaning in the context of these verses. Here it functions as a designation for the supreme internal potency of the Lord—the *hlādinī-śakti*, the potency of divine bliss, whose fullest personal expression is Śrī Rādhā. She is called "Durgā," meaning that which is reached only with great difficulty, because the mystery of Her pure divine love is utterly beyond the reach of persons whose consciousness is conditioned by material conceptions. This is not the Durgā who governs matter, but the supreme transcendental potency who governs the Lord's innermost pastimes of love.

As the original source of all spiritual energies and expansions, She is completely one in essence with the Supreme Lord Himself; at the same time, She is eternally distinct for the sake of loving exchange *(rasa),* yet absolutely non-different in essence and reality *(tattva)*.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 3

**The central portion of that spiritual lotus is the pericarp, the abode of Kṛṣṇa. It is a particular mystical diagram consisting of a hexagon and presided over by *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. In the middle is situated the pivot in the form of *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, endowed with spiritual potency and shining like a diamond. The great eighteen-syllable *mantra* is manifested there as the seat of the sixfold, six-part arrangement, being situated in six divisions and six limbs.**

Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are of two kinds: manifest and unmanifest. The Vṛndāvana pastimes visible to the eyes of ordinary men are the manifest Kṛṣṇa pastimes, and those Kṛṣṇa pastimes which cannot be perceived by material eyes are the

unmanifest ones. In Goloka, the unmanifest pastimes are always manifest, and in Gokula the unmanifest pastimes become manifest to worldly eyes when Kṛṣṇa so desires.

In the *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha*, Śrī Jīva has said: "The manifest pastimes are the manifestation arising from the unmanifest pastimes." In other words, the manifestation of the unmanifest pastimes constitutes the manifest pastimes. Again, in the *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha* he has said: "Goloka is a special manifestation of Śrī Vṛndāvana. That manifestation which appears as the sphere accommodating the manifest pastimes in the material world is properly to be understood as Goloka." This means that although Kṛṣṇa's pastimes become manifest in the material world only at certain times, they continue eternally in Goloka. There they are always manifest, although they remain unmanifest to the eyes of the material world. Therefore the statement of Śrī Rūpa in the *Bhāgavatāmṛta* resolves this matter: "That which is known by the name 'Goloka' is the glory of Gokula; and its greatness lies in the magnificence of that self-same identity." The meaning is that the glory of Gokula's own identical nature is the enhancement of its magnificence. Therefore Goloka is merely the opulence of Gokula. Although all the pastimes of Śrī Kṛṣṇa are unmanifest in Gokula, they are eternally manifest in Goloka-dhāma. In relation to conditioned souls, the manifestation in Goloka of those unmanifest pastimes—Goloka being the opulent expansion of Gokula—is of two kinds: one consists of *mantra* worship, and the other consists of spontaneous relish.

Śrī Jīva has said that one type is fixed in a particular place and consists of meditation on a particular *mantra*. Meditation on the *mantra* remains fixed in the place appropriate for one specific pastime; that manifestation of Goloka perceived in meditation is the pastime consisting of *mantra* worship.

The pastime that extends through many places in diverse playful movements is manifold and spontaneous; therefore it is called *svārasikī*. Both meanings are present in this verse.

One meaning is that within the eighteen-syllable *līlā-mantra*, the words of the *mantra* are placed in various positions, thereby revealing one specific pastime of Kṛṣṇa. For example: *klīṁ kṛṣṇāya govindāya gopījana-vallabhāya svāhā*. This *mantra* is called the sixfold, six-part *mantra*:

(1) *kṛṣṇāya*
(2) *govindāya*
(3) *gopījana*
(4) *vallabhāya*
(5) *svā*
(6) *hā*

When these six limbs and six divisions are successively placed, the arrangement of the *mantra* becomes manifest. The great hexagonal mystical diagram is of this kind, with the seed, the *kāma-bīja* "*klīṁ*", situated internally as the pivot of the diagram.

By drawing such a diagram and continuously contemplating spiritual truth, realization of *tattva* arises like the crescent moon gradually appearing.

In the *Gautamīya-tantra* the following instruction is given: "By the word *svā* is indicated the knower of the field, and by *hā* the supreme spiritual nature."

According to the opinion of the *Śrī Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*: "From the word *govindāya* are understood the *surabhi* cows and the cowherd community. From the word *gopījana* are understood the fourteen branches of knowledge. From the word *vallabha*..." and so forth.

By meanings of this kind there arises realization of the pastime situated in one place and consisting of *mantra* worship. This is the purport of *mantra* worship.

The general purport is this: One who has an intense desire to enter Kṛṣṇa's spiritual pastimes should establish service to Kṛṣṇa according to his own spiritual identity, together with deliberation upon knowledge of relationship generated from devotional *rasa*.

Through realization of the following forms, relationship is established: (1) the nature of Kṛṣṇa, (2) the nature of Kṛṣṇa's spiritual Vraja pastimes and enjoyments, (3) the nature of His associates, the *gopīs*, (4) the nature of surrendering oneself to Kṛṣṇa in the mood of following those beloved *gopīs*, (5) the conscious nature of the pure soul, and (6) spiritual nature itself, the disposition for service to Kṛṣṇa.

When realization of these forms awakens, relationship is established. Thereby, through steadfastness in the practice whose nature is union with the

self, one comes to understand Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the supreme shelter in the form of the *puruṣa*, and the "I" in the form of *prakṛti* as the maidservant of Śrī Rādhā. The bliss of serving Bhagavān alone constitutes true *rasa*. This is the meaning.

In the stage of practice, the pastimes of Goloka and Gokula are approached through meditation and *mantra* worship; in the perfected state, the unrestricted relishing of those pastimes arises. This is the condition of Goloka or Gokula, and it will gradually become manifest.

The meaning of the words *jyotī-rūpeṇa manunā* is this: as the spiritual meaning of the *mantra* becomes manifest, one joins with it pure *kṛṣṇa-prema* in the form of transcendental desire and continues to render service. In this way, one becomes established in the *rasa* of *premānanda* and *mahānanda*. Such eternal pastimes eternally shine forth in Goloka.

### Verse 4

**The pericarp of that eternal abode named Gokula is the six-pointed land of Kṛṣṇa's residence. Its *kiñjalka*, meaning its filaments or petals, are the abodes of the *gopas*, who are expansions of Kṛṣṇa's self and are pure devotees possessing supreme love, being of the same nature as Kṛṣṇa. They shine forth like a surrounding rampart. The expanded petals of that lotus are the special bowers belonging to Śrī Rādhikā and the other beloved consorts of the Lord.**

The spiritual Gokula is lotus-shaped. Its central pericarp is six-pointed in form. Within it, the essence of the eighteen-syllable *mantra*, namely the truth of Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa *(rādhā-kṛṣṇa-tattva)*, is situated at the center, and in accordance with that, the personal bodily expansions *(kāya-vyūha)* manifested from His intrinsic potency are present. The seed *(bīja)* is Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

The *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* states:

*tasmād oṁkāra-sambhūto gopālo viśva-sambhavaḥ*
*klīṁ oṁkārasya caikatvaṁ paṭhyate brahma-vādibhiḥ*

"Therefore Gopāla, the source of the universe, is manifested from *oṁkāra*. The knowers of Brahman declare that *klīṁ* and *oṁkāra* are one."

*Oṁkāra* signifies both the potency and Gopāla, the possessor of potency. Since the word *klīṁ* signifies that same *oṁkāra*, the *kāma-bīja*, the seed-syllable *klīṁ*, denotes the *tattva* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

## Annotations 2

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The *vajra-kīlaka*, the diamond-like pivot at the center of the six-pointed *yantra*, should not be understood merely as a geometric form. Jīva Gosvāmī describes it as a diamond-like pivot situated in the pericarp of the lotus, while Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura further explains that it is established there in the form of *kṛṣṇa-tattva*, endowed with spiritual potency. Thus the central pivot symbolizes Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, the supreme reality upon whom the entire structure of Gokula rests.

In Vaiṣṇava understanding, the symbol, the *mantra*, the divine principle *(kṛṣṇa-tattva)*, and Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person, are spiritually non-different, though understood separately according to their respective modes of manifestation.

For this reason, in the illustration of these verses Kṛṣṇa is shown standing upon the diamond-like center of the *yantra*, visually expressing Him as the fixed spiritual center of all existence.

# VERSE 5




चतुरस्रं तत्परितः श्वेतद्वीपाख्यमद्भुतम् ।
चतुरस्रं चतुर्मूर्तेश्चतुर्धाम चतुष्कृतम् ॥

चतुर्भिः पुरुषार्थैश्च चतुर्भिर्हेतुभिर्वृतम् ।
शूलैर्दशभिरानद्धमूर्ध्वाधो दिग्विदिक्ष्वपि ॥

अष्टभिर्निधिभिर्जुष्टमष्टभिः सिद्धिभिस्तथा ।
मनुरूपैश्च दशभिर्दिक्पालैः परितो वृतम् ॥

श्यामैर्गौरैश्च रक्तैश्च शुक्लैश्च पार्षदर्षभैः ।
शोभितं शक्तिभिस्ताभिरद्भुताभिः समन्ततः ॥ ५ ॥

*catur-asraṁ tat-paritaḥ śvetadvīpākhyam adbhutam*
*catur-asraṁ catur-mūrteś catur-dhāma catuṣ-kṛtam*

*caturbhiḥ puruṣārthaiś ca caturbhir hetubhir vṛtam*
*śūlair daśabhir ānaddham ūrdhādho dig-vidikṣv api*

*aṣṭabhir nidhibhir juṣṭam aṣṭabhiḥ siddhibhis tathā*
*manu-rūpaiś ca daśabhir dik-pālaiḥ parito vṛtam*

*śyāmair gauraiś ca raktaiś ca śuklaiś ca pārṣadarṣabhaiḥ*
*śobhitaṁ śaktibhis tābhir adbhutābhiḥ samantataḥ*

**Surrounding Gokula on every side is a wonderful quadrangular region known as Śvetadvīpa. It is divided fourfold into the four abodes of the four manifestations of the *catur-vyūha*.**
**That fourfold realm is surrounded by the four goals of human life and by their four causes. It is enclosed by ten tridents situated above, below, and in the cardinal and intermediate directions.**
**It is endowed with eight treasures and surrounded on all sides by the ten guardians of the directions in the forms of their respective *mantras*.**
**It is adorned everywhere by the foremost associates, whose complexions are dark blue, golden, red, and white, and by those wonderful divine potencies.**

*catur-asram*—four-sided, square; *tat-paritaḥ*—surrounding that; *śvetadvīpa-ākhyam*—known by the name Śvetadvīpa; *adbhutam*—wonderful, astonishing; *catur-asram*—four-sided, square; *catuḥ-mūrteḥ*—of the four manifestations of the *catur-vyūha*, namely Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha; *catuḥ-dhāma*—the four abodes; *catuṣ-kṛtam*—divided into four parts; *caturbhiḥ*—by four; *puruṣa-arthaiḥ*—goals of human life, namely *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*; *ca*—and; *caturbhiḥ*—by four; *hetubhiḥ*—causes or means of attainment, identified in the commentaries with the four Vedas; *vṛtam*—surrounded; *śūlaiḥ*—by tridents; *daśabhiḥ*—ten; *ānaddham*—bound, enclosed; *ūrdhva-adhaḥ*—above and below; *dik-vidikṣu*—in the cardinal and intermediate directions; *api*—also; *aṣṭabhiḥ*—by eight; *nidhibhiḥ*—treasures, namely Mahāpadma, Padma, Śaṅkha, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Kunda, and Nīla; *juṣṭam*—endowed with; *aṣṭabhiḥ*—

by eight; *siddhibhiḥ*—mystic perfections, namely *aṇimā*, *laghimā*, *prāpti*, *prākāmya*, *mahimā*, *īśitva*, *vaśitva*, and *kāmāvasāyitā*; *tathā*—likewise; *manu-rūpaiḥ*—in the forms of *mantras*; *ca*—and; *daśabhiḥ*—by ten; *dik-pālaiḥ*—guardians of the directions; *paritaḥ*—on all sides; *vṛtam*—surrounded; *śyāmaiḥ*—by dark-blue-complexioned ones; *gauraiḥ*—by golden-complexioned ones; *ca*—and; *raktaiḥ*—by red-complexioned ones; *ca*—and; *śuklaiḥ*—by white-complexioned ones; *ca*—and; *pārṣada-ṛṣabhaiḥ*—by the foremost associates; *śobhitam*—adorned, beautified; *śaktibhiḥ*—by potencies; *tābhiḥ*—by those; *adbhutābhiḥ*—wonderful; *samantataḥ*—on all sides.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

by Jīva Gosvāmī

Now Brahmā describes the surrounding regions of Gokula.

Outside the central region of Gokula, on every side, lies a square region known as Śvetadvīpa. The name Śvetadvīpa may also designate Gokula itself. Nevertheless, because Gokula contains distinct inner regions, this particular region is separately known by the established name Śvetadvīpa.[16] Within this quadrangular realm, however, the inner circular region should be understood to be known as Vṛndāvana. Thus the *Svāyambhuva-āgama* states:

*dhyāyettatra viśuddhātmā idaṁ sarvaṁ krameṇaiva*
*tan madhye vṛndāvanaṁ kusumitaṁ nānā-vṛkṣair vihaṅgamaiḥ saṁsmaret*

"There, the purified soul should meditate upon all this in due sequence. Within it one should remember Vṛndāvana, flowering and filled with many trees and birds."

In the *Bṛhad-vāmana Purāṇa*, the personified *Vedas* pray to Bhagavān:

*ānanda-rūpam iti yad vidanti hi purā vidaḥ*
*tad rūpaṁ darśayāsmākaṁ yadi deyo varo hi naḥ*

"O Lord, if You desire to grant us a boon, then show us that form which the sages of old know as bliss personified."

[16] See *Annotations* and the diagram for further clarification.

Hearing this, Bhagavān revealed Gokula, which is beyond material nature, consisting solely of the bliss of direct spiritual experience, imperishable and beyond material limitation. Within it lies the forest named Vṛndāvana, filled with wish-fulfilling trees.

That quadrangular realm is divided into four sections, the four abodes of the four manifestations of the *catur-vyūha*, namely Śrī Vāsudeva and the others. Because they engage in divine pastimes, they should be understood to reside above that region in divine aerial vehicles.

The phrase *hetubhiḥ* refers to the means of attaining the respective four goals of human life. The ten guardians of the directions headed by Indra surround that realm in the forms of their respective *mantras*. The four *Vedas* beginning with the *Sāma Veda* are also indicated by these *mantra* forms.

This realm called Goloka is established in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*.

It is adorned everywhere by wonderful potencies beginning with Vimalā, and by the foremost associates whose bodily complexions are dark blue, golden, red, and white.

Thus the nature of that realm is described in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.28.10–17) as follows:

*nandastv atīndriyaṁ dṛṣṭvā loka-pāla-mahodayam*
*kṛṣṇe ca sanātibhyo vismito 'bravīt*

*te cautsukya-dhiyo rājan matvā gopās tam īśvaram*
*api naḥ sva-gatiṁ sūkṣmām upādhāsyad adhīśvaraḥ*

*iti svānāṁ sa bhagavān vijñāyākhila-dṛk svayam*
*saṅkalpa-siddhaye teṣāṁ kṛpayaitad acintayat*

*jano vai loka etasminn avidyā-kāma-karmabhiḥ*
*uccāvacāsu gatiṣu na veda svāṁ gatiṁ bhraman*

*iti sañcintya bhagavān mahā-kāruṇiko hariḥ*
*darśayām āsa lokaṁ svaṁ gopānāṁ tamasaḥ param*

*satyaṁ jñānam anantaṁ yad brahma jyotiḥ sanātanam*
*yad dhi paśyanti munayo guṇāpāye samāhitāḥ*

*te tu brahma-hradaṁ nītā magnāḥ kṛṣṇena coddhṛtāḥ*
*dadṛśur brahmaṇo lokaṁ yatrākrūro 'dhyagāt purā*

*nandādayas tu taṁ dṛṣṭvā paramānanda-nivṛtāḥ*
*kṛṣṇaṁ ca tatra cchandobhiḥ stūyamānaṁ su-vismitāḥ*

Nanda Mahārāja, seeing the extraordinary opulence of the guardians of the worlds and their reverence toward Kṛṣṇa, spoke in astonishment to his kinsmen.

O King Parīkṣit, the cowherd men, filled with eagerness and understanding Kṛṣṇa to be the Supreme Lord, thought: "Will He reveal to us our subtle destination?"

Knowing the hearts of His devotees, Bhagavān, who sees everything, mercifully considered how to fulfill their desire. He thought:

"The living entities in this world wander through higher and lower destinations because of ignorance, material desire, and *karma*, and thus do not know their true destination."

Reflecting in this way, the all-powerful and supremely compassionate Lord revealed to the cowherd men His realm, which is beyond material darkness.

That eternal spiritual effulgence is truth, knowledge, and infinity, and is seen by sages absorbed in meditation when the material modes of nature cease to influence their consciousness.

The cowherd men were taken by Kṛṣṇa to Brahma-hrada, the lake of Brahman. Immersed there and then raised up again by Him, they beheld the spiritual world which Akrūra had formerly seen there.

Seeing that realm, Nanda and the others became filled with supreme bliss, and they saw Kṛṣṇa there being praised by the *Vedas*.

The term *sva-gatim* means "their eternal destination," namely their spiritual abode. The word *sūkṣmām* means "subtle" or "difficult to understand." The word *jana* here specifically refers to the residents of Vraja as Kṛṣṇa's intimate devotees. This is indicated by Bhagavān's statement when He was lifting Govardhana Hill (10.25.18):

*tasmān mac-charaṇaṁ goṣṭhaṁ man-nāthaṁ mat-parigraham*
*gopāye svātma-yogena so 'yaṁ me vrata āhitaḥ*

"Therefore I shall personally protect this community of cowherds, which has taken shelter of Me, whose Lord is Me, and which belongs to Me. This is My solemn vow."

The meaning is that although the residents of Vraja appear within this material world among various embodied conditions, because their true nature is concealed by Kṛṣṇa's humanlike pastimes, they themselves do not fully perceive their eternal spiritual identity.

Thus it is said in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.11.58):

*iti nandādayo gopāḥ kṛṣṇa-rāma-kathāṁ mudā |*
*kurvanto ramamāṇāś ca nāvidan bhava-vedanām ||*

"Nanda and the other cowherds joyfully spent their time hearing and speaking narrations of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, and thus remained unaware of the sufferings of material existence."

Because ignorance, desire, and *karma* possess no power over them, Kṛṣṇa revealed Goloka, their eternal realm, to each of them individually. Since that realm is manifested by His internal potency, it is beyond material nature and therefore inherently composed of eternity, consciousness, and bliss.

How the residents of Vraja, while still physically situated in Vṛndāvana, were able to behold that supreme realm is now explained.

Kṛṣṇa led them to Brahma-hrada, also known as Akrūra-tīrtha. After immersing them there and lifting them out again, He returned them to their previous location, whereupon they saw Goloka, the supreme abode of the Supreme Brahman.

The phrase *mūrdhabhiḥ satya-lokas tu brahma-lokaḥ sanātanaḥ* is cited from the Second Canto (2.5.39) to establish that Brahmaloka here refers not to the material Satyaloka but to the eternal spiritual Vaikuṇṭha realm.

The phrase *svāṁ gatim* indicates their personal destination, and the expression *gopānāṁ svaṁ lokam* establishes that Goloka specifically belongs to the cowherd devotees. By explicitly mentioning Kṛṣṇa Himself in that realm, the text excludes any interpretation that this is merely another Vaikuṇṭha planet and firmly establishes that the realm revealed here is specifically Śrī Goloka.

Therefore, in the *Harivaṁśa*, Indra declares:

*svargād ūrdhvaṁ brahma-loko brahmarṣi-gaṇa-sevitaḥ*
*tatra soma-gatiś caiva jyotiṣāṁ ca mahātmanām*

*tasyopari gavāṁ lokaḥ sādhyās taṁ pālayanti hi*
*sa hi sarva-gataḥ kṛṣṇo mahākāśa-gato mahān*

"Above Svarga lies Brahmaloka, served by the hosts of great sages. There is the destination of Soma and of the great luminous beings. Above that is the world of the cows, protected by the Sādhyas. There the all-pervading and supremely great Kṛṣṇa resides within the supreme spiritual sky."

Therefore any interpretation that this Goloka is merely a material heavenly region cannot be accepted. The description cannot refer to an ordinary celestial world because the Moon and stars do not travel above Dhruvaloka, nor could the Sādhyas govern a realm superior to heaven itself. Moreover, the words *sarva-gataḥ* (all-pervading) can properly apply only to Bhagavān and His transcendental abode, both of which possess inconceivable potency.

Therefore this Goloka must be entirely distinct from any material or cosmic Goloka. In the *Mokṣa-dharma* section of the *Mahābhārata*, Bhagavān declares:

*evaṁ bahu-vidhai rūpaiś carāmīha vasundharām*
*brahma-lokaṁ ca kaunteya golokaṁ ca sanātanam*

"O son of Kuntī, in many forms I wander throughout the Earth, and also through Brahmaloka and the eternal Goloka."

Here the word *brahma-lokam* refers to the eternal Vaikuṇṭha realm beyond material creation. The personified Vedas, Nārada, Garuḍa, Viṣvaksena, and other eternal associates reside there.

Above even that Brahmaloka lies Śrī Goloka.

The Sādhyas who guard Goloka are either eternal associates of Bhagavān functioning as protectors of the directions or, according to another interpretation, they are exalted devotees such as the *gopas* and *gopīs* who assist qualified souls in attaining that supreme perfection.

Thus Śrī Goloka, though the highest of all realms, is nevertheless all-pervading through its inconceivable spiritual potency, just as Śrī Nārāyaṇa Himself is all-pervading.

Even souls who gradually attain liberation may eventually perceive that realm, just as Brahmā once saw Vaikuṇṭha as described in the Second Canto. Yet the residents of Vraja behold it directly even while situated here within Kṛṣṇa's earthly pastimes.

Therefore the Scriptures describe Bhagavān there as *mahāntaṁ vibhum ātmānam,* "the great, all-pervading Supreme Self."

The words *tapo-mayī gatiḥ* mean that this destination is not ordinary but composed of unlimited divine majesty and sovereignty. Here *tapaḥ* means uninterrupted sovereignty, not austerity in the ordinary sense.

Thus Goloka is attained only by those whose minds are completely absorbed in Śrī Kṛṣṇa through pure love and devotion.

Another Vedic passage glorifies that supreme abode as follows:

*tā vāṁ vāstūny uśmasi gomadhyai yatra gāvo bhūri-śṛṅgā ayāsaḥ*
*atrāha tad urugāyasya kṛṣṇaḥ paramaṁ padam avabhāti bhūri*

"We long to attain Your abodes, O Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, where the great-horned cows dwell. There the supreme abode of the all-glorious Kṛṣṇa shines resplendently."

In this way, the *Vedas* proclaim the existence of the supreme realm known as Śrī Goloka.

## BRAHMA-SAṀHITĀ-PRAKĀŚINĪ

by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 5

(The enclosing region of that Gokula is now being described.)

**Around Gokula, on all four sides, lies a wondrous quadrangular region called Śvetadvīpa. Śvetadvīpa is divided into four sections, each of which is the abode of one of the four manifestations: Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, and Aniruddha.**

**That fourfold realm is enclosed by the four goals of human life—*dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*—and by the four Vedas—*Ṛg*, *Sāma*, *Yajur*, and *Atharva*—which, in their *mantra* forms, serve as the respective means of attaining those goals.**

**Ten tridents are fixed in the eight directions and also above and below. The realm is adorned with the eight treasures—Mahāpadma, Padma, Śaṅkha, Makara, Kacchapa, Mukunda, Kunda, and Nīla—and with the eight mystic perfections.**

**The ten directional guardians are present in the ten directions in the forms of their respective *mantras*. The associates of dark blue, golden,**

**red, and white complexion shine on all sides together with the wonderful potencies headed by Vimalā.**[17]

Gokula is primarily the seat of *prema-bhakti*, loving devotional service. Therefore Yamunā, Govardhana, Śrī-kuṇḍa (Rādhā-kuṇḍa) and all the other features situated within the earthly Vraja-maṇḍala are present within it. All the opulences of Vaikuṇṭha are also perceived there as pervading all directions, and the four members of the *catur-vyūha* are present there in their respective places. From those *catur-vyūha* expansions, the Vaikuṇṭha realm of the spiritual sky becomes manifest and expanded. The *mokṣa* in Vaikuṇṭha and the *dharma, artha* and *kāma* found in the various worlds exist there in Gokula in the form of original seeds. The personified Vedas also are there, engaged in singing the glories of the Lord of Gokula.

Those who attempt to attain Goloka through mental prowess, without the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, are obstructed by the ten tridents situated in the ten directions. Those who approach through the path of *yoga* or the path of *jñāna* are pierced by those ten tridents, and thus their pride is defeated. In the Brahman realm, *nirvāṇa* is considered the desirable attainment; that itself forms the trident-like covering surrounding Goloka. *Śūla* means trident, and the limitations produced by the three modes of material nature and by past, present, and future constitute this trident.

The *aṣṭāṅga-yogīs* and the impersonalist knowers of Brahman who rush toward Goloka are cut down by the tridents situated in the ten directions and fall into the pit of despair. Those who approach Goloka through devotional service mixed with reverence become enchanted by the eight mystic

[17] Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's Bengali rendering of Verse 5 includes information that is implied but not spelled out in the original Sanskrit verse, such as the names of the four forms, the four goals of life and the names of the eight jewels. This is a technique followed by Śrīla Prabhupāda in many translations of verses in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, the reason being to make cryptic texts accessible to an audience not familiar with Sanskrit and the intricate aspects of Vaiṣṇava philosophy.

Conversely, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's rendering also omits something present in the original Sanskrit verse, namely the eight mystic perfections. However, the *siddhis* are not lost—they reappear in his commentary.

perfections such as *aṇimā* and by the treasures of opulence such as *mahāpadma*, and thus remain captivated within the Vaikuṇṭha-tattva, which forms the outer covering of Śrī Goloka. Those whose intelligence is still weaker come under the control of the ten directional guardians in the form of *mantras* and return again to the seven worlds.

Thus Goloka is difficult to conquer and difficult to attain.

The divine manifestations who propagate the *dharma* of each age eternally remain there solely to bestow mercy upon devotees who arrive through pure loving devotion. They are surrounded by associates corresponding to Their respective complexions. Śvetadvīpa within Gokula is Their abode. For this reason Vyāsadeva described it by saying: *śvetadvīpa-nāma, navadvīpa-grāma.* "The name Śvetadvīpa refers to the town of Navadvīpa."[18] Within that Śvetadvīpa, the complementary *līlā* of Gokula, namely *navadvīpa-līlā*, eternally exists. Therefore Navadvīpa-maṇḍala, Vraja-maṇḍala and Goloka are one indivisible truth; only through endless varieties of loving moods have they appeared as diverse.

There is yet another confidential truth in this matter, understood by the great souls devoted to supreme loving devotional service directly through Kṛṣṇa's mercy: In the material universe there are fourteen worlds arranged in ascending and descending order. Fruitive workers attached to enjoyment and household life move within the three worlds known as Bhūḥ, Bhuvaḥ and Svaḥ. Great celibates, ascetics and peaceful persons devoted to truth attain Maharloka, Janaloka, Tapoloka and Satyaloka through desireless *dharma* and *yoga*. Above these is the realm of the four-faced Brahmā, and above that the Vaikuṇṭha of Kṣīrodakaśāyī.

The *sannyāsī paramahaṁsas* and the *asuras* slain by Hari cross beyond the Virajā, which means beyond the fourteen worlds, and attain *nirvāṇa* characterized by the disappearance of individual self-awareness.

The *jñāna-bhaktas*, *śuddha-bhaktas*, *prema-bhaktas*, *prema-para-bhaktas*, and *premātura-bhaktas* who cherish Bhagavān's supreme opulence attain residence in Vaikuṇṭha, the spiritual sky constituting the transcendental abode of Nārāyaṇa.

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[18] This statement appears in various *Purāṇas* and *Upaniṣads*, including the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* and *Padma Purāṇa*.

Only the *vrajānugata-bhaktas*, the devotees who follow the mood of Vraja and are devoted to its supreme sweetness, attain Goloka-dhāma.

According to distinctions of *rasa*, the separate positions of devotees in Goloka are determined by Kṛṣṇa's inconceivable potency. The pure followers of Vraja reside in Kṛṣṇa-loka, and the pure followers of Navadvīpa reside in Gaura-loka. Those devotees who are established in the unity of Vraja and Navadvīpa attain the happiness of service simultaneously in Kṛṣṇa-loka and Gaura-loka.[19]

Therefore, in the *Śrī Gopāla-campū*, Śrī Jīva has said:

*yasya khalu lokasya go-lokas tathā go-gopāvāsa-rūpasya*
*śvetadvīpatayā cānanya-spṛṣṭaḥ parama-śuddhatā-samudbuddha-svarūpasya*
*tādṛśa-jñānamaya-katipayamātra-prameya-pātrataya*
*tat-tat-paramatā matā, parama-golokaḥ paramaḥ śvetadvīpa iti*

"That realm is called Goloka because it is the abode of cows and cowherd men. It is also called Śvetadvīpa because its nature is manifest as supreme purity untouched by anything else. Since it can be known only by the few who possess realization of that nature, its supremacy under both designations is acknowledged: the supreme Goloka and the supreme Śvetadvīpa."

The essential purport is this: Although Kṛṣṇa relishes the *līlā* of Vraja, which is *kṛṣṇa-līlā* itself, He still does not attain the happiness of tasting the entirety of *rasa*. Therefore, accepting the mood and golden complexion of Rādhikā, who is the very shelter of *kṛṣṇa-rasa*, Kṛṣṇa performs the eternal *līlā* of tasting Himself. For this reason Goloka in the form of Śvetadvīpa is eternally manifest.

This mood is expressed in the following verse:

*śrī-rādhāyāḥ praṇaya-mahimā kīdṛśo vā*
*anayāivāsvādyo yenādbhuta madhurimā kīdṛśo vā madīyaḥ*

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[19] Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura uses the word *yugapat*, "simultaneously," which appears to indicate that devotees participate in both *kṛṣṇa-līlā* and *gaura-līlā* at the same time. He does not explain whether this entails two distinct *siddha-dehas*. Since he describes Kṛṣṇa-loka and Gaura-loka as distinct manifestations of the one indivisible Goloka-dhāma, the precise manner in which such simultaneous service occurs may belong to the inconceivable nature of the spiritual realm.

*saukhyaṁ cāsyā mad-anubhavataḥ kīdṛśaṁ veti lobhāt*
*tad-bhāvāḍhyaḥ samajani śacī-garbha-sindhau harīnduḥ*

"What is the greatness of Śrī Rādhā's love? What kind of astonishing sweetness in Me does She alone relish? And what sort of happiness does She experience by perceiving My sweetness? Out of longing to know these three things, the moonlike Hari took birth in the ocean of Śacī's womb."

Thus the confidential intention of Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī becomes manifest.

In the *Śrī Caitanya Upaniṣad* (4–5), Brahmā says to the sage Pippalāda:

*rahasyaṁ te vadiṣyāmi—jāhnavī-tīre navadvīpe golokākhye dhāmni govindo dvi-bhujo gauraḥ sarvātmā mahā-puruṣo mahātmā mahā-yogī tri-guṇātītaḥ sattva-rūpo bhaktiṁ loke kāśyatīti*

"I shall tell you a secret. On the bank of the Jāhnavī, in Navadvīpa within the abode called Goloka, Govinda appears as the two-armed Gaura, the self of all, the Supreme Person, the great soul, the great *yogī* beyond the three *guṇas*, whose form is purely spiritual, manifesting devotional service in this world."

Brahmā continues (Verse 6 of the *Caitanya Upaniṣad*):

*eko devaḥ sarva-rūpī mahātmā gaura-rakta-śyāmala-śveta-rūpaḥ*
*caitanyātmā sa vai caitanya-śaktir bhaktākāro bhakti-do bhakti-vedyaḥ*

"The one Supreme Lord, the great soul who assumes all forms, appears in golden, red, dark, and white forms. He is consciousness itself and is endowed with spiritual potency. He appears in the form of a devotee, bestows devotional service, and is known through devotional service."

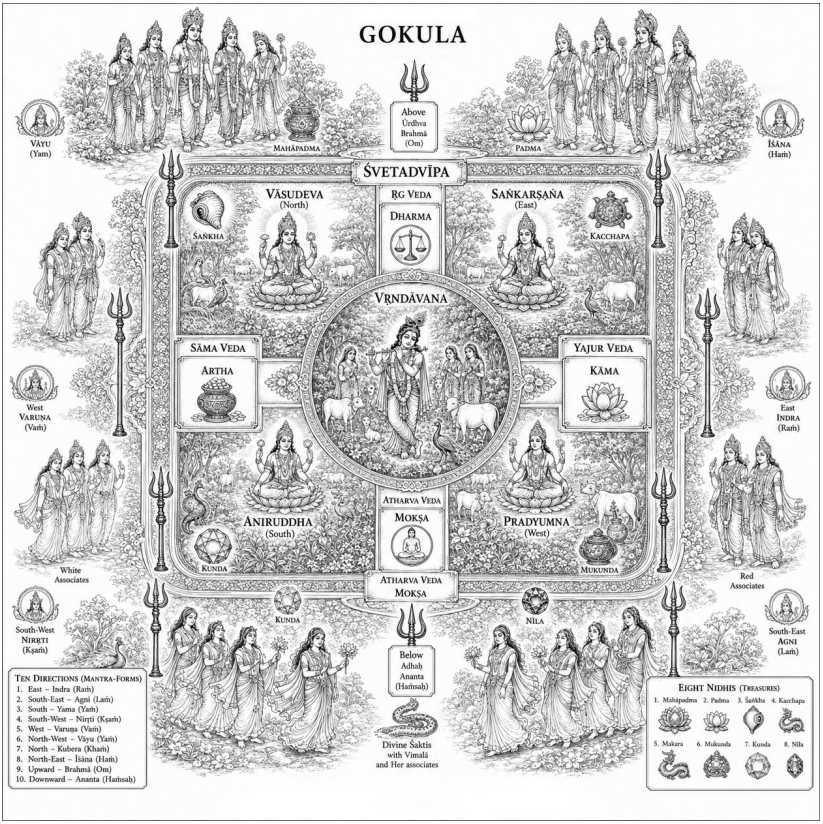
As established by many scriptural statements such as *āsan varṇās trayaḥ, kṛṣṇa-varṇaṁ tviṣākṛṣṇam, yadā paśyaḥ paśyati rukma-varṇam,* and *mahān prabhur vai,* Śrī Gaura, although non-different from Kṛṣṇa, eternally resides in Goloka in the form of eternal Navadvīpa, relishing the *rasa* of *rādhā-kṛṣṇa-līlā* in His Gaura form. This is also understood from these Vedic statements.

Just as, by the power of Yogamāyā, Śrī Kṛṣṇa manifests birth and other pastimes in earthly Gokula, similarly, by the power of Yogamāyā, Śrī Gaura manifests His birth from the womb of Śacī and other pastimes in earthly Navadvīpa. This is an independently existing spiritual reality, not an imagination produced by thought dependent upon *māyā*.

# Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Jīva Gosvāmī's description of Śvetadvīpa should not be understood as a geographical map of Goloka. Rather, it should be seen as a conceptual diagram




based upon Verse 5 and its commentaries. The verse describes a quadrangular region surrounding the central Gokula, yet this Śvetadvīpa is not a separate realm independent of Gokula. Rather, it is a distinct region within the same indivisible spiritual abode. The entire realm may therefore be designated Gokula, while one of its internal divisions is specifically known as Śvetadvīpa.

Within this quadrangular region lies the inner circular domain known as Vṛndāvana, the most intimate setting of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Thus Gokula,

Śvetadvīpa, and Vṛndāvana do not designate unrelated places, but interconnected regions and aspects of the one eternal spiritual reality. Jīva Gosvāmī's purpose is philosophical rather than geographical: he is explaining how different revealed names designate distinct dimensions of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's eternal abode.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura accepts Jīva Gosvāmī's presentation and develops it further by identifying Śvetadvīpa with eternal Navadvīpa, the abode of Śrī Gaurāṅga. In his understanding, Goloka, Gokula, Vṛndāvana, Śvetadvīpa, and Navadvīpa are manifestations of one indivisible spiritual reality, revealed according to distinct moods of divine love and different purposes within the Lord's eternal pastimes.

# VERSE 6




एवं ज्योतिर्मयो देवः सदानन्दः परात्परः ।
आत्मारामस्य तस्यास्ति प्रकृत्या न समागमः ॥ ६ ॥

*evaṁ jyotir-mayo devaḥ sad-ānandaḥ parāt paraḥ*
*ātmārāmasya tasyāsti prakṛtyā na samāgamaḥ*

**Thus the divine Lord, whose nature is spiritual effulgence, is eternally blissful and supreme beyond the supreme. Since He delights in Himself, He has no contact with material nature.**

*evam*—thus; *jyotir-mayaḥ*—whose nature is composed of spiritual effulgence; *devaḥ*—the divine Lord; *sad-ānandaḥ*—eternally blissful; *parāt paraḥ*—supreme beyond the supreme; *ātma-ārāmasya tasya*—of Him who delights in Himself; *asti*—there is; *prakṛtyā*—with material nature; *na samāgamaḥ*—no contact or association.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

Now we proceed to explain the root verse.

Just as the *Puruṣa-sūkta* and other texts describe the universal form and its indwelling Lord as one *puruṣa* in order to express their non-difference, so this verse beginning with *evam* describes Goloka and its presiding Lord as non-different.

The word *devaḥ* refers to Goloka in the form of its presiding Lord, Śrī Govinda.

The word *sad-ānandaḥ* indicates His essential nature. The neuter gender is in accordance with the *Śruti* statement: *vijñānam ānandaṁ brahma*. "Brahman is knowledge and bliss."

The word *ātmārāmasya* means "of Him who delights in Himself," being independent of anything else.

He has no contact with *prakṛti*, or *māyā*, as stated in the Second Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.9.10): *na yatra māyā kim utāpare*. "*Māyā* does not exist there, what to speak of anything else."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 6**

**That Lord of Gokula is the transcendental Supreme Lord, whose very nature is eternal bliss. He is supreme beyond all others and delights in Himself within the transcendental realm of pure consciousness. He has no association with material nature, *māyā*.**

The sole supreme potency *(parā-śakti)* of Gokuleśvara Śrī Kṛṣṇa, manifest as His spiritual potency *(cit-śakti)*, has brought forth the entire realm of Goloka and all the pastimes enacted there. Only by the mercy of this divine potency can the living entities, who belong to the marginal potency (*taṭastha-śakti),* enter those eternal pastimes and participate in the bliss of Goloka.

The inferior external potency *(māyā-śakti)* is merely the shadow of that spiritual potency and remains outside the Virajā River. Virajā lies beyond Brahma-dhāma, the impersonal Brahman effulgence that forms the outer boundary of Mahā-Vaikuṇṭha, which surrounds Goloka.

Within such complete purity, the external *māyā-śakti*, far from obtaining Kṛṣṇa's association, is ashamed even to come within the path of His glance.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's purport presents a graduated structure of transcendental reality, with Goloka as the supreme realm. Surrounding Goloka is Mahā-Vaikuṇṭha, the realm of divine majesty presided over by Nārāyaṇa. Its outer boundary is Brahma-dhāma, the impersonal Brahman effulgence. Beyond Brahma-dhāma flows the Virajā River, which separates the spiritual and material domains, and beyond Virajā lies the realm governed by Māyā, the external energy. This external potency is not an independent principle, but merely the shadow of the internal spiritual potency.

The essential point is that Māyā has absolutely no access to the *sac-cid-ānanda* reality of Śrī Kṛṣṇa and His abode. She cannot enter Goloka or even come within the path of the Lord's glance. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura expresses this by saying that Māyā feels ashamed even to approach His presence. Thus the distinction between Goloka and the material realm is not merely one of location; they belong to entirely different orders of reality.

# VERSE 7



मायया रममाणस्य न वियोगस्तया सह ।
आत्मना रमया रेमे त्यक्तकालं सिसृक्षया ॥ ७ ॥

*māyayāramamāṇasya na viyogas tayā saha*
*ātmanā ramayā reme tyakta-kālaṁ sisṛkṣayā*

**Although the Puruṣa does not sport with Māyā, He is not separated from her. Desiring to create, He sported with Ramā, His own intrinsic potency, having sent forth time.**

*māyayā*— with Māyā; *aramamāṇasya*—of Him who does not sport or enjoy; *na viyogaḥ*—there is no separation; *tayā saha*—from her; *ātmanā ramayā*—with Ramā, His own intrinsic potency; *reme*—He sported, enjoyed; *tyakta-kālam*—having sent forth time; *sisṛkṣayā*—with the desire to create.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

Now Brahmā explains that the Puruṣa, who is the indwelling self of the material manifestation and an expansion of Govinda, is not entirely without relation to Māyā in the same way as Govinda is. Thus the verse begins with *māyayā*.

Even during the material dissolution, Māyā dissolves into Him, as indicated by statements such as: *yasyāṁśāṁśāṁśa-bhāgena.*

One may then object: "Would He not thereby become affected by her like an ordinary *jīva* and consequently cease to be the supreme controller?"

In reply it is said: *ātmanā ramayā reme*. "He enjoys with Ramā, His intrinsic potency, who abides within Him." The meaning is that He enjoys only with His intrinsic potency, while Māyā serves Him externally.

Thus Brahmā says in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.9.23):

*eṣa prapanna-varado ramayātma-śaktyā*
*yadyat kariṣyati gṛhīta-guṇāvatāraḥ*

"This Lord, who bestows blessings upon the surrendered souls, performs whatever He does through Ramā, His intrinsic potency, even when He assumes an *avatāra* associated with the material modes."

And Arjuna prays in the First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.7.23) to Kṛṣṇa:

*māyāṁ vyudasya cic-chaktyā kaivalye sthita ātmani*

"Having cast aside Māyā by Your spiritual potency, You remain situated in Your own self in absolute spiritual independence."

One may then ask: "Without His impelling her, how can creation take place?"

Therefore the verse says *sisṛkṣayā*, "with the desire to create," and *tyakta-kālam*, indicating that time was sent forth by Him for the purpose of creation.

The reading *tyakta-kālaḥ* in the nominative case is also straightforward.

The meaning is that creation is accomplished by that very time, which is the form of His power. Thus Scripture states: *prabhāvaṁ pauruṣaṁ prāhuḥ kālam eke yato bhayam*. "Some describe time as the power of the Supreme Person, from which fear arises."

In the Third Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.5.26), Maitreya says:

*kāla-vṛttyā tu māyāyāṁ guṇa-mayyām adhokṣajaḥ*
*puruṣeṇātma-bhūtena vīryam ādhatta vīryavān*

"Through the agency of time, the powerful Lord Adhokṣaja placed His generative potency within material nature, composed of the modes, by means of the Puruṣa, His own expansion."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 7

**The Puruṣa does not directly unite with Kṛṣṇa's external potency, nor does He enjoy with Māyā. Nevertheless, there is no absolute separation between Māyā and that Supreme Being. Desiring to create the material universe, the Puruṣa sports with Ramā, His spiritual potency. His connection with Māyā occurs only indirectly through His glance in the form of the time potency.**

Kṛṣṇa's relation with the *māyā-śakti* is not direct but indirect. Through the Puruṣa-avatāra Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī,[20] an expansion of Mahā-Saṅkarṣaṇa of Vaikuṇṭha, the abode of His divine pastimes, He casts His glance upon Māyā.

Even in that act of glancing, there is no direct contact with Māyā, because Ramā, His spiritual potency, who is inseparably present within Him and acts entirely according to His will, performs that act of glancing.

[20] Another name for Kāraṇodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, or Mahā-Viṣṇu.

External Māyā, serving as the maidservant of Ramā, serves the expansion of Bhagavān who sports with Ramā. Time is the active agency through which Ramā carries out the work of creation and manifestation. From that agency arises the generative potency underlying creation.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

This verse emphasizes the transcendental position of Govinda, who, although He is *sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*, the cause of all causes, remains aloof from the process of material creation. Even the Puruṣa-avatāra, through whom creation proceeds, does not directly unite with Māyā. He acts through His intrinsic spiritual potency, while Māyā serves externally and receives His creative impulse through the time factor.

Śrīla Prabhupāda gives the example of a king who remains in his palace, enjoying the company of his family and friends, while the affairs of the kingdom are overseen by ministers, secretaries, and other government servants.

***

A brief note concerning the use of *māyā* and Māyā, and of *puruṣa* and Puruṣa: When *māyā* refers to the external potency or to the principle of illusion, it is written in lowercase. When Māyā refers to the personified external energy, it is capitalized.

Similarly, when *puruṣa* is used as a general philosophical term, it is written in lowercase. When it designates the divine Puruṣa, the personal expansion of the Lord associated with creation, it is capitalized.

The need for this distinction becomes especially important in passages where the Puruṣa and Māyā are described as two personalities interacting with one another.

# Verse 8



नियतिः सा रमा देवी तत्प्रिया तद्वशं तदा ।
तल्लिङ्गं भगवान् शम्भुर्ज्योतीरूपः सनातनः ॥
या योनिः सापराशक्तिः कामो बीजं महद्धरेः ॥ ८ ॥

*niyatiḥ sā ramā devī tat-priyā tad-vaśaṁ tadā*
*tal-liṅgaṁ bhagavān śambhur jyotī-rūpaḥ sanātanaḥ*
*yā yoniḥ sāparā-śaktiḥ kāmo bījaṁ mahad dhareḥ*

**At that time, the goddess Ramā, His beloved, is the principle of divine ordinance and remains under His control. His generative principle, the *liṅga*, is Bhagavān Śambhu, eternal and of the nature of effulgence. The *yoni* is the inferior potency, and Hari's creative desire is the great seed.**

*niyatiḥ*—the principle of divine ordinance; *sā*—she; *ramā devī*—the goddess Ramā; *tat-priyā*—His beloved; *tad-vaśam*—under His control; *tadā*—then, at that time; *tat-liṅgam*—His *liṅga*, the generative principle corresponding to Him; *bhagavān śambhuḥ*—Bhagavān Śambhu; *jyotī-rūpaḥ*—of the nature of effulgence; *sanātanaḥ*—eternal; *yā yoniḥ*—that which is the *yoni*, the generative matrix; *sā aparā-śaktiḥ*—that is the inferior potency; *kāmaḥ*—desire, the creative impulse; *bījam*—the seed; *mahat*—the great, the *mahat-tattva*; *hareḥ*—of Hari.

## DIG-DARŚINĪ-ṬĪKĀ

Jīva Gosvāmī

One may ask: "Who is this Ramā?"

The text answers in the first half of the verse beginning with *niyatiḥ*. She is called *niyati* because she is governed solely by Bhagavān Himself and remains fixed in Him. She is Hari's inseparable potency. The reason is expressed by the phrase "directly belonging to His own self." Since His essential nature is consciousness, and since she is non-different from Him, she too is of the nature of consciousness.

Thus it is said in the Twelfth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (12.11.20): *anapāyinī bhagavatī śaktiḥ śrīḥ sākṣād ātmanaḥ hareḥ.* "The goddess of fortune, Śrī, who never leaves the Lord's side, appears with Him in this world as the representation of His internal potency."

And the commentary explains: "She is the inseparable potency of Hari because She directly belongs to His essence. Since His nature is consciousness, and since She is non-different from Him, She too is of the nature of consciousness."

By the use of the word *sākṣāt*, it is implied that this does not refer to Māyā, of whom Brahmā said in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.5.13): *vilajjamānayā yasya sthātum īkṣā-pathe 'muyā*. "That Māyā, being ashamed, cannot remain within the range of His glance."

Her status as an inseparable potency is also described in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*:

*nityaiva sā jagan-mātā viṣṇoḥ śrīr anapāyinī*
*yathā sarva-gato viṣṇus tathaiveyaṁ dvijottama*

"She, the mother of the universe, is eternally the inseparable Śrī of Viṣṇu. O best of *brāhmaṇas*, just as Viṣṇu is all-pervading, so is She."

And further:

*evaṁ yathā jagat-svāmī deva-devo janārdanaḥ |*
*avatāraṁ karoty eṣā tathā śrīs tat-sahāyinī ||*

"Just as Janārdana, the Lord of the universe and God of gods, descends, so Śrī also appears as His companion."

One may object: "Are not Śiva and Śakti sometimes described as the causes of creation?"

In reply, as in descriptions of the *virāṭ*, the text figuratively presents them as particular limbs or aspects of Him. Thus it says: *tal-liṅgaṁ bhagavān śambhuḥ*. "That *liṅga* is Bhagavān Śambhu."

According to the statement of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*: *tasyā yutā yutāṁśāṁśe viśva-śaktir iyaṁ sthitā*. "This universal potency abides within an exceedingly minute fraction of Him."

The Puruṣa, who is the self of the material manifestation and a great expansion of Bhagavān, possesses an unmanifest form because He is covered by the effulgence of His own portion. The portion of that Puruṣa which occupies the position of the *liṅga* and produces the material universe is Śambhu. Other manifestations bear the name Śambhu because they are particular manifestations of this principle. This will later (Verse 45) be explained by the example: *kṣīraṁ yathā dadhi-vikāra-viśeṣa-yogāt*. "Just as milk becomes transformed into yogurt..."

Similarly, that portion of Māyā in her unmanifest condition which occupies the position of the *yoni* is the inferior potency known as *pradhāna*. Within her arises the desire of Hari; in other words, the portion of Hari known as the Puruṣa desires to bring forth the creation. Thereafter the seed in the form of the *mahat-tattva*, containing the living entities and the entire material cosmos, is implanted. Thus the *Śruti* states: *so 'kāmayata*. "He desired." And in the Third Canto it is said: *kāla-vṛttyā*. "Through the agency of time."

# BRAHMA-SAṀHITĀ-PRAKĀŚINĪ

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

## Verse 8

(The process of that indirect association with Māyā is now being described.)

**Goddess Ramā, the spiritual potency *(cit-śakti)*, is Bhagavān's beloved and the principle of divine ordinance *(niyati)*, remaining entirely under His control. At the time of creation, when Kṛṣṇa's expansion becomes inclined toward manifesting the material world, the effulgence arising from His personal expansion appears as the divine *liṅga*, Bhagavān Śambhu, a particular reflected manifestation of the eternal effulgence. That *liṅga* is the principle destined to generate the material world and acts under divine ordinance. The corresponding generative matrix is the inferior potency, Māyā in the form of the *yoni*. Through their conjunction, the reflected *kāma-bīja* of Hari arises in the form of the *mahat-tattva*.**

Saṅkarṣaṇa, endowed with the desire for creation, is the expansion of Kṛṣṇa inclined toward generating the material world. Reclining in the waters of the Causal Ocean as the original *avatāra-puruṣa*, He casts His glance upon Māyā. That glance is the instrumental cause of creation.

The reflected appearance of His effulgence is the Śambhu-liṅga, and that becomes united within the generative matrix of Māyā, who is the shadow of the Ramā-śakti. At that time, the reflected appearance of the *kāma-bīja* in the form of the *mahat-tattva* arises and becomes engaged in the work of creation.

The initial manifestation produced by Mahā-Viṣṇu's creative desire is called the golden *mahat-tattva*; it is the principle of the cosmic mind inclined toward creation.

The deeper purport is that the will of the Puruṣa creates through both the instrumental and material causal principles. Māyā, represented as the *yoni*, is the instrumental matrix, while Śambhu, represented as the *liṅga*, embodies the material causal principle. Mahā-Viṣṇu, the Puruṣa, is the conscious agent whose will brings them into union.

*Pradhāna*, the primordial material substance, constitutes the material causal principle, while *prakṛti*, the supporting matrix, is Māyā. The conscious will that brings these together is the Puruṣa, the expansion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa who manifests the material universe. These three together constitute the agency of material creation.

The *kāma-bīja* existing in Goloka is completely pure and spiritual, whereas the *kāma-bīja* existing in the material world belongs to the shadow potency connected with time and other forces. The first-mentioned *kāma-bīja*, although serving as the original prototype of the reflected manifestation found within Māyā, remains infinitely remote from her, whereas the second *kāma-bīja* is merely a material reflection.

How Śambhu comes into existence is described later, in Verses 10 and 15.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The terms *liṅga* and *yoni* in this passage refer to primordial metaphysical principles involved in the creation of the universe. Although these words today are associated primarily with the male and female generative organs, their original Sanskrit meanings are broader and, in this context, philosophical.

*Liṅga* literally means "mark," "sign," or "manifesting symbol." In this context it refers to the projecting or generative principle represented by Śambhu. The *liṅga* symbolizes the active, formative impulse through which latent material nature becomes capable of manifestation.

*Yoni* literally means "source," "womb," "matrix," or "place of generation." Here it refers to *māyā-prakṛti*, material nature, as the receptive and generative matrix from which the material universe emerges.

The imagery employed in these verses intentionally parallels biological generation, because the familiar language of generation provides an analogy for the causal principles involved in cosmic manifestation. The union of *liṅga* and *yoni* therefore represents the interaction of the activating principle, the receptive matrix, and the divine will by which creation becomes manifest.

The text repeatedly emphasizes, however, that this process involves no direct material contact between the Supreme Lord and Māyā. The Lord

remains completely transcendental. Material nature is activated only indirectly through the Puruṣa-avatāra, through the mediation of the spiritual potency Ramā, and through the operation of the time potency (*kāla-śakti*).

For this reason, the *ācāryas* carefully distinguish between the pure transcendental *kāma-bīja* eternally present in Goloka and its reflected, shadow-like manifestation within material creation. Material generation is a distant reflection of a higher causal pattern, but the original spiritual *kāma-bīja* must never be understood as mundane sexuality projected onto the Supreme Lord.

The same danger of material projection applies to the amorous pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, which can easily be misconstrued as being of the same nature as the sexual relationships of mundane lovers.

In a lecture given on August 27, 1969, in Hamburg, Śrīla Prabhupāda explained the difference to his young followers:

> By our present senses, we cannot understand what is Kṛṣṇa, God, what is His name, what is His form, what are His qualities. Therefore, if we try to understand Kṛṣṇa by looking at His picture, "Oh, Kṛṣṇa is embracing Rādhārāṇī or the *gopīs*," we shall come to a wrong understanding. Because unless our senses are purified, we shall view Kṛṣṇa and Rādhārāṇī as an ordinary young boy and girl and their dealings as ordinary love affairs. But actually their relationship is not like this. It is pure.
>
> The author of the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* has explained that there is a gulf of difference between the loving affairs of the *gopīs* with Kṛṣṇa and the ordinary, lustful dealings of human beings. He compares that the *gopīs*' love for Kṛṣṇa is gold, and our so-called love here is iron. As there is a difference between gold and iron, similarly there is a difference between the loving affairs of the *gopīs* with Kṛṣṇa and the lusty affairs between boys and girls. It is never equal.
>
> Therefore it is said: *ataḥ śrī-kṛṣṇa-nāmādi na bhaved grāhyam indriyaiḥ.* Our present senses, these impure, contaminated senses cannot understand Kṛṣṇa; therefore we should follow this principle: *sevonmukhe hi jihvādau*. First of all, engage in chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. There is Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Harā is Rādhā, and there is Kṛṣṇa. But

> don't try to understand by your present senses, but simply chant Their holy names: Hare Kṛṣṇa. Then *ceto-darpaṇa-mārjanam*. When the dust on the mirror of your heart will be cleansed, and there will be no more material condition, then you will be able to understand.

Vaiṣṇava philosophy is a profound science and must be studied carefully if intricate subjects such as those discussed in the present verse are to be properly understood. Otherwise, we risk projecting our material conceptions onto transcendental reality and thereby misunderstanding its true nature.

# Verse 9



लिङ्गयोन्यात्मिका जाता इमा माहेश्वरीप्रजाः ॥ ९ ॥

*liṅga-yony-ātmikā jātā imā māheśvarī-prajāḥ*

**These progeny of Maheśvarī have arisen as constituted of the *liṅga* and *yoni* principles.**

*liṅga*—consisting of, or characterized by, the *liṅga* and *yoni* principles; *jātāḥ*—have arisen, have been born; *imāḥ*—these; *māheśvarī-prajāḥ*—the progeny of Maheśvarī, the potency and consort of Maheśvara.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

Therefore, even the Scriptures of the followers of Śiva appear to proceed independently only because the particular distinctions involved are not properly discerned. In reality, however, their intended conclusion is the same as that previously established. Thus the text states in this half verse: *liṅga-yony-ātmikā jātā imā māheśvarī-prajāḥ*. "These progeny of Maheśvarī have arisen as constituted of the *liṅga* and *yoni* principles."

The expression *māheśvarī-prajāḥ* means "the progeny of Maheśvarī."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 9

**All the progeny of Maheśvarī within this world are constituted of the *liṅga* and *yoni* principles.**

The Supreme Lord's complete opulence is described as fourfold. Of this, the three-quarter manifestation, which is free from sorrow, death, and fear, is the opulence of Vaikuṇṭha, Goloka, and the other spiritual realms. Within this illusory world, however, the demigods, human beings, all other creatures, and all the planetary systems are particular manifestations of the one-quarter opulence belonging to Māyā's domain. All entities here are constituted, according to the distinction between material and instrumental causes, of the *liṅga* and *yoni* principles and arise through their union.

Whatever knowledge has been obtained through material science confirms this principle. Trees, creepers, and even inert objects manifest this nature of union—the interaction of active and receptive principles, or of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*.

The essential point is this: Although terms such as *liṅga* and *yoni* may be regarded as vulgar in ordinary social usage, within scientific and philosophical discourse they are highly meaningful and indispensable expressions of

fundamental principles. Vulgarity is merely a social attribution. Neither material science nor spiritual science can deny reality merely to conform to social convention.

Therefore, when explaining that the root principle underlying material manifestation is the material *kāma-bīja*, the use of such terminology becomes unavoidable. By these expressions one should understand the masculine potency as the active, initiating principle and the feminine potency as the receptive, productive principle.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Maheśvarī is the feminine counterpart and divine consort of Maheśvara, and the compound *māheśvarī-prajāḥ* means "the progeny of Maheśvarī." Just as Śiva bears many names according to his qualities and activities, including Maheśvara, his consort likewise appears under many names, among them Satī, Pārvatī, Durgā, Kālī, Umā, and Maheśvarī.

As mentioned in the Annotations to the previous verse, the terms *liṅga* and *yoni* refer here to universal structural principles underlying material creation, not merely to their anatomical manifestations as the male and female generative organs.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura recognizes that ordinary usage readily associates *liṅga* and *yoni* with the male and female generative organs, but he insists that their philosophical significance should not be reduced to vulgar associations arising from mundane perception.

The error arises when material sexual union is regarded as the ultimate and sufficient cause of life and the universe. The *Bhagavad-gītā* (16.8) identifies this as an atheistic conclusion:

*asatyam apratiṣṭhaṁ te jagad āhur anīśvaram*
*aparaspara-sambhūtaṁ kim anyat kāma-haitukam*

"The demons say that this world is unreal, with no foundation, no God in control. They say it is produced of sex desire and has no cause other than lust."

According to the atheistic conception, material sexual union is treated as a

sufficient explanation of life, without any higher conscious cause, whereas devotees understand biological generation as a material expression of deeper causal principles governed by divine will.

A similar confusion appears in some modern movements that present themselves under the name of "tantra," in which sexual techniques are promoted as a direct means to spiritual awakening, transcendence, or union with the divine. Such practices should not be confused with the diverse historical Tantric traditions, nor should the metaphysical symbolism of *liṅga* and *yoni* be reduced to a spiritual endorsement of sexual experience. When material sexuality itself is elevated to the status of transcendental realization, the reflection is mistaken for the original reality. From the Vaiṣṇava perspective, material desire is not transformed into *prema* merely by being ritualized or described in spiritual language; consciousness must be purified and desire redirected toward loving service to Bhagavān.

Nevertheless, although it is only a material reflection, sexual attraction functions within conditioned existence as the strongest binding force, impelling the living entity to continue within the cycle of birth and death. As Ṛṣabhadeva explains to his sons (SB 5.5.8–9):

> The attraction between male and female is the basic principle of material existence. On the basis of this misconception, which ties together the hearts of the male and female, one becomes attracted to his body, home, property, children, relatives and wealth. In this way one increases life's illusions and thinks in terms of "I" and "mine."
>
> When the strong knot in the heart of a person, implicated in material life due to the results of past action, is slackened, one turns away from his attachment to home, wife and children. In this way, one gives up the basic principle of illusion [I and mine] and becomes liberated. Thus one goes to the transcendental world.

Thus the same polarity that serves as an instrument of material generation also becomes, under the influence of false identification, the knot binding the conditioned soul to the conceptions of "I" and "mine."

# Verse 10



शक्तिमान्पुरुषः सोऽयं लिङ्गरूपी महेश्वरः ।
तस्मिन्नाविरभूल्लिङ्गे महाविष्णुर्जगत्पतिः ॥ १० ॥

*śaktimān puruṣaḥ so 'yaṁ liṅga-rūpī maheśvaraḥ*
*tasminn āvirabhūl liṅge mahā-viṣṇur jagat-patiḥ*

**This potent Puruṣa, endowed with potency, is Maheśvara in the form of the *liṅga*. Within that *liṅga*, Mahā-Viṣṇu, the Lord of the universe, became manifest.**

*śaktimān*— endowed with potency; *puruṣaḥ*—the Puruṣa; *saḥ ayam*—that very one; *liṅga-rūpī*—assuming the form of the *liṅga*, the generative principle; *maheśvaraḥ*—Maheśvara; *tasmin liṅge*—within that *liṅga*; *āvirabhūt*—became manifest; *mahā-viṣṇuḥ*—Mahā-Viṣṇu; *jagat-patiḥ*—the Lord of the universe.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

In the first half of this verse, beginning with *śaktimān*, the same point is restated. Then, in the second half, beginning with *tasmin*, Brahmā explains that within that *liṅga* the previously described unmanifest form reappears in manifest form. Therefore, even that portion of Him which assumes the form of the *liṅga* and produces the material world is called the *puruṣa* endowed with potency, Maheśvara.

Thereafter, when that *liṅga* has developed as far as the subtle elements, Mahā-Viṣṇu Himself, of whom that *liṅga* is a portion, appears within it in manifest form. For He alone is the Lord of the universe, the master of all worlds and of all living beings, higher and lower.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 10

**Śambhu, Maheśvara in the form of the *liṅga* and the Puruṣa embodying the material cause, is endowed with potency in the form of Māyā, the instrumental cause.[21] Mahā-Viṣṇu, the Lord of the universe, manifests within him through the aspect of His glance.**

In the supreme spiritual sky, which is characterized by spiritual opulence, Śrī Nārāyaṇa, who is non-different from Kṛṣṇa, eternally resides. Mahā-Saṅkarṣaṇa, belonging to His *vyūha* manifestation, is likewise a portion of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's *vilāsa-vigraha*, His pastime form.

[21] See *Annotations* for further clarification.

By the power of His spiritual potency, He eternally reclines in one of His portions within the Virajā River, the boundary between the spiritual and material worlds. At the time of creation, He casts His glance from there upon the distant, shadow-like *māyā-śakti*.[22]

At that time, Śambhu—the lord of *pradhāna*, composed of material potency, appearing as Rudra, and forming a reflected semblance of that spiritual glance—associates with Māyā, the instrumental cause. Yet without the influence of Mahā-Viṣṇu, Kṛṣṇa's direct spiritual power, he can accomplish nothing.

Therefore, only when Mahā-Viṣṇu, the original *avatāra*, a portion of Kṛṣṇa through Mahā-Saṅkarṣaṇa, bestows His favor does the *mahat-tattva* arise through the combined activity of *māyā*, the instrumental potency, and *pradhāna*, the material cause.

By the favor of Mahā-Viṣṇu, Śiva-śakti gradually produces false ego, the five gross elements beginning with ether, the subtle sense objects, and the material senses of the living beings.

The living entities are particles of the rays emanating from Mahā-Viṣṇu. This will be explained later.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

In this verse, Jīva Gosvāmī carefully distinguishes between Śambhu and Mahā-Viṣṇu. Śambhu functions as the *liṅga*-principle involved in material creation, but he is not independent. Mahā-Viṣṇu remains the immediate source of the potency by which creation takes place. Thus the *ācāryas* describe Śambhu as participating in the creation of the material world, while simultaneously affirming that the creative energy originates in Mahā-Viṣṇu. Śambhu acts, but it is Mahā-Viṣṇu who empowers his actions.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura further explains that Śambhu represents the

[22] On one side of the river Virajā is the effulgence of Brahmaloka and innumerable Vaikuṇṭha planets, and on the other side is this material world. It is to be understood that this side of the Virajā River is filled with material planets floating in the Causal Ocean. (Cc. Madhya 15.172, pp)

material cause (*upādāna-kāraṇa*), while Māyā represents the instrumental cause (*nimitta-kāraṇa*). Material creation unfolds through the interaction of these two principles, yet neither can function apart from the influence of Mahā-Viṣṇu. The appearance of the *mahat-tattva*, the first stage of cosmic manifestation, occurs only when Mahā-Viṣṇu casts His glance upon material nature. A detailed explanation of this process is given in the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā*, Chapter 6, Verses 14-17.

# Verse 11



सहस्र-शीर्षा पुरुषः सहस्राक्षः सहस्र-पात्
सहस्र-बाहुर् विश्वात्मा सहस्रांशः सहस्र-सूः ॥ ११॥

*sahasra-śīrṣā puruṣaḥ sahasrākṣaḥ sahasra-pāt*
*sahasra-bāhur viśvātmā sahasrāṁśaḥ sahasra-sūḥ*

**The Puruṣa possesses thousands of heads, thousands of eyes, thousands of feet, and thousands of arms. He is the soul of the universe, possesses thousands of expansions, and generates thousands of living entities.**

*sahasra-śīrṣā*—possessing thousands of heads; *puruṣaḥ*—the Puruṣa; *sahasra-akṣaḥ*—possessing thousands of eyes; *sahasra-pāt*—possessing thousands of feet; *sahasra-bāhuḥ*—possessing thousands of arms; *viśva-ātmā*—the soul of the universe; *sahasra-aṁśaḥ*—possessing thousands, or innumerable, expansions and *avatāras*; *sahasra-sūḥ*—producing thousands, or innumerable, living entities.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

This verse further elaborates upon that same form, the Puruṣa. The word *sahasrāṁśaḥ* means: "He whose innumerable expansions are *avatāras*." And *sahasra-sūḥ* means: "He who produces innumerable living entities."

Throughout the verse, the word *sahasra* ("thousand") should not be understood literally, but in the sense of an immeasurable quantity.

This form is also described in the commentary on the Second Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.6.42), on the words *ādyo 'vatāraḥ puruṣaḥ parasya*. "The Puruṣa is the first *avatāra* of the Supreme." The commentary explains: "The Puruṣa of the Supreme Infinite Lord sets material nature into motion. His pastime form is described by statements beginning with 'He possesses thousands of heads.' He is the original *avatāra*."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 11

**That Lord of the universe, Mahā-Viṣṇu, possesses thousands upon thousands of heads, thousands upon thousands of eyes, thousands upon thousands of feet, and thousands upon thousands of arms. Through thousands upon thousands of His portions, He manifests thousands upon thousands of *avatāras*. He is the soul of the universe and the generator of thousands upon thousands of living beings**.

That Mahā-Viṣṇu, praised by all the *Vedas*, possesses unlimited causal potency and is the original *puruṣa-avatāra*, the source of all *avatāras*.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Jīva Gosvāmī refers here to the Second Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Chapter 6, Text 42 and its commentary. Śrīla Prabhupāda translates this verse and comments as follows:

> Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Viṣṇu is the first incarnation of the Supreme Lord, and He is the master of eternal time, space, cause and effects, mind, the elements, the material ego, the modes of nature, the senses, the universal form of the Lord, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, and the sum total of all living beings, both moving and nonmoving.
> [...]
> This first incarnation in the material creation, namely Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Viṣṇu, is the plenary part of the original Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, described in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.48) as follows:
>
> *yasyaika-niśvasita-kālam athāvalambya*
> *jīvanti loma-vila-jā jagad-aṇḍa-nāthāḥ*
> *viṣṇur mahān sa iha yasya kalā-viśeṣo*
> *govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*
>
> "All the innumerable universes are maintained only during the breathing period of Mahā-Viṣṇu, or Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Viṣṇu, who is only a plenary part of Govinda, the original Personality of Godhead Lord Kṛṣṇa."

Thus Mahā-Viṣṇu is the original *puruṣa-avatāra* through whom material nature is set into motion.

# VERSE 12



नारायणः स भगवानापस्तस्मात्सनातनात् ।
आविरासीत्कारणार्णोनिधिः सङ्कर्षणात्मकः ॥
योगनिद्रां गतस्तस्मिन् सहस्रांशः स्वयं महान् ॥ १२ ॥

*nārāyaṇaḥ sa bhagavān āpas tasmāt sanātanāt*
*āvirāsīt kāraṇārṇo-nidhiḥ saṅkarṣaṇātmakaḥ*
*yoga-nidrāṁ gatas tasmin sahasrāṁśaḥ svayaṁ mahān*

**From that eternal Lord, the waters of the Causal Ocean manifested. Bhagavān Nārāyaṇa, a portion of Saṅkarṣaṇa and Himself the Great Lord possessing innumerable expansions, entered *yoga-nidrā* upon those waters.**

*nārāyaṇaḥ*—Nārāyaṇa; *saḥ bhagavān*—that Supreme Lord; *āpaḥ*—the waters; *tasmāt sanātanāt*—from that eternal Lord; *āvirāsīt*—became manifest; *kāraṇa-arṇo-nidhiḥ*—the oceanic reservoir of causal waters, the Causal Ocean; *saṅkarṣaṇa-ātmakaḥ*—of the nature of Saṅkarṣaṇa; *yoga-nidrām gataḥ*—entered *yoga-nidrā*; *tasmin*—within or upon that ocean; *sahasra-aṁśaḥ*—possessing thousands, or innumerable, expansions; *svayam mahān*—Himself, the Great Lord.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

Brahmā now states that this same Lord is Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Viṣṇu. From that eternal Lord, the waters themselves manifested as the ocean known as the Causal Ocean. The word *saṅkarṣaṇātmakaḥ* indicates that this Nārāyaṇa is a portion of Saṅkarṣaṇa, who was previously identified as one of the four members of the *catur-vyūha* surrounding Goloka.

The verse then describes His pastime: *yoga-nidrāṁ gataḥ.* "He entered *yoga-nidrā*." This means that He entered *samādhi* in the bliss of His own nature *(svarūpānanda-samādhi)*.

Thus it is said: *āpo nārā iti proktā āpo vai nara-sūnavaḥ / tasya tā ayanaṁ pūrvaṁ tena nārāyaṇaḥ smṛtaḥ*. "The waters are called *nārāḥ*, for the waters are indeed the offspring of Nara. Since they were originally His resting place, He is remembered as Nārāyaṇa."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 12

**That Mahā-Viṣṇu is known within the material world by the name Nārāyaṇa. From that eternal *puruṣa*, the waters of the Causal Ocean have arisen. That Supreme Person, Bhagavān, is a portion of Saṅkarṣaṇa, who is situated in the spiritual sky. He Himself possesses innumerable portions. He enters *yoga-nidrā* and reclines upon those waters.**

*Samādhi* in the bliss of His own nature is called *yoga-nidrā*. The previously mentioned goddess Ramā herself is this *yoga-nidrā* in the form of Yogamāyā.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

It should be noted that the term *yoga-nidrā* does not mean ordinary sleep or unconsciousness. Rather, it refers to complete absorption in the bliss of His own nature *(svarūpānanda-samādhi)*. Although He appears to sleep, Mahā-Viṣṇu remains fully conscious and fully sovereign.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura further explains that this *yoga-nidrā* is not an impersonal state. The previously mentioned goddess Ramā, appearing in the form of Yogamāyā, is herself this *yoga-nidrā*. Thus Mahā-Viṣṇu's apparent sleep is actually an expression of His eternal spiritual bliss, not a condition of inactivity or ignorance.

The term *yoga-nidrā* is also used in a different context for Brahmā's repose during the night of partial cosmic devastation. At that time, Brahmā enters the body of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu and rests there, as Śrīla Prabhupāda explains in his purport to the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.6.30:

> The duration of a day in the life of Brahmā is 4,320,000,000 solar years. This is stated also in the *Bhagavad-gītā*. So for this period Brahmājī rests in *yoga-nidrā* within the body of the Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, the generator of Brahmā. Thus after the sleeping period of Brahmā, when there is again creation by the will of the Lord through the agency of Brahmā, all the great *ṛṣis* again appear from different parts of the transcendental body, and Nārada also appears.
>
> This means that Nārada appears in the same transcendental body, just as a man awakes from sleep in the same body. Śrī Nārada is eternally free to move in all parts of the transcendental and material creations of the Almighty. He appears and disappears in his own transcendental body, which is without distinction of body and soul, unlike conditioned beings.

In this passage, *yoga-nidrā* describes Brahmā's divinely ordained repose during his night, which, like his day, lasts 4,320,000,000 solar years. Brahmā's *yoga-nidrā*, however, should not be equated with that of Mahā-Viṣṇu. The latter is His *svarūpānanda-samādhi*, which Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura identifies with Ramā in the form of Yogamāyā.

# Verse 13



तद्रोमबिलजालेषु बीजं सङ्कर्षणस्य च ।
हैमाण्यण्डानि जातानि महाभूतावृतानि तु ॥ १३ ॥

*tad-roma-bila-jāleṣu bījaṁ saṅkarṣaṇasya ca*
*haimāny aṇḍāni jātāni mahā-bhūtāvṛtāni tu*

**Within the network of His hair pores, golden cosmic eggs enveloped by the great elements arose from the seed of Saṅkarṣaṇa.**

*tat*—of Him, Mahā-Viṣṇu; *roma-bila-jāleṣu*—within the network of His hair pores; *bījam*—the seed; *saṅkarṣaṇasya*—of Saṅkarṣaṇa; *ca*—and; *haimāni*—golden; *aṇḍāni*—cosmic eggs, universes; *jātāni*—arose, came into being; *mahā-bhūta-āvṛtāni*—enveloped by the great elements; *tu*—indeed.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

Brahmā now describes the origin of the universes from that same Lord in the verse beginning with *tad-roma*. The word *tat* means "of Him." The seed of that Lord, who is of the nature of Saṅkarṣaṇa, had previously been placed within the *yoni-śakti*, the womb potency. Having developed to the stage of the subtle elements, the seed then entered the cavities within the network of His hair pores and gave rise to golden cosmic eggs. Those eggs were enveloped by portions of the great elements that had not yet undergone quintuplication.

In this regard, Brahmā says in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.11):

*kvedṛg-vidhāviganitāṇḍa-parāṇu-caryā*
*vātādhva-roma-vivarasya ca te mahitvam*

"What can be said of Your greatness, when countless universes move like atoms through the pores of Your body along the pathways of the wind?"

And in the Third Canto (SB 3.11.40-41), Maitreya says:

*vikāraiḥ sahito yuktair viśeṣādibhir āvṛtaḥ*
*aṇḍa-koṣo bahir ayaṁ pañcāśat-koṭi-vistṛtaḥ*
*daśottarādhikair yatra praviṣṭaḥ paramāṇu-vat*
*lakṣyate 'ntar-gatāś cānye koṭiśo hy aṇḍa-rāśayaḥ*

"Together with its transformations and enclosed by the elements beginning with earth, this universal shell extends five hundred million *yojanas*. Surrounded by successive coverings, each ten times greater than the previous one, it appears like an atom. Millions of other clusters of universes are also situated within the vast material aggregate."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 13**

**Within the pores of Mahā-Viṣṇu, the spiritual seed of Saṅkarṣaṇa gives rise to innumerable golden cosmic eggs. Those golden universes are enveloped by the *mahā-bhūtas*, the great material elements.**

The original Puruṣa-avatāra, reclining within the Causal Ocean, manifests innumerable seeds of universes within the pores of His body. These clusters of universes are imitations of the infinite abodes of the spiritual world. While they remain within the body of the Puruṣa-avatāra, they exist like golden luminous eggs possessing only a semblance of spiritual existence.

According to Mahā-Viṣṇu's will concerning the universes, the subtle elements associated with Māyā's instrumental and material causal functions already surround the cosmic eggs as coverings.

Then, emerging with the exhalation of the Puruṣa, those golden cosmic eggs enter the limitless chambers of Māyā. There they expand further through the agency of the uncombined material elements *(apañcīkṛta-bhūtas).*

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The "golden cosmic egg" in this verse represents the embryonic state of each universe before fully developed material differentiation takes place.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura introduces a subtle philosophical point here: the universes initially exist in a luminous condition resembling a reflection of the spiritual world. They are not yet gross material structures. Even before they emerge from Mahā-Viṣṇu, they are already surrounded by subtle elemental coverings. After His exhalation carries them into the domain of Māyā, the uncombined elements expand further and the gross material manifestation gradually develops. Thus the spiritual seed gives rise to luminous cosmic embryos already enclosed by subtle elemental coverings. Those coverings later expand into the gross material structure of each universe.

The material cosmos is therefore not independent of the Supreme Lord but exists as a distant reflected imitation of eternal spiritual reality.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.1), Kṛṣṇa compares the material world to an upside-down banyan tree. Śrīla Prabhupāda explains in his purport:

> The tree of this material world is only a reflection of the real tree of the spiritual world. This reflection of the spiritual world is situated on desire, just as a tree's reflection is situated on water. Desire is the cause of things' being situated in this reflected material light. One who wants to get out of this material existence must know this tree thoroughly through analytical study. Then he can cut off his relationship with it.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura mentions that the golden universes, after entering the domain of Māyā, are expanded by the *apañcīkṛta* elements. This term, which literally means "not yet made fivefold," belongs to the technical vocabulary of classical *Vedānta* and deserves a brief explanation, since it does not appear in Prabhupāda's books.

According to the Vedāntic doctrine of *pañcīkaraṇa* ("quintuplication"), the five elements first exist in a subtle, unmixed state called *apañcīkṛta*. To produce the gross elements, each subtle element is divided into two. One half retains its original identity, while the other half is divided into four equal parts and combined with one-eighth of each of the other four elements. Gross earth, for example, consists of one-half subtle earth and one-eighth each of water, fire, air, and ether. For this reason, every gross element is composite.

Prabhupāda presents the same essential idea using the *Bhāgavatam*'s own vocabulary: the subtle sense objects *(tan-mātras)* give rise to the gross elements, and each successive element possesses the qualities of those preceding it. This account likewise shows that gross matter is internally composite, although it describes the process differently from the technical doctrine of *pañcīkaraṇa*.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, writing for readers familiar with traditional Vedānta terminology, uses a technical expression they would readily have understood. In summary, the cosmic eggs, upon entering Māyā's realm, are still surrounded by matter in its subtle, uncombined state, because the full gross manifestation, described in the following verses, has not yet taken place.

# VERSE 14



प्रत्यण्डमेवमेकांशादेकांशाद्विशति स्वयम् ।
सहस्रमूर्धा विश्वात्मा महाविष्णुः सनातनः ॥ १४ ॥

*pratyaṇḍam evam ekāṁśād ekāṁśād viśati svayam*
*sahasra-mūrdhā viśvātmā mahā-viṣṇuḥ sanātanaḥ*

**Thus the eternal Mahā-Viṣṇu, who possesses thousands of heads and is the soul of the universe, personally enters each universe through a separate expansion of Himself.**

*prati-aṇḍam*—into each universe; *evam*—thus; *eka-aṁśāt eka-aṁśāt*—through each separate expansion; *viśati*—enters; *svayam*—personally; *sahasra-mūrdhā*—possessing thousands of heads; *viśva-ātmā*—the soul of the universe; *mahā-viṣṇuḥ*—Mahā-Viṣṇu; *sanātanaḥ*—eternal.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

Then He Himself entered those universes in distinct, separate forms. This is expressed by the word *pratyaṇḍam*, "into each universe."

The words *ekāṁśād ekāṁśāt* mean "through each separate expansion."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 14**

**Mahā-Viṣṇu personally enters each universe through a separate expansion of Himself. Each such expansion is the soul of His universe, possesses thousands upon thousands of heads, is endowed with His opulence, and exists as a form of the eternal Mahā-Viṣṇu.**

Mahā-Viṣṇu, who reclines upon the Causal Ocean, is an expansion of Mahā-Saṅkarṣaṇa. From Him innumerable universes emanate, and He personally enters each of them through a separate expansion of Himself.

Each of these expansions is the Garbhodakaśāyī Puruṣa and is in every respect similar to Mahā-Viṣṇu. Each is also the collective indwelling Supersoul of its universe *(samaṣṭi-antaryāmī-puruṣa)*.

# Verse 15



वामाङ्गादसृजद्विष्णुं दक्षिणाङ्गात्प्रजापतिम् ।
ज्योतिर्लिङ्गमयं शम्भुं कूर्चदेशादवासृजत् ॥ १५ ॥

*vāmāṅgād asṛjad viṣṇuṁ dakṣiṇāṅgāt prajāpatim*
*jyotir-liṅga-mayaṁ śambhuṁ kūrca-deśād avāsṛjat*

**From His left side He created Viṣṇu, from His right side Prajāpati, and from the region between His eyebrows He manifested Śambhu, consisting of an effulgent *liṅga*.**

*vāma-aṅgāt*—from His left side; *asṛjat*—He brought forth, manifested; *viṣṇum*—Viṣṇu; *dakṣiṇa-aṅgāt*—from His right side; *prajāpatim*—Prajāpati; *jyotiḥ-liṅga-mayam*—whose form consists of an effulgent *liṅga*; *śambhum*—Śambhu; *kūrca-deśāt*—from the region between the eyebrows; *avāsṛjat*—He manifested, brought forth.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

"What did Mahā-Viṣṇu do next?" This is explained in the present verse beginning with *vāmāṅgāt.* Viṣṇu and the others mentioned here are the maintainers and other governing authorities of all the universes. They direct the corresponding rulers, such as Viṣṇu, who are situated within each individual universe.

The intended meaning is that, just as such an arrangement exists within each individual universe, a corresponding arrangement must also be accepted for the totality of all universes.

Among these, this Prajāpati is Hiraṇyagarbha, not the four-faced Brahmā who will be described later. He is the creator of the various deities situated within the respective coverings of the universes.

Viṣṇu and Śambhu should likewise be understood as the respective maintainers and destroyers.

The phrase *kūrca-deśāt* means: "from the region between the eyebrows."

The abodes of these deities should be understood to exist within the water covering of the universe.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 15**

**Mahā-Viṣṇu manifested Viṣṇu from His left side, Prajāpati from His right side, and Śambhu as an effulgent *liṅga* from the space between His eyebrows**.

The individual indwelling Supersoul *(vyaṣṭi-antaryāmī)*, namely Kṣīrodakaśāyī Puruṣa, is Śrī Viṣṇu.

The divine expansion known as Hiraṇyagarbha is Prajāpati. He is distinct from the four-headed Brahmā. This Hiraṇyagarbha is the seed-form of all the Brahmās within the innumerable universes.

The luminous *liṅga*-form of Śambhu is an expanded manifestation of the original Śambhu, the primordial *liṅga-tattva* previously described.

Viṣṇu is a direct personal expansion *(svāṁśa)* of Mahā-Viṣṇu and is therefore *sarva-maheśvara*, the Supreme Lord of all. Prajāpati and Śambhu, however, are differentiated expansions *(vibhinnāṁśas)* of Mahā-Viṣṇu and are therefore particular administrative demigods.

Because the Lord's spiritual potency resides upon His left side, Viṣṇu appears from the left side of Mahā-Viṣṇu through *viśuddha-sattva*, the pure spiritual state of the internal potency.

Viṣṇu, as the Supreme Lord, is the indwelling Paramātmā within every living entity. The *Vedas* describe Him as "a person of the measure of a thumb" *(aṅguṣṭha-mātra puruṣa)*. He is the maintainer of the universe. Ritualists worship Him as Yajñeśvara Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of sacrifice. *Yogīs* meditate upon Him as Paramātmā while aspiring for *samādhi*.

# VERSE 16




अहङ्कारात्मकं विश्वं तस्मादेतद् व्यजायत ॥ १६ ॥

*ahaṅkārātmakaṁ viśvaṁ tasmād etad vyajāyata*

**This universe, constituted of false ego, arose from him [Śambhu].**

*ahaṅkāra-ātmakam*—constituted of false ego, whose nature is false ego; *viśvam*—the universe; *tasmāt*—from him, Śambhu; *etat*—this; *vyajāyata*—arose, came into being.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

In this half verse, Brahmā describes another function performed by Śambhu. The entire universe, characterized by false ego, came into existence from him alone. In other words, the universe's condition of being characterized by false ego arises from Śambhu, because he is the presiding controller of the principle of false ego.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 16

**In relation to the living entities, Śambhu's function is as follows: from him arises the universe constituted of false ego *(ahaṅkāra).***

In the original spiritual condition, all entities are free from the conception of possessing an existence independent of Bhagavān. The conception of separate, independent existence that appears within the material world, marked by the *liṅga* as its sign, is a material reflection of pure spiritual existence. This reflected principle appears as the primordial Śambhu and becomes united with Māyā. She is the shadow manifestation of the goddess Ramā and appears as the material *yoni*, the receptive basis of material manifestation. At that stage Śambhu functions merely as the material principle constituting the aggregate of elemental substance.

Thereafter, when the universes unfold through the progressive evolution of the cosmic elements, the Rudra principle also manifests as a further development of the Śambhu-tattva arising from the region of the brow.

Nevertheless, in every condition Śambhu-tattva remains characterized by *ahaṅkāra*, the false ego that makes material identification possible.

The innumerable living entities are particles of spiritual consciousness manifest from the rays of the Paramātmā. As long as they identify themselves solely as servants of Bhagavān, they remain entirely free from relation with the material world. In that condition they attain Vaikuṇṭha.

But when they forget that conception and desire to enjoy Māyā, the false-ego principle presided over by Śambhu enters their existence and establishes within them the consciousness of being separate, independent enjoyers. Therefore Śambhu is the root principle underlying both the ego-centered material universe and the living being's material identification with the body.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

In modern language, the word "ego" often refers to pride, vanity, or an inflated sense of self-importance. The Sanskrit term *ahaṅkāra* is broader. It literally means the principle of "I-making" (*aham*, "I"; *kāra*, "making"), the construction of a false identity through identifying the self with the external gross body and the internal subtle mind.

In its pure condition the living entity understands, "I am an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa." Material identification takes place when that original identity is forgotten and the soul identifies with temporary designations such as body, mind, nationality, race, gender, social position, or religious and spiritual status.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura therefore presents Śambhu as the presiding principle of cosmic individuation. Through *ahaṅkāra*, the material world is experienced in terms of false identity, possession, and the sense of being "the doer," with each conditioned being thinking in terms of "I" and "mine."

This does not mean that Śambhu creates the soul itself. Rather, he presides over the mechanism by which the conditioned soul becomes entangled in the conception of an independent existence separate from Bhagavān.

As long as the living entity identifies itself as Kṛṣṇa's servant, *ahaṅkāra* has no power over it. When the soul desires independent enjoyment, however, the covering of false ego arises and material existence begins.

# Verse 17



अथ तैस्त्रिविधैर्वेशैर्लीलामुद्वहतः किल ।
योगनिद्रा भगवती तस्य श्रीरिव सङ्गता ॥ १७ ॥

*atha tais tri-vidhair veśair līlām udvahataḥ kila*
*yoga-nidrā bhagavatī tasya śrīr iva saṅgatā*

**Then, while He carries out His pastimes through those three forms, the divine Yoga-nidrā remains associated with Him, just as Śrī does.**

*atha*—then; *taiḥ tri-vidhaiḥ veśaiḥ*—through those three kinds of forms; *līlām udvahataḥ*—of Him who performs His pastimes; *kila*—indeed; *yoga-nidrā*—Yoga-nidrā; *bhagavatī*—the divine goddess; *tasya*—of Him, with Him in this construction; *śrīḥ iva*—like Śrī; *saṅgatā*—associated, united.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

The verse now describes the pastimes of the Lord who has entered the universes in those respective forms.

*Taiḥ tri-vidhaiḥ veśaiḥ:* "Through those three kinds of corresponding forms," namely Viṣṇu, Prajāpati, and Śambhu situated within each universe.

*Līlām udvahataḥ:* "While performing His *līlā*," referring to the Puruṣa within each universe who carries out maintenance and the other cosmic functions there.

Yoga-nidrā is a partial manifestation of the previously described Mahā-Yoga-nidrā. This divine goddess consists of absorption in the bliss of the Lord's own nature *(svarūpānanda-samādhi)* and contains all divine opulences within herself. She remains associated with Him.

*Śrīr iva saṅgatā:* "Associated like Śrī" means that, just as Śrī accompanies Him through a portion of herself, Yoga-nidrā also accompanies Him through a partial manifestation.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 17**

**Thereafter, Bhagavān assumes the three forms of Viṣṇu, Prajāpati, and Śambhu within the universes and performs the pastimes of maintenance, creation, and destruction. These pastimes belong to the sphere of material *māyā* and are therefore of little significance. Viṣṇu, who represents Bhagavān's own essential being, remains associated with the divine Yoga-nidrā, a partial manifestation of His spiritual potency who consists of absorption in the bliss of His own nature.**

Prajāpati and Śambhu, who belong to the category of separated expansions *(vibhinnāṁśa)*, possess a sense of separateness from Bhagavān. They therefore sport with their respective inferior potencies, Sāvitrī and Umā, who are particular shadow manifestations of the spiritual potency.

Bhagavān Viṣṇu alone is the husband of Ramā, or Śrī, who is the embodiment of the internal spiritual potency.

# Verse 18



सिसृक्षायां ततो नाभेस्तस्य पद्मं विनिर्ययौ ।
तन्नालं हेमनलिनं ब्रह्मणो लोकमद्भुतम् ॥ १८ ॥

*sisṛkṣāyāṁ tato nābhes tasya padmaṁ viniryayau*
*tan-nālaṁ hema-nalinaṁ brahmaṇo lokam adbhutam*

**When He desired to create, a lotus emerged from His navel. That golden lotus, together with its stem, was the wondrous abode of Brahmā.**

*sisṛkṣāyām*—when the desire to create arose; *tataḥ*—then; *nābheḥ tasya*—from His navel; *padmam*—a lotus; *viniryayau*—emerged; *tat-nālam*—together with its stem; *hema-nalinam*—golden lotus; *brahmaṇaḥ lokam*—the abode of Brahmā; *adbhutam*—wondrous**.**

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

The meaning is that the golden lotus, together with its stem, is called the world of Brahmā because it serves as the place of both his birth and his residence.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 18**

**When Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu desires to create, a golden lotus arises from His navel. That golden lotus, together with its stem, is Brahmaloka, also known as Satyaloka, the dwelling place of Brahmā.**

Here the word "golden" *(hema)* indicates a reflection or semblance of spiritual consciousness *(cid-ābhāsa)*.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The stem connecting the lotus to Viṣṇu indicates that even the highest realm within the material universe, Satyaloka or Brahmaloka, remains dependent upon the Supreme Lord as its source and support.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains that the word "golden" indicates *cid-ābhāsa*, a semblance or reflected appearance of spiritual consciousness. Brahmaloka therefore possesses an extraordinary brilliance and purity resembling spiritual existence, yet it remains within the material creation and should not be confused with the eternal spiritual realm.

The lotus imagery may also suggest a deeper metaphysical symbolism. Just as a lotus grows from water yet remains untouched by it, the cosmic manifestation arises from the Supreme Lord while He remains completely transcendental and unaffected by material nature.

# VERSE 19



तत्त्वानि पूर्वरूढानि कारणानि परस्परम् ।
समवायाप्रयोगाच्च विभिन्नानि पृथक्पृथक् ॥
चिच्छक्त्या सज्जमानोऽथ भगवानादिपूरुषः ।
योजयन्मायया देवो योगनिद्रामकल्पयत् ॥ १९ ॥

*tattvāni pūrva-rūḍhāni kāraṇāni parasparam*
*samavāyāprayogāc ca vibhinnāni pṛthak pṛthak*
*cic-chaktyā sajjamāno 'tha bhagavān ādi-pūruṣaḥ*
*yojayan māyayā devo yoga-nidrām akalpayat*

**The material principles, previously manifested as causes, remained mutually separate because they had not yet been combined. Then Bhagavān, the primeval Puruṣa, associating with His spiritual potency, caused them to combine through Māyā and thereafter assumed *yoga-nidrā*.**

*tattvāni*—the material principles; *pūrva-rūḍhāni*—previously arisen or established; *kāraṇāni*—causes, causal principles; *parasparam*—mutually, with one another; *samavāya-aprayogāt*—because conjunction had not been applied, due to the absence of combination; *ca*—and; *vibhinnāni*—separate; *pṛthak pṛthak*—each distinct from the others; *cit-śaktyā*—with His spiritual potency; *sajjamānaḥ*—becoming associated; *atha*—then; *bhagavān ādi-pūruṣaḥ*—Bhagavān, the primeval Puruṣa; *yojayan*—causing to combine; *māyayā*—through Māyā; *devaḥ*—the Lord; *yoga-nidrām—yoga-nidrā*; *akalpayat*—assumed.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

To describe the awakening of the collective living being composed of innumerable individual souls, Brahmā now elaborates in three verses upon the process of creation carried out by Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Viṣṇu, following the account given in the Third Canto. Thus he begins with the word *tattvāni*.

The present verse describes two stages. Through Māyā, His own potency, Bhagavān causes the material principles to combine with one another. Thereafter, remaining without personal endeavor, He assumes *yoga-nidrā*.

## Annotations 1

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The account in the Third Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* mentioned by Jīva Gosvāmī refers to the prayers of the demigods at the end of the fifth chapter, where they pray to the Lord for directions and the potency to render their service in the different departments of subsequent creation. In the first ten verses of the next chapter, Maitreya Muni describes the Lord's reaction as follows:

> The Lord thus heard about the suspension of the progressive creative functions of the universe due to the noncombination of His potencies, such as the *mahat-tattva*.
>
> The Supreme Powerful Lord then simultaneously entered into the

twenty-three elements with the goddess Kālī, His external energy, who alone amalgamates all the different elements.

Thus when the Personality of Godhead entered into the elements by His energy, all the living entities were enlivened into different activities, just as one is engaged in his work after awakening from sleep.

When the twenty-three principal elements were set in action by the will of the Supreme, the gigantic universal form, or the *viśvarūpa* body of the Lord, came into existence.

As the Lord, in His plenary portion, entered into the elements of the universal creation, they transformed into the gigantic form in which all the planetary systems and all movable and immovable creations rest.

The gigantic *virāṭ-puruṣa*, known as Hiraṇmaya, lived for one thousand celestial years on the water of the universe, and all the living entities lay with Him.

The total energy of the *mahat-tattva*, in the form of the gigantic *virāṭ-rūpa*, divided Himself by Himself into the consciousness of the living entities, the life of activity, and self-identification, which are subdivided into one, ten and three respectively.

The gigantic universal form of the Supreme Lord is the first incarnation and plenary portion of the Supersoul. He is the Self of an unlimited number of living entities, and in Him rests the aggregate creation, which thus flourishes.

The gigantic universal form is represented by three, ten and one in the sense that He is the body and the mind and the senses, He is the dynamic force for all movements by ten kinds of life energy, and He is the one heart where life energy is generated.

The Supreme Lord is the Supersoul of all the demigods entrusted with the task of constructing the cosmic manifestation. Being thus prayed to by the demigods, He thought to Himself and thus manifested the gigantic form for their understanding.

These verses from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* expand upon the brief account in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. They show how the previously manifested material principles become an ordered universe only after the Supreme Lord activates and combines them through His potency.

# BRAHMA-SAṀHITĀ-PRAKĀŚINĪ

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

## Verse 19

**Before the process of combination *(pañcīkaraṇa)*, the original elements existed separately, established in distinct forms, because no integration or mutual conjunction had yet taken place.**
**Then Bhagavān Mahā-Viṣṇu, the primeval Lord, through His association with His spiritual potency *(cit-śakti)*, set Māyā into motion. By applying the process of combination, He united those separate principles and brought the manifested universe into being. Thereafter He remained absorbed in *yoga-nidrā*, the blissful union with His spiritual potency.**

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.10), Kṛṣṇa says: *mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carācaram*. "Under My supervision, material nature produces all moving and nonmoving beings." The meaning of this statement is as follows: In the beginning, Māyā, the shadow of the spiritual potency *(cit-śakti)*, remained inert and inactive. The aggregate of material ingredients constituting her material aspect likewise existed separately, without mutual connection. By Kṛṣṇa's will, acting through Mahā-Viṣṇu, Māyā's instrumental and material aspects became united, and the manifested universe arose as their effect.

Nevertheless, Bhagavān Himself remained fully absorbed in *yoga-nidrā* through His association with the spiritual potency. The terms *yoga-nidrā* and *yoga-māyā* should be understood as follows: The nature of the spiritual potency is illumination and conscious manifestation, whereas the nature of its shadow is inertness and darkness. Whenever Kṛṣṇa desires to manifest something within the inert darkness of the material realm, He brings the influence of His spiritual potency into relation with Māyā, her motionless shadow, and thereby accomplishes that work. This operation is called *yoga-māyā*.

From this arise two modes of perception: one grounded in Vaikuṇṭha consciousness and the other in material darkness.

Kṛṣṇa, His personal expansions, and the pure living beings perceive these activities through Vaikuṇṭha consciousness, whereas conditioned souls perceive them through consciousness shrouded in material darkness.

In this context, the covering that obscures spiritual perception in conditioned souls is also called *yoga-nidrā*. It too is a manifestation of the Lord's potency.

This subject will be discussed more fully later.

## Annotations 2

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Verse 19 marks the transition from the manifestation of the material principles described in Verses 8-18 to their organization into a functioning universe. The central point is that Bhagavān remains transcendental and absorbed in His spiritual bliss while creation proceeds under His supervision. This accords with the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.10): *mayādhyakṣeṇa prakṛtiḥ sūyate sa-carācaram*. "Under My supervision, material nature produces all moving and nonmoving beings."

# Verse 20



योजयित्वा तु तान्येव प्रविवेश स्वयं गुहाम् ।
गुहां प्रविष्टे तस्मिंस्तु जीवात्मा प्रतिबुध्यते ॥ २० ॥

*yojayitvā tu tāny eva praviveśa svayaṁ guhām*
*guhāṁ praviṣṭe tasmiṁs tu jīvātmā pratibudhyate*

**Having combined those very elements, He Himself entered the hidden cavity. When He had entered that cavity, the collective living being awakened.**

*yojayitvā*—having combined; *tu*—then; *tāni eva*—those very elements; *praviveśa*—entered; *svayam*—He Himself; *guhām*—the hidden cavity, the concealed interior; *guhām praviṣṭe tasmin*—when He had entered the cavity; *tu*—then; *jīva-ātmā*—the collective living being; *pratibudhyate*—awakens.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

Now comes the third verse, beginning with *yojayitvā*, "having combined." The meaning is that this entry occurs between the combination of the elements and His assumption of *yoga-nidrā*.

As for *guhām*, it means "into the cavity."

The *virāṭ* form awakens; it rises from the sleep of cosmic dissolution.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 20

**Having combined those separate elements, He manifested innumerable material universes and then Himself entered into the "cavity," the interior of each universal form. At that time the living entities, who during the cosmic dissolution had lain dormant in sleep, became awakened once again.**

In Scripture, the word *guhā*, "cavity" or "hidden chamber," is used in several contexts. In some passages it denotes unmanifest *līlā*; in others, the dwelling place of the indwelling Puruṣa within the individual living being; and elsewhere, the cave of the living entity's heart.

In all these usages, *guhā* denotes a hidden or concealed place.

The living entities referred to here are those who, during the great dissolution at the close of the preceding cosmic cycle, had entered a dormant state within Hari. According to the latent impressions of their previous *karma*, they again became manifest within the created universe.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The word *guhā* here primarily refers to the interior of the *virāṭ* form, which the Lord enters after combining the material elements. This "entry" should not be understood as ordinary physical movement. It denotes His manifestation as the indwelling Lord within the cosmic form.

Only after His entry do the dormant *jīvas* awaken from their condition during *pralaya*, the annihilation of the universe, and resume activity within the new creation according to their previous *karma*.

In the *Upaniṣads*, the term *guhā* often denotes the "cave of the heart" *(hṛdaya-guhā)*, the hidden inner place where Paramātmā resides within each living entity. In the present sequence, however, it refers specifically to the interior of the cosmic *virāṭ* form.

Verses 19 and 20 describe four stages: the material principles remain separate, the Lord combines them, He enters the resulting cosmic form, and the dormant living entities awaken.

Creation does not involve the production of new souls. The *jīvas* exist eternally as manifestations of the Lord's marginal potency. During cosmic dissolution they remain dormant and unmanifest within Hari; at the beginning of a new creation they again become active according to the impressions of their previous *karma*.

# VERSE 21



स नित्यो नित्यसम्बन्धः प्रकृतिश्च परैव सा ॥ २१ ॥

*sa nityo nitya-sambandhaḥ prakṛtiś ca paraiva sā*

**The jīva is eternal, possesses an eternal relationship, and is indeed the superior potency.**

*saḥ*—he, the *jīva*; *nityaḥ*—eternal; *nitya-sambandhaḥ*—possessing an eternal relationship; *prakṛtiḥ*—potency, nature; *ca*—and; *parā*—superior, spiritual; *eva*—indeed; *sā*—that potency.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

With the half verse beginning *sa nityaḥ*, Brahmā describes the natural relationship between Bhagavān and the living entity. The word *saḥ* refers to the *jīva*. The word *nityaḥ* indicates that the *jīva* exists throughout beginningless and endless time.

The word *nitya-sambandhaḥ* indicates that the *jīva* has an eternal and inseparable relationship with Bhagavān, like the relationship between the Sun and its rays.

This has been stated in the *Nārada-pañcarātra*:

*yat taṭasthaṁ tu cid-rūpaṁ saṁvedāt tu vinirgatam*
*rañjitaṁ guṇa-rāgeṇa sa jīva iti kathyate.*

"That marginal entity who is of the nature of consciousness, who has emanated from consciousness, and who is colored by attachment to the *guṇas* is called the *jīva*."

Similarly, in the *Gītā* (15.7), Kṛṣṇa says:

mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ.

"The living entities in this conditioned world are My eternal fragmental parts."

Thus the word *prakṛti* applies to the *jīva*. As the witness *(sākṣī),* he remains situated in his own nature; yet as the knower *(pramātṛ)*, he assumes a condition resembling *prakṛti*, in accordance with the relationship between an original and its reflection *(bimba-pratibimba)*. For this very reason, Kṛṣṇa also says in the *Gītā* (7.5):

*prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parām jīva-bhūtāṁ mahā-bāho*

"O mighty-armed one, know My superior *prakṛti*, which consists of the living entities."

The *Śruti* also demonstrates this eternal relationship by saying: *dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā*. "Two birds, united companions." (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 4.6)

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 21

**The *jīva* is eternal and has an eternal relationship with Bhagavān spanning beginningless and endless time. The living entity is indeed the superior potency.**

Just as the Sun and its rays have an eternal relationship, so Bhagavān, the spiritual Sun, and the *jīvas* are eternally related. The *jīvas* are particles of His spiritual rays and are therefore not temporary like material objects. As particles of those rays, they possess minute portions of Kṛṣṇa's qualities. Consequently, the *jīva* is of the nature of knowledge *(jñāna),* is a knower *(jñātṛ),* has a sense of individual existence, or "I"-awareness *(ahaṁtā-bhāva),* and is an enjoyer *(bhoktṛ),* a thinker *(mantṛ),* and a doer *(kartṛ).*

Kṛṣṇa is infinite *(vibhu)*, whereas the living being is infinitesimal *(aṇu)*. This is the defining distinction between them. The eternal relationship between the *jīva* and Bhagavān is that the *jīva* is eternally His servant and Bhagavān is eternally the *jīva's* master. The *jīva* also possesses sufficient eligibility to exchange *rasa* with Bhagavān.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.5), Kṛṣṇa says:

*apareyam itas tv anyāṁ prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parām.*

"Besides this inferior nature, know My other, superior potency."

It is therefore understood that the *jīva* is Kṛṣṇa's superior potency. All the qualities of the pure *jīvātmā* transcend the eight constituents of the inferior potency, including *ahaṅkāra*. Therefore, although the *jīva-śakti* is minute, it is superior to the *māyā-śakti*.

Another name for this potency is *taṭastha-śakti*, meaning that it is situated on the boundary line between *māyā* and *cit-tattva*. Because of its atomic

nature, it is susceptible to the control of *māyā*. If it remains under Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of *māyā*, however, it need not come under *māyā's* control. Only the *jīva* bound by beginningless *māyā* suffers the miseries of *saṁsāra* and undergoes repeated birth and death.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The expression *taṭastha-śakti*, "marginal potency," should not be understood as describing a geographical location between the spiritual and material worlds. It describes the constitutional category of the *jīva*. The designation *parā prakṛti*, "superior potency," distinguishes the conscious living entity from the inferior material potency; it does not identify the *jīva* with Bhagavān or His internal potency. Although the *jīva* is spiritual, it is infinitesimal and may therefore come under the influence of *māyā*.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains this condition by describing the *jīva* as situated on the *taṭa*, or margin, between the domains of spirit and matter. The point is not physical position but potential orientation. The *jīva* may remain under Kṛṣṇa's shelter or become subject to *māyā*. This capacity for orientation reflects the minute independence of the living entity.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's inclusion of *ahaṁtā-bhāva*, the sense of "I," among the natural qualities of the pure *jīva* should not be confused with the material *ahaṅkāra* described in Verse 16. *Ahaṁtā-bhāva* is the soul's genuine awareness of its existence and eternal identity as Bhagavān's servant. Material *ahaṅkāra* misidentifies the self with the body and mind and regards it as an independent doer and enjoyer.

# VERSE 22



एवं सर्वात्मसम्बन्धं नाभ्यां पद्मं हरेरभूत् ।
तत्र ब्रह्माभवद्भूयश्चतुर्वेदी चतुर्मुखः ॥ २२ ॥

*evaṁ sarvātma-sambandhaṁ nābhyāṁ padmaṁ harer abhūt*
*tatra brahmābhavad bhūyaś catur-vedī catur-mukhaḥ*

**Thus from Hari's navel arose the lotus connected with all living beings. Thereafter, four-faced Brahmā, knower of the four Vedas, appeared upon that lotus.**

*evam*—thus; *sarva-ātma-sambandham*—connected with all living beings; *nābhyām*—from the navel; *padmam*—the lotus; *hareḥ*—of Hari; *abhūt*—arose, came into being; *tatra*—there, upon that lotus; *brahmā abhavat*—Brahmā appeared; *bhūyaḥ*—thereafter, then; *catur-vedī*—knower of the four *Vedas*; *catur-mukhaḥ*—having four faces.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

With the word *evam*, "thus," Brahmā explains that the lotus appropriately serves as the seat of the aggregate of living entities because it arose from the Puruṣa who had entered the cavity.

Then, with the word *tatra*, he describes the manifestation of the *bhoga-vigraha* and the other features of four-faced Brahmā from Hiraṇyagarbha Brahmā, who identifies with the aggregate cosmic body *(samaṣṭi-deha)*.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 22

**The lotus that arises from the navel region of Viṣṇu is connected with all living beings collectively. Upon that lotus appears the four-faced Brahmā, knower of the four *Vedas*.**

From the Puruṣa who had entered the cosmic cavity *(guhā-praviṣṭa-puruṣa)* arises the lotus that serves as the seat of the aggregate of living entities *(samaṣṭi-jīva-adhiṣṭhāna)*.

From the original Brahmā in the form of Hiraṇyagarbha, who identifies with the aggregate cosmic body *(samaṣṭi-dehābhimānī)*, the four-faced Brahmā is born in the form of a *bhoga-vigraha*.

Brahmā is thus established as an appointed deity *(ādhikārika-devatā)* and as a separated expansion of Kṛṣṇa *(vibhinnāṁśa)*.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

When Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states that Brahmā is born in the form of a *bhoga-vigraha*, one may wonder what he wants to convey, since *bhoga-vigraha* literally means "a body for enjoyment." In this context, however, the term denotes a body suitable for experience and activity—in other words, an individual embodied form through which one performs a particular function.

In this case, it refers to the individual embodied form through which the four-faced Brahmā carries out his divinely appointed function of universal creation..

Jīva Gosvāmī distinguishes this personal Brahmā from Hiraṇyagarbha, the cosmic Brahmā identified with the aggregate cosmic body.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura further explains that although Brahmā occupies the office of an *ādhikārika-devatā* (an appointed presiding deity), he nevertheless remains a *vibhinnāṁśa*, an individual living being who is a separated expansion of Kṛṣṇa.

# VERSE 23



सञ्जातो भगवच्छक्त्या तत्कालं किल चोदितः ।
सिसृक्षायां मतिं चक्रे पूर्वसंस्कारसंस्कृतम् ॥
ददर्श केवलं ध्वान्तं नान्यत्किमपि सर्वतः ॥ २३ ॥

*sañjāto bhagavac-chaktyā tat-kālaṁ kila coditaḥ*
*sisṛkṣāyāṁ matiṁ cakre pūrva-saṁskāra-saṁskṛtam*
*dadarśa kevalaṁ dhvāntaṁ nānyat kiṁ api sarvataḥ*

**Having been born, Brahmā was impelled at that very time by the Lord's potency and set his mind, shaped by prior impressions, upon creation. Yet in every direction he saw nothing but darkness.**

*sañjātaḥ*—having been born; *bhagavat-śaktyā*—by the potency of Bhagavān; *tat-kālam*—at that very time; *kila*—indeed; *coditaḥ*—impelled, inspired; *sisṛkṣāyām*—upon creation, upon the desire to create; *matim cakre*—he set or turned his mind; *pūrva-saṁskāra-saṁskṛtam*—shaped by prior impressions; *dadarśa*—he saw; *kevalam dhvāntam*—only darkness; *na anyat kim api*—nothing else whatsoever; *sarvataḥ*—on all sides, in every direction.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

Now, in the verse and a half beginning with *sañjātaḥ*, the activity of that four-faced Brahmā is described. The meaning is clear.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 23

**Having been born, Brahmā was impelled by Bhagavān's potency and set his mind upon creation according to impressions from a previous birth. Yet in every direction he saw nothing but darkness.**

Brahmā's endeavor to create arose solely in accordance with prior impressions *(pūrva-saṁskāra).*

Every living entity acquires a particular disposition according to prior impressions, and the living entity's endeavors arise according to that disposition. This is called *adṛṣṭa*[23], or *karma-phala*, the fruit of action.

Brahmā's natural disposition and endeavors likewise arose according to the actions he had performed in the previous *kalpa*.

Similarly, some qualified living entities may attain the position of Brahmā in this same way.

[23] *Adṛṣṭa* literally means "the unseen" and refers to the subtle, invisible workings of *karma* by which previous actions produce their results.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura draws from this verse a broader point concerning the post of Brahmā. It is ordinarily occupied by a highly qualified *jīva* whom the Lord empowers to carry out secondary creation within a universe. Brahmā is therefore both a living entity and an empowered cosmic administrator. His impulse to create arises from impressions carried over from his previous performance of the same function, while his appointment to this position depends upon the qualifications by which he becomes eligible to receive the Lord's empowerment.

In his purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.3.5, Śrīla Prabhupāda explains the position of Brahmā as follows:

> Brahmā is always *jīva-tattva*. The highest pious living being, or the greatest devotee of the Lord, is empowered with the potency of the Lord for creation, and he is called Brahmā. His power is like the power of the Sun reflected in valuable stones and jewels. When there is no such living being to occupy the post of Brahmā, the Lord Himself becomes a Brahmā and takes charge of the post.

In a lecture on *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.25.5, he similarly states:

> The first Bhagavān is Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself, but some of His opulences are also bestowed upon Lord Brahmā. Lord Brahmā is *jīva-tattva*, a living being like us. If we become spiritually powerful, we can also have the post of Lord Brahmā.

# VERSES 24-25



उवाच पुरतस्तस्मै तस्य दिव्या सरस्वती ।
कामः कृष्णाय गोविन्द हे गोपीजन इत्यपि ।
वल्लभाय प्रिया वह्नेर्मन्त्रं ते दास्यति प्रियम् ॥ २४ ॥
तपस्त्वं तप एतेन तव सिद्धिर्भविष्यति ॥ २५ ॥

*uvāca puratas tasmai tasya divyā sarasvatī*
*kāmaḥ kṛṣṇāya govinda he gopī-jana ity api*
*vallabhāya priyā vahner mantraṁ te dāsyati priyam*
*tapas tvaṁ tapa etena tava siddhir bhaviṣyati*

**Then Bhagavān's divine Sarasvatī spoke to Brahmā:**
***klīṁ kṛṣṇāya govindāya gopī-jana-vallabhāya svāhā.***
**"This *mantra* will bestow your cherished desire."**
**"Practice austerity by means of this *mantra*, and you will attain perfection."**

*uvāca*—spoke; *purataḥ*—before him; *tasmai*—to him; *tasya*—His, of Bhagavān; *divyā sarasvatī*—the divine Sarasvatī; *kāmaḥ*—the *kāma-bīja*, *klīṁ*; *kṛṣṇāya*—unto Kṛṣṇa; *govinda*—Govinda, understood here as *govindāya*, unto Govinda; *he*—O; *gopī-jana*—the *gopīs*; *iti api*—and also; *vallabhāya*—unto the beloved; *priyā vahneḥ*—the dear wife of Agni, Svāhā; *mantram*—the *mantra*; *te*—for you; *dāsyati*—will bestow; *prīyam*—what is dear, your cherished desire; *tapaḥ*—austerity; *tvam*—you; *tapa*—practice, perform; *etena*—by this, by means of this *mantra*; *tava*—your; *siddhiḥ*—perfection; *bhaviṣyati*—will arise, will be attained.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

### Verse 24

Now, in the verse and a half beginning with *uvāca*, the mercy of Bhagavān that Brahmā had obtained through his previous worship is described.
The meaning is clear.

### Verse 25

He connects this same instruction with the account in the Third Canto: *sparśeṣu yat ṣoḍaśam ekaviṁśam*. "The sixteenth and the twenty-first among the stop consonants." Thus the present half verse begins *tapas tvam*, "Practice austerity." The meaning is clear.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verses 24-25

**At that time, Śrī Bhagavān's divine Sarasvatī spoke as follows to Brahmā, who saw darkness in every direction: "O Brahmā, this *mantra*—*klīṁ kṛṣṇāya govindāya gopī-jana-vallabhāya svāhā*—will fulfill your cherished desire. Practice austerity with this *mantra*. Then you will attain all perfection."**

The eighteen-syllable *mantra*, prefixed by the *kāma-bīja (klīṁ)*, is supreme among *mantras*. It has two functions. The first is to draw the pure *jīva* toward Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the supreme attractor of the mind, the Lord of Gokula and Lord of the *gopīs*. This is the highest culmination of the *jīva's* spiritual propensity. If the practitioner is free from material desire *(niṣkāma)*, the perfected fruit of this *mantra* is love for Kṛṣṇa *(prema)*.

Its second function is to fulfill the desires of materially motivated practitioners *(sakāma)*. For them also, this supreme *mantra* grants the object of their desire.

In spiritual reality, the *kāma-bīja* is situated within the lotus of Goloka. Its reflected form within the material world fulfills all varieties of material desire.

The meaning of Verse 25 is clear.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

In the Second Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.9.5-8), Brahmā, unable to discover the source of the lotus upon which he had appeared or the means of creation, hears the syllables *ta* and *pa* and undertakes austerity for one thousand celestial years. In his purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.9.6, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

> According to *Bhāgavata* philosophy, every human being is meant simply for this *tapa* and for no other business, because by penance only can one realize his self; and self-realization, not sense gratification, is the business of human life. This *tapa,* or penance, was begun from the very beginning of the creation, and it was first adopted by the supreme spiritual master, Lord Brahmā. By *tapasya* only can one get the profit of human life, and not by a polished civilization of animal life. The animal does not know anything except sense gratification in the jurisdiction of eat, drink, be merry and enjoy. But the human being is made to undergo *tapasya* for going back to Godhead, back home.

Being pleased with Brahmā's austerities, the Supreme Lord revealed His personal spiritual abode to him. The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes this

revelation principally in terms of Vaikuṇṭha, while the *Brahma-saṁhitā* records Brahmā's realization of the supreme realm of Goloka Vṛndāvana. Brahmā's hymn occupies Verses 29-56. Except for Verse 56, each of these verses concludes with the refrain *govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*. "I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord."

The account in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* and that of the Second Canto are not contradictory but complementary. The *Bhāgavatam* emphasizes that Brahmā's knowledge and empowerment originate from Bhagavān. Bewildered and unable to understand either his origin or the means of creation, Brahmā hears the divine instruction *ta-pa*, performs austerity, and ultimately receives direct revelation from the Supreme Lord. The *Brahma-saṁhitā* identifies the specific *mantra* communicated through divine Sarasvatī and describes Brahmā's ensuing worship of Govinda.

Sarasvatī should not be understood as a source of transcendental knowledge independent of Bhagavān. She is His divine potency, through whom spiritual knowledge and transcendental sound *(śabda-brahma)* are communicated. When Sarasvatī reveals the Gopāla-mantra to Brahmā, it is actually Bhagavān who is instructing him through His potency. The revelation therefore originates from Bhagavān and reaches Brahmā in the form of divine sound.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura focuses upon the eighteen-syllable *mantra* prefixed by the *kāma-bīja (klīṁ)*. He distinguishes its original spiritual function from its reflected operation within the material world. For the desireless practitioner *(niṣkāma)*, the *mantra* draws the soul toward Kṛṣṇa and culminates in pure love *(prema)*. In its reflected material operation, it fulfills the worldly aspirations of the materially motivated practitioner *(sakāma)*.

# VERSE 26



अथ तेपे स सुचिरं प्रीणन् गोविन्दमव्ययम् ।
श्वेतद्वीपपतिं कृष्णं गोलोकस्थं परात्परम् ।

प्रकृत्या गुणरूपिण्या रूपिण्या पर्युपासितम् ।
सहस्रदलसम्पन्ने कोटिकिञ्जल्कबृंहिते ।

भूमिश्चिन्तामणिस्तत्र कर्णिकारे महासने ।
समासीनं चिदानन्दं ज्योतिरूपं सनातनम् ।

शब्दब्रह्ममयं वेणुं वादयन्तं मुखाम्बुजे ।
विलासिनीगणवृतं स्वैः स्वैरंशैरभिष्टुतम् ॥ २६ ॥

*atha tepe sa suciraṁ prīṇan govindam avyayam*
*śvetadvīpa-patiṁ kṛṣṇaṁ goloka-sthaṁ parāt param*

*prakṛtyā guṇa-rūpiṇyā rūpiṇyā paryupāsitam*
*sahasra-dala-sampanne koṭi-kiñjalka-bṛṁhite*

*bhūmiś cintāmaṇis tatra karṇikāre mahāsane*
*samāsīnaṁ cid-ānandaṁ jyotirūpaṁ sanātanam*

*śabda-brahma-mayaṁ veṇuṁ vādayantaṁ mukhāmbuje*
*vilāsinī-gaṇa-vṛtaṁ svaiḥ svair aṁśair abhiṣṭutam*

*atha*—then; *tepe*—he practiced austerity; *saḥ*—he, Brahmā; *suciram*—for a long time; *prīṇan*—pleasing, seeking to please; *govindam*—Govinda; *avyayam*—imperishable; *śvetadvīpa-patim*—the Lord of Śvetadvīpa; *kṛṣṇam*—Kṛṣṇa; *goloka-stham*—situated in Goloka; *parāt param*—supreme beyond the supreme; *prakṛtyā*—by material nature; *guṇa-rūpiṇyā*—whose form consists of the *guṇas*; *rūpiṇyā*—personified, possessing form; *paryupāsitam*—worshiped from all sides; *sahasra-dala-sampanne*—endowed with a thousand petals; *koṭi-kiñjalka-bṛṁhite*—adorned and expanded with millions of filaments; *bhūmiḥ cintāmaṇiḥ*—the ground is *cintāmaṇi*; *tatra*—there; *karṇikāre*—within the pericarp; *mahā-āsane*—upon a great seat; *samāsīnam*—seated; *cit-ānandam*—of the nature of consciousness and bliss; *jyotirūpam*—whose form is effulgence; *sanātanam*—eternal; *śabda-brahma-mayam*—composed of transcendental sound; *veṇum*—the flute; *vādayantam*—playing; *mukha-ambuje*—with His lotus mouth; *vilāsinī-gaṇa-vṛtam*—surrounded by a company of playful women; *svaiḥ svaiḥ aṁśaiḥ*—by His own respective expansions; *abhiṣṭutam*—praised.

**Then Brahmā practiced austerity for a long time, seeking to please the imperishable Govinda, the Lord of Śvetadvīpa, Kṛṣṇa, situated in Goloka and supreme beyond the supreme, who is worshiped from all sides by personified material nature, whose form consists of the *guṇas*. There, upon a ground of *cintāmaṇi*, within the pericarp of a lotus endowed with a thousand petals and adorned with millions of filaments, He sat upon a great throne.**
**Eternal and of the nature of consciousness and bliss, His form composed of effulgence, He played a flute composed of transcendental**

**sound with His lotus mouth. He was surrounded by a company of playful women and praised by His own expansions.**

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

Through that *mantra*, and in accordance with his particular desire, Brahmā worshiped Śrī Govinda as endowed with the specific potency required for creation, situated upon the sacred seat known as Gokula, and according to the hymn to be given later. This is described in the four stanzas beginning with *atha tepe*.

The term *guṇa-rūpiṇyā* means "whose nature consists of the modes of goodness, passion, and ignorance." *Rūpiṇyā* means "possessing a form." *Paryupāsitam* means "worshiped from all sides," referring to personified Māyā, who, remaining outside that realm, worships Him through meditation and other forms of adoration.

Thus the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* states: *māyā parety abhimukhe ca vilajjamānā*. "Māyā withdraws, ashamed to appear before Him." It is also stated: *balim udvahanti samadanty ajayānimiṣāḥ*. "Together with Māyā, the demigods carry tribute to You and rejoice."

The word *aṁśaiḥ* means here "by associates situated in the surrounding enclosures."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 26

**Seeking to please Govinda, Brahmā performed austerity for a long time, meditating upon Kṛṣṇa, Lord of Śvetadvīpa, who resides in Goloka. His meditation was as follows:**
**Upon a ground composed of *cintāmaṇi* stands a lotus possessing a thousand petals and adorned with millions of filaments. Within its pericarp stands a great throne. Upon that throne sits eternal Śrī Kṛṣṇa, whose nature is spiritual consciousness, bliss, and effulgence.**

**At His lotus mouth He plays a flute composed of transcendental sound *(śabda-brahma)*. He is surrounded by playful *gopīs* and praised by His own associates residing in the surrounding enclosures of His abode. Personified material nature *(prakṛti)*, whose forms consist of the *guṇas*, worships Him from outside.**

Although the object of meditation is entirely spiritual, Māyā, the external potency whose nature is associated with the mode of passion and who assumes forms such as Durgā composed of the three *guṇas*, worshipfully meditates upon Kṛṣṇa from outside.

As long as material desires remain within the heart, one should worship the Lord whom Māyā-devī herself worships. One should not worship Māyā-devī independently, for her worshipable Lord alone possesses the power to fulfill every aspiration. Thus the statement of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.3.10) says:

*akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ*
*tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena yajeta puruṣaṁ param*

"Whether free from desire, full of desires, or desiring liberation, an intelligent person should worship the Supreme Person with intense devotional service."

The meaning is that, although the various demigods, as manifestations of the Lord's opulence, may bestow particular results, a truly wise person does not worship them independently. He worships the Supreme Lord Himself, who possesses the power to bestow every result.

Accordingly, Brahmā meditated from afar upon Kṛṣṇa, who enjoys His pastimes in Goloka and is the worshipable Lord even of Māyā-devī.

Pure devotional service free from all ulterior desire *(anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyā)* is called desireless devotional service *(niṣkāma-bhakti)*. The devotional service of Brahmā and others, however, belongs to the category of devotion mixed with desire *(sakāma-bhakti)*. Even within such devotional service, a form of relative selflessness may be present. This subject is explained more fully in the final five verses of the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. Until the conditioned soul attains realization of its true spiritual identity *(svarūpa-siddhi)*, such worship *(bhajana)* remains a suitable form of devotional practice.

# VERSE 27



अथ वेणुनिनादस्य त्रयीमूर्तिमयी गतिः ।
स्फुरन्ती प्रविवेशाशु मुखाब्जानि स्वयम्भुवः ।

गायत्रीं गायतस्तस्मादधिगत्य सरोजजः ।
संस्कृतश्चादिगुरुणा द्विजतामगमत्ततः ॥ २७ ॥

*atha veṇu-ninādasya trayī-mūrti-mayī gatiḥ*
*sphurantī praviveśāśu mukhābjāni svayambhuvaḥ*

*gāyatrīṁ gāyatas tasmād adhigatya sarojajaḥ*
*saṁskṛtaś cādi-guruṇā dvijatām agamat tataḥ*

**Then the current of the flute's sound, embodying the threefold *Veda*, manifested and swiftly entered the lotus-like mouths of self-born Brahmā. Having received the Gāyatrī from Govinda as He sang it, lotus-born Brahmā was initiated by the original *guru* and thereafter attained the status of a twice-born.**

*atha*—then; *veṇu-nināda*sya—of the sound of the flute; *trayī-mūrti-mayī*—embodying the form of the three *Vedas*; *gatiḥ*—the course, current, or flow; *sphurantī*—manifesting; *praviveśa*—entered; *āśu*—swiftly; *mukha-abjāni*—the lotus-like mouths; *svayambhuvaḥ*—of self-born Brahmā; *gāyatrīm*—the Gāyatrī; *gāyataḥ*—of Him who was singing; *tasmāt*—from Him; *adhigatya*—having received, having obtained; *saroja-jaḥ*—lotus-born Brahmā; *saṁskṛtaḥ*—sanctified; *ca*—and; *ādi-guruṇā*—by the original *guru*; *dvijatām*—the status of a twice-born; *agamat*—attained; *tataḥ*—thereafter.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

Thus, like Dhruva, Brahmā attained the status of a twice-born only after being initiated by the presiding deity of the *mantra* he had worshiped. This is stated in the two stanzas comprising Verse 27, beginning with *atha veṇu*.

The expression *trayī-mūrti-mayī* indicates that the current of the flute sound consisted of Gāyatrī, the embodied form of the three *Vedas*. She is the mother of the *Vedas*, and in the second of these two stanzas she herself becomes manifest.

The word *gatiḥ* means "course," "sequence," or "flow."

The statement *mukhābjāni praviveśa*, "it entered the lotus-like mouths," means that Gāyatrī entered through Brahmā's eight ears and then appeared in his mouths.

The phrase *ādi-guruṇā* means "by the original *guru*, Śrī Kṛṣṇa."

In the expression *sa brahmā saṁskṛtaḥ*, "that Brahmā was sanctified," Brahmā, although nominative in form, is the recipient of the action.

# Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

## Verse 27

**Thereafter, Gāyatrī, embodying the threefold Vedic revelation together with the sacred syllable *oṁ*, manifested as the melodious sound of Śrī Kṛṣṇa's flute and swiftly entered Brahmā's lotus-like mouths through his eight ears.**
**Receiving that Gāyatrī, which had arisen from Śrī Kṛṣṇa's flute-song, lotus-born Brahmā was initiated by Bhagavān, the original *guru*, and thereby attained the status of a twice-born.**

The sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute is a special manifestation of eternal existence, consciousness, and bliss *(sac-cid-ānanda);* therefore the archetype of all the *Vedas* is present within it.

Gāyatrī is a Vedic meter containing both meditation and prayer in condensed form. Among all Gāyatrīs, the Kāma-gāyatrī is supreme because its meditation and prayer are entirely composed of transcendental divine pastimes *(cid-vilāsa)*, a nature possessed by no other Gāyatrī.

The Gāyatrī received after the eighteen-syllable *mantra* is the Kāma-gāyatrī: *klīṁ kāma-devāya vidmahe puṣpa-bāṇāya dhīmahi tan no 'naṅgaḥ pracodayāt.* This Gāyatrī indicates complete meditation upon Śrī Gopījana-vallabha, realization of His divine pastimes, and prayer for attainment of the transcendental god of love, Anaṅga.[24] Within the spiritual world, no means of attaining love imbued with the highest *rasa* surpasses this. The moment this Gāyatrī entered Brahmā's ear, he received the sacrament of second birth *(dvijatva-saṁskāra)* and began chanting that Gāyatrī.

Whoever truly receives this Gāyatrī in its essential reality likewise attains a second, transcendental birth. The ordinary twice-born status attained according to material lineage and social customs is far inferior to this spiritual

[24] Anaṅga, literally "the bodiless one," is a name of Kāmadeva, the god of love. In the Kāma-gāyatrī, the name refers not to the material demigod of desire, but to transcendental Kāmadeva, Śrī Kṛṣṇa as Gopījana-vallabha, whose divine pastimes are the object of the *mantra's* meditation and prayer.

second birth, through which the living entity becomes qualified to enter the transcendental realm.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

A significant theme of this verse is that spiritual knowledge descends through divine sound. Brahmā does not discover the Gāyatrī by intellectual effort; he receives it through Govinda's flute-sound. This illustrates the principle that transcendental realization arises through receptive hearing of revealed sound *(śabda-brahma)*, not through the ascending process of study or mental speculation.

Jīva Gosvāmī also connects this event with Brahmā's attainment of true "second birth" *(dvijatva)*. Ordinary social initiation according to family tradition is secondary; the higher birth is the awakening of spiritual consciousness through reception of the transcendental *mantra* from the Lord, the original *guru*, or His bona fide representative.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura further emphasizes that the Kāma-gāyatrī directs the soul toward the highest goal of divine love for Śrī Kṛṣṇa in Goloka. Thus the *mantra* is not merely a ritual formula but a revelation of the supreme object of meditation and devotion.

Regarding how Brahmā received the *mantra*, it should be noted that the verse literally states that Gāyatrī entered Brahmā's "lotus mouths" *(mukhābjāni)*, which may be surprising, since *mantras* and knowledge in general are received through the ears.

Jīva Gosvāmī therefore explains that the expression should be understood as referring to Brahmā's eight ears *(aṣṭabhiḥ karṇaiḥ praviveśa)*, since Brahmā possesses four heads. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura follows this understanding and explicitly states that Gāyatrī entered through Brahmā's ear apertures and then appeared in his mouths.

This also reflects the fundamental Vedic principle that transcendental knowledge is first received through hearing *(śravaṇam)* before it is expressed through chanting and glorification *(kīrtanam)*.

# VERSE 28



त्रय्या प्रबुद्धोऽथ विधिर्विज्ञाततत्त्वसागरः ।
तुष्टाव वेदसारेण स्तोत्रेणानेन केशवम् ॥ २८ ॥

*trayyā prabuddho 'tha vidhir vijñāta-tattva-sāgaraḥ*
*tuṣṭāva veda-sāreṇa stotreṇānena keśavam*

**Then Brahmā, awakened by the threefold *Veda* and having fathomed the ocean of truth, praised Keśava with the following hymn, the essence of the *Vedas*.**

*trayyā*—by the threefold *Veda*; *prabuddhaḥ*—awakened, enlightened; *atha*—then; *vidhiḥ*—Brahmā; *vijñāta-tattva-sāgaraḥ*—having fathomed the ocean of truth; *tuṣṭāva*—praised; *veda-sāreṇa*—constituting the essence of the Vedas; *stotreṇa anena*—with this hymn; *keśavam*—Keśava.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Jīva Gosvāmī

Then, having also received the threefold *Veda* from Govinda, Brahmā praised Him alone. This is stated in the verse beginning with *trayyā*. The meaning is clear.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 28

**Awakened by remembering that Gāyatrī, the embodiment of the three *Vedas*, Brahmā fathomed the ocean of truth. He then praised Śrī Kṛṣṇa with this hymn, which is the essence of the Vedas.**

By remembering the Kāma-gāyatrī, Brahmā realized: *āmi kṛṣṇera nitya-dāsī*. "I am Kṛṣṇa's eternal maidservant."

Although the further mysteries concerning his identity as Kṛṣṇa's *dāsī* had not yet been revealed to him, Brahmā became acquainted with the ocean of truth through inquiry into the nature of the self.

When all the truths of the *Vedas* became manifest within him, he composed this hymn from those statements that constitute their essence.

Because this hymn fully contains the conclusions of Vaiṣṇava philosophy, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught it to His devotees.

Therefore, readers should recite and relish this hymn every day with the greatest care.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Verse 28 serves as a bridge between Brahmā's experience of divine revelation and the celebrated hymn that follows. Up to this point, the text has described how Brahmā received transcendental knowledge through the Gopāla-mantra, Kāma-gāyatrī, and the grace of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Having become spiritually awakened and established in knowledge of the fundamental truths *(tattva)*, Brahmā now begins his glorification of Govinda.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura emphasizes that the verses which follow constitute the essence of all Vedic revelation *(veda-sāra)*. Just as the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is described as the *galitaṁ phalam*, the ripened fruit of Vedic knowledge, the *Brahma-saṁhitā* is described as its essence, *veda-sāra*. For this reason Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu held the *Brahma-saṁhitā* in such high regard and instructed His followers to study it carefully. The remaining verses are therefore not merely poetic praise but a condensed presentation of Vaiṣṇava philosophy, cosmology, and devotional realization.

Śrīla Prabhupāda was very fond of the *Cintāmaṇi Prayers*, or *Govinda Prayers*, as he referred to these verses, all of which end with the line: *govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*. "I worship Govinda, the Primeval Lord."

There are several recordings of Prabhupāda singing Brahmā's prayers, and he frequently quoted many of the verses in his books and lectures. Two verses in particular, *veṇuṁ kvaṇantam...* and *aṅgāni yasya...*, have become two of the most widely memorized verses in ISKCON since they were recorded in 1969 by the London devotees, with Yamunā-devī Dāsī leading the chanting and George Harrison arranging and producing the song. Prabhupāda appreciated this recording so much that he instructed his disciples that the song be played in ISKCON temples throughout the world during the morning greeting of the Deities.

To facilitate the singing and memorization of Brahmā's hymn, I have undertaken the task of rendering all the verses ending in *govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi* into English. Entitled *Govinda, the Primeval Lord*, this song is presented at the end of the book, accompanied by an illustration for each verse.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's statement concerning Brahmā's spiritual identity deserves clarification. He says that Brahmā, by remembering the Kāma-gāyatrī *(klīṁ kāma-devāya vidmahe puṣpa-bāṇāya dhīmahi tan no 'naṅgaḥ pracodayāt)* realized his spiritual identity, his *siddha-svarūpa*, as an eternal maidservant of Kṛṣṇa: *āmi kṛṣṇera nitya-dāsī.* This statement should not be interpreted to mean that all *vaiṣṇavas*, in particular *vaiṣṇava ācāryas* belonging to the Brahmā-Madhva-Gauḍīya-sampradāya, have a female spiritual identity. Many are understood to possess such an identity, including Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura himself and the Six Gosvāmīs, but Kṛṣṇa's entourage is variegated, as Śrīla Prabhupāda pointed out in a lecture given in 1973 in Sweden:

> Some spiritual masters are thinking of becoming assistants to the *gopīs*, some are thinking of becoming assistants to the cowherd boys, some are thinking of becoming assistants to Nanda and Mother Yaśodā, and some are thinking of becoming God's servants. Some are thinking of becoming flower trees, fruit trees, calves, or cows in Vṛndāvana.
>
> There are five kinds of mellows: *śānta*, *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, and *mādhurya*. Everything is there in the spiritual world.
>
> *Cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu*. In the spiritual sky, even the land is spiritual. The trees are spiritual, the fruit is spiritual, the flowers are spiritual, the water is spiritual, the servants are spiritual, the friends are spiritual, the mothers are spiritual, the fathers are spiritual, the Lord is spiritual, and His associates are spiritual. It is all absolute, although there are varieties.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who also identified Himself as Kṛṣṇa's maidservant, taught the general understanding that we *jīvas* are all Kṛṣṇa's servants, using the masculine gender *(dāsa)*. In His teachings to Sanātana Gosvāmī, He said: *'jīvera svarūpa' haya—kṛṣṇera 'nitya-dāsa'*. "It is the living entity's constitutional position to be an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa." (Cc. Madhya 20.108). And in His prayers to Lord Jagannātha during the Ratha-yatra festival, He said: *gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ*. "I identify Myself only as the servant of the servant of the servant of the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the maintainer of the *gopīs*." (Cc. Madhya 13.80)

# Verse 29



चिन्तामणिप्रकरसद्मसु कल्पवृक्ष- लक्षावृतेषु सुरभीरभिपालयन्तम् ।
लक्ष्मीसहस्रशतसम्भ्रमसेव्यमानं गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ २९ ॥

*cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu kalpa-vṛkṣa-*
*lakṣāvṛteṣu surabhīr abhipālayantam*

*lakṣmī-sahasra-śata-sambhrama-sevyamānaṁ*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who tends the *surabhi* cows within abodes made of *cintāmaṇi* gems, surrounded by hundreds of thousands of wish-fulfilling trees, and who is served with loving eagerness by hundreds of thousands of Lakṣmīs.**

*cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu*—in palaces made of clusters of *cintāmaṇi* gems; *kalpa-vṛkṣa-lakṣa-āvṛteṣu*—surrounded by hundreds of thousands of wish-fulfilling trees; *surabhīḥ*—the *surabhi* cows; *abhipālayantam*—carefully tending and protecting; *lakṣmī-sahasra-śata*—by hundreds of thousands of Lakṣmīs; *sambhrama-sevyamānam*—served with great reverence and loving eagerness; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *aham*—I; *bhajāmi*—worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Now Brahmā begins his hymn.

Among the many sacred *pīṭhas*, or spiritual centers, within Goloka—distinguished according to different *mantras*, different regions, and meditative manifestations such as the *Bṛhad-dhyāna* and others—there are various seats associated with particular times and modes of worship for a single *mantra*.

Yet among them all, the foremost and central *pīṭha* is the one known as Gokula. Therefore Brahmā first glorifies Govinda according to the pastimes appropriate to residence within that principal Gokula-pīṭha.

Thus he says: *cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu.* The meaning is clear.

The phrase *surabhīr abhipālayantam* means that He carefully protects and tends the cows in every way, with deep affection, by grazing them in forests, leading them to water, guiding them along pathways, and bringing them to the cowherd settlements.

Then Brahmā hints at the Lord's more confidential activities by saying: *lakṣmī-sahasra-śata-sambhrama-sevyamānam*. He is served with loving eagerness by hundreds of thousands of Lakṣmīs. As explained previously, *lakṣmī* here means the beautiful *gopīs* of Vraja.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, who tends the *surabhi* cows, the wish-fulfilling *kāmadhenus*, in abodes built of clusters of *cintāmaṇi* gems, surrounded by millions of wish-fulfilling trees, and who is lovingly served by hundreds of thousands of Lakṣmīs.**

The word *cintāmaṇi* here should be understood as a spiritual gem. Just as the illusory energy, *māyā-śakti*, constructs the material world from the five gross material elements, in the same way the spiritual potency, *cic-chakti*, creates the spiritual world from spiritual substance in the form of *cintāmaṇi*. Among these, the *cintāmaṇi* that constitutes the very substance of Bhagavān's abode in Goloka is even more rare and valuable than ordinary *cintāmaṇi* gems.

Ordinary wish-fulfilling trees grant the fruits of religiosity, wealth, sense enjoyment, and liberation. But the wish-fulfilling trees in Kṛṣṇa's abode bestow unlimited varieties of divine love. Ordinary wish-fulfilling cows give milk only when milked, but the *surabhi* cows of Goloka constantly pour forth an ocean of milk in the form of a fountain of love, streaming with spiritual consciousness and bliss and dispelling the hunger and thirst of the pure devotees.

The numerical expressions in the verse indicate unlimited numbers. The word *sambhrama* signifies service performed with a heart overflowing with love and eager regard. The word *lakṣmī* here refers to the beautiful cowherd girls, the *gopīs*. The expression *ādi-puruṣa*, "the primeval Lord," means He who is the origin of all.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The revelation granted to Brahmā after his austerities is also described in Chapter Nine of the Second Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. There the Supreme Lord, pleased with Brahmā's penance, manifests His personal abode, Vaikuṇṭha, before him.

In the purport to Text 9, Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that the austerities performed by Brahmā were acts of devotional service rather than ordinary penances; otherwise, the Lord would not have revealed His personal abode. That abode is real and transcendental, not mythical or material as impersonalists believe. Only through *bhakti* can the transcendental realm of Vaikuṇṭha become visible; no amount of speculation, dry renunciation, or mechanical meditation can grant entrance into the Lord's eternal abode.

Although austerity, such as the one performed by Brahmā, may involve hardship, the difficulties accepted in *bhakti-yoga* are spiritual in nature and

therefore filled with transcendental happiness from the very beginning. Other forms of severe discipline, when devoid of devotional service to the Lord, ultimately yield only labor and frustration, like beating empty husks without obtaining grain.

Then Prabhupāda makes a remarkable comparison that needs explanation. He writes: "Executing *bhakti-yoga* is exactly like sitting on the lotus sprouted out of the abdomen of the transcendental Personality of Godhead, for Lord Brahmā was seated there."

Taken literally, this statement may be confusing because it appears to say: "Since Brahmā sat on the lotus, therefore *bhakti* is like sitting on a lotus." But this is not meant as a formal logical argument. The comparison is analogical, not causal. Understood in that way, the lotus functions as a symbol of direct dependence upon and connection with the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Brahmā's physical position upon the lotus mirrors the metaphysical position of the devotee practicing *bhakti-yoga* who is supported by the Lord, connected to the Lord, nourished by the Lord, and ultimately granted entrance by the Lord into His abode. Just as Brahmā attained realization while seated upon the lotus arising from the Lord Himself, so the devotee attains realization by remaining fully dependent upon the Lord's mercy.

Another important point raised by Prabhupāda is that true self-realization culminates not in an impersonal conception of one's self, but in perceiving the transcendental personality of both the Lord and His devotees. Such realization is possible only for those who are *sva-dṛṣṭavadbhiḥ,* those who have realized their true self as spiritual persons and eternal servants of the Lord.

This verse also marks the beginning of Brahmā's direct description of Goloka Vṛndāvana, the supreme spiritual abode. Rather than describing the Supreme Lord as a majestic ruler surrounded by awe and reverence, Brahmā presents Govinda as a cowherd boy who lovingly tends His *surabhi* cows amidst forests of wish-fulfilling trees.

# VERSE 30



वेणुं क्वणन्तमरविन्ददलायताक्षं बर्हावतंसमसिताम्बुदसुन्दराङ्गम् ।
कन्दर्पकोटिकमनीयविशेषशोभं गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ३०॥

*veṇuṁ kvaṇantam aravinda-dalāyatākṣam*
*barhāvataṁsam asitāmbuda-sundarāṅgam*
*kandarpa-koṭi-kamanīya-viśeṣa-śobhaṁ*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who plays upon His flute, whose elongated eyes resemble lotus petals, whose head is adorned with a peacock feather, whose beautiful form resembles a dark raincloud, and whose unique beauty enchants millions of Kandarpas.**

*veṇum*—the flute; *kvaṇantam*—playing, causing to resound; *aravinda-dala*—like the petals of a lotus; *āyata*—elongated; *akṣam*—whose eyes; *barha*—a peacock feather; *avataṁsam*—whose ornament; *asita-ambuda*—like a dark raincloud; *sundara-aṅgam*—whose bodily form is beautiful; *kandarpa-koṭi*—millions of Kandarpas (Kandarpa, or Kāmadeva, is the Vedic god of love, equivalent to the Western Cupid); *kamanīya*—charming, enchanting; *viśeṣa-śobham*—whose beauty is unique; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *aham*—I; *bhajāmi*—worship, adore.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Having described the pastimes situated in the extraordinary abode known as Gokula, composed of *cintāmaṇi* palaces, in accordance with the statement to be given later, "speech is song and movement is dance," Brahmā now describes the *līlā* of the second *pīṭha*. As described in the *Bṛhad-dhyāna* and similar meditations, the Lord remains there in one place, without walking or other movement.

In the verse beginning with *veṇum*, everything is clear.

## Annotations 1

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

*Bṛhad-dhyāna*, literally "the great meditation," appears to refer more fully to the *Bṛhad-dhyāna-ratnābhiṣeka* section of the *Krama-dīpikā*. Vaiṣṇava authors cite it as an example of *mantropāsanāmayī-līlā*, a meditative method centered upon a particular *mantra* and fixed in the place appropriate to a particular pastime.

Jīva Gosvāmī contrasts this manifestation, in which Govinda remains in one place, with the dynamic pastimes of Gokula, where He moves from one place to another. Yet remaining in one place does not mean remaining inactive. Even while Govinda remains there, He is always playing His flute, as indicated by the words *veṇuṁ kvaṇantam*.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who is absorbed in playing upon His flute, whose eyes resemble fully blossomed lotus petals, whose head is adorned with a peacock-feather ornament, whose beautiful form resembles a fresh raincloud, and whose unique splendor enchants millions of Kandarpas**.

(The incomparable beauty of Kṛṣṇa, the supreme beloved of Goloka, is now being described.)

Kṛṣṇa, the infinite conscious reality, possesses an entirely spiritual form by His very nature. His form is not an imagination projected from the beautiful objects of this material world. Rather, Brahmā describes here what he beholds in the spiritual trance of devotion.

Kṛṣṇa is absorbed in flute-playing. The charming sound of His flute steals the hearts of all conscious beings.

Just as lotus petals convey softness, Kṛṣṇa's two eyes, through which spiritual vision shines forth *(cid-dṛṣṭi-prakāśa-rūpa)*, unfold the boundless beauty of His moonlike face.

The peacock-feather ornament upon His head enhances the spiritual beauty of His form.

Just as a dark raincloud appears pleasing to the eye, Kṛṣṇa's complexion is transcendently dark and beautiful.

Even if one could behold or imagine the beauty of millions upon millions of Kandarpas within this material world gathered together, Kṛṣṇa's form would still be more enchanting.

## Annotations 2

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Having described the spiritual environment of Goloka in the previous verse, Brahmā now turns his attention to the central figure of that realm, Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself.

It is noteworthy that he does not begin his description by expounding Kṛṣṇa's power, omniscience, or majesty. Instead, he describes His beauty. This reflects a central conclusion of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy: the most complete and perfect revelation of the Absolute is found not in awe-inspiring greatness, but in supreme sweetness and irresistible charm. Indeed, the name Kṛṣṇa signifies "the all-attractive one." His unique beauty enchants even millions of Kandarpas, gods of love, who are celebrated throughout the three worlds for their ravishing beauty.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's rendering brings out a further nuance. Kṛṣṇa's beauty does not merely surpass that of Kandarpa, but enchants Kandarpa himself. Kandarpa, also known as Kāmadeva or Madana, is the Vedic demigod associated with amorous attraction and the generative impulse. Kṛṣṇa therefore says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.28): *prajanaś cāsmi kandarpaḥ*. "Of causes for procreation I am Kandarpa, the god of love." Among the forces leading to procreation, Kandarpa represents Kṛṣṇa's divine potency.

The name *Madana* literally means "he who intoxicates or bewilders the mind," because Madana's influence enchants all embodied beings. But Kṛṣṇa's beauty is so captivating that it enchants even Madana. Therefore Kṛṣṇa is also known as Madana-mohana, "He who enchants Madana."

In the Vedic literature Kāmadeva is often depicted carrying a sugarcane bow strung with bees and shooting flower arrows that awaken sensual attraction. A rough Western equivalent is Cupid, who is likewise portrayed carrying a bow and shooting arrows that awaken attraction.

The flute occupies a special place in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. Unlike the weapons and emblems borne by Nārāyaṇa—disc, club, conch, and lotus—which express divine majesty, sovereignty, and protection, the flute belongs wholly to the intimate sweetness of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Vṛndāvana. It is purely an instrument of enchantment.

Through the sound of His flute, Kṛṣṇa calls the cows, charms His friends, captivates the hearts of the *gopīs*, and awakens love for Him within all living creatures. Thus the flute manifests the Lord's supreme attractive potency, by which He draws all living beings toward a loving relationship with Himself.

# VERSE 31



आलोलचन्द्रकलसद्वनमाल्यवंशीरत्नाङ्गदं प्रणयकेलिकलाविलासम् । श्यामं त्रिभङ्गललितं नियतप्रकाशं गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ३१ ॥

*ālola-candraka-lasad-vanamālya-vaṁśī-*
*ratnāṅgadaṁ praṇaya-keli-kalā-vilāsam*
*śyāmaṁ tribhaṅga-lalitaṁ niyata-prakāśaṁ*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, whose garland of forest flowers shines with a gently swaying moon-locket, who carries a flute and wears jeweled armlets, who revels in the art of loving play, and whose dark-hued form, gracefully curved in three places, is eternally manifest.**

*ālola*—gently swaying; *candraka*—a moon-shaped locket or ornament; *lasat*—shining, resplendent; *vanamālya*—whose garland of forest flowers; *vaṁśī*—holding a flute; *ratna-aṅgadam*—wearing jeweled armlets; *praṇaya-keli-kalā-vilāsam*—who revels in the art of loving play; *śyāmam*—dark-hued; *tri-bhaṅga-lalitam*—graceful in a posture bent in three places; *niyata-prakāśam*—eternally manifest; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *aham*—I; *bhajāmi*—worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Regarding the words beginning with *ālola*: *Praṇaya-keli-kalā-vilāsam* refers to Him whose joyful pastimes consist of the artistic skill displayed in playful jesting born of love. The *Amara-kośa* thesaurus gives *drava*, *keli*, and *parihāsa* as synonymous terms for "sportive jesting."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 31**

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, whose neck is adorned by a garland of forest flowers and beautified by a swinging moon-locket, who carries a flute and wears jeweled armlets, who is always engaged in loving playful pastimes, and who is eternally manifest as Śyāmasundara in His graceful threefold-bending form.**

In the verse beginning *cintāmaṇi-prakara*, the spiritual abode *(cinmaya-dhāma)* and spiritual names such as *Govinda (cinmaya-nāma)* were described. In the verse beginning *veṇuṁ kvaṇantam*, the eternal spiritual form *(cinmaya-nitya-rūpa)* was described. In the present verse, the playful pastimes *(keli-vilāsa)*, which manifest the sixty-four qualities of that spiritual form, are described. All spiritual activities possible within *mādhurya-rasa*, the mellow of conjugal sweetness, are contained within this *praṇaya-keli-vilāsa*, joyful loving play.

# VERSE 32



अङ्गानि यस्य सकलेन्द्रियवृत्तिमन्ति पश्यन्ति पान्ति कलयन्ति चिरं जगन्ति ।
आनन्दचिन्मयसदुज्ज्वलविग्रहस्य गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ३२ ॥

*aṅgāni yasya sakalendriya-vṛttimanti*
*paśyanti pānti kalayanti ciraṁ jaganti*
*ānanda-cinmaya-sad-ujjvala-vigrahasya*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, whose limbs possess the functions of all the senses and eternally see, sustain, and manifest the universes, and whose form, composed of consciousness and bliss, is eternally radiant.**

*aṅgāni*—the limbs; *yasya*—whose; *sakala-indriya-vṛttimanti*—possessing the functions of all the senses; *paśyanti*—they see; *pānti*—they protect, sustain; *kalayanti*—they manifest; *ciram*—eternally, perpetually; *jaganti*—the worlds, the universes; *ānanda*—bliss; *cinmaya*—composed of consciousness; *sat*—eternally existent; *ujjvala*—radiant, effulgent; *vigrahasya*—whose form; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *aham*—I; *bhajāmi*—worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Having described those two kinds of pastimes, Brahmā now describes Govinda's distinctive opulence, manifested through His supremely inconceivable potency, in four verses beginning with *aṅgāni*.

In the first of these verses, Brahmā describes Govinda's form. Even His hands are able to see, His eyes are capable of sustaining and protecting, and likewise each limb is able to perform the function of every other limb.

Thus it is also said in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (13.14): *sarvataḥ pāṇi-pādaṁ tat sarvato 'kṣi-śiro-mukham*. "Everywhere are His hands and feet; everywhere are His eyes, heads, and faces."

With the word *jaganti*, "the universes," the intended meaning is that, in relation to the associates and other constituents of His pastimes, each of His limbs acts just as Govinda Himself does. The cause of this extraordinary capacity is the distinctive nature of His form, indicated by the words *ānanda-cinmaya*: composed of consciousness and bliss.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 32

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, whose form is composed of bliss, consciousness, and eternal existence, and is therefore supremely effulgent. Every limb of His form possesses all the functions of all the senses, and eternally sees, maintains, and manifests the innumerable spiritual and material worlds.**

In the absence of tasting spiritual reality *(cid-āsvāda)*, a grave doubt arises within persons conditioned by materialistic knowledge. Hearing descriptions of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, they think that learned people have merely projected the idea of Kṛṣṇa from material experience through poetic imagination.

To dispel this harmful misconception, Brahmā, in this verse and the next three, carefully explains the distinction between spirit and matter through philosophical analysis. In this way, he establishes Kṛṣṇa's pastimes as perceived in pure spiritual absorption *(śuddha-samādhi)*.

Brahmā's intention is to convey the following understanding:

> Kṛṣṇa's form is composed of eternity, consciousness, and bliss *(sac-cid-ānanda)*, whereas all material perceptions are composed of inert darkness born of *māyā*.
>
> Although spirit and matter display certain superficial similarities in variety and differentiation, the essential truth is that conscious spiritual reality is the original substance. Variety and diversity eternally exist within it. Upon that spiritual variety are established Kṛṣṇa's spiritual abode, spiritual form, spiritual name, qualities, and pastimes. Only those endowed with pure spiritual awareness and freed from contact with *māyā* can truly perceive and relish those pastimes.

The spiritual abode, the pastime realm composed of *cintāmaṇi* manifested by the spiritual potency, and Kṛṣṇa's form are all completely spiritual.

Just as *māyā* is the shadow of the spiritual potency, so the varieties found in the material world are likewise inferior reflections or shadows of spiritual variety. Thus only a resemblance to the variety of spiritual reality is perceived within the material world.

Although both spiritual and material realms display variety, they are fundamentally distinct. The defect of matter lies precisely in its inferior quality, whereas spiritual reality possesses variety completely free from such defect. Kṛṣṇa's self and body are not different from one another. In conditioned souls, however, body and self are distinct. In spiritual reality there is no distinction between the body and the possessor of the body, limb and whole, attributes and the possessor of attributes. But in material existence such distinctions exist in conditioned beings.

Although Kṛṣṇa possesses limbs, each of His limbs is complete Kṛṣṇa Himself. All spiritual functions are present in every one of His limbs. Therefore He is indivisible, complete consciousness.

Both the *jīva* and Kṛṣṇa are conscious spiritual entities and are thus similar in nature. The difference is that in the *jīva* these qualities exist in atomic measure, whereas in Kṛṣṇa they exist infinitely.

When the soul attains its pure spiritual condition, those qualities become manifest within it in minute measure. When, by Kṛṣṇa's mercy, the power of the spiritual *hlādinī-śakti* manifests within the soul, it attains a perfected likeness to the infinite.

Even so, because of certain unique qualities, Kṛṣṇa alone remains the supreme object of worship. Those four unique qualities are not manifested even in the Lords of Vaikuṇṭha or the *puruṣa-avatāras*, what to speak of demigods like Śiva or ordinary living beings.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The four unique qualities *(catuḥ-viśeṣa-mādhurya)* mentioned by Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura that distinguish Kṛṣṇa even from Nārāyaṇa in Vaikuṇṭha and the *puruṣa-avatāras* are:

1. *Līlā-mādhurya*—Kṛṣṇa is an ocean of sweet and wonderful pastimes.
2. *Prema-mādhurya*—Kṛṣṇa is surrounded by devotees possessing incomparable sweet love for Him.
3. *Veṇu-mādhurya*—Kṛṣṇa's flute song is so sweet and enchanting that it captivates the mind of everyone in the three worlds.
4. *Rūpa-mādhurya*—Kṛṣṇa's bodily beauty is so sweet and incomparable that it astonishes all moving and nonmoving beings.

# Verse 33



अद्वैतमच्युतमनादिमनन्तरूपम् आद्यं पुराणपुरुषं नवयौवनं च । वेदेषु
दुर्लभमदुर्लभमात्मभक्तौ गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ३३ ॥

*advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam*
*ādyaṁ purāṇa-puruṣaṁ nava-yauvanaṁ ca*
*vedeṣu durlabham adurlabham ātma-bhaktau*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who is nondual, infallible, and beginningless. He possesses unlimited forms and is the original and ancient person, yet ever fresh in youth. He is difficult to attain through the *Vedas* but not difficult to attain through the soul's devotion.**

*advaitam*—nondual, without equal or second; *acyutam*—infallible; *anādim*—without beginning; *ananta-rūpam*—having unlimited forms; *ādyam*—the original, the first; *purāṇa-puruṣam*—the ancient, primeval person; *nava-yauvanam*—ever fresh in youth; *ca*—and; *vedeṣu*—through the *Vedas*; *durlabham*—difficult to attain; *adurlabham*—not difficult to attain; *ātma-bhaktau*—through the soul's devotion; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *aham*—I; *bhajāmi*—worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

The extraordinary nature of Govinda's form is further established in the next three verses beginning with *advaitam*.

The word *advaitam* here means "without equal," as in the statements, "On Earth this king is without equal" and "the king has no equal." Thus it means "unrivaled" or "incomparable." This is supported by Uddhava's statement in the Third Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.2.12): *vismāpanaṁ svasya ca saubhagarddheḥ*. "His extraordinary beauty was astonishing even to Himself."

The word *acyutam* means "infallible" and is confirmed by statements such as Akrūra's prayer in the Tenth Canto: "Indeed, Kaṁsa has shown me great favor, for by sending me here he has enabled me to behold the lotus feet of Hari, who has descended into this world. By the radiance of His toenails, the ancients crossed the realm of insurmountable darkness. Those feet are worshiped by Brahmā, Śiva, the other demigods, and Śrī Devī herself."

Uddhava likewise says in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*: "The lotus feet of Bhagavān Śrī Kṛṣṇa, which Śrī, Brahmā, and other fully satisfied masters of *yoga* worship within their hearts, were placed upon the breasts of the *gopīs* during the *rāsa* dance; embracing those feet, the *gopīs* cast off their distress."

Śukadeva also states: *darśayām āsa lokaṁ svaṁ gopānāṁ tamasaḥ param*. "He revealed to the cowherds His own realm beyond darkness." He then says: *nandādayas tu taṁ dṛṣṭvā paramānanda-nirvṛtāḥ kṛṣṇaṁ ca tatra chandobhiḥ stūyamānaṁ suvismitāḥ*. "Nanda and the others, seeing that realm and Kṛṣṇa praised there by the *Vedas*, were filled with supreme bliss and great wonder."

In the Eleventh Canto's exposition of Sāṅkhya beginning with *kālo māyāmaye jīvaḥ*, Brahman is taught as that which remains after the great cosmic dissolution. Bhagavān Himself, however, is the witness even of that Brahman. Concerning this, the Lord says: *eṣa sāṅkhya-vidhiḥ proktaḥ saṁśaya-granthi-bhedanaḥ pratilomānulomābhyāṁ parāvara-dṛśā mayā*. "I, who perceive both the higher and the lower, have explained this method of Sāṅkhya, which severs the knot of doubt, through analysis in both forward and reverse order."

The term *purāṇa-puruṣam*, "the primeval person," is supported by Brahmā's statement: *ekas tvam ātmā puruṣaḥ purāṇaḥ*. "You alone are the Self, the primeval person." It is also supported by the statement of the women of Mathurā: *gūḍhaḥ purāṇa-puruṣo vana-citra-mālyaḥ*. "The hidden primeval person, adorned with a variegated forest garland."

Although He is the primeval person, He is nevertheless *nava-yauvanam*, ever fresh in youth. According to the Vedic dictionary *Nirukta: purā api navaḥ purāṇaḥ*. "Though ancient, He is ever new." The Tenth Canto states: *gopyas tapaḥ kim acaran yad amuṣya rūpam ... dṛgbhiḥ pibanty anusavābhinavaṁ durāpam*. "What austerities did the *gopīs* perform? With their eyes they drink the beauty of His form, ever fresh at every moment and difficult to attain." The Ninth Canto likewise begins a description: "His face adorned with shark-shaped earrings..." In the First Canto, after qualities such as truthfulness, purity, beauty, skill, and steadiness have been listed, it is said: *ete cānye ca bhagavan nityā yatra mahā-guṇāḥ prārthyā mahattvam icchadbhir na viyanti sma karhicit*. "These and many other great qualities are eternally present in Bhagavān. Those who aspire for greatness desire them, yet they never depart from Him." Similar descriptions are also heard in the *Bṛhad-dhyāna* and related works. The *Tāpanī Śruti* states: *gopa-veśam abhrābhaṁ taruṇaṁ kalpa-drumāśritam*. "He was dressed as a cowherd, dark like a raincloud, youthful, and standing beneath a wish-fulfilling tree." Here the word *taruṇa* specifically indicates fresh youth as the very abode of beauty.

The words *vedeṣu durlabham* are supported by statements from the Tenth Canto such as: *bhejur mukunda-padavīṁ śrutibhir vimṛgyām*. "They attained the path of Mukunda, sought by the *Vedas*." It is also stated: *adyāpi yat-pada-rajaḥ śruti-mṛgyam eva*. "Even now, the dust of His feet is sought by the *Vedas*." Yet He is *adurlabham ātma-bhaktau*, not difficult to attain

through the soul's devotion. Thus in the Eleventh Canto Kṛṣṇa says: *bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyaḥ*. "I am attainable only through exclusive devotional service." And in the Tenth Canto (10.14.5) Brahmā prays:

*pureha bhūman bahavo 'pi yoginas tvad-arpitehā nija-karma-labdhayā*
*vibudhya bhaktyaiva kathopanītayā prapedire 'ñjo 'cyuta te gatiṁ parām*

"O almighty Lord, in the past many *yogīs* in this world achieved the platform of devotional service by offering all their endeavors unto You and faithfully carrying out their prescribed duties. Through such devotional service, perfected by the processes of hearing and chanting about You, they came to understand You, O infallible one, and could easily surrender to You and achieve Your supreme abode."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 33

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who is inaccessible even to the *Vedas* but attainable through pure devotion of the soul. He is nondual, infallible, beginningless, possessed of unlimited forms, the original and primeval person, yet always beautiful and endowed with ever-fresh youth.**

*Advaita* means *advaya-jñāna*, the indivisible, nondual truth *(akhaṇḍa-tattva)*. Although the infinite Brahman emanates as His effulgence and the Lord in the form of Paramātmā manifests as His portion, He remains indivisible.

*Acyuta* means supremely complete *(parama-pūrṇa)*. Although millions upon millions of *avatāras* manifest as His personal expansions *(svāṁśa)*, and although innumerable living beings emanate as His separated expansions *(vibhinnāṁśa)*, He nevertheless remains supremely complete.

Even while manifesting birth and other pastimes, He is *anādi*, without beginning. Even when He makes His manifest pastimes unmanifest, He is *ananta*, without end. Although beginningless, in His manifest pastimes He is *ādya*, endowed with a beginning in the form of birth and similar events.

Although in truth the eternal primeval person *(sanātana-puruṣa)*, He is forever endowed with fresh, eternal youth.

The essential meaning is this: Although He possesses many apparently contradictory qualities, all of them are harmoniously reconciled everywhere through His inconceivable potency *(acintya-śakti)*. This is *cid-dharma,* a characteristic entirely distinct from matter.

His beautiful flute-bearing form of Śyāmasundara, gracefully standing in the threefold-bending posture, is eternally youthful and entirely beyond the defects of material time and space. In the spiritual realm, only the pure present exists, free from past and future. Likewise, the distinction found in material space between an attribute and its possessor does not exist in the spiritual reality. Therefore, qualities that appear contradictory to intelligence conditioned by material time and space exist there in perfect harmony.

But how can the living being experience such an unprecedented reality? The conditioned soul's faculty of cognition is always contaminated by the defects arising from material time, space, and other limitations and therefore cannot relinquish the material mode of perception. If that faculty cannot perceive spiritual reality, through what faculty can pure spiritual reality be experienced?

In answer, Brahmā says that the spiritual reality is beyond the reach of the *Vedas*. The *Vedas* are rooted in sound, and sound is rooted in material nature. Therefore, the *Vedas* cannot directly reveal the transcendental realm of Goloka. Only when the *Vedas* are pervaded by the spiritual potency can they speak of that reality to some extent.

Every *jīva*, however, can receive the revelation of Goloka through the influence of the *saṁvit-śakti* united with the essence of the *hlādinī-śakti*. This influence manifests within the *jīva* as the faculty of devotion. The *hlādinī* function of devotion is unlimited and completely spiritual. When knowledge becomes united with devotion, it no longer manifests a separate identity as knowledge, and reveals the reality of Goloka through devotion.

# Verse 34



पन्थास्तु कोटिशतवत्सरसम्प्रगम्यो वायोरथापि मनसो मुनिपुङ्गवानाम् ।
सोऽप्यस्ति यत्प्रपदसीम्न्यविचिन्त्यतत्त्वे गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ३४ ॥

*panthās tu koṭi-śata-vatsara-sampragamyo*
*vāyor athāpi manaso muni-puṅgavānām*
*so 'py asti yat-prapada-sīmny avicintya-tattve*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord. Even the path traversed for a billion years by the foremost sages at the speed of the wind, or even of the mind, reaches only the outermost boundary of His lotus feet, whose reality is inconceivable.**

*panthāḥ*—the path; *tu*—indeed; *koṭi-śata-vatsara-sampragamyaḥ*—to be traversed for a billion years; *vāyoḥ*—of the wind; *atha api*—or even; *manasaḥ*—of the mind; *muni-puṅgavānām*—of the greatest sages; *saḥ api*—even that; *asti*—exists; *yat-prapada-sīmni*—at the boundary of whose lotus feet; *avicintya-tattve*—in the inconceivable reality; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## DIG-DARŚINĪ-ṬĪKĀ

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

The verse beginning with *panthās tu* is now explained. The phrase *yat-prapada-sīmni* means "at the tips of His lotus feet."

Thus Nārada says in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.69.2):

*citraṁ bataitad ekena vapuṣā yugapat pṛthak*
*gṛheṣu dvy-aṣṭa-sāhasraṁ striya eka udāvahat*

"How astonishing! With a single form, He simultaneously and separately married sixteen thousand wives in their respective palaces."

And the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* states:

*eko vaśī sarvagaḥ kṛṣṇa īḍyaḥ*
*eko 'pi san bahudhā yo vibhāti*

"Kṛṣṇa is the one controller, all-pervading and worshipable. Though one, He manifests in many forms."

The *siddhānta* (conclusion) is expressed by the phrase *avicintya-tattve*, "whose reality is inconceivable."

Thus the Third Canto states: *ātmeśvaro 'tarkya-sahasra-śaktiḥ*. "The Supreme Lord possesses thousands of powers beyond the reach of logic."

And the *Skanda Purāṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* declare:

*acintyāḥ khalu ye bhāvā na tāṁs tarkeṇa yojayet*
*prakṛtibhyaḥ paraṁ yac ca tad acintyasya lakṣaṇam*

"Those realities that are inconceivable should not be subjected to mundane logic. That which is beyond material nature is the characteristic of the inconceivable."

And the *Brahma-sūtra* states: *śrutes tu śabda-mūlatvāt.* "But [the inconceivable reality is known] from *Śruti*, because revealed sound is the source of such knowledge."

And the *Bhāṣya* explains: *acintyo hi maṇi-mantra-mahauṣadhīnām prabhāvaḥ.* "The potency of jewels, *mantras*, and great medicinal herbs is indeed inconceivable."

The meaning is that Govinda's nature and powers are not known through reasoning, but through revealed Scripture.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 34

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord. The path of breath-control followed by yogīs engaged in *prāṇāyāma*, who desire to approach that reality beyond material thought, or the path of cultivating knowledge followed by the foremost sages who search for undifferentiated Brahman by rejecting all that is not that, may be pursued for a billion years, yet it reaches only the front boundary of His lotus feet.**

Attaining Govinda's lotus feet means relishing pure devotional service *(śuddha-bhakti)*.

The practitioners of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* may, through the process of *samādhi* over one billion years, attain *kaivalya*, the state of nondual oneness. Similarly, the foremost nondualistic sages may spend an equally vast period discriminating between spirit and matter, rejecting one material object after another with the understanding, "Not this, not this," and ultimately merge into the undifferentiated Brahman beyond material illusion.

Yet that attainment is merely the region lying outside the tips of Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet; it is not the lotus feet themselves.

The essential point is this: *Kaivalya* and absorption into Brahman constitute only the boundary between the material world and the spiritual world. Until one passes beyond those states, one cannot experience the variety within spiritual reality *(cid-viśeṣa)*.

Such attainments represent merely the absence of suffering arising from material existence; they are not happiness. Even if one is willing to call that absence of suffering a kind of happiness, it is exceedingly slight and insignificant. The mere destruction of material existence is not the ultimate goal. Real attainment consists in the soul becoming established in its spiritual condition.

That state can be attained only by the mercy of devotional service, whose nature is spiritual consciousness. It cannot be attained through the dry path of intellectual speculation.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Commenting on this verse, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in *Teachings of Queen Kuntī*, Chapter 14:

> Space is unlimited, and the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.34) suggests: Suppose one travels by spacecraft for millions of years at the velocity of the wind or even the speed of mind. Everyone knows that the mind is so swift that in even one ten-thousandth of a second it can take us millions of miles. If we have seen something millions of miles away, the mind can go there immediately. But even if we can travel at that speed on a spacecraft manufactured by *muni-puṅgavānām*, the greatest scientists and most thoughtful men, will that be perfection? No. The *Brahma-saṁhitā* says, *so 'py asti yat-prapada-sīmny avicintya-tattve:* Still this creation will remain inconceivable to our understanding. And Kṛṣṇa has created all these things, so how can we study Kṛṣṇa? If we cannot understand the things Kṛṣṇa has created, how can we understand Kṛṣṇa? It is not possible at all.

# VERSE 35



एकोऽप्यसौ रचयितुं जगदण्डकोटिं यच्छक्तिरस्ति जगदण्डचया यदन्तः ।
अण्डान्तरस्थपरमाणुचयान्तरस्थं गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ३५ ॥

*eko 'py asau racayituṁ jagad-aṇḍa-koṭiṁ*
*yac-chaktir asti jagad-aṇḍa-cayā yad-antaḥ*
*aṇḍāntara-stha-paramāṇu-cayāntara-sthaṁ*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord. Although He is one, He has the potency to create millions of universes. Multitudes of universes exist within Him, and He is present within every universe and within every atom.**

*ekaḥ api*—although one; *asau*—He; *racayitum*—to create; *jagad-aṇḍa-koṭim*—millions of universes; *yat-śaktiḥ asti*—who possesses the potency; *jagad-aṇḍa-cayāḥ*—the multitudes of universes; *yat-antaḥ*—within whom; *aṇḍa-antara-stha*—situated within each universe; *paramāṇu-caya-antara-stham*—situated within every aggregate of atoms; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## DIG-DARŚINĪ-ṬĪKĀ

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

The verse beginning *eko 'py asau* is explained by the following account in the Tenth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.13.46):

*tāvat sarve vatsa-pālāḥ paśyato 'jasya tat-kṣaṇāt*
*vyadṛśyanta ghana-śyāmāḥ pīta-kauśeya-vāsasaḥ*

"Then, while Brahmā was watching, all the cowherd boys and calves immediately appeared as dark-blue forms dressed in yellow silk."

This occurred because within those very cowherd boys and calves were included the presiding *puruṣas* together with the complete arrangements of innumerable universes.

The phrase *jagad-aṇḍa-cayāḥ*, "the aggregates of universes," is supported by statements such as *na cāntar na bahir yasya*, "for Him there is neither inside nor outside." The *Śruti* also declares: *aṇor aṇīyān mahato mahīyān*. "Smaller than the smallest, greater than the greatest."

In the *Tāpanī Upaniṣad* it is said: *yo 'sau sarveṣu bhūteṣv āviśya bhūtāni vidadhāti sa vo hi svāmī bhavati.* "He who enters all beings and sustains them is indeed your Lord." And: *yo 'sau sarva-bhūtātmā gopāla eko devaḥ sarva-bhūteṣu gūḍhaḥ.* "That Gopāla, the one Supreme Being, is the self of all beings, hidden within all beings."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 35

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord. Because potency and the possessor of potency are non-different, He is one truth. His potency is inseparably present in the work of creating millions upon millions of universes. All universes exist within Him, and at the same time He is fully present within every atom.**

There is yet another quality present in Kṛṣṇa, the supreme spiritual being *(cit-vastu-śreṣṭha)*, which is altogether unlike anything found in material existence.

By His inconceivable potency and according to His will, He creates unlimited universes. The entire world is a transformation of His potency.

His mode of existence is likewise beyond worldly experience, for the entire world of spirit and matter exists within Him, and at the same time He is fully present throughout that world, indeed within every atom.

The quality of omnipresence is merely one aspect of Kṛṣṇa's majesty. Yet although He is all-pervading, His being fully present everywhere while remaining in His medium-sized form is His transcendental spiritual opulence.

By this reasoning, the doctrine of simultaneous inconceivable difference and non-difference *(acintya-bhedābheda-tattva)* is established, and all erroneous doctrines such as Māyāvāda are refuted.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

In the purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.13.47, Śrīla Prabhupāda explains:

> All the Viṣṇu forms had four arms, with conchshell and other articles, but these characteristics are also possessed by those who have attained *sārūpya-mukti* in Vaikuṇṭha and who consequently have forms exactly like the form of the Lord. However, these Viṣṇu forms appearing before Lord Brahmā also possessed the mark of Śrīvatsa and

the Kaustubha gem, which are special characteristics possessed only by the Supreme Lord Himself. This proves that all these boys and calves were in fact directly expansions of Viṣṇu, the Personality of Godhead, not merely His associates of Vaikuṇṭha. Viṣṇu Himself is included within Kṛṣṇa. All the opulences of Viṣṇu are already present in Kṛṣṇa, and consequently for Kṛṣṇa to demonstrate so many Viṣṇu forms was actually not very astonishing.

In a later purport (Verse 57), Prabhupāda says:

Brahmā was mystified about Kṛṣṇa's opulence *(nija-mahimani)* because this opulence was *atarkya,* or inconceivable. With one's limited senses, one cannot argue about that which is inconceivable. Therefore the inconceivable is called *acintya,* that which is beyond *cintya,* our thoughts and arguments. *Acintya* refers to that which we cannot contemplate but have to accept. Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī has said that unless we accept *acintya* in the Supreme, we cannot accommodate the conception of God. This must be understood. Therefore we say that the words of *śāstra* should be taken as they are, without change, since they are beyond our arguments. *Acintyāḥ khalu ye bhāvā na tāṁs tarkeṇa yojayet:* "That which is *acintya* cannot be ascertained by argument." People generally argue, but our process is not to argue but to accept the Vedic knowledge as it is. When Kṛṣṇa says, "This is superior, and this is inferior," we accept what He says. It is not that we argue, "Why is this superior and that inferior?" If one argues, for him the knowledge is lost.

# VERSE 36




यद्भावभावितधियो मनुजास्तथैव सम्प्राप्य रूपमहिमासनयानभूषाः ।
सूक्तैर्यमेव निगमप्रथितैः स्तुवन्ति गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ३६ ॥

*yad-bhāva-bhāvita-dhiyo manujās tathaiva*
*samprāpya rūpa-mahimāsana-yāna-bhūṣāḥ*
*sūktair yam eva nigama-prathitaiḥ stuvanti*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord. Human beings whose intelligence has been imbued with a particular devotional mood toward Him attain corresponding forms, glories, seats, vehicles, and ornaments, and they praise Him with the very hymns proclaimed in the *Vedas*.**

*yat-bhāva-bhāvita-dhiyaḥ*—whose intelligence has been imbued with a particular devotional mood toward Him; *manujāḥ*—human beings; *tathā eva*—in that very manner; *samprāpya*—having attained; *rūpa*—forms; *mahimā*—glories, opulences; *āsana*—seats; *yāna*—vehicles; *bhūṣāḥ*—ornaments; *sūktaiḥ*—with hymns; *yam eva*—that very Lord; *nigama-prathitaiḥ*—proclaimed in the *Vedas*; *stuvanti*—they praise; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*—Him I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

While describing the Lord's generosity even toward devotees engaged in spiritual practice, Brahmā points out how much more this is true of His eternal associates. Thus the verse begins *yad-bhāva-bhāvita-dhiyaḥ*. The meaning is that, just as it is heard in the revealed texts that the *gopas* attain likeness to Him in qualities, character, age, sportive dealings, and dress, so the same should be understood here as well regarding His eternal companions.

Thus in the Eleventh Canto (11.5.48) Nārada states:

*vaireṇa yaṁ nṛpatayaḥ śiśupāla-śālva*
*pauṇḍrādayo gati-vilāsa-vilokanādyaiḥ*
*dhyāyanta ākṛti-dhiyaḥ śayanāsanādau*
*tad-bhāvam āpur anurakta-dhiyāṁ punaḥ kim*

"Śiśupāla, Śālva, Pauṇḍraka, and other kings were always thinking about Kṛṣṇa with envy. Even while they were lying down, sitting or engaging in other activities, their minds were fixed on His form, movements, playful pastimes, glances, and so on. Being thus always absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, they attained a position on the same level with Him. What, then, may be said of those whose minds are filled with loving devotion?"

## Annotations 1

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The verse cited by Jīva Gosvāmī originally appears in a conversation between Nārada and Vasudeva in the Eleventh Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. Vasudeva, despite being Kṛṣṇa's father, felt anxiety that he might not have fully utilized the opportunity of the Lord's personal presence and wondered whether treating the Supreme Lord as his son could have constituted an offense. He was also concerned about the apparent destruction of the Yadu dynasty. Nārada reassured him by pointing out that even envious kings such as Śiśupāla, Śālva, and Pauṇḍraka attained liberation through constant absorption in Kṛṣṇa. If such perfection could be achieved through enmity, then what need be said of those whose minds are filled with love for Him? The verse therefore establishes a fundamental principle: one attains a result according to the nature and intensity of one's absorption in Kṛṣṇa.

In the Seventh Canto, Nārada Muni explained a similar point to Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira who had inquired about the Lord's impartiality. Nārada reassured the king that Viṣṇu had no enemy and no friend. When He chastises the demons it is for their good, and when He accepts the prayers of the devotees it is for their good. He then said (SB 7.1.26):

*tasmād vairānubandhena nirvaireṇa bhayena vā*
*snehāt kāmena vā yuñjyāt kathañcin nekṣate pṛthak*

"Therefore by enmity or by devotional service, by fear, by affection or by lusty desire—by all of these or any one of them—if a conditioned soul somehow or other concentrates his mind upon the Lord, the result is the same, for the Lord, because of His blissful position, is never affected by enmity or friendship."

However, Śrīla Prabhupāda explains in the purport that to imitate demons like Śiśupāla is not the way to success:

> From this verse one should not conclude that because Kṛṣṇa is unaffected by favorable prayers or unfavorable blasphemy one should therefore blaspheme the Supreme Lord. This is not the regulative principle. *Bhakti-yoga* means *ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānuśīlanam:* one

should serve Kṛṣṇa very favorably. This is the real injunction. Here it is said that although an enemy thinks of Kṛṣṇa unfavorably, the Lord is unaffected by such antidevotional service. Thus He offers His benedictions even to Śiśupāla and similarly inimical conditioned souls. This does not mean, however, that one should be inimical toward the Lord. The stress is given to the favorable execution of devotional service, not purposeful blasphemy of the Lord. [...]

The conclusion is that one should not give up pure devotional service. For one's own benefit, one should not imitate Hiraṇyakaśipu or Śiśupāla. This is not the way to achieve success.

A few verses later, Nārada elaborates on the Lord's merciful nature:

*gopyaḥ kāmād bhayāt kaṁso*
*dveṣāc caidyādayo nṛpāḥ*
*sambandhād vṛṣṇayaḥ snehād*
*yūyaṁ bhaktyā vayaṁ vibho*

"My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, the *gopīs* by their lusty desires, Kaṁsa by his fear, Śiśupāla and other kings by envy, the Yadus by their familial relationship with Kṛṣṇa, you Pāṇḍavas by your great affection for Kṛṣṇa, and we, the general devotees, by our devotional service, have obtained the mercy of Kṛṣṇa."

In the purport to this verse, Prabhupāda points out:

Different persons achieve different types of *mukti—sāyujya, sālokya, sārūpya, sāmīpya and sārṣṭi*—according to their intense desire, which is called *bhāva*. [...]

Kaṁsa and other enemies of Kṛṣṇa merged into the existence of Brahman, but why should Kṛṣṇa's friends and devotees have the same position? Kṛṣṇa's devotees attain the association of the Lord as His constant companions, either in Vṛndāvana or in the Vaikuṇṭha planets.

# Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

## Verse 36

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord. Human beings whose hearts have been imbued with a particular devotional mood attain forms, glories, seats, vehicles, and ornaments corresponding to that mood. Endowed with these, they glorify Him with the hymns and mantras spoken in the Vedas.**

According to the analysis of devotional *rasa*, there are five principal devotional moods: *śānta*, *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, and *śṛṅgāra* or *mādhurya*.

Devotees established in each of these moods render constant service to the corresponding form of Kṛṣṇa and ultimately attain the destination appropriate to that particular relationship. They receive spiritual forms suited to their *rasa*, corresponding degrees of spiritual glory, suitable seats of service, appropriate vehicles, and transcendental ornaments that enhance the beauty of their spiritual forms.

Those qualified for *śānta-rasa* attain the realm of Brahman and Paramātmā, which is the abode of spiritual peace. Those qualified for *dāsya-rasa* attain the majestic realm of Vaikuṇṭha. Those qualified for pure *sakhya-*, *vātsalya-*, and *mādhurya-rasa* attain Goloka, which lies beyond Vaikuṇṭha.

In those respective abodes, having obtained all the facilities and paraphernalia appropriate to their particular *rasa*, they glorify the Lord according to the hymns described in the *Vedas*.

In certain places the personified *Vedas*, under the influence of the Lord's spiritual potency, speak of His transcendental pastimes. The glorification and *kīrtana* of liberated devotees follow those indications.

## Annotations 2

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Some statements in Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's commentary may require clarification. He says that those qualified for *śānta-rasa* attain the realm of Brahman and Paramātmā *(brahma-paramātmā-dhāma)*, while those qualified for *dāsya-rasa* attain the majestic realm of Vaikuṇṭha. At first glance, this may appear difficult to reconcile with other descriptions by Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas*, including statements by Śrīla Prabhupāda, that the land, water, trees, flowers, cows, and other creatures in Vṛndāvana serve Kṛṣṇa in *śānta-rasa*, and that Kṛṣṇa has personal servants such as Raktaka and Patraka whose mood is identified as *dāsya-rasa*.

The apparent contradiction is resolved when it is understood that Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura is not attempting to provide an exhaustive classification of all manifestations of *rasa* throughout the spiritual world. Rather, he is identifying the realms in which particular devotional moods are most prominently or characteristically expressed.

Thus, in this context, *śānta-rasa* refers primarily to peaceful God-consciousness characterized by freedom from material desire and the absence of intimate active service. In that sense, realization of Brahman and Paramātmā may be associated with *śānta*.

Similarly, *dāsya-rasa* is not confined to Vaikuṇṭha. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura mentions Vaikuṇṭha because it is the realm in which reverential service *(aiśvarya-maya dāsya)* predominates. In Goloka, Kṛṣṇa's servants perform their service within the intimate sweetness of Vraja rather than the atmosphere of majesty and awe that characterizes Vaikuṇṭha.

The passage should therefore be understood as presenting the principal or characteristic destinations associated with these devotional moods rather than as an exhaustive study of every manifestation of *śānta-rasa* and *dāsya-rasa* found within the spiritual world.

# VERSE 37



आनन्दचिन्मयरसप्रतिभाविताभिस्ताभिर्य एव निजरूपतया कलाभिः ।
गोलोक एव निवस्यखिलात्मभूतो गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ३७ ॥

*ānanda-cinmaya-rasa-pratibhāvitābhis*
*tābhir ya eva nija-rūpatayā kalābhiḥ*
*goloka eva nivasaty akhilātma-bhūto*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who, although He is the self of all, resides only in Goloka with those expansions of His own form who are fully imbued with blissful spiritual rasa.**

*ānanda-cinmaya-rasa*—blissful spiritual *rasa*; *pratibhāvitābhiḥ*—permeated, fully imbued; *tābhiḥ*—with them; *yaḥ eva*—He who indeed; *nija-rūpatayā*—as His own forms; *kalābhiḥ*—with expansions or potencies; *goloke eva*—only in Goloka; *nivasati*—resides; *akhila-ātma-bhūtaḥ*—being the self of all; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*—Him I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

What then need be said of Govinda's beloveds? Since He resides in that realm only in the company of those supreme goddesses of fortune, Brahmā now declares: *ānanda-cinmaya-rasa-pratibhāvitābhiḥ.* "The *ānanda-cinmaya-rasa* is the supreme divine love known as *ujjvala-rasa*. The *gopīs* are pervaded and fully imbued with that *rasa*."

Alternatively, the meaning may be understood as follows: First there is that *rasa*, and by that *rasa* Govinda is worshiped and realized; then, because the *gopīs* are completely permeated by that same *rasa*, He resides together with them. This meaning is implied by the prefix *prati* in *pratibhāvitābhiḥ*.

Although all the residents of Goloka and all His other beloved associates are exceedingly dear to Him, this verse shows the unsurpassed excellence of the *gopīs*, for He resides exclusively with them, even though all others are also dear to Him as His self. The reason is given by the word *kalābhiḥ*, which indicates that they are manifestations of the functions of His *hlādinī-śakti*.

A further distinction is then indicated. Just as, from a statement such as, "He was benefited by him," one understands that the other person had first rendered the benefit, so here also a prior relationship is implied. Therefore the term *nija-rūpatayā* means that they exist as His consorts, and not under the convention of being others' wives as appears in the manifest earthly pastimes, for it is impossible that these supreme Lakṣmīs could actually be the wives of others. Rather, in the manifest pastimes, for the sake of heightening amorous relish through the intense eagerness produced when the *rasa* of their being His own consorts is veiled by playful intrigue, Yogamāyā alone manifests the appearance of such a condition.

The emphatic particle *eva* in *ya eva* indicates that the very same Lord who, in His manifest earthly pastimes, appears to reside among them under the convention that they are married to others, resides in Goloka, the abode of His unmanifest pastimes, under the convention that they are His consorts. Thus the *Gautamīya-tantra* explains in its exposition of the syllables relating to the eternal manifest pastimes: *aneka-janma-siddhānāṁ gopīnāṁ patir eva vā*. "He alone is the husband of the *gopīs*, who are perfected through many births."

And by the words *goloka eva* it is made clear that this particular *līlā* exists nowhere else.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 37

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, the Soul of all souls, who eternally resides in His abode of Goloka together with Śrī Rādhā. She is His pleasure potency *(hlādinī-śakti)*, permeated with the blissful spiritual mellow *(ānanda-cinmaya-rasa)*, corresponding to His own spiritual nature, and endowed with sixty-four arts. He is also accompanied by the *sakhīs*, who are expansions of Her form.**

Although the potency *(śakti)* and the possessor of the potency *(śaktimān)* are one reality, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa eternally exist as two distinct persons through the agency of the pleasure potency *(hlādinī-śakti)*. Within both *ānanda* (Rādhā, the pleasure potency) and *cit* (Kṛṣṇa) exists the inconceivable conjugal mellow *(śṛṅgāra-rasa)*.

This *rasa* has two kinds of stimulating causes: the supporting basis and the stimulus. The supporting basis is further divided into two: the repository *(āśraya)* and the object *(viṣaya)*. Śrī Rādhikā and Her expansions are the repository, while Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself is the object. Kṛṣṇa is Govinda, the Lord of Goloka. The *gopīs*, being permeated with this *rasa*, constitute its repository, and with them Kṛṣṇa performs His eternal pastimes in Goloka.

The phrase "corresponding to His form" *(nijarūpatayā)* means that Śrī Rādhā is accompanied by the arts *(kalās)*, which are manifested expressions of the pleasure potency. These sixty-four arts are:

> Dancing; singing; playing musical instruments; performing dramas; painting; decorating the body; making designs with rice and flowers; arranging flower beds; decorating the teeth, garments, and limbs; inlaying floors with jewels; making beds; producing music with water-filled vessels; engaging in water sports; painting pictures; weaving flower garlands; preparing floral ornaments for the head; designing costumes; designing earrings; blending perfumes; arranging jewelry; performing magic and conjuring; practicing the amorous arts; performing sleight of hand; preparing decorative foods and sweets; mixing beverages; doing needlework; making string figures; solving riddles; reciting poetry; solving difficult verbal puzzles; reading aloud; narrating dramatic stories; completing poetic compositions; weaving baskets and cane work; spinning thread; practicing carpentry; designing buildings; assaying silver and jewels; working with metals; recognizing the colors of gems; identifying mines; caring for trees; arranging contests between rams and cocks; teaching parrots and *mynah* birds to speak; giving massages; dressing hair; writing and deciphering secret codes; speaking foreign languages; interpreting floral omens; constructing mechanical devices; memorizing efficiently; composing poetry extemporaneously; composing literary works; adopting disguises; mastering lexicography, studying poetic meters and the art of versification; draping garments skillfully; playing dice; playing attractive games; entertaining children; practicing ethics; mastering the science of victory; and practicing the art of the bard.

All these arts exist eternally in Goloka in their original, personified forms as manifestations of spiritual *rasa*. In the material world they are beautifully manifested in Kṛṣṇa's Vraja pastimes through the agency of the spiritual potency *(cit-śakti)* and Yogamāyā.

For this reason Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī has written:

> Śrī Hari eternally shines with His unlimited manifestations and pastimes. Sometimes one such manifestation appears within the material world. He manifests His pastimes beginning with His birth together with His eternal associates. The potency known as *līlā-śakti*, following Kṛṣṇa's mood, inspires those same moods within His associates. Those pastimes that become visible within the material world are called manifest *(prakaṭa)* pastimes. Those of the same nature, which remain beyond the material world, shine as unmanifest *(aprakaṭa)* pastimes. Within the manifest pastimes, Kṛṣṇa's comings and goings take place in Gokula, Mathurā, and Dvārakā. Those same pastimes, which are unmanifest in these three places, are eternally manifest in Vṛndāvana and the other places of the spiritual world.

The meaning is as follows: Kṛṣṇa eternally shines in Goloka through His unlimited manifestations of pastimes. Occasionally, one of those manifestations appears within the material world. Together with His eternal associates, Śrī Hari manifests His pastimes beginning with His birth. The *līlā-śakti*, following Kṛṣṇa's mood, inspires those same moods within His associates. Those pastimes that become visible within the material world are called manifest pastimes, whereas all of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes eternally exist in Goloka as unmanifest pastimes beyond the material world. Within the manifest pastimes, Kṛṣṇa moves between Gokula, Mathurā, and Dvārakā. Those same pastimes, which are unmanifest there, are eternally manifest in Vṛndāvana and the other places of the spiritual world. From these conclusive statements it should be understood that there is no difference between the manifest and unmanifest pastimes.

In his commentary on this verse, as well as in his commentary on the *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi*, the *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha*, and other works, our *tattva-ācārya*, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, explains at length that Kṛṣṇa's manifest pastimes are arranged by Yogamāyā. Because these pastimes appear in connection with the material world, certain features, such as the killing of demons, Kṛṣṇa's relationships with the wives of others, and His birth, appear within them through Yogamāyā's arrangement. Since the *gopīs* belong to Kṛṣṇa's intrinsic potency *(svarūpa-śakti)*, they are eternally His. How, then, could they actually be the wives of others? Whatever appearance of their belonging to other

husbands is seen in the manifest pastimes is simply an impression created by *māyā (māyika-pratyaya)*.

If the deeper intention underlying Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī's statements is properly understood, no room for doubt remains. Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī is our *tattva-ācārya*. Always acting under the guidance of Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana, and being himself an eternal *mañjarī* in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, he fully understands these truths. Failing to grasp his intention, some people construct their own interpretations and argue either for or against various conclusions.

According to Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana, the manifest and unmanifest pastimes are non-different. One is manifest beyond the material world and the other within it; this alone distinguishes them. In the manifestation beyond the material world, both the seer and the object seen are perfectly pure.

When a soul, by the accumulation of great spiritual merit, receives Kṛṣṇa's mercy, gives up all connection with the material world and enters the spiritual realm, and when that soul has attained perfection in relishing the various *rasas* during the stage of devotional practice *(sādhana)*, then they can fully behold and relish the completely pure pastimes of Goloka. Such souls are exceedingly rare.

Even while still living in the material world, however, one who, by the perfection of devotional service and Kṛṣṇa's mercy, has awakened the experience of spiritual mellow *(cid-rasa)* can perceive those Goloka pastimes within Kṛṣṇa's earthly Gokula pastimes. Even among such qualified devotees there are degrees of realization. Until one attains full realization *(vastu-siddhi)*, traces of *māyā*-based obstacles remain in one's vision of Goloka's pastimes. Likewise, according to the degree of realization of one's eternal spiritual identity *(svarūpa-siddhi)*, the vision of one's spiritual form varies, and accordingly one's vision of Goloka also differs.

Those who are completely bound by *māyā* lack the eye of devotion. Among them, some are simply absorbed in *māyā*'s countless varieties, while others, taking shelter of knowledge opposed to devotion, await ultimate dissolution. Even if such persons witness Kṛṣṇa's manifest pastimes, they perceive only a material impression, completely disconnected from the unmanifest reality. Thus the vision of Goloka depends upon the qualification of the observer.

The essential point is this: Just as Goloka is a realm of pure spiritual reality, Gokula is equally pure and completely free from material contamination, although it is manifested within the material world by Yogamāyā through the agency of the spiritual potency *(cit-śakti)*. Neither the manifest nor the unmanifest pastimes contain even the slightest trace of physicality, inferiority, or imperfection. Such ideas arise solely from the lack of qualification of the individual living being who beholds them.

Material contamination, inferiority, superimposition, illusion, ignorance, impurity, triviality, insignificance, and grossness belong only to the materially conditioned eyes, intelligence, mind, and false ego of the observer; they never belong to the object perceived. To the extent that these defects are removed, to that same extent one perceives reality in its purity. Whatever truths are revealed in the Scriptures are themselves entirely pure; they appear pure or impure only according to the qualification of the person who studies them.

The sixty-four arts described here exist eternally in Goloka in their original, pure form. Impressions of inferiority, triviality, or grossness arise only according to the level of qualification of those who contemplate them. According to Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana, all the pastimes manifested in Gokula exist eternally in Goloka in their complete, perfectly pure form, free from the influence of *māyā*. Therefore the mood of paramour love *(parakīya-bhāva)* must also exist there in some inconceivably pure form.

Everything manifested by Yogamāyā is pure. Therefore the mood concerning another man's wife *(paradāra-bhāva)*, being arranged by Yogamāyā, must likewise have its basis in a pure reality. What, then, is that pure reality? Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī writes:

> Among the four types of heroes beginning with the *dhīrodātta*, two distinctions are recognized here: *pati* (husband) and *upapati* (paramour). One who accepts a maiden's hand in marriage according to religious law is called a *pati*. One who, impelled by passionate love *(rāga)*, transgresses the laws of religion to attain another man's wife, considering her love to be his very life, is called an *upapati* by the wise. Whatever fault is described here applies only to worldly heroes, never to Kṛṣṇa, who descends solely to relish the essence of *rasa*.

Concerning the heroine, he further writes:

> She who is described as another man's wife within the primary conjugal *rasa* is so designated only according to the conventions governing ordinary worldly heroines.

On the strength of these verses, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī argues at length that the sentiment of belonging to another man's wife *(paradāra-bhāva)*, like Kṛṣṇa's birth pastimes arranged by Yogamāyā, is a playful illusion *(vibhrama-vilāsa)*. Through the statement, "He is the husband of the women of the city and the paramour of the women of Vraja," Śrī Jīva reveals his deeper intention.

Śrī Rūpa and Śrī Sanātana likewise accept this playful illusion arranged by Yogamāyā. Nevertheless, since Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī establishes the essential oneness of Goloka and Gokula, it must also be accepted that every pastime manifested in Gokula has its eternal foundation in Goloka.

Applying these definitions to Goloka, one who accepts a maiden's hand according to the prescribed rites of marriage is a *pati*, whereas one who, impelled by *rāga*, transgresses religious law in order to attain another man's wife, regarding her love as his very life, is an *upapati*. In Goloka, however, there is no *dharma* consisting of bondage to the institution of marriage; therefore *patitva*, husbandhood in this sense, does not exist there. Likewise, because the *gopīs*, who belong to Kṛṣṇa's intrinsic potency *(svarūpa-śakti)*, are not married to anyone else, literal *upapatitva*, the status of being their paramour, does not exist there either. Thus *svakīya* and *parakīya* cannot exist there as two separately established conditions.

Within the manifest pastimes of the material world, however, the institution of marriage does exist, and Kṛṣṇa transcends its restrictions. Therefore Yogamāyā arranges the sphere of sweetness *(mādhurya-maṇḍala)* in such a way that Kṛṣṇa relishes the *rasa* of paramour love *(parakīya-rasa)* by apparently transgressing the law of *dharma*.

This apparent transgression, arranged by Yogamāyā, is perceived only through the materially conditioned vision of those who inhabit the material world. In reality, no such fault exists in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

Since *parakīya-rasa* is the crown jewel of all spiritual *rasas*, to deny its existence in Goloka would diminish the perfection of Goloka itself. It cannot

be that the highest spiritual abode is devoid of the highest spiritual *rasa*. Kṛṣṇa, the source of all *avatāras*, relishes this *rasa* in one manner in Goloka and in another in Gokula. Therefore, although the materially conditioned observer perceives an apparent transgression in the sentiment of belonging to another man *(paradāra-bhāva)*, that sentiment possesses an eternal, pure reality in Goloka.

The scriptural statements, "Although He is self-satisfied, He nevertheless enjoyed loving pastimes;" "His amorous enjoyment is entirely contained within Himself," and "He sported with the beautiful damsels of Vraja just as a child plays with his own reflection," all establish that complete self-satisfaction *(ātmārāmatā)* is Kṛṣṇa's intrinsic nature.

In the majestic spiritual world *(aiśvarya-maya cid-jagat)*, Kṛṣṇa manifests His potency as Lakṣmī and enjoys relationships in the mood of wedded love *(svakīya)*. Because that mood predominates there, the exchange of *rasa* beautifully extends only up to servitude *(dāsya-rasa)*.

In Goloka, however, Kṛṣṇa expands His potency into hundreds of thousands of *gopīs* and, forgetting that they are His potency, eternally enjoys loving pastimes with them.

Because the mood of wedded love *(svakīya-bhāva)* does not make *rasa* especially rare or intense, the *gopīs* have, from beginningless time, possessed the eternal self-conception *(abhimāna)* of belonging to another man *(paroḍhā)*. Kṛṣṇa likewise accepts the corresponding self-conception of being their paramour *(aupāpatya-abhimāna)* and performs the *rāsa* dance and His other pastimes with the *gopīs*, whom He summons with the sound of His flute. Goloka is the eternal, transcendental abode of *rasa* beyond the influence of *māyā*; therefore, there the flow of *rasa* is perfected through this self-conception *(abhimāna)* alone.

Similarly, parental affection *(vātsalya-rasa)* directed toward the original Personality of Godhead does not exist in Vaikuṇṭha. Such is the nature of divine majesty *(aiśvarya)*. In Goloka, however, which is supremely filled with sweetness *(mādhurya)*, parental love exists solely on the foundation of self-conception *(abhimāna)*.

Nanda and Yaśodā eternally exist there, but Kṛṣṇa's birth does not. Since there is no actual birth, their identity as Kṛṣṇa's father and mother is not

established through a historical event but solely through their eternal self-conception *(abhimāna)*, as expressed in the statement: "Glory to Him who dwells among His devotees and who is spoken of as having been born from Devakī."

That eternal self-conception alone perfects the *rasa*. Likewise, in conjugal love *(śṛṅgāra-rasa)*, if the condition of belonging to another man *(paroḍhātva)* and the condition of being a paramour *(aupāpatya)* exist eternally only as self-conceptions *(abhimāna)*, then no fault whatsoever can arise, nor does this contradict any scriptural conclusion.

When the reality of Goloka becomes manifest within Vraja, these two self-conceptions appear in a somewhat more tangible form to those whose vision is conditioned by the material world. This alone constitutes the difference.

Thus, in parental affection, Nanda and Yaśodā's eternal self-conception of being Kṛṣṇa's parents appears outwardly as His birth and childhood pastimes. Likewise, in conjugal love, the gopīs' eternal self-conception of belonging to another man appears outwardly as their marriages to Abhimanyu, Govardhana, and others.

In truth, however, the *gopīs* never have husbands separate from Kṛṣṇa—either in Goloka or in Gokula. Therefore the Scriptures declare: "The ladies of Vraja never had union with their husbands."

Goloka is an eternally perfected realm of *rasa* beyond all material conception. Therefore there the flow of *rasa* is accomplished solely through these transcendental self-conceptions.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's purport to this verse is the most extensive and philosophically dense in the entire *Brahma-saṁhitā*. He addresses the relationship between Goloka and Gokula, the role of Yogamāyā, and the long-standing discussion among devotees concerning the nature of Kṛṣṇa's relationship with the *gopīs*. His purpose is not polemical; rather, he shows how the various scriptural descriptions can be understood as complementary aspects of the same inconceivable spiritual reality.

**1. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are eternally one and different**

Although Śakti and Śaktimān are one reality, the *hlādinī-śakti* manifests eternally as Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The *gopīs* are expansions of Rādhā's form *(kāya-vyūha)*. Thus the amorous pastimes of Goloka are not relationships between separate material individuals but the eternal loving exchanges between the Lord and His internal potency.

**2. Goloka and Gokula are one reality**

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura repeatedly stresses that Goloka in the spiritual sky and Vraja on Earth are not two different realms. The difference lies only in their manifestation: Goloka is the eternal, fully spiritual manifestation, and Gokula is the same reality manifested within the material universe through Yogamāyā. The *līlās* in both places are identical in essence.

**3. Apparent material features and perception**

Birth, marriage, social customs, separation, and similar events appear in the earthly manifestation, but they do not belong to the essential nature of the spiritual reality itself.

As Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura repeatedly explains, impurity, limitation, physicality, and vulgarity exist only in the conditioned observer's mind and senses, not in the transcendental reality itself. The more one's consciousness becomes purified through *bhakti*, the more one perceives Gokula exactly as it eternally exists in Goloka.

**4. The debate regarding *parakīya***

A major portion of the purport discusses the question whether the *gopīs* are Kṛṣṇa's wives *(svakīya)* or paramours *(parakīya)*. Several important points should be kept in mind. In Goloka there is no material marriage, and therefore ordinary marital status does not exist there. At the same time, the emotional mood of paramour love *(parakīya-bhāva)* eternally exists because it intensifies *rasa*. When Goloka manifests as Gokula, Yogamāyā arranges circumstances that externally resemble marriage and extramarital relationships.

Thus the apparent *parakīya* seen in Vraja is neither ordinary immorality nor merely an illusion. It is the earthly manifestation of an eternal transcendental reality.

**5. Reconciling apparent disagreements**

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's purpose is not to reject either Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī or the later *ācāryas* who emphasized *parakīya-rasa*. Rather, he explains that they address different aspects of the same inconceivable reality.

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī emphasizes that the *gopīs* are eternally Kṛṣṇa's own and that any appearance of their belonging to others is arranged by Yogamāyā for the purpose of enhancing *rasa* in the manifest pastimes. Other *ācāryas* emphasize the eternal reality of *parakīya-bhāva* as the highest expression of divine love.

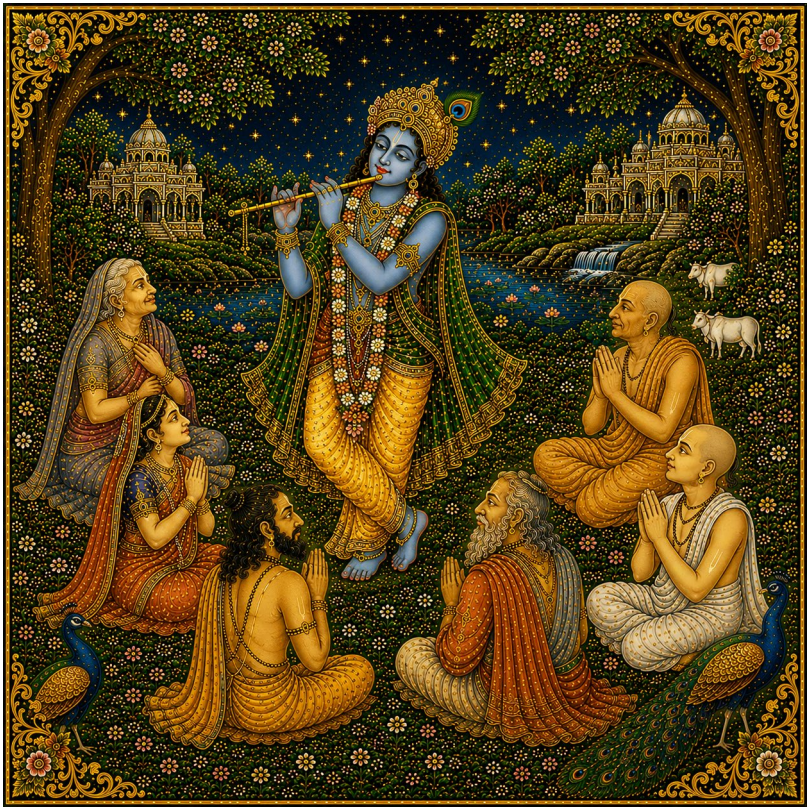
According to Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, these explanations are not ultimately contradictory. They describe the same transcendental reality from different perspectives. The apparent contradiction arises only when one attempts to reduce the inconceivable (*acintya*) to ordinary material categories.

**6. The practical conclusion**

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura repeatedly reminds us that Goloka is *acintya.* Mere argument cannot reveal it; endless debate only produces confusion, and the proper method is not speculation but realization through devotional service.

As one's heart becomes purified through the nine processes of *bhakti*, spiritual perception gradually awakens and the mysteries of Goloka reveal themselves naturally.

# VERSE 38



प्रेमाञ्जनच्छुरितभक्तिविलोचनेन सन्तः सदैव हृदयेषु विलोकयन्ति । यं
श्यामसुन्दरमचिन्त्यगुणस्वरूपं गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ३८ ॥

*premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena*
*santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti*
*yaṁ śyāmasundaram acintya-guṇa-svarūpaṁ*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, Śyāmasundara, whose very form consists of inconceivable qualities and whom the saints constantly behold within their hearts through the eye of devotion anointed with the salve of divine love.**

*prema-añjana-cchurita*—anointed with the ointment of divine love; *bhakti-vilocanena*—by the eye of devotion; *santaḥ*—saintly devotees; *sadā eva*—always; *hṛdayeṣu*—within their hearts; *vilokayanti*—behold; *yam*—whom; *śyāmasundaram*—Śyāmasundara; *acintya-guṇa-svarūpam*—whose very form consists of inconceivable qualities; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Although Govinda eternally resides in Goloka, He is nevertheless seen by the saints within their hearts. The *añjana*, salve, referred to here is *prema*, divine love. The meaning is that the eye in the form of devotion becomes brilliantly illuminated, as though richly anointed with that salve of divine love, and by means of such vision the saints behold Him directly: *premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena*... The phrase *acintya-guṇa-svarūpam* means "whose very form consists of inconceivable qualities."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 38

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, Śyāmasundara Kṛṣṇa, whose qualities are inconceivable and whom the saintly devotees, whose eyes have been anointed with the salve of love *(prema)*, behold within their hearts through the vision of devotion.**

Śyāmasundara is Kṛṣṇa's inconceivable form in which apparently contradictory characteristics, such as possessing both specific attributes and transcendence beyond all attributes, exist simultaneously. Saintly devotees behold that form within their hearts through devotional absorption *(bhakti-samādhi)*.

His dark-blue complexion *(śyāma)* is not a material hue. Rather, it is an eternally blissful spiritual color, belonging to the variegated beauty of the spiritual realm. Material eyes cannot perceive it.

If one considers Vyāsa's vision in *samādhi*, described in the words (SB 1.7.4): *bhakti-yogena manasi samyak praṇihite 'male apaśyat puruṣaṁ pūrṇam,* "With his mind fully fixed and purified through *bhakti-yoga*, he beheld the complete Supreme Person," it becomes evident that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the complete Supreme Person, manifests within the devotee's heart, which serves as the seat of devotional trance.

When Kṛṣṇa's earthly Vraja pastimes were manifest, both devotees and nondevotees saw Him with their eyes. Yet only the devotees cherished the Kṛṣṇa who resided in Vraja as the supreme treasure of their hearts.

At present, although devotees do not obtain such direct vision with their eyes, they nevertheless behold Kṛṣṇa in Vraja through hearts imbued with devotion.

The eyes of the living being's pure spiritual form are the eyes of devotion *(bhakti-cakṣu)*. To the degree that these eyes open through the cultivation of devotional service, to that degree pure vision of Kṛṣṇa's form is obtained.

When devotional practice *(sādhana-bhakti)* attains the stage of *bhāva*, then, by Kṛṣṇa's mercy, the ointment of love *(prema)* is applied to the eyes of that devotee. At that point direct perception takes place.

The expression "within the heart" means that Kṛṣṇa is seen within the heart according to the degree of devotional qualification possessed by each devotee.

The essential point is this: Śyāmasundara, the supreme dancer, the flute-bearing Lord, whose form is gracefully bent in three places, is not an imagined form. He is perceived by the eye of spiritual trance *(samādhi-cakṣu)*.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

"Can you show me God?" is a familiar challenge raised by materialistic people who ridicule the belief of devotees in a personal supreme being whom, materialists claim, "nobody has seen."

When Prabhupāda was faced with this challenge, he used to respond by asking two questions. First, "What is your seeing power?" Even material things can be seen only under certain conditions, namely when there is light. Second, "What is your qualification to see God?" Even in ordinary life, you cannot see the president of the country unless you are qualified and invited into his presence.

On the other hand, Prabhupāda also turned around the challenge by asking, "What is the difficulty?" God is visible by *śāstra-cakṣu*, the eyes of Scripture. Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.8) that He is the taste of water; therefore every time we drink water, we can "see" Kṛṣṇa. He is the light of the Sun and the Moon. "That is the way of perceiving the Supreme," says Prabhupāda in the purport to this verse. It should be understood, however, that the ability to perceive Kṛṣṇa through *śāstra-cakṣu* is not imaginary or symbolic. It is a genuine form of perception based on revealed knowledge, although indirect when compared with the direct realization described in this verse of the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. *Santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti* describes a more direct form of spiritual perception. Beyond seeing through *śāstra-cakṣu*, the eyes of knowledge revealed by Scripture, the devotee beholds the Lord through *samādhi-cakṣu*, the inner eye purified by divine love.

# VERSE 39



रामादिमूर्तिषु कलानियमेन तिष्ठन् नानावतारमकरोद्भुवनेषु किन्तु । कृष्णः
स्वयं समभवत्परमः पुमान्यो गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ३९ ॥

*rāmādi-mūrtiṣu kalā-niyamena tiṣṭhan*
*nānāvatāram akarod bhuvaneṣu kintu*
*kṛṣṇaḥ svayaṁ samabhavat paramaḥ pumān yo*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, the Supreme Person who, while remaining situated in forms beginning with Rāma according to the order of His plenary portions and expansions, manifested various *avatāras* throughout the worlds, but who Himself appeared as Kṛṣṇa.**

*rāma-ādi-mūrtiṣu*—in forms beginning with Rāma; *kalā-niyamena*—according to the order of His plenary portions and expansions; *tiṣṭhan*—remaining situated; *nānā-avatāram akarot*—He appeared in many *avatāras*; *bhuvaneṣu*—within the worlds; *kintu*—but; *kṛṣṇaḥ svayam*—Kṛṣṇa Himself; *samabhavat*—personally came; *paramaḥ pumān*—the Supreme Person; *yaḥ*—who; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Now Brahmā explains that this same Lord sometimes personally descends into the material world by His own portion. Thus he says: *rāmādi-mūrtiṣu*. The Supreme Person known as Kṛṣṇa remains situated in forms such as Rāma by manifesting only the specific potencies fixed in those forms, and, by manifesting those respective forms, He produces various *avatāras* throughout the worlds.

Yet: *kṛṣṇaḥ svayaṁ samabhavat*. "He Himself personally appeared as Kṛṣṇa." Thus the meaning is: "I worship Govinda, who is distinguished by this particular pastime."

This is confirmed in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.2.40) by the prayers of the demigods:

*matsyāśva-kacchapa-varāha-nṛsiṁha-haṁsa-*
*rājanya-vipra-vibudheṣu kṛtāvatāraḥ tvaṁ*
*pāsi nas tri-bhuvanaṁ ca yathādhuneśa*
*bhāraṁ bhuvo hara yadūttama vandanaṁ te*

"O Lord, You have previously appeared as Matsya, Hayagrīva, Kūrma, Nṛsiṁha, Varāha, Haṁsa, as Rāmacandra among the *kṣatriyas*, as Paraśurāma among the *brāhmaṇas*, and as Vāmanadeva among the demigods, in order to protect us and the three worlds. Now, O Lord, O best of the Yadus, please remove the burden of the Earth. We offer our obeisances unto You."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 39

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, the Supreme Person, who, remaining situated in forms such as Rāma according to the order of His plenary expansions and portions *(svāṁśa, kalā,* and others*)*, manifested various *avatāras* throughout the worlds, and who also manifested personally as Śrī Kṛṣṇa Himself.**

The *avatāras* headed by Rāma descend from Vaikuṇṭha as plenary expansions *(svāṁśa-avatāras)*. Kṛṣṇa, however, descends personally together with Vraja-dhāma from Goloka.

Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, who is non-different from Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Person, also accepts manifestation in that very *svayaṁ-rūpa*. This is the deeper significance of the verse.

# VERSE 40



यस्य प्रभा प्रभवतो जगदण्डकोटि- कोटिष्वशेषवसुधादि विभूतिभिन्नम् ।
तद्ब्रह्म निष्कलमनन्तमशेषभूतं गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ४० ॥

*yasya prabhā prabhavato jagad-aṇḍa-koṭi-*
*koṭiṣv aśeṣa-vasudhādi-vibhūti-bhinnam*
*tad brahma niṣkalam anantam aśeṣa-bhūtaṁ*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, whose effulgence is that Brahman—indivisible, infinite, and all-pervading—which is diversified by the innumerable planets and other opulences present within millions upon millions of universes.**

*yasya*—whose; *prabhā*—effulgence; *prabhavataḥ*—of the powerful Lord or, of Him from whom all proceeds; *jagad-aṇḍa-koṭi-koṭiṣu*—within millions upon millions of universes; *aśeṣa-vasudhā-ādi-vibhūti-bhinnam*—diversified by innumerable opulences beginning with planets; *tat brahma*—that Brahman; *niṣkalam*—without parts, indivisible; *anantam*—infinite; *aśeṣa-bhūtam*—all-pervading, or existing without limit; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Having thus established Govinda's completeness as the source of all *avatāras*, Brahmā now describes Him in relation to His essential nature, beginning with *yasya prabhā prabhavato jagad-aṇḍa-koṭi.*

Although Govinda and Brahman are one reality, because Śrī Govinda manifests with specific distinction, He has the status of the *dharmī*, the possessor of the characteristic, whereas Brahman, because it manifests without specific distinction, has the status of the *dharma*, the characteristic. Thus Govinda occupies the position of the luminous orb and Brahman the effulgence. For this reason, Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.27): *brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham.* "I am the foundation of Brahman."

Similarly, in the Eleventh Canto (SB 11.16.37), while enumerating His manifestations, Kṛṣṇa includes Brahman among them:

*pṛthivī vāyur ākāśa āpo jyotir ahaṁ mahān*
*vikāraḥ puruṣo 'vyaktaṁ rajaḥ sattvaṁ tamaḥ param*

"I am earth, air, sky, water, fire, the *mahat-tattva*, transformation, the *puruṣa*, the unmanifest, passion, goodness, darkness, and the *param*."

The commentary explains that *param* means the Supreme Brahman. Likewise, Lord Matsya says in the Eighth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (8.24.38) to King Satyavrata:

*madīyaṁ mahimānaṁ ca paraṁ brahmeti śabditam*
*vetsyasy anugṛhītaṁ me sampraśnair viditaṁ hṛdi*

"You will be thoroughly advised and favored by Me, and because of your inquiries, everything about My glories, which are known as the Supreme Brahman, will be manifest within your heart. Thus you will know everything about Me."

For the same reason Dhruva Mahārāja prays in the Fourth Canto (SB 4.9.10):

*yā nirvṛtis tanu-bhṛtāṁ tava pāda-padma-*
*dhyānād bhavaj-jana-kathā-śravaṇena vā syāt*
*sā brahmaṇi sva-mahimany api nātha mā bhūt*
*kiṁ tv antakāsi-lulitāt patatāṁ vimānāt*

"My Lord, the transcendental bliss derived from meditating upon Your lotus feet or hearing about Your glories from pure devotees is so unlimited that it is far beyond the stage of *brahmānanda*, wherein one thinks himself merged in the impersonal Brahman as one with the Supreme. Since *brahmānanda* is also defeated by the transcendental bliss derived from devotional service, then what to speak of the temporary blissfulness of elevating oneself to the heavenly planets, which is ended by the separating sword of time? Although one may be elevated to the heavenly planets, he falls down in due course of time."

Even the self-satisfied sages are said to be attracted by His qualities:

*ātmārāmāś ca munayo nirgranthā apy urukrame*
*kurvanty ahaitukīṁ bhaktim itttham-bhūta-guṇo hariḥ*

"Those who take pleasure in the self, though freed from all kinds of material bondage, desire to render unalloyed devotional service unto the Supreme Lord. This means that His wonderful qualities attract everyone." (SB 1.7.10)

If a more detailed inquiry into this subject is desired, one should consult the *Śrī Bhagavat-sandarbha*. Further elaboration here would be excessive.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 40**

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, from whose effulgence arises the undifferentiated Brahman spoken of in the Upaniṣads. Distinct**

**from the planets and other opulences contained within millions of universes, that Brahman is perceived as indivisible, infinite, and unlimited reality.**

The multitude of universes produced by *māyā* constitutes but one-quarter *(eka-pāda-vibhūti)* of Govinda's opulence. Beyond that lies the undifferentiated Brahman. That Brahman is a particular effulgence situated at the outer boundary of the spiritual world, which constitutes Govinda's three-quarters opulence *(tri-pāda-vibhūti)*.

It is *niṣkala*, without divisions or constituent parts, and therefore is perceived as *ekam eva advitīyam* ("one alone, without a second"). It is infinite and an undifferentiated reality.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Jīva Gosvāmī uses the terms *dharmī* and *dharma* in the sense of "the possessor of a characteristic" and "the characteristic by which the possessor is known." The Sanskrit says: *śrī-govindasya dharmī-rūpatvam*. "Govinda has the status of the *dharmī."* And: *brahmaṇo dharma-rūpatvam*. "Brahman has the status of the *dharma*." Here *dharma* means the intrinsic nature or characteristic by which an entity is known, just as sweetness is the *dharma* of sugar, or heat is the *dharma* of fire.

Jīva Gosvāmī's point is not that Brahman is separate from Govinda or less real than Govinda. Rather, Brahman is the undifferentiated spiritual effulgence emanating from Govinda, who is the complete personal reality from whom Brahman proceeds.

Śrīla Prabhupāda translated this verse in several places. The following rendering helps illuminate the relationship between Govinda, Brahman, and the cosmic manifestation:

> I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who is endowed with great power. The glowing effulgence of His transcendental form is the impersonal Brahman, which is absolute, complete and unlimited and which displays the varieties of countless planets, with their different opulences, in millions and millions of universes. (SB 5.11.13-14 pp)

# VERSE 41




माया हि यस्य जगदण्डशतानि सूते त्रैगुण्यतद्विषयवेदवितायमाना ।
सत्त्वावलम्बिपरसत्त्वविशुद्धसत्त्वं गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ४१ ॥

*māyā hi yasya jagad-aṇḍa-śatāni sūte*
*traiguṇya-tad-viṣaya-veda-vitāyamānā*
*sattvāvalambi-para-sattva-viśuddha-sattvaṁ*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, whose *māyā* potency gives birth to hundreds of universes and unfolds the Vedic knowledge concerning the three modes of material nature and their objects. Yet He Himself is *viśuddha-sattva*, the pure *para-sattva* upon which material *sattva* rests.**

*māyā*—the Lord's external potency; *hi*—indeed; *yasya*—of whom; *jagad-aṇḍa-śatāni*—hundreds of universes; *sūte*—gives birth to, produces; *traiguṇya*—the three modes of material nature; *tad-viṣaya*—and the objects pertaining to them; *veda-vitāyamānā*—unfolding or expanding the Vedic knowledge; *sattva-avalambi*—upon which material *sattva* rests; *para-sattva*—transcendental *sattva*; *viśuddha-sattvam*—pure spiritual existence; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *aham bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Having thus described the glory inherent in Govinda's own nature, Brahmā now describes the glory related to Him in two verses.

First, he describes the inconceivable workings of His external potency, *māyā*, beginning with the verse *māyā hi*. Although *māyā* produces the material universes, Govinda Himself has no contact with her. This is indicated by the word *sattva*. The meaning is that He possesses pure, unmixed *sattva*, which is *para-sattva*, beyond material *sattva* mixed with *rajas* and *tamas*, and which consists of the functions of the spiritual potency *(cit-śakti)*.

Thus the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* states:

*sattvādayo na santīśe yatra na prākṛtā guṇāḥ*
*sa śuddhaḥ sarva-śuddhebhyaḥ pumān ādyaḥ prasīdatu*

"In the Supreme Lord there are no material qualities such as *sattva*, nor any of the other material modes. May that primeval Lord, who is purer than all that is pure, bestow His mercy."

This subject has been explained in greater detail in the *Śrī Bhagavat-sandarbha*.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 41

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, whose inferior potency, *māyā*, is constituted of the three *guṇas*—*sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*—and expands the Vedic knowledge concerning the material universes. He is pure spiritual existence *(śuddha-sattva)*, established in transcendental *sattva (para-sattva)*, which is the support of material *sattva*.**

Creation is the function of the mode of passion *(rajo-guṇa)*. After creation, maintenance takes place through *sattva-guṇa* mixed with *rajas*. Destruction is the function of the mode of ignorance *(tamo-guṇa)*.

*Sattva* mixed with the three *guṇas* is material. But that *sattva* which is completely free from mixture with *rajas* and *tamas* is transcendental. That eternally existing transcendental reality is called *para-sattva*.

He whose essential nature is situated in that *para-sattva* is *śuddha-sattva*—free from *māyā*, beyond the material manifestation, beyond the *guṇas (nirguṇa)*, and composed of eternal consciousness and bliss *(sac-cid-ānanda)*.

*Māyā* has expanded all Vedic knowledge concerned with the three *guṇas* and the regulations governing the material world.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

This verse introduces several important philosophical terms that are easily misunderstood: *sattva*, *śuddha-sattva*, *para-sattva*, and *nirguṇa*.

*Sattva* refers to the mode of goodness, one of the three modes of material nature *(guṇas)* together with *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (ignorance). Because goodness produces knowledge, clarity, morality, and peacefulness, it is superior to the lower modes. Nevertheless, it remains a material condition and therefore belongs to the realm of *māyā*.

Consequently, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura distinguishes *sattva*, material goodness, from *śuddha-sattva*, pure spiritual existence. *Śuddha-sattva* is not *sattva* refined to its highest degree. It is an entirely different category of reality. Jīva Gosvāmī explains that it consists of the functions of the Lord's spiritual potency *(cit-śakti)* and is completely free from any mixture of passion or ignorance.

For this reason the Lord is described here as *para-sattva* and *viśuddha-sattva*. The word *para* means "transcendental" or "beyond." Thus *para-sattva* refers to the spiritual reality that exists beyond the material *guṇas*, while *viśuddha-sattva* emphasizes its completely pure and uncontaminated nature.

This also helps explain the meaning of the word *nirguṇa*, which frequently appears in the *Upaniṣads, Purāṇas,* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. The word literally means "without qualities," leading some scholars to conclude that the Absolute Truth has no qualities and is therefore ultimately impersonal.

However, from the Vaiṣṇava perspective, *nirguṇa* means "free from the material *guṇas*," not "without qualities." Kṛṣṇa possesses unlimited qualities, but all of them belong to the realm of *śuddha-sattva* and are therefore transcendental, beyond material nature.

Thus the present verse describes two complementary truths. *Māyā*, with her three *guṇas*, gives birth to the material universes and expands the Vedic knowledge governing them, while Govinda remains forever beyond her influence, established in His eternal spiritual nature of *viśuddha-sattva*.

# VERSE 42



आनन्दचिन्मयरसात्मकतया मनःसु यः प्राणिनां प्रतिफलन्स्मरतामुपेत्य ।
लीलायितेन भुवनानि जयत्यजस्रं गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ४२ ॥

*ānanda-cinmaya-rasātmatayā manaḥsu*
*yaḥ prāṇināṁ pratiphalan smaratām upetya*
*līlāyitena bhuvanāni jayaty ajasraṁ*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who, entering the minds of those living beings who remember Him, is reflected there as the embodiment of blissful spiritual *rasa* and continually conquers the worlds through His playful acts.**

*ānanda-cinmaya-rasa-ātmatayā*—as the embodiment of blissful spiritual *rasa*; *manaḥsu*—within the minds; *yaḥ*—who; *prāṇinām*—of living beings; *pratiphalan*—being reflected; *smaratām*—of those who remember Him; *upetya*—entering, approaching; *līlāyitena*—by His playful activity; *bhuvanāni*—the worlds; *jayati*—conquers; *ajasram*—continuously; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Now Brahmā describes Govinda's power to enchant those who are absorbed in Him. Thus the verse begins with *ānanda-cinmaya-rasa.*

This *ānanda-cinmaya-rasa* is the *rasa* of ecstatic love *(prema-rasa)* known as *ujjvala-rasa*. By becoming the very embodiment of that *rasa*, or in other words, by being embraced by it, Govinda is reflected within the minds of living beings.

Although He arises there only slightly, He appears as the reflection of an atomic particle touched by an aspect of His all-enchanting potency, and thus He enters those who remember Him. The words *smaratām upetya* should be connected in this way.

Concerning this it is said in the five chapters describing the *rāsa-līlā* (SB 10.32.2): *sākṣān manmatha-manmathaḥ.* "He directly enchants Cupid himself." Just as the Scriptures speak of *cakṣuṣaś cakṣuḥ*, "the eye of the eye," so Kṛṣṇa is the Cupid of Cupid. Thus, although He is the cause of Smara[25], His being seen as touched by the influence of Smara is nevertheless observed, just as His entering the universe is also observed.[26]

[25] Smara is another name for Cupid, the personification of amorous desire.

[26] Kṛṣṇa is the cause of Cupid, yet in His *līlā* He appears touched by amorous *rasa*, just as He is the cause of the universe yet also enters it.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 42

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, who, as the very embodiment of blissful conscious *rasa (ānanda-cinmaya-rasa),* is reflected within the minds of those living beings who remember Him, and who, through the playful activities of His divine pastimes, continually conquers all the worlds.**

The rememberers referred to here are those who, following proper spiritual instruction, constantly remember the names, form, qualities, and pastimes connected with Kṛṣṇa's form as Manmatha-manmatha[27] in *ujjvala-rasa*. It is within their hearts that Kṛṣṇa, together with His abode and pastimes, manifests Himself.

The abode and pastimes of Kṛṣṇa that thus appear within the heart completely conquer all the majesty and beauty found within the material world.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

This verse emphasizes the practice of *smaraṇam*, remembrance of Kṛṣṇa. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.5-6), Kṛṣṇa says that those who remember Him at the time of death will surely come to Him. In the purport to Verse 5, Śrīla Prabhupāda speaks about the importance of *smaranam*:

> The word *smaran* (remembering) is important. Remembrance of Kṛṣṇa is not possible for the impure soul who has not practiced Kṛṣṇa consciousness in devotional service. Therefore one should practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness from the very beginning of life. If one wants to achieve success at the end of his life, the process of remembering Kṛṣṇa is essential. Therefore one should constantly, incessantly chant the

[27] The bewilderer of the mind of Him who bewilders the mind of everyone.

> *mahā-mantra:* Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

In the purport to the next verse, he repeats the same instruction:

> One's thoughts during the course of one's life accumulate to influence one's thoughts at the moment of death, so this life creates one's next life. If in one's present life one lives in the mode of goodness and always thinks of Kṛṣṇa, it is possible for one to remember Kṛṣṇa at the end of one's life. That will help one be transferred to the transcendental nature of Kṛṣṇa. If one is transcendentally absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's service, then his next body will be transcendental (spiritual), not material. Therefore the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare is the best process for successfully changing one's state of being at the end of one's life.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura therefore identifies the true rememberers as those who constantly meditate on Kṛṣṇa's names, form, qualities, and pastimes according to authentic spiritual instruction. As remembrance deepens, the Lord's form, abode, associates, and pastimes become progressively revealed within the heart. What begins as faith gradually develops into realization.

The verse also explains why Kṛṣṇa is called *Manmatha-manmatha*, "the enchanter of Cupid." Ordinary attraction captivates the mind and binds it to the material world. Kṛṣṇa's beauty, however, attracts the soul toward spiritual reality. Thus even a slight reflection of His beauty and sweetness within the heart surpasses all the attractions of the material world.

The phrase *bhuvanāni jayati*, "He conquers all the worlds," should therefore be understood in this context. Kṛṣṇa does not conquer by force but by attraction. Through the beauty of His form, the sweetness of His flute, the charm of His pastimes, and the power of His love, He conquers the hearts of living beings throughout all worlds.

# VERSE 43



गोलोकनाम्नि निजधाम्नि तले च तस्य देवीमहेशहरिधामसु तेषु तेषु ।
ते ते प्रभावनिचया विहिताश्च येन गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ४३ ॥

*goloka-nāmni nija-dhāmni tale ca tasya*
*devī-maheśa-hari-dhāmasu teṣu teṣu*
*te te prabhāva-nicayā vihitāś ca yena*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, by whom the respective powers and glories have been established in His own abode known as Goloka, and in the realms of Devī, Maheśa, and Hari situated beneath it.**

*goloka-nāmni*—named Goloka; *nija-dhāmni*—in His own abode; *tale ca tasya*—and below it; *devī-maheśa-hari-dhāmasu*—in the realms of Devī, Maheśa, and Hari; *teṣu teṣu*—within each of those; *te te*—their respective; *prabhāva-nicayāḥ*—collections of powers and glories; *vihitāḥ*—established, arranged; *ca*—and; *yena*—by whom; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Having described the Lord's glory as manifested within the material creation, Brahmā now describes the glory of Govinda's eternal abode. Thus the verse begins: *goloka-nāmni.* The enumeration of Devī-dhāma, Maheśa-dhāma, Hari-dhāma, and Goloka should be understood in reverse order, from lowest to highest. Each successive realm possesses greater glory than the one below it, and therefore each higher realm is situated above the preceding one.

Goloka has already been established as the highest of all realms and as all-pervading in relation to the others. Earlier it was also shown that Vṛndāvana manifest on Earth is non-different from Goloka.

Indeed, this identity is indicated in the following verse:

*sa tu lokas tvayā kṛṣṇa sīdamānaḥ kṛtātmanā*
*dhṛto dhṛtimatā vīra nighnato 'padravān gavām*

"O Kṛṣṇa, O hero, that realm, though sinking, was upheld by You, the resolute and perfected one, when You destroyed the disturbances threatening the cows."[28]

Thus the statement *goloka eva nivasati*, "He resides exclusively in Goloka," is perfectly appropriate, because Scripture also describes Him as eternally performing His pastimes in Vṛndāvana manifest on Earth. For example, the *Ādi-varāha Purāṇa* states: "The twelve forests of Vṛndāvana are protected by Vṛndā-devī. They are presided over by Hari and worshiped by Brahmā, Rudra,

[28] When Indra, the king of heaven, surrendered to Kṛṣṇa after Kṛṣṇa had raised Govardhana Hill, he offered this prayer, which is found in the Vedic Scripture *Hari-vaṁśa* (*Viṣṇu-parva*, Chapter 19).

and others." And further: "The bridge constructed by Kṛṣṇa for His pastimes destroys the greatest sins. Having created it for sporting with the cowherd girls, Lord Gadādhara remains there with the cowherd boys for a moment every day. Indeed, He continually goes there for His enjoyment."[29]

Similarly, in the *Gautamīya-tantra*, Nārada asks: "O Lord of men, what is this Vṛndāvana consisting of thirty-two forests? If I am qualified to hear, please explain it to me." Śrī Kṛṣṇa replies: "This place known as Vṛndāvana is exclusively My abode. The animals, birds, deer, insects, and even the most fallen human beings who dwell here and die while absorbed in Me attain My abode. The cowherd girls who dwell here in My abode are My *gopīs*, eternally devoted to My service. This forest extends for five *yojanas* and is My very bodily form. The Yamunā, known as Suṣumnā, carries the supreme nectar. Here the demigods and other beings dwell in subtle forms. I am present here as the embodiment of all the demigods and never abandon this forest. In every age My appearance and disappearance take place here. This charming realm is composed of spiritual effulgence and cannot be seen with material eyes."

It is on the basis of this very form of Vraja that the eternal *kadamba* trees and other features described in the *Varāha Purāṇa* and elsewhere are to be understood. Therefore one should conclude that the Vṛndāvana visible to us and Goloka are one and the same reality. Goloka is simply this very Vṛndāvana in its transcendental manifestation beyond the range of ordinary vision.

When Śrī Kṛṣṇa appears there together with His associates within the manifest realm visible to us, that appearance is called His *avatāra*. For the nourishment of particular *rasas*, various pastimes of union, separation, reunion, and other wonderful exchanges are then enacted. The convention of the *gopīs* appearing to belong to others, along with similar features, should also be understood in this context. Whenever distinctions are described here or elsewhere, for example in the *Kalpa-tantra*, *Yāmala*, *Saṁhitās*, *Pañcarātras*, and other works, they should be interpreted according to this understanding.

[29] The bridge mentioned here is a traditional site in Vṛndāvana known as Setu-bandha or Setu-bandha-kuṇḍa. During His pastimes, Kṛṣṇa manifested a bridge there to demonstrate to the *gopīs* that He is the same person as Rāmacandra. Jīva Gosvāmī cites this passage to show that Kṛṣṇa eternally visits this place in His Vṛndāvana pastimes and, consequently, that manifest Vṛndāvana and Goloka are one and the same spiritual reality.

Thus the Tenth Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.90.48) states:

*jayati jana-nivāso devakī-janma-vādo*
*yadu-vara-pariṣat svair dorbhir asyann adharmam*
*sthira-cara-vṛjina-ghnaḥ su-smita-śrī-mukhena*
*vraja-pura-vanitānāṁ vardhayan kāma-devam*

"All glory to Him who is the dwelling place of all beings, who is spoken of as having been born from Devakī, who, surrounded by the foremost Yadus, casts away irreligion with His own arms, who destroys the sufferings of all moving and nonmoving beings, and whose beautiful smiling face increases the amorous desire of the women of Vraja."

And in the *Padma Purāṇa*, *Nirvāṇa-khaṇḍa*, Vyāsa says: "Look! I shall show you the form concealed within the *Vedas*." Then he beholds "a cowherd boy dark like a raincloud, surrounded by cowherd girls and laughing among the cowherd boys." The use of the word *kanyā*, "maiden," indicates that these *gopīs* are not to be understood as having attained the ordinary worldly condition of married womanhood.

Similarly, the Fourth Chapter of the *Gautamīya-tantra* describes meditation on Vṛndāvana like this: "One should meditate upon Vṛndāvana as adorned with hundreds of maidens who seem to have descended from heaven, filled with cowherds, calves, and groves of trees, and worshiped by thousands of cowherd girls with eyes like lotus petals, who offer flowers of spiritual emotion to the Supreme Lord, the sole spiritual master of the three worlds."

The same text also says: "A practitioner who constantly chants the *mantra* with controlled mind will undoubtedly behold Hari in the form of a cowherd boy."

And elsewhere: "The wise person should reside in Vṛndāvana until he obtains the vision of Kṛṣṇa." Likewise, the *Trailokya-sammohana-tantra* states: "The practitioner who chants with concentrated mind will undoubtedly see Hari dressed as a cowherd boy."

Therefore Brahmā says in the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad*: "While I performed *brahma-savana*, the meditative worship of Brahman, contemplating and praising Him, at the end of a vast period the Supreme Person became known to me and appeared before me in the dress of a cowherd boy."

Therefore, whenever Scripture speaks of Kṛṣṇa as appearing through forms such as Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, this should be understood with reference to the entrance of His expansions into those forms.

For a fuller discussion of these matters, one should consult the *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha*.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 43

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, who has established the respective potencies and glories of the various realms: Devī-dhāma, above it Maheśa-dhāma, above it Hari-dhāma, and above all His abode known as Goloka.**

Goloka-dhāma is situated above all other realms. Brahmā, perceiving that abode above all others, describes the intermediary realms from the position of his residence.

First is Devī-dhāma, the material world. Within it are the fourteen planetary systems headed by Satyaloka. Above that is Maheśa-dhāma, or Śiva-dhāma. One portion of that realm is known as Mahākāla-dhāma and is enveloped in darkness. Beyond that region lies the brilliantly effulgent abode of Sadāśiva.[30]

Above that is Hari-dhāma, the spiritual world consisting of the Vaikuṇṭha planets.

The characteristic glory of Devī-dhāma is the opulence of Māyā. The characteristic glory of Śiva-dhāma consists of time (*kāla*), the arrangement of material elements, and reflected manifestations of the Lord's personal expansions appearing among His separated expansions. The characteristic glory of Hari-dhāma is spiritual majesty *(cid-aiśvarya)*. The characteristic

[30] Śiva-dhāma is an intermediate realm situated between the material world (Devī-dhāma) and the spiritual world (Hari-dhāma). One aspect of this realm, called Mahākāla-dhāma, is associated with cosmic time and the interface between spirit and matter, whereas beyond it lies the effulgent abode of Sadāśiva.

glory of Goloka, the abode of all opulences, is supreme sweetness *(mahā-mādhurya)*.

Govinda Himself has established all these respective glories within their respective realms, both directly and through His secondary agencies.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The illustration accompanying this verse depicts the four realms as arranged one above another in a vertical hierarchy. Their actual relationship, however, is more subtle. Devī-dhāma is the material universe; Maheśa-dhāma is the intermediate realm at the boundary between the material and spiritual domains; Hari-dhāma is the spiritual world characterized by divine majesty; and Goloka is the abode of supreme sweetness.

Their relationship cannot be adequately understood in terms of ordinary three-dimensional space. They exist on distinct ontological levels and represent progressively fuller manifestations of divine reality and correspondingly deeper revelations of the Absolute Truth. The vertical arrangement therefore serves only as a visual aid, not as a geographical map of physical space.

This perspective may help us understand the statement in Verse 34 that even if one could travel for one billion years at the speed of the wind or the mind, one would still be unable to attain the lotus feet of Govinda. The higher realms are not reached merely by movement through physical space. Rather, they become accessible and are revealed according to the soul's spiritual qualification and realization. Govinda is revealed through *bhakti* and attained in fullness through *prema-bhakti*, devotion imbued with pure love.

# Verse 44



सृष्टिस्थितिप्रलयसाधनशक्तिरेका छायेव यस्य भुवनानि बिभर्ति दुर्गा ।
इच्छानुरूपमपि यस्य च चेष्टते सा गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ४४ ॥

*sṛṣṭi-sthiti-pralaya-sādhana-śaktir ekā*
*chāyeva yasya bhuvanāni bibharti durgā*
*icchānurūpam api yasya ca ceṣṭate sā*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, whose one potency, Durgā, like His shadow, accomplishes creation, maintenance, and dissolution, sustains all the worlds, and acts according to His will.**

*sṛṣṭi*—creation; *sthiti*—maintenance; *pralaya*—dissolution; *sādhana-śaktiḥ*—the potency that accomplishes; *ekā*—one; *chāyā iva*—like a shadow; *yasya*—of whom, whose; *bhuvanāni*—the worlds; *bibharti*—bears, sustains; *durgā*—Durgā; *icchā-anurūpam*—according to the desire; *api*—indeed; *yasya*—of whom, whose; *ca*—and; *ceṣṭate*—acts; *sā*—she; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Previously it was shown that the realms of Devī, Maheśa, and Hari are subordinate realms beneath His abode. Now Brahmā demonstrates that this arrangement is appropriate, since those realms rest upon Him as their foundation. Thus the verse begins: *sṛṣṭi-sthiti-pralaya...*

In the *Śruti* it is stated:

*tvam akaraṇaḥ svarāḍ akhila-kāraka-śakti-dharaḥ*
*tava balim udvahanti sama-danty-ajayā nimiṣāḥ*

"You are without material instruments, self-sovereign, and the possessor of all operative powers. Even the unconquered demigods bear tribute to You."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 44

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, whose *māyā-śakti*, the shadow of His *svarūpa-śakti* or *cit-śakti*, accomplishes the creation, maintenance, and dissolution of the material world and is worshiped throughout the worlds as Durgā, acting according to His will.**

(Brahmā now describes the presiding deity of the previously mentioned Devī-dhāma.)

The world in which Brahmā resides while offering prayers to the Lord of Goloka is the fourteen-world system known as Devī-dhāma. The presiding deity of that realm is Durgā. She possesses ten arms, representing ten kinds of activities *(daśa-karma)*. Because she is established in heroic power and majesty, she rides a lion. Because she subdues sin, she is known as the slayer of the demon Mahiṣāsura. She is characterized by two children: Kārttikeya, who represents beauty and splendor, and Gaṇeśa, who represents perfection and success. Situated between Lakṣmī and Sarasvatī, who represent material opulence and material knowledge, she bears twenty weapons, symbolizing the many Vedic religious principles employed for the suppression of sin. Adorned with serpents, she is associated with the power of time. Such is Durgā in her various forms.

The word *durga* means a fortress or prison. When the living beings, who originate from the marginal potency, turn away from Kṛṣṇa, they become confined within the prison of material existence. That prison is Durgā's fortress. Within that prison, the cycle of *karma* serves as punishment. This work, consisting of a corrective system for the outward-turned living beings, is Govinda's action according to His will, and Durgā continually carries it out.

When, by good fortune and the association of saintly devotees, the conditioned souls become free from their aversion to Kṛṣṇa and develop an inward orientation toward Him, then Durgā herself, again acting according to Govinda's will, becomes the cause of their liberation.

Therefore one should endeavor to satisfy Durgā, the superintendent of the prison, by showing an inward orientation toward Kṛṣṇa and thus obtain her genuine mercy.

Blessings such as wealth, food grains, and the good health of one's children should be understood as Durgā's deceptive mercy.

The same Durgā, in the form of the ten Mahāvidyās, unfolds various material activities and subordinate religious practices for the souls who remain turned away from Kṛṣṇa.

The *jīva* is by nature a particle of spiritual consciousness. As soon as he becomes averse to Kṛṣṇa, he is scattered by the attractive power of Māyā. The moment the *jīva* becomes thus bewildered, Durgā binds him within a gross body composed of the five gross elements, the five subtle sense objects, and the

eleven senses, just as a prisoner is dressed in prison clothing, and casts him into the wheel of *karma*.

There the living being revolves, experiencing happiness and distress, heaven and hell, and various other conditions.

In addition to the gross body, Durgā provides a subtle body composed of mind, intelligence, and false ego. Upon abandoning one gross body, the living being takes shelter of another gross body through this subtle, *liṅga* body.

Until liberation is attained, the subtle body, composed of ignorance and material impressions, does not disappear. When it is finally removed, the soul bathes in the Virajā River and proceeds to Hari-dhāma.

All these activities are carried out by Durgā according to the will of Govinda.

Thus the *Bhāgavatam* (2.5.13) states:

> *vilajjamānayā yasya sthātum īkṣā-pathe 'muyā*
> *vimohitā vikatthante mamāham iti durdhiyaḥ*

"The illusory energy of the Lord cannot take precedence, being ashamed of her position, but those who are bewildered by her always talk nonsense, being absorbed in thoughts of "It is I" and "It is mine."

This verse describes Durgā's relationship with the conditioned souls who have turned away from the Lord. The Durgā worshiped in the material world is this very Durgā. However, the Mantra-mayī Durgā mentioned as guarding the boundary of the Lord's spiritual abode is a spiritual servant of Kṛṣṇa, and the shadow-Durgā who functions within this world acts as her servant.[31]

A detailed explanation of Durgā's role is given in the commentary on Verse 3 of the *Brahma-saṁhitā*.

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[31] Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura refers back to the commentary on Verse 3, where Durgā is mentioned in connection with the *mantra-pīṭha* of the Lord's abode. Jīva Gosvāmī explains there that this Durgā is not the Durgā who is a portion of Māyā, but Kṛṣṇa's own *svarūpa-śakti* bearing the name Durgā.

# Verse 45



क्षीरं यथा दधि विकारविशेषयोगात् सञ्जायते न हि ततः पृथगस्ति हेतोः ।
यः शम्भुतामपि तथा समुपैति कार्याद् गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ४५ ॥

*kṣīraṁ yathā dadhi vikāra-viśeṣa-yogāt*
*sañjāyate na hi tataḥ pṛthag asti hetoḥ*
*yaḥ śambhutām api tathā samupaiti kāryād*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who, for the sake of a particular function, assumes the state of Śambhu, just as milk becomes yogurt through a particular transformation, though yogurt is not a reality separate from milk, its cause.**

*kṣīram*—milk; *yathā*—just as; *dadhi*—yogurt; *vikāra-viśeṣa-yogāt*—through a particular transformation; *sañjāyate*—comes into being; *na hi*—indeed not; *tataḥ*—from that; *pṛthak asti*—exists separately; *hetoḥ*—from its cause; *yaḥ*—who; *śambhutām api*—even the state of Śambhu; *tathā*—similarly; *samupaiti*—assumes, attains; *kāryāt*—for the sake of a particular function; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Now, in due sequence, Brahmā explains Maheśvara, Śiva.[32] Thus the verse begins: *kṣīram yathā dadhi...* This analogy applies only to the aspect of cause and effect. In the subject being illustrated, the cause undergoes no transformation. Rather, by His inconceivable potency, Govinda remains established as the cause and also as the effect beginning with Śambhu, just as a wish-fulfilling gem produces various effects without undergoing change.

The *Śruti* declares:

*eko ha vai puruṣo nārāyaṇa āsīn na brahmā na ca śaṅkaraḥ*
*sa munir bhūtvā samacintayat tata ete vyajāyanta*
*viśvo hiraṇyagarbho 'gni-varuṇa-rudrendraḥ*

"In the beginning there was only the one supreme person, Nārāyaṇa. There was neither Brahmā nor Śaṅkara. Nārāyaṇa contemplated, and from Him arose Viśva, Hiraṇyagarbha, Agni, Varuṇa, Rudra, and Indra."

And elsewhere:

*sa brahmaṇā srjati rudreṇa nāśayati so 'nutpatti-laya*
*eva hariḥ kāraṇa-rūpaḥ paraḥ paramānandaḥ*

"Through Brahmā He creates; through Rudra He destroys. Hari alone remains beyond creation and dissolution, the supreme cause and supreme bliss."

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[32] who is also known as Śambhu, Śaṅkara, Mahadeva, Rudra, and Āśutoṣa

That Śambhu is likewise an effect is shown by his association with the material modes of nature. As stated in the Tenth Canto, in two non-contiguous half-verses (SB 10.88.5 and 10.88.3):

*harir hi nirguṇaḥ sākṣāt puruṣaḥ prakṛteḥ paraḥ*

*śivaḥ śakti-yutaḥ śaśvat tri-liṅgo guṇa-saṁvṛtaḥ*

"Hari is situated beyond the material qualities; He is the Supreme Person beyond material nature."
"Śiva, eternally united with his *śakti*, is associated with the threefold material designation and enveloped by the guṇas."

This is precisely what is meant by *vikāra-viśeṣa-yogāt*, "through association with a particular transformation."

If scriptural passages sometimes speak of Śiva as different from Nārāyaṇa, those statements are also reconciled by understanding that there is ultimately no separation from the cause. Thus it is said in the *Nārāyaṇa* section of the *Ṛg-veda-śiras*:

*atha nityo nārāyaṇaḥ*
*brahmā ca nārāyaṇaḥ śivaś ca nārāyaṇaḥ*
*śakraś ca nārāyaṇaḥ kālaś ca nārāyaṇaḥ*
*diśaś ca nārāyaṇaḥ adhaś ca nārāyaṇaḥ*
*ūrdhvaṁ ca nārāyaṇaḥ antar bahiś ca nārāyaṇaḥ*
*nārāyaṇa evedaṁ sarvaṁ jātaṁ jagatyāṁ jagat*

"Nārāyaṇa is eternal. Brahmā is Nārāyaṇa, Śiva is Nārāyaṇa, Indra is Nārāyaṇa, Time is Nārāyaṇa, the directions are Nārāyaṇa, below is Nārāyaṇa, above is Nārāyaṇa, within and without is Nārāyaṇa. All this—whatever has come into being in the moving universe—is indeed Nārāyaṇa."

And Brahmā himself says in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.6.32):

*sṛjāmi tan-niyukto 'haṁ haro harati tad-vaśaḥ*
*viśvaṁ puruṣa-rūpeṇa paripāti tri-śakti-dhṛk*

"I create by His command; Hara destroys under His control; and He, bearing the three potencies, preserves the universe in the form of the Puruṣa."

# Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

## Verse 45

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, who assumes the state of Śambhu for a particular function, just as milk becomes yogurt through a specific transformation, yet yogurt is not a reality separate from the milk that is its cause.**

(The nature of Śambhu, previously described as the presiding deity of Maheśa-dhāma, is now being established.)

Śambhu is not another, independent god separate from Kṛṣṇa. Those who hold such a conception commit an offense against the Supreme Lord. The lordship *(īśvaratva)* of Śambhu is subordinate to the lordship of Govinda. Therefore, in principle, the two are non-different. The characteristic of this non-difference is illustrated by the example of milk and yogurt. Just as milk, by undergoing a particular transformation, becomes yogurt, so the Lord assumes a distinct form through a specific transformation. Yet that form remains dependent; it has no independent existence.

A particular transformation arises through the combination of (1) the mode of ignorance of *māyā*, (2) the minute nature of the marginal potency, and (3) the cognitive aspect, *saṁvit,* of the spiritual potency mixed with a slight portion of *hlādinī*. The reflection of the Lord's plenary expansion associated with that transformation is the effulgent Śambhu-liṅga known as Sadāśiva, from whom Rudra subsequently manifests.

For the purpose of creation, Śambhu functions as the principle underlying the material ingredients; for the purpose of maintenance, he destroys certain demons; and for the purpose of dissolution, Govinda assumes the form of Śambhu, a *vibhinnāṁśa* invested with the status of a *svāṁśa*, and thus acts as the *guṇāvatāra* associated with the mode of ignorance.

Śambhu has also been identified as Kāla-puruṣa, the personification of time. The scriptural evidence for this is cited in the commentary.

The significance of the *Bhāgavata* statement *vaiṣṇavānāṁ yathā*

*śambhuḥ*, "Among *vaiṣṇavas*, Śambhu is the greatest," is that Śambhu, through his power of time, acts in conjunction with Durgā-devī according to the will of Govinda.

In the *Tantras* and many other Scriptures, he teaches various forms of religious practice according to the qualifications of different living beings, thereby providing progressive stages leading ultimately toward devotion.

According to Govinda's will, he also propagates Māyāvāda and certain fabricated scriptures for the protection and preservation of pure devotion.

Śambhu possesses, in an abundant measure, the fifty qualities found in the *jīva*, and in addition possesses partially the five great qualities that ordinary *jīvas* do not possess.

Therefore Śambhu cannot be classified as a *jīva*. He is an *īśvara*. Yet he belongs to the category of a *vibhinnāṁśa* manifestation.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Śambhu is neither *jīva-tattva* nor *viṣṇu-tattva*, but occupies a unique category distinct from both. He possesses the fifty qualities of the *jīva* in abundant measure and additionally, in a partial measure, five great qualities not found in the *jīva*:

1. *Sadā-svarūpa-samprāptaḥ*—always situated in his spiritual identity; never covered by ignorance as conditioned souls are
2. *Sarvajñatā*—extraordinary all-knowing capacity, knowledge extending far beyond the capacity of any *jīva*
3. *Nitya-nūtanaḥ*—ever-freshness in his manifestation
4. *Sac-cid-ānanda-sāndrāṅgaḥ*—possessing a form composed of concentrated eternity, knowledge, and bliss
5. *Sarva-siddhi-niṣevitaḥ*—served by all mystic perfections and endowed with all *siddhis*

The analogy of milk and yogurt should not be interpreted beyond the specific understanding intended by Brahmā and Jīva Gosvāmī. Milk actually undergoes transformation, whereas Govinda does not. Jīva Gosvāmī explicitly

states that the comparison applies only to the relationship between cause and effect. Unlike milk becoming yogurt, the Supreme Lord remains completely unchanged while, by His inconceivable potency, Śambhu manifests for the purpose of a particular cosmic function. Thus the analogy illustrates dependence upon the original cause, not an actual transformation of the Supreme Lord Himself.

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Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura states that Śambhu is also understood as Kāla-puruṣa, the personification of time, and remarks that the scriptural evidence for this has been cited in the *ṭīkā*. At this point, the reader may naturally wonder which citation he is referring to, since Jīva Gosvāmī does not explicitly identify Śambhu as Kāla-puruṣa in his *ṭīkā*. Rather, he cites a series of passages from Scripture describing Śambhu's relationship to Govinda, the modes of nature, and the work of creation, maintenance and destruction of the universe. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura appears to regard these citations collectively as providing the theological basis for understanding Śambhu's function as Kāla-puruṣa, rather than as containing an explicit statement to that effect.

# Verse 46



दीपार्चिरेव हि दशान्तरमभ्युपेत्य दीपायते विवृतहेतुसमानधर्मा ।
यस्तादृगेव हि च विष्णुतया विभाति गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ४६ ॥

*dīpārcir eva hi daśāntaram abhyupetya*
*dīpāyate vivṛta-hetu-samāna-dharmā*
*yas tādṛg eva hi ca viṣṇutayā vibhāti*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who appears as Viṣṇu in just the same way that the flame of one lamp, entering another condition, burns as another lamp while possessing the same nature as the source from which it was kindled.**

*dīpa-arciḥ*—the flame of a lamp; *eva hi*—indeed; *daśā-antaram abhyupetya*—having entered another condition; *dīpāyate*—burns as another lamp; *vivṛta-hetu-samāna-dharmā*—possessing the same nature as the manifest source; *yaḥ*—who; *tādṛk eva*—exactly in that manner; *hi ca*—indeed; *viṣṇutayā*—as Viṣṇu; *vibhāti*—appears, shines; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Now, describing the one form of Hari that comes next in sequence, and because Maheśa has just been discussed as a *guṇāvatāra*, Brahmā describes Viṣṇu, the *guṇāvatāra*. Thus the verse begins with *dīpārcir eva.* The reason for the similarity is given by the phrase *vivṛta-hetu-samāna-dharmā* (possessing the same nature as the original source).

Although it is understood that this Viṣṇu is an *avatāra* of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, who is an expansion of Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Viṣṇu, who in turn is an expansion of an expansion of Govinda, nevertheless the comparison is as follows: Just as the luminous portion of a fine, pure lamp, kindled in succession from a great lamp, possesses similarity with that original lamp, so Viṣṇu, as another form, is understood to possess similarity with Govinda.

Śambhu, however, because he presides over *tamas*, is comparable to a subtle lamp-flame filled with soot, and therefore he does not possess such similarity. Therefore this distinction is stated here.

Later, however, Mahā-Viṣṇu will also be shown to be a partial manifestation *(kalā-viśeṣa)* of Govinda.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 46

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, who manifests Himself as Viṣṇu, just as the flame of one original lamp lights another lamp and**

**burns separately, yet possesses the same illuminating nature as its source.**

(The nature of the Lord's plenary expansions *(svāṁśa-tattva)*, known by the names Hari, Nārāyaṇa, and Viṣṇu and presiding over Hari-dhāma, is now being described.)

Nārāyaṇa, the Lord of the spiritual sky, is a pastime expansion *(vilāsa-mūrti)* of Kṛṣṇa. From Him proceeds the original *puruṣa-avatāra*; from Him proceeds Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu; and from Him proceeds Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. The principle denoted by the name "Viṣṇu" pervades all these manifestations.

In this verse, by explaining the nature of Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, Brahmā establishes the nature of the Lord's plenary expansions *(svāṁśa-vilāsa)*.

Viṣṇu, the *guṇāvatāra*, who presides over the mode of goodness, is entirely distinct from Śambhu, who is connected with the material *guṇas*. Govinda and Viṣṇu possess the same essential nature. Both are constituted of pure goodness *(śuddha-sattva)*. Viṣṇu possesses the same qualities as Govinda because He is manifested from Him as an expansion.

The material mode of goodness found within *māyā* is impure because it is mixed with passion and ignorance. Brahmā is a separated expansion *(vibhinnāṁśa)* invested with a manifestation arising from the mode of passion, while Śambhu is a separated expansion invested with a manifestation arising from the mode of ignorance.

The reason for the designation *vibhinnāṁśas* is that the modes of passion and ignorance belong entirely to the realm of unconscious matter *(acit)*, and therefore the manifestations arising through them stand at a considerable distance from the Lord's original form and His direct expansions.

Although the material mode of goodness is mixed, it reflects a portion of pure goodness. Viṣṇu, the *guṇāvatāra*, manifests through that pure aspect. Therefore Viṣṇu is a complete plenary expansion *(pūrṇa svāṁśa-vilāsa)* and belongs to the category of Mahā-īśvara. He is not touched by Māyā, although He is the Lord of Māyā.

Viṣṇu is the very expansion and manifestation of Govinda, who is the original source and possessor of all energies.

In Nārāyaṇa, the Lord's pastime expansion, all of Govinda's opulences, namely the sixty qualities, are present in completeness. Therefore, unlike Brahmā and Śiva, whose manifestations are associated with the material *guṇas*, Viṣṇu, although called a *guṇāvatāra*, is not touched by the material modes.

The manifestation of Nārāyaṇa as Mahā-Viṣṇu, of Mahā-Viṣṇu as Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, and of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu as Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu constitutes an example of the principle illustrated by the lamp analogy.

Viṣṇu alone is *īśvara*. The other two *guṇāvatāras* and all the demigods are subordinate administrative authorities under Him.

From Govinda, the great original lamp, are manifested through the agency of His spiritual potency separate lamps in the form of His pastime expansions: Mahā-Viṣṇu, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, and the various plenary *avatāras* such as Lord Rāma.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The analogy of the lamp in this verse complements the milk-and-yogurt analogy of the previous verse. Śambhu is compared to milk transformed into yogurt, indicating a unique state that is neither completely identical with nor entirely separate from its source. Viṣṇu, however, is compared to one lamp lighting another lamp. Although the second lamp is kindled from the first, both flames possess the same illuminating nature. The purpose of the analogy is to show that Viṣṇu possesses the very same divine nature as Govinda because He is His direct plenary expansion, whereas Śambhu occupies a unique existential position connected with a particular transformative function within material creation.

# VERSE 47



यः कारणार्णवजले भजति स्म योगनिद्रामनन्तजगदण्डसरोमकूपः ।
आधारशक्तिमवलम्ब्य परां स्वमूर्तिं गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ४७ ॥

*yaḥ kāraṇārṇava-jale bhajati sma yoga-*
*nidrām ananta-jagad-aṇḍa-sa-romakūpaḥ*
*ādhāra-śaktim avalambya parāṁ sva-mūrtiṁ*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who reclines in yogic slumber upon the waters of the Causal Ocean, with innumerable universes contained in His pores, while resting upon His own supreme form known as Śeṣa, the embodiment of the supporting potency.**

*yaḥ*—who; *kāraṇa-arṇava-jale*—in the waters of the Causal Ocean; *bhajati sma*—reclines, enjoys; *yoga-nidrām*—yogic slumber; *ananta-jagad-aṇḍa-sa-romakūpaḥ*—whose pores contain innumerable universes; *ādhāra-śaktim*—the supporting potency; *avalambya*—taking shelter of, resting upon; *parām*—supreme, transcendental; *sva-mūrtim*—His own form; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Now Brahmā describes Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Viṣṇu.

The phrase *ananta-jagad-aṇḍa-sa-roma-kūpaḥ* means: "He whose pores are associated with innumerable universes." The irregular placement of the particle *sa* ("with") after *jagad-aṇḍa* instead of before it is an archaic usage.

The phrase *ādhāra-śaktim avalambya parāṁ sva-mūrtim* refers to His supreme form known as Śeṣa, who is constituted of the supporting potency *(ādhāra-śakti)*.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 47**

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, who reclines in the Causal Ocean in yogic slumber, with innumerable universes resting within the pores of His body, while taking shelter of His own supreme form known as Śeṣa, who is constituted of the supporting potency *(ādhāra-śakti).***

(The nature of Ananta, who serves as the couch of Mahā-Viṣṇu, is now being described.)

Ananta, upon whom Mahā-Viṣṇu reclines, is an *avatāra* of Kṛṣṇa known as Śeṣa, who embodies the principle of being Kṛṣṇa's servant *(dāsa-tattva)*.

# Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura describes Ananta Śeṣa as *sei ananta kṛṣṇer dāsa-tattva-rūpa*, the embodiment of *dāsya-tattva*, eternal service to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī says in the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā,* Chapter Five, Verse 142: *ekale īśvara kṛṣṇa, āra saba bhṛtya*. "Lord Kṛṣṇa alone is the *īśvara* (supreme controller), and all others are His servants!"

A proper understanding of this truth helps the conditioned soul overcome the deeply ingrained false notion that he is the *īśvara*, a demonic mentality described by Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (16.14) as the conception *īśvaro 'ham*, "I am the lord of everything."

Even Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who is non-different from the Lord, considers Himself Kṛṣṇa's servant and expands Himself into various forms to serve His brother, as described in the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi* 5.5, 8-10):

> These two [Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma] are one and the same identity. They differ only in form. Lord Balarāma is the first bodily expansion of Kṛṣṇa, and He assists in Lord Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes.
> Lord Balarāma is the original Saṅkarṣaṇa. He assumes five other forms to serve Lord Kṛṣṇa.
> He Himself helps in the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and He does the work of creation in four other forms.
> He executes the orders of Lord Kṛṣṇa in the work of creation, and in the form of Lord Śeṣa He serves Kṛṣṇa in various ways.

Prabhupāda further explains in the purport of Text 10:

> According to expert opinion, Balarāma, as the chief of the original quadruple forms, is also the original Saṅkarṣaṇa. Balarāma, the first expansion of Kṛṣṇa, expands Himself in five forms: (1) Mahā-saṅkarṣaṇa, (2) Kāraṇābdhiśāyī, (3) Garbhodakaśāyī, (4) Kṣīrodakaśāyī, and (5) Śeṣa. These five plenary portions are responsible for both the spiritual and material cosmic manifestations. In these five forms Lord Balarāma assists Lord Kṛṣṇa in His activities. The first four

> of these forms are responsible for the cosmic manifestations, whereas Śeṣa is responsible for personal service to the Lord. Śeṣa is called Ananta, or unlimited, because He assists the Personality of Godhead in His unlimited expansions by performing an unlimited variety of services. Śrī Balarāma is the servitor Godhead who serves Lord Kṛṣṇa in all affairs of existence and knowledge. Lord Nityānanda Prabhu, who is the same servitor Godhead, Balarāma, performs the same service to Lord Gaurāṅga by constant association.

Śrīla Prabhupāda elaborates further in his purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.17.21:

> The incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead known as Śeṣa or Ananta has unlimited strength, fame, wealth, knowledge, beauty and renunciation. As described in this verse, Ananta's strength is so great that the innumerable universes rest on His hoods. He has the bodily features of a snake with thousands of hoods, and since His strength is unlimited, all the universes resting on His hoods feel no heavier than mustard seeds. We can just imagine how insignificant a mustard seed is on the hood of a serpent. In this connection, the reader is referred to *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā,* Chapter Five, Verses 117-125. There it is stated that Lord Viṣṇu's incarnation as the serpentine Ananta Śeṣa Nāga supports all the universes on His hoods. By our calculation, a universe may be very, very heavy, but because the Lord is *ananta* (unlimited), He feels the weight to be no heavier than a mustard seed.

Ananta, or Śeṣa, personifies the principle of *dāsya*, loving service to the Supreme Lord. Although He is a direct expansion of Kṛṣṇa, His eternal function is to serve Him in every possible way. He becomes the Lord's couch, throne, umbrella, garments, ornaments, and countless other paraphernalia of divine service. Thus Śeṣa demonstrates that the principle stated by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī—"Lord Kṛṣṇa alone is the supreme controller, and all others are His servants!"—extends even to the Lord's own expansions. Loving devotional service is not merely the constitutional position of the *jīva*—it is an eternal principle embodied in Śeṣa Himself.

# Verse 48



यस्यैकनिःश्वसितकालमथावलम्ब्य जीवन्ति लोमविलजा जगदण्डनाथाः ।
विष्णुर्महान् स इह यस्य कलाविशेषो गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ४८ ॥

*yasyaika-niśvasita-kālam athāvalambya*
*jīvanti loma-vilajā jagad-aṇḍa-nāthāḥ*
*viṣṇur mahān sa iha yasya kalā-viśeṣo*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, of whom the Great Viṣṇu is a particular portion. The lords of the universes, born from the pores of His body, live only for the duration of a single exhalation of His breath.**

*yasya*—whose; *eka-niśvasita-kālam*—the duration of a single exhalation; *atha avalambya*—depending upon; *jīvanti*—live; *loma-bila-jāḥ*—born from the pores of His body; *jagad-aṇḍa-nāthāḥ*—the lords of the universes; *viṣṇuḥ mahān*—the Great Viṣṇu, Mahā-Viṣṇu; *saḥ iha*—He here; *yasya*—of whom; *kalā-viśeṣaḥ*—a particular portion; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Previously, Mahā-Viṣṇu was shown to be an *avatāra* of Govinda and the protector of all the universes. Although He appears in association with Mahā-Brahmā and the other cosmic rulers, He is entirely distinct from them.[33]

Now Brahmā further describes Him by these characteristics:

*yasyaika-niśvasita-kālam athāvalambya*
*jīvanti loma-bilajā jagad-aṇḍa-nāthāḥ*

The phrase *tat-tat-jagad-aṇḍa-nāthāḥ* refers to the rulers of the respective universes, beginning with Brahmā. They live and remain within their respective worlds for the duration of their appointed administrative functions.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 48**

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, of whom Mahā-Viṣṇu is a particular portion. The lords of the universes, beginning with Brahmā and born from the pores of Mahā-Viṣṇu, live only for the duration of a single exhalation of His breath.**

The supreme majesty *(mahaiśvarya)* of *viṣṇu-tattva* is thus demonstrated.

[33] Mahā-Brahmā here is Hiraṇyagarbha Prajāpati, not the four-faced Brahmā presiding over an individual universe. He is the collective or original form of Brahmā from whom the Brahmās of the individual universes are manifested.

# Verse 49



भास्वान्यथाश्मशकलेषु निजेषु तेजः । स्वीयं कियत्प्रकटयत्यपि तद्वदत्र ।
ब्रह्मा य एष जगदण्डविधानकर्ता । गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ४९ ॥

*bhāsvān yathāśma-śakaleṣu nijeṣu tejaḥ*
*svīyaṁ kiyat prakaṭayaty api tadvad atra*
*brahmā ya eṣa jagad-aṇḍa-vidhāna-kartā*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who manifests a small portion of His splendor in this Brahmā, the engineer of the universe, just as the Sun manifests a portion of its light in *sūryakānta* gems.**

*bhāsvān*—the Sun; *yathā*—just as; *aśma-śakaleṣu*—in fragments of stone; *nijeṣu*—belonging to itself; *tejaḥ svīyam*—its radiance; *kiyat prakaṭayati*—manifests to a small degree; *api*—indeed; *tadvat atra*—similarly here; *brahmā*—Brahmā; *yaḥ eṣaḥ*—this one who; *jagad-aṇḍa-vidhāna-kartā*—the engineer of the universe; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Having thus shown that Durgā and the others depend upon Govinda, Brahmā now turns, in due sequence, to his own position and clearly establishes that he is a *jīva*, entirely distinct from the Lord. Thus the verse begins: *bhāsvān iti*. Just as the radiant Sun manifests a small measure of its own light in a precious stone known as *sūryakānta*, traditionally associated with the Sun, and through that concentrated light produces effects such as burning, so Govinda manifests a small measure of His splendor in a particular *jīva*.[34]

By means of that manifested portion of divine power, the Lord acts through Brahmā as the engineer of a universe, the creator of the secondary creation *(vyaṣṭi-sṛṣṭi)*.

Alternatively, Mahā-Brahmā himself may be the one described here, and Mahā-Śiva should also be understood as indicated by him.

Therefore it is entirely appropriate that they are described as creators of the universes.

Although Māyā, known as Durgā, acts as the servant of Kāraṇārṇavaśāyī Viṣṇu, and although Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and the others are *avatāras* of Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, they are nevertheless counted as dependent upon Govinda because He is the support of all.

The same principle should be understood in the verses that follow.

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[34] *Sūryakānta*, literally "beloved of the Sun," is the traditional sun-crystal, a transparent stone believed to concentrate the Sun's rays and thereby produce heat or ignite dry tinder. Jīva Gosvāmī describes such stones as "always belonging to the Sun" because their distinctive power becomes manifest through sunlight.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 49**

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, from whom Brahmā, a separated expansion (*vibhinnāṁśa*), receives his power and thereby arranges the affairs of the universe, just as the Sun manifests a portion of its own brilliance within *sūryakānta* gems and similar jewels.**

There are two kinds of Brahmā. In some creations, when a suitable *jīva* receives an empowerment *(āveśa)* of the Lord's potency, that *jīva* becomes Brahmā and carries out the work of universal creation.

In some *kalpas*, when no such qualified living being is available and the Brahmā of the previous creation has attained liberation, Kṛṣṇa Himself creates Brahmā, the *guṇāvatāra* presiding over the mode of passion, through a division of His potency.

In principle, Brahmā is superior to ordinary living beings, but he is not directly the Supreme Lord. Śambhu, described previously, possesses a greater measure of lordship *(īśvaratva)* than Brahmā.

The essential conclusion is this: Brahmā possesses the fifty qualities found in ordinary living beings in a greater degree, together with a partial manifestation of five additional qualities. In Śambhu those same fifty qualities, along with those five additional qualities, are present in a still greater measure.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Generally, Brahmā is an empowered *jīva* entrusted with the work of secondary creation within a universe. However, when no qualified *jīva* is available to occupy that post, the Supreme Lord Himself assumes the function of Brahmā. Thus Scripture sometimes describes Brahmā as a *jīva* and at other times as a direct manifestation of the Lord. The distinction depends upon the particular universe and cosmic cycle under consideration.

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains this in the purport to SB 1.3.5 as follows:

> There are *guṇāvatāras* such as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva who take charge of the different modes of material nature.
> Lord Viṣṇu is non-different from the Personality of Godhead. Lord Śiva is in the marginal position between the Personality of Godhead and the living entities, or *jīvas*. Brahmā is always a *jīva-tattva*. The highest pious living being, or the greatest devotee of the Lord, is empowered with the potency of the Lord for creation, and he is called Brahmā. His power is like the power of the Sun reflected in valuable stones and jewels. However, when there is no such living being to take charge of the post of Brahmā, the Lord Himself becomes a Brahmā and takes charge of the post.

Thus Brahmā's creative power is never independent. Whether the post is occupied by an empowered *jīva* or, in exceptional cases, by the Lord Himself, the work of creation is ultimately carried out by Govinda's potency, just as the brilliance of a sunstone is a manifestation of the Sun's own light.

# VERSE 50



यत्पादपल्लवयुगं विनिधाय कुम्भद्वन्द्वे प्रणामसमये स गणाधिराजः ।
विघ्नान् विहन्तुमलमस्य जगत्त्रयस्य गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ५० ॥

*yat-pāda-pallava-yugaṁ vinidhāya kumbha-*
*dvandve praṇāma-samaye sa gaṇādhi-rājaḥ*
*vighnān vihantum alam asya jagat-trayasya*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, whose lotus feet Gaṇeśa, the lord of the Gaṇas, places upon the pair of pot-like elevations on his head when offering obeisances. He thereby becomes empowered to remove the obstacles of the three worlds.**

*yat*—whose; *pāda-pallava-yugam*—pair of tender lotus feet; *vinidhāya*—placing; *kumbha-dvandve*—upon the pair of pot-like elevations on his head; *praṇāma-samaye*—at the time of offering obeisances; *saḥ*—he; *gaṇa-adhi-rājaḥ*—the lord of the Gaṇas, Gaṇeśa; *vighnān*—obstacles; *vihantum*—to destroy; *alam*—fully capable; *asya jagat-trayasya*—of these three worlds; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

One might object: "Since all people worship Gaṇapati first for the removal of obstacles, perhaps he alone is supremely worshipable." Anticipating this objection, Brahmā replies with the opening words *yat-pāde:* Gaṇeśa possesses the power to remove obstacles only because he worships Govinda's lotus feet.

This conclusion is supported by a *kaimutya* ("how much more so") argument based on Lord Kapila's statement in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.28.22): "Lord Śiva became truly auspicious by bearing upon his head the sacred waters of the foremost river flowing from the Lord's lotus feet."

If even the water that has washed the Lord's feet bestowed such exalted glory upon Śiva, then how much greater must be the potency obtained by Gaṇeśa, who places those very lotus feet upon his head?

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 50**

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, whose lotus feet Gaṇeśa eternally places upon the pair of pot-like protuberances of his head in order to obtain the power required for his task of removing obstacles throughout the three worlds.**

Gaṇeśa has been entrusted with the authority to remove obstacles. Therefore he is worshiped by those whose undertakings fall within the scope of his jurisdiction.

Indeed, because he is regarded as a worshipable form of Brahman endowed with attributes *(saguṇa-brahman)*, he has even attained a place among the five principal deities *(pañca-devatā)*.

Nevertheless, Gaṇeśa is an empowered administrative demigod *(śaktyāveśa ādhikārika-devatā)*. All his greatness and glory arise solely through the mercy of Govinda.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Gaṇeśa, also known as Gaṇapati, is described in this verse as *gaṇādhi-rājaḥ*, the king of the Gaṇas. According to the *Śiva Purāṇa*, Lord Śiva's Gaṇas were a diverse and wild host of beings that were difficult to control. Pārvatī created Gaṇeśa to be her loyal guardian. During a confrontation in which Gaṇeśa fiercely defended his mother's privacy, Śiva inadvertently severed Gaṇeśa's head and replaced it with an elephant's. However, recognizing his son's immense courage, loyalty, and strength, Śiva blessed and rewarded him by ordaining that he would be the leader of all of Śiva's troops. According to the traditional Purāṇic account, he appointed him leader of the Gaṇas, declaring that he would be honored before auspicious undertakings.

As the leader of the Gaṇas, Gaṇeśa presides over numerous subordinate beings and powers involved in the administration of the material world. Because he governs these hosts and the powers under his authority, he has the unique power to either place obstacles in a person's path or completely remove them. For this reason, Gaṇeśa is worshiped by many people in India, especially business or shop owners, who seek Gaṇeśa's blessings for success in their undertakings.

He is also associated with intellect, learning, and the arts because he served as the scribe for Vyāsadeva, writing down the Mahābhārata as it was dictated to him.

While Gaṇeśa has been entrusted with authority over obstacles, this verse clarifies that he derives his power entirely from the Supreme Lord by holding Govinda's lotus feet upon his elephant head. Thus a devotee honors Gaṇeśa not as an independent god, but as a servant of Kṛṣṇa, empowered to remove obstacles on the path of devotional service.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions on Gaṇeśa worship should be understood in this same light. In *The Nectar of Devotion*, he notes that Gaṇapati may be honored as one who removes impediments in devotional service. In a 1974 letter, however, he discouraged independent or public Gaṇeśa worship, emphasizing that devotees should simply worship Kṛṣṇa and perform devotional service to Him. Thus Gaṇeśa may be honored according to the principle taught in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*: not as an independent deity equal to the Supreme Lord, but as a servant empowered by Govinda.

Regarding the worship of the five principal deities *(pañca-devatā)*, Prabhupāda says the following in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā*, 7.157:

> In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* there are *mantras* offering obeisances to Lord Śiva, Lord Brahmā, the sun-god and Lord Gaṇeśa, as well as Lord Viṣṇu, all of whom are worshiped by the impersonalists as *pañcopāsanā*. In their temples impersonalists install deities of Lord Viṣṇu, Lord Śiva, the sun-god, goddess Durgā and sometimes Lord Brahmā also, and this system is continuing at present in India under the guise of the Hindu religion. Vaiṣṇavas can also worship all these demigods, but only on the principles of the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, which is recommended by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. We may note in this connection the *mantras* for worshiping Lord Śiva, Lord Brahmā, goddess Durgā, the sun-god and Gaṇeśa, as described in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (44, 45, 49, 50 and 52).

# Verse 51



अग्निर्मही गगनमम्बु मरुद्दिशश्च कालस्तथात्ममनसीति जगत्त्रयाणि ।
यस्माद्भवन्ति विभवन्ति विशन्ति यं च गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ५१ ॥

*agnir mahī gaganam ambu marud-diśaś ca*
*kālas tathātma-manasīti jagat-trayāṇi*
*yasmād bhavanti vibhavanti viśanti yaṁ ca*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, from whom arise the three worlds composed of fire, earth, ether, water, air, the directions, time, the individual self, and the mind; in whom they are sustained; and into whom they again enter at dissolution.**

*agniḥ*—fire; *mahī*—earth; *gaganam*—ether; *ambu*—water; *marut*—air; *diśaḥ ca*—and the directions; *kālaḥ*—time; *tathā*—also; *ātma*—the individual self; *manas*—the mind; *iti*—thus; *jagat-trayāṇi*—the three worlds; *yasmāt*—from whom; *bhavanti*—arise; *vibhavanti*—are sustained, remain manifest; *viśanti*—enter; *yam ca*—and into whom; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

That this is appropriate is stated in the verse beginning *agnir mahī*. Everything is clear.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 51**

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, from whom arise the three worlds composed of these nine principles—fire, earth, ether, water, air, the directions, time, the self, and the mind. In Him they remain after their creation, and into Him they enter again at the time of dissolution.**

Beyond the five gross elements *(pañca-bhūtas)*, the directions *(dik)*, time *(kāla)*, the individual soul *(jīvātmā)*, and the mental principle consisting of mind, intelligence, and false ego, which forms the subtle body *(liṅga-deha)* of the conditioned soul, nothing else exists within the three worlds.

The ritualistic workers *(karmīs)* offer oblations into fire in sacrifice. The souls turned away from the Lord know nothing beyond this visible world composed of these nine principles.

The dry speculators *(jñānīs)* search for the state of self-satisfaction *(ātmārāmatā)*, yet the self they seek is simply the *jīva* itself.

What the followers of Sāṅkhya call *prakṛti*, and what they designate as the self *(ātmā)*, are also included within these categories.

In other words, the principles identified by the various schools of philosophical inquiry are contained within these nine categories.

Śrī Govinda alone is the source, sustenance, and resting place at dissolution of all these principles.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

When reading Jīva Gosvāmī's very brief comment, one may wonder, "What is he referring to when he says, 'That this is appropriate is stated in the verse'? What does he mean by 'this'?" The Sanskrit pronoun *tat* refers back to the conclusion established in the preceding verse: Gaṇeśa's capacity to remove obstacles throughout the three worlds is not independent but is derived from his worship of Govinda's lotus feet.

Verse 51 explains why this conclusion is appropriate. The three worlds, represented here by nine constituent principles—fire, earth, sky, water, air, the directions, time, the self, and the mind—arise from Govinda, subsist through Him, and ultimately return to Him. Thus the principal purpose of Verse 51 is not merely to define what is meant by "the three worlds." It establishes that the total cosmic order, together with all the powers operating within it, rests entirely upon Govinda. Gaṇeśa may exercise authority throughout the three worlds, but both the sphere of that authority and the power by which he acts have their source in the primeval Lord.

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Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's commentary emphasizes that all attempts to understand reality within the material universe ultimately revolve around the nine principles listed in this verse: the five gross elements (earth, water, fire, air, and ether), together with directions, time, the individual self *(jīva)*, and the mental *tattva* comprising mind, intelligence, and false ego.

Different philosophical systems may analyze these categories in different ways and may assign them different names, but according to Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura they remain confined within the same field of material and conditioned existence, even when discussing the individual self, which, though spiritual by nature, is considered here in relation to the material cosmos.

The *karmīs* concern themselves primarily with the gross material elements and their manipulation for obtaining objects of sense enjoyment.

The *jñānīs* focus on the nature of the self and seek liberation through knowledge and self-realization. The followers of Sāṅkhya analyze matter and consciousness through categories such as *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. Yet all such inquiries remain within the framework of these nine principles.

With this verse, Brahmā reminds us that however extensive human knowledge of and control over the universe may become, all the principles described in this verse ultimately arise from Govinda, are sustained by Govinda, and finally return to Him at the time of cosmic dissolution. The Supreme Lord alone transcends the entire system while simultaneously remaining its source, sustainer, and ultimate resting place.

# VERSE 52



यच्चक्षुरेष सविता सकलग्रहाणां राजा समस्तसुरमूर्तिरशेषतेजाः ।
यस्याज्ञया भ्रमति सम्भृतकालचक्रो गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ५२ ॥

*yac-cakṣur eṣa savitā sakala-grahāṇāṁ*
*rājā samasta-sura-mūrtir aśeṣa-tejāḥ*
*yasyājñayā bhramati sambhṛta-kāla-cakro*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, whose eye is the Sun, the king of all the planets, the embodiment of all the demigods, endowed with unlimited brilliance. By His command the Sun moves within the wheel of time.**

*yat-cakṣuḥ*—whose eye; *eṣaḥ savitā*—this Sun; *sakala-grahāṇām rājā*—the king of all the planets; *samasta-sura-mūrtiḥ*—the embodiment of all the demigods; *aśeṣa-tejāḥ*—possessing unlimited brilliance; *yasya ājñayā*—by whose command; *bhramati*—moves; *sambhṛta-kāla-cakraḥ*—bearing the wheel of time; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Someone may object that some authorities regard the Sun-god as the Supreme Lord. Brahmā answers this objection with the words *yac-cakṣur...* The Sun is not the Supreme Lord Himself but the eye of Govinda, for by illuminating the universe it serves as His eye.

This is confirmed by Kṛṣṇa in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.12): "The splendor that is found in the Sun, that illumines the entire world, and also that which is in the Moon and in fire—know that splendor to be Mine."

The *Upaniṣads* likewise declare: "Out of fear of Him the wind blows; out of fear of Him the sun rises." Moreover, within the universal form (*virāṭ-rūpa*), the Sun is described as the eye of the Lord.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 52

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, by whose command Savitā, the Sun—the king of all the planets, possessed of unlimited splendor, the embodiment of all the demigods, and the eye of the world—travels mounted upon the wheel of time.**

Many followers of the *Vedas* worship the Sun as Brahman. The Sun is one of the five principal demigods *(pañca-devatā)*.

Some maintain that heat is the generative principle and that the Sun alone is the reservoir of heat and thus the cause of the universe.

Whatever may be said, the Sun is the presiding deity of a sphere composed of material light. Therefore he is an administrative demigod *(ādhikārika-devatā)*.

It is only by the command of Govinda that the Sun performs his service.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Throughout history, the Sun has been one of the most widely worshiped objects in human civilization. Ancient peoples recognized that without the Sun there would be no light, heat, agriculture, seasons, or biological life. As a result, many cultures regarded the Sun as the supreme deity or as the visible manifestation of divine power. Solar worship appeared in ancient Egypt, Greece, Rome, Japan, and throughout the civilizations of the Americas.

The Vedic tradition also accords the Sun an exalted position. The sun-god (Sūrya or Savitā) is honored as one of the principal demigods, as the source of light and heat, and as the basis for measuring time within the universe. The great Solar Dynasty (Sūrya-vaṁśa), in which Lord Rāmacandra appeared, traces its lineage to the sun-god.

Yet Brahmā's purpose in this verse is to establish that however glorious the Sun may be, he is not the Supreme Being. The Sun is described as the eye of the universal form and as the king of the planets, but he moves only according to Govinda's command. His brilliance is a manifestation of the Lord's power, and his orbit is governed by the wheel of time established by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Thus the verse acknowledges the Sun's extraordinary importance while placing him in his proper relationship to Govinda, the source of the universal order.

In the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.87.41), the Śrutis, the personified Vedas, extend this vision beyond the Sun and its cosmic course. They declare that the innumerable universes, each enclosed within its own coverings, move within the Supreme Lord under the influence of time, like particles of dust blown about in the sky: *antarāṇḍa-nicayā nanu sāvaraṇāḥ*

*kha iva rajāṁsi vānti vayasā saha*. Thus, the *kāla-cakra* of this verse is not confined to the solar orbit or to the calculation of days, seasons, and years. It is the divinely ordered power by which all material bodies, planets, and universes move, change, and endure for their appointed duration, while Govinda Himself remains untouched by its influence. He is always fully independent, *sva-rāt*, as stated in the first verse of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.*

# VERSE 53



धर्मोऽथ पापनिचयः श्रुतयस्तपांसि ब्रह्मादिकीटपतगावधयश्च जीवाः ।
यद्दत्तमात्रविभवप्रकटप्रभावा गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ५३ ॥

*dharmo 'tha pāpa-nicayaḥ śrutayas tapāṁsi*
*brahmādi-kīṭa-patagāvadhayaś ca jīvāḥ*
*yad-datta-mātra-vibhava-prakaṭa-prabhāvā*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, from whom alone religion, the accumulated mass of sins, the *Vedas*, austerities, and all living beings—from Brahmā down to insects and birds—receive the power to manifest their respective influence.**

*dharmaḥ*—religion, prescribed duty; *atha*—and also; *pāpa-nicayaḥ*—the accumulated mass of sins; *śrutayaḥ*—the *Vedas*, the revealed Scriptures; *tapāṁsi*—austerities; *brahmā-ādi*—beginning with Brahmā; *kīṭa-pataga-avadhayaḥ*—down to insects and birds; *ca*—and; *jīvāḥ*—living beings; *yat-datta-mātra-vibhava*—by the power bestowed by Him alone; *prakaṭa-prabhāvāḥ*—whose influence becomes manifest; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

What more need be said?
Thus Brahmā speaks the verse beginning *dharmaḥ*. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (10.8):

*ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavo mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate*

"I am the source of everything; from Me everything proceeds."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 53

**I worship that primeval Lord Govinda, by whose bestowed power alone religion, irreligion, the Vedic revelations, austerities, and all living beings from Brahmā down to the smallest insect manifest their respective influence.**

By *dharma* are meant the duties prescribed in the *Vedas* and elaborated in the twenty *Dharma-śāstras*, namely *varṇa-dharma* and *āśrama-dharma*.

Among these, the natural duties of the four social orders—*brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya,* and *śūdra*—constitute *varṇa-dharma*, while the duties appropriate to the four spiritual orders—*brahmacārī, gṛhastha, vānaprastha,* and *sannyāsī*—constitute *āśrama-dharma*. These two divisions determine the proper conduct for all aspects of human life.

By *adharma*, or sin, are meant ignorance *(avidyā)*, sinful desires, the great sins *(mahā-pātakas)*, secondary sins *(anu-pātakas)*, ordinary sins *(pātakas)*, and all forms of unauthorized conduct.

By the *Śrutis* are meant the *Ṛg, Sāma, Yajur,* and *Atharva Vedas*, together with the *Upaniṣads*, which are their crowning ornaments.

By austerities *(tapas)* are meant all the disciplines undertaken for the sake of religious attainment. Some of these, such as the practice known as *pañca-tapā*, are exceedingly difficult. The disciplines of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* and steadfast cultivation of knowledge of Brahman are also included within this category.

All these are merely various states within the cycle of *karma* experienced by conditioned souls.

The conditioned living entities wander through the 8,400,000 species of life. They appear in many forms—as *devas, dānavas, rākṣasas, humans, nāgas, kinnaras, gandharvas,* and others. These living beings, from Brahmā down to the smallest insect, are innumerable varieties of conditioned souls, all situated within the cycle of *karma*.

Each possesses a particular influence or power and is capable of performing certain functions. Yet none of these powers are self-existent.

The influence possessed by any being is manifested only according to the measure of power and opulence bestowed upon them by Śrī Govinda.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

*Pāpa-nicayaḥ*, "the accumulated mass of sins," refers to the aggregate of offenses classified by the *Dharmaśāstras* according to their gravity. The *mahā-pātakas*, or great sins, traditionally include killing a *brāhmaṇa*, drinking intoxicating beverages, stealing a *brāhmaṇa*'s gold, having sexual relations with the wife of one's spiritual master, and knowingly associating with persons guilty of such acts. *Anu-pātakas* are secondary offenses treated as comparable to one or another of the great sins; examples include reviling or neglecting the Vedic literature, bearing false witness, killing a friend, deliberately eating forbidden food, lying for self-aggrandizement, and falsely accusing one's superior. *Pātaka* is the general term for an act that causes moral

or spiritual degradation and, within a graded classification, may denote other forms of conduct prohibited by Scripture. The classification of a particular act may vary according to intention, circumstances, and the *Dharmaśāstra* consulted.

One may wonder why Brahmā places *dharma* and *pāpa* side by side, implying that both manifest their influence through power bestowed by Govinda. Does this mean that Govinda fosters wrongdoing or impels living beings toward sin? This is certainly not the intended meaning. Rather, it shows that nothing possesses any independent power to act or produce effects. Even the laws governing vice operate within the cosmic order established by the Supreme Lord.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains that, in this context, *dharma* includes the system of duties prescribed in the Vedic literature, while *pāpa* encompasses ignorance, sinful desires, and all forms of conduct opposed to divine law. Both function within material existence and bear corresponding results within the cycle of *karma*.

It is true that any capacity to act by any living entity comes from Govinda, but the Lord does not compel a living entity to misuse that capacity. The *jīva*, exercising its minute independence, may employ the power it has received either in accordance with *dharma* or in opposition to it. Thus the Lord is the ultimate source of the power by which actions are performed, while the living entity remains responsible for the manner in which that power is used.

# Verse 54



यस्त्विन्द्रगोपमथवेन्द्रमहः स्वकर्मबन्धानुरूपफलभाजनमातनोति ।
कर्माणि निर्दहति किन्तु च भक्तिभाजां गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ५४ ॥

*yas tv indra-gopam athavendram aho sva-karma-*
*bandhānurūpa-phala-bhājanam ātanoti*
*karmāṇi nirdahati kintu ca bhakti-bhājāṁ*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, who awards to all living beings—from the tiny Indragopa insect up to Indra—the results corresponding to the bondage of their own *karma*. Yet, astonishingly, He burns up the *karma* of those who possess devotion to Him.**

*yaḥ tu*—but He who; *indra-gopam*—the tiny insect called Indragopa; *athavā indram*—or even Indra; *aho*—indeed, astonishingly; *sva-karma-bandha-anurūpa*—corresponding to the bondage of one's own *karma*; *phala-bhājanam*—the recipient of results; *ātanoti*—awards; *karmāṇi*—*karmas*, karmic reactions; *nirdahati*—burns up completely; *kintu ca*—but indeed; *bhakti-bhājām*—of those who possess devotion; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Although the Supreme Lord is equal in awarding results according to *karma*, according to the principle that He is like a rain cloud, He nevertheless shows special favor toward His devotee. Thus the verse says: *yas tv indra-gopam...*

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.29) Kṛṣṇa states:

*samo 'haṁ sarva-bhūteṣu na me dveṣyo 'sti na priyaḥ*
*ye bhajanti tu māṁ bhaktyā mayi te teṣu cāpy aham*

"I am equal toward all beings. No one is hateful or dear to Me. But those who worship Me with devotion dwell in Me, and I also dwell in them."

And He also says (Bg. 9.22):

*ananyāś cintayanto māṁ ye janāḥ paryupāsate*
*teṣāṁ nityābhiyuktānāṁ yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*

"Those who always worship Me with exclusive devotion, meditating upon Me alone—I personally carry what they lack and preserve what they possess."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 54**

**Whether it be the tiny insect known as the Indragopa or Indra, the king of the demigods, Govinda impartially awards to the living beings bound by *karma* the results corresponding to their respective bondage**

**of actions. Yet, astonishingly, He completely burns away the *karma* of His devotees. I worship that primeval Lord, Govinda.**

In awarding the results of *karma* to the conditioned living beings, the Supreme Lord remains completely impartial, causing future activities to arise from the actions the *jīvas* have performed in the past. However, out of special mercy toward His devotees, He burns up their pious and impious activities together with the very root of *karma*, namely the desire for fruitive action *(karma-vāsanā)* and ignorance *(avidyā)*.

Although *karma* is beginningless, it is nevertheless subject to destruction. The *karma* of those who perform works with a desire for their fruits becomes inexhaustible; it never comes to an end. Even the religious duties of the renounced order *(sannyāsa-dharma)* constitute a particular type of prescribed action. Since such practices are often accompanied by a desire for liberation as their fruit, they are not pleasing to Kṛṣṇa. Such persons also receive results corresponding to their actions, and even if they are completely free from material desires, they attain only the insignificant result of self-satisfaction *(ātmārāmatā)*.

Pure devotees, however, being free from all other desires, abandon independent endeavors on the paths of knowledge and fruitive work and continuously cultivate devotional service to Kṛṣṇa in a favorable mood. Kṛṣṇa completely destroys the *karma*, the desire for *karma*, and the ignorance of such persons.

The remarkable point is that although Kṛṣṇa is impartial, He nevertheless shows a special inclination toward His devotees.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The question of whether God is impartial or shows favor to some is not new. Mahārāja Parīkṣit raises this question to Śukadeva Gosvāmī at the beginning of the Seventh Canto. He inquired:

> My dear brāhmaṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Viṣṇu, being everyone's well-wisher, is equal and extremely dear to everyone.

How, then, did He become partial like a common man for the sake of Indra and thus kill Indra's enemies? How can a person equal to everyone be partial to some and inimical toward others?

In the purport to this verse (SB 7.1.1), Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

In *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.29) the Lord says, *samo 'haṁ sarva-bhūteṣu na me dveṣyo 'sti na priyaḥ:* "I am equal to everyone. No one is dear to Me, nor is anyone My enemy." In the previous canto, however, it has been observed that the Lord sided with Indra by killing the demons on his account (*hata-putrā ditiḥ śakra-pārṣṇi-grāheṇa viṣṇunā*). Therefore, the Lord was clearly partial to Indra, although He is the Supersoul in everyone's heart. The soul is extremely dear to everyone, and similarly the Supersoul is also dear to everyone. Thus there cannot be any faulty action on the part of the Supersoul. The Lord is always kind to all living entities, irrespective of form and situation, yet He took the side of Indra just like an ordinary friend. This was the subject of Parīkṣit Mahārāja's inquiry. As a devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, he knew very well that Kṛṣṇa cannot be partial to anyone, but when he saw that Kṛṣṇa acted as the enemy of the demons, he was somewhat doubtful. Therefore he posed this question to Śukadeva Gosvāmī for a clear answer.

A devotee cannot accept that Lord Viṣṇu has material qualifications. Mahārāja Parīkṣit knew perfectly well that Lord Viṣṇu, being transcendental, has nothing to do with material qualities, but to confirm his conviction he wanted to hear from the authority Śukadeva Gosvāmī. Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura says, *samasya kathaṁ vaiṣamyam:* since the Lord is equally disposed toward everyone, how can He be partial? *Priyasya katham asureṣu prīty-abhāvaḥ.* The Lord, being the Supersoul, is extremely dear to everyone. Why, then, should the Lord display unsympathetic behavior toward the *asuras*? How is this impartial? *Suhṛdaś ca kathaṁ teṣv asauhārdam.* Since the Lord says that He is *suhṛdaṁ sarva-bhūtānām,* the well-wisher of all living entities, how could He act with partiality by killing demons? These questions arose in the heart of Parīkṣit Mahārāja, and therefore he inquired from Śukadeva Gosvāmī.

Verse 54 of the *Brahmā-saṁhitā* may raise a similar doubt. Here also Govinda is described as impartial, awarding the results of *karma* equally to all living beings, from the insignificant *indragopa* insect to mighty Indra, the king of heaven. Every living entity receives the consequences of its actions according to the infallible law of *karma*.

Yet in the second half of the verse Brahmā declares that Govinda burns away the *karma* of His devotees. How can the Lord be both impartial and partial at the same time?

The answer is that Kṛṣṇa does not arbitrarily suspend the law of *karma* to favor His devotees. Rather, loving devotional service itself establishes a new relationship between the individual soul and the Supreme Soul. When a living entity voluntarily turns toward Kṛṣṇa and places itself under His shelter, Kṛṣṇa personally takes responsibility for that soul. Thus He says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (9.22): "Those who always worship Me with exclusive devotion, meditating upon Me alone, I personally carry what they lack and preserve what they possess." And later, in Text 29, He claims: "I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. But whoever renders service unto Me in devotion is a friend, is in Me, and I am also a friend to him."

In the purport to this verse, Prabhupāda explains that Kṛṣṇa's apparent partiality is not material discrimination, but natural personal reciprocation:

> One may question here that if Kṛṣṇa is equal to everyone and no one is His special friend, then why does He take a special interest in the devotees who are always engaged in His transcendental service? But this is not discrimination; it is natural. Any man in this material world may be very charitably disposed, yet he has a special interest in his own children. The Lord claims that every living entity—in whatever form—is His son, and so He provides everyone with a generous supply of the necessities of life. He is just like a cloud which pours rain all over, regardless of whether it falls on rock or land or water. But for His devotees, He gives specific attention. Such devotees are mentioned here: they are always in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and therefore they are always transcendentally situated in Kṛṣṇa. The very phrase "Kṛṣṇa consciousness" suggests that those who are in such consciousness are

living transcendentalists, situated in Him. The Lord says here distinctly, *mayi te:* "They are in Me." Naturally, as a result, the Lord is also in them. This is reciprocal. This also explains the words *ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham:* "Whoever surrenders unto Me, proportionately I take care of him." This transcendental reciprocation exists because both the Lord and the devotee are conscious. When a diamond is set in a golden ring, it looks very nice. The gold is glorified, and at the same time the diamond is glorified. The Lord and the living entity eternally glitter, and when a living entity becomes inclined to the service of the Supreme Lord he looks like gold. The Lord is a diamond, and so this combination is very nice. Living entities in a pure state are called devotees. The Supreme Lord becomes the devotee of His devotees. If a reciprocal relationship is not present between the devotee and the Lord, then there is no personalist philosophy. In the impersonal philosophy there is no reciprocation between the Supreme and the living entity, but in the personalist philosophy there is.

The conclusion is that the destruction of *karma* mentioned in this verse is not a sign of unjust preferential treatment. It is a sign of the Lord's reciprocal relationship with His devotees. When Kṛṣṇa says, "As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly," He remains equal to all, yet responds according to the disposition with which each individual approaches Him.

# Verse 55



यं क्रोधकामसहजप्रणयादिभीतिवात्सल्यमोहगुरुगौरवसेव्यभावैः ।
सञ्चिन्त्य तस्य सदृशीं तनुमापुरेते गोविन्दमादिपुरुषं तमहं भजामि ॥ ५५ ॥

*yaṁ krodha-kāma-sahaja-praṇayādi-bhīti-*
*vātsalya-moha-guru-gaurava-sevya-bhāvaiḥ*
*sañcintya tasya sadṛśīṁ tanum āpur ete*
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

**I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord. Those who meditated upon Him through anger, amorous desire, natural loving friendship, fear, parental affection, bewilderment, reverential regard, or the mood of service attained forms similar to His.**

*yam*—whom; *krodha*—through anger; *kāma*—amorous desire; *sahaja-praṇaya*—natural affectionate friendship; *ādi*—and so forth; *bhīti*—fear; *vātsalya*—parental affection; *moha*—bewilderment, absorption in forgetfulness of all else; *guru-gaurava*—reverential respect; *sevya-bhāvaiḥ*—moods of service; *sañcintya*—meditating upon; *tasya sadṛśīm tanum*—a form similar to His; *āpuḥ ete*—they attained; *govindam*—Govinda; *ādi-puruṣam*—the primeval Lord; *tam*—Him; *ahaṁ bhajāmi*—I worship.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Indeed, He personally bestows upon even His enemies a result that is difficult for others to attain. What, then, may be said of those superior souls who are free from selfish desire and approach Him through desire directed toward Him and other such sentiments? Therefore, who else could possibly be worthy of worship?

Thus Brahmā concludes the section of verses ending with the words *tam ahaṁ bhajāmi* with the words *yaṁ krodha...*

*Sahaja-praṇaya* means friendship *(sakhya)*.

*Vātsalya* means the affection appropriate to parents and similar relations.

*Moha* means a state of complete forgetfulness of everything else, such as absorption in Him under the conception of the Supreme Brahman.

*Guru-gaurava* means regarding Him as one's father or another superior worthy of reverence.

*Sevya-bhāva* means the conception "He is my Lord to be served," or in other words, the mood of servitude *(dāsya)*.

The phrase *tasya sadṛśīṁ tanum* means that those who meditated upon Him attained forms similar to His.

In the case of those absorbed in anger, the similarity extends only to transcendence beyond ordinary material existence. In the other cases, however, the degree of similarity varies according to the extent to which the particular form and qualities appropriate to each mood are attained.

This understanding is supported by statements such as this one, spoken by Śrī Vāsudeva [Kṛṣṇa]: *adṛṣṭvānyatamaṁ loke śīlaudārya-guṇaiḥ samam*, "Nowhere in this world have I found anyone equal to you [Devakī and

Vasudeva] in character, generosity, and qualities"; by the *Brahma-sūtra's* declaration *jagad-vyāpāra-varjam*, "except for the functions of universal creation and governance"; and by Nārada's statement *prayojyamāne mayi tāṁ śuddhāṁ bhāgavatīṁ tanum*, "I obtained that pure spiritual form." Previously, while discussing the verse *vaireṇa yaṁ nṛpatayaḥ...*, "The kings attained Him through enmity...," the conclusion was reached with the words *anurakta-dhiyāṁ punaḥ kim:* "What then may be said of those whose minds are filled with love?"

There the devotees were glorified. One might therefore conclude that all devotees attain the same result. However, even among devotees there are gradations corresponding to the degree of their particular attachment and love. By this verse it is also demonstrated that Kṛṣṇa in Goloka and Kṛṣṇa who descends into the material world are one and the same person.

Thus it is said: *nandādayas tu taṁ dṛṣṭvā...* "When Nanda and the others saw that realm..." and so forth.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 55

**I worship Govinda, the primal Lord. By meditating upon Him through anger, desire, natural friendship, fear, parental affection, bewilderment, reverential regard, or the mood of service, those who cultivate such dispositions attain corresponding spiritual forms, with varying degrees of the forms and qualities appropriate to their respective contemplations.**

*Bhakti* is of two kinds: *vaidhī-bhakti* and *rāgātmikā-bhakti*.[35] Devotional service rooted in the measure of faith that arises solely through the instructions of Scripture and the spiritual master remains bound by scriptural injunctions. Through continued endeavor in the cultivation of devotion to Kṛṣṇa, it gradually becomes permeated with *bhāva*. When *bhāva* awakens, the devotee

[35] See *Annotations* for a detailed explanation.

becomes a recipient of Kṛṣṇa's full mercy. Because considerable time is generally required to attain this state, this is known as *vaidhī-bhakti*.

*Rāgātmikā-bhakti*, however, whose essential nature is spontaneous attachment, is superior. It yields its fruit quickly and powerfully attracts Kṛṣṇa. The various forms in which it appears are described in this verse. The mood of regarding Him with reverential respect as father or another superior corresponds to *śānta-rasa*. The mood of serving the worshipable Lord corresponds to *dāsya-rasa*. Natural loving friendship corresponds to *sakhya-rasa*. Parental affection corresponds to *vātsalya-rasa*, and amorous desire corresponds to *mādhurya-rasa*. These constitute the devotional relationships within *rāgātmikā-bhakti*.

Anger, fear, and bewilderment, although they may possess the intensity of *rāga*, are not *bhakti*, because they contain an unfavorable disposition rather than a favorable one. The anger of demons such as Śiśupāla, the fear of Kaṁsa and others, and the bewilderment of Māyāvādī scholars are examples. Such persons possess *rāgātmikā*, intense absorption, in Kṛṣṇa through anger, fear, or the bewildered absorption of identifying the self with Brahman while forgetting everything else. Yet because these attitudes lack favorable disposition toward Him, they cannot be considered *bhakti*.

Among the five moods of *śānta*, *dāsya*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya*, and *śṛṅgāra*, the *śānta* mood contains a considerable element of detachment and is therefore almost devoid of *rāga*. Nevertheless, because it contains some favorable disposition toward the Lord, it is counted among the forms of *bhakti*. In the remaining four moods, *rāga* is present in great abundance.

In accordance with Kṛṣṇa's promise in the *Bhagavad-gītā—ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham* ("As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly")—those who cultivate absorption through anger, fear, or bewilderment attain *sāyujya-mukti*. Those situated in *śānta-rasa* attain forms characterized by realization of Brahman and Paramātmā. Those situated in *dāsya-rasa* and *sakhya-rasa* attain, according to their respective qualifications, forms constituted of the appropriate masculine and feminine spiritual nature. Those situated in *vātsalya-rasa* attain forms suitable for parental affection. Those situated in *śṛṅgāra-rasa* attain pure *gopī* forms.

# Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

When reading the opening sentence in Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's commentary, "*Bhakti* is of two kinds: *vaidhī-bhakti* and *rāgātmikā-bhakti*," one may wonder whether there is a mistake in the translation. Should *rāgātmikā-bhakti* instead be *rāgānugā-bhakti?* After all, as Rūpa Gosvāmī explains in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, *rāgātmikā-bhakti* is the spontaneous devotion eternally present in the residents of Vraja, whereas *rāgānugā-bhakti* is part of *sādhana-bhakti*, the devotional practice of following in the footsteps of these *rāgātmikā* devotees.

The original Bengali, however, explicitly uses the term *rāgātmikā-bhakti*. It appears that Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura employs *rāgātmikā* more broadly in its etymological sense of "having *rāga*, or intense attachment." This is evident from his statement that anger, fear, and bewilderment may also possess the intensity of *rāga*, although they are not *bhakti* because they are unfavorable to Kṛṣṇa.

Some of Kṛṣṇa's enemies, such as Śiśupāla, remained constantly absorbed in Him through envy and hatred; Kaṁsa constantly remembered Him through fear. The Māyāvādī scholars become absorbed in the impersonal Brahman by forgetting His personal form, whereas the residents of Vraja meditate upon Him through friendship, parental affection, or conjugal love. In each case, Kṛṣṇa reciprocates according to the disposition with which He is approached, fulfilling His declaration in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.11): *ye yathā māṁ prapadyante tāṁs tathaiva bhajāmy aham*. "As all surrender unto Me, I reward them accordingly."

Jīva Gosvāmī and Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura therefore make an important distinction: Anger, fear, and bewilderment may produce *rāga*, intense absorption, in Kṛṣṇa, but because they are unfavorable rather than favorable, they do not constitute *bhakti*. They may lead to liberation, but they do not establish an eternal loving relationship with the Supreme Lord.

Pure devotional service begins when one's attitude becomes favorable to Kṛṣṇa. As Rūpa Gosvāmī explains at the beginning of his work *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.1.11):

*anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyaṁ jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam*
*ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanaṁ bhaktir uttamā*

"When first-class devotional service develops, one must be devoid of all material desires, knowledge obtained by monistic philosophy, and fruitive action. The devotee must constantly serve Kṛṣṇa favorably, as Kṛṣṇa desires."

The moods of reverence, service, friendship, parental affection, and especially conjugal love are therefore genuine expressions of *bhakti*. As love deepens, the devotee attains a corresponding eternal spiritual form suitable for serving Kṛṣṇa in that particular relationship.

This verse demonstrates, therefore, that not all forms of absorption lead to the same destination. Although all intense absorption in Kṛṣṇa produces a result, only favorable devotional service establishes a loving relationship with Govinda and is the path that will lead us to enter and participate in His eternal pastimes.

# VERSE 56



श्रियः कान्ताः कान्तः परमपुरुषः कल्पतरवो ।
द्रुमा भूमिश्चिन्तामणिगणमयी तोयममृतम् ।
कथा गानं नाट्यं गमनमपि वंशी प्रियसखी ।
चिदानन्दं ज्योतिः परमपि तदास्वाद्यमपि च ।

स यत्र क्षीराब्धिः स्रवति सुरभीभ्यश्च सुमहान् ।
निमेषार्धाख्यो वा व्रजति न हि यत्रापि समयः ।
भजे श्वेतद्वीपं तमहमिह गोलोकमिति यं ।
विदन्तस्ते सन्तः क्षितिविरलचाराः कतिपये ॥ ५६ ॥

*śriyaḥ kāntāḥ kāntaḥ parama-puruṣaḥ kalpa-taravo*
*drumā bhūmiś cintāmaṇi-gaṇa-mayī toyam amṛtam*
*kathā gānaṁ nāṭyaṁ gamanam api vaṁśī priya-sakhī*
*cid-ānandaṁ jyotiḥ param api tad āsvādyam api ca*

*sa yatra kṣīrābdhiḥ sravati surabhībhyaś ca su-mahān*
*nimeṣārdhākhyo vā vrajati na hi yatrāpi samayaḥ*
*bhaje śvetadvīpaṁ tam aham iha golokam iti yaṁ*
*vidantas te santaḥ kṣiti-virala-cārāḥ katipaye*

*śriyaḥ*—the goddesses of fortune; *kāntāḥ*—beloved consorts; *kāntaḥ*—the beloved Lord; *parama-puruṣaḥ*—the Supreme Person; *kalpa-taravaḥ drumāḥ*—the trees are desire trees; *bhūmiḥ*—the ground; *cintāmaṇi-gaṇa-mayī*—composed of clusters of wish-fulfilling gems; *toyam*—the water; *amṛtam*—nectar; *kathā*—speech; *gānam*—song; *nāṭyam*—dance; *gamanam api*—even walking; *vaṁśī*—the flute; *priya-sakhī*—a dear companion; *cid-ānandam*—spiritual bliss; *jyotiḥ*—effulgence; *param api*—supreme also; *tat āsvādyam api ca*— and that also is relishable; *saḥ yatra*—where; *kṣīra-abdhiḥ*—an ocean of milk; *sravati*—flows; *surabhībhyaḥ ca*—from the *surabhi* cows; *su-mahān*—exceedingly vast; *nimeṣa-ardha-ākhyaḥ vā*—even what is called half a blink; *vrajati na hi*—does not pass; *yatra api samayaḥ*—where even time does not proceed; *bhaje*— I worship; *śvetadvīpam*—Śvetadvīpa; *tam aham*—that I; *iha*—here, in this world; *golokam iti yam*—which they know as Goloka; *vidantaḥ*—knowing; *te santaḥ*—those saintly persons; *kṣiti-virala-cārāḥ*—rarely moving upon the Earth, rarely found upon the Earth; *katipaye*—a few.

**I worship that Śvetadvīpa, which the few saintly persons found upon this Earth know as Goloka. There the goddesses of fortune are beloved consorts, and the Supreme Person is their beloved. The trees are wish-fulfilling trees, the ground is composed of clusters of *cintāmaṇi* gems, and the water is nectar. Speech is song, walking is dance, and the flute is the beloved companion. The effulgence is conscious bliss itself, both the supreme illuminating principle and the supreme object of relish. There a vast ocean of milk flows from the *surabhi* cows, and time does not pass, even in the measure of half a blink.**

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Having thus glorified his worshipable Lord as the supreme object of worship, Brahmā now glorifies that Lord's abode in the two verses beginning with *śriyaḥ kāntāḥ.*

The word *śriyaḥ* refers to the beautiful *gopīs* of Vraja, for they are universally described in the *mantras* and meditations relating to that realm.

Although they are unlimited in number, they have only one beloved—the Supreme Person: *kāntaḥ parama-puruṣaḥ.* By this, the greatness of that realm is shown, surpassing even the abodes of Nārāyaṇa and other forms of the Lord.

The trees are called *kalpa-taravas* because every one of them fulfills all desires. Similarly, the ground and everything else there possess the same nature. The earth itself grants all cherished desires; what then need be said of jewels such as the Kaustubha? The water is nectar-like in sweetness; what then need be said of actual nectar?

The phrase *vaṁśī priya-sakhī* indicates that the flute is Kṛṣṇa's beloved companion because it proclaims everywhere Śrī Kṛṣṇa's state of happiness.

Why say more?

Everything there is composed of conscious bliss.

Even the light, manifesting as sun, moon, and other forms, is itself of the nature of spiritual consciousness and bliss. Thus the two *Gautamīya-tantras* describe Vṛndāvana as "the place where sun and moon rise together." Because the moon there is eternally full, this statement is appropriate. That same spiritual light is both the supreme illuminator and the supreme object of enjoyment.

Since everything there consists of the Lord's internal potency *(cit-śakti)*, everything is relishable.

As stated in the Tenth Canto: *darśayām āsa lokaṁ svaṁ gopānāṁ tamasaḥ param.* "He revealed to the cowherd men His abode beyond darkness."

The ocean of milk flows from the *surabhi* cows because of their ecstatic absorption caused by the sound of Kṛṣṇa's flute and other such stimuli.

The statement that time does not pass there means that the inhabitants,

absorbed in ecstasy, are unaware even of the passage of time. Or, alternatively, it means that the defects of material time do not exist there. As stated in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.9.10): *na ca kāla-vikramaḥ.* "There is no influence of time." Therefore that realm is called Śvetadvīpa. *Śveta* means "pure," and *dvīpa* indicates an island separated from all other associations.

The *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* explains that just as a lotus stands upon water while remaining distinct from it, so that realm exists in this world while remaining untouched by it.

Finally it says *kṣiti-viralacārāḥ*, which means that only a few rare saints wandering this Earth truly know this abode.

As Indra declares in the *Harivaṁśa*: *yaṁ na vidmo vayaṁ sarve pṛcchanto 'pi pitāmaham.* "Even after questioning Pitāmaha (Brahmā), none of us knows that realm."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 56

**I worship that supreme abode known as Śvetadvīpa, where the spiritual goddesses of fortune are beloved consorts, and the Supreme Person, Kṛṣṇa, is the only beloved; where every tree is a spiritual wish-fulfilling tree, every particle of land is a spiritual touchstone, every drop of water is nectar, every word is song, every movement is dance, and the flute is the dear companion of the Lord; where all effulgence is composed of spiritual bliss and consciousness, and everything there is relishable; where from millions of *surabhī* cows flows an endless ocean of spiritual milk; and where spiritual time exists in an eternal present, free from the divisions of past and future, so that not even half a moment is touched by temporal decay. Very few saintly persons within this material world know that supreme realm as Goloka.**

That abode which is attained by living beings through the highest cultivation of devotional *rasa* is completely spiritual, yet it is not devoid of variety.

Through anger, fear, and delusion one may attain the impersonal Brahman realm. Devotees, however, attain either the Vaikuṇṭha planets of the spiritual sky according to their particular *rasa*, or Goloka, which lies beyond them. Because that abode is supremely pure, it is called Śvetadvīpa, the White Island.

Those rare souls in this material world who attain the highest perfection of devotional *rasa* perceive that very Śvetadvīpa-tattva within Gokula-Vṛndāvana and Navadvīpa manifested in this universe, and therefore call it Goloka.[36]

In that Goloka there eternally exist spiritual beloved consorts and the beloved Lord, spiritual trees and creepers, spiritual land (together with mountains, rivers, and forests), spiritual water, speech, movement, flute music, moon and sun, objects of enjoyment and the enjoyment itself (that is, the inconceivable wonders of the sixty-four arts), spiritual cows, oceans of milk flowing with nectar, and eternally present spiritual time.

The *Vedas, Purāṇas*, and *Tantras* describe Goloka in many places. The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* states:

*sa yāvān vā ayam ākāśas tāvān eṣo 'ntar-hṛdaya ākāśaḥ;*
*ubhe asmin dyāvāpṛthivī antar eva samāhite,*
*ubhāv agniś ca vāyuś ca sūryācandramasāv ubhau vidyun nakṣatrāṇi,*
*yac cāsyehāsti yac ca nāsti sarvaṁ tad asmin samāhitam.*

"As vast as this external space is, so vast is the space within the heart. Within it both heaven and Earth are contained; both fire and air; both the Sun and the Moon; lightning and the stars. Whatever exists here and whatever does not exist here—all of it is contained within that inner space."

The essential meaning is that whatever varieties are seen within this material world exist in the spiritual realm as well, together with many more varieties beyond our present experience.

The varieties of the spiritual world are harmonized and integrated, whereas

[36] Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura here identifies the eternal Śvetadvīpa-Goloka with Gokula-Vṛndāvana and Navadvīpa as they appear within this universe. These earthly manifestations are not mere symbolic representations, but direct revelations of the eternal spiritual reality, visible according to the degree of spiritual realization.

the varieties of the material world are unharmonized and therefore become sources of both happiness and distress. The harmonized varieties of the spiritual world are fully manifest and composed of spiritual bliss and consciousness.

Through pure devotional absorption, the *Vedas* and the saintly devotees who follow them perceive that abode by means of their spiritually awakened consciousness. By Kṛṣṇa's mercy, their minute spiritual consciousness becomes capable of entering into the limitless spiritual reality, where they attain equal participation in the bliss of loving exchanges with Him.

The phrase *param api tad āsvādyam api ca* contains a profound meaning.

By *param api* it is indicated that among all manifestations of spiritual bliss and consciousness, Śrī Kṛṣṇa alone is supreme.

By *tad āsvādyam api* is indicated that He Himself becomes the object of relish. When Kṛṣṇa relishes (1) the glory of Śrī Rādhā's love, (2) the sweetness that Śrī Rādhā experiences in Him, and (3) the happiness She derives from that experience, He appears as Gaura.

Thus the bliss experienced by those who participate in this revealed mystery of divine love through loving service to Śrī Gaurāṅga is also eternally present in Śvetadvīpa.

# Verse 57



अथोवाच महाविष्णुर्भगवन्तं प्रजापतिम् ।
ब्रह्मन् महत्त्वविज्ञाने प्रजासर्गे च चेन्मतिः ।
पञ्चश्लोकीमिमां विद्यां वत्स दत्तां निबोध मे ॥ ५७ ॥

*athovāca mahā-viṣṇur bhagavantaṁ prajāpatiṁ*
*brahman mahattva-vijñāne prajā-sarge ca cen matiḥ*
*pañca-ślokīm imāṁ vidyāṁ vatsa dattāṁ nibodha me*

**Then Mahā-Viṣṇu spoke to the venerable Prajāpati, Brahmā: "O Brahmā, if your mind is inclined toward knowledge of the Lord's greatness and toward the creation of living beings, then, My child, understand from Me this knowledge consisting of five verses, which is bestowed by Me."**

*atha*—then; *uvāca*—said; *mahā-viṣṇuḥ*—Mahā-Viṣṇu; *bhagavantam prajāpatiṁ*—to the venerable Prajāpati, Brahmā; *brahman*—O Brahmā; *mahattva-vijñāne*—toward knowledge of the Lord's greatness; *prajā-sarge ca*—and toward the creation of living beings; *cet matiḥ*—if your mind is inclined; *pañca-ślokīm*—consisting of five verses; *imām vidyām*—this knowledge; *vatsa*—My child; *dattām*—bestowed; *nibodha me*—understand from Me.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Having thus spoken this praise of Him, he [Brahmā] now speaks of his attainment of the Lord's grace, beginning with the word *atha*, extending across one and a half verses. Everything here is self-evident.

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 57

**Hearing this profound and essential hymn, Lord Kṛṣṇa said to Brahmā: "O Brahmā, if your mind is inclined toward knowledge of the Lord's greatness and toward the creation of living beings, then, My dear child, hear from Me this knowledge known as the Five Verses."**

When Brahmā, overwhelmed with eagerness, uttered the names Kṛṣṇa and *Govinda*, which indicate the Lord's form, qualities, and pastimes, the Supreme Lord became pleased.

Because Brahmā desired to carry out the work of creation, Kṛṣṇa began to explain how conditioned souls may practice pure, exclusive devotional service (*viśuddhā ananyā-bhakti*) while performing worldly duties in obedience to His command.

Kṛṣṇa said: "Spiritual consciousness itself is true knowledge of the Lord's greatness. If your mind is inclined toward creating living beings while endowed with that knowledge, then hear these five verses. In these five verses I shall teach the science of devotional service."

Thus the Lord begins to explain how one may cultivate devotional service while carrying out worldly duties in obedience to His command.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

How one can remain Kṛṣṇa conscious while fulfilling one's responsibilities in the world is a recurring question for devotees working within secular society, who often struggle to reconcile their obligations with the practices and regulations of spiritual life.

A similar question was at the heart of Kṛṣṇa's conversation with Arjuna, who wanted to give up his prescribed duty as a *kṣatriya*. When Arjuna proposed leaving the battlefield and adopting the life of a renounced mendicant, Kṛṣṇa rejected his proposal. He explained that no one can truly remain inactive, as the modes of material nature force constant activity through body, mind, and senses. Mere external renunciation while the mind remains attached is hypocritical and inferior.

Later in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (8.7), Kṛṣṇa reveals to Arjuna the secret of success:

*tasmāt sarveṣu kāleṣu*
*mām anusmara yudhya ca*
*mayy arpita-mano-buddhir*
*mām evaiṣyasy asaṁśayaḥ*

"Therefore, Arjuna, you should always think of Me in the form of Kṛṣṇa and at the same time carry out your prescribed duty of fighting. With your activities dedicated to Me and your mind and intelligence fixed on Me, you will attain Me without doubt."

In the purport to this verse, Śrīla Prabhupāda presents the solution to this conundrum in a nutshell:

> This instruction to Arjuna is very important for all men engaged in material activities. The Lord does not say that one should give up his prescribed duties or engagements. One can continue them and at the same time think of Kṛṣṇa by chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa. This will free one from material contamination and engage the mind and intelligence in

Kṛṣṇa. By chanting Kṛṣṇa's names, one will be transferred to the supreme planet, Kṛṣṇaloka, without a doubt.

Verse 57 marks an important transition in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. After revealing His eternal form, abode, associates, and expansions, Govinda now instructs Brahmā in the practical application of *bhakti*. Brahmā has just received the highest spiritual realization, yet he must now undertake the immense responsibility of creating the material universe. The question therefore arises: How can one remain fully established in pure devotional service while performing extensive worldly duties? The five verses that follow, known as the *Pañca-ślokī Vidyā* (The Five-Verse Teaching), answer precisely this question. They explain how a devotee may carry out even the greatest material responsibilities as devotional service to the Lord, without becoming entangled in material consciousness.

Rather than advocating renunciation of action, these verses teach the transformation of action through the purification of consciousness. They reveal how work performed in remembrance of Govinda becomes *bhakti* rather than *karma*.

***

There is a detail worth noting. Although the text explicitly states that Mahā-Viṣṇu speaks to Brahmā (*athovāca mahā-viṣṇur...*), Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura identifies the speaker simply as Kṛṣṇa, thereby underscoring that, from the perspective of *tattva*, there is no difference between the two. Throughout the Brahma-saṁhitā, Mahā-Viṣṇu, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, and Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu are described again and again as expansions of Govinda, the original Supreme Personality established in the opening verse (*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*). For this reason, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura attributes directly to Kṛṣṇa the words spoken by Mahā-Viṣṇu, whom Brahmā has just finished repeatedly worshipping in his prayers as *govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ* —Govinda, the primeval Lord.

# VERSE 58



प्रबुद्धे ज्ञानभक्तिभ्यामात्मन्यानन्दचिन्मयी ।
उदेत्यनुत्तमा भक्तिर्भगवत्प्रेमलक्षणा ॥ ५८ ॥

*prabuddhe jñāna-bhaktibhyām ātmany ānanda-cinmayī*
*udety anuttamā bhaktir bhagavat-prema-lakṣaṇā*

**When the self awakens through knowledge and devotion, there arises unsurpassed devotion, composed of spiritual bliss and consciousness, characterized by love for Bhagavān, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.**

*prabuddhe*—when awakened; *jñāna-bhaktibhyām*—by knowledge and devotion; *ātmani*—in the self, when the self is awakened; *ānanda-cinmayī*—composed of spiritual bliss and consciousness; *udeti*—arises; *anuttamā bhaktiḥ*—unsurpassed devotion; *bhagavat-prema-lakṣaṇā*—characterized by love for Bhagavān, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Here the Lord begins the *Pañca-ślokī*, the five-verse teaching bestowed upon Brahmā as an expression of His grace, with the verse beginning *prabuddhe*.

As stated in the Eleventh Canto:

*jñāna-vijñāna-sampanno bhaja māṁ bhakti-bhāvitaḥ*

"Endowed with knowledge and realization, worship Me with a heart imbued with devotion."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 58**

**When spiritual realization awakens through knowledge and devotion, there arises toward Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is dear to the self, the highest devotion characterized by love for Bhagavān *(bhagavat-prema).***

Knowledge *(jñāna)* here means knowledge of one's relationship *(sambandha-jñāna)*. The truths concerning *cit*, *acit*, and Kṛṣṇa, together with their mutual relationships, constitute this knowledge.

The cultivation of impersonal knowledge is not intended here, for such knowledge is opposed to devotional service.

The first seven principles of the *Daśa-mūla* constitute this *sambandha-jñāna*.

The practical means *(abhidheya-tattva)* taught in the Scriptures of devotional service is the cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness through hearing, chanting, remembering, serving the Lord's feet, worship, offering prayers,

servitude, friendship, and complete self-surrender.

A detailed explanation of these practices is given in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. Through such knowledge and devotional service, *bhakti* characterized by divine love *(prema-lakṣaṇā bhakti)* awakens.

That is the highest stage of devotion, and that alone is the ultimate goal *(sādhya-tattva)* of the *jīva*.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

The *Daśa-mūla* (The Ten Foundational Principles) is Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's concise summary of the essential teachings of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava philosophy. These ten principles are arranged according to the traditional threefold structure of *sambandha*, *abhidheya*, and *prayojana*. The first seven establish *sambandha-jñāna*, knowledge of the fundamental relationship between the Supreme Lord, the living beings, His energies, and the universe. The eighth principle describes *abhidheya*, the process of attaining perfection through pure devotional service, while the final two describe *prayojana*, the ultimate goal of life, namely pure love of Kṛṣṇa *(prema)*. The ten principles are as follows:

1. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Absolute Truth.
2. Kṛṣṇa is the possessor of all potencies.
3. Kṛṣṇa is the ocean of all transcendental *rasas*.
4. The *jīvas* are Kṛṣṇa's separated expansions *(vibhinnāṁśa)*.
5. Some *jīvas* are conditioned by the material energy *(baddha-jīvas)*.
6. Some *jīvas* are liberated from material bondage *(mukta-jīvas)*.
7. The relationship between Kṛṣṇa, His energies, and the universe is one of inconceivable simultaneous oneness and difference *(acintya-bhedābheda-tattva)*.
8. Pure devotional service *(śuddha-bhakti)* is the means *(abhidheya)* for attaining Him.
9. Pure love of Kṛṣṇa (*prema*) is the supreme goal of life *(prayojana)*.
10. The highest perfection is to relish the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa through *prema*.

# Verse 59



प्रमाणैस्तत्सदाचारैस्तदभ्यासैर्निरन्तरम् ।
बोधयन्नात्मनात्मानं भक्तिमप्युत्तमां लभेत् ॥ ५९ ॥

*pramāṇais tat-sad-ācārais tad-abhyāsair nirantaram*
*bodhayann ātmanātmānaṁ bhaktim apy uttamāṁ labhet*

**By scriptural authority, by the conduct of the Lord's saintly devotees, and by constant practice of that conduct, one continually awakens the self by the self and attains even the topmost level of devotional service.**

*pramāṇaiḥ*—by scriptural authorities; *tat-sad-ācāraiḥ*—by the conduct and practices of the Lord's saintly devotees; *tat-abhyāsaiḥ*—by repeated practice of those very practices; *nirantaram*—constantly; *bodhayan*—awakening, enlightening; *ātmanā ātmānam*—the self by the self; *bhaktim api uttamām*—even the highest devotional service; *labhet*—one attains.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

The Lord now explains the means of attaining knowledge and the form of devotion that serve as the practices leading to devotional service characterized by divine love *(prema)*.

Thus He says: *pramāṇair iti.* By *pramāṇas*, evidence from the Scriptures concerning Bhagavān; by *tat-sad-ācāraiḥ*, the conduct and practices of the saints who belong to Him; and by *tad-abhyāsaiḥ*, repeated engagement in those very practices, a person awakens the self by the self and directly realizes the self as a pure *jīva* sheltered by Bhagavān. Thereafter he attains the highest form of *bhakti*, pure devotional service.

Thus it is said in the prayers of the personified *Vedas (*10.87.20):

*svakṛta-pureṣv amīṣv abahir-antara-saṁvaraṇaṁ*
*tava puruṣaṁ vadanty akhila-śakti-dhṛto 'ṁśa-kṛtam*

"Within the bodies created by Himself, the sages describe the individual soul as a partial manifestation of the Supreme Person, who possesses all potencies and who is neither enclosed from within nor from without."

And further:

*nṛ-gatiṁ vivicya kavayo nigamāvapanam*
*bhavata upāsate 'ṅghrim abhavaṁ bhuvi viśvasitāḥ*

"Having discerned the true destination of human life, the wise, placing their faith in the *Vedas*, worship Your lotus feet, which are beyond material existence."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 59**

**Through scriptural authority, saintly conduct, and constant practice thereof, one continually awakens oneself with realization of one's spiritual identity and attains supreme devotional service.**

*Pramāṇa* refers to the revealed Scriptures concerning the Supreme Lord, such as the *Vedas, Purāṇas, Bhagavad-gītā*, and other devotional literature.

*Sadācāra* refers to the conduct of pure devotees and, in particular, the *rāga*-based conduct of saintly devotees established in *rāga-bhakti.*

*Tad-abhyāsa* refers to constant practice of the devotional process thus received.

Having understood the teachings of the *Daśa-mūla* from the Scriptures, one receives the holy name of Hari, which consists of His name, form, qualities, and pastimes.

One then continually cultivates these through constant practice. Included within this are study of the Scriptures and association with saintly devotees. When one chants the holy name in conjunction with saintly conduct, the ten offenses against the holy name will gradually disappear. To follow the example of *sādhus* in their offenseless chanting and discussion of the holy name is called *abhyāsa*. By continually engaging in such devotional practice, the ultimate goal arises, namely *bhakti* characterized by divine love *(prema-lakṣaṇā bhakti)*.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura identifies three essential components of spiritual progress: *pramāṇa* (revealed Scripture), *sadācāra* (the example and conduct of realized devotees), and *abhyāsa* (steady personal practice). Spiritual advancement does not arise from theoretical study alone. Scripture provides knowledge, saintly devotees demonstrate how that knowledge is lived, and regular practice transforms knowledge into realization. When these three

work together, regular devotional service gradually matures into *prema*, pure love of God.

The progression outlined in the teachings of the *pañca-ślokī*, the five verses, is systematic. Verse 58 established the three foundational principles of *sambandha, abhidheya*, and *prayojana*. Verse 59 now explains the practical method by which *sambandha* and *abhidheya* are cultivated: through Scripture, saintly association, and steady practice.

This same progression later became one of the central themes of the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the Six Gosvāmīs, exemplified by Rūpa Gosvāmī's description of the process of devotional service in his work *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (1.4.15-16):

*ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriyā*
*tato 'nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt tato niṣṭhā rucis tataḥ*
*athāsaktis tato bhāvas tataḥ premābhyudañcati*
*sādhakānām ayaṁ premṇaḥ prādurbhāve bhavet kramaḥ*

"In the beginning there is faith, then association with saintly devotees, and then engagement in devotional practice. Thereafter comes the cessation of unwanted habits, then steadiness, taste, attachment, and then spiritual ecstasy. After that, *prema*, pure love of God, arises. This is the sequence by which *prema* appears among practitioners."

# VERSE 60



यस्याः श्रेयस्करं नास्ति यया निर्वृतिमाप्नुयात् ।
या साधयति मामेव भक्तिं तामेव साधयेत् ॥ ६० ॥

*yasyāḥ śreyaskaraṁ nāsti yayā nirvṛtim āpnuyāt*
*yā sādhayati mām eva bhaktiṁ tām eva sādhayet*

**There is nothing more conducive to the highest good than that devotional service by which one attains complete fulfillment and which brings one to Me alone. One should cultivate that devotion exclusively.**

*yasyāḥ*—than which; *śreyas-karam*—more conducive to the highest good; *na asti*—there is not; *yayā*—by which; *nirvṛtim āpnuyāt*—one attains complete fulfillment; *yā*—which; *sādhayati*—causes one to attain; *mām eva*—Me alone; *bhaktim*—devotion; *tām eva sādhayet*—one should cultivate that alone.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Here the Lord declares that *prema-bhakti* alone is the goal, and nothing else. Thus He says: *yasyā iti...* This is also stated in the Fourth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (4.24.55) by Śiva who prays to the Lord as follows:

*taṁ durārādhyam ārādhya satām api durāpayā*
*ekānta-bhaktyā ko vāñchet pāda-mūlaṁ vinā bahiḥ*

"My dear Lord, pure devotional service is even difficult for liberated persons to discharge, but devotional service alone can satisfy You. Who will take to other processes of self-realization if he is serious about the perfection of life?"

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 60

**There is nothing more beneficial than that devotional service by which one attains complete fulfillment. Since that devotion alone enables one to attain Me, one should cultivate it exclusively.**

There is no greater good for the living entity than *prema-bhakti*, pure loving devotional service for the Supreme Lord. In that perfected devotional service alone the living being attains supreme bliss. Only through *prema-bhakti* can one attain the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore one who eagerly cultivates *sādhana-bhakti* with the goal of attaining *prema-bhakti* will surely attain that supreme perfection. Those who pursue other goals will not.

# Verse 61



धर्मानन्यान्परित्यज्य मामेकं भज विश्वसन् ।
यादृशी यादृशी श्रद्धा सिद्धिर्भवति तादृशी ।
कुर्वन्निरन्तरं कर्म लोकोऽयमनुवर्तते ।
तेनैव कर्मणा ध्यायन्मां परां भक्तिमिच्छति ॥ ६१ ॥

*dharmān anyān parityajya mām ekaṁ bhaja viśvasan*
*yādṛśī yādṛśī śraddhā siddhir bhavati tādṛśī*
*kurvan nirantaraṁ karma loko 'yam anuvartate*
*tenaiva karmaṇā dhyāyan māṁ parāṁ bhaktim icchati*

**Abandoning all other forms of *dharma*, worship Me alone with faith. According to the nature and degree of one's faith, the corresponding perfection is attained. This world continues while people constantly perform their activities; by meditating upon Me through those very activities, one should seek supreme *bhakti*.**

*dharmān*—forms of *dharma*; *anyān*—other; *parityajya*—abandoning; *mām*—Me; *ekam*—alone; *bhaja*—worship; *viśvasan*—with firm conviction; *yādṛśī*—of whatever nature; *yādṛśī*—of whatever degree; *śraddhā*—faith; *siddhiḥ*—perfection; *bhavati*—arises, is attained; *tādṛśī*—corresponding to that; *kurvan*—performing; *nirantaram*—constantly; *karma*—work; *lokaḥ*—the world; *ayam*—this; *anuvartate*—continues, proceeds; *tena*—by that; *eva*—alone; *karmaṇā*—activity; *dhyāyan*—meditating; *mām*—upon Me; *parām*—supreme; *bhaktim*—devotional service; *icchati*—desires.

## DIG-DARŚINĪ-ṬĪKĀ

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

Again, reinforcing pure *sādhana-bhakti*, the Lord declares that even those who possess various other desires should practice such devotional service alone. As it is said in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.3.10):

*akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ*
*tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena yajeta puruṣaṁ param*

"Whether one is free from all desires, full of all desires, or desirous of liberation, a broad-minded person should worship the Supreme Person through intense devotional service."

## BRAHMA-SAṀHITĀ-PRAKĀŚINĪ

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

**Verse 61**

**Abandon all other forms of *dharma* and worship Me alone with faith. According to the nature and degree of one's faith, corresponding perfection is attained. While continually performing one's duties in this world, one should meditate upon Me through those very activities and thereby attain supreme devotion characterized by divine love *(prema-bhakti).***

Pure devotional service *(śuddha-bhakti)* alone is the true *dharma* of the *jīva*; it is the soul's eternal function *(nitya-dharma)*. All other forms of *dharma* are merely circumstantial, imposed duties *(aupādhika-dharma)*.

Among these are:

- the path of Brahman realization aimed at liberation *(nirvāṇa)*,
- the path of *aṣṭāṅga-yoga* aimed at oneness *(kaivalya)*,
- the ritualistic path aimed at material enjoyment,
- the path of *jñāna-yoga*, consisting of the conjunction of action and knowledge,
- and the path of dry renunciation.

The Lord says: "Abandoning all such secondary forms of *dharma*, one should take shelter of devotional service grounded in faith and worship Me alone. Exclusive faith in Me is called *viśvāsa* (firm conviction). As that faith matures, it develops successively into *niṣṭhā* (steadiness), *ruci* (taste), *āsakti* (attachment), and *bhāva* (spiritual emotion). As faith becomes more developed, perfection arises proportionately."

One may object by arguing:

"If one remains constantly engaged in striving for devotional perfection, how will bodily maintenance and ordinary worldly affairs continue? And if the body cannot be maintained, how can one continue practicing devotional service?"

To dispel this doubt, the Lord explains that people in this world are always engaged in activity. Therefore one should transform those activities into meditation upon Him, thereby destroying their karmic character and establishing their devotional character.

Human life is maintained through three kinds of activity:

1. Bodily activities—eating, sitting, traveling, sleeping, cleansing, clothing oneself, and similar acts.
2. Mental activities—thinking, remembering, contemplating, perceiving objects, and experiencing happiness and distress.
3. Social activities—marriage, relations between rulers and subjects, family relationships, sacrificial assemblies, charitable works, maintaining one's household, hospitality, social dealings, and honoring others appropriately.

When these activities are performed for one's enjoyment, they are called *karma-kāṇḍa*, but when they are performed to facilitate the cultivation of knowledge, they are called *karma-yoga* or *jñāna-yoga*, according to their particular orientation.

When they are made favorable to the cultivation of devotional service, they are called secondary devotional service *(gauṇa-bhakti-yoga)*.

Only activities directly characterized by worship of the Lord are called direct devotional service *(sākṣād-bhakti)*.

By practicing direct devotional service at appropriate times and secondary devotional service in one's ordinary dealings with the world, one remembers and meditates upon the Lord in every activity. In that condition, although one continues to act, one does not become turned away from Him. Rather, such activity fosters inwardness toward Him.

As stated in the *Īśopaniṣad*, Text 1:

*īśāvāsyam idaṁ sarvaṁ yat kiñca jagatyāṁ jagat*
*tena tyaktena bhuñjīthā mā gṛdhaḥ kasyasvid dhanam*

"Everything animate or inanimate that is within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. One should therefore accept only those things necessary for himself, which are set aside as his quota, and one should not accept other things, knowing well to whom they belong."

The commentator explains: *tena īśa-tyaktena visṛṣṭena*—"by that which has been allotted by the Lord." The essential meaning is that whatever one accepts should be accepted as the Lord's *prasāda*, His mercy. Then activity loses its karmic nature and becomes devotional.

Therefore the *Īśopaniṣad* also declares in the next verse:

*kurvann eveha karmāṇi jijīviṣec chataṁ samāḥ*
*evaṁ tvayi nānyatheto 'sti na karma lipyate nare*

"One may aspire to live for hundreds of years if he continuously goes on working in that way, for that sort of work will not bind him to the law of *karma*. There is no alternative to this way for man."

From the standpoint of knowledge, these two *mantras* teach renunciation of the fruits of action. From the standpoint of devotional service, they teach accepting everything as the Lord's mercy through surrender unto Him.

Thus one should perform the duties of worldly life while maintaining meditation upon and worship of the Lord.

Brahmā desired to create the universe. If that desire is fulfilled while meditating upon the execution of the Lord's command, then it becomes an act of surrender unto the Supreme Lord and thus a secondary duty that nourishes devotional service.

Therefore this instruction is entirely appropriate for Brahmā.

For one who has already attained *bhāva* and has naturally developed detachment from everything unrelated to Kṛṣṇa, this instruction is no longer required in the same way.

## Annotations

Bhakti Gauravani Goswami

This verse is in the same spirit as Kṛṣṇa's final instruction to Arjuna in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (18.66): *sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja*. "Abandon all varieties of *dharma* and surrender unto Me alone."

In his commentary, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains how ordinary life can be spiritualized. For most people, the solution is not to abandon bodily, mental, and social responsibilities, but to transform them by dovetailing them in devotional service to Kṛṣṇa.

Activities performed for personal enjoyment generate *karma*, but the same activities, when offered to Kṛṣṇa and performed for His satisfaction, become favorable to *bhakti*. In this way, the devotee gradually transforms his life into constant remembrance of the Lord.

# VERSE 62



अहं हि विश्वस्य चराचरस्य बीजं प्रधानं प्रकृतिः पुमांश्च ।
मयाहितं तेज इदं विभर्षि विधे विधेहि त्वमथो जगन्ति ॥ ६२ ॥

*ahaṁ hi viśvasya carācarasya bījaṁ pradhānaṁ prakṛtiḥ pumāṁś ca*
*mayāhitaṁ teja idaṁ vibharṣi vidhe vidhehi tvam atho jaganti*

**For I am indeed the supreme seed of the entire universe, moving and nonmoving; I am also *prakṛti* and *puruṣa*. O Vidhi, you bear this power bestowed by Me; therefore, with that power, create the worlds.**

*aham*—I; *hi*—certainly; *viśvasya*—of the universe; *carācarasya*—consisting of moving and nonmoving beings; *bījam*—the seed; *pradhānam*—supreme, primary; *prakṛtiḥ—prakṛti*, material nature; *pumān*—the *puruṣa*, the conscious person; *ca*—and; *mayā*—by Me; *āhitam*—placed, bestowed; *tejaḥ*—power, potency; *idam*—this; *vibharṣi*—you bear, possess; *vidhe*—O Vidhi, O Brahmā; *vidhehi*—create; *tvam*—you; *atho*—therefore, then; *jaganti*—the worlds.

## Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

The Lord now explains, with supporting reasoning, why Brahmā's desire to create will certainly be fulfilled, beginning with the words *ahaṁ hi*.

Here *pradhānam* means "supreme"; *bījam* refers to Bhagavān in His complete form; *prakṛtiḥ* denotes the unmanifest material nature; and *pumān* the witnessing person.

In short, the Lord tells Brahmā: "You too bear only the power that I have placed within you. Therefore, O Vidhi, by that power of Mine create all the worlds, both moving and nonmoving."

## Brahma-saṁhitā-prakāśinī

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

### Verse 62

**O Vidhi, I alone am the supreme seed of this entire universe of moving and nonmoving beings. I am *pradhāna*, I am *prakṛti*, and I am *puruṣa*. Even the spiritual splendor *(brahma-tejas)* that exists within you has been bestowed by Me. Bearing that power, you should create and arrange the universe of moving and nonmoving beings.**

Some philosophers conclude: "The undifferentiated Brahman alone appears as the world of variety through *vivarta* (apparent transformation)."

Others maintain:

"Māyā, in its conditioned state, is the universe, and in its unconditioned state is Brahman."

Others say:

"Brahman is the original object *(bimba)* and the universe is merely its reflection *(pratibimba)*."

Still others hold:

"The entire world is merely the illusion of the individual soul."

Some think:

"God, the individual soul, and the world, though belonging to one reality, are eternally distinct from one another."

Others maintain:

"God alone is the substantive reality, while all conscious and unconscious entities are His attributes."

Others believe:

"By inconceivable power, sometimes non-duality and sometimes duality appear to be true."

Others conclude:

"A powerless non-dualism is meaningless; therefore Brahman is eternally non-dual but endowed with pure potency."

All these doctrines have arisen from the *Vedas* by taking shelter of the *Vedānta-sūtras*. Although none of them contain the whole truth, each contains some measure of truth.

Leaving aside systems opposed to the Vedic conclusion, such as Sāṅkhya, Patañjali, Nyāya, and Vaiśeṣika, and also the ritualistic schools such as Pūrva-Mīmāṁsā, which accept only the karmic portion of the *Vedas*, even the previously mentioned schools have arisen while outwardly taking shelter of *Vedānta*.

[The Lord tells Brahmā:] "Abandoning all these doctrines, you and your pure disciplic succession should accept the supreme truth in the form of *acintya-bhedābheda*, inconceivable simultaneous oneness and difference. Only then will you be able to become a pure devotee."

The essential meaning is this. Kṛṣṇa says:

> The moving universe is composed of living entities, and the nonmoving universe is composed of matter. Among them, the living entities are manifested by My superior potency through the operation

of the marginal potency, and the material world is manifested by My inferior energy.

I am the seed of all these manifestations. Remaining non-different from these various energies, I regulate them through My will. Through the transformations of these energies arise *pradhāna*, *prakṛti*, and *puruṣa*. Therefore, from the standpoint of energy *(śakti-tattva)*, I am *pradhāna*, *prakṛti*, and *puruṣa*; yet from the standpoint of the possessor of energy *(śaktimān-tattva)*, I am eternally distinct from all of them.

This simultaneous oneness and difference exists solely by virtue of My inconceivable potency. Therefore, let this remain the *āmnāya-upadeśa*, the traditional teaching transmitted through your disciplic succession:

> "Through knowledge of the mutual relationship of the *jīva*, matter, and Kṛṣṇa according to the principle of *acintya-bhedābheda*, one should attain *kṛṣṇa-prema* through pure devotional service."

***

This commentary, entitled *Prakāśinī*, which reveals the inner intention of the living beings and bestows fearlessness upon them, has been composed by Bhaktivinoda, the resident of Surabhī-kuñja.

Thus ends the Gauḍīya commentary entitled *Prakāśinī* on the Fifth Chapter, known as the *Mūla-sūtra*, of the *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā*, the compendium of the established conclusions concerning Bhagavān, the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

# EPILOGUE

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī

**Text 1**

अध्यायशतसम्पन्ना भगवद्ब्रह्मसंहिता ।
कृष्णोपनिषदां सारैः सञ्चिता ब्रह्मणोदिता ॥

*adhyāya-śata-sampannā bhagavad-brahma-saṁhitā*
*kṛṣṇopaniṣadāṁ sāraiḥ sañcitā brahmaṇoditā*

**"The divine *Brahma-saṁhitā*, complete in one hundred chapters, was spoken by Brahmā and compiled from the essential teachings of the *Kṛṣṇa Upaniṣads*."**

**Text 2**

यद्यपि नानापाठान् नानार्थान् स्मरन्ति नानार्थास्ते ।
तदपि च सत्पथलब्धा एवास्माभिस्त्वमी प्रमिताः ॥

*yadyapi nānā-pāṭhān nānārthān smaranti nānārthās te*
*tad api ca sat-patha-labdhā evāsmābhis tv amī pramitāḥ*

**"Although scholars of differing views preserve various readings and interpretations, we have accepted as authoritative only these readings, received through the authentic tradition."**

**Text 3**

सनातनसमो यस्य ज्यायान् श्रीमान् सनातनः ।
श्रीवल्लभोऽनुजः सोऽसौ श्रीरूपो जीवसद्गतिः ॥

*sanātana-samo yasya jyāyān śrīmān sanātanaḥ*
*śrī-vallabho 'nujaḥ so 'sau śrī-rūpo jīva-sad-gatiḥ*

**That illustrious Śrī Rūpa, whose elder brother is Śrīmān Sanātana, equal to the eternal Lord[37], and whose younger brother is Śrī Vallabha, is Jīva's true refuge.[38]**

**Text 4**

इति श्रीब्रह्मसंहितायां मूलसूत्राख्यः पञ्चमोऽध्यायः ।
श्रीकृष्णप्रीतये भवतादिति करुणामयमनिशं कृष्णं नमामि ॥

*iti śrī-brahma-saṁhitāyāṁ mūla-sūtrākhyaḥ pañcamo 'dhyāyaḥ.*
*śrī-kṛṣṇa-prītaye bhavatād iti karuṇāmayam aniśaṁ kṛṣṇaṁ namāmi*

**Thus ends the Fifth Chapter of the *Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā*, known as the *Mūla-sūtra*. May this work be pleasing to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. I ceaselessly bow to merciful Kṛṣṇa.[39]**

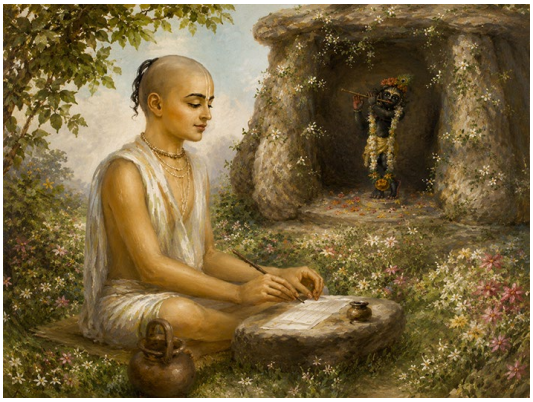
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[37] *Sanātana-samaḥ* is a conventional expression of praise and also contains a play upon the name Sanātana. It compares Sanātana, the devotee, with Sanātana, the Eternal Lord, by indicating that Sanātana Gosvāmī reflects the Lord's exalted qualities. It does not imply ontological equality between the *jīva* and Bhagavān.

[38] *Jīva-sad-gatiḥ* contains another play on words. It literally means "the true refuge or destination of Jīva." The phrase affectionately identifies Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī as Jīva Gosvāmī's true refuge, while also allowing the broader meaning that he is the true refuge and destination of all *jīvas*.

[39] *Mūla-sūtra* literally means "the foundational aphoristic text" or "root aphoristic text." A *sūtra* is an aphorism, a concise formulation in which extensive meaning is compressed into few words. At the beginning of his commentary, Jīva Gosvāmī explains that although the *Brahma-saṁhitā* originally comprised one hundred chapters, this Fifth Chapter, because it is in *sūtra* form, encompasses the essential content of the entire work. The designation *Mūla-sūtra* thus identifies it as the condensed foundational text of the complete *Saṁhitā*.

# Jīva Gosvāmī



Jīva Gosvāmī (c. 1513–c. 1598), one of the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, was described by Śrīla Prabhupāda as "the greatest scholar and philosopher in the world." He compiled the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in a systematic way and wrote extensively on Vedānta philosophy, the practice of devotional service, Sanskrit grammar, poetics, and the pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

His works gave the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava tradition a coherent philosophical foundation and preserved the teachings of his uncles, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī and Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī.

Jīva was born in Rāmakeli, in the region of Gauḍa in present-day West Bengal. His father, Vallabha, later known as Anupama, was the younger brother of Rūpa and Sanātana. The family was distinguished for learning, devotion, and public service. Traditional accounts describe Jīva as exceptionally gifted and deeply devoted to Kṛṣṇa from childhood. After leaving home, he traveled to Navadvīpa, where he met Nityānanda Prabhu, who guided him through the places associated with Śrī Caitanya's early pastimes and blessed him to proceed to Vṛndāvana. Jīva also studied in Varanāsi and became thoroughly conversant with logic, Vedānta, and the major systems of philosophy prevalent in India.

In Vṛndāvana, Jīva accepted Rūpa Gosvāmī as his spiritual master and assisted his uncles in editing manuscripts, composing works, establishing sacred sites, and organizing the growing Vaiṣṇava community.

After the departure of Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī, Jīva Gosvāmī became the leading philosophical authority of the Gauḍīya community. Closely

associated with the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple, he helped make Vṛndāvana a center of learning and devotional culture. He also trained and encouraged teachers such as Śrīnivāsa Ācārya, Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, and Śyāmānanda Prabhu, who carried the writings of the Gosvāmīs from Vṛndāvana to Bengal and other regions.

Jīva Gosvāmī's greatest philosophical achievement is the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbha*, a monumental exposition of Gauḍīya Vedānta in six volumes based primarily on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. This work establishes the authority of the *Bhāgavatam*, explains the nature of Bhagavān, Paramātmā, the living entities, and material nature, demonstrates that Kṛṣṇa is *Svayaṁ Bhagavān*, and presents *bhakti* and *prema* as the means and supreme goal of spiritual life. His *Sarva-saṁvādinī* further clarifies difficult points and answers possible objections.

Through these writings, Jīva Gosvāmī gave systematic expression to *acintya-bhedābheda*, the inconceivable simultaneous oneness and difference between the Supreme Lord and His energies. The living beings and the universe depend entirely upon Kṛṣṇa and are one with Him as manifestations of His potency, yet they remain eternally distinct from Him.

His literary activity extended far beyond the *Sandarbhas*. He wrote commentaries on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad*, the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, and important works of Rūpa Gosvāmī. His *Dig-darśinī-ṭīkā* on the *Brahma-saṁhitā* reveals the scriptural and philosophical structure underlying Brahmā's hymn to Govinda. He also composed the *Hari-nāmāmṛta-vyākaraṇa*, an innovative Sanskrit grammar centered upon Kṛṣṇa's names, and the *Gopāla-campū*, an elaborate prose-and-poetry narration of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

Jīva Gosvāmī spent most of his life in Vṛndāvana and passed away near the end of the sixteenth century, although sources differ concerning the exact date. His *samādhi* stands within the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple. He is remembered as a brilliant philosopher, prolific author, careful editor, and devoted servant of Rūpa Gosvāmī whose scholarship was wholly dedicated to revealing the eternal service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

# Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura



Bhaktivinoda Thakura, born as Kedarnath Dutt in 1838 in the town of Birnagar, West Bengal, was a prominent spiritual leader, philosopher, and a key figure in the revitalization of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism in the 19th century. Śrīla Prabhupāda called him "the pioneer of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement." His life was marked by his profound spiritual realization, prolific writings, and dedicated efforts to spread the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu both in India and abroad.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura was born into a devout Vaiṣṇava family. He received a traditional education in Sanskrit grammar, literature, and philosophy, acquiring a deep understanding of the Vedic Scriptures. He demonstrated exceptional intellectual capabilities from an early age.

In his early twenties, Kedarnath Dutt experienced a profound spiritual awakening and developed a strong inclination towards devotional practices. He immersed himself in the study of Vaiṣṇava philosophy and sought guidance from renowned Vaiṣṇava teachers.

He dedicated himself to intense spiritual practice and embarked on a quest for spiritual realization. He extensively studied and analyzed the teachings of Śrī Chaitanya and different Vaiṣṇava Scriptures.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's literary contributions are vast and influential. He authored numerous books, essays, and commentaries, primarily in Bengali, Sanskrit, and English. His writings cover a wide range of topics, including philosophy, devotional practices, scriptural exegesis, social reform, and the importance of chanting the holy names of the Lord.

He played a pivotal role in reviving and reestablishing the teachings of Śrī Caitanya, which had faced a decline after His disappearance. He engaged in

extensive research, scriptural study, and philosophical analysis to present the teachings of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in a relevant and accessible manner for the contemporary audience.

Bhaktivinoda Thakura was married and had ten children, including his illustrious son Bimala Prasad, who became later Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, a prominent Vaiṣṇava leader who founded the preaching mission Gauḍiya Math, establishing temples all over India and in neighboring countries.

Bhaktivinoda Thakura's teachings and contributions had a profound impact on subsequent generations, inspiring the growth and expansion of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement worldwide. His writings continue to inspire and guide countless individuals on the path of devotion and spiritual realization.

In 1910, he retired to his house in Calcutta, Bhakti Bhavan, so that he could remain uninterruptedly engaged in the divine service of Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. On June 23, 1914, at noon, the Ṭhākura entered the eternal pastimes of the Lord, far beyond the vision of the conditioned souls of this world.

# The Founder-Ācārya



His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness, was born Abhay Charan De in 1896 in Calcutta, India, into a Vaiṣṇava family. From the very beginning of his childhood, he was educated in a devotional way of life and learned how to see everything in relation to the Supreme Lord.

He first met his spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, in 1922, and eleven years later became his initiated disciple and received his new name, Abhay Charanaravinda.

At their first meeting, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta had requested Abhay to broadcast Vedic knowledge through the English language. Thus, in the years that followed, his disciple wrote an English commentary on the *Bhagavad-gītā* and in 1944, without assistance, started a fortnightly magazine, *Back to Godhead*.

Recognizing his philosophical learning and devotion, the Gauḍiya Vaiṣṇava Society honored him in 1947 with the title "Bhaktivedanta." In 1950, at the age of fifty-four, A. C. Bhaktivedanta retired from married life and four years later adopted the *vānaprastha* (retired) order to devote more time to his studies and writing. He traveled to the holy city of Vṛndāvana, where he lived in very humble circumstances in the historic medieval temple of Radha-Damodara. There he engaged for several years in deep study and writing. He accepted the renounced order of life *(sannyāsa)* and the title "Swami" in 1959. At Radha-Damodara, A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami began work on his life's masterpiece: a multivolume translation and commentary on the 18,000-verse, 12-canto *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.*

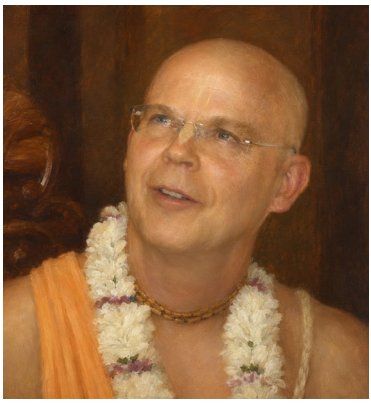
After publishing the First Canto in three volumes, he came to the United States in 1965 to fulfill the mission of his spiritual master. After almost a year of great difficulty, he established the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) in July of 1966 in New York. Under his careful guidance, the Society grew within a decade to a worldwide confederation of almost one hundred ashrams, schools, temples, institutes and farm communities.

Śrīla Prabhupāda also inspired the construction of a large international center at Mayapur in West Bengal, India, which is also the site The Temple of the Vedic Planetarium. A similar project is the magnificent Krishna-Balaram Temple and International Guest House in Vṛndāvana, India. These are centers where Westerners can live to gain firsthand experience of Vedic culture.

Prabhupāda's most significant contribution, however, is his books. Highly respected by the academic community for their authoritativeness, depth and clarity, they are used as standard textbooks in numerous universities. His writings have been translated into over eighty languages. The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, established in 1972 to publish the works of His Divine Grace, has thus become the world's largest publisher of books in the field of Indian religion and philosophy.

In the last ten years of his life (1967–1977), in spite of his advanced age, Prabhupāda circled the globe twelve times on lecture tours that took him to six continents. In spite of such a vigorous schedule, he continued to write prolifically. The writings of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda constitute a veritable library of Vedic philosophy, religion, literature and culture.

# Bhakti Gauravani Goswami



Bhakti Gauravani Goswami, born in Germany in 1951, first encountered Kṛṣṇa's devotees in Hamburg in the summer of 1971 while fulfilling his mandatory military service. After reading Śrīla Prabhupāda's translation and commentary on the *Śrī Īśopaniṣad* and receiving guidance from the devotees at the Hamburg temple, he became a vegetarian, shaved his head, and lived a devotional life to the extent circumstances allowed while still in the army. To help him focus, devotees encouraged him to translate the Second Canto of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* into German.

Shortly after his discharge from military service, he traveled to Paris in July 1972 to meet Śrīla Prabhupāda, who accepted him as a disciple and gave him the spiritual name Vedavyas Das.

For the next eight years, Vedavyas translated his spiritual master's books into German and managed the German branch of the Bhaktivedanta Book Trust (BBT), the publisher of Prabhupāda's works.

In 1981, Vedavyas moved to Spain and assisted in the administration of the Spanish temples. In 1982, he met his future wife, Rasāmṛta devī dāsī, with whom he would raise four children.

In 1985, he established the European office of the Spanish BBT and organized the translation and production of Prabhupāda's books in Spanish.

In 1996, for Śrīla Prabhupāda's centennial celebration, Vedavyas published *Śrīla Prabhupāda and His Disciples in Germany*, a book that recounts Prabhupāda's visits to Germany and other temples in Europe, the history of ISKCON Germany from 1969 to 1977, and memories from Prabhupāda's disciples. In honor of his spiritual master's 125th anniversary, a revised and expanded edition was published in 2021.

In 2007, he and his wife entered the *vānaprastha* (retired) order of life. Seven years later, on the auspicious day of Gaura Pūrṇimā, in Māyāpura, Vedavyas Das accepted *sannyāsa* (the renounced order of life) and has since been known as Bhakti Gauravani Goswami.

In 2020, he published *Sacred Song Symphony*, a compilation of 108 Bengali and Sanskrit songs and prayers by Vaiṣṇava *ācāryas* and other *mahājanas*, accompanied by commentaries. He also recorded all the songs and made them available on his website: www.spiritualsound.space.

In early 2025, he presented *Introspection—Life in the Shadow of Time*, a collection of eighteen Vaiṣṇava songs, adapted into English poetry. Available in both print and e-book formats, this work includes 160 color illustrations and an analytical commentary for each song. The recordings of these timeless, reflective songs have been reimagined in a modern soundscape, preserving their original essence while appealing to a global audience.

Later in 2025, to commemorate the 60th anniversary of Śrīla Prabhupāda's arrival in America, Bhakti Gauravani Goswami published *Mārkine bhāgavata-dharma*, a Bengali poem composed by Prabhupāda after visiting Boston on his first day in the US. This work, complete with commentaries and color illustrations for the verses, is available in English, German and Spanish.

Currently, Bhakti Gauravani Goswami continues his work in translation, writing, and recording, while traveling and preaching across Europe, South America, and India.

# Govinda
# The Primeval Lord



Selected Verses
from the Brahma-saṁhitā
adapted into English poetry
and set to music by
Bhakti Gauravani Goswami



1

Kṛṣṇa, the supreme controller of all,
is condensed eternity, knowledge and bliss,
without beginning, yet the beginning of all,
the cause of all causes—Govinda.



29

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord,
who dwells in realms of *cintāmaṇi* gems,
tending *surabhi* cows amid desire trees;
countless *gopīs* serve Him with unalloyed love.



30

Govinda, the primeval Lord I adore,
with lotus-petal eyes, playing on His flute;
dark blue as a rain cloud, peacock plume in His hair,
His beauty enchanting millions of Cupids—gods of love.



31

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord,
a garland, flute and moon-locket grace His beauty.
In loving playful pastimes He ever delights,
eternally revealing His threefold-bending form.



32

Govinda, the primeval Lord, I adore,
whose form is radiant with bliss and truth.
Each of His limbs holds the power of each sense,
creating and sustaining worlds without end.



33

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord,
nondual, infallible, beyond beginning.
Ancient of days, yet ever fresh in youth,
above all Vedic knowledge, yet known to loving souls.



34

Though *yogīs* and *jñānis* strive millions of years,
swift as the wind and outrunning the mind,
they reach but the tip of the lotus toes
of transcendent Govinda, whom I adore.



35

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord,
though one, from Him countless worlds arise.
All the universes rest within His being;
He dwells in His fullness in every atom.




36

Govinda, the primeval Lord, I adore,
whose love floods the hearts of those devoted.
Endowed with forms and realms reflecting His glory,
they praise Him with the hymns of the holy *Vedas*.



37

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord,
the self of all, who dwells in Goloka,
with Rādhā and Her *sakhīs*, Her own expansions,
immersed in eternal blissful *rasa*.



38

Govinda, the primeval Lord, I adore,
whom saints perceive with love-anointed eyes,
beholding Him forever within their hearts,
Śyāmasundara, whose qualities transcend all thought.



39

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord,
as Rāma and others, His portions descend.
In many forms He appears throughout the worlds,
yet He is Kṛṣṇa Himself—Svayaṁ Bhagavān.



40

Govinda, the primeval Lord, I adore,
whose effulgence is the endless *brahmajyoti*,
all-pervading, yet adorned with countless worlds
and all their planets, powers, and glories.



41

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord,
who is never touched by material nature.
His Māyā brings forth the worlds of three modes,
yet He resides beyond, in pure transcendence.



42

Govinda, the primeval Lord, I adore,
the essence of bliss and the nectar of grace.
He shines in the hearts of all those who remember,
and conquers the world with His joyful pastimes.



43

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord,
who grants each realm its glory and might.
Above all the worlds stands His abode,
Goloka, the dwelling of sweetness supreme.



44

Govinda, the primeval Lord, I adore,
whose potency shapes and dissolves the worlds.
As Durgā she sustains the whole creation,
moving like a shadow according to His will.



45

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord,
who acts as Śambhu for a sacred deed.
As milk becomes yogurt yet stays one in essence,
He takes on this form to bless the world.



46

Govinda, the primeval Lord, I adore;
as one lamp kindles countless others,
though each burns separately, their light is one;
He shines forth in countless forms of Viṣṇu.



47

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord,
who lies in mystic slumber on the Causal Ocean.
Infinite universes drift from His pores,
upheld by Śeṣa, His all-sustaining power.



48

Govinda, the primeval Lord, I adore,
whose breath is the lifespan of each universe.
The lords of the worlds live but a single breath
of His great expansion—Mahā-Viṣṇu.



49

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord,
who empowers Brahmā to fashion the worlds.
As the Sun reflects its fire in *sūryakānta* gems,
Govinda shines through the second creator.



50

Govinda, the primeval Lord, I adore,
whose lotus feet rest on Gaṇeśa's head.
Touching those lotus feet, he receives the power
to clear all obstacles from the three worlds.




51

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord,
from whom the elements of the worlds arise.
In Him they rest, and to Him they all return,
the source and the end of time, soul, and space.



52

Govinda, the primeval Lord, I adore,
whose eye is the Sun, king of the planets.
By His command it moves through space,
mounted upon the wheel of time.



53

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord,
by whose bestowed power all things prevail—
*dharma* and sin, the *Vedas* and penance,
and every life, from Brahmā to insects and birds.



54

Govinda, the primeval Lord, I adore,
who awards the fruit of every deed to all,
from Indra in heaven to the insect Indragopa,
yet burns His devotee's *karma* to ashes.



55

I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord;
those fixed upon Him in many moods—
like anger, fear, affection, reverence, or love—
attain a form according to their meditation.



56 a

In Goloka, divine *lakṣmīs* dwell as lovers;
Kṛṣṇa, Govinda, is their one beloved.
Trees grant every wish in *cintāmaṇi* lands,
where every single step is a graceful dance.



56 b

Every word is song, the flute His dear companion,
water flows as nectar, light is conscious bliss.
Surabhi cows streaming oceans of milk,
time does not pass, not even half a blink.



56 c

That Śvetadvīpa is known to saints as Goloka;
few are they who walk this Earth and truly see
that transcendental realm overflowing with nectar.
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

# CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW TEMPLE
## FOR
# ŚRĪ ŚRĪ RĀDHĀ-GOVINDACANDRA

The project to build a new temple
for Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Govindacandra is now underway.
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TOGETHER WE ARE BUILDING THE NEW TEMPLE
You too can take part, according to your means.

For more Información, contact: +34 644 31 12 05



Rupa Goshala
vaqueria No violenta

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*Les invitamos a participar en una de las acciones más nobles y piadosas de este mundo:*

***En la protección de las vacas***

*The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.*

*We humbly invite you to participate in one of the most noble and pious activities in the world*

*The protection of the cows*




























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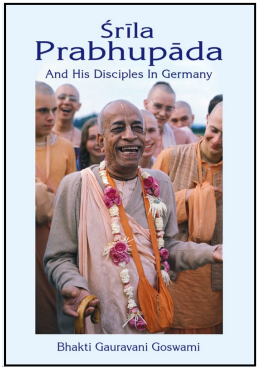
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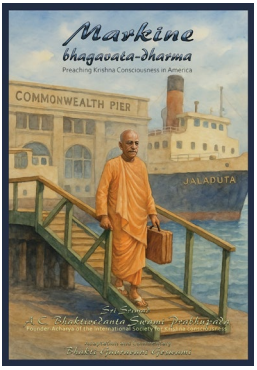
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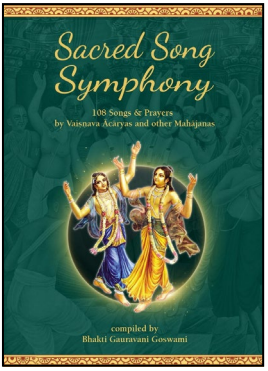
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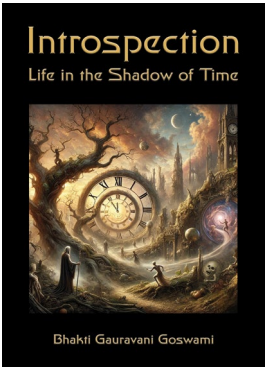
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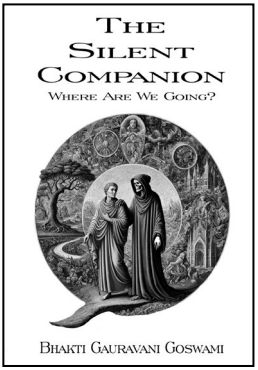
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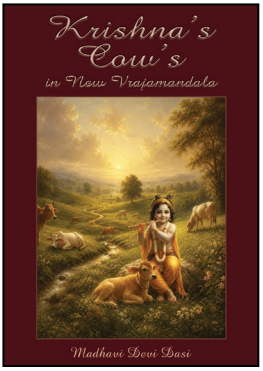



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