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**Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam**  
**Canto Ten, Chapter Fourteen**  
**with the commentaries of Śrīla Śrīdhara Swami,**  
**Śrīla Sanātana Goswami**  
**and Śrīla Viśvanatha Cakravarti Ṭhākura**

**Text 1**

śrī-brahmovāca

naumīdya te 'bhra-vapuṣe taḍid-ambarāya  
guñjāvataṁsa-paripiccha-lasan-mukhāya  
vanya-sraje kavala-vetra-viṣāṇa-veṇu-  
lakṣmā-śriye mṛdu-pade paśupāṅgajāya

śrī-brahmā uvāca-Śrī Brahmā said; naumi-I offer my humble obeisances; īdya-O worshipable one; te-to You; abhra-cloud; vapuṣe-form; taḍit-lightning; ambarāya-garments; guñjā-gunja; avataṁsa-earrings; paripiccha-peacock feather; lasat-glittering; mukhāya-face; vanya-forest; sraje-garland; kavala-morsel of food; vetra-stick; viṣāṇa-horn; veṇu-flute; lakṣmā-characterized; śriye-glory; mṛdu-soft; pade-feet; paśupāṅgajāya-son of a gopa.

Brahmā said: My dear Lord, You are the only worshipful Supreme Lord, Personality of Godhead. Therefore I am offering my humble obeisances and prayers just to please You. Your bodily features are of the color of clouds filled with water. You are glittering with a silver electric aura emanating from Your yellow garments.

Let me offer my respectful repeated obeisances unto the son of Mahārāja Nanda who is standing before me with conchshell, earrings, and peacock feather on His head. His face is beautiful. He is wearing a helmet, garlanded with forest flowers, and He stands with a morsel of food in His hand. He is decorated with cane and bugle, and He carries a buffalo horn and flute. He stands before me with small lotus feet.\*

**Commentaries**

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī's Śrī Bhāvārtha-dīpikā:

catudaśe 'dbhutam dṛṣṭvā

pūrvāgantuka-niścayam  
anīśāḥ kartum astaṣṭit  
kṛṣṇaṁ brahmā vimohitaḥ

In the fourteenth chapter, seeing these unprecedented wonders and not having the power to understand them, bewildered Brahmā offered prayers to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Trembling in fear of the offense he has committed, and still unable to understand the Lord's glories, Brahmā simply glorifies the form he sees before him. He speaks this verse, which begins with the word "naumi". He says, "O worshipable one (īḍya), to You (te) I offer my respectful obeisances."

Here the dative case is used with the same meaning as the accusative. Or, the dative case is used because the Lord who is glorified here is the object of the sentence, and therefore the goal of the prayers. Because the Lord is the goal the dative case is appropriate. Or, the meaning is, "I offer these prayers to please You". (In that sense also the dative case is appropriate).

"Abhra-vapuṣe" means "to He whose form is a cloud," "taḍid-ambarāya" means "to He whose garments are lightning," "guṅjāvataṁsa" means "guṅjā earrings", "paripiccha" means "peacock-feather", "lasan-mukhāya" means "to He whose face is splendid in this way", "vanya-sraje" means "to He who wears a forest garland", "kavala-vetra-viṣāṇa-veṇu-lakṣmā-śriye" means "to He who is handsome in this way", "mṛdu-pade" means "to he whose feet are delicate", and "paśupāṅgajāya" means "to He who is the son of a gopa".

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī's Śrī Vaiṣṇava-toṣaṇī:

Now the object of the Lord's great mercy, and now plunged in the nectar of transcendental love for Him, Brahmā gazes at the Lord's supremely charming form, qualities, pastimes, and opulences, and describes the form he sees in this verse, which begins with the word "naumi".

The word "īḍya" here means "O You who should be glorified with prayers". It means "Neither Brahmā, nor the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, nor Your many incarnations (should be glorified as You are). That is the meaning. This is so because You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead within whom all incarnations exist and You are the origin from which the incarnations and everything else has come. Therefore I glorify You." Why (do I glorify You)? The answer is given in the word "te", which means "to attain Your association".

Here the Lord Himself may object: "By realizing My form as impersonal Brahman and all-pervading Paramātmā have you not already attained My association?"

Brahmā replies by speaking the words "abhra-vapuṣe taḍid-ambarāya", which mean "(I have not attained the association of You), whose splendid dark form is like a water-bearing black cloud, and who wears garments yellow as lightning".

The Lord may then object: "Is it not so that what you have described is the form of the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha, or the form of Lord Rāma, the master of the Raghus?"

Fearing the Lord might say that, Brahmā, to refute Him, says, "guñjāvataṁsa-paripiccha-lasan-mukhāya vanya-sraje".

"Paripiccha" here means "paritaḥ" (everywhere) "piccha" (peacock feathers), or "an ornament of many peacock feathers". "vanya-sraje" means "He who wears a garland of many different kinds of flowers, leaves, and other things that had grown in the forest".

His mind attracted by the Lord's childhood pastimes, Brahmā described them in the words "kavala-vetra-viṣāṇa-veṇu-lakṣmā-śriye mṛdu-pade paśupāṅgajāya".

"Kavala" means "Holding a mouthful of rice and yogurt in His left hand", "vetra-viṣāṇa" means "with a horn and stick tucked under His left arm", "veṇu" means "with a flute tucked in the waist of His garment". "lakṣma" means extraordinary features, "śriye" means "glorious and handsome", and "mṛdu-pade" means "His feet were delicate because He was only a boy". Because the Lord is his own father, spiritual master, and Deity, Brahmā, out of great respect, does not specifically mention the Lord's age. Hinting at many here unspoken Vṛndāvana pastimes such as the Lord's decorating His limbs with colorful pictures and designs drawn in mineral pigments found in the forest, Brahmā speaks the word "paśupāṅgajāya", which means "the son of Śrī Nanda".

Here Brahmā says, "Because You are eternally a child and You eternally have these features, I offer these prayers in order to attain association with You in this form of a cowherd boy." With great longing Brahmā speaks these prayers with this aim in mind.

In this way, with adjective after adjective, Brahmā expresses His feelings of wonder.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī's Śrī Sārārtha-darśinī Ṭīkā:

bhakti-jñāna-mahaiśvarya-  
mādhuryābdhau patan vidhiḥ  
astaut prīti-vidhau praśnot-  
taraṁ coktaṁ caturdaśe

In the fourteenth chapter Brahmā, drowning in an ocean of devotion to the Lord, awareness of the Lord, and the Lord's great sweetness and opulence, offers prayers. Also, a question about love for the Lord is answered.

mama ratna-vaṇig-bhāvaṁ  
ratnāny aparicinvataḥ  
hasantu santo jihremi  
na sva-svāntar-vinoda-kṛt

Let the saintly devotees laugh at me because I am a gem merchant that does not carefully count his gems. I am not ashamed. I feel bliss to have placed the Lord's pastimes in my heart.

śrīmad-guru-padāmbhoja-  
dhyāna-mātraika-sāhasam  
vidhi-stavāmbudheḥ param  
yiyāsati mano mama

Courageous by meditating on my spiritual master's lotus feet, my mind yearns to cross the ocean of Brahmā's prayers.

Directly seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose form is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss, and who is the son of the king of the gopas, Brahmā, filled with wonderful faith and devotion, describes the Lord in this verse, which begins with the word "naumi".

Brahmā says: "O worshipable one (īḍya), who I now see present in all beings from Brahmā down to the immovable plants and who are therefore known as Vāsudeva, the all-pervading, and who are supremely glorious as You expand in many thousands of incarnations, I glorify You with prayers. I offer prayers to You as one does to a master taking rest, or I offer prayers to please You or to attain Your association."

The description of the Lord here as He whose "form is a cloud, and whose garments are lightning" shows that the Lord removes the burning sufferings of the world and is the life of the cātaka birds that are His devotees.

Here the word "guñjāvataṁsa" means "a crown of guñā". The word "avatāṁsa" may mean either "crown", "earrings", or "flower-garland".

The word "paripiccha" means that a peacock feather was placed on the top of His crown. "Lasan-mukha" means that His face was extraordinary with the many decorations of His crown.

The guñā and other decorations of Vṛndāvana are more glorious than the priceless jewel ornaments of Vaikuṅṭha.

"Vanya-sraje" means "He who is garlanded with the flowers and leaves of Vṛndāvana forest." These decorations are more glorious than decorations made with pārijātas and other flowers from the forests of the heavenly planets.

The words "kavala-vetra-viṣāṇa-veṇu-lakṣmā-śriye" describe the Lord's glorious handsomeness. His feet as a young cowherd boy are more glorious than His feet in all His incarnations.

"Mṛdu-pade" means "He whose feet are very delicate," Seeing the Lord wander in the forest with His delicate feet makes the devotees faint with concern for the Lord's well-being.

The word "paśupāṅgajāya" shows that Mahārāja Nanda is more fortunate than Mahārāja Vasudeva and the other devotees.

## Text 2

asyāpi deva vapuṣo mad-anugrahasya  
sveccha-mayasya na tu bhūta-mayasya ko 'pi

neṣe mahi tv avasitum manasāntareṇa  
sākṣāt tavaiva kim utātma-sukhānubhūteḥ

asya-of this; api-even; deva-O Lord; vapuṣaḥ-form; mad-anugrahasya-merciful to me; sveccha-mayasya-which appears by Your own desire; na-not; tu-indeed; bhūta-mayasya-made of material elements; kaḥ-Brahmā; api-even; na-nit; īṣe-am able; mahi-the potency; tv-indeed; avasitum-to measure; manasāntareṇa-with the mind; sākṣāt-directly; tava-of You; eva-indeed; kim uta-what to speak?; ātma-own; sukha-of the happiness; anubhūteḥ-from the experience.

Your appearance as a cowherd child is for the benefit of the devotees, and although I have committed offenses to Your lotus feet by stealing away Your cows, boys, and calves, I can understand that You have mercy upon me. That is Your transcendental quality. You are very affectionate toward Your devotees. In spite of Your affection for me, I cannot estimate the potency of Your bodily activities. It is to be understood that when I, Lord Brahmā, the supreme personality of the universe, cannot estimate the childlike body of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, then what to speak of others? And if I cannot estimate the spiritual potency of Your childlike body, then what can I understand about Your transcendental pastimes?\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here the Lord May object, "You say, 'I am offering prayers', but why do you describe only My form (and nothing else about Me in your prayers)?"

To answer this objection Brahmā speaks this verse, which begins with the word "asyāpi". He says, "Even though (api) I am Brahmā (kaḥ), I do not (na) have the power (īṣe) to understand (avasitum) the glory (mahi) of this form (vapuṣaḥ) You have casually manifested before me. If You are kind to me (mad-anugrahasya), and You appear in whatever forms Your devotees wish (svecchāmayasya), then why do I not have the power to understand You?"

Then Brahmā answers his own question. He says: "na tu bhūta-mayasya", which means, "Your inconceivable form is made of pure goodness". Then Brahmā says, "sākṣāt tavaiva kim utātma-sukhānubhūteḥ", which means, "If this is so, then how is it possible for anyone to really understand You as You are? Who, employing only his limited material mind (manasāntareṇa), has the power to understand the true glories of You, who have now descended to this world, who are beyond the modes of material nature, and who are filled with transcendental bliss?"

Or, the word "bhūtamayasya" may mean "the universal form of the Lord, which is made of material elements". Then the sentence becomes, "I cannot understand the glory of Your universal form, so how can I understand the extraordinary form I have just described, a form beyond both the controlled material energy and the demigods who control it?" Thus the meaning of this verse is, "How can anything be said to describe this form?"

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here the Lord May object, "You say, 'I am offering prayers', but why do you describe only My form (and nothing else about Me in your prayers)?"

To answer this objection Brahmā speaks this verse, which begins with the word "asyāpi". The word "vapuṣaḥ" means either "of Your many incarnations" or "of a certain incarnation". The word "mad-anugrahasya" means "which showed mercy to me by protecting the the material world created by Brahmā. You did this by preaching the true religion and by destroying irreligion." The words "na tu bhūtamayasya" mean "which is not made of the five material elements, and is not even like the bodies of the demigods, who have bodies made of light."

If all this is true, then what kind of body is this? Brahmā answers by speaking the word "ātma-sukhānubhūteḥ", which means, "it is the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead". Or, it may mean, "even when the mind is turned away from material sense-objects and turned within, still it is not possible to understand this form of bliss. How much more so, then, is it not possible to understand the direct nature of You, the origin of all incarnations of Godhead?" The remainder of this verse has been clearly explained by the other commentators.

"Therefore," Brahmā implies, "my prayer shall be simply describing this form that I have seen." Or, the word "vapuṣaḥ" may mean, "of Your form as a cowherd boy, which is more glorious than even Your splendid form as the master of Vaikuṅṭha". Or, this phrase may mean, "Even though I am Brahmā, I still cannot understand this form of a cowherd boy".

The words "kim uta" mean, "I cannot even understand Your impersonal Brahman feature, what to speak of understanding Your four-armed form of Lord Narayana, who is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss, so how can I understand this form of a cowherd boy?" The words "kim uta" here imply that the forms of the impersonal Brahman and Lord Narayana are less glorious than the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa the cowherd boy.

This is also seen in the use of the three adjectives here (mad-anugrahasya, svecchāmayasya, and na tu bhūtamayasya). "Mad-anugrahasya" means "even though I am a great offender, You are still merciful to me", "svecchāmayasya" means, "by Your own will You appear in many different forms, such as the form of Lord Dāmodara. You do this to show mercy to the living entities. You show mercy not only to the devotees, but to everyone." What does the phrase "na tu bhūtamayasya" mean? They mean that with humble words, with words choked with emotion, Brahmā says, "Your form is not material, for You are the only shelter of the entire universe, and You have descended here to benefit the entire universe".

If the alternate reading of "nanu" (indeed) is accepted instead of the phrase "na tu", then the meaning is clear. This alternate reading was also implied by Śrīdhara Svāmī when in his commentary on this verse he said, "Or, the word 'bhūtamayasya' may mean 'the universal form of the Lord, which is made of material elements'." In this interpretation the word "na" has the same meaning as "nanu" and the word "tu" is understood to mean "certainly". The rest of the verse remains the same whether "na tu" or "nanu" are accepted. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.3.24 and 10.2.26 are examples of transcendental prayers that describe the form of the Lord.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "O Brahmā, you are the all-powerful master of the universe, I am the son of a gopa who lives in the forest. You are the oldest, and I am just a boy. You are the most learned, for you know the meaning of the Vedas and you are most saintly and virtuous. Because I am engaged in herding some calves, I have no knowledge. I do not untouch even the slightest fragrance of the saintly conduct described in the Smṛti-śāstras. I simply wander aimlessly, eating a morsel of food. You are the master of the illusory potency māyā. You are filled with transcendental bliss. You are the supreme controller himself, whereas I, bewildered by Your māyā potency and my heart filled with grief, aimlessly wander in this forest. It is I who am not worthy to offer prayers to you."

Fearing that Lord Kṛṣṇa would speak these crooked words, Lord Brahmā said, "In truth I have foolishly committed a great offense. Then he spoke this verse, which begins with the word "asya".

Brahmā says, "O Lord, (deva), I do not understand the glories of Your form, which appears to be bewildered and intent only on childish activities. If I cannot understand this form, then how can I understand the glories of the most expert and sublime form You will soon manifest to enjoy teenage (kaisora) pastimes? If I cannot understand that form, then how can I understand the transcendental bliss You feel in Your heart? Even though You are always filled with limitless bliss, You experience more bliss by Your pastimes of herding the calves. If I cannot understand the bliss Your friends feel in their hearts, then how can I understand the bliss that You personally feel. If I cannot understand You even when my mind is withdrawn from sense objects and brought under control, then how can I understand You when my mind is fickle and wavering? If even I, the demigod Brahmā, cannot understand You, then how can others understand You?

"With this series of five `how can I's, I have proved my complete inability to understand You. I will never understand You by scripture-study, austerity, yoga, or any other like means. I will understand You only if You place Your merciful glance upon me."

Thus, to earn Lord Kṛṣṇa's merciful glance, Brahmā spoke these prayers describing Lord Kṛṣṇa's transcendental form. Brahmā thought, "Even though I am an offender, still You are merciful to me. I can guess that this must be so, for first You bewildered me by displaying Your great powers and opulences, and then, after some time, You gave me the gift of being able to see You in this form. You did this because You are merciful."

Here the word "svecchāmayasya" means, "because You love Your affectionate (prema-bhakti) devotees, You appear in different forms to satisfy their desires to see You and serve You in different ways."

Here Lord Brahmā hints, "Even though I am an offender, and even though I am only very pale reflection of a true devotee, still I may be eligible to get a small amount of Your mercy."

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest, "If I have desire and mercy, then I must have a human body, for these qualities are naturally present only in human bodies." To this Brahmā replies with the phrase "na tu bhūtamayasya", which means, Your body is not material, it is spiritual." In Brahma-saṁhitā (5.32) it is said:



aṅgāni yasya sakalendriya-vṛttimānti

"Each of Lord Kṛṣṇa's limbs possesses in Himself the full-fledged functions of all organs."\*\*

This means that each limb and sense of Lord Govinda's transcendental body can perform the function of any other limb or sense. However, just as Lord Kṛṣṇa manifests His different incarnations only a certain times, when He deems it appropriate, so Lord Kṛṣṇa manifests this extraordinary power of His various limbs and senses only a certain times, when He deems it appropriate. Generally He does not manifest it. Generally He sees with His eyes, hears with His ears, and thinks with His mind. Generally He does not see with His hands, or employ the extraordinary interchangeable powers of His other limbs and senses.

Or, the words "deva vaupṣaḥ" may be considered one word, "deva-vapuṣaḥ", which then means "the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead". In this interpretation the word "mad-anugrahasya" (You have been merciful to me) may mean, "You are merciful to me because today You have shown me Your Vāsudeva form", or it may mean "You showed Your mercy to me by personally appearing before me and teaching me the four important verses (catuḥ-ślokī) of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam".

The word "svecchāmayasya" means "Your desires are all at once fulfilled. O Lord, in this way You different from us, the conditioned souls who have external bodies made of material elements."

Then Brahmā says, "Even though I am Brahmā, I cannot understand the glory of Your form, which is not material. Even though I am the teacher of the self-manifested Vedas and the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, which is the final fruit of all the Vedas, still I cannot understand the glory of Your transcendental form. How, then, can I understand You directly when You appear in Your original form as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a form that is the origin of all Your incarnations, a form that appears like the form of a human being?

"What is this original form like? In this original form You enjoy happy pastimes of stealing yogurt, drinking the breast-milk of the gopī Yaśodā, herding the calves, and playing like a child. These pastimes are extraordinarily glorious, even in comparison to Your other incarnations. In these pastimes You experience great transcendental bliss."

### Text 3

jñāne prayāsam udapasya namanta eva  
jīvanti san-mukharitaṁ bhavadīya-vārtām  
sthāne sthitaḥ śruti-gataṁ tanu-vān-manobhir  
ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais trilokyam

jñāne-in gaining knowledge; prayāsam-unnecessary endeavor; udapasya-setting

far aside; namanta-completely surrendering; eva-certainly; jīvanti-live; san-mukharitam-declared by great realized devotees; bhavadīya-vārtām-discussions about You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead; sthāne sthitaḥ-situated in their own positions; śruti-gatam-received aurally; tanu-vān-manobhiḥ-by the body, words, and mind; ye-those who; prāyaśaḥ-almost always; ajita-O my unconquerable Lord (beyond perception and unlimited;y independent; jitaḥ-conquered; api-indeed; asi-You are; taiḥ-by such pure devotees; trilokyam-within the three worlds.

My dear Lord, those devotees who have thrown away the impersonal conception of the Absolute Truth and have therefore abandoned discussing empiric philosophical truths should hear from self-realized devotees about Your holy name, form, pastimes, and qualities. They should completely follow the principles of devotional service and remain free from illicit sex, gambling, intoxication, and animal slaughter. Surrendering themselves fully with body, words, and mind, they can live in any āśrama or social status. Indeed, You are conquered by such persons, although You are always unconquerable."\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

How will the ignorant conditioned souls escape the material world of birth and death? This verse is spoken to answer that question. Here the word "udapasya" means "not done, even slightly". This verse means, "Remaining in their own positions, the people should always hear from self-realized devotees about You. They should surrender to You and worship You with body, mind, and words. Even if they do nothing but this, they will conquer You, who cannot be conquered by anyone else in the three worlds. Since this is so, what is the use of struggling to attain impersonal realization?"

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

"O Lord, if a person somehow or other worships or serves You, You allow Yourself to come under their control." That is the gist of this verse. The word "udapasya" means, "when one completely (ud) abandons (apasya) all efforts to understand You".

"Tanu-vān-manobhir namantaḥ" means, "worshiping and serving You with body, mind, and words." This means respectfully folding one's hands as one hears about Lord Kṛṣṇa's glories, being very happy to speak Lord Kṛṣṇa's glories, and employing one's mind to always remember Lord Kṛṣṇa's glories.

"San-mukharitam" means, "even though, so they may always speak the truth, so their senses may not become agitated, and for a host of other reasons, saintly persons like to remain silent, they nevertheless become very eager to talk about Your glories." The rest of this verse is already explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

The words "vārtām jīvanti" mean, "hearing from the saintly devotees, they make these descriptions of You their very life and soul".

"Ajita" means, "O Lord who cannot be attained by the ordinary endeavors of the body, mind, and words". The Lord cannot be attained in this way because: 1.

He is not within the material senses' range of perception, and 2. He appears only when He Himself wishes to appear.

"Jito 'si" means, "You become submissive". This means, "when the devotees serve You in different ways, You personally appear before them." Or, it means, "You are then directly attained by the body, mind, and words". This means, "You are attained by the body when the devotee touches Your lotus feet with His hands and serves You in various ways with his various limbs, You come when Your devotee calls Your names, and You show Yourself to Your devotee when the devotee uses his mind to meditate on You."

Or, since the word "tanu-vān-manobhiḥ" is in the instrumental case, the passage could be interpreted to mean, "along with Your body, mind, and words". This means, "O Lord, Your body, mind, and words are also conquered by the devotee. Your body is conquered when You always stay by Your devotee's side, Your words are conquered when You speak many words glorifying Your devotee, and Your mind is conquered when You always think of Your devotee." In this alternate interpretation the rest of the verse is understood as before.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here someone may protest: In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (3.8) it is said:

tam eva viditvāti-mṛtyum eti

"By understanding the Supreme one is able to escape the world of repeated birth and death."

If this is so, then how will the ignorant people in general, who have no knowledge of the Supreme, escape this world of birth and death? This verse is spoken to answer this protest.

Here the word "udapasya" means, "not doing, even slightly", and "san-mukharitam" means, "even though the saintly devotees are inclined to remain silent, Your sweetness, O Lord, impels them to eagerly talk about You." Thus the devotees need not wander from one pilgrimage place to another. They may stay in one place where there are devotees, hear the glories of the Lord from the other devotees, and serve (namantaḥ) the Lord with body, mind, and words.

With his body the devotee may employ his hands to touch the Lord or his head to touch the ground when offering obeisances to the Lord. He may use his words to chant the glories of the Lord, or he may use his words to glory the devotees. For example, he may say, "I offer my respectful obeisances to the Vaiṣṇavas, who relish hearing about the Supreme Personality of Godhead". With his mind and intelligence he may always meditate on what he has heard of the descriptions of the Lord. In this way worshipping the Lord becomes the very life and soul of the devotee.

"Ajita jito 'pi" means, "thus even though the devotee may not do any other thing, by doing these things, he conquers You, O Lord, who cannot be conquered in any other way. However, they who have attained impersonal liberation by

cultivating impersonal knowledge cannot bring You under their control. On the other hand they who relish hearing about You not only bring You under their control, but they also easily cross beyond the material world of repeated births and deaths. There is nothing at all surprising in this. Thus by hearing about You, one attains real knowledge of You, and in this way one is able to escape the material world of repeated birth and death." That is the true meaning of these words of the Śruti-śāstra:

tena saṁsāram api taranti

"By understanding the truth of the Supreme, they cross beyond this world of repeated birth and death."

#### Text 4

śreyaḥ-sṛtiṁ bhaktim udasya te vibhoḥ  
kliśyanti ye kevala-bodha-labdhave  
teṣāṁ asau kleśala eva śiṣyate  
nānyad yathā sthūla-tuṣāvagāhatinām

śreyaḥ-sṛtiṁ-the auspicious path of liberation; bhaktim-devotional service; udasya-giving up; te-of You; vibhoḥ-O my Lord; kliśyanti-accept increased difficulties; ye-all those persons; kevala-only; bodha-labdhave-for obtaining knowledge; teṣāṁ-for them; asau-that; kleśala-trouble; eva-only; śiṣyate-remains; na-not; anyat-anything else; yathā-as much as; sthūla-bulky; tuṣa-husks of rice; avagāhatinām-of those beating.

My dear Lord, devotional service unto You is the only auspicious path. If one gives it up simply for speculative knowledge or the understanding that these living beings are spirit souls and the material world is false, he undergoes a great deal of trouble. He only gains troublesome and inauspicious activities. His endeavors are like beating a husk that is already devoid of rice. One's labor becomes fruitless.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Without engaging in devotional service, no one can attain perfect knowledge. That is the gist of this verse. "Śreyaḥ" means "liberation and good fortune", and "sṛtiṁ" means "path". Liberation and good fortune are like two swiftly moving streams fed by a lake. "Te" means "of You", and "bhaktim udasya" means, "rejecting devotional service, which is the path to true auspiciousness". For such persons only trouble (kleśalaḥ) remains (śiṣyate).

Here is the meaning: One who rejects a small amount of actual rice and instead beats a large quantity of empty husks will not attain any result for his efforts. In the same way, they who think devotional service unimportant and strive instead

for impersonal realization also do not attain any tangible result for their efforts.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

In this way it is said that if a person somehow or other engages in some devotional service, he will attain the greatest benefit. How, then, can one properly describe the glories of pure devotional service? They who reject devotional service and instead struggle to attain impersonal realization become very unhappy. That is the only result of all their efforts. That is the gist of this verse.

The path of devotional service brings all auspicious things, including true spiritual knowledge. They who reject devotional service and contemptuously throw it far away commit a great offense.

The phrase "kliśyanti ye kevala-bodha-labdhave" may mean, "such persons suffer greatly as they perform severe austerities to attain pure (kevala) spiritual knowledge". Or, it may mean, "they struggle to attain spiritual knowledge completely untouched (kevala) by devotional service". The word "eva" (indeed) here hints that other results, such as attainment of Svargaloka or purification of the heart are not being considered here.

Here someone may protest: Is it not true that by repeated struggles on the path of yoga one does indeed attain fame and wealth as unavoidable by-products of his efforts? To this protest the reply is given: One may attain them, but he will not attain anything else.

Here an example is given. As a fool will beat empty husks of rice, to the amusement of intelligent onlookers, and attain as his only results: 1. the destruction of a great pile of empty husks, and 2. a great soreness in his hands and other limbs, so in the same way the impersonalists labor to attain spiritual knowledge.

Here the word "vibho" means "O master". This word indicates a person who must be worshiped. They who refuse to worship Him will fall into hell. That is the meaning implied here. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.3) it is said:

ya eṣaṁ puruṣaṁ sākṣād  
ātma-prabhavam īśvaram  
na bhajanty avajānanti  
sthānād bhraṣṭāḥ patanty adhaḥ

"Anyone who does not render service and neglects his duty to the Primeval Lord, who is the source of all living entities, will certainly fall down from his constitutional position."\*

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

By serving the Lord with even only one of the different processes of devotional service that begin with hearing and chanting His glories, one attains all perfection. This is described in the following words of the Nṛsimha Purāṇa:

patreṣu puṣpeṣu phaleṣu toyeṣv  
akṛīta-labhyeṣu vadaiva satsu  
bhaktyā su-labhye puruṣe purāṇe  
muktyai kim arthaṁ kriyate prayatnaḥ

"Please tell me: If the ancient Supreme Personality of Godhead is easily attained by devotedly offering Him pleasant flowers, leaves, fruit, and water, which are all easily available for free without having to spend any money, then why should one undergo a great struggle to attain impersonal liberation?"

In this verse it is said that they who reject devotional service and instead undergo a great struggle to attain spiritual knowledge attain misery as their only result. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has explained:

"`Śreyah` means `liberation and good fortune`, and `sṛtim` means `path`. Liberation and good fortune are like two swiftly moving streams fed by a lake. `Te` means `of You`, and `bhaktim udasya` means, `rejecting devotional service`."

The phrase "śreyah-sṛtim bhaktim udasya" means, "rejecting devotional service, which gives all the auspicious results provided by speculative knowledge, fruitive work, or any other means". The impersonal ideas (bodhaḥ) thus attained bring (la) only sufferings (kleśa). Only sufferings remain (śiṣyate) for such a person.

Here an example is given with the word "sthūla-tuṣāvagāhatinām", which means, "After rejecting a small quantity of actual rice, a person may with great effort gather a great mountain of empty rice-husks and with great effort try to thresh rice from it. Such a person will attain suffering as the only result of his labor. His hands and other limbs will become sore. That is the only result he will obtain."

## Text 5

pureha bhūman bahavo 'pi yoginas  
tvad-arpitehā nija-karma-labdhayā  
vibudhya bhaktyaiva kathopanītayā  
prapedire 'ñjo 'cyuta te gatim parām

purā-previously; iha-in this world; bhūman-O Lord; bahavaḥ-many; api-also; yoginaḥ-yogis; tvat-to You; arpita-offered; iha-endeavors; nija-own; karma-work; labdhayā-attained; vibudhya-understanding; bhaktyā-by devotional service; eva-indeed; kathā-topics; upanītayā-cultivated; prapedire-attained; añjaḥ-easily; 'cyuta-O infallible Lord; te-they; gatim-destination; parām-supreme.

My dear Lord, there are many instances in the history of human society where a

person, after failing to achieve the transcendental platform, engaged himself in devotional service with his body, mind, and words and thus attained the highest perfectional state of entering into Your abode. The processes of understanding You by speculation or mystic meditation are all useless without devotional service. One should therefore engage himself in Your devotional service even in his worldly activities, and one should always keep himself near You by the process of hearing and chanting Your transcendental glories. Simply by being attached to hearing and chanting Your glories, one can attain the highest perfectional stage of entering into Your kingdom. If a person, therefore, always keeps in touch with You by hearing and chanting Your glories and offers the results of his work for Your satisfaction only, he very easily and happily attains entrance into Your supreme abode. You are realizable by persons who have cleansed their hearts of all contamination. This cleansing of the heart is made possible by chanting and hearing the glories of Your Lordship.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Transcendental knowledge is attained only by devotional service. It is not otherwise, and that is proved by the activities of the saintly persons described in this verse.

"Bhūman" means, "O all-pervading one", and "iha" means "in this world". Brahmā said, "Many yogīs, unable to attain transcendental knowledge by engaging in various kinds of yoga, instead offered even their material activities unto You." The second line of this verse may also be considered not two but one large compound word.

Brahmā continued, "By hearing and chanting Your glories, they were able to approach You, and by engaging in devotional service they were able to understand You. Thus they easily attained Your supreme abode."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The path to auspiciousness described in the previous verse is not merely a matter of words. It is a reality directly seen by many persons in the past. That is described in this verse.

"Bhūman" here means, "O Lord whose glories have no end". This verse describes engagement in devotional service. Here "yoginaḥ api" mean "even though they were already liberated souls", "te" means "of You", and "kathopanītayā" means "by hearing and chanting Your glories". The spiritual practice these persons adopted is described in the word "tvad-arpitehāḥ".

Here someone may protest: Is it not true that devotional service, which brings one to the supreme destination, is very rare and difficult to attain? This protest is answered by the word "kathopanītayā". This word may mean "made perfect by descriptions of Your pastimes", or it may also mean, "inspired by the description of Your glories".

"Parām" means, "the highest". "Acyuta" means, "O Lord, by devotional service to You one attains the highest perfection, from which one never again falls down". Or, this passage may also mean, "By engaging in devotional service the yogīs attain Your association. Thus they attain the supreme destination."

The words "parām gatim" may refer either to the spiritual world of Vaikuṅṭha, or to pure love of God. Understanding that this is the supreme goal, the yogīs then attain it. The rest of the verse is the same as in the previous explanation.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

In the previous two verses positive and negative arguments were offered to prove that devotional service is the true way to attain the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In this verse the example of great saintly persons is presented as evidence to further prove this truth.

"Bhūman" means "O Lord", "iha" means, "in this material universe", "yoginaḥ" means "persons engaged in bhakti-yoga", "tvad-arpitehāḥ" means, "who offered their activities to You and engaged all the activities of their senses in Your devotional service".

"Nija-karma" means, "having faith in bhakti-yoga alone, they turned from the activities of varṇāśrama-dharma and engaged instead in hearing and chanting Your glories". "Labdhayā" means "attained by performing these activities of hearing and chanting", "kathā" means, "hearing, chanting, and remembering Your glories", "upa" means "greatly", nītayā" means "attained", "bhaktyā" means "devotion characterized by pure love (prema)", and "vibudhya" means "directly seeing Your qualities, pastimes, and other features". "Parām gatim" means "the status of being loving (prema-vān) personal associates of the Lord". That status they attain.

Or, as the previous verse explained that impersonal knowledge (kevala-bodha) is ultimately fruitless, so this verse explains that the yoga practiced by the impersonalists is also fruitless. This verse gives the activities of saintly persons in the past as evidence to prove this truth.

Here Brahmā says, "After a long time, the yogīs understand that their yoga activities are all fruitless, and then they offer their activities to You. In these two ways they attain devotional service mixed with knowledge (jñāna-miśra). Thus they are able to understand You."

## Text 6

tathāpi bhūman mahimāguṇasya te  
vibodhhum arhaty amalāntarātmabhiḥ  
avikriyāt svānubhavād arūpato  
hy ananya-bodhyātmatayā na cānyathā

tathāpi-nevertheless; bhūman-O Lord; mahima-glory; agūṇasya-qualities without limit; te-of You; vibodhhum-to understand; arhati-is able; amalāntarātmabhiḥ-by they who are pure in heart; avikriyāt-because of not being subject to material transformations; svānubhavāt-because of being perceived by His own wish; arūpataḥ-because His form is not material; hi-indeed; ananya-bodhyātmatayā-because He is not perceived in any other way; na-not; ca-and; anyathā-otherwise.



Nevertheless, O Lord whose glories are limitless, they who are pure in heart and who control their senses are able to see something of Your glories. They can see Your glories because You personally appear in Your devotee's pure heart, because You give them spiritual senses with which to see You, and because You are manifested by Your own wish. It is not otherwise.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Thus far it has been said that it is difficult to attain knowledge of either the impersonal qualityless aspect of the Supreme, or His personal form filled with transcendental qualities. In the previous verse Brahmā said, "O Lord You can be attained only by devotional service, which begins with hearing and chanting Your glories. There is no other way." Now, this verse declares that although it is said that it is very difficult to understand either of these features of the Supreme, nevertheless the qualityless Brahman can be understood to a certain extent. However, the personal form of the Lord cannot be understood at all, for it has limitless inconceivable qualities, This is confirmed in the next verse (text 7).

Here Brahmā says, "O Lord, Your glories are limitless. Only the who are pure in heart and who control their senses are able to see something of Your glories." Or, the words "vibodhum arhati" may also be interpreted to mean, "are able to know something of Your glories". Or, these words may mean, "only certain persons are able to know something of Your glories".

How is it possible to know something of Your glories? The answer is given in the word "svānubhavāt", which means, "You personally appear in the devotee's heart".

Here someone may protest: But is it not so that the heart and mind can only perceive material things, which are by nature always changing? This protest is answered here by the word "avikriyāt", which means "by a heart purified of the limitations of ever-changing material perception, a heart thus able to perceive the Supreme."

Here someone may again protest: Is it not so that because something is directly perceived within the heart it must be, by definition, not the Supreme? This objection is answered here by the word "arūpataḥ". "Rūpa" here means "sense-object". Therefore "arūpataḥ" means "because the material senses are not here the tools of perception, the Supreme may be thus seen in the heart". Therefore there is no error in this statement that the Supreme is seen in the heart.

By what means is the Lord thus manifested? The answer is given in the word "ananya-bodhya", which means "He is manifested by His own wish". There is no other way (na cānyathā). The Lord decides, "So be it", and then He is suddenly visible to someone.

Brahmā may ask, "Does Mother Lakṣmī, who is Your internal potency, and whose thoughts and senses are completely pure, have the power by herself to understand Your glories?" The answer is given: No. She is not able. How does one become able? The answer is given in the word "svānubhavāt", which means, "You personally appear, by Your own wish, in the devotee's heart".

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here it may be asked: "O Lord, O supreme object of worship, what person has the power to describe the glories of You and devotional service to You? O Lord filled with transcendental qualities, we do not have the power to truthfully understand the glories of even one of Your many qualities." Or it may be said, "the glories of devotional service being what they are, it is not possible to know all the glories of You, who are a great ocean of limitless transcendental qualities. However, somehow or other, it may be possible for some persons to understand something of some of Your qualities." That is explained in this verse, which begins with the word "tathāpi".

"Te guṇāḥ" means "Your qualities, such as compassion", and "mahimā" means "glory". "Mahimā" may be divided into "mahi" and "mā". In that case "mā" means "the glory of Goddess Lakṣmī." Then the phrase means, "some person may be able to know something of Her glory". Or, the word "mā" may mean "Śrī Rādhā, the supreme goddess of fortune". That Śrī Rādhā is the supreme goddess of fortune is always true in all Her eternal pastimes, even when She enjoys pastimes as a little girl. Or, the phrase "mahi viboddhum arhati" may mean, "in this way one is able to understand His glory".

The method one may adopt to understand the Lord's glory is described in the word "svānubhavāt", which means "by direct perception". By the special mercy of the supremely merciful Lord one may attain the great good fortune of seeing Him directly. What is that mercy of the Lord like? It is "nirvikāra", which means "perfect and complete". What is the direct perception of the Lord like? That is described in the word "ananya-bodhātmatayā", which means "only by the Lord's wish is one able to see the form of the Lord". "Arūpataḥ" means "this is so because He is inconceivable". It is not otherwise. Without directly seeing the Lord it is not possible to understand the true extent of His glories. Thus the qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are supremely great and spiritual.

Or, it may be asked: "When will one attain the good fortune to see the Lord directly?" The answer is given: The Lord reveals Himself by His own wish. Therefore it cannot be predicted when one will have His audience. No one can say.

Or, it may be said, "No one is able to understand, even slightly, the glories of the Lord who has limitless qualities." Then someone may ask, "Since her heart is pure (avikriyāt) and since the Lord appears before someone by His own wish (svānubhavāt), does even Mother Lakṣmī not have the power to understand the Lord's glories?" Here the word "na" (not), spoken in a plaintive voice filled with emotion, is actually meant to imply "yes" in this rhetorical question.

The reason for this is given in the word "bhūman", which is in the vocative case, and which means, "O Lord whose glories are endless". The word "ananya-bodhātmatayā" here shows that in the word "arūpataḥ" the letter "a" means "of Lord Viṣṇu", and therefore that whole word means "from the form of Lord Viṣṇu". This is because in the Lord's case there is no different between Him, the possessor of qualities, and the qualities He possesses. He is the same as His qualities. It is not otherwise. That is not a lie. Śrīla Yāmunācārya (Śrī Stotra-ratna, verse 16) explains:

upary upary abja-bhuvo 'pi puruṣān

"O Lord, desiring to measure one of Your transcendental qualities, the words of the Vedas again and again multiply by a hundred the qualities of the demigod Brahmā. Although eternally engaged in this way, they cannot cross beyond even one of Your qualities."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Although the Lord's transcendental form can be seen directly only by a person who engages in unalloyed loving devotional service (prema-bhakti), nevertheless the Lord's impersonal Brahman feature can be seen even by a person who only attains impersonal knowledge or impersonal knowledge mixed with devotional service. The Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself explains:

jñānam ca mayi sannyaset

"To attain Me one should abandon all ideas that I am impersonal."

Therefore this verse of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam describes the situation after one has already abandoned the idea of impersonalism. Therefore this verse describes pure devotional service.

This verse begins with the word "tathāpi", which means "nevertheless", and which is connected to the clause "Even though one has not yet attained pure devotional service". This clause should be understood, even though it is not expressed, to precede this verse.

In the word "bhūman", "bhū" means "manifestation", and therefore one whose manifestation is charming is "bhūman". "Aguṇasya" means "without material qualities", and "mahimā" means "Your glories". The Lord Himself says:

madiyam mahimānam ca  
para-brahmeti-śabditam  
vetsyasy anugṛhītam me  
sampraśnair vivṛtam hr̥di

"In answer to your questions I will reveal in your heart My transcendental glory, which is called the Supreme Brahman."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.9.10), Dhruva Mahārāja says:

sā brahmaṇi sva-mahimany api nātha

"My Lord, the transcendental bliss derived from meditating upon Your lotus feet of 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."\*

In this passage the word "mahimā" refers to Brahman. Here it is said the Supreme is known of its own accord. This is the same as saying "the food cooks" or "the ax chops down the tree". Actually, as there is another cause behind the food or the ax, so there is another cause that enables one to understand the Supreme. What is that cause? The answer is given in the words "amalāntarātmabhiḥ" (by they who are pure in heart) and svānubhavāt" (because the Lord is manifested by His own wish).

Here someone may protest: The activities of the mind are by nature subject to the changes inherent in material nature. The Supreme, however, is always aloof from all such material changes. How, then, is it possible for the material mind to directly perceive the spiritual Supreme ?

The answer is given in the word "avikriyāt", which means "without material transformations". Material transformations are a product of the illusory potency, māyā. When māyā no longer acts, then the subtle material body of mind, intelligence and false ego is no longer manifested. That is the situation when a person perceives the Supreme.

Here someone may again protest: Still, the Supreme cannot be perceived by the senses.

To this question the answer is given in the word "arūpataḥ". "Rūpa" here means "what is seen by the material senses", and "a-rūpa" then means "what cannot be seen by the material senses". Therefore "arūpataḥ" means "because the Supreme cannot be seen by the material senses". However, there is no fault in saying that the form of the Supreme may be experienced by tools other than the material senses.

Here someone may ask: What is this other way of seeing the Supreme?

To this question the answer is given in the word "ananya-bodhātmatayā", which means "because the Supreme cannot be understood in any other way". This means that the Supreme is not a material sense-object, such as sound or touch. The Supreme therefore cannot be perceived as one perceives material sense objects. However, the form of the Supreme can be perceived on His own terms, spiritually, and not as an object of perception for material senses.

## Text 7

guṇātmanas te 'pi guṇān vimātuḥ  
hitāvatīrṇasya ka īsire 'sya  
kālena yair vā vimitaḥ su-kalpair  
bhū-paṁśavaḥ khe mihikā dyu-bhāsaḥ

guṇātmanaḥ-the overseer of the three qualities; te-of You; api-certainly; guṇān-the qualities; vimātuḥ-to count; hitāvatīrṇasya-who have descended for the benefit of all living entities; ke-who?; īsire-were able; asya-of the universe; kālena-in due course of time; yaiḥ-by whom; vā-or; vimitaḥ-counted; su-kalpaiḥ-by great

scientists; bhū-paṁśavaḥ-the atoms of the universe; khe-in the sky; mihikāḥ-particles of snow; dyu-bhāsaḥ-the illuminating stars and planets.

In time, great scientists may be able to count all the atoms of the universe, all the stars and planets in the sky, and all the particles of snow, but who among them can count the unlimited transcendental qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead? He descends on the surface of the globe for the benefit of all living entities.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

This verse means, "O master of all qualities, who is able to count all of Your qualities?" Since this is impossible, it is also impossible to discuss Your qualities in the great detail they deserve.

What are You like? The answer is given here: "You descend on the surface of the globe to benefit all living entities by revealing Your transcendental qualities to them."

Here someone may protest: What task is impossible for the wise when they have enough time to labor at it? If the great philosophers only had enough time for research, they could certainly count all the transcendental qualities of the Supreme Lord.

That protest is answered in this verse by the passage beginning with the word "kālena". The word "vā" (or) is used here to begin the refutation of the protester's argument. That refutation is: "In time, great scientists may be able to count all the atoms of the universe, all the stars and planets in the sky, and all the particles of snow, but who among them can count the unlimited transcendental qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead?\*"

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

This verse means, "O Lord who have descended to this world, no one can understand all the glories of Your transcendental qualities." Here Brahmā hints, "Because I was unaware of them, it seems like Your transcendental qualities were dormant, asleep, and now they are manifest before me. Now it is like they are awake. O Lord, now it is clearly determined that You have many transcendental qualities.

"Since that is Your nature, there arises the possibility of counting the number of them. However, the question may be raised: Who has the power to count all of Your glorious qualities? The answer to this question must certainly be: No one has that power. The reason for that is given in the word 'hitāvatīrṇasya' (You descend on the surface of the globe for the benefit of all living entities).

Here is the meaning: The Lord manifests specific qualities to benefit the conditioned souls in specific ways. Now, because the individual spirit souls are limitless in number, and because the individual natures they possess are also limitless in number, therefore the personal qualities the Supreme Lord manifests to benefit them must also be limitless in number. It is not possible to count the number of something that is limitless, so therefore no one has the power to count

all the glories and qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The earth-atoms and other particles here are all progressively more and more tiny. Therefore they are given as examples of very numerous things that seem to be limitless in number.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

If they do not engage in loving devotional service (prema-bhakti), even wise philosophers who have crossed beyond the ocean of material illusion cannot understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead's form, which is filled with auspicious transcendental qualities. Here Brahmā may say, "If I and the people who live in my universe cannot understand You even when we see You, and if no one is thus able to count all Your charming qualities, then how can it be said that anyone can even perceive all the many varieties of Your transcendental sweetness? Your personal qualities are both eternal and transcendental. They are not material." In the Brahma-tarka it is said:

guṇaiḥ svarūpa-bhūtais tu  
guṇy asau harir īśvaraḥ

"Lord Hari, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, possesses many transcendental qualities."

In this verse of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam the word "api" means "but". Therefore Brahmā says, "But Your qualities are limitless. Therefore who has the power to count them all?" The answer is, of course, that no one has that power. It may be noted that the periphrastic perfect is not used here for the verb "īś". That is the poetic license of the saintly author of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

The word "hitāvātīrṇasya" means "who descended to this world to cure the conditioned souls' disease of repeated birth and death". The word "vā" is used to begin the refutation of the opposing argument.

Here Brahmā says, "Sañkaraṣaṇa Muni and other wise philosophers may be able to count all the atoms of the universe. Even greater than that, they may be able to count all the stars and planets in the sky. Even greater than that, they may be able to count all the particles of snow. Still, Sañkaraṣaṇa Muni and the other great philosophers cannot find the limit of Your transcendental qualities.

Or, the word "guṇātmanaḥ" may be interpreted to mean "of the material universe, which is made of the three modes of matter". Interpreted in this way, the verse means, "O Lord, no one is able to count all the qualities of You, who have descended to protect this world made of the three modes of nature. How, then, can anyone count Your very wonderful transcendental pastimes, such as Your stealing of the gopīs' yogurt?"

**Text 8**

tat te 'nukampām su-samīkṣamāṇo  
bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtaṁ vipākam  
hṛd-vāg-vapurbbhir vidadhan namas te  
jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk

tat-therefore; te-Your; anukampām-compassion; su-samīkṣamāṇaḥ-hoping for;  
bhuñjānaḥ-enduring; eva-certainly; ātma-kṛtaṁ-done by himself; vipākam-fruitive  
results; hṛt-with the heart; vāk-words; vapurbhiḥ-and body; vidadhan-offering;  
namaḥ-obeisances; te-unto You; jīveta-may live; yaḥ-anyone who; mukti-pade-in  
liberation; sa-he; dāya-bhāk-a bona-fide candidate.

One who seeks Your compassion and thus tolerates all kinds of adverse conditions due to the karma of his past deeds, who engages always in Your devotional service with his mind, words, and body, and who always offers obeisances unto You is certainly a bona-fide candidate for becoming liberated.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

The gist of this verse is: One should engage in devotional service. The word "su-samīkṣamāṇaḥ" means, "thinking, 'When will the Lord be merciful to me?'"

This means that a person who, without becoming attached, patiently accepts what destiny gives him because of his past karma, and who does not try to counteract his past karma by performing severe austerities or other like deeds, and who lives his life in that way, gains liberation as his proper inheritance. As the only way to gain an inheritance is to patiently live out one's life, so the only way to gain the inheritance of liberation is to patiently live out one's life as a devotee of the Lord.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The word "su-samīkṣamāṇaḥ" here means "fully expecting". The word "eva" (certainly) should be carried again into the verse where appropriate.

One must experience the results of past karma. That is unavoidable. Therefore one should not be concerned about the happiness and distress that comes in this way.

"Vipākam" means "the results of various past deeds". The phrase "hṛd-vāg-vapurbbhir vidadhan namaḥ" means that one should be attached to devotional activities and to nothing else.

"Mukti-padam" means either "liberation", or "the city of Lord Śiva", or "the abode of Vaikuṅṭha", or "the lotus feet of the Lord", or if the letter "a" is understood to precede (yo 'mukti) the word "mukti", it may mean "because they are plunged in the nectar ocean of the Supreme Lord's glories, the devotees consider impersonal liberation to be like a tiny drop from the salt-water ocean".

"Pade" means either "the lotus feet", or "love for the Lord's lotus feet". "Dāya" means "gift" and "bhāk" means "one who gives". The word "hṛd-vāg-vapurbbhiḥ" (with mind, words, and body) is related to this act of giving. Simply by desiring in his mind (hṛd) such a person gives liberation to others. By his words (vāg), and

also by the touch of his body (vapuḥ), and in other ways also, he again gives liberation.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

"O Lord, a person who renounces all other spiritual practices and engages in devotional service, attains You." That is the gist of this verse. Someone may ask, "What is a devotee's outlook on life? How does he act?" To answer these questions, Brahmā speaks this verse.

The phrase "ātma-kṛtaṁ vipākam" is explained in these words of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.9):

dharmasya hy apavargasya  
nārtho 'rthāyopakalpate

"All occupational engagements are certainly meant for ultimate liberation. They should never be performed for material gain."\*

Thus a devotee knows that present happiness has past devotional activities as its cause and present suffering has past offenses as its cause. Thus a devotee peacefully endures all happiness and suffering and patiently waits for the Lord's mercy. He knows that his present happiness and suffering is really all the Lord's mercy on him.

A devotee thinks, "As a father sometimes mercifully gives a cup of milk to his small son, at other times mercifully gives him bitter nimba medicine, at other times embraces and kisses him, and at other times spanks him, in the same way the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is like my father knows what is in truth good and bad for me, who am like His son. I do not know it myself. O Lord, I have no devotion for You. That is why time and karma have their power over me. It is because You are merciful to me that I sometimes enjoy and sometimes suffer. In truth the Supreme Lord is serving me in this way." Mahārāja Pṛthu explains (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.20.31):

yathā cared bāla-hitāṁ pitā svayāṁ  
tathā tvam evārhasi naḥ samīhitum

"Therefore, please do not ask me to take some material benefits from You, but as a father, not waiting for the son's demand, does everything for the benefit of the son, please bestow upon me whatever You think best for me."\*

A person who every day prays like Pṛthu Mahārāja, and who every day offers obeisances with His body, mind, and words, and who lives out his life patiently tolerating the sufferings that naturally come his way, inherits "mukti-pada", which means first "service to the Supreme Lord's feet" and second, "liberation from the



world of repeated births and deaths". As a son's qualification to receive his inheritance is simply that he has patiently lived out his life, in the same way a devotee's qualification to receive his inheritance of "mukti-pada" is simply that he patiently lived out his life as he followed the path of devotional service. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.87.17) it is said:

ḍṛtaya iva śvasanty asu-bhṛto te 'nuvidhāḥ

"O Lord, they who do not engage in Your devotional service breathe in vain. Their breathing is like breathing of a bellows."

### Text 9

paśyeśa me 'nāryam ananta ādye  
parātmani tvayy api māyi-māyini  
māyānvitatyekṣitum ātma-vaibhavam  
hy aham kiyān aiccham ivārcir agnau

paśya-see; īśa-O Lord; me-of me; anāryam-unworthiness; ananta-O unlimited; ādye-the original; parātmani-the Supreme Personality of Godhead; tvayi-You; api-also; māyi-of the masters of illusion; māyini-the master of illusion; māyām-illusory power; vitatya-expanding; īkṣitum--to see; ātma-Your; vaibhavam-power; hi-indeed; aham-I; kiyān--how much; aiccham-desired; iva-like; arcir-a spark; agnau-in the fire.

O Lord, see my wickedness. When I employed my mystic powers on You, who are my father, who are the Supersoul, and who bewilder all other masters of mystic power, I only desired to see Your own power and glory. What am I in comparison to You? I am like a spark compared to a fire.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

After offering the preceding prayers to the Lord, in this verse Brahmā begs forgiveness for his offense. He says, "O Lord, see my wickedness. When I employed my mystic powers on You, who bewilder all other masters of mystic power, I only desired to see Your own power and glory. What am I in comparison to You? I am nothing. I am like a spark compared to a fire. I am nothing."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

In this verse Brahmā confesses his offense. Here "īśa" means "O master", "ananta" means "He whose glories are limitless", "ādye" means "to the father", and "parātmani" means "to the supreme spiritual master". Here the Lord is addressed

as spiritual master because, staying in Brahmā's heart, the Lord taught him all the Vedas.

"Māyi-māyini" means "he who bewilders the masters of mystic power", and "tvayy api" means "to Lord Kṛṣṇa". Here Brahmā says, "O Lord Kṛṣṇa, it was not proper of me to try to use my mystic powers to bewilder You. Still, Your mystic power was far greater than mine." "Atma-vaibhavam īkṣitum aiccham" means "I desired to see the glory of Your mystic powers". This is described in the following words of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.13.15):

draṣṭuṁ mañju mahitvam anyad api

"Brahmā wanted to see the power of Kṛṣṇa."\*

The word "hi" means either "indeed" or "alas!". In the passage beginning with the word "kiyān", Brahmā says, "Although, in one sense, I did not commit an offense, still I am very lowly and insignificant in comparison to You."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

With great contrition Brahmā says here, "I did not perform even the slightest devotional service. Instead I committed many offenses." Brahmā says, "O Lord, see my anāryam". "Arya" means "a person who is both good and wise", "āryam" means "the nature of such a person", and "anāryam" means "the opposite of that nature". Thus "anāryam" means "wickedness" and "folly".

Here Brahmā says, "O Lord, please either punish me or forgive me. If You do neither, then the wickedness and folly of persons like myself only increases."

What is Brahmā's wickedness and folly here? Brahmā explains, "Although, because You created me, You are my father (ādye), I offended You when You were enjoying lunch with Your friends. That was my wickedness. I offended a person whose powers and opulences have no limit (anante). That was my folly. I offended a person who bewilders the masters of mystic power. That was my supreme folly.

"Even though You are very great in this way, I still manifested my own mystic power because I wished to see Your own power and glory. What am I in relation to You? What is my size in relation to You. I am like a spark that, after taking birth from a great fire, then desires to burn that fire away."

## Text 10

ataḥ kṣamasvācyuta me rajo-bhuvo  
hy ajānatas tvat-pṛthag-īśa-māninaḥ  
ajāvālepāndha-tamo-'ndha-cakṣuṣā  
eṣo 'nukampyo mayi nāthavān iti

ataḥ-therefore; kṣamasva-please excuse; acyuta-O infallible one; me-me; rajo-bhuvaḥ-born from the mode of passion; hi-indeed; ajānataḥ-ignorant; tvat-from

You; pṛthag-different; īśa-a master; māninaḥ-proudly thinking; aja-of the unborn; avalepa-covering; andha-tamaḥ-by the darkness of ignorance; andha-blinded; cakṣuṣā-with eyes; eṣaḥ-he; anukampyaḥ-to be pitied; mayi-in me; nāthavān-having a master; iti-thus.

O infallible Lord, because I was born from the mode of passion, I was foolish, and because my eyes were blinded by the darkness of Your illusory potency, I foolishly thought I was a great controller independent of You. Please think of me in this way: "He is my servant. I should forgive him."

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

The words "rajo-bhuvaḥ", "ataḥ", and "ajānataḥ" mean "ignorant because of taking birth from the mode of passion". The words "ajāvalepāndha-tamo-'ndha-cakṣuṣā" mean "Intoxicated by thinking, 'I am Brahmā, the unborn creator of the universe', my eyes were blinded with ignorance." Because of this Brahmā thought "I am a powerful controller. I am independent."

"Eṣo 'nukampyo mayi nāthavān iti" means "Even though I may be a master in certain situations, aside from those situations You are my master. Therefore please think of me as Your servant. Thinking, 'This person should receive My mercy', please forgive me."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here Brahmā says, "Because You are very great and glorious and I am very tiny and insignificant, therefore please forgive me." In the series of adjectives beginning with "rajo-bhuvaḥ" Brahmā reveals how tiny and insignificant he is. The word "hi", which means "indeed", should be connected with all these adjectives.

The passage beginning with "acyuta" means "When a person somehow surrenders unto You, his offenses are all forgiven. Because of Your great glory such a surrendered soul never falls down under any circumstances." Here Brahmā says, "eṣo 'nukampyaḥ" (mercy should be given to me). Why is that? Brahmā declares, "nāthavān" (because I am Your servant).

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: Is it not true that You are Brahmā, the great controller of the universe? How have you become a servant?

To this protest Brahmā replies: "O Lord, You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the cause of all. I now approach You to take shelter of You alone." The remainder of this verse has already been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Or, the reason for speaking this series of adjectives is given in the word "ajāvalepāndha-tamo-'ndha-cakṣuṣā" which means "I was covered by the illusory potency māyā. Thus my eyes were blinded with ignorance."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Brahmā says, "O Lord, because I am wicked, I should be punished. Because I am foolish, I should be forgiven. Still, because You are merciful, You should forgive me." Brahmā says, "O infallible Lord, because You possess mercy

and a host of other good qualities, therefore You never fall down and You never make a mistake. On the other hand, I am very lowly and fallen. Therefore please forgive my offense." In the Nīti-śāstra it is said:

nīce dayādhike spardhā

"He who is most fallen should receive the most mercy."

Then Brahmā proceeds to describe his fallen condition. He says that he is "rajo-bhuvaḥ". "Rajaḥ" means either "the mode of passion" or "dust". Therefore "rajo-bhuvaḥ" means either "Your son, born from the mode of passion" or "Your son, born from dust". Then he says, "ajānatas tvat-prthag-īśa-māninaḥ", which means "because I was very foolish, I though myself a great controller independent of You".

Then Brahmā explains his proud misconception that he is a great controller. He says, "ajāvalepāndha-tamo-'ndha-cakṣuṣā", which means "Proud of being the great demigod Brahmā, my eyes were blinded with the darkness of ignorance". Here poetic license is used to avoid making "tamaḥ" the end of the compound word.

Then Brahmā says, "O Lord, when the moon of Your mercy rises it will drive away the darkness of my false pride. Only then will You become visible to me. There is no other way."

If Lord Kṛṣṇa protests: Why should I forgive you? Then Brahmā replies with the word, "anukampyaḥ", which means "I should be forgiven".

Then Brahmā says, "mayi nāthavān iti", which means "Please think of me as Your servant. Please think, `Brahmā thought he was independent, but actually he was always in the grip of My illusory potency. Actually he is always dependent on Me.' " The word "nāthavān" is defined in these words of Amara-kośa:

para-tantraḥ parādhīnaḥ  
paravān nāthavān api

"The words para-tantra, parādhīna, paravān, and nāthavān all mean `dependent'."

## Text 11

kvāhaṁ tamo-mahad-aham-khacarāgni-vār-bhū-  
samveṣṭitāṇḍa-ghata-sapta-vitaṣṭi-kāyaḥ  
kvedṛg-vidhāvigaṇitāṇḍa-parānu-caryā-  
vātādhva-roma-vivarasya ca te mahitvam

kva-where?; aham-I; tamaḥ-material nature; mahat-the total material energy;

aham-false ego; kha-ether; cara-air; agni-fire; vāḥ-water; bhū-earth; samveṣṭita-surrounded by; aṇḍa-ghaṭa-a pot-like universe; sapta-vitaṣṭi-seven vitastis; kāyaḥ-body; kva-where?; īḍṛk-such; vidha-like; avigaṇita-unlimited; aṇḍa-universes; parānu-caryā-moving like the atomic dust; vātādhva-air holes; roma-of the hair on the body; vivarasya-of the holes; ca-also; te-You; mahitvam-greatness.

Where am I, a small creature of seven spans the measure of my own hand? I am enclosed in the universe composed of material nature, the total material energy, false ego, ether, air, water, and earth. And what is Your glory? Unlimited universes pass through the pores of Your body just like particles of dust passing through the opening of a window.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: Is it not true that the entire material universe is your body and you are the controller of it? If Lord Kṛṣṇa protests in this way, then Brahmā speaks this verse in reply.

Here "tamaḥ" means "material nature", "mahat" means "the total material energy", "aham" means "false ego", "kha" means "ether", "cara" means "air", "agni" means "fire", "vār" means "water", and "bhū" means "earth".

Brahmā says, "The material universe is like a great pot made of these elements beginning with material nature. Within this universe-pot I am a creature whose body is the size of seven spans the measure of my own hand. Where am I? Where is Your greatness and glory?"

"What are You like? Unlimited universes pass through the pores of Your body just like particles of dust passing through the opening of a window. Therefore, because I am very lowly and insignificant, You should be merciful to me."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is, "Alas, because I am so fallen and insignificant, I am not worthy even to beg forgiveness from You, who are supremely great and glorious." The metaphor identifying the material universe as a pot shows both the greatness of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the insignificance of Brahmā. The word "mahitvam" means "glory". Brahmā says, "Because You are so great and glorious, You should show mercy to me spontaneously, of Your own wish."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest, "You are famous as the creator of the universe. Therefore it is not false pride when you think yourself a great controller. However, what great power and opulence do I possess? Please tell Me that." Brahmā speaks this verse in reply to that protest.

Here "tamaḥ" means "material nature", "mahat" means "the total material energy", "aham" means "false ego", "kha" means "ether", "cara" means "air", "agni" means "fire", "vār" means "water", and "bhū" means "earth".

Brahmā says, "The material universe is like a great pot made of these elements

beginning with material nature. Within this universe-pot, which extends from Pātāloka to Satyaloka, I am a creature whose body is the size of seven spans the measure of my own hand.

"Where am I? And what is Your glory? Unlimited universes pass through the pores of Your body just like particles of dust passing through the opening of a window. That is Your glory. You are the creator of the mahat-tattva. You are the first puruṣa-avatāra. My power and glory compares to Yours as a locust compares to Garuḍa. In others words, my glory is not to be taken seriously.

## Text 12

utkṣepaṇam garbha-gatasya pādayoḥ  
kim kalpate mātur adhokṣajāgase  
kim asti-nāsti-vyapadeśa-bhūṣitam  
tavāsti kukṣeḥ kiyad apy anantaḥ

utkṣepaṇam-kicking; garbha-gatasya-of a child in the womb; pādayoḥ-of the feet; kim-whether; kalpate-considers; mātuḥ-of the mother; adhokṣaja-to the Supreme Personality of Godhead; agase-for an offense; kim-whether?; asti-is; na-not; asti-is; vyapadeśa-explanations; bhūṣitam-decorated; tava-of You; asti-is; kukṣeḥ-of the belly; kiyat-how much; api-also; an-not; antaḥ-within.

O Lord Adhokṣaja, does a mother take offense when the child kicks within her womb? How much of existence, whether philosophers decorate it with the words it "It exists" or with the words "It does not exist", is outside Your abdomen?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Furthermore, is the kicking of a child in the womb an offense to the mother? "Asti-nāsti-vyapadeśa" means "being and non-being", or it may mean "subtle and gross", or it may mean "cause and effect". "Bhūṣitam" means "said". Or, "bhūṣitam" may mean situated (uṣitam) in the material world (bhū). Thus this phrase means "all that exists".

Then Brahmā says, "O Lord Adhokṣaja, does anything exist that is outside Your abdomen?" The meaning here is that there is not anything outside Lord Kṛṣṇa's abdomen. Then Brahmā says, "Since everything is within Your abdomen, I am also within Your abdomen, and since I am within Your abdomen, You are like my mother. Therefore You should forgive my offense."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

This gist of this verse is, "Furthermore, offenses committed by persons like myself have no effect on You. They do not count as offenses. The word "adhokṣaja" means "He who was metaphorically said to be born again under a cart". This pastime is described in Śrī Hari-varṣa (Śrī Viṣṇu-parva, 101.30-33), Śrī Vāsudeva-māhātmya, where Śrī Nārada said:

adho 'nena śayānena  
śakaṭāntara-cāriṇā  
rākṣasī nihatā raudrā  
śakuni-veṣa-dhāriṇī

pūtanā nāma ghorā sā  
mahā-kāyā mahā-balā  
viṣa-digdhaṁ stanam kṣudrā  
prayacchanti janārdane

"Then Lord Kṛṣṇa, who had wandered underneath the cart and fallen asleep there, killed the ferocious, tall, and very powerful demoness Pūtanā, who had smeared poison on her breast and then offered it to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

dadṛśur nihatām tatra  
rākṣasīm vana-gocarāḥ  
punar-jāto 'yam ity āhur  
uktas tasmād adhokṣajaḥ

"When the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana saw the giant demoness Pūtanā had been killed by Kṛṣṇa, they cried out: 'Kṛṣṇa is safe! It is as if He has taken birth (ja) for a second time under (adhaḥ) the cart's axle (akṣa).' Because the vrajavāsīs called out in this way, Lord Kṛṣṇa is known as Adhokṣaja."

The commentator on Hari-varṇṣa gives this explanation:

"Because He was born (ja) again under (adhaḥ) the cart's axle (akṣa), the Lord was called Adhokṣaja."

In this way the meaning of this name is revealed in the Lord's great pastimes as the son of Vraja's king. This word (adhokṣaja) in the vocative case has within its womb another reason for Lord Kṛṣṇa to forgive Brahmā's offense. By using this name, Brahmā hints, "O Lord, in Your pastimes in this world You committed theft and many other offenses. Still, it is seen that the people of Vraja always forgave You and gave You their mercy. For this reason also You should forgive my offense." That is the meaning.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is, "O Lord, You must forgive my offense because You are my mother." Thinking Lord Kṛṣṇa identical with the second puruṣa-avatāra, Lord Padmanābha, Brahmā speaks this verse. Is the kicking of a child in the womb an offense to the mother? It is not.

The word "asti-nāsti-vyapadeśa-bhūṣitam" means "It may be said 'This exists' or 'That does not exist', and in this way one may ascertain that one thing is a reality and another thing is an illusion." All of this reality and illusion taken together is the material universe.

Here Brahmā asks, "O Lord, is this sum totality of all existence within or abdomen or outside of it? It is certainly within Your abdomen. Therefore I am also within Your abdomen. Therefore I am Your son and You are my mother. Therefore You, my mother, should forgive me, Your son." In Bhagavad-gītā (9.17) Lord Kṛṣṇa declares:

pitāham asya jagataḥ  
mātā dhātā pitāmahaḥ

"I am the father of this universe, the mother, the support, and the grandsire."\*

### Text 13

jagat-trayāntodadhi-samplavode  
nārāyaṇasyodara-nābhi-nālāt  
vinirgato 'jas tv iti vāñ na vai mṛṣā  
kintv īśvara tvan na vinirgato 'smi

jagat-worlds; traya-three; anta-end; udadhi-ocean; samplava-flood; ude-inde the water; nārāyaṇasya-of Lord Nārāyaṇa; udara-in the abdomen; nābhi-of the navel; nālāt-from the stem; vinirgataḥ-emerged; ajaḥ-unborn; tu-indeed; iti-thus; vāk-words; na-not; vai-indeed; mṛṣā-false; kintu-however; īśvara-O Lord; tvat-from You; na-not; vinirgataḥ-emerged; asmi-I am.

When the three worlds are destroyed and there is a great flood, Brahmā is born from Lord Nārāyaṇa's lotus navel. These words are not false. O Lord, am I not born from You?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

The gist of this verse is, "Furthermore, it is well known that I was born from You". Brahmā says, "When the three worlds were destroyed and there was a great flood, on the water of that flood was Lord Nārāyaṇa, and on Lord Nārāyaṇa's abdomen there was a navel. From the stem of that navel I was born. These words are not false." Here the word "vai" means "certainly".

Then Brahmā continues, "Furthermore, am I not born from You?" The answer to this rhetorical question is, "Yes. I am indeed born from You."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:



The gist of this verse is, "You, who are directly my father, should excuse this offense committed by me, Your son." Here the word "nāla" means "the stem of a lotus flower". By this word the entire lotus flower is implied. In the Viśva Dictionary it is said:

naline tu nalaṁ matam

"The word "nala (stem) can refer to the entire lotus flower."

The word "nāla" here is a tad-dhita. Thus it means "the thing that has a stem". Here the word "tu" means "indeed". It is used here because Brahmā wishes to emphasize that he was directly born from Lord Nārāyaṇa. The prefix "vi" added to "nirgataḥ" here indicates that before he was born Brahmā was a long time in the abdomen of Lord Nārāyaṇa.

Here the word "īśvara" means "O Supreme Personality of Godhead". It is not appropriate to interpret this word to mean "O father". With this word Brahmā devotedly addresses the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Or, this passage may be interpreted, "O Lord, even though I was born from Lord Nārāyaṇa, it is true that I was born from You, for You are not different from Lord Nārāyaṇa."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest, "Is it not true that a son is born from a mother's womb? The child does not stay forever in the womb." If the Lord raises this protest, then Brahmā gives this reply, "When the three worlds are destroyed and there is a great flood, then everything becomes one in the flooding waters, and eventually a new Brahmā is born. Was I not born from You? Indeed I was born from You."

#### Text 14

nārāyaṇas tvam na hi sarva-dehinām  
ātmāsy adhīśākhila-loka-sākṣī  
nārāyaṇo 'ṅgam nara-bhū-jalāyanāt  
tac cāpi satyaṁ na tavaiva māyā

nārāyaṇaḥ-Lord Nārāyaṇa; tvam-You; na-not; hi-certainly; sarva-dehinām-all; ātmā-the Supersoul; asi-You are; adhīśa-O Lord; akhila-loka-of all the worlds; sākṣī-the witness; nārāyaṇaḥ-known as Nārāyaṇa; aṅgam-plenary portuion; nara-of Nara; bhū-born; jala-in the water; ayanāt-due to the place of refuge; tat-that; ca-and; api-certainly; satyam-highest truth; na-not; tava-Your; eva-at all; māyā-the illusory energy.

O Lord of lords, You are the seer of all creation. You are indeed everyone's dearest life. Are You not, therefore, my father Nārāyaṇa? Nārāyaṇa refers to one whose abode is in the water born from Nara (Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu), and that Nārāyaṇa is Your plenary portion. All Your plenary portions are transcendental. They are absolute and are not creations of māyā.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may ask, "The son of Nārāyaṇa you may be, but how did you come to be My son?" To answer this challenge, Brahmā spoke this verse. The word "na" (not) is spoken here in irony. The meaning is, "You certainly are Nārāyaṇa".

If Lord Kṛṣṇa challenges, "Why do you say I am Nārāyaṇa?", then Brahmā replies, "sarva-dehinām ātmāsi" (You are indeed everyone's dearest life). Brahmā says, "Are You not Nārāyaṇa?"

"Nāra" means "all living entities", and "ayana" means "shelter". Therefore "Nārāyaṇa" means "the shelter of all living entities". Brahmā thus says, "Because You are the Supersoul of all living beings, You must be Nārāyaṇa." Thus, changing the pitch of his voice, Brahmā asks ironically, "O Lord of lords, You are not Nārāyaṇa?"

Here "adhīśa" means "creator", and "ayana" means "creation". Therefore Nārāyaṇa means. "He from whom creation (ayana) of all living entities (nāra) is manifest." Here Brahmā says, "You are that person."

Brahmā also says, "akhila-loka-sākṣī", which means "You are the witness who observes all living entities". Interpreted in this way, Nārāyaṇa means "You who know (ayase) all living entities (nāra)."

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest, "This may be a very good etymological explanation of the word 'Nārāyaṇa', but still I am not that Nārāyaṇa." Fearing that Lord Kṛṣṇa would protest in this way, Brahmā spoke the passage beginning with the words "nārāyaṇo 'ṅgam".

"Nārāyaṇa" may also be explained in this way: "Nāra" means "the living entities born from Nara (Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu)", or it may also mean "the water born from Nara". The resting place (ayana) of these is called Nārāyaṇa. Thus the words "nārāyaṇo 'ṅgam" mean "Nārāyaṇa is one of Your forms". In the Smṛti-śāstra it is said:

narāj jātāni tattvāni  
nārāṇīti vidur budhāḥ  
tasya tāny ayanam pūrvam  
tena nārāyaṇaḥ smṛtaḥ

"The wise know that the elements born from Nara are called nāras. He who is the resting place of these elements is called Nārāyaṇa."

In the scriptures it is also said:

āpo nārā iti proktā  
āpo vā nara-sūnavah  
ayanam tasya yā pūrvam  
tena nārāyaṇaḥ smṛtaḥ

"Because it is manifested from Nara (Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu), this water (the Garbhodaka ocean) is called nāra. He who rests on this water is called Nārāyaṇa."

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest, "My form is limitless and all-pervading. How can it rest on the water?" Brahmā answers by affirming, "tac cāpi satyam na" (It is real. It is not a creation of māyā).

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here the word "aṅgam" means "one of Your forms". Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest, "The words `nara-bhū-jalāyanāt' (Nārāyaṇa refers to one whose abode is in the water born from Nara, Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu) imply that Nārāyaṇa has a body. Bodies are by nature temporary and unreal. If Nārāyaṇa has a body, must it not also be temporary and unreal?"

To this protest Brahmā gives the following reply: "tac cāpi satyam na tavaiva māyā", which means "The water where Nārāyaṇa rests is real and Lord Nārāyaṇa Himself is also real. They are not creations of māyā."

The word "api" here means "also". Here Brahmā says, "Because Your pastimes are real, this taking shelter of the water is also real, for it plays a part in Your pastimes." Thus because it is manifested from Nāra (Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu), who is an incarnation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, this water (the Garbhodaka Ocean) is also real and eternal. Therefore, because it is not a creation of māyā, this water (the Garbhodaka Ocean) is limitless, and because it is limitless, it is possible that limitless Nārāyaṇa can lie down upon it.

Or, directly seeing that Lord Kṛṣṇa is more glorious than Nārāyaṇa, Brahmā is afraid to address Him as Nārāyaṇa, and instead in this verse he anxiously and straightforwardly says, "nārāyaṇas tvam na" (You are not Nārāyaṇa). Here "adhīśa" means "O master of the universes".

Here Brahmā affirms, "nārāyaṇas tvam na" (You are not Nārāyaṇa). Then he says, "nārāyaṇo 'ṅgam nara-bhū-jalāyanāt" (This is so because Nārāyaṇa, who rests on the water, is Your expansion). In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.4.3) it is said:

bhūtair yadā pañcabhir ātma-sṛṣṭaiḥ  
puraṁ virājaṁ viracayya tasmin  
svāmīṣena viṣṭaḥ puruṣābhidhānam  
avāpa nārāyaṇa ādi-devaḥ

"When the primeval Lord Nārāyaṇa created His universal form from the five material elements He Himself created, He manifested His own plenary expansion and then entered that universal form. That plenary expansion was called the

Puruṣa-avatāra."

The Nārāyaṇa mentioned in this verse is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, the origin of all incarnations. He assumed the form of the Nārāyaṇa who lies down on the water (of the Garbhodaka Ocean), a form known as the Puruṣa-avatāra. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.32) it is said:

yan-mitraṁ paramānandaṁ  
pūrṇaṁ brahma sanātanaṁ

"How greatly fortunate are Nanda Mahārāja, the cowherd men, and all the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi! There is no limit to their good fortune because the Absolute Truth, the source of all transcendental bliss, the eternal Supreme Brahman, has become their friend."\*

From these words, which will be spoken later in this chapter, it is clear that Kṛṣṇa is the full, original Supreme Personality of Godhead. Therefore Brahmā says, "tvam akhila-loka-sākṣī" (You are the witness who sees everything in all the universes). In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.11) it is said:

kvedṛg-vidhāvigaṇitāṇḍa-parānu-caryā-

"And what is Your glory? Unlimited universes pass through the pores of Your body just like particles of dust passing through the opening of a window."\*

That Kṛṣṇa is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead is also confirmed by the fact that Brahmā himself had just before seen many millions of material universes manifested in one place in Vṛndāvana forest. Nārāyaṇa is the master of only one universe. But Kṛṣṇa, because He is described here as "sarva-dehinām ātmā" (the Supersoul of all living entities), is the Supersoul of all, of all living entities in all, in limitless millions, of universes. The rest is explained as before.

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may raise the following protest: In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.1.19-20) it is said:

brahmā tad-upadhāryātha  
saha devais tayā saha  
jagāma sa-trinayanas  
tīraṁ kṣīra-payo-nidheḥ

"Thereafter, having heard of the distress of mother earth, Lord Brahmā, with mother earth, Lord Śiva, and all the other demigods, approached the shore of the ocean of milk.\*

tatra gatvā jagan-nātham  
deva-devam vṛṣākapim  
puruṣam puruṣa-sūktena  
upataste samāhitaḥ

"After reaching the shore of the ocean of milk, the demigods worshiped the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, the master of the whole universe, the Supreme God of all gods, who provides for everyone and diminishes everyone's suffering. With great attention, they worshiped Lord Viṣṇu, who lies on the ocean of milk, by reciting the Vedic mantras known as Puruṣa-sūkta."\*

In this passage the Puruṣa-avatāra Nārāyaṇa is described as the Supersoul of the universal form (virāt). Therefore it should be understood that Kṛṣṇa is an incarnation of Nārāyaṇa. Therefore it is correct to address Kṛṣṇa by the names Nārāyaṇa and Puruṣa-avatāra. Why, then, do tell Me "nārāyaṇas tvam na" (You are not Nārāyaṇa)?

Brahmā refutes Kṛṣṇa's argument in these words: In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.3.1-3) it is said:

jagrthe pauruṣam rūpam  
bhagavān mahad-ādibhiḥ  
sambhūtam ṣoḍaśa-kalam  
ādau loka-sisṛkṣayā

"In the beginning of the creation, the Lord first expanded Himself in the universal form of the puruṣa-incarnation and manifested all the ingredients for the material creation. And thus at first there was the creation of the sixteen principles of material action. This was for the purpose of creating the material universe.\*

yasyāmbhasi śayānasya  
yoga-nidrām vitanvataḥ  
nābhi-hradāmbujād āsīd  
brahmā viśva-sṛjām patiḥ

"A part of the puruṣa lies down within the water of the universe, from the navel lake of His body sprouts a lotus stem, and from the lotus flower atop this stem, Brahmā, the master of all engineers in the universe, becomes manifest.\*

yasyāvayava-saṁsthānaiḥ

kalpito loka-vistaraha  
tad vai bhagavato rūpam  
viśuddham sattvam ūrjitam

"It is believed that all the universal planetary systems are situated on the extensive body of the puruṣa, but He has nothing to do with the created material ingredients. His body is eternally in spiritual existence par excellence."\*

Here is the meaning: In the beginning of the material creation (ādau) the Supreme Personality of Godhead (puruṣottamaḥ) desired to create the material worlds (loka-sisṛkṣayā) with the mahat-tattva and other material principles (mahad-ādibhiḥ). Thus, with a glance He manifested (jagṛhe) His form of the puruṣa incarnation (pauruṣam rūpam).

How was the creation manifested? The answer is given in the words "ṣoḍaśa-kalam" (And thus at first there was the creation of the sixteen principles of material action). The first eight of these sixteen principles of material action are described in these words of scripture:

aṇimā mahimā prāptiḥ  
prākāmyam laghimesitā  
tathā kāmāvaśāyitvam  
vaśitety aṣṭa-siddhayaḥ

"There are eight mystic perfections. They are the powers to: 1. make oneself very small, 2. make oneself very large, 3. attain whatever one desires, 4. enjoy whatever one wishes, 5. make oneself very light, 6. control the material energy, 7. obtain anything from anywhere, and 8. bring others under his control."

Six more principles are described in these words of Viṣṇu Purāṇa (6.5.74):

aiśvaryasya samagrasya  
vīryasya yaśasaḥ śriyaḥ  
jñāna-vairāgyayoś cāpi  
śaṅṅām bhaga itīṅganā

"Kṛṣṇa is full in all opulences, namely strength, wealth, fame, beauty, knowledge, and renunciation."\*

Two more principles are described in these words of scripture:

līlā-kṛpābhidhau viiṣṇoḥ  
sva-parārthau gunāv ubhau

lilā svasyaiva saukhyāya  
pareṣāṁ tu kṛpā smṛtā

"Lord Viṣṇu has two important qualities: 1. His pastimes, and 2. His mercy. His pastimes are for His own happiness and His mercy is for the happiness of others."

The first puruṣa incarnation manifests the mahat-tattva and the sixteen principles of matter. The second puruṣa incarnation then enters the material universe and resides there. This is described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.3.2 quoted above.

After the material universe is created and the second puruṣa incarnation enters it and lies down on the waters of the Garbhodaka Ocean, a lotus flower grows from the puruṣa's navel lake. On that lotus Brahmā is born.

What is that lotus like? That lotus grows from the navel lake of the puruṣa. On its whorl, petals, and other parts the different planets of the universe are situated.

What is the form of Nārāyaṇa like? That is described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.3.3. This incarnation (Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu) should not be confused with Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, who lies down on the ocean of milk. He is a different incarnation of the Lord. They are different because Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu entered the lotus flower grown from Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu's navel. This is described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.8.15):

tal-loka-padmaṁ sa u eva viṣṇuḥ  
prāvīviśat sarva-guṇāvabhāsam

"Into that universal lotus flower Lord Viṣṇu personally entered as the Supersoul, and when it was thus impregnated with all the modes of material nature, the personality of Vedic wisdom, who we called the self-born, was generated."\*

The third puruṣa incarnation (Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu) is the origin of twenty-two incarnations beginning with the Kumāras described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.3.6 and culminating in Lord Kalki. Although included among these incarnations of the third puruṣa incarnation, Lord Kṛṣṇa's position is unique. Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.3.28) explains:

ete cāmśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ  
kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam

"All of the above-mentioned incarnations are either plenary portions or portions of the plenary portions of the Lord, but Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of Godhead."\*

In this way it is seen that the Kumāras and other incarnations are all plenary portions or portions of the plenary portions of the puruṣa incarnation, but Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the original Personality of Godhead. The word "tu" (but) indicates Lord Kṛṣṇa's difference. He is the bhagavān (Supreme Personality of Godhead) who originally assumed the forms of the puruṣa incarnations (jagṛhe pauruṣam rūpam) as described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.3.1. The word "svayam" here indicates Lord Kṛṣṇa's supreme independence. Lord Kṛṣṇa is not dependent on or manifested from any other form of the Lord as one lamp is lit from another lamp. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa is not manifested from any other form of the Lord. Rather Lord Kṛṣṇa is the original lamp and all the other forms of the Lord are like lamps lit from the original lamp, Kṛṣṇa. This is described in Brahma-saṁhitā (5.59):

yasyaika-niśvasita-kālam athāvalambya  
jīvanti loma-vilajā jagadaṇḍa-nāthāḥ  
viṣṇur mahān sa iha yasya kalā-viśeṣo  
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi

"The Brahmās and other lords of the mundane worlds appear from the pores of the Mahā-Viṣṇu and remain alive for the duration of His one exhalation. I adore the primeval Lord, Govinda, for Mahā-Viṣṇu is a portion of His plenary portion."\*

Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa is not really to be counted among the other incarnations of the Lord, for Lord Kṛṣṇa's sweetness and charm is special and much greater than what is manifested by the other pastime incarnations and other incarnations of the Lord.

Here someone may protest: It may very well be that Lord Kṛṣṇa is perfect and complete in every way. Still, in the Padma Purāṇa, Mokṣa-dharma, it is said that Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu is Aniruddha of the Catur-vyūha. How, then, is it possible that Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu is a mere expansion of the Lord and not the original Lord Himself?

To this protest the following reply is given: The truth is that Vāsudeva and the other forms of the Catur-vyūha are all plenary portions of Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose great glory has no equal or superior. Aniruddha and the other forms of the Catur-vyūha are expanded from Mahā-Nārāyaṇa, and Mahā-Nārāyaṇa is expanded from Lord Kṛṣṇa. This is described in the Brahma-saṁhitā (5.59) verse quoted above.

Thus Kṛṣṇa is the origin of Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu. Thus when the demigods approached the shore of the milk-ocean they easily attained the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The words of that passage do not intend to describe another form of the Lord. This is also explained in the following words of Padma Purāṇa:

anugrahāya devānām  
tatra sannhito hariḥ



"To show mercy to the demigods, Lord Kṛṣṇa personally descended to this earth."

Indeed, it is said in that passage that, in response to the demigods' prayers, Lord Kṛṣṇa, taking with Him all His other forms, descended to the earth. That is the opinion of Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī. In his explanation of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.2.9, Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī says:

amśena puruṣa-rūpeṇa bhāgo māyāyā bhajanam iksaṇam yena tena

"Here the word `amśa' means `with the form of the puruṣa incarnation', and `bhāgena' means `glancing at the illusory potency, māyā'."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest, "Then you are the son of Nārāyaṇa, but what does that have to do with Me?" To this protest Brahmā replies by changing the inflection of his voice and asking the rhetorical question: "nārāyaṇas tvam na hi" (You are not Nārāyaṇa?) The answer to this rhetorical question is, "You are indeed Nārāyaṇa." The word "adhīśa" means "O master of masters".

Here Brahmā may say: In Bhagavad-gītā (10.42) You have said:

viṣṭabhyāham idaṁ kṛtsnam  
ekāmśena sthito jagat

"With a single fragment of Myself I pervade and support this entire creation."\*

Nārāyaṇa is merely the Supersoul, the all-pervading witness present in the hearts of all conditioned souls. However, You are the origin of Nārāyaṇa, for as You explain in this verse of Bhagavad-gītā, with a single fragment of Yourself You pervade and support the entire creation. That fragment of Yourself is Nārāyaṇa.

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may again protest, "O Brahmā, I stay in Vṛndāvana. Because My complexion is black, I am called Kṛṣṇa. Nārāyaṇa stays on the water called Nāra. Therefore He is called Nārāyaṇa. How is it possible that I am He?"

To this protest Brahmā replies: The name "Nārāyaṇa" is defines in these words of the scriptures:

nara-bhū-jalāyanāt

"He is called Nārāyaṇa because He rests on the water manifested from Nara

(Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu)."

āpo nārā iti proktā  
āpo vā nara-sūnavah  
ayanam tasya yā pūrvam  
tena nārāyaṇaḥ smṛtaḥ

"Because it is manifested from Nara (Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu), this water (the Garbhodaka ocean) is called nārā. He who rests on this water is called Nārāyaṇa."

He who is called Nārāyaṇa because He rests on the water born from Nara, is a plenary portion of You (nārāyaṇo 'ṅgam). Therefore, if I rest within His abdomen, then I rest within Your abdomen also.

Furthermore, as I have already said in text 2 of this chapter, "svecchamayasya na tu bhūtamayasya" (Your desires are all fulfilled and Your form is not made of the material elements). This means that Your form of the boy Kṛṣṇa and Your form of the Vāsudeva who is part of the Catur-vyūha are both eternal and full of knowledge and bliss. Therefore Your plenary expansion Nārāyaṇa is eternal and real, situated in transcendental goodness, existing for all time, and all-pervading, present everywhere.

Your universal form is not like that. The universal form is a manifestation of the illusory potency, māyā. The word "ca" (also) here indicates that the forms of the other incarnations, such as Matsya and Kūrma are also expansions of Lord Kṛṣṇa and they are also eternal, transcendental, and real.

## Text 15

tac cej jala-stham tava saj jagad-vapuḥ  
kim me ca dr̥ṣtam bhagavaṁs tadaiva  
kim va su-dr̥ṣtam hr̥di me tadaiva  
kim no sapady eva punar vyadar̥si

tat-that; cet-if; jala-on the water; stham-staying; tava-of You; sat-real; jagat-of the universe; vapuḥ-form; kim-whether; me-of me; ca-and; dr̥ṣtam-seen; bhagavan-O Supreme Personality of Godhead; tadā-then; eva-indeed; kim-whether?; va-or; su-dr̥ṣtam-properly seen; hr̥di-in the heart; me-of me; tadā-then; eva-indeed; kim-whether?; na-not; u-indeed; sapady-simultaneously; eva-indeed; punaḥ-again; vyadar̥si-seen.

O Lord, if Your transcendental form, the shelter of the universe, was then resting on the Garbhodaka waters, why could I not see it? Why was I later able to see that form in My heart? Why was I suddenly able to see it a second time also?

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

This verse proves that Lord Kṛṣṇa's form is all-pervading. Here Brahmā says, "O Lord whose powers are beyond conception, if Your Nārāyaṇa form, which lies on the water and is the shelter of the universe, is transcendental, real, and eternal, then why could I not find it, even when I searched for a hundred years on the lotus stem?"

To this Lord Kṛṣṇa may reply, "You searched outside. You should have looked within your heart."

To this Brahmā may reply, "I looked in my heart. Still I did not see You. It was when I performed austerities that I suddenly saw You. The idea that You are limited by time and space is not true. That idea is an illusion."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

This verse proves that Lord Kṛṣṇa's form is eternal, real, and transcendental. The passage beginning with the words "kim vā" asserts that it was not with material eyes that Brahmā saw Lord Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu (jala-stham). Here the prefix "su" hints that it was only after hearing and following the Lord's order "tapa tapa" (Perform austerities. Perform austerities.) that Brahmā was able to see the Lord. The words "tadā eva" hint that it was only after great effort and a long time that Brahmā was able to see the Lord. The words "kim no" hint that it was not by Brahmā's endeavor alone that he was able to see the Lord. Then Brahmā says that he could not again (punaḥ) see the Lord in his heart. This means that the Lord blessed Brahmā by appearing once in his meditation. Then when the Lord disappeared again, Brahmā was overcome with feelings of separation. Thus, in order to see the Lord again, Brahmā performed austerities. Even after performing austerities, Brahmā still could not see the Lord in his heart. Then, after some time, suddenly he saw the Lord in his heart. Or, at first the Lord was not seen, but later, by the Lord's mercy, He was seen. That may be the meaning of the passage beginning with the word "kim". Was (kim) the Lord not seen eventually with His transcendental handsomeness, paraphernalia, and associates? Certainly the Lord was seen. The meaning is the Lord reveals Himself by His own wish. When He wishes one may see His transcendental form, pastimes, associates, the water of the Garbhodaka Ocean, and other things in relation to Him. Although water and other material elements not part of the Lord's paraphernalia, are not spiritual, and although the Supreme Lord is Nārāyaṇa eternally and that Nārāyaṇa form is spiritual, nevertheless, the Lord's pastimes, associates, and all else in relation with Him is not material or made of material elements. It is all eternal and spiritual.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: If Lord Nārāyaṇa's form is situated in transcendental pure goodness, then how is it possible that He lie down on the material Garbha Ocean? If the Lord is indeed unlimited and all-pervading, it should not be possible for Him to be confined to a certain part of a limited, not-all-pervading material ocean.

If this protest is raised, Brahmā gives the following reply: O Lord whose

Yogamāyā potency is inconceivable, if Your Nārāyaṇa form was in the water, then why was I not able to see it even though I searched the lotus stem for a hundred years?

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may reply: Lord Nārāyaṇa was there in the water. You could not see Him only because You were covered by ignorance.

If this is said, Brahmā gives this reply: Then why was I able to see You when I meditated on You? Why was I able to see You another time also? Even though You seemed to be a limited, not-all-pervading form resting on the Garbhodaka water, by Your inconceivable potency You actually kept all the universes in Your abdomen. The truth is that You are indeed all-pervading. You exist in all times and places simultaneously. Your Yogamāyā potency sometimes hides You and sometimes reveals You. In this way You are sometimes seen, and at other times not seen. In this way it should be understood.

## Text 16

atraiva māyā-dhamanāvatāre  
hy asya prāpañcasya bahiḥ sphuṭasya  
kṛtsnasya cāntar jaṭhare jananyā  
māyātvam eva prakatī-kṛtaṁ te

atra-here; eva-indeed; māyā-of illusion; dhamana-O subduer; avatāre-in the incarnation; hi-indeed; asya-of this; prāpañcasya-material world of five elements; bahiḥ-outside; sphuṭasya-manifested; kṛtsnasya-complete; ca-and; antaḥ-within; jaṭhare-the abdomen; jananyā-of the mother; māyātvam-illusion; eva-indeed; prakatī-kṛtaṁmanifested; te-of You.

My dear Lord, in this incarnation You have proved that You are the supreme controller of māyā. You remain within the cosmic manifestation, and yet the whole creation is within You. This fact has already been proved by You when You exhibited the whole universal creation within Your mouth before Your mother Yaśodā. By Your inconceivable potency of Yogamāyā, You can make such things effective without external help.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

In these three verses (16-18) Brahmā says, "O Lord, if this material world made of water and other elements were the highest reality, then You would certainly be limited. However, You have clearly shown that this material world is only the play of Your illusory potency māyā."

"Māyā-dhamana" here means "O subduer of illusion". Brahmā says, "In this incarnation You allowed Your mother to see that the entire external material universe is in truth present within Your abdomen."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: If this is so, then the water and other elements of the material world would be real, just like the water of the Garbhodaka Ocean. Is that idea contradicted by the scriptures and by the experience of the great sages?

In these two verses (16 and 17) Brahmā replies: Yes. That is true. The material world is an illusion.

The word "māyā-dhamanāvātāre" means that this incarnation and all in relation to it are completely free of material illusion (māyā). This means that they who worship this incarnation also escape the influence of material illusion.

Used in relation to the word "māyā-dhamanāvātāre", the word "eva" means "even" and "hi" means "indeed". The words "māyātvam prakatī-kṛtam" mean "the great illusion of the material world". "Jananyāḥ prakatī-kṛtam" mean "You showed this illusion even to Your mother, Yaśodā". These words are offered as evidence to prove that the material world is an illusion.

Here "ca" means "even" and it is used with the word "kṛtsnasya". Or, it is used to mean "also". Interpreted in this way, it refers all that was previously described. With the words "antar jaṭhare", Brahmā gives an example to prove his argument. Here something that has already been proved true is used to prove the truth of something else.

Here is the meaning: "Just as Your sudden appearance and then, a moment later, disappearance, was an illusion, like a dream or a mirage, so in the same way the idea that the entire material creation is outside of You is also an illusion. Yaśodā revealed this truth to Nanda and the others. This refers to the time when, as He was drinking from His mother's breast, infant Kṛṣṇa yawned and showed His mother the entire universe within His mouth. Because he knows all that occurs in his universe, and also because He received special mercy from the Lord, Brahmā was able to know of these two occasions when Lord Kṛṣṇa showed His mother the entire universe in His mouth. Thus Brahmā says, "O Lord, in this way You showed Your mother the universe in Your mouth".

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "I rest on the Garbhodaka Ocean, and thus I am certainly present within the universe. How is it possible, then, that the universe rests within My abdomen? After all, if a pot sits within a house no one will say that the house also sits within the pot. Also, My body is transcendental, made of pure goodness. Therefore whatever is in My body must also be transcendental. Therefore the universe that was seen within My body must be different from the external material universe, which is certainly not transcendental. This being so, You are certainly not present in My abdomen."

Fearing that Lord Kṛṣṇa would protest in this way, Brahmā speaks these two verses (16 and 17) to prove that the universe within Lord Kṛṣṇa is the material universe made of māyā. Thus the universe outside of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the universe within Lord Kṛṣṇa's abdomen are one and the same.

Here the word "māyā-dhamana" means "O subduer of illusion". In the remainder of the verse Brahmā says, "O Lord, You showed that the entire material universe, although seemingly outside of You, is also present within Your abdomen". The word "jananyāḥ" means "to Your mother, Yaśodā", and "māyātvam" means "illusion".

Here Brahmā hints, "O Lord, it is by the power of Your inconceivable Yogamāyā potency that the material universe is present within Your transcendental body and, at the same time, You are present everywhere in the material universe. Since this is true, at this moment I stand within Your abdomen. Therefore You are my mother."

### Text 17

yasya kuṣāv idam sarvaṁ  
ātmaṁ bhāti yathā tathā  
tat tvayy apīha tat sarvaṁ  
kim idam māyayā vinā

yasya-of whom; kuṣau-in the abdomen; idam-this; sarvam-all; sa-ātmam-with Yourself; bhāti-is manifested; yathā-as; tathā-so; tat-that; tvayi-in You; api-even; iha-here; tat-that; sarvam-all; kim-whether?; idam-this; māyayā-māyā; vinā-without.

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, the whole cosmic manifestation that we are visualizing at present is all within Your body. Yet I am seeing You outside, and You are also seeing me outside. How can such things happen without being influenced by Your inconceivable energy?\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "The external material universe may have been reflected inside My abdomen. Still, why do you say that the universe is all an illusion of māyā?"

To answer that protest, Brahmā speaks this verse. Here he says, "As everything is manifested within Your abdomen, so, in the same way, everything is also manifested outside of You. Furthermore, the everything that is manifested within You includes Yourself. In this way You Yourself are also manifested within Your abdomen along with everything else. How can this occur without the action of Your illusory potency, māyā?"

Here is the meaning: "O Lord, if the external material world were reflected within Lord Kṛṣṇa, then the image of the world would be reversed, as all reflections are. Also, because here You would assume the role of the mirror, You would not be present in the reflection, for the mirror itself is never present among the reflected images. Therefore the conclusion is that all of this is the working of Your illusory potency."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "Is it not so that a reflection is always unreal and what is perceived directly, not reflected, is always real?" If Lord Kṛṣṇa protests in this way, Brahmā replies with this verse.

Here "sātman" means "along with Yourself". The rest of the verse has already been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Or, Lord Kṛṣṇa may also protest: "If one is real, then the other must also be real. Then they both must be real." If Lord Kṛṣṇa protests in this way, Brahmā replies with this verse. Here Brahmā says, "In this situation both are completely identical in all respects. This is unlike the situation of an image and its reflection. Therefore it is not true that these two are like an image and its reflection. Of, since no one has ever heard of or proved the existence of multiple completely identical universes, therefore one of these two universes must be an illusion.

If Lord Kṛṣṇa protests, "Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.14.11 describes the existence of multiple universes", then Brahmā may reply, "If this is so, then the spiritual universes, which are directly manifested by the Lord would be equal to the material universes manifested from His material potency. That is not a logical idea. Also, this idea is clearly contradicted by the many statements of Śruti and Smṛti declaring the material world an illusion, like a dream or a fantasy imposed on the individual spirit souls. Therefore the proper conclusion is that the material world is māyā (illusory) in all respects." That is confirmed in this verse by the use of the words "tat sarvam" (everything).

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is, "Because they are not different in any way, the universe within Your abdomen and the universe outside of You are both one, the same universe. In this way it is understood that the universe within Your abdomen is a product of the illusory potency māyā." Therefore Brahmā says here, "the universe manifest outside of You is identical with the universe manifested in Your abdomen."

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "Is it not true that the universe manifested in My abdomen is a reflection of the universe manifested outside of Me?" To this protest Brahmā replies: "You are also present (sātman) in that reflected universe."

The meaning here is that when an image is reflected in a mirror, the mirror itself does not appear among the reflected objects. In this way it is proved that the same external material universe (and not merely its reflection) that was manifested outside Lord Kṛṣṇa was also manifested within His abdomen.

Here the word "tvayi" (within You) means "just as the universe present in Your abdomen rests within You, in the same way the universe that seems to be outside of You also rests within You."

Brahmā then concludes, "Therefore (tat), since there is not the slightest scent of difference between these two universes, how can the universe within Your abdomen be manifested without the presence of Your illusory potency, māyā (kim idaṁ māyayā vinā)? Therefore the universe within Your abdomen must also be a product of the material potency māyā. Therefore, since the universe seen in Your mouth by Your mother and the universe I see before me are both the same product of the illusory potency, māyā, I am certainly standing within Your abdomen." Here, using the argument of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.14.12, Brahmā here begs the Lord, "Please forgive me."

## Text 18

adyaiva tvad ṛte 'sya kim mama na te māyātvam ādarśitam  
eko 'si prathamam tato vraja-suhṛd-vatsāḥ samastā api  
tāvanto 'si catur-bhujas tad akhilaiḥ sākam mayopāsītās  
tāvanty eva jaganty abhūs tad amitam brahmādvayam śiṣyate

adya-now; eva-indeed; tvat-You; ṛte-without; asya-of this; kim-whether?;  
mama-of me; na-not; te-of You; māyātvam-illusion; ādarśitam-shown; ekaḥ-one;  
asi-You are; prathamam-first; tataḥ-then; vraja-of Vraja; suhṛt-friends; vatsāḥ--and  
calves; samastāḥ-all; api-also; tāvantaḥ-to that extent; asi-are; catur-bhujāḥ-four  
arms; tat-that; akhilaiḥ-all; sākam-with; mayā-by me; upāsītāḥ-worshiped; tāvanti-  
to that extent; eva-indeed; jaganti-universes; abhūḥ-were; tat-that; amitam-without  
measure; brahma-Brahman; advayam-non-dual; śiṣyate-remains.

My dear Lord, leaving aside all other things, and just considering today's happenings, what I have seen, are they not all due to Your inconceivable energies? First of all, I saw You alone. Thereafter You expanded Yourself as Your friends, the calves, and all the existence of Vṛndāvana. Then I saw You and all the boys as four-handed Viṣṇus, and they were being worshiped by all elements and all demigods, including myself. Again they all became cowherd boys, and You remained alone as You were before.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "You did not show this only to Your mother. Today You showed it also to me." "Tvad-ṛte" means "except for You". Here Brahmā says, "Did You just now show me how this material world is an illusion? You certainly did show me. Here Brahmā says, "First You were one. Then You were many four-armed forms worshiped by me and by all the elements. The word "jaganti" means "universes". Although they were not mentioned before, the universes were also seen.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "If everything is a product of the illusory potency māyā, then I must also be a product of the illusory potency māyā."

To this protest Brahmā replies: "No. That is not the truth. Even though present in the material world, You and Your associates are spiritual reality. This I have today seen with my own eyes." Thus, eager to refute the idea that everything is illusion and reality does not exist, an idea created by false ego, Brahmā speaks this verse.

Here Brahmā says: "The material world of five elements is a product of the illusory potency, māyā. O Lord, today did You not show me that even though You are now present in this material world of māyā, a world that is like a dream or a fantasy, and even though You are seen to manifest many very wonderful forms in



this world, You are different from this world of māyā? Did You not show this very clearly?" The answer to this rhetorical question is: "Yes. You certainly showed this to me."

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "How did I show you?" To this Brahmā's reply is the passage beginning with the words "eko 'si". Here the word "suhṛt" means "the boys who are Your friends". Here Brahmā says, "Those forms were not created by the illusory potency, māyā. You Yourself were all those forms. All those forms were limitless. The boys, calves, and other forms You manifested were all limitless, not restricted in any way. Then, after manifesting that great variety of forms, You again became one, alone, the unrivaled, non-dual, Absolute Supreme Personality of Godhead. This pastime is described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.13.54, where the many forms manifested by Lord Kṛṣṇa are described in these words:

satya-jñānānantānanda

"The Viṣṇu-mūrtis all had eternal, unlimited forms, full of knowledge and bliss."\*

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, all this time I have known that You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, that the entire external material world rests within Your abdomen, that all the many thousands of material universes come from the pores of Your transcendental body, and that, because they are manifested by the māyā potency, all these material universes are illusory in nature. However, now I have personally seen that You possess very great spiritual opulences and with Your internal potency You have manifested many thousands of spiritual universes also.

Here Brahmā asks: "Today I have seen how You are the glorious creator of many thousands of material universes. What thing in these thousands of universes was not manifested from You?" The answer to this rhetorical question is: Everything was manifested from Your transcendental form.

Here Brahmā says: "What You showed me today was not a manifestation of Your māyā potency. What You showed me was all spiritual."

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "Why do you say is that?" Brahmā replies with the words beginning with "eko 'si".

Brahmā says: "First You were alone. Then, by Your internal potency, You became all Your Vraja friends and all the calves. Then, by Your Yogamāyā potency, You covered those forms and manifested many four-armed forms made of Your internal potency."

What were these forms like? Brahmā says, "They were worshiped by all spiritual living entities, from myself, who am the Brahmā, down to the blades of grass." Brahmā continues, "Then You became many spiritual universes, and then, by Your will, Yogamāyā covered them. Now only the unlimitedly handsome form of the unrivaled, perfect, and complete Supreme Personality of Godhead remains. Thus, by the agency of Your Yogamāyā and also by my good fortune, You now

stand before me, and I now see You." That is the meaning.

Because in the passage saying "You became this, and then You became that" the Lord's illusory potency *māyā* is never mentioned as causing the appearance of the manifestations that begin with the Lord's Vraja friends and conclude with the many universes, it should be understood that the friends, universes, and everything else here are all spiritual in nature. Because here *Brahmā* never says, "This You became by manifesting Your illusory potency, *māyā*" and because does say, "tvad-ṛte 'sya kim" "What is there beside You?" it should be understood that the universes mentioned here are all spiritual.

## Text 19

ajānatām tvat-pādavim anātmany  
ātmanā bhāsi vitatya māyām  
sṛṣṭāv ivāham jagato vidhāna  
iva tvam eṣo 'nta iva trinetraḥ

ajānatām-of they who do not understand; tvat-pādavim-Your nature; anātmani-in the material world; ātmā-You; ātmanā--by Yourself; bhāsi-are manifested; vitatya-expanding; māyām-maya; sṛṣṭau-in the creation; iva-like; aham-I; jagataḥ-of the universe; vidhāne-in maintenance; iva-like; tvam-You; eṣaḥ-He; ante-at the end; iva-like; trinetraḥ-Śiva.

Persons who are unaware of Your inconceivable energy cannot understand that You alone expand Yourself as the creator *Brahmā*, maintainer *Viṣṇu*, and annihilator *Śiva*.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here Lord *Kṛṣṇa* may protest: "O *Brahmā*, if what I have shown to you is all pure and spiritual, then why did You say it is *māyā*, like the *māyā* of the material world?" To this *Brahmā* replies: "That may be. Still, You are the first, without any rival. To fulfill a specific mission, You sometimes come to the material world. You come in many forms, as *guṇa-avatāras*, and as many other incarnations, such as Lord *Matsya*. What I meant when I spoke those words is that although You are independent, You still enter the world that is bound by *māyā*." That is the gist of these two verses (19 and 20).

Here *Brahmā* says: "When You enter the material world, You voluntarily expand Your *māyā* potency to bewilder persons ignorant of Your true nature." Lord *Kṛṣṇa* may then ask: "How do I manifest that *māyā*?" To this *Brahmā* may reply: "To manifest this world of *māyā*, You engage me, *Brahmā*, in the task of creation, You personally accept the task of maintenance, and You engage *Śiva* in the task of destruction."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, to they who do not understand Your glories, You seem to be different than You are in truth."

The word "padavīm" means either "truth" or "the path of devotional service". "Atmani" means "in the material body, which of itself has no life", "ātmā" means "You Yourself", and "ātmanā" means "appear to be an ordinary conditioned soul".

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may ask: "Why do such persons not understand the great difference that exists between the individual spirit soul and the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a difference described in the Śruti and Smṛti śāstras?" To this Brahmā replies with the words "Vitatya māyām", which mean "because they have no devotion for You, such persons become bewildered by māyā."

Here Brahmā says: "Although I appear to be the creator of the universe, You are the actual creator." This has already been explained in previous verses.

The words "tvam eṣaḥ" mean "You appear as Lord Viṣṇu, who is in no way different from You, in order to protect the worlds during the reign of the Manus." Brahmā continues: "Viṣṇu, Śiva, and I, Brahmā, understand all this perfectly."

When one thus understands that the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the material universes is ultimately performed by Lord Kṛṣṇa, and the various demigods are merely His agents, the ignorance of the common people who think otherwise is clearly seen. Still, because their activities of creation, maintenance and destruction place them so far above the ordinary conditioned souls, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are generally thought of as the creator, maintainer, and destroyer of the universe.

Or, the words "bhāsi vitatya māyām" may mean "expanding Your māyā potency as the mahat-tattva, the create, maintain, and destroy the universe." Here Brahmā may say: In truth You create, maintain, and destroy the universe. This is proved in the following words of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.1.1):

janmādy asya yataḥ

"Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Absolute Truth and the primeval cause of all causes of the creation, sustenance, and destruction of the manifested universes."\*

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, the non-devotees cannot understand Your limitless glories and Your multitudes of spiritual universes. That is why they insist that You must be material, a product of the material potency māyā."

Here "tvat-padavīm" means "devotional service, which is the path that leads to You", and "ajānatām" means "they who, although proud of being very learned, remain ignorant of that devotional path". "Anātmāny ātmātmanā bhāsi" means "by Your own will You come to the material world". Here Brahmā says, "O Lord, in this way it is seen that You are different from the individual spirit souls."

The ignorant persons described here interpret Brahmā's words in the following way: "The words `bhāsi vitatya māyām' mean `O Lord, even though originally You have no form, You expand Your māyā potency, and thus create a material form for

Yourself. As I come under the grip of the mode of passion when I create the material world, so do You also come under its grip. When You become Viṣṇu You become under the grip of the mode of goodness. In this way You maintain the universe. Finally, as Śiva comes under the grip of the mode of ignorance when he destroys the universe, so do You also come under its grip.

"In truth You have no form, and therefore Your forms as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva are all material forms made of the māyā potency. Your form of Nārāyaṇa who lies down on the Kāraṇa Ocean is also material, and the forms of all Your incarnations are also material. The forms of the calves, boys, and four-armed Viṣṇus that You showed me a moment ago are also all material in their natures." That is the way these fools speak.

## Text 20

sureṣv ṛṣiṣv īśa tathaiva nṛṣv api  
tiryakṣu yadaḥsv api te 'janasya  
janmāsatām durmada-nigrahāya  
prabhoḥ vidhātaḥ sad-anurgahāya ca

sureṣ-among the demigods; ṛṣiṣu-among the sages; īśa-O Lord; tathā-so; eva-indeed; nṛṣv-among human beings; api-also; tiryakṣu-among animals; yadaḥsv-among fish; api-also; te-of You; ajanasya-who never take birth; janma-birth; asatām-of the non-devotees; durmada-of false pride; nigrahāya-for subduing; prabhoḥ-of the Lord; vidhātaḥ-the creator; sat-to the devotees; anurgahāya-for mercy; ca-also.

O Lord, You expand Yourself in different incarnations. Among the demigods You incarnate as Vāmanadeva, among the great sages You incarnate as Paraśurāma, among the human beings You appear as Yourself, as Lord Kṛṣṇa, or a Lord Rāma, among the animals You appear as the boar incarnation, and among the aquatics You appear as the incarnation of fish. And yet You have no appearance. You are always eternal. Your appearance and disappearance are made possible by Your inconceivable energy just to give protection to the faithful devotees and to annihilate the demons.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī does not comment on this verse.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, because Your mercy has no limit, to benefit even these foolish persons You descend to this world in many different forms." In the "ajanasya" the word "jana" means "birth". Therefore "ajanasya" means "He who protects His devotees from taking birth again in the material world".

The word "durmada" means the false pride where one thinks, "I am the most

learned in all the scriptures. I am the most perfect in yoga." "Nigrahāya" means "to remove that false pride". The meaning here is that by devotedly hearing of Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, one becomes free of all false pride.

The Lord does not descend to this world only to benefit these foolish persons. He also comes to please the saintly devotees. That is confirmed by the word "sad-anugrahāya". Thus the Lord curbs the false pride of the impious, firmly establishes the principles of true religion, manifests His sweet pastimes and many other kinds of pastimes also, and gives His mercy to His devotees.

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "Why do you say that I am merciful to the impious?" To this Brahmā replies by speaking the word "prabho", which means "O supremely independent one". Or, this question may also be answered by the words, "O Lord, if You are not merciful to them, how will they become free from material desires?" The word "prabho" may also mean "O supremely capable one". Thus Brahmā says, "O Lord nothing is impossible for You".

The word "vidhātāḥ" means "O Lord who descends to this world in many different incarnations". This interpretation of this word in the vocative case is appropriate in this context.

Or, Brahmā says, "bewildered by Your māyā potency, the materialists think Your incarnations are ordinary conditioned souls. They think in this way because they hear that Your incarnations are born and perform many activities that seem like the activities of ordinary persons." Or, if the last two lines of the previous verse are considered to be part of this verse, the sentence may be expanded to include the words, "In truth, We three (Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva) are also Your incarnations. As We three take birth to create, protect, and destroy the universe, so Your other incarnations also take birth to fulfill various missions in this world. Thus their birth is not like the births of the conditioned souls." That is the meaning of the "passage beginning with the word "janma". Thus Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi take birth as the sons of Dharma Muni, and many other incarnations of the Lord also take birth among the demigods.

Or, if the question, "O Lord, why do You appear among Your devotees?" is asked, the passage beginning with the word "tvad-ṛte" (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.14.18) may be quoted in reply. To show the truth of that, Brahmā also speaks the passage beginning with the word "śṛṣṭau" (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.14.19).

Brahmā says: "O Lord, to create, maintain, and destroy the universes, You appear as Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Śiva, and to fulfill many other purposes You appear among the living entities as Nara-Nārāyaṇa Ṛṣi and many other incarnations." The meaning is: "O Lord, even though You enter within the material world, You are always eternal, spiritual, and transcendental, and even though You manifest many different forms, You are always one."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, to show the devotees the truth about You and the way to attain You, and also to protect them from being defeated by the demons, You appear in many incarnations." Brahmā also says, "O Lord You descend to this world to destroy the proud demons, who think "We know everything. You also descend to show mercy to the devotees. You do this by allowing them to directly see Your transcendental, eternal, and blissful form,

qualities, and pastimes." This is also described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.2.35):

sattvaṁ na ced dhātar idaṁ nijāṁ bhavet

"O Lord, cause of all causes, if Your transcendental body were not beyond the modes of material nature, one could not understand the difference between matter and transcendence. Only by Your presence one can understand the transcendental nature of Your Lordship, who are the controller of material nature. Your transcendental nature is very difficult to understand unless one is influenced by the presence of Your transcendental form."\*

### Text 21

ko vetti bhūman bhagavan parātman  
yogeśvarotir bhavatas tri-lokyam  
kva vā katham vā kati vā kadeti  
vistārayan kṛḍasi yoga-māyām

kaḥ-who; vetti-knows; bhūman-O supreme great one; bhagavan-O Supreme Personality of Godhead; parātman-O Supersoul; yogeśvara-O master of mystic power; ūtiḥ-pastimes; bhavataḥ-of Your Lordship; tri-lokyam-in the three worlds; kva-where?; vā-or; katham-how?; vā-or; kati-how many?; vā-or; kadā-when?; iti-thus; vistārayan-expanding; kṛḍasi-You play; yoga-māyām-spiritual energy.

O supreme great one! O Supreme Personality of Godhead! O Supersoul, master of all mystic power! Your pastimes are taking place continuously in these worlds, but who can estimate where, how, and when You are employing Your spiritual energy and performing Your pastimes? No one can understand the mystery of these activities.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "If I am completely independent and can do whatever I like, then why would I voluntarily take birth among the fish and other lower species? Why would I engage in begging and other degraded activities, as I did in My incarnation of Vāmana and other incarnations? Why in this incarnation do I sometime flee in fear and do other activities less than what could be desired?"

To refute this protest of the Lord, Brahmā speaks this verse. In the series of vocative-case words beginning with "bhūman", Brahmā affirms that the Lord is beyond the understanding of ordinary living entities.

Brahmā says: "In these three worlds, who can understand Your pastimes? Who can estimate where, how, and when You are employing Your spiritual energy and performing Your pastimes?" The meaning here is the Lord's pastimes are

inconceivable because they are manifested by His Yogamāyā potency.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Someone may ask Lord Kṛṣṇa: "Is it not true that in Your various incarnations You sometimes perform very ordinary activities, as if You were an ordinary conditioned soul?" To resolve that doubt, Brahmā speaks this verse.

Here "bhūman" means "O limitless one", "bhagavan" means "O master of all opulences", "parātman" means "O Supersoul hidden in everyone's heart", and "yogeśvara" means "O Lord able to perform any impossible feat". One after another, these words describe the Lord's quality of being beyond the understanding of ordinary souls.

The word "yogamāyā" here refers to the Lord's potency that manifests His forms and pastimes, which are all eternal and full of knowledge and bliss. Here the words "yogamāyām vistārayan" show that the Lord's pastimes are eternal and spiritual. I have already elaborately explained this truth in the second part of my book Śrī Bṛhad-Bhāgavatāmṛta. The remainder of this verse has already been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Or, "yoga" may be interpreted to mean "powers and opulences", and "māyām" may be interpreted to mean "mercy to the devotees". In this way the word "yogamāyā" may mean "the Supreme Lord's very powerful and opulent mercy to His devotees". The meaning here is that the Lord's pastimes are inconceivable because they display great powers and opulences and because they are limitless.

Or, someone may protest: "Why is it that many of the Supreme Lord's pastimes show less than exemplary desires on His part?" Brahmā speaks this verse to silence that protest. Brahmā says, "O Lord, Because they are manifested by Your Yogamāyā potency, Your pastimes are beyond the understanding of ordinary persons. Ordinary persons are clearly bewildered about their true nature."

The four vocative words in this verse confirm that this interpretation is correct. Thus because the Supreme Personality of Godhead is beyond the understanding of ordinary persons, so His pastimes are also beyond their understanding. In this way it is proved.

Here Brahmā says, "O Lord, to understand the truth of Your pastimes, the people must surrender to Your pure devotee. Then they will be delivered from this world of birth and death. There is no other way."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "Is it not true that I took birth in this world in order to remove the earth's burden, that Rāma took birth to kill Rāvaṇa, and that Śukla and other incarnations took birth to preach the science of spiritual life? That is all well known. My incarnations did not come to curb the false pride of fools who think they know everything."

To this protest Brahmā may reply: "Yes. That is true. Still, no one is able to know completely in what situations, for what purpose, or when You descend to this world and manifest Your pastimes." That is the gist of this verse.

Here "bhūman" means "O Lord whose limitless form pervades the universe", "bhagavan" means "O Lord who, even though all-pervading, possess six opulences

in fullness and perfection", "paramātman" means "O Lord who, even though who possess six opulences, are the Supersoul in everyone's heart", "yogeśvara" means "yogamāyām" means "the potency by which Your powers and opulences are seen", "ūtīḥ" means "Your pastimes, which begin with Your birth", and "trilokyām" means "in the three worlds".

Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, who can understand Your pastimes in the three worlds?" The implied answer to this rhetorical question is: "No one can understand Your pastimes." That is declared in the third line of this stanza.

Here someone may protest: "O Lord, is it not true that Your forms are limitless, all-pervading, and the masters of the six opulences? Although they are not made of material elements, still they are present in the three material worlds to enjoy the service of Your devotees. This means, then, that all Your pastimes are present in every place and every moment of time simultaneously. How is this possible?" To answer this doubt, Brahmā speaks the fourth line of this stanza.

here Brahmā says, "O Lord, even though all Your pastimes are always present, Your inconceivable Yogamāyā potency allows the appropriate devotees to see them at the appropriate times. At other times, when it is not appropriate to reveal them, Yogamāyā conceals Your pastimes, although they certainly continue to exist.

## Text 22

tasmād idam jagad aśeṣam asat-svarūpaṁ  
svapnābham asta-dhiṣaṇaṁ puru-duḥkha-duḥkham  
tvayy eva nitya-sukha-bodha-tanāv anante  
māyāta udyat api yat sad ivāvabhāti

tasmāt-therefore; idam-this; jagat-universe; aśeṣam-entire; asat-temporary; svarūpam-form; svapna-a dream; ābham-nature; asta-dhiṣaṇam-covered consciousness; puru-duḥkha-duḥkham-with many great sufferings; tvayi-in You; eva-indeed; nitya-eternal; sukha-happiness; bodha-awareness; tanau-in the body; anante-limitless; māyātaḥ-because of māyā; udyat-coming forth; api-although; yat-what; sat-eternal; iva-like; avabhāti-is manifested.

My dear Lord, this whole cosmic manifestation is just like a flashing dream, and its temporary existence simply disturbs the mind. As a result, we are full of anxiety in this existence. To live within this material world means simply to suffer and to be full of miseries. And yet this temporary existence of the material world appears to be pleasing and dear on account of its having evolved from Your body, which is eternal and full of bliss and knowledge.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here someone may protest: "O Lord, if Your various incarnations possess glories that have no limit, why is it that the conditioned souls think the temporary material world to be their true and real home?" To answer that doubt, Brahmā speaks this verse.



Here "asta-dhiṣaṇam" means "where consciousness is covered over". The words "tvayi" and "udyat" mean "because it is manifested from You", and "sad iva" mean "it appears to be eternal and substantial".

Here Brahmā says: "Matter seems to have Your qualities of eternity, bliss, and consciousness because it is manifested from You and You are its creator." That is the meaning here.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is, "O Lord, Your incarnations and pastimes are eternal spiritual reality. This material world, however, is in one sense an illusion, although in another sense it is also real because it has a relationship with You." Brahmā continues, "This is so because Your pastimes are manifested by Your Yogamāyā potency."

In the beginning, Brahmā explained that the material world is an illusion. Then, in verses 16 through 18 of this chapter, he refuted that idea. Now, in this verse he reconciles those two ideas. Here the Lord may say, "I am the mother who has created the material world. Why do You say, then, that it is an illusion?" To answer, Brahmā speaks this verse.

The meanings of some words follow. "Anta" means "destruction" and "an" means "without". Therefore "ananta" means "He who never dies", or, in other words, "He who lives eternally". Therefore, even something that seems to be unreal must be in one sense real if it has a relationship with the eternal "ananta".

The word "svapnābham" means "temporary like a dream". Still, even though it is temporary in this way, the material world is in one sense eternal, for it has a relationship with the supreme eternal. "Asta-dhiṣaṇam" means "without conscious". However, because it has a relationship with the supreme conscious person, the material world must also be, in one sense, conscious also. "Para-duḥkha-duḥkham" means "filled with sufferings". Still, because it has a relationship with the supremely blissful person, the material world must also be, in one sense, blissful also. The remainder of this verse has already been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Or, in this verse Brahmā hints, "O Lord, this world is also real, for within its confines one can engage in devotional service to You and thus one can attain the highest auspiciousness."

Brahmā also says, "O Lord, Your incarnations and pastimes are inconceivably glorious. Because the planets in this material world are manifested only temporarily, the material world is said to be temporary and not eternal. As a dream is only temporary, so the material is only temporarily manifested.

The material world is said to be "asta-dhiṣaṇam" (unconscious) because most of the living entities in the world are unaware of the true glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The reason for all this is given in the words "māyāta udyat" (it is manifested from the māyā potency).

Here Brahmā hints: "O Lord, although You are the creator of the material world, nevertheless attaining You is the highest goal for they who live in the material world. Thus You are both the creator and the goal. A person who knows that You are the goal engages in Your devotional service. For such a person the material world is certainly real, for he uses his stay within it to attain the highest

benefit."

Here the word "iva" is used in the colloquial sense of "not superior to". Or, it may mean "like" in the sense that for a person always engaged in service to the Lord this material world becomes like the spiritual world of Vaikuṅṭha. The remainder of the verse is as Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has explained it.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, this material world manifested from the māyā potency is limited and it is in constant flux. On the other hand, Your personal form is perfectly pure and spiritual."

Here the word "asat" means "what does not exist in all phases of time". "Svapnābham" means "what is temporary and of restricted consciousness, like a dream". That word should not be interpreted to mean that the material world is false like a dream. In the Seventh Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

pradhāna-pumbhyāṁ naradeva satya-kṛt

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead and His material creation are both real."

In his commentary on this verse, Śrīpada Madhvācārya quotes the following words of the Śruti-śāstra:

satyaṁ hy evedaṁ viśvam asṛjata

"Because the Supreme Personality of Godhead created it, the material world is real."

"Asta" means "lost" and dhiṣaṇam" means "knowledge". Thus "asta-dhiṣaṇam" means "when knowledge is stolen by ignorance". "Nityam" refers to the Lord's sandhinī potency of eternal existence, "sukham" refers to the Lord's hlādinī potency of spiritual bliss, and "bodha" refers to the Lord's samvit potency of transcendental knowledge.

Here Brahmā says, "O Lord, because of these three potencies Your forms are all eternal and full of knowledge and bliss." Brahmā continues, "O Lord, You are the original creator. From You comes the māyā potency, and from the māyā potency comes the material world." The words "sad iva" here mean "as if manifested in all phases of time".

Or, this verse may mean, "O Lord, You manifest Your many auspicious forms just to give mercy to the devotees." Interpreted in this way, the words "jagad asat-svarūpan" mean "without You the material world is an inauspicious place".

Here someone may protest: "Is it not true that the material world is an illusion? What is the use, then, of considering under what circumstances the material world is auspicious or inauspicious?"

To this protest Brahmā replies with the word “svapnābham”, which means "like a dream". The material world is like a dream. It is not to be believed. However, even though because they are in material consciousness (asta-dhīṣaṇam) they experience many sufferings (para-duḥkha-duḥkha), the conditioned souls still think the material world an auspicious place. In their eyes the objects of material sense gratification are sources of bliss. That is why they think the material world is auspicious (sad ivābhāti).

### Text 23

ekas tvam ātmā puruṣaḥ purāṇaḥ  
satyaḥ svayam-jyotiḥ ananta ādyaḥ  
nityo 'kṣaro 'jasra-sukho nirañjanaḥ  
pūrṇādvayo mukta upādhitō 'mṛtaḥ

ekaḥ-one; tvam-You; ātmā-Superson; puruṣaḥ-Supreme Personality of Godhead; purāṇaḥ-ancient; satyaḥ-eternal; svayam-jyotiḥ-self-effulgent; ananta-limitless; ādyaḥ-the first; nityaḥ-eternal; akṣaraḥ-imperishable; ajasra-sukhaḥ-always blissful; nirañjanaḥ-untouched by matter; pūrṇa-perfect and complete; advayaḥ-without any rival; mukta-free; upādhitāḥ-from all material designations; amṛtaḥ-immortal.

My conclusion is, therefore, that You are the Supreme Soul, Absolute Truth, and the supreme, original person, and although You have expanded Yourself in so many Viṣṇu forms, or in living entities and energies, by Your inconceivable transcendental potencies, You are the supreme one without a second. You are the supreme Supersoul. You are the Absolute Truth, and You are not of this material darkness. You are the source of the original brahmajyoti as well as the material luminaries. Your transcendental effulgence is identical with the brahmajyoti. Because You are not one of the creations of this material world, Your existence as You are will continue. Your body is indestructible. The material body is always full of threefold miseries, but Your body is full of being, bliss, knowledge, and eternity. You are always complete. Although many expansions from the complete are visible, the complete is one without a second. Since Your pastimes are spiritual, there is no possibility of their being contaminated by the material modes of nature. There is no other competitor of second identity than Yourself. You are the original nectar of immortality, indestructible.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, You are the eternal spiritual reality." Here Brahmā says, "O Lord, the material body, which is easily seen, is not eternal and spiritual. It is the soul, which cannot be seen by material senses, that is eternal and spiritual. Furthermore, whatever undergoes change cannot be eternal and spiritual. Material transformations, which begin with birth, never affect You. This is so for

You are the original cause (ādyā) of all. Therefore You never take birth."

The reason Lord Kṛṣṇa is the original cause of all is given in the word "purāṇaḥ", which means "He who existed before the material world was created". The reason Lord Kṛṣṇa existed before the material world was created is given in the word "puruṣaḥ", which means "the Supreme Personality of Godhead". This is explained in the following words of the Śruti-śāstra:

pūrvam evāham ihāsam

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead said: Before the material creation, I existed."

tat puruṣasya puruṣatvam

"That person who existed before the material world is the Supreme Person."

The idea that Lord Kṛṣṇa takes birth again and again, like a conditioned soul, is refuted here by the word "nityaḥ", which means "eternal". The four words "pūrṇa", "ajasra-sukhaḥ", "akṣaraḥ", and "amṛtaḥ" refute (respectively) the ideas that the Lord grows, changes, becomes weaker, and, finally, dies.

The reason the Lord is perfect and complete (pūrṇa) is given in the words "anantaḥ" and "advayaḥ", which declare that the Lord is not bound by the limitations of time, space, or the ordinary nature of things. Then, to prove that Lord Kṛṣṇa is eternal (amṛta), Brahmā explains that Lord Kṛṣṇa is not affected by the four kinds of karmic reaction. To prove that Brahmā uses the three words "svayam-jyotiḥ", "nirañjanaḥ" and "mukta upādhiḥ".

Here is the meaning: The word "ādyāḥ" refutes the idea that Lord is created at a certain point in time. In addition to that, a person attains an object either by performing actions, or by attaining knowledge. The idea that Lord Kṛṣṇa required to perform actions to attain His desire is refuted here by the word "ātmā", and the idea that He needs knowledge to attain His desires is refuted here by the word "svayam-jyotiḥ".

Material transformations occur on the external material body or external material covering. For example, the external covering of rice is transformed when the husk is removed by threshing. However, Lord Kṛṣṇa has no external material body. This Brahmā explains with the words "mukta upādhiḥ".

Transformation for the good, or improvement, is done either by attaining a good quality, or removing a bad quality. The idea that Lord Kṛṣṇa does not already have all good qualities and therefore needs to attain them is refuted here by the word "pūrṇa", and the idea that Lord Kṛṣṇa has some bad qualities and therefore requires to be purified of them is refuted by the word "nirañjanaḥ", which means "pure".

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

In this verse Brahmā proves that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the eternal spiritual reality, a truth he has already described in this chapter, and he also proves that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is different from the individual spirit souls. Here the words "ekas tvam ātmā puruṣaḥ" mean, "You are the all-pervading Supersoul, present in the hearts of all conditioned souls". This is described in the following words of Vedic literature:

puri śayanāt puruṣaḥ

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead resides in the city of the heart."

"Purāṇaḥ" means "even though He existed, with all His powers and opulences, before the material world was created, Lord Kṛṣṇa is always a fresh youth." This means that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the all-powerful supreme controller.

These three words (1. ekaḥ, 2. ātmā, and 3. puruṣaḥ) thus describe, in that order, 1. Brahman, 2. the Supersoul (Paramātmā), and 3. the Supreme Personality of Godhead (Parameśvara). Lord Kṛṣṇa's powers, opulences, and other attributes are not manifestations of matter. This Brahmā affirms with the word "satyaḥ".

Here someone may protest: "But Lord Kṛṣṇa has a form. He can even be seen. How is it possible, then, that He is eternal and spiritual?"

To this protest Brahmā replies with the word "svayam-jyotiḥ", which means "He can reveal Himself to whomever He likes. By His own mercy He makes Himself visible to someone." Furthermore, Lord Kṛṣṇa is "anantaḥ", which means "There is no upper limit beyond which He cannot go". Lord Kṛṣṇa is also "ādyāḥ", which means "There was no time in the past when He did not exist". In this way Lord Kṛṣṇa cannot be bound by any kind of limit or restriction.

Or, "anantaḥ" may mean "limitless", "ādyāḥ" may mean "he who is not born, as the conditioned souls are", "nityāḥ" may mean "whose form is always the same and never changes", and "akṣara" may mean "unchanging". "Akṣaraḥ" may also mean "beyond the material world". This usage of "akṣara" is seen in these words of Bhagavad-gītā (15.16):

kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni

"There are two classes of beings: the fallible and the infallible. In the material world every living entity is fallible (kṣara), and in the spiritual world every living entity is called infallible (akṣara)."\*

"Ajasra-sukhaḥ" means "He who is always blissful" or "He whose body is filled with intense bliss", "nirañjanaḥ" means "He who is pure and free of impurities", "pūrṇaḥ" means "He who is perfect and complete, and thus does not require anything that He does not already have", "advayaḥ" means "He who has no contact with persons whose nature is not like His", and "mukta upādhiḥ" means "He

who without any ulterior motive (upādhi) always benefits all living entities", or it may also mean "He who is naturally endowed with all these virtues". "Amṛtaḥ" means "He who never dies", or it may also mean "He who rescues His devotees from the material world, which is the land of repeated deaths".

In this way the idea that because He has a form, Lord Kṛṣṇa must be like an ordinary conditioned soul, and therefore must be attached to the material world, not able to control whether He is visible to others, limited, forced to assume different forms because He stays in the womb, becomes born, and goes through various material transformations, experiencing only small happinesses, impure, forced to associate with others whose natures are not congenial to His nature, encased within a material body, and a resident of the material world, is refuted. If he wishes, the reader may search the scriptures to find the evidence for all these truths, one by one.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, although You have many forms, by Your inconceivable potency Your form is one." Here the words "ekas tvam ātmā" mean "You are the Supersoul". Here the word "ekaḥ" must refer to Lord Kṛṣṇa, for the individual spirit souls are many, and cannot be said to be one.

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "The Supersoul has no form. He is not a person. After all, the word 'person' generally refers to being that has a form. You say I am a person. Am I a young person?"

Here Brahmā replies: No. You are the oldest.

Lord Kṛṣṇa protests: I am Nanda's son. I am young. It is not right to say that I am the oldest.

Brahmā replies: It is true that You are the son of Nanda, but it is also true that You exist eternally (satyaḥ), in all three phases of time. Therefore You are the oldest person.

Lord Kṛṣṇa: The Supreme Person You describe is the creator of time, karma, and everything else. How is it possible that I am He?

Brahmā: Please do not argue. You are self-effulgent (svayam-jyotiḥ).

Lord Kṛṣṇa: Am I like the sun, existing only within a certain area of space?

Brahmā: No. You are limitless (anantaḥ). For You time and space impose no limits.

Lord Kṛṣṇa: Then the Supreme has many incarnations, and I am one of them.

Brahmā: You are the source (ādyāḥ) of all incarnations. You are the root of the Lord's incarnations.

Lord Kṛṣṇa: In the next lifetime of Brahmā will I again incarnate in this form?

Brahmā: You are eternal (nityāḥ). The material universe is ancient, real, and eternal. However, at the end of Brahmā's lifetime it is not longer manifested in the same form. That is what is meant when it is said that the material universe is not eternal. On the other hand, You will remain eternally in this form as the son of Nanda. Therefore You are said to be eternal. Your form is eternal and unchanging because You are the original Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Vedic literatures confirm this by saying:

yo 'sau saurye tiṣṭhati

"Lord Kṛṣṇa is the same Supreme Personality of Godhead who formerly appeared in the Sūrya-vamśa."

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

yaḥ sāksāt para-brahmeti govindam sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaṁ vṛndāvana-sura-  
bhūruha-talāsīnam

"Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose form is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss, and who sits under a kalpa-vṛkṣa tree in Vṛndāvana forest, is the original Supreme Personality of Godhead."

In Bhagavad-gītā (14.27) You Yourself affirm:

brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham

"I am the basis of the impersonal Brahman."\*

Then Lord Kṛṣṇa may again protest: Any form is, by its very nature, subject to the six transformations. Thus forms are always being diminished moment after moment. How is it possible that I am like that?

Brahmā: No. You are not like that. You are unchanging (akṣarah).

Lord Kṛṣṇa: They who have forms must experience sometimes happiness and sometimes sufferings.

Brahmā: You are always full of bliss (ajasra-sukhaḥ).

Lord Kṛṣṇa: Is it not true that in My early childhood I was greedy to drink My mother's breast milk and then to steal the gopīs' butter and yogurt? In My later childhood was I not angry with Kāliya and a host of others? In My teenage years was I not lusty to enjoy with the gopīs? Therefore I am impure. I am contaminated by lust and a host of other vices.

Brahmā: That is not true. You are supremely pure (nirañjanaḥ). Your so-called lust and other vices are all pure and spiritual.

Lord Kṛṣṇa: Still, I am dependent on the gopīs and many others. Because I need them, therefore I am not perfect and complete.

Brahmā: You are perfect and complete (pūrṇa). Your being dependent on Your loving devotees does not negate Your perfection and completeness.

Lord Kṛṣṇa: Is there another person like Me, or is there no one else like Me?

Brahmā: No one else is like You (advayaḥ).

Lord Kṛṣṇa: Very well then, because there is no one else like Me, I am therefore the original Supreme Personality of Godhead. Still, many people think I am simply a transformation of transcendental knowledge.

Brahmā: You are not a transformation of transcendental knowledge (mukta upādhitaḥ). In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

vidyāvidyābhyām bhinnāḥ

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is beyond both knowledge and ignorance."

This is so because You are beyond all limiting designations. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

amṛtaṁ śāśvataṁ brahma

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternal. He is far beyond any limiting designation."

In this passage the word "amṛta" means "The Supreme Personality of Godhead is beyond any limiting designation". The word "amṛta" here may also be interpreted to mean "He who never dies".

#### Text 24

evam-vidham tvam sakalātmanām api  
svātmānam ātmāmatayā vicakṣate  
gurv-arka-labdhopaniṣat-sucakṣuṣā  
ye te tarantīva bhavānṛtāmbudhim

evam-vidham-like this; tvam-You; sakalātmanām-of all souls; api-also; svātmānam-the Supersoul; ātmāmatayā-as the Supersoul; vicakṣate-sees; guru-great; arka-sun; labdha-attained; upaniṣat-of the Upaniṣads; sucakṣuṣā-with the eyes; ye-who; te-they; taranti-cross over; iva-like; bhava-of repeated birth and death; anṛta-of māyā; ambudhim-the ocean.

In the Upaniṣads it is stated that the Supreme Brahman is as effulgent as the sun and is the origin of everything, and anyone who can understand that original person becomes liberated from the material conditional life.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "By understanding You in this way, the people become liberated." Here the words "tvām", "ye", and "vicakṣante" mean "they who see You properly". How do they see the Lord? They see Him as the Supersoul of all living



beings (ātmātmayā). They do not see Him from a little distance, as one might see his children. They see Him very intimately: as the Supersoul present in the hearts of all living beings.

How are they able to see Him in that way? The answer is given in the word "gurv-arka-labdhopaniṣat-sucakṣuṣā", which means "with eyes enlightened by Upaniṣad-knowledge obtained from the spiritual-master sun." Thus they are able to cross the ocean of material existence (tarantīva bhavānṛtāmbudhim).

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "By attaining this kind of knowledge about You, which is to say by engaging in devotional service to You, such persons easily become liberated from the material world." Brahmā here says: "They see You as the Supersoul and the controller of all living entities. They see You as more dear (ātmayā) than their own lives."

Or, these words may mean, "They see You as the Supersoul of all living entities, the Supersoul who stays in my own heart also". Brahmā continues: "Somehow or other thinking of You as their dearest friend, and understanding You in the ways previously described, Your devotees cross over the illusory material world, which is here called an ocean because it is so difficult to cross." Or, the word "anṛta" may mean "because material existence is flimsy, insubstantial, and basically an illusion, simply by attaining transcendental knowledge one can cross beyond it." The word "iva" here means "because knowledge of the Supersoul is included within knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, by understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead one easily understands the Supersoul also."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is: "Even they who worship Your feature as the varietyless Brahman can, by engaging in devotional service to the Supersoul, who has a form and is a person, become fortunate. If they become fortunate in this way, they will attain faith in You. Then they are called śānta-bhaktas, devotees in the rasa of neutrality."

Here Brahmā says: "With devotion they see You as the Supersoul (ātmātmayā). They see that You have a form and You are a person, that You are charming and handsome, that You delight the eyes, the mind, and the heart, that You have the qualities (evam-vidham) described in the previous verses, and that You are the Supersoul present in all living entities (sakalātmānam)." This is also described in the following words of Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu:

paramātmayā kṛṣṇe  
jātā śāntī ratir matā

"By understanding that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supersoul, one attains the neutral stage of devotional service."

The question may be asked: "How is this attained?" Brahmā answers by saying: "The spiritual master is like the sun. By studying under his direction one attains the knowledge of the Upaniṣads. By understanding that knowledge one crosses over the ocean of illusions that is material existence."

## Text 25

ātmānam evātmatayāvijānatām  
tenaiva jātām nikhilam prāpañcitam  
jñānena bhūyo 'pi ca tat praliyate  
rajjvām aher bhoga-bhavābhavau yathā

ātmānam-Yourself; eva-indeed; ātmatayā-as the Supersoul; avijānatām-unaware; tena-by that; eva-indeed; jātām-born; nikhilam-all; prāpañcitam-material world; jñānena-by the knowledge; bhūyaḥ-greatly; api-even; ca-also; tat-that; praliyate-enters; rajjvām-of a rope; aheḥ-of a snake; bhoga-experience; bhava-existence; abhavau-and non-existence; yathā-as.

There are many so-called meditators who do not know that You are the Supreme Soul. One who is always absorbed in meditation on Your original form of Kṛṣṇa easily crosses over the ocean of material nescience. But person who do not know that You are the Supreme Soul remain within this material world in spite of their so-called meditation. If, by the association of Your devotees, a person comes to the knowledge that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the original Supersoul, then it is possible for him to cross over the ocean of material ignorance. For instance, a person becomes transcendental to the mistake of thinking a rope is a snake. As soon as one understands that the rope is not a snake, he is liberated from fear. One who understands You, therefore, need no more fear the material existence.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

In the next four verses (25-28) three statements are made, one after another. These statements are: 1. By knowledge, they transcend, 2. They transcend, and 3. By knowledge of the Supersoul they transcend. In this verse (25), the first of these statements (by knowledge they transcend) is made, in the next verse (26) the second statement (they transcend) is made, and in the next two verses (27 and 28) the third statement (by knowledge of the Supersoul, they transcend) is made.

Here someone may ask: "Why does transcendental knowledge enable one to transcend the material realm? " To this question the answer is given in this verse: "because ignorance is the root of material existence". This means that ignorance has created the material world of five elements. Here the words "rajjvām aher bhoga-bhavābhavau yathā" mean "like the mistake of thinking a rope is a snake."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is: Liberation to easy to attain. "Atmānam evātmatayāvijānatām" means "of they who do not understand that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is free from material desires, the law of karma, and all other material disadvantages", and "tenaiva jātaṁ nikhilam prāpañcitam" means "by that ignorance of the true nature of the Supreme, the material world of five elements is created".

Or, these words may mean, "the material world is created for persons who do not think the Supreme Personality of Godhead is their dear friend". Or, the words "jñānena bhūyo 'pi ca tat pralīyate" may mean, "simply by understanding the truth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead all foolish impersonalist ideas, such as the thoughts 'I am the supreme controller' or 'I am the all-opulent Supreme' are at once destroyed."

Here the word "ca" implies "the desire for impersonal liberation and all other foolish desires are also destroyed". What more need be said? The verse explains: "then it is possible for him to cross over the ocean of material ignorance." The words "bhūyo 'pi" mean "even though the material world is very great and formidable".

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here someone may ask: "Do they not transcend the material world? Why do you say 'as if' (iva) they transcend it? Why is it said here that the material world is unreal?"

The answers to these questions follow: These two verses (24 and 25) describe the vivarta-vāda theory of the impersonalists, who claim that the material world is unreal and the act of transcending the material world is also unreal. That is why the word "as if" is sarcastically used here in describing the act of transcending the material world.

Here "ātmānam" means "the individual spirit soul", and "ātmatayā avijānatām" means "unaware of the self that is full of knowledge and bliss". The first two lines of this verse mean, "because they are covered by ignorance, the living entities are not able to understand the true nature of the soul. It is because of their ignorance that the material world of five elements was created."

The word "bhūyaḥ" means "again". "Pralīyate" means "by saṅkhyā, yoga, renunciation, austerity, and devotional service one becomes aware that the self is different from the external material body. This knowledge puts an end to the material world of five elements." The verse then explains: "For instance, a person becomes transcendental to the mistake of thinking a rope is a snake. As soon as one understands that the rope is not a snake, he is liberated from fear. One who understands You, therefore, need no more fear the material existence."

## Text 26

ajñāna-samjñau bhava-bandha-mokṣau  
dvau nāma nānyau sta ṛta-jñā-bhāvāt  
ajasra-city ātmani kevale pare

vicaryamāṇe taraṇāv ivāhanī

ajñāna-ignorance; samjñau-knowledge; bhava-bandha-material bondage; mokṣau-liberation; dvau-two; nāma-indeed; na-not; anyau-others; staḥ-are; ṛta-jñā-bhāvāt-from true knowledge; ajasra-citi-in unobstructed consciousness; ātmani-in the spirit soul; kevale-transcendental; pare-spiritual; vicaryamāṇe-being considered; taraṇau-within the sun; iva-like; ahanī-day and night.

So-called liberation and bondage have no meaning for a person who is already engaged in Your devotional service, just as a person who knows that the rope is not a snake is unafraid. A devotee knows that this material world belongs to You, and he therefore engages everything in Your transcendental loving service. Thus there is no bandage for him. For a person who is already situated in the sun planet, there is no question of the appearance or disappearance of the sun in the name of day or night. It is also said that You, Kṛṣṇa, are just like the sun and māyā is like darkness. When the sun is present there is no question of darkness. So, for those who are always in Your presence, there is no question of bondage or liberation. They are already liberated. On the other hand, persons who falsely think themselves to be liberated without taking shelter of Your lotus feet fall down because their intelligence is not pure.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here someone may ask: "Is it not true that they who have spiritual knowledge transcend the material world? Why, then, was it said in that previous verse that it is 'as if' (iva) they transcend the material world?" This verse is spoken in reply to that question.

The words "ajñāna-samjñau bhava-bandha-mokṣau" mean "the words 'liberation' and 'material bondage' are spoken only out of ignorance". These two words 'liberation' and 'material bondage' are well known. Still, one situated in spiritual knowledge knows that they are not truly different from each other.

Then someone may ask: "If this is so, then why do you spend so much time talking about 'liberation' and 'material bondage'?" Explaining the true goal of life, Brahmā answers this question in the second half of this verse.

He says, "The Supreme Personality of Godhead is completely pure. He knows everything. For Him there is neither 'material bondage' nor 'liberation', just as within the sun there is neither 'day' nor 'night'."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "Whether one transcends the cycle of birth and death is not very important, and liberation is not the final goal of life." These two (transcendence and liberation) are not different from true spiritual knowledge. In truth, the idea that they are not identical with spiritual knowledge is an illusion.

Here Brahmā says: "When one understands the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is filled with spiritual knowledge, and who is pure, and untouched by matter, then material bondage and liberation become irrelevant. They are both

seen to be illusions only."

Here an example is given: "As on the sun there are neither day nor night, so for the Supreme Personality of Godhead there are neither material bondage nor liberation." In this way it is said that liberation from the cycle of birth and death is a very insignificant attainment. It is not the real goal of life. Or, these words may mean, "when one's mind understands the transcendental Supreme Personality of Godhead, then material bondage and liberation are revealed to be illusions only."

Here someone may ask: "Why is it that simply by understanding the truth of the material bondage and liberation are revealed to be illusions only?" The answer is given in the word "ajasra-citi", which means (filled with transcendental knowledge". By understanding the Supreme, who is filled with transcendental knowledge, one attains transcendental knowledge also.

Here an example is given to show this illusion. Brahmā says: "It is like the sun, where there are no days and also no nights, which separate one day from another."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is: "The material world is an illusion, and therefore to transcend it is also an illusion." Here Brahmā says, "the ideas of material bondage and liberation are both illusions. When one is situated in transcendental knowledge one knows that they are not different from each other. When one understands that he is a pure spirit soul, different from the external material body, then he is no longer bewildered by the illusion of material bondage and liberation."

Here Brahmā gives an example. He says: "As day and night do not exist on the sun, so material bondage and liberation do not exist when one understands the spiritual truth.

## Text 27

tvam ātmānaṁ paramṁ matvā  
param ātmānam eva ca  
ātma punar bahir mṛgya  
aho 'jñā-janatājñatā

tvam-You; ātmānam-the Supersoul; param-something else; matvā-considering; param-other; ātmānam-self; eva-indeed; ca-and; ātma-self; punaḥ-again; bahiḥ-outside; mṛgya-to be sought; ahaḥ-Oh; ajñā-janatā-of ignorant persons; ajñatā-ignorance.

If one therefore thinks that the Supersoul is something different from Your personality, and thus searches out the Supersoul somewhere else, in the forest or in the caves of the Himalayas, his condition is very lamentable. You are present in everyone's heart, and there is no need to search out the Supersoul anywhere else. If someone does so, he is simply in ignorance.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here someone may protest: "Is it not true that knowledge of life's goal destroys ignorance? Why, then, should one be interested in knowledge of the spiritual soul specifically?"

To this protest Brahmā gives the following reply: "The living entity does not understand his true identity. Therefore knowledge of the true nature of the spirit soul is important." In this context, filled with surprise, Brahmā speaks this verse.

Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, these persons think that the self is the material body or something else material. Thus they ascribe material attributes to the self. Even though they think the self is identical with the body, when the body dies, they still think the self has gone elsewhere, and they search, 'Where has the self gone?' This is very surprising. After all, if one misplaces an object in one's house, one does not go roaming in the forest to search where he has misplaced it."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "They who, even though they understand that each self is a spiritual soul distinct from the five material elements, think that You, O Lord, are an individual spirit soul, and thus not fundamentally different from the other spirit souls, are the greatest fools."

Here the words "tvam ātmānam param matvā" mean "Even though You are the Supersoul, they think that You are an ordinary conditioned soul encased within a material body." Here "api" means "and".

Here Brahmā says, "The truth is that You are the all-pervading Supersoul. You exist everywhere, both within and without. Therefore no one need go outside to search for You."

Here the word "apunaḥ" (not again) begins with the negative prefix "a". This prefix is described in the following words of the Amara-kośa Dictionary:

abhāve na hy a no nāpi

"The words `na', `hi', `a', `no', and `nāpi' all mean `not'."

The conclusion is that the non-devotees need not search Vṛndāvana or any other place to find Lord Kṛṣṇa. They can find Him as the Supersoul within their own bodies. The word "aho" means "How surprising!"

"Ajña-janatājñatā" means "the folly of fools". Their folly is this: Even though the Supreme Personality of Godhead is all-pervading, and even though He has many unique qualities, as have been previously described, these fools deny the truth that He (the Supreme Personality of Godhead) and the individual spirit soul are different persons.

The elision of the letter "a" here in the word "ajña" is according to the standard of Vedic grammar. In some readings the word is "ajña-janājñatā".

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, so-called philosophers who reject Your personal form are like fools who try to thresh empty husks of rice, as has already been described here (in text 4)."

Here the word "ca" means "even though". Here Brahmā says, "O Lord, these persons think that Your personal form of the Supersoul is a manifestation of the māyā potency, and the real, pure Supersoul is to be sought somewhere else." Here the idea of folly (the folly of fools) is repeated because Brahmā is so surprised (aho) by these persons.

This is the meaning: Vivarta-vāda, pariṇāma-vāda, and other impersonalist theories describe only what occurs in the material world manifested from the māyā potency, a world different from the world of spirit. These theories cannot hope to describe the world of spirit, which is full of knowledge. This is described in the following words of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam's Third Canto:

śābdam brahma vapur dadhat

"Then the Supreme Personality of Godhead revealed His form, which is purely spiritual and is described in the Vedas."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (8.18.12) it is also said:

yat tad vapur bhāti vibhūṣaṇāyudhair  
avyakta-cid-vyaktam adhārayad dhariḥ  
babhūva tenaiva sa vāmanaḥ. . .

"The Lord appeared in His original form, with ornaments and weapons in His hands. Although this ever-existing form is not visible in the material world, he nonetheless appeared in this form. Then, in the presence of His father and mother, He assumed the form of Vāmana, a brāhmaṇa-dwarf, a brahmacārī, just like a theatrical actor."\*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.13.54) it is said:

satya-jñānānantānanda-  
mātraika-rasa-mūrtayaḥ

"The Viṣṇu-mūrtis all had eternal, unlimited forms, full of knowledge and bliss, and existing beyond the influence of time."\*

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

govindaṁ sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaṁ vṛndāvana-sura-bhūruha-talāsīnam

"Lord Kṛṣṇa, who sits under a kalpa-vṛkṣa tree in Vṛndāvana forest, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. His form is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss."

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is also said:

tāsāṁ madhye sāksād brahma gopāla-purī

"In this midst of that spiritual world is the spiritual city of Lord Kṛṣṇa."

Here the word "pūrṇa-brahmātmake" means "The Supreme Lord's form, abode, and all else in relation to Him is always perfectly spiritual in nature." They who do not have the eyes of these and other statements in the Śruti and Smṛti śāstras are blind. Following blind so-called spiritual teachers (the blind paramparā), they fall into the impersonalist theory of vivarta-vāda.

The word "aho" here shows that Brahmā is amazed that such lamentable creatures exist within his creation. In some readings the last word is "ajña-janājñatā".

## Text 28

antar-bhave 'nanta bhavantam eva  
hy atat tyajanto mṛgayanti santaḥ  
asantam apy anty ahim antareṇa  
santaṁ guṇaṁ taṁ kim u yānti santaḥ

antar-bhave-within; ananta-O limitless one; bhavantam-You; eva-indeed; hi-indeed; atat-not that; tyajantaḥ-rejecting; mṛgayanti-search; santaḥ-saints; asantam-non-existent; api-even; anti-present nearby; ahim-snake; antareṇa-within; santaṁ-being; guṇam-rope; taṁ-that; kim-whether?; u-indeed; yānti-attain; santaḥ-saints.

One who is transcendental to such a position understands that You are unlimited. You are both within and without. Your presence is everywhere. Instead of searching for the Supersoul anywhere else, a devotee only concentrates his mind on You within. Actually one who is liberated from the material concept of life can search for You. Others cannot. The simile of thinking the rope to be a snake is applicable only to those who are still in ignorance of You. Actually the existence of a snake besides the rope is only within the mind. The existence of māyā, similarly,



is only within the mind. Māyā is nothing but ignorance of Your personality. When one forgets Your personality, that is the conditional state of māyā. Therefore one who is fixed upon You, both internally and externally is not illusioned.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, they who are wise know the real truth of Your Supersoul form." here the word "bhava" means "it is" and refers to the body, which is made of material elements and contains a spirit soul. Here Brahmā says, "O Lord, in that material body they search for You and they reject everything that is not You."

Here someone may protest: Knowledge of the spiritual reality is sufficient. Why be concerned to negate what is not spiritual?"

Fearing that someone would raise this protest, Brahmā declares: "Without first rejecting what is false it is not possible to establish the truth". The practical activities of saintly persons are given as an example in the second half of this verse.

"Anti" means "nearby", and "asantam apy anty ahim antareṇa" means "without negating the illusion of a snake". Here Brahmā says: "Without first understanding that the 'snake' is an illusion, how can the saintly persons understand that what is before them is truly a rope?"

Or, these words may be interpreted to mean, "Without first rejecting the illusion, can they then understand that what is near them is a rope?" The answer is: "They cannot understand." Therefore, the conclusion is, "By understanding the Supersoul, one attains liberation."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, saintly persons search for You within and without, for You are all-pervading." Here "ananta" means "-O limitless one, who are present everywhere, within and without".

With a touch of sarcasm, Brahmā rhetorically asks, "O Lord, do the saintly devotees search for You only within their own bodies?" The answer implied here is, "No. They do not. They also look for You outside their bodies."

Here someone may ask: "How do they do that?" The answer is given in the second half of this verse: "They reject all false conceptions of the self, false conceptions dear to the materialists. Without first rejecting these false conceptions, one cannot attain pure knowledge." "Antareṇa" here means "without rejecting that illusion".

Here Brahmā says: "Thinking, 'I am not the Lord. Rather, I belong to the Lord. I am His property', the devotees reject the impersonalists false idea that they are the Lord themselves. O Lord, in this way the devotees attain You."

Or, this passage may mean "rejecting all that is material, all that is separate from the Lord." In this way it is said, "Without first rejecting matter it is not possible to attain the spiritual, the true reality". That is the meaning of the second half of this verse.

Or, then someone may ask: "How do the wise search for the Lord?" The answer is given with the word "antar-bhave", which means "They search in the lotus of the heart". Thus they reject everything that is "atat", which means "everything that

does not help the search to find the Lord."

Here someone may ask: "By remembering the Lord one becomes automatically free from all that is separate from Him. Why, then, should one artificially struggle to reject what is not the Lord?"

This question is answered by the second half of this verse. The answer is: "Without first renouncing material sense gratification, fruitive work, and the speculative theories of the impersonalists, it is not possible to become perfect in always remembering the Lord." The remainder of the verse is as has already been explained.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, the wise do not think that You have a material body made by the māyā potency. It is the conditioned soul who has a material body. To rescue the conditioned soul from the contamination of māyā, they search for the soul itself, who is by nature both pure and spiritual. They search for the individual spirit soul, who resides within the material body (antar-bhave), who takes birth in different species of life countless times (ananta-bhavantam), and who has very little true knowledge."

Here someone may ask: "What do they do?" The answer is given: "They reject māyā, all that is produced by māyā, and all that is different (atat) from the spirit soul."

Here someone may protest: "Is it not true that knowledge of the spirit soul is all one needs? Why need one reject all that is not spiritual?"

Fearing that someone would raise this protest, Brahmā declares: "Without first rejecting what is material, one cannot attain the spiritual truth."

The activities of the saintly devotees are described in the second half of this verse. "Anti" means "nearby", and "asantam apy anty ahim antareṇa" means "without negating the illusion of a snake". Here Brahmā says: "Without first understanding that the 'snake' is an illusion, how can the saintly persons understand that what is before them is truly a rope?" The implied answer to this rhetorical question is: "They cannot understand without first becoming free of that illusion." In the Śruti-āśātra it is said:

asaṅgo hy ayam puruṣaḥ

"The spirit soul is, by nature, aloof from matter."

This means that the spirit soul is by nature different from the gross and subtle material bodies, and therefore the lamentations, illusions, and other misfortunes that are an inevitable part of that body are not really his. However, because of ignorance, the soul mistakes the material body for himself. Therefore, without first understanding, "I am not the material body", how is it possible for one to understand the true nature of the eternal, pure spiritual soul? It is not possible. That is the meaning here.

## Text 29

athāpi te deva-padāmbuja-dvaya-  
prasāda-leśānuḡrḥīta eva hi  
jānāti tattvaṁ bhagavan-mahimno  
na cānya eko 'pi ciraṁ vicinvaṁ

atha-therefore; api-indeed; te-Your; deva-My Lord; padāmbuja-dvaya-of the two lotus feet; prasāda-of the mercy; leśa-by only a trace; anuḡrḥīta-favored; eva-certainly; hi-indeed; jānāti-one knows; tattvaṁ-the truth; bhagavat-of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; mahimnaḥ-of the greatness; na-never; ca-and; anya-another; ekaḥ-one; api-although; ciraṁ-for a long period; vicinvaṁ-speculating.

My Lord, if one is favored by even a slight trace of the mercy of Your lotus feet, he can understand the greatness of Your personality. But those who speculate in order to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead are unable to know You, even though they continue to study the Vedas for many years.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here someone may ask: "But if liberation is attained only by transcendental knowledge, why have you described devotional service?" This verse is spoken to answer that question.

Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, although I have spoken as if transcendental knowledge very easily falls into the palm of one's hand, the truth is that transcendental stays only in a small fragment of the mercy of Your lotus feet. Only when one is blessed with that mercy may one understand the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (bhagavan-mahimnaḥ)."

Or, this may be considered two words (bhagavan and mahimnaḥ). Interpreted in that way, the sentence means "O Lord, only then may one understand Your glories". Here "eko 'pi ciraṁ vicinvaṁ" means "someone who spends a long time trying to discern what is the Supreme and what is not the Supreme."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, although Your glory is clearly manifested in this way, one can see Your glory only by Your mercy." "Deva" here means "O all-glorious Lord", or else it may mean "O all-pervading Lord", or it may mean "O Lord who enjoys pastimes in Vṛndāvana eternally". In these ways "deva" is interpreted as a word in the vocative case. It may also be interpreted as an adjective (in a karmadhāraya-samāsa) modifying the word "padāmbuja".

"Prasāda" means either "happiness" or "mercy". To "prasāda" is then added "leśānuḡrḥītaḥ" (favored by a small part). Or, "prasāda" may mean "the remnants of tulasī or other offerings". This is called "mahā-prasāda". The word "hi" means "certainly".

"Bhagavan" means "O Lord who manifests Your mercy and other virtues". This is the reason for the Lord's mercy. Other persons are not merciful like He.

Or, devotional service has been the central topic discussed in this chapter. Even though some words were spent refuting various fallacies, in every verse Brahmā prayed for devotional service. Considered from this point of view, the glory (mahimnaḥ) here is the glory of devotional service.

The word "tattvam" here means either "the truth of its nature" or "the truth of its extent". "Ekaḥ" means either "alone" or "alone the best, as for example Lord Śiva is the best". "Vicinvan" means either "investigating by studying the scriptures" or "investigating by performing yoga". Although it is only by the complete mercy of the Lord that one can understand His true nature, nevertheless the word "leśa" (a small particle of mercy) is used here to emphasize how difficult it is to attain even a small part of the Lord's mercy.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, it is only when he attains a small particle of devotional service to You that the individual spirit soul is able to experience spiritual bliss. There is no other way."

here Brahmā says "O Lord, even if he is completely free of māyā and all that come from māyā, an individual spirit soul must first have a small particle of the mercy of Your lotus feet before he can understand Your glory. Here the words "jānāti tattvaṁ mahimnaḥ" mean "he understand the the truth of the glory of Brahman." This interpretation is corroborated by the following words of Lord Matsya (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 8.24.38):

madīyaṁ mahimānaṁ ca  
para-brahmeti śabditam  
vetsasy anugṛhītaṁ me  
sampraśnair vivṛtaṁ hṛdi

"You will be thoroughly advised and favored by Me, and because of your inquiries, everything about My glories, which are known as param brahma, will be manifest within your heart. Thus you will know everything about Me."\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī comments in these words:

"This verse means: 'Because you have obtained My mercy, you will understand the Supreme Brahman'."

The "prasāda-leśa" (small part of mercy) described here is the kind of devotional service mixed with the modes of nature that is attained by the jñānīs. The word "anugṛhītaḥ" means "when material knowledge has come to an end and when the so-called spiritual knowledge of impersonalism has also come to an end, then one may attain the mercy of the Lord". This is explained by the Lord Himself in the following words:

jñānam ca mayi sannyaset

"To attain Me one should first reject the impersonalist theory."

Thus a person who rejects the impersonalist theory, and considers pure devotional service the only true path is truly wise. To such a person the Lord gives a small particle of His mercy, and that mercy is engagement in the Lord's devotional service.

In the last line of this verse Brahmā says: "However, a person who thinks 'once I have attained the result there is no need to continue with spiritual activities', and who thus abandons both paths, the path of impersonalism and the path of devotional service, cannot understand the Lord's glories, even if he is a great (eko 'pi) guru of thousands of impersonalists, and even if by studying many scriptures and carefully following the practice of yoga, he struggles (vicinvan) for a long time (ciram) to understand the Lord's glories."

### Text 30

tad astu me nātha sa bhūri-bhāgo  
bhava 'tra vānyatra tu vā tiraścām  
yenāham eko 'pi bhavaj-janānām  
bhūtvā niṣeve tava pāda-pallavam

tat-that; astu-may be; me-of me; nātha-O master; sa-that; bhūri-bhāgaḥ-great good fortune; bhava-in birth; atra-here; vā-or; anyatra-in another place; tu-indeed; vā-or; tiraścām-among the animals; yena-by which; aham-I; ekaḥ-one; api-even; bhavaj-janānām-of Your devotees; bhūtvā-becoming; niṣeve-I serve; tava-of You; pāda-pallavam-the lotus feet.

My dear Lord, I pray that I may be so fortunate that, in this life or in another life, wherever I may take my birth, I may be counted as one of Your devotees. Wherever I may be, I pray that I may be engaged in Your devotional service.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

"Tat" means "therefore" and "bhūri-bhāgaḥ" means "great good fortune". Here Brahmā says: "Either in this birth as Brahmā, or in another birth, even in the animal species, I pray only to be counted as one of Your devotees. Thus I will enthusiastically engage in Your devotional service."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "O Lord, by engaging in Your devotional service, one attains Your mercy."

"Nātha" means "O Lord who fulfills all desires". Here Brahmā says: "I am fortunate to have attained the post of Brahmā. Still, I am not very fortunate." Here the word "bhūri-bhāgaḥ" means "very fortunate". Brahmā says: "Even though I am Your eldest son, birth as Your devotee would be the greatest good fortune for me".

In the words "eko 'pi bhavaj-janānām bhūtvā niṣeve" the prefix "ni" is used to emphasize the exalted nature of devotional service. The words "bhava 'tra vānyatra" mean "either in this birth as Brahmā, or in another birth". Here Brahmā hints: "I do not wish to take birth in a lower species, like those of the insects or worms, if in such a birth I cannot engage in devotional service to You. However, if I can engage in devotional service to You, I may take birth as Brahmā, or I may take birth in any other form." The remainder of the verse has been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Or, this verse may be interpreted: "O Lord, by serving Your devotees, one attains Your mercy." In this interpretation the word "ekaḥ" has the same meaning as previously, and the words "bhavaj-janānām bhūtvā niṣeve tava pāda-pallavam" mean "I serve the lotus feet of Your devotees".

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may ask: "O Brahmā, O crest jewel of they who know both the spiritual goal and the way to attain it, you have now described the path of knowledge and the path of devotional service. Which do you wish to follow?" This verse is Brahmā's reply to that question. By speaking the word "nātha" (O master), which is in the vocative case, Brahmā reveals his desire to become a servant of the Lord.

If Lord Kṛṣṇa says: "O Brahmā, please carefully consider what is more valuable and what is less. Then you request what is most valuable," then Brahmā may reply with the statement beginning with the word "bhūri-bhāgaḥ", which means "the greatest good fortune my mind can conceive".

The second line of this verse means, "a fortunate birth in any form of life, from Brahmā down to the lowest animal". In the scriptures it is said:

gajo ḡrdhro vaṇik-pathaḥ

"An elephant, a vulture, and a merchant became great devotees of the Lord."

In these words it is seen that even animals may engage in devotional service to the Lord. By using the word "tirścām" (of births as animals) in the plural, Brahmā is performing a funeral ceremony to commemorate the death of his desire to attain liberation. By using the word "atra" (here), he prays that he may take birth a thousand times. He says, "May I take any sort of birth (eko 'pi) among Your devotees, and, as either a neophyte or a perfect devotee, I will serve You."

In the first verse of this chapter Brahmā described Lord Kṛṣṇa's sweetness, and in verses 2-30 Brahmā described the Lord's supreme opulence. In verses 3 and 8,

Brahmā described the superiority of pure devotional service. In verses 27 and 19 Brahmā discussed the theories of the impersonalists. In verses 4 and 5 Brahmā explained the great value of devotional service and the complete uselessness of impersonalism. In verses 28 and 29 Brahmā described devotional service mixed with jñāna. In verse 24 Brahmā described devotional service in the rasa of neutrality (śānta-bhakti). In verse 30 Brahmā described devotional service in the rasa of servitorship (dāsya-bhakti).

After that point, in the passage beginning with verse 31, Brahmā becomes plunged in the ocean of sweetness and he speaks prayers describing spontaneous (rāgātmaka) devotional service in the rasas of parenthood and conjugal love. That is the outline of Brahmā's prayers.

### Text 31

aho 'ti-dhanya vraja-go-ramaṇyaḥ  
stanyāmṛtam pītam atīva te mudā  
yāsām vibho vatsatarātmajātmajā  
yat-trptaye 'dyāpi na cālam adhvaraḥ

ahaḥ-Oh; ati-very; dhanya-fortunate; vraja-go-ramaṇyaḥ-the cows and gopīs of Vraja; stanyāmṛtam-the nectar of their breasts; pītam-drunk; atīva-greatly; te-they; mudā-happily; yāsām-of whom; vibhaḥ-O Lord; vatsatarātmajātmajā-in the form of the calves and the gopīs' sons; yat-trptaye-for the satisfaction of whom; adya-today; api-even; na-not; ca-and; alam-enough; adhvaraḥ-yajnas.

The gopīs and cows of Vṛndāvana are so fortunate that they have been able to supply their breast milk to You. Persons who are engaged in performing great sacrifices and offering many valuable goats in the sacrifice cannot attain the perfection of understanding You., but simply by devotional service these innocent village women and cows are all able to satisfy You with their milk. You have drunk their milk to satisfaction, yet You are never satisfied by those engaged in performing sacrifices.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

In these seven verses (31-37) Brahmā enthusiastically declares that birth as a devotee, in whatever species or situation, is better than birth among the demigods or other exalted beings.

"Vraja-go-ramaṇyaḥ" means "the cows and gopīs of Vraja". Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, all the Vedic yajñas taken together have not the power to satisfy You. Still, You became very happy and satisfied by drinking the breast-milk of these cows and gopīs when You became their sons."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

In these ten verses (31-40) Brahmā glorifies the dear devotees of the Lord.

Either he prays to have devotion like that of the people of Vraja, or he prays to be able to serve their lotus feet. The reason he offers these prayers is given in the nyāya:

madhureṇa samāpayet

"It that way one tastes a great sweetness".

Also, Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself is greatly glorified when the praises of His devotees are sung. That is another reason for Brahmā to offer these prayers.

"Aho" is spoken either out of wonder or to invoke auspiciousness. "Ati-dhanyāḥ" means "having attained the greatest success", "raṁyaḥ" means "who pleased You, O Lord, by offering their breast-milk", "yat-tṛptaye" means "to please You", "vibho" means "O all-perfect Lord", "pītam" means "O Lord, even though You are all-perfect and all-complete, You still drank their breast milk", and "atīva" means "greatly". Here also the adverb "mudā" (happily) is used.

Brahmā says: "O Lord, when You became the calves and gopa boys, You directly drank their milk." The word "atīva" hints that the Lord concealed His original form at that time. "Adyāpi" means either "from that moment to this moment" or "even now, when Your childhood pastimes are manifested".

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

In these two verses (31 and 32) Brahmā says: "O Lord, I am the lowest of Your devotees. Therefore it is only by Your mercy that my prayer will bear its proper fruit. However, it is not proper for persons like myself to request the position of Your greatest devotees, who love You in the pure vātsalya-rasa and other exalted rasas. That position is very difficult to attain. My words here are meant only to glorify it."

Here Brahmā says: "The cows and gopīs of Vraja are very fortunate". Here the word "aho" means that the full extent of Brahmā's feeling of wonder cannot be properly understood by the mind or expressed with words.

Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, manifesting Your form of eternity, knowledge, and bliss, You drank their breast-milk, which was like nectar flowing from their bodies. Furthermore, You did this with great pleasure (mudā).

"Also, even though You drank that milk again and again, Your pleasure from drinking increased from moment to moment. Furthermore, You became the calves because the cows could not bear not being able to give their milk to You, and You also became the gopīs' sons because had You not the gopīs would not have attained such close association with You.

"O Lord, pushed by intense greed, You expanded into many forms among the cows and gopīs, and You could not stop drinking the nectar-milk flowing from their breasts. This means that because You are naturally filled with transcendental bliss, the bodies of these cows and gopīs must also be filled with transcendental bliss."

Here the word "yat-tṛptaye" means "to please You", for the dictionaries



confirm:

trp priṇane

"The verb `trp' means `to please'."

Brahmā concludes: "O Lord, from beginningless time (adyāpi) persons like myself have performed every possible yajña, yajñas performed with flawless mantras, rituals, purificatory ceremonies, and a host of other ceremonies. Still, all these yajñas were not enough to satisfy You."

### Text 32

aho bhāgyam aho bhāgyam  
nanda-gopa-vrajaukasām  
yan-mitram paramānandaṁ  
pūrṇam brahma sanātanam

ahaḥ-what great; bhāgyam-good fortune; ahaḥ-what great; bhāgyam-good fortune; nanda-of Mahārāja Nanda; gopa-of the other cowherd men; vraja-okasām-of the other residents of Vrajabhūmi; yat-of whom; mitram-the friend; paramānandaṁ-the supreme bliss; pūrṇam-complete; brahma-the Absolute Truth; sanātanam-eternal.

How greatly fortunate are Nanda Mahārāja, the cowherd men, and all the other inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi! There is no limit to their good fortune because the Absolute Truth, the source of transcendental bliss, the eternal Supreme Brahman, has become their friend.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

The word "aho" is repeated here in order to indicate that the good fortune is limitless in every way.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "The cows and gopīs who gave their breast-milk to Lord Kṛṣṇa are not the only fortunate ones. Nanda Mahārāja and the other residents of Vraja are all very fortunate also."

Here the word "aho" is spoken to express either great joy or great good fortune. "Nanda-gopa-vrajaukasām" means either "of they who have their homes in Nanda's Vraja", or "of Nanda, the gopas, the cows, the birds, and all others who have their homes in Vraja".

Here Brahmā hints: "How can I describe the good fortune of Nanda Mahārāja? And if I cannot describe his good fortune, then how can I describe the supreme good fortune of all the other gopas?"

Here "yan-mitram" means "their friend", "paramānandam" means "he who brings intense transcendental bliss that pushes away petty, lesser happinesses, and also drives away suffering, lamentation, and other unwanted experiences. "Pūrṇam" means "who does not need help from anyone". "Brahma" means "He is all-pervading. There is no place where He cannot be found." "sanātanam" means "He is eternal. There is no point in time when He cannot be found". Or, "yan-mitram pūrṇam brahma sanātanam" means "The perfect Supreme Brahman who is the eternal friend of the gopas".

The Lord is not only the deliverer from dangers, but He is also blissful, as explained by the word "paramānandam", which means either "He whose form is filled with transcendental bliss", or "he who gives transcendental (parama) bliss (ānandam) to others".

Here the word "mitram" (friend) means that in this situation Lord Kṛṣṇa does not manifest His identity as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for that revelation would destroy the love present in the rasa of friendship. Or, the words "mitram pūrṇam brahma" mean "Nanda and the people of Vraja are Your friends, even though You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead." The neuter gender is used here throughout because all these words modify the neuter word "brahma".

Rādhā and the youthful gopīs, who are all very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, are not specifically glorified here because their pastimes with Lord Kṛṣṇa are not yet manifested in the Lord's early, childhood pastimes. Or, it may be that they are not glorified here because Brahmā, being Lord Kṛṣṇa's direct son, is shy to mention them. Or, perhaps Brahmā does not mention them simply because their pastimes with the Lord are very confidential.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

In the previous verse Brahmā praised the devotees who have spontaneous love in the rasa of parenthood, and in this verse he praises the devotees who have spontaneous love in the rasa of friendship. In this way he praises the devotees in the rasa of parenthood and in the other rasas also.

The words "aho bhāgyam" are repeated because Brahmā is filled with bliss and wonder. The neuter gender of the word "paramānandam" is a poetic license of the sages (āṛṣa). The word "brahma" here is defined in the following words of the Śruti-śāstra:

satyaṁ vijñānam ānandaṁ brahma

"The Supreme Brahman is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss."

The word "parama" here indicates that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the origin and basis of the impersonal Brahman. The word "pūrṇam" here indicates that Lord Kṛṣṇa is not the impersonal Brahman, nor is He an aṁśa incarnation of the Lord.

This Brahman is then described to be the friend (mitram) of Śrīdāmā and the other cowherd boys. Then Brahmā refutes the idea that Lord Kṛṣṇa is their friend for a specific period of time only. Using the word "nityam" (eternal) Brahmā affirms that Lord Kṛṣṇa is their friend for all time. Therefore, because their friendship with Lord Kṛṣṇa exists for all time, Śrīdāmā and the other cowherd boys also exist for all time. In the scriptures it is said:

ayaṁ tūttamo brāhmaṇaḥ

"A brāhmaṇa is the most exalted of persons."

Because a brāhmaṇa is exalted, therefore his personal qualities are also exalted. In the same way, because Lord Kṛṣṇa's friendship is eternal, the other qualities of Lord Kṛṣṇa are here hinted to be eternal also. Thus the word "mitram" means "friend".

Here Brahmā says: "How greatly fortunate are all the residents of Nanda's Vraja, including even the cows and the birds! If they are all fortunate, then how much more fortunate must be King Nanda himself and his gopa friends?"

Someone may ask: "What is that good fortune?" Brahmā replies: "Lord Kṛṣṇa, there eternal and blissful Supreme Personality of Godhead, has become the friend and relative (mitram) of the people of Vraja, who love Him in the rasa of parenthood and other rasas." This means that the people of Vraja treat Kṛṣṇa as their friend, and He reciprocates by treating them as His friends. This is described by the gopas in these words of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.26.13):

dustyajaś cānurago 'smin  
sarveṣāṁ no vrajaukasām  
nanda te tanaye 'smāsu  
tasyāpy autpattikaḥ katham

"My dear Nanda, we do not know why we are so attracted by Your son Kṛṣṇa. We want to forget Him, but this is impossible. Why are we so naturally affectionate to Him? Just imagine how wonderful it is!"\*

This is so because the Supreme Personality of Godhead feels spontaneous love for the residents of Vraja. For this reason He fills the residents of Vraja with transcendental bliss. Also, because their forms are eternal and full of knowledge and bliss, the residents of Vraja brought great wonder to Brahmā.

### Text 33

eṣāṁ tu bhāgya-mahimācyuta yāvad astāṁ  
ekādaśaiva hi vyaṁ bata bhūri-bhāgāḥ

etad-dhṛṣika-caśakair asakṛt pibāmaḥ  
śarvādayo 'nghry-udaja-madhv-amṛtāsavaṁ te

eṣām-of them; tu-indeed; bhāgya-of the good fortune; mahimā-the glory;  
acyuta-O infallible Lord; yāvat-as much as; astām-may be; ekādaśa-eleven; eva-  
certainly; hi-indeed; vayam-we; bata-indeed; bhūri-bhāgāḥ-very fortunate; etad-  
dhṛṣika-of the senses; caśakaiḥ-with the cups; asakṛt-again and again; pibāmaḥ-we  
drink; śarvādayaḥ-headed by Indra; aṅghri-of the feet; udaja-lotus; madhu-  
amṛtāsavaṁnectar; te-of You.

I am simply surprised, therefore, with the fortunate position of Mahārāja Nanda, mother Yaśodā, and the cowherd men and gopis, because You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the Absolute Truth, are existing here as their most intimate lovable object. My dear Lord, no one can actually appreciate the good fortune of these residents of Vṛndāvana. We are all demigods, controlling deities of the various senses of the living entities, and we are proud of enjoying such privileges, but actually there is no comparison between our position and the position of these fortunate residents of Vṛndāvana because they are actually relishing Your presence and enjoying Your association by dint of their activities.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "The glory of Vraja's residents must remain undescribed. Who has the power to describe it?"

Here "śarvādayaḥ" means "the demigods headed by Indra, who is the presiding deity of false-ego", and "ekādaśa" means "the eleven demigods headed by Candra". Here Brahmā uses the word "vayam" (we), referring to himself, because he has a high opinion of himself. Thus Brahmā declares that the thirteen demigods (Indra+Brahmā+eleven demigods headed by Candra) who control the mind, intelligence, false-ego, eyes, and other senses are very fortunate (bhūri-bhāgāḥ).

"Etad-dhṛṣika-caśakaiḥ" means with the drinking-cups of the senses". Here Brahmā says: "With those cups of the senses we drink the nectar of the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is the fourteenth Deity, the ruler of the mind". Brahmā says: "We demigods are the rulers of the senses. If, each of us employing only the one sense that he controls, we serve You and thus attain success, how can we describe the success and good fortune of they who serve You with all the senses?"

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "Who has the power to properly describe the glories of Vraja's residents? Even we demigods have attained the goal of life simply by a little association with them."

Here the word "tu" is used either as a sort of sidelong glance, or as a rhetorical ornament. "Acyuta" means "O Lord whose devotees possess glories that never become diminished".

The word "aṅghry-udaja-madhu" means "the honey of the lotus feet". This nectar consists of service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, using one's

spiritual intelligence to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, firmly deciding to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead, gazing at the Lord's transcendental form, hearing descriptions of the Lord, and many other like activities.

Someone may ask: "What is this honey like?" The answer is given in the word "amṛtāsavam". In that word "amṛta" means "the sweetest nectar" and "āsavam" means "life-giving".

Or, "amṛta" may mean "of the liberated souls, who are free from death" and "āsavam" may mean "the delightful, intoxicating nectar". This nectar is so sweet that it makes one completely forget all about impersonal so-called liberation.

Because they constantly drink this nectar, the residents of Vraja are more glorious than any other devotees. That is explained in the second line of this verse.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.5.30) it is said:

dig-vātārka-praceto 'śvi-  
vahnīndropendra-mitra-kaḥ

"From the mode of goodness the mind is generated and becomes manifest, as also the ten demigods controlling the bodily movements. Such demigods are known as the controller of directions, the controller of air, the sun-god, the father of Dakṣa Prajāpati, the Aśvinī-kumāras, the fire-god, the king of heaven, the worshipable deity in heaven, the chief of the Adityas, and Brahmajī, the Prajāpati. All come into existence."\*

Thus ten demigods control the ten senses. The moon-god, who controls the mind, is the eleventh. The word "vayam" (we) refers to Brahmā, who controls the intelligence. The word "śarvādayaḥ" refers to Lord Rudra. This word is a bahuvrīhi-samāsa describing Lord Rudra's qualities. Thus there thirteen demigods are mentioned here. The remainder of this verse has been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Or, because the anus and genital are not directly used in devotional service, Mitra and Prajāpati, who control these parts of the body, are not mentioned here, and therefore the list of demigods here is actually eleven. Or, because men and women may serve the Lord by giving birth to Vaiṣṇava children, Prajāpati may be included here in the list of demigods, and it may Upendra, the controller of the feet, who is omitted from this list to keep the number of demigods at eleven. Upendra may be omitted because He is not a demigod. Rather, He is an incarnation of Lord Vāsudeva, the Personality of Godhead.

Even though the residents of Vraja have spiritual bodies that are eternal and full of knowledge and bliss, it is still appropriate to say that the various controlling demigods preside over the activities of their senses. That is so because Candra and the other demigods here are not the same as the demigods of material world. Rather, these demigods are residents of the spiritual world and their forms are also spiritual, eternal, full of knowledge, and full of bliss.

Or, perhaps the material demigods are intended here because they are, in one sense, not different from the original controlling demigods present in the spiritual

world. This is so because the material demigods are like shadows of the demigods in the spiritual world.

Or, perhaps these words are spoken according to the external vision of the materialists, and therefore the material demigods are intended. In the eternal spiritual world the original demigods are also eternal. This is described in the following words of Padma Purāṇa, Uttara-khaṇḍa:

nityāḥ sarve pare dhāmnī  
ye cānye ca divaukaśaḥ  
te vai prākṛta-nake 'smin  
na nityās tridaśeśvarāḥ

"The demigods and others who live in the spiritual world are all eternal, whereas the thirty million demigods of the material world are not eternal."

Or, perhaps, another interpretation may be: Now that for a moment he has directly seen something of Lord Kṛṣṇa's intense and multifaceted sweetness, in this verse Brahmā praises his own good fortune. Brahmā says: "O Lord, with the drinking-cups of our senses we drink the honey of Your lotus feet."

What is this honey like? It is described in the word "amṛtāsavam", which means "an intoxicating beverage sweet like nectar". Another interpretation of the word "vayam" (we) is "the nine rulers of the planets, excluding Nairṛti, plus Candra and Sūrya, which then comes to eleven."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is: "Furthermore, we also have become fortunate by our contact with the residents of Vraja."

Here Brahmā says: "The glory of Vraja's residents must remain undescribed. Who has the power to describe it?" Brahmā continues: "Even we, the eleven demigods who control the various senses, have become very fortunate. With the drinking-cups of our senses we eleven demigods, excluding the deities of the two vulgar senses and also excluding the Deity of the consciousness, a Deity (Vāmana) who is not different from Lord Vāsudeva, drink with our eleven senses the sweet and intoxicating nectar of Your lotus feet, lotus feet decorated with tinkling anklets, and nectar where ego, action, will, sound, touch, form, taste, smell, glorification, massaging, and approaching You are employed for Your service."

Even though they do not experience the sense objects there, the demigods who control the various senses do certainly reside in the senses of the conditioned souls. For example, Brahmā resides in the intelligence, Sūrya resides in the eyes, and other demigods reside in the other senses. Without the aid of these controlling demigods, one cannot use the senses to see forms, taste tastes, or perceive anything at all, even if the object of perception is Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself.

Brahmā and the other demigods yearn to attain love for Lord Kṛṣṇa. That is why even the words of they who directly see Lord Kṛṣṇa fills them with bliss.

Although these demigods have power only on the functioning power of the

senses, still they falsely imagine that they are able to experience whatever is experienced by the senses of the conditioned souls. In truth these demigods have jurisdiction only over material senses. They are not the controllers of the spiritual senses, although they may proudly claim that they are.

The activities of they who are filled with pure love for Lord Kṛṣṇa are not within the jurisdiction of these demigods. This is seen in the following words of Śrī Padyāvalī:

mithyāpavāda-vacasāpy abhimana-siddheḥ

The personal associates of the Lord have spiritual bodies that are eternal and full of knowledge and bliss. Their senses are also spiritual, like those of the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. Their senses are not material. How can Brahmā and the other material demigods enter these spiritual senses?

Or, perhaps in this verse Brahmā congratulates the demigods for somehow, somewhere being able to taste the sweetness of Lord Kṛṣṇa. The word "ekādaśa" may be divided into "ekā" and "daśa". Interpreted in this way, "ekā" means "the demigods' good fortune has no peer", and "daśa" means "we, the protectors of the ten directions, have become very fortunate (bhūri-bhāgāḥ)."

Here someone may ask: "What is the good fortune of the demigods?" This question is answered in the second half of this verse.

With his forefinger Brahmā touches his eyes and ears and says: "O Lord, as You leave Vraja Village to tend the calves, with our eyes and ears we drink the nectar of Your handsomeness and beautiful music."

#### Text 34

tad bhūri-bhāgyam iha janma kim apy aṭavyām  
yad gokule 'pi katamāṅghri-rajo-'bhiṣekam  
yaj-jīvitam tu nikhilam bhagavān mukundaś  
tv adyāpi yat-pāda-rajāḥ śruti-mṛgyam eva

tat-that; bhūri-bhāgyam-great good fortune; iha-in this; janma-birth; kim api-something; aṭavyām-in the forest; yat-what; gokule-in Gokula; api-even; katama-of anyone; aṅghri-of the feet; rajāḥ-in the dust; abhiṣekam-bath; yaj-jīvitam-the life; tu-indeed; nikhilam-all; bhagavān-the Lord; mukundaḥ-Mukunda; tv-indeed; adya-today; api-also; yat-pāda-rajāḥ-the dust of whose feet; śruti-by the Vedas; mṛgyam-sought; eva-certainly.

I am most humbly praying at Your lotus feet for You to please give me any sort of birth within this Vṛndāvana forest so that I may be able to be favored by the dust of the feet of some of the devotees of Vṛndāvana. Even if I am given the chance to grow just as the humble grass in this land, that will be a glorious birth

for me. But if I am not so fortunate to take birth within the forest of Vṛndāvana, I beg to be allowed to take birth outside the immediate area of Vṛndāvana so that when the devotees go out they will walk over me. Even that would be a great fortune for me. I am just aspiring for a birth in which I will be smeared by the dust of Your devotees' feet. I can see that everyone here is simply full of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. They do not know anything but Mukunda. All the Vedas are indeed searching after the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

In this verse Brahmā says: "In this verse I repeated the request I made in verse 30." Someone may ask: "What is that request?" The answer is: "I request a birth in the world of human beings, in the forest of Gokula."

Then someone may ask: "What will you gain by leaving Satyaloka and taking birth in Gokula?" To this Brahmā answers with the words: "katamāṅghri-rajo-'bhiṣekam", which mean "then I will be able to bathe in the dust from the feet of some of the residents of Gokula".

Then someone may ask: "Why are the residents of Gokula so fortunate?" In the third line of this verse Brahmā answers this question by saying, "Lord Mukunda is their entire life".

In the fourth line Brahmā explains that Lord Kṛṣṇa is very difficult to attain. There the word "śruti-mṛgyaḥ" means "although they search for Him, the Vedas have not been able to see Lord Kṛṣṇa."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Desiring either devotion like that of the residents of Nanda's Vraja or direct service to their lotus feet, Brahmā speaks this verse. With the five words beginning with "iha", Brahmā rejects the five obstacles to devotional service, obstacles that begin with impersonal liberation.

By speaking the word "janma" (birth) Brahmā rejects impersonal liberation. By speaking the word "iha" (here) Brahmā rejects residence in Svargaloka. By speaking the word "kim api" (anywhere) Brahmā rejects birth as a brāhmaṇa. By speaking the word "aṭavyām" (in the forest), Brahmā rejects birth in the cities and towns. By speaking the word "gokule" (in Gokula), Brahmā rejects fleeing to other forests to practice artificial austerities.

The word "kim api" (anywhere) refers to birth as an insignificant blade of grass. In such a birth Brahmā will be bathed by the dust of the feet of Vraja's residents.

The word "abhiṣeka" means "a bathing of all parts of the body, beginning with the head". Or, this word may mean "the eager success obtained by all limbs of the body". Or, it may mean "bathing in a single particle of dust". The idea here is that a single particle of this sacred dust contains within it all holy places and has the power to grant any status of life that one may desire.

The words "yat-pāda-rajah śruti-mṛgyam" mean "Even though they diligently search for it, and even though Lord Kṛṣṇa has personally descended to this world, the Vedas still cannot find the dust of Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet." the vedas search for Lord Kṛṣṇa is described in these words of Taittirīya Upaniṣad (2.5.1):



brahma puccham pratiṣṭhā

"In these five ways one searches for the Supreme."

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.3.9) it is said:

tad viṣṇoḥ paramam padam

"One who follows the spiritual path attains the transcendental abode of Lord Viṣṇu."

Here the word "brahma" means "the Supreme Personality of Godhead" and the paths of jñāna and karma and other paths are all spoken in relation to Him. Otherwise, if one accepts the idea that once the goal is attained the means employed to attain it may be rejected, then the description here of the Supreme and of jñāna and other paths is not to be accepted.

Here "mukundaḥ" means "He who gives rare devotional service to persons like myself" and "bhagavān" means "He who manifests all powers and opulences". "Yaj" means "of Gokula's residents", and "jīvitam nikhilam" mean "O Lord, without You the residents of Gokula cannot live for even a moment". In this way the highest spiritual love is described. The remainder of this verse has already been described by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Or, Lord Kṛṣṇa may ask: "You prayed to attain any sort of birth where You would be touched by the dust from the feet of Gokula's residents. Why did you not ask for a birth as a gopa or one of the other people there?"

In the second half of this verse Brahmā gives his reply. He says: "O Lord, the Personified Vedas are the most senior and venerable persons. They are my teachers. If they find it difficult to attain the dust of Your feet, then it is not proper for me to pray as You suggest. How can I pray to become a gopa or other Gokula resident, who have all conquered Your lotus feet by the greatness of their love?"

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Brahmā says: "Now I shall perform a funeral ceremony to celebrate the death of my desire to attain liberation or any kind of power or opulence in this world. Now my only thought is: How shall I attain the dust of Gokula's residents' feet? I pray that I may become fortunate in that way. I may become fortunate if the residents of Gokula place their merciful glance upon me."

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may ask: "What good fortune do you seek?" To this Brahmā replies: "Any kind of birth in Vṛndāvana forest. For example, birth as a tender blade of darba grass or other kind of grass. Then Your dear gopa friends and the other residents of Vraja will place their feet upon me. That will be a great good fortune for me."

Then Lord Kṛṣṇa may say: "This will be very difficult for you to attain. I suggest

you give up this desire and pray for something else, something more appropriate."

If Lord Kṛṣṇa says this, then Brahmā may give the following reply: "Then I pray that I may take birth as a stone in the footpath in Gokula, or even in marking the boundary of Gokula. Then I will be bathed with the dust from the feet of Your tailors, weavers, artisans, or other servants.

Then Lord Kṛṣṇa may say: "Why are the residents of Vraja so great and glorious? and why are you, who are Brahmā, the creator of the worlds and worshiped by all the living entities in the worlds, not embarrassed to desire to be touched by the dust of the feet of the low-born people of Vraja?"

To this Brahmā may reply: "The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the very life of the residents of Gokula."

In the Amara-kośa Dictionary it is said:

bhagaḥ śrī-kāma-māhātmye

"The word `bhaga' may mean `handsomeness', `desire', or `glory'."

Therefore the word "bhagavān" means "He who is handsome, speaks poetically, and has a host of other virtues." "Mukundaḥ" means "He whose face (mukh) is like a kunda (jasmine) flower."

Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, Your handsomeness, gentle smile, and other attractive features are the only things that sustain the lives of Gokula's residents. Without these features of Yours, Gokula's residents would at once die. O Lord, their intense and uncommon love for You is the reason the residents of Gokula are so exalted."

Here the word "nikhilam" (entire) means that for their entire lives the people of Vraja had no desire for eating, drinking, or any other material happiness. The last line of this verse means, "Even today the Vedas are searching for the dust of the Gokula residents' feet. Even today the Vedas have not yet found it. How can I, whom only a Brahmā, be more important or more exalted than the Vedas personified? That is why, O Lord, I am embarrassed to offer the prayer that You suggest.

"Therefore I now repeat the request I spoke in verse 30. If I follow the path of vaidhi-bhakti (devotional service in practice), I may eventually come to the stage of following in the footsteps of Gokula's residents. Then eventually I may become plunged in the nectar ocean of spontaneous (rāgānuga) love for You. That is my request."

### Text 35

eṣāṃ ghoṣa-nivāsinām uta bhavān kiṃ deva rātetī naś  
ceto viśva-phalāt phalaṃ tvad-param kutrāpy ayan muhyati  
sad-veśād iva pūtanāpi sa-kulā tvām eva devāpitā  
yad-dhāmārtha-suhṛt-priyātma-tanaya-prāṇāśayas tvat-kṛte

eṣām-of them; ghoṣa-nivāsinām-the residents of Vraja; uta-indeed; bhavān-You; kim-whether?; deva-O Lord; rātā-will give; iti-thus; naḥ-of us; cetah-mind; viśva-of the world; phalāt-from thr result; phalam-the4 result; tvad-param-devoted to You; kutrāpi-somewhere; ayat-considering; muhyati-is bewildered; sad-veṣāt-by dressing nicely; iva-as if; pūtanā-Putana; api-aslo; sa-kulā-with family; tvām-You; eva-indeed; deva-O Lord; āpitā-was caused to attain; yat-what; dhāma-homes; artha-wealth; suhṛt-friends; priya-dear; ātma-selves; tanaya-children; prāṇa-lives; āśayaḥ-and minds; tvat-kṛte-for Your sake.

My Lord, sometimes I am puzzled as to how Your Lordship will be able to repay, in gratitude, the devotional service of these residents of Vṛndāvana. Although I know that You are the supreme source of all benediction, I am puzzled to know how You will be able to repay all the service that You are receiving from these residents of Vṛndāvana. I think of how You are so kind, so magnanimous, that even Pūtanā, who came to cheat You by dressing herself as a very affectionate mother, was awarded liberation and the actual post of a mother. And other demons belonging to the same family, such as Aghāsura and Bakāsura, were also favored with liberation. Under the circumstances, I am puzzled. These residents of Vṛndāvana have given You everything: Their bodies, their minds, their love, their homes. Everything is being utilized for Your purpose. So how will You be able to repay their debt? You have already given Yourself to Pūtanā! I surmise that You shall ever ever remain a debtor to the residents of Vṛndāvana, being unable to repay their loving service.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, how can anyone properly describe the success of these people of Vraja? Their loving service has placed You in their debt."

Then Lord Kṛṣṇa may ask: "Does anything exist that I have not the power to give to repay My debt? How can I be a debtor?"

To this Brahmā replies: "Is there any gift You can give that is better than the gift of Yourself, which is the best of all gifts? When I think of this, my mind becomes bewildered."

Then Lord Kṛṣṇa may say: "Well then, if I give Myself in payment, then my debt will be absolved and I no longer will be a debtor."

Then Brahmā may reply: "That is not true. It is not true. Simply by pretending to be Your devotee Pūtanā attained You as a gift. And then, if You say 'I shall also give Myself to Pūtanā's relatives', then I say whatever gift You give to Pūtanā, Bakāsura, and Aghāsura is not a good enough gift to give to Your pure devotees, whose homes and everything else are all meant for You alone."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here the word "muhyati" means "bewildered because of being unable to come to a conclusion". Or, it may mean "Because You are in debt to them, You are now under their dominion. That means that You will abandon persons like Myself and instead always stay with the people of Vraja." Thinking in this way Brahmā became

bewildered and overwhelmed with grief.

"Sa-kulā" means "with Bakāsura and Aghāsura". Therefore it is because of their relationship with Pūtanā that Bakāsura and Aghāsura were touched by the Lord and able to attain His association. The remainder of this verse has already been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

The word "api" is correctly connected to the word "viśva-phalāt". "Kutrāpi" (anywhere) here means "any kind of birth in Māthura's land of Vraja". The word "kutrāpi" is here placed in its proper position in the sentence. "Ayat" is the present active participle of the verb "i" (to go). "Sad-dveṣaṭ" means "because of hating the devotees and even trying to kill them".

Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, even though she was famous for killing children and performing many demonic activities, Pūtanā and her family members attained You. Because she offered her breast milk to You, You allowed her to attain Your association.

The passage beginning with the word "iva" means "in truth, she happily attained the Lord's association". "Apitā" means "Spiritual bliss is not different from the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. Therefore when Pūtanā attained that bliss she also attained the Lord Himself". Then Brahmā says: "The people of Vraja are all Your friends. Therefore it is inevitable that they attain Your association."

Then Lord Kṛṣṇa may say: "then I shall give the people of Vraja My transcendental abode, My wealth, and a host of other gifts. And I will also give Myself to them. In that way I will become free of My debt to them."

In the last line of this verse Brahmā replies to this proposal. Brahmā says: "O Lord, to serve You (tvat-kṛte), they have offered everything to You. If You give them in return only in measure equal to what they have given to You, then Your great generosity will not be gloriously manifest."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Brahmā may say: "O Lord, I have earnestly requested that I may attain the dust of the feet of Gokula's residents. I may attain that dust, or I may not attain it. If You do not wish to clearly respond to my request, then I ask that You please answer one question that I have. My question is: What reward will You give the residents of Gokula?"

Here the word "uta" is used for asking a question. It means: "This question I ask".

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may say: "You know all the truths of the Vedas. Simply reflect and You will know the truth of this."

In answer to these words Brahmā speaks the words beginning with "naś cetaḥ", where "naḥ" means "our". By using the plural here Brahmā means "Not only my heart, but also the hearts of Śīva, the four Kumāras, Nārada, and all the wise philosophers are all bewildered by this."

What are these hearts like? Brahmā may say: "Although with great intelligence we search in all times and places, we could not find any result to be obtained that is superior to You. You are the best result." Here the word "ayat" is a present active participle of the verb "i" (to go).

Here is the meaning. Brahmā says: "O Lord, You are the result attained by the residents of Vraja. They have attained You as their so, or in many other

relationships also. That is why I used the genitive case in the words beginning with `eṣām' and ending with `bhavān'.

"If something better than You existed, then You would give it to the people of Vraja. However, no such thing exists. That is why our minds are now bewildered."

To this Lord Kṛṣṇa may reply: "O Brahmā, you do not understand the truth of this. I could see how in the future the people of Vraja would attain spontaneous love for Me, so from the very beginning I gave them the result of that love. I gave them Myself in the form of their son or other relative or associate. Others may be grateful for gifts that have already been given, but I am grateful for gifts that will be given in the future, and I reciprocate these gifts even before they are given."

If Lord Kṛṣṇa were to speak these words, then Brahmā may give this reply: "That is true, my Lord. Still, You live by a code of right conduct." This Brahmā explains with the words "sad-veṣād iva" which have the same meaning as "sad-veṣād eva".

Then Brahmā may say: "Even though Pūtanā was most sinful, she and her family members were able to attain You. You gave Yourself to them. Therefore the residents of Vraja, whose homes, possessions, actions, and all else were dedicated to Your service, certainly also attained You. You gave Yourself to them." By the movements of his nose, eyes, eyebrows, and neck, Brahmā communicates what is not directly spoken here.

Then Brahmā may say: "O Lord, first You gave Yourself to the degraded sinner Pūtanā, and then You gave Yourself to Vraja's residents, who are the exalted crest-jewels of all saintly persons. Since You have already given Yourself to Pūtanā, You cannot rightly give Yourself again as a gift to someone else. Therefore You are now in debt to the residents of Vraja."

### Text 36

tāvad rāgādayaḥ stenās  
tāvat kara-grham grham  
tāvan mohō 'ñghri-nigaḍo  
yāvat kṛṣṇa na te janāḥ

tāvat-for that long; rāgādayaḥ-beginning with passionate attachment; stenāḥ-thieves; tāvat-for that long; kara-grham-a prison; grham-home; tāvat-for that long; mohāḥ-illusion; añghri-on the feet; nigaḍaḥ-shackles; yāvat-as long as; kṛṣṇa-Kṛṣṇa; na-not; te-of You; janāḥ-people.

It is said that attachment for material objects and home is due to illusion, which makes a living entity conditioned in the material world. But this is only the case for persons who are not in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. In the case of the residents of Vṛndāvana, such obstructions, as attachment to hearth and home, are nonexistent. Because their attachment has been converted unto You, and their home has been converted into a temple because You are always there, and because they have forgotten everything for Your sake, there is no impediment. For a Kṛṣṇa conscious person, there is no such thing as impediments in heart and home. Nor is there

illusion.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "But is it not true that even the great sannyāsīs, who are free of lust and other vices, affirm that I am the best and none is better than Me? Why, then, would giving Myself not be adequate to pay My debt to the residents of Vraja?"

To answer this protest, Brahmā speaks this verse. He says: "O Kṛṣṇa, until people become Your devotees, their material attachments and desires remain thieves, their homes remain prisons, and their affectionate feelings for their family members remain foot-shackles. For Your devotees, however, these various attachments, now directed toward You, become the causes of liberation. Thus Your devotees became as renounced as the greatest sannyāsīs. And they worship You better than do the greatest sannyāsīs."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here "ādi" means "anger and other vices". Brahmā says: "O Lord, Your devotees employ even their anger in devotional service to You, for by rebuking the foolish materialists, they ultimately bring them to liberation." Here "kṛṣṇa" means "O Supreme Personality of Godhead". The remainder of this verse is already explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Or, Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "If they have dedicated their homes and everything else for My sake alone, then why do the people of Vraja nevertheless enjoy different pleasures, manifest attachment and love for others, receive guests, engage in all the different activities of householder life, and have great love for each other?" By speaking the words "kṛṣṇa na te janāḥ", Brahmā answers this protest.

Or, the word "Kṛṣṇa" may mean "O giver of all transcendental bliss". In this second interpretation the two words "na te" are considered the single word "nate", which means "bowing down with devotion". "Stenāḥ" means "thieves that steal one's intelligence, discrimination, forbearance, and other jewellike virtues", and "rāgādayaḥ" means "attachment to sense pleasures". "Adi" means "many vices, such as the anger that comes when attempts for sense gratification are thwarted".

Thus afflicted with many troubles, the materialistic householder feels that his home is a place of suffering, just like a prison cell. The great love he feels for his family bewilders him. It becomes like foot shackles that hinder his movements and rob him of his freedom.

Here is the meaning. Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, because they spontaneously offer everything to You and then accept the remnants of those offerings as mahā-prasāda, the attachment, greed, and other so-called faults of Your devotees act only to increase the love they feel for You, the anger they feel for the non-devotees also increases the devotees' love for You, their hospitality to Vaiṣṇava guests, their various household duties, their welfare activities for the people in general, their hearing about Your glories, and their other activities all act to increase their love for You. Indeed, they avoid whatever has no relation with You."

Then Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "Should not such persons be rebuked? After all, they always worship Me, even though I have no power to fulfill their desires."

To this Brahmā replies: "O Lord Kṛṣṇa, O Lord who attracts everyone's mind and heart, if the people of Vraja were to not engage in Your service, then their singing, dancing and other happy pastimes would all become thieves. These activities would become like a series of great calamities. Then their homes would become miserable prisons, their love for other devotees would become bewildering foot-shackles, and their independence would be lost."

Or, these words may be interpreted: "O Lord, Your attachment and other emotions are directed to the spiritual world of Vaikuṅṭha, and Your love is directed to the goddess of fortune, Śrīmatī Lakṣmī-devī." The remainder is the same as in the first interpretation.

Here Brahmā may say: "O Lord, as the people of the world worship You, You reciprocate appropriately. What fault is there on Your part?"

Or, these words may be interpreted: "O Lord, if the people of Vraja do not engage in devotional service to You, then their attachment for their bodies, cows, and others will become like thieves, their homes will become prison cells, and their love for their relatives and friends will become foot-shackles."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "Is it not true that householders have fallen into a network of material life, where the ropes are wife, children, and a host of other persons and things? That is what the sannyāsīs say."

To this Brahmā may reply: "Yes. That is true. Still, householders who are Your devotees, who have wives that are Your devotees and children with spiritual virtues like Yours, are better than these sannyāsī critics." That is the gist of this verse.

Here Brahmā says: "Attachment, hatred, and other material emotions are great thieves who rob the living entities of the great treasure of their knowledge, happiness, and other advantages. With the idea 'No one may spit on the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the supreme ruler', the rebellious souls are bound by their karma, placed in the prison cell of household life, and bound with foot-shackles of a host of illusions."

Brahmā says: "O Lord Kṛṣṇa, as long as the living entities do not attain the mercy of Your devotees, their attachments and other emotions will be thieves to plunder them. However, when the living entities become Your devotees, then their attachment becomes placed in Your devotees, their hatred becomes placed in whatever impedes Your devotional service, and their love becomes placed in You. In this way the devotees' attachment, hatred, and love become sanctified. They help the devotee and they give him bliss, knowledge, and a host of advantages.

"In that way the same home that formerly was a prison cell created by favorable and unfavorable karmic reactions, becomes for Your devotee a place filled with service to You, hearing and chanting Your glories, and a host of other activities meant to please You. These activities carry one to the eternal abode of the Lord.

"Thus the devotees' affection for other devotees creates in him love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. How can householders like this be compared to ordinary sannyāsīs? In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.22.40) it is said:

"kṛcchro mahān iha bhavārṇavam āplaveśām  
ṣaḍ-varga-nakram asukhena titīṣanti

"The ocean of nescience is very difficult to cross because it is infested with many dangerous sharks. Although those who are non-devotees undergo severe austerities and penances to cross that ocean, we recommend that you simply take shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord, which are like boats for crossing the ocean. Although the ocean is difficult to cross, by taking shelter of His lotus feet you will overcome all dangers!."\*

"In this verse my son Sanat-kumāra criticizes the non-devotee sannyāsīs. Devotee householders are more advanced than such sannyāsīs. The residents of Vraja have thousands of times more love for You than householders who live in other places, for the residents of Vraja have You, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, as their son or other relation. That is why You have become their submissive servant."

### Text 37

prāpañcam nisprāpañco 'pi  
viḍambayasi bhū-tale  
prāpanna-janatānanda-  
sandoham prathitum prabho

prāpañcam-material; nisprāpañcaḥ-spiritual; api-also; viḍambayasi-You imitate; bhū-of the earth; tale-on the surface; prāpanna-janatā-of the surrendered devotees; ānanda-sandoham-great bliss; prathitum-to spread; prabhaḥ-O Lord.

I can also understand that Your appearance as a small cowherd boy, a child of the cowherd men, is not at all a material activity. You are so much obliged by their affection that You are here to enthuse them with more loving service by Your transcendental presence. In Vṛndāvana there is no distinction between material and spiritual because everything is dedicated to Your loving service. My dear Lord, Your Vṛndāvana pastimes are simply to enthuse Your devotees. If someone takes Your Vṛndāvana pastimes to be material, he will be misled.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may say: "For each of the residents of Vraja I am either the son or another kind of relative or friend. That is My identity." If Lord Kṛṣṇa were to say this, then Brahmā replies by speaking this verse.

Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, You do this to bring great bliss to Your surrendered devotees." However, Brahmā also hints: "O Lord, by pretending to be their son or other relative or friend, You do not become free from Your debt to the residents of Vraja."



Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here the word "prapañcam" means "a son or other kind of relative or friend". Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, even though (api) You are beyond the material world of five elements (niṣprapañcaḥ), You pretend (viḍambayasi) to be resident of the earth (bhū-tale)."

The question may be asked: "Why does the Lord do this?" Brahmā answers: "You do this to give bliss to Your devotees by enabling them to hear of Your Vraja pastimes." The remainder of this verse has already been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Then someone may ask: "O Lord is it true that You become their son and other relative or friend and then enjoy pastimes with the residents of Vraja?" To answer this question, Brahmā speaks this verse.

The word "niṣprapañcaḥ" may also mean "You who liberate the conditioned souls from the material world of five elements". "Viḍambayasi" may mean "You make steady". Then Brahmā says: "O Lord, by manifesting Your pastimes with the residents of Vraja, You bring great bliss to Your surrendered devotees."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may say: "Some persons claim that because I am the Supreme Personality of Godhead it is not a fact that I am the son or other friend or relative in Vraja. However, it is a fact. These persons are mistaken." In this verse Brahmā replies to that statement of the Lord.

Brahmā says: "O Lord, although You are beyond this material world of five elements, You always stay on the earth and pretend that You are an ordinary resident of the material world. In this way You imitate the activities of an ordinary son or other relative or friend. As material sons act in relation to material fathers, and as other kinds of relations and friends act in relation to each other, so You act also.

"Thus Your relationships with Your devotees are not insubstantial and unreal as are the relations of material father and material son and other like relationships in the material world. Because You exist beyond the material world, when You manifest these relationships they are all eternal. Even though they are all eternal, spiritual, and beyond the material world, Your pastimes still resemble the actions of the material world. That is the conclusion spoken in the scriptures.

"Why do You imitate ordinary activities in this way? You do this to give to Your surrendered devotees the bliss of relishing the descriptions of Your Vraja pastimes. You do this to place on the earth a bliss greater than the bliss of impersonal Brahman and greater even than hearing the pastimes of Vaikuṅṭha."

Here is the meaning: A lamp does not seem to shine as brightly in daylight as it does in darkness. A diamond does not seem to shine as brightly when resting on a glittering silver tray as it does on a tray of dark glass. In the same way the spiritual pastimes of the Lord do not seem as wonderful in the spiritual world as they do in the material world of māyā, the world of five elements. Even though the land of Vraja is in truth spiritual, it is seen to be material by ordinary persons, just as spiritual Lord Kṛṣṇa is seen to be an ordinary material person and Lord Kṛṣṇa

spiritual pastimes are also seen to be material. In this way Lord Kṛṣṇa pastimes are seen to be very wonderful. Here the word "prabho" means "O Lord, please count me among Your surrendered devotees."

### Text 38

jānanta eva jānantu  
kim bahūktyā na me prabho  
manaso vapuṣo vāco  
vaibhavam tava gocaraḥ

jānantaḥ-persons who think they are aware of Your unlimited potency; eva-certainly; jānantu-let them think like that; kim-what is the use?; bahūktyā-with many words; na-not; me-my; prabhaḥ-O Lord; manasaḥ-of the mind; vapuṣaḥ-of the body; vācaḥ-of the words; vaibhavam-opulences; tava-Your; gocaraḥ-within the range.

There are people who say, "I know everything about Kṛṣṇa." Let them think that way. As far as I am concerned, I do not wish to speak very much about this matter. O my Lord, let me say this much. As far as Your opulences are concerned, they are all beyond the reach of my mind, body, and words.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

From the very beginning of these prayers it has been said that Lord Kṛṣṇa cannot be completely understood, for His qualities are both inconceivable and limitless. Some philosophers may say: "We understand Lord Kṛṣṇa perfectly." In this verse Brahmā mocks such persons. Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, Your glories are far beyond my mind and all my powers of understanding."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

In this verse Brahmā concludes his argument, begun in verse 3, that knowledge is insignificant in comparison to the glory of devotional service. Brahmā says: "They who are proud, thinking themselves great paṇḍitas who know the glory (vaibhavam) of Your devotional service, may understand Your glories." This means "They may strive to understand Your glories, and they may attain that understanding". Here Brahmā speaks sarcastically. He hints: "How can mere knowledge, which is by nature pathetic and feeble, have the power to describe in many words the glory of devotional service?"

Then Brahmā says: "O Lord who has limitless wonderful powers and glories, because they are limitless and inconceivable, Your glories are beyond the reach of my body's power to describe in writing, my words' power of description, and my mind's power of thinking. It is all beyond my power".

Or, Brahmā began these prayers by describing Lord Kṛṣṇa's form, and the

proceeded to refute many objections, answer many doubts, and glorify devotional service. Now he comes to his conclusion.

"Prabho" means "O Lord who is most handsome and who has all auspicious qualities," or, in other words, "O most extraordinary, excellent Lord". Here the proper sequence of the words is "tava vapuṣo vaibhavaṁ na me gocaraḥ" (the glory of Your form is beyond my perception). Or, the sequence may be: "tava manaso vaibhavaṁ na me gocaraḥ" (the glory of Your mind and other senses is beyond my perception).

Here Brahmā hints: "O Lord, Your mind is deeper than many millions of oceans, and Your body which is both all-pervading and limited to certain place, is the form of the fathomless Vedas." Or, these words may mean, "O Lord, even though You appear to be limited and not all-pervading, You are certainly the greatest in every respect. The glory of the words You speak to Your friends and other associates is not within the scope of my power to understand."

Or, concluding His prayers to Lord Kṛṣṇa by describing the glory of Nanda's village of Vraja, Brahmā here mocks the bewildered fools who think they understand the truth of the Lord and His Vraja. This he does in verses 35-38.

The residents of Vraja follow the Lord. Therefore their glories are also beyond the understanding of Brahmā. Here Brahmā says: "O master of Gokula, the glory of Vraja's residents is beyond the understanding of my body, words, and mind. It is even beyond Your understanding. Therefore, they who are proud to understand everything about the residents of Vraja are all the greatest fools, and it is right that the wise mock them and laugh at them." The remainder of the verse is as in the first interpretation.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa might say: "If this is all true, then please tell me how many wise philosophers are there like You who can so brilliantly explain everything about My transcendental form, the residents of My Vraja, and My devotional service? You know. Please speak." Fearing that Lord Kṛṣṇa would speak such crooked words, Brahmā speaks this verse with embarrassment, trembling, and remorse. He says: "They who know may know, but I am a great fool."

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may protest: "If that is so, then why have You spoken all these words?" In reply Brahmā says: "kim bahūktyā" (what is the use of all my words?). Brahmā says: "O Lord, to speak many words in Your presence is simply a sign of foolishness."

Then Lord Kṛṣṇa may again protest: "My dear Brahmā, you are trying to cheat Me with your words." In reply, Brahmā speaks the words beginning with "na". Brahmā says: "O Lord, my mind cannot understand Your power and opulence. I have meditated on them without limit, and still I do not understand them. "Vapuṣā" here means "with my eyes". Brahmā hints: "In verse 7, I have already explained the word "vācaḥ".

Or, these words may mean: "O Lord, My mind has no power to understand Your opulences. How could I have the power to understand them with my mind? I have already affirmed this in verse 2. How can I understand anything of Your body, or of Your words, which spoke the Vedas? Indeed, You never spoke to me directly. How important are persons like myself in Your presence? Persons like

myself are all very unimportant."

### Text 39

anujānīhi mām kṛṣṇa  
sarvaṁ tvam vetsy sarva-dṛk  
tvam eva jagatām nātho  
jagad eva tavārpitam

anujānīhi-please give permission; mām-to me; kṛṣṇa-O Lord Kṛṣṇa; sarvam-all; tvam-You; vetsy-know; sarva-dṛk-seeing all; tvam-You; eva-indeed; jagatām-of the universes; nāthaḥ-O Lord; jagat-the universe; eva-indeed; tava-of You; arpitam-offered.

My dear Lord, You are the Supreme Lord of all creation, although I sometimes falsely think that I am the master of this universe. I may be the master of this universe, but there are innumerable universes, and there are innumerable Brahmās also who preside over these universes. But actually You are the master of them all. As the Supersoul in everyone's heart, You know everything. Please therefore accept me as Your surrendered servant. I hope that You will excuse me for disturbing You in Your pastimes with Your friends and calves. Now if You will kindly allow me, I will immediately leave so You can enjoy Your friends and calves without my presence.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Brahmā speaks this verse after abandoning the pride he felt on being the master of the universe. Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, You know everything. You know Your own glories and You also know whatever knowledge and power is possessed by persons like myself. Therefore You are "sarva-dṛk" (one who sees everything). You are the master of all the universes and therefore You know everything about all the universes. I now offer to You my body as well as the universe that is my home."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

By speaking these prayers Brahmā attained the Lord's mercy, mercy that enabled him to be very humble and free from pride. Now Brahmā requests permission to return to his home. That is the topic of this verse.

Here Brahmā says: "O Kṛṣṇa, O Lord who has all the qualities natural for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, You know Your own opulences and powers, which are spiritual and free from any touch with matter. This is because You are 'sarva-dṛk', or one who knows everything."

Or, perhaps, with the word "sarva-dṛk", Brahmā ironically asks: "O Lord, do even You know everything about Your own opulences and powers?" the implied answer being: "Because Your glories are limitless, even You do not know their full extent."

In this way Brahmā hints: "I am not worthy to praise Your glories. Therefore please give me permission to depart. Furthermore, rejecting all my pride so that I may attain perfection in Your devotional service, I now offer to You everything that I possess." That is the gist of the second half of this stanza. The remainder of this verse has been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Or, Lord Kṛṣṇa may say here: "O Brahmā, you have now requested any sort of birth here in Vṛndāvana. Why do you wish to leave Vṛndāvana and go somewhere else?" To answer this question, Brahmā speaks the passage beginning with the word "sarvam".

Here Brahmā says: "My situation is that I am four-headed Brahmā, a demigod. I am not worthy to stay here in Vraja. Your situation is that You are controlled by the love of Vraja's residents and You are very eager to please them. O Kṛṣṇa, only beloved of Vraja's people, You know everything. Why should I stay any longer here in Vraja?"

"However, in order to attain the fulfillment of my request, I will now offer to You everything that I possess. You are already the master of all the universes. Therefore I do not really possess anything that I can offer to You. So because I do not possess anything to offer, I shall now offer to You my desire to offer something to You.

Or, Lord Kṛṣṇa may say: "O Brahmā, you are the creator and master of the universe. Why are you so humble?"

To this Brahmā replies: "You are the master (nāthaḥ) of the universes (jagatām). I am only Your servant."

Then Lord Kṛṣṇa may say: "Do I not see that You are the grandfather of the universe, and the universe is filled with Your children, grandchildren, and descendants? You are certainly the controller of the universe."

Then Brahmā replies: "This universe is Yours. It was You who first gave this universe to me. Therefore I am not the master of the universe. It was You who gave me the power to preside over this universe."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Lord Kṛṣṇa may say: "Very well, perhaps You do not know the full extent of all my powers and opulences. Still, I do not know the full extent of Your powers and opulences either." Thinking, "what kind of reply will I speak if Lord Kṛṣṇa says that", Brahmā, embarrassed and distraught, speaks this verse.

Here the word "anujānīhi" means "please give me permission to depart." Here Brahmā says: "I am not worthy to stay here even for a moment. Therefore please give me permission to depart. I should go to Satyaloka. That is the place where persons like myself belong."

Here the word "kṛṣṇa" means "O Lord, You attract my mind and heart." Here Brahmā says: "O Lord, You have not replied, even with a meaningful glance, to the request I made in verse 34. Therefore, what more shall I do here?"

"I became an obstacle troubling Your lunch-pastimes by the riverbank. Therefore I am an offender. It is because of my offense that I could not taste the nectar of many words from Your mouth. Therefore I will quickly depart. I will go far away.

"Now please reclaim Your calves and finish Your lunch pastimes with Your dear

friends, joking and laughing with them as they eat by the riverbank. Why should I recklessly repeat my request again and again? Indeed, You (tvam) know (vetsi) everything (sarvam) about the mind, body, and words of persons like myself.

"Just because I created this universe does not mean that I am its master. It is You who are the master of not only this, but of many other universes also.

"Therefore, I now offer to You this very small universe, which is Your property to begin with. Whatever You desire is proper. You know everything. Therefore please do with this universe whatever You wish."

#### Text 40

śrī-kṛṣṇa vṛṣṇi-kula-puṣkara-joṣa-dāyin  
kṣmā-nirjara-dvija-paśūdadhi-vṛddhi-kārin  
uddharma-śarvara-hara kṣiti-rākṣasa-dhruk  
ā-kalpam ārkam arhan bhagavan namas te

śrī-kṛṣṇa-O Lord Kṛṣṇa; vṛṣṇi-kula-of nthe Vṛṣṇi dynasty; puṣkara-to the lotus; joṣa-pleasure; dāyin--giving; kṣmā-of the earth; nirjara-demigods; dvija-brahmanas; paśu-cows; udadhi-oceans; vṛddhi-increase; kārin-doing; uddharma-of impiety; śarvara-the darkness; hāra-removing; kṣiti-on the earth; rākṣasa-of the demons; dhruk-the enemy; ā-kalpam-until the end of the kalpa; arkam-the sun; arhan-O Lord; bhagavan-O Lord; namaḥ-obeisances; te-to You.

My dear Lord Kṛṣṇa, Your very name suggests that You are all-attractive. The attraction of the sun and moon are all due to You. By the attraction of the sun You are beautifying the very existence of the Yadu dynasty. With the attraction of the moon, You are enhancing the potency of the land, the demigods, the brāhmaṇas, the cows, and the oceans. Because of Your supreme attraction, demons like Kāmsa and others are annihilated. Therefore it is my deliberate conclusion that You are the only worshipable Deity within the creation. Accept my humble obeisances until the annihilation of this material world. As long as there is sunshine in this material world, kindly accept my humble obeisances.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

In this verse Lord Kṛṣṇa dismisses His servant, and Brahmā offers respectful obeisances. "Vṛṣṇi-kula-puṣkara-joṣa-dāyin" means "O Lord who are like a sun delighting the lotus flower of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty." "Kṣmā" means "the earth", "nirjara" means "the demigods", "dvija-paśūdadhi-vṛddhi-kārin" means "who nourishes the earth, the demigods, the brāhmaṇas and the cows". The first line of this verse means "O Lord who are like the moon".

"Uddharma" means "irreligion", "śarvara" means "blinding darkness", and "hara" means "removing". Of these, the first statement compares the Lord to the moon and the second compares Him to the sun. Therefore Brahmā hints: "O Lord who are like both the moon and the sun".

"Kṣiti-rākṣasa-dhruk" means "O enemy of Kaiṁsa and the other demons on the earth". Thus again Brahmā hints a comparison with the sun. Then, thinking the sun very insignificant in comparison to Lord Kṛṣṇa, Brahmā says: "ārkaṁ arhan", which means "O Lord who are worshiped by the sun-god". "Bhagavan namas te" means "O Supreme Personality of Godhead, I offer obeisances to You until the end of the kalpa."

sa-sakhi-vatsaka-mokṣaṇa-kautuka  
druta-vilambita-putra-mude 'dbhutam  
nikhila-rūpam ato dadhad acyuto  
'vatu sa vaḥ kalayan vraja-maṅgalam

May infallible Lord Kṛṣṇa, who brings auspiciousness to the land of Vraja, who happily rescued His friends and calves, who expanded into many forms, and who at once filled His son, Brahmā, with wonder and joy, protect us.

Translator's note: This verse is written in the meter druta-vilambita. Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī included the meter's name in the second line of this verse.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

In the word "śrī kṛṣṇa", the word "śrī " means "who possesses all kinds of handsomeness and grace", and "kṛṣṇa" means "who, possessing all handsomeness, attracts the hearts and minds of all". These words mean that Lord Kṛṣṇa is always and in all respects more handsome than any other being. That is described in the word "vṛṣṇi-kula-puṣkara-joṣa-dāyin".

The reason Lord Kṛṣṇa is the most handsome is given in the word "bhagavan", which means "O master of all opulences". The remainder of this verse has already been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Or, in this one stanza, with great devotion Brahmā offers prayers that glorify Lord Kṛṣṇa's wonderful holy names, briefly describes the purpose of all of Lord Kṛṣṇa's incarnations, touches Lord Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, and bows down to offer respectful obeisances to Him.

The word "vṛṣṇi-kula-puṣkara-joṣa-dāyin" "as the sunrise drives away the darkness and sheds light upon the lotus flowers, so the appearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa destroys the sufferings of Śrī Vasudeva and the Yādavas and fills them with transcendental bliss. These themes have already been discussed in the verses of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam. For example, in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.2.17 it was said:

sa bibhrat pauruṣaṁ dhāma

"While carrying the form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead within the core of his heart, Vasudeva bore the Lord's transcendently illuminating effulgence, and thus he became as bright as the sun."\*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.2.38 it was said:

diṣṭyā hare 'syā bhavataḥ pado bhuvo

"O Lord, we are fortunate because the heavy burden of the demons upon this earth is removed by Your appearance. Indeed, we are certainly fortunate, for we shall be able to see upon this earth and in the heavenly planets the marks of lotus, conchshell, club, and disc that adorn Your lotus feet."\*

"Kṣmā-nirjara-dvija-paśūdadhi-vṛddhi-kārin" means "O moon who expands the ocean of the earth, the demigods, the brāhmaṇas, and the cows and other animals". "Uddharma-śārvara-hāra" means "O Lord who brings happiness and directly removes the sufferings caused by the proponents of atheism and irreligion".

Although Brahmā could have simply said that Lord Kṛṣṇa increases the good fortune of the earth, and from that one could infer the increase of the good fortune of the brāhmaṇas and cows, because in this incarnation the Lord specifically protects the brāhmaṇas and cows, they are here mentioned separately. Or, perhaps they are mentioned separately because Brahmā is eager to include the great sages of Maharloka and other places and the cows of Goloka and other places.

Or, perhaps these words refer to the residents of Vraja exclusively. In this interpretation the word "kṣmā-nirjara" means "the brāhmaṇas", "dvija" means "the birds", and "paśu" means "the cows, buffalo, and other animals". Because they are all very numerous, they are here called "oceans". In this interpretation, then, the word "vṛddhi-kārin" means "who increases the good fortune of the residents of Vraja especially".

Now, toward the end of this description, Brahmā explains that teaching the religion of loving devotional service is Lord Kṛṣṇa's primary purpose in coming to the material world. "Dharma" (religion) here refers to devotional service, and "uddharma" (irreligion) refers to impersonal speculation and other so-called spiritual paths that might lead a person away from the true path of devotion. That true path of devotional service is eternally manifest, although it may sometimes be concealed by darkness (śārvara). Here Brahmā says that Lord Kṛṣṇa removes (hara) that darkness.

Then Brahmā speaks word "kṣiti-rākṣasa-dhruk". The word "kṣiti-rākṣasa" refers to two kinds of living entities. Some are called rākṣasas because, like demons who move about under the cover of night's darkness, they move about within the darkness of the world of repeated births and deaths. Because they create obstacles on the path of devotional service, which is the only real life for all living entities, these persons are called rākṣasas. Because within their hearts they conceal a demonic nature, these persons are actually demons.

Another class of rākṣasas is the enemies of Vṛṣṇi dynasty and the other associates of Lord Kṛṣṇa. These persons, like Kāmsa and his associates, are openly demons. Lord Kṛṣṇa is thus the enemy (dhruk) of these different kinds of demons. Lord Kṛṣṇa merely removes the false pride and other faults of the first class of



demons, but the second class of demons, like Kaiṁsa and his associates, Lord Kṛṣṇa directly kills.

These activities are actually for the demons' true benefit, as is declared here by the word "bhagavan", which means "O supremely merciful Lord". The Lord is called merciful here because He teaches the saintly devotees how to serve Him with devotion. The word "arhan" means: "O Lord, only You can perform this unprecedented activity (of first revealing the truth of devotional service). No one else has the power to do it." Or, the word "arhan" may mean "O Lord, You are all-powerful. You can do anything."

Here the word "ākalpam" means "until the end of my (Brahmā's) life". Or, this word may mean "Your ornaments (kalpam) from (ā) Your peacock-feather crown and guñjā necklace to the morsel of food in Your left hand."

"Arkam" is the name of a tree that bears a flower not suitable to offer to Lord Kṛṣṇa. Therefore this tree is not honored by the Vaiṣṇavas. Here Brahmā says: "O Lord Your powers, opulences, and glories are manifest everywhere in the material world, even down to the lowly ārka tree." In conclusion, Brahmā says: "O Kṛṣṇa, O supremely blissful son of Nanda, I offer my respectful obeisances to You (namas te)."

śrīmac-caitanyadevānu-  
grhītānām anugrahāt  
teṣāṁ mude stutir brāhmī  
vyākhyāteyaṁ yathā-ruci

By the mercy of they who have attained Lord Caitanyadeva's mercy, for their pleasure, and according to their wishes, I have written this commentary on Brahmā's prayers.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here Brahmā hints: "O Lord, although, because You know that I am an offender, You do not speak to me, still, please give to me the nectar of Your merciful glance. By always drinking this nectar I will preserve my life until the kalpa's end." After speaking these words, Brahmā bows down to offer respects. That is the gist of this verse.

Referring to the Lord's right eye, which is the original form of the sun, Brahmā says: "vṛṣṇi-kula-puṣkara-joṣa-dāyin", which means "O sun who makes the lotus flower of the Vṛṣṇi dynasty bloom, please mercifully make the lotus flower of me also bloom."

Then, referring to the Lord's left eye, which is the original form of the moon, Brahmā says: "kṣmā-nirjara-dvija-paśūdadhī-vṛddhi-kārin", which means "O moon who expands the oceans of the human beings and other residents of the earth, the demigods in Svargaloka, and the birds and cows in Vṛndāvana, please mercifully expand the good fortune of me, the lowest of the demigods."

Then, referring to the Lord's two eyes, which are like the sun and moon risen together, Brahmā says: "uddharma-śarvara-hara". "Uddharma" means atheism and

impiety", and "śarvara" means "blinding darkness". In the Amara-kośa Dictionary it is said:

śārvaras tv andha-tamaṣaḥ

" `Śarvara' means `blinding darkness'."

"Hara" here means "who removes". Here Brahmā hints: "O Lord, please mercifully remove my impiety, which was seen in my attempt to bewilder even You with my mystic potency. Please remove it so I will never act in this way again."

Then Brahmā says: "kṣiti-rākṣasa-dhruk", which means "O Lord, even though You are the enemy of Aghāsura and the other demons on the earth, nevertheless You give them residence in Your own spiritual abode. I am a demon like them. I am a brahma-rākṣasa from Satyaloka, for I became the enemy of Your friends and calves. Therefore, as You punished the other demons, please also punish me.

"If he sees that his master is either merciful or cruel, the servant is encouraged to continue living. But if he sees that his master is indifferent and does not care at all, then a servant no longer desires to maintain his life."

Then Brahmā thought within his heart: "Alas! Alas! Thinking that it was not proper for my master, the great Lord of lords, to hold a stick, be decorated with guñjā, mineral dyes, peacock feathers, and other like ornaments, and enjoy pastimes with cowherd boys, I foolishly committed an offense to Him and to His friends. Let me beg forgiveness from them."

In the word "ā-kalpam ārkam arhan bhagavan namas te", "ā-kalpam" means "including Your guñjā necklace and other ornaments", and "ārkam" means "even the ārka tree, which bears flowers that cannot be offered to the Lord". Here "Brahmā says: "everything in the land of Vraja, including even Your ornaments and even the arka trees". "Arhan" means "O object of worship".

Then Brahmā says: "O Lord who can be merciful or merciless, who can grant me auspiciousness or trouble, I offer my respectful obeisances to You (namas te)."

sarva-saiṁśaya-hṛt sarva-  
bhakti-siddhānta-santatiḥ  
astu brahma-stutiś citta-  
bhittau me cāru-citritā

May Brahmā's prayers, which remove all doubts, teach all the truths of devotional service, and are an expert and graceful architect, build a wonder on the foundation stone of my heart.

Text 41

śrī-śuka uvāca

ity abhiṣṭutya bhūmānam  
triḥ parikramya pādayoḥ  
natvābhīṣṭam jagad-dhātā  
sva-dhāma pratyapadyata

śrī-śukaḥ uvāca-Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said; iti-thus; abhiṣṭutya-offering prayers; bhūmānam-to the Supreme Personality of Godhead; triḥ-thrice; parikramya-circumambulating; pādayoḥ-to the feet; natvā-bowing; abhiṣṭam-desired; jagad-dhātā-the creator of the universe; sva-dhāma-own abode; pratyapadyata-returned.

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: In this way Brahmā, the master of this universe, after offering humble and respectful obeisances unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead and circumambulating Him three times, was ready to return to his abode known as Brahmāloka.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Thus Brahmā bowed down before Lord Kṛṣṇa's feet. Here the word "abhiṣṭam" means either "worshiped by all" or "loved by all".

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here "bhūmānam" means "He whose glory is limitless", "iti" means "thus", and "abhiṣṭutya" means "praising (ṣṭūya) everything (abhi)". Or, "bhūmānam" may mean "even though He is all-pervading, He stands in that way, as if He is not all-pervading."

Here it is said: "After thrice devotedly circumambulating most dear Kṛṣṇa, Brahmā returned to his home in Satyaloka." At first, overcome by embarrassment and other like emotions, Brahmā yearned to reside in Vraja. He thought, "Let me give up my post as Brahmā and take birth somewhere, anywhere, in Vraja".

But now that he attained Lord Kṛṣṇa's mercy, Brahmā instead returned to his own abode, which is very dear to him. This is because he is the creator of the universe and if he left his post the universe would not function properly. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa sent him back to Satyaloka.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The meaning here is that Lord Kṛṣṇa sent Brahmā back to his own home, which is very dear to him. Brahmā is the creator of the universe, and if he suddenly abandons his post, the universe would not function properly. In the Nyāya it is said:

yāvad adhikāram avisthitir adhikārikāṇām

"Authorities should fulfill the duties of their posts for as long as they are assigned."

Here it is understood that when his term as Brahmā is completed, he will attain his desire.

## Text 42

tato 'nujñāpya bhagavān  
sva-bhuvam prāg avasthitān  
vatsān pulinam āninye  
yathā-pūrva-sakham svakam

tataḥ-then; anujñāpya-giving permission; bhagavān-the Supreme Personality of Godhead; sva-bhuvam-to His son; prāk-as before; avasthitān-situated; vatsān-calves; pulinam-riverbank; āninye-brought; yathā-pūrva-sakham-the friends as before; svakam-own.

By His gesture, the Supreme Personality of Godhead gave him permission to return. As soon as Brahmā left, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa immediately appeared as He had on the very day the cows and cowherd boys had vanished. Kṛṣṇa had left His friends on the bank of the Yamunā while they were engaged in lunch.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

"Anujñāpya" means "giving permission", and "sva-bhuvam" means "to Brahmā". Then Lord Kṛṣṇa brought His friends to the riverbank where they had been before.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here Brahmā did not depart merely by his own wish. The word "anujñāpya" means "Lord Kṛṣṇa sent him away". "Sva-bhuvam" means "His own son". This word hints that Lord Kṛṣṇa forgave all of Brahmā's offenses.

"Prāk" means "previously". "Yathā-pūrva-sakham svakam" means either "the place where Lord Kṛṣṇa and the boys were taking lunch" or "the place where the calves were". In this way Lord Kṛṣṇa took the calves from the forest to the riverbank.

The text here does not expressly state whether Brahmā took the boys and calves to that place, Lord Kṛṣṇa took them, or they returned by their own accord. It simply says that the illusion of Brahmā was lifted, Lord Kṛṣṇa sat down among the boys as they sat down by the riverbank to eat lunch, as before.

Previously, Lord Kṛṣṇa reassured the boys, and left to bring back the calves.

Because (after one year) the boys said: "Now Lord Kṛṣṇa had returned with the calves", it should be understood that the boys and calves had been in the grip of Brahmā's mystic illusion for an entire year.

Here someone may ask: "Why is it that the other gopas or other residents of Vraja did not see the boys and calves the forest for that year? Were the boys and calves troubled by cold weather, winds, or other troubles in the forest for that year?" To this the answer is given: "The all-powerful potency of Lord Kṛṣṇa intervened at this point, and therefore these problems did not occur."

Or, if someone says: "Why did Lord Kṛṣṇa neglect the boys and calves when He saw them in this condition? Probably Brahmā bewildered the boys and calves with his mystic power and then took them to Satyaloka or some other place, and kept them there, where Lord Kṛṣṇa could not see them.", then the following answer may be given: "No. That is not correct. Brahmā did not actually take the boys and calves from Vraja." This is seen in the following statement of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.13.41):

"Lord Brahmā thought: Whatever boys and calves there were in Gokula, I have kept them sleeping on the bed of my mystic potency, and to this very day they have not yet risen again."\*

By the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa the boys and calves did not suffer any distress. Neither were they ever invisible to Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose transcendental form is filled with all knowledge. Not a moment passed that Lord Kṛṣṇa could not see them. When Lord Kṛṣṇa spent time searching for them He did so either to show how much He loved them or to bewilder Brahmā. All this was explained previously. Thus it is proved that the boys and calves remained in their respective places in Vraja.

In his commentary on the next verse (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.14.43) Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī asks: "How were the boys and calves able to sit still for so long? How were they able to completely forget hunger, thirst, and a host of other desires?"

The answer to this question is found in the word "yathā-pūrvam" (as before), which shows that the calves remained where they were, and the boys also remained seated for their lunch by the riverbank. However, it should be understood that because now the boys were one year older, their bodies had grown in size.

It is because of the Lord's great power that the mothers of the boys and calves identified Lord Kṛṣṇa's expansions as their own children. Otherwise they certainly would have been greatly distressed by their children's absence for an entire year.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

By remaining silent, Lord Kṛṣṇa gave permission to His son, Brahmā. It is said:

maunam sammati-lakṣaṇam

"Silence is the symptom of agreement."

After asking permission in the words "anujānīhi mām kṛṣṇa" of text 39, Brahmā departed. Lord Kṛṣṇa remained silent through the entirety of Brahmā's prayers. He did this because He had accepted the role of the small child of a gopa and also to bewilder Brahmā. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa's silence here was deliberate. It was like an actor's assuming a certain role from the beginning to the end of a play. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.13.16 it is said:

tato vatsān adṛṣṭvaitya  
puline 'pi ca vatsapān  
ubhāv api vane kṛṣṇo  
vicikāya samantataḥ

"Thereafter, when Kṛṣṇa was unable to find the calves, He returned to the bank of the river, but there He was also unable to see the cowherd boys. Thus He began to search for both the calves and the boys, as if He could not understand what had happened."\*

This search for the calves and boys marks the beginning of Lord Kṛṣṇa's dramatic performance here.

The verse beginning with the word "naumīḍya" (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.14.1) marks the beginning of Brahmā's prayers. As Brahmā speaks these prayers, Lord Kṛṣṇa says to Himself: "From what place has this four-headed person come? What is he doing? What is he saying? I am eager only to find My calves. I am only a gopa boy. I am not intelligent enough to decipher his words."

In this way, by remaining silent throughout Brahmā's prayers, Lord Kṛṣṇa concluded His dramatic performance. Thus, in the presence of His servant Brahmā, Lord Kṛṣṇa pretended to be ignorant of His own powers and opulences. He did this like an actor playing a part on the stage. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.13.61 it is said:

tatrodvahat paśupa-vamśa-śiśutva-nāṭyam

"Then Lord Brahmā saw the Absolute Truth, who is one without a second, who possesses full knowledge, and who is unlimited, assuming the role of a child in a family of cowherd men and standing all alone, just as before, with a morsel of food in His hand, searching everywhere for the calves and His cowherd friends."\*

Overwhelmed by the great sweetness of love for mother Yaśodā and His other associates in vātsalya-rasa and the other rasas, Lord Kṛṣṇa finds that His own knowledge of His own powers and opulences becomes covered. This is perfectly proper for Him. This is not play-acting on Lord Kṛṣṇa's part. The word "nāṭyam"

(in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.13.61) should not be understood in that sense.

"Prk" means "as before", "avasthitān" means "looking for grass and performing other like activities", "svakam" means "His place for taking lunch". To that place by the riverbank Lord Kṛṣṇa took the calves (pulinam āninye).

What was that place like? In that place Lord Kṛṣṇa's gopa friends remained seated as before. They had never left.

In the ending of the compound word "yathā-pūrva-sakham" the poetic license of the sages (ārṣa) is employed. Or, the word "yathā" means "as before", and "pūrva-sakham" means "The Lord's original friends, who were there before He manifested many forms of His friends".

### Text 43

ekasminn api yāte 'bde  
prāṇeśam cāntarātmanaḥ  
kṛṣṇa-māyāhata rājan  
kṣaṇārdham menire 'rbhakāḥ

ekasmin-in one; api-even; yāte-gone; abde-year; prāṇeśam-the master of life; ca-and; antarātmanaḥ-of the Supersoul; kṛṣṇa-māyāhata-overcome by Lord Kṛṣṇa's potency; rājan-O king; kṣaṇārdham-half a moment; menire-considered; arbhakāḥ-the boys.

Although He returned exactly one year later, the cowherd boys thought He had returned within a second. That is the way of Kṛṣṇa's different energies and activities.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here someone may ask: "How were the boys and calves able to sit still for so long? How were they able to completely forget hunger, thirst, and a host of other desires?" These two verses (43 and 44) answer this question.

Here it is said: "The gopa boys spent a year separated from Lord Kṛṣṇa." When the devotees are separated from their beloved Kṛṣṇa, they think every moment longer than a year. However, in this situation the gopa boys were bewildered by the Lord's Yogamāyā potency. Thus they thought a year was only half a moment.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here "prāṇeśam ātmanaḥ" means p"the master of their lives", and "māyāhatāḥ" means "bewildered by Lord Kṛṣṇa's illusory potency". Although the illusory potency here was created by Brahmā, because it was sanctioned by Lord Kṛṣṇa, it is here called "the illusory potency of Lord Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇa-māyā)". In a previous verse (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.13.37) Lord Balarāma thought:

prāyo māyāstu me bhartuḥ

"Who is this mystic power, and where has she come from? Is she a demigod or a demonness? She must be the illusory potency of My master, Lord Kṛṣṇa, for who else can bewilder Me?"\*

In this way everything is explained. This has also been written before. Thus the boys and calves were bewildered by Lord Kṛṣṇa's māyā potency.

The word "prāṇeśam" means "Lord Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vraja's king", and "arbhakāḥ" means "the boys of Nanda's Vraja". The word "rājan" (O King) is spoken here out of great wonder.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

This pastime, where the boys spent a year unaware of the passage of time and where at the end of that time they concluded their lunch pastimes when Lord Kṛṣṇa arrived with a morsel of food in His hand, was arranged by the power of Lord Kṛṣṇa's inconceivable Yogamāyā potency. That is explained in these four (43-46) verses.

Here "ātmanaḥ" means "their own", "prāṇeśam" means "Lord Kṛṣṇa", and "antarā" means "without". "Māyā" means "Yogamāyā", and "āhataḥ" means "covered".

#### Text 44

kiṁ kiṁ na vismarantīha  
māyā-mohita-cetasaḥ  
yan-mohitaṁ jagat sarvaṁ  
abhikṣnam viśmṛtātmakam

kim-what?; kim-what?; na-not; vismaranti-forget; iha-here; māyā-mohita-cetasaḥ-maya; yan-mohitam-bewildered by whom; jagat-universe; sarvam-entire; abhikṣnam-constantly; viśmṛtātmakam-forgetful.

All living entities are controlled by the supreme energy of the Lord, and sometimes they remember and sometimes they forget their constitutional position. His friends, being controlled in such a way, could not understand that for one whole year they were absent from the Yamunā bank and were under the spell of Brahmā's illusion.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

"Yan-mohitam" means "bewildered by māyā". "Jagad abhikṣnam viśmṛtātmakam" means "again and again the conditioned souls are bewildered."



They have forgotten their true identity".

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

In this (iha) material world (jagat) the conditioned soul forgets (vismṛta) his own identity (ātmakam). He also forgets the everywhere-present Supreme Personality of Godhead. All (sarvam) conditioned souls, including even Indra and the demigods, are thus bewildered by Lord Kṛṣṇa's māyā potency.

The word "abhīkṣnam" means "even if sometimes and in some circumstances one remembers or is made to remember the spiritual reality, again he will forget. In this way the power of the illusory potency is described.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Because it also bewilders the living entity, the Lord's external potency Mahāmāyā is given as an example to hint the power of the Lord's spiritual Yogamāyā potency. Here Brahmā says: "As a conditioned soul forgets his spiritual identity because he is bewildered by Mahāmāyā, so the boys and calves for one year forgot the suffering of being separated from Lord Kṛṣṇa because they were bewildered by the Yogamāyā potency."

#### Text 45

ūcuś ca suhrdaḥ kṛṣṇam  
sv-āgataḥ te 'ti-ramhasā  
naiko 'py abhoji kavala  
ehiitaḥ sādhu bhujyatām

ūcuḥ-said; ca-and; suhrdaḥ-friends; kṛṣṇam-Kṛṣṇa; sv-āgataḥ-welcome; te-they; ati-ramhasā-very quickly; na-not; ekaḥ-one; api-even; abhoji-eaten; kavala-handful; ehi-please come; itaḥ-here; sādhu-nicely; bhujyatām-should be eaten.

They began to laugh, thinking that Kṛṣṇa was not willing to leave their lunchtime company. They were very jubilant and invited Him, "Dear friend Kṛṣṇa, You have come back so quickly! All right, we have not as yet begun our lunch, not even taken one morsel of food. So please come and join us and let us eat together."

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "The gopas said (ūcuḥ): 'You have come back (svāgataḥ) so quickly (ati-ramhasā)! All right, we have not as yet begun our lunch, not (na) even (api) taken one (ekaḥ) morsel of food. So please come and join us and let us eat together (bhujyatām sādhu)'."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

"Svāgatam" means "happily returning with the calves". The remainder of the verse is already explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Or, the adverb "ati-ramhasā" modifies "svāgatam". "Tvayaikaḥ" is an alternate reading for "naikaḥ".

Or, "tvayaiko 'py abhoji kavalah" then means "You have not eaten even a morsel, for the food is still in Your hand". Then the gopas say: "Therefore please come. Enter the circle we have formed. Eat. Fill up Your stomach."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

"Ucuḥ" means "the boys said", and "svāgatam ati-ramhasā" means "who had happily arrived". Here the boys say: "We thought it would take half an hour to bring back the calves, who had wandered far away, but You have returned with them in half a moment. You have not eaten even a single morsel. Therefore, please come here."

#### Text 46

tato hasan hr̥ṣikeśo  
'bhyavahr̥tya saḥārbhakaiḥ  
darśayam̐s carmājagaram  
nyavartata vanād vrajam

tataḥ-then; hasan-laughing; hr̥ṣikeśaḥ-Lord Kṛṣṇa; abhyavahr̥tya-taking lunch; sadarbhakaḥ-with the boys; darśayam̐s-showing; carma-the skin; ājagaram-the snake; nyavartata-returned; vanāt-from the forest; vrajam-to Vraja.

Kṛṣṇa smiled and accepted their invitation, and He began to enjoy the lunchtime company of His friends. After finishing their lunch, Kṛṣṇa and His friends and calves began to return to their Vrajabhūmi homes. While passing, they enjoyed seeing the dead carcass of Aghāsura in the shape of a gigantic serpent.

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

"Abhyavahr̥tya" means "after eating".

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here the word "hasan" (smiling) means either, "Lord Kṛṣṇa smiled to hear the words of the boys who had been bewildered by His māyā," or "Lord Kṛṣṇa smiled because He was happy that the boys did not say that they had suffered in any way." The words "abhyavahr̥tya saḥārbhakaiḥ" hint that for all that time Lord Kṛṣṇa also had not eaten anything.

Here someone may object: "If that were true, then why did mother Yaśodā and the others tolerate such a situation?" To this the answer is given in the word

“hr̥ṣīkeśaḥ” (the master of the senses).

This means that when He is called, "Please come and eat." Lord Kṛṣṇa can so expertly imitate the activity of eating that everyone believes that He is, even when He is not. An example of this is Śrī Lakṣmaṇa in relation to Lord Rāma and others. This activity of pretending to eat is described in different places in the Purāṇas.

Or, it may mean that in those situations Lord Kṛṣṇa ate only to please the others, but He did not enjoy eating. However, now Lord Kṛṣṇa ate with great relish, enjoying the taste, smell, and other features of the foods.

After those pastimes, Lord Kṛṣṇa returned (nyavartata) to Vraja (vrajam). In some texts "nivartata" replaces “nyavartata”. Either way, the meaning is the same.

The words "darśayaṁś carmājagaram" indicate that for all that time Lord Kṛṣṇa's māyā potency carefully protected the snake's corpse so the pastime of killing Aghāsura would be easily remembered and repeated in the village of Vraja.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here the word "hasan" (smiling) means that Lord Kṛṣṇa was very happy to see His friends. "Abhyavahr̥tya" (after finishing their lunch) means that if in the course of that year the grains, vegetables, and other foods had undergone even a moment's change they would have become unpalatable to the Lord.

"Darśayan" means that Lord Kṛṣṇa told His friends: "Look! Here is the dead snake covered with blood." Yogamāyā had carefully preserved the snake's corpse so the story of its death could be repeated in Vraja Village. “Nyavartata vanād vrajam” means "Lord Kṛṣṇa and the boys left their forest pastimes and returned to Vraja Village."

#### Text 47

barha-prasūna-vana-dhātu-vicitritāṅgaḥ  
proddāma-veṇu-dala-śṛṅga-ravotsavāḍhyaḥ  
vatsān gṛṇann anuga-gīta-pavitra-kīrtir  
gopī-dṛg-utsava-dṛśiḥ praviveśa goṣṭham

barha-peacock feathers; prasūna-flowers; vana-dhātu-forst minerals; vicitrita-decorated; āṅgaḥ-limbs; proddāma-great; veṇu-flute; dala-leaf; śṛṅga-horn; rava-sound; utsavāḍhyaḥgreat festival; vatsān-calves; gṛṇann-calling; anuga-followers; gīta-song; pavitra-pure; kīrtiḥ-glories; gopī-of the gopīs; dṛk-of the eyes; utsava-festival; dṛśiḥ-glance; praviveśa-entered; goṣṭham-Vraja.

When Kṛṣṇa returned home to Vrajabhūmi, He was seen by all the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana. He was wearing a peacock feather in His helmet, which was also decorated with forest flowers. Kṛṣṇa was also garlanded with flowers and painted with different colored minerals collected from the caves of Govardhana Hill. Govardhana Hill is always famous for supplying natural red dyes, and Kṛṣṇa and His friends painted their bodies with them. Each of them had a bugle made of buffalo horn and a stick and a flute, and each called his respective calves by their

particular names. They were so proud of Kṛṣṇa's wonderful activities that, while entering the village, they all sang His glories. All the gopīs in Vṛndāvana saw beautiful Kṛṣṇa entering the village.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

"Proddāma-veṇu-dala-śṛṅga-ravotsavādhyah" means "opulent with a tumultuous festival of music from the flute and other instruments". "Gṛṇan" means "affectionately calling". "Gopī-dṛg-utsava-dṛśiḥ" means "He whose sight is a festival of happiness for the gopīs' eyes".

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "Happy to be in the company of the calves and the boys who are His dear friends, decorated with forest ornaments, and delighting the vraja-gopīs' eyes, Lord Kṛṣṇa entered Vraja Village."

"Vana-dhātu" means "colored minerals collected from the caves of Govardhana Hill. "Barha-prasūna-vicitritāṅgaḥ" means "limbs wonderfully decorated with peacock feathers and other ornaments", of it may mean "He whose limbs were thus decorated by His friends".

"Proddāma" means "tumultuous", "veṇu-dala-śṛṅga-ravotsavādhyah" means "a festival of the music of leaf-flutes and horns". Or, the words "anuga-gīta-pavitra-kīrtiḥ" mean "with singing, hand-clapping, and dancing the boys happily, loudly, and melodiously proclaimed the glories of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Here "pavitra" means either "pure" or "purifying the entire world". The word "kīrtiḥ" here means "singing about the killing of Aghāsura and other pastimes".

The word "gopī" here refers to Yaśodā and all the women of Vraja. By seeing Lord Kṛṣṇa at that moment their eyes became filled with tears of joy.

Or, the word "gopī" may refer to Śrī Rādhā and the other gopī-beloveds of Lord Kṛṣṇa. For them especially the sight of Lord Kṛṣṇa was a great festival of happiness. The remainder of this verse has already been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

Or, these words may mean the sight of Lord Kṛṣṇa was a festival for the gopīs' eyes and the sight of the gopīs was a festival for Lord Kṛṣṇa's eyes. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa and the gopīs became filled with bliss by gazing upon each other.

These pastimes should be understood to have occurred within Vraja Village. This is so because when He left to protect the calves, Lord Kṛṣṇa did not go very far from Vraja Village, and also because there is no description here of great separation from Vraja Village, and also because it is not said that they were outside of Vraja Village. This fact will also be confirmed in a subsequent passage of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam describing some rasas (nectar mellows) while protecting the cows.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

"Gṛṇan" means "affectionately calling". "Gopī-dṛg-utsava-dṛśiḥ" means "a festival for the eyes of the gopīs in the mood of parental love (vātsalya-rasa).

## Text 48

adyānena mahā-vyālo  
yaśodā-nanda-sūnunā  
hato 'vitā vayan̄ cāsmād  
iti bālā vraje jaguḥ

adya-today; anena-by Him; mahā-vyālah-a great serpent; yaśodā-nanda-sūnuna-by the son of Yaśodā and Nanda; hataḥ-killed; avitā-protected; vayan̄-we; ca-also; asmāt-from it; iti-thus; bālā-the boys; vraje-in Vraja; jaguḥ-sang.

The boys composed nice songs describing how they were saved from being swallowed by the great serpent and how the serpent was killed. Some described Kṛṣṇa as the son of Yaśodā, and others as the son of Nanda Mahārāja. "He is so wonderful that He saved us from the clutches of the great serpent and killed him," they said.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here the word "yaśodā-nanda-sūnunā" refers to the statements of many different persons. Some called Lord Kṛṣṇa the son of mother Yaśodā and other called Him the son of Nanda Mahārāja. Or, this word may mean "the son who delights Yaśoda" (yaśodā plus ānanda becomes yaśodānanda). Then the gopas say: "He protected (avitāḥ) us (vayan̄) from a great serpent (mahā-vyālah̄)."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here the word "yaśodānanda-sūnunā" means "the son who delights Yaśodā". The killing Aghāsura was especially pleasing to mother Yaśodā.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here the word "yaśodā-nanda-sūnunā" means "He who is the good fortune (ānanda or yaśaḥ) of Nanda and Yaśodā. Because this is a śāka-pārthiva karmadhāraya-samāsa, its middle word is elided. The words "vayan̄ avitāḥ" mean "we were protected from a great serpent."

## Text 49

śrī-rājovāca

brahman parodbhave kṛṣṇe  
iyān̄ premā katham̄ bhavet  
yo 'bhūta-pūrvas tokeṣu

svodbhaveṣv api kathyatām

śrī-rājā uvāca-the king said; brahman-O brahmana; para-of another; udbhave-for the child; kṛṣṇe-Kṛṣṇa; iyān-so much; premā-love; katham-why?; bhavet-could be; yaḥ-who; abhūta-pūrvaḥ-unprecedented; tokeṣu-for children; svodbhaveṣu-for one's own children; api-also; kathyatām-may be spoken.

Mahārāja Parīkṣit inquired: During the absence of the original cowherd boys, when Kṛṣṇa expanded Himself, why is it that the boys' parents became more loving toward Him than toward their own sons? Also, why did the cows become so loving toward the calves, more than toward their own calves?\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

In the previous chapter (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.13.26) it was said:

vrajaukasāṁ sva-tokeṣu  
sneha-vally ābdam anvaham  
śanaiḥ niḥsīma vavṛdhe  
yathā kṛṣṇe tv apūrvavat

"Although the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi, the cowherd men and cowherd women, previously had more affection for Kṛṣṇa than for their own children, now, for one year, their affection for their own sons continuously increased, for Kṛṣṇa had now become their sons. There was no limit to the increment of their affection for their sons, who were now Kṛṣṇa. Every day they found new inspiration for loving their children as much as they loved Kṛṣṇa."\*

In this way the parents of Vraja had more love for Kṛṣṇa, who was the son of another, than for their own sons. In this verse Mahārāja Parīkṣit asks about this.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here the word "brāhmaṇa" (O brāhmaṇa) hints: "You are directly the Vedas personified. You know everything." "Iyān" means "this much" and "yaḥ" means "how much".

The word "parodbhave" (the son of another) hints that the people of Vraja thought of Kṛṣṇa as the son of Nanda and Yaśodā. They did not think of Him as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Nevertheless they had more love for Kṛṣṇa than they had for their own children.

Here someone may ask: "If a person naturally loves his own children more than others' children, then why did the people of Vraja love Kṛṣṇa more than their own children?" In the words beginning with "katham", Mahārāja Parīkṣit asks this question.

If the alternate reading of "svodbhaveṣu ca" is accepted instead of "svodbhaveṣv

api", the meaning is the same. "Kathyatām" means "please describe it".

Here the question is how this great love happened, not whether it was appropriate. It has already been said here that the residents of Vraja renounced their children and everything else for Lord Kṛṣṇa's sake.

Or, perhaps, seeing in the assembly at Naimiṣāranya some austere impersonalist sages who loved their own children but not the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mahārāja Parīkṣit mocked them with this question. Here "katham" means "from what?" The remainder of the verse is as has already been explained.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

In the previous chapter (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.13.26) it was said:

vrajaukasām sva-tokeṣu  
sneha-vally ābdam anvaham  
śanaiḥ niḥsīma vavṛdhe  
yathā kṛṣṇe tv apūrvavat

"Although the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi, the cowherd men and cowherd women, previously had more affection for Kṛṣṇa than for their own children, now, for one year, their affection for their own sons continuously increased, for Kṛṣṇa had now become their sons. There was no limit to the increment of their affection for their sons, who were now Kṛṣṇa. Every day they found new inspiration for loving their children as much as they loved Kṛṣṇa."\*

In this way the parents of Vraja had more love for Kṛṣṇa, who was the son of another, than for their own sons. In this verse Mahārāja Parīkṣit asks about this.

This love for Lord Kṛṣṇa appearing as their own sons was not manifested before the pastime of bewildering Brahmā. In this world it is seen that a person has greater love for his own son, even if the son has no good qualities, than for the son of another, even if that son has many good qualities. Because the condition described here is the opposite of the what naturally occurs in the material world, Mahārāja Parīkṣit here asks about it.

## Text 50

śrī-śuka uvāca

sarveṣām api bhūtānām  
nrpa svātmaiva vallabhaḥ  
itare 'patya-vittādyās  
tad-vallabhatayaiva hi

śrī-śuka uvāca-Śrī Śuka said; sarveṣām-of all; api-also; bhūtānām-living

ewntities; nrpa-O king; svātmā-own self; eva-indeed; vallabhaḥ-dear; itare-others; apatyā-children; vitta-wealth; ādyāḥ-beginning with; tad-vallabhatayā-with affection; eva-indeed; hi-indeed.

Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Every living entity is actually most attached to his own self. Outward paraphernalia, such as home, family, friends, country, society, wealth, opulence, reputation, etc. are all only secondary in pleasing the living entity. They please only because they bring pleasure to the self.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Because Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supersoul residing in the heart, it is appropriate that one love Him more than one's own children. To explain this truth, here it will be explained that a person loves himself first and others second. This is explained in these five verses (50-54).

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supersoul. Therefore He is more dear than all others. He is more dear even than one's own self, what to speak of one's relatives. The spirit soul considers himself most dear and others are dear only in relation to Him. That is explained in these five verses (50-54).

Impelled by ignorance, the individual living entity thinks others different from himself and therefore he thinks himself most dear. Or, one's own self is most dear because it is one's own self alone that one perceives directly.

Here the word "ādyāḥ" (beginning with) means "beginning with one's home and wife". Even though it is more dear than one's children or other persons, one's own body is not mentioned here because persons who identify the material body with the self and thus think their bodies the most dear thing in the world will be described later in this chapter.

Or, perhaps the material body is included here in the word "ādyāḥ" and it is not expressly stated because the material body is obviously dear because the living entity always exerts so much effort to maintain and protect it. This was also explained previously.

The word "nrpa" (O king) here hints: "O King Parīkṣit, even a king like yourself protects and maintains the citizens ultimately because the self is most dear." The word "hi" (certainly) hints that this is all proved by direct experience of the living entities.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of these five verses (50-54) is: "O king, in this material world it is seen that the natural tendency is to love oneself more than one's children or other persons one may claim as one's own. By understanding this one will come to understand the final truth."

Here the word "vallabha" means "according to material vision, the object of great love". That love is different for each different body, as is affirmed here by the



word "itare" (others).

## Text 51

tad rājendra yathā snehaḥ  
sva-svakātmani dehinām  
na tathā mamatālambi-  
putra-vitta-grhādiṣu

tat-that; rājendra-O great king; yathā-as; snehaḥ-love; sva-svakātmani-in one's own self; dehinām-of embodied souls; na-not; tathā-so; mamatā-possessiveness; ālambi-manifesting; putra-vitta-grhādiṣu-beginning with children, wealth, and home.

O best of kings, for this reason one is self-centered and is attached to his body and self more than he is to relatives like wife, children, and friends.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Why is that? Because everyone can see it to be so. That is declared in this verse. Here "tat" means "for that reason", and "sva-svakātmani" means "in the material body, which is the home of the false-ego".

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The topic of the previous verse is further explained in this verse. The syllable "ka" in "svaka" means "one's own". "Sva" means "own", and "ātmani" means "in the soul, which is the controller of the material body". It is because the conditioned soul identifies the material body as his self that Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has defined "sva-svakātmani" as "in the material body, which is the home of the false-ego".

To interpret "ātmani" as "the material body" is not logical, for the material body will be specifically mentioned in the very next verse. Thus the word "dehinām" here describes they who know the spirit soul is different from the material body.

The passage beginning with "mamatālambi" declares that it is logical that one have more affection for oneself, which one designates as "I" that one has for children and other persons, whom one designates as "mine". The word "rājendra" (O king of kings) hints: "O king, you know that you do not love your kingdom as much as you love your self".

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

Here the word "yathā" (as) hints: "As one who does not identify the material body as the self".

## Text 52

dehātma-vādinām puṁsām  
api rājanya-sattama  
yathā dehaḥ priyatamas  
tathā na hy anu ye ca tam

deha-body; ātma-self; vādinām-saying; puṁsām-of persons; api-even; rājanya-sattama-O best of kings; yathā-as; dehaḥ-body; priyatamaḥ-most dear; tathā-so; na-not; hi-indeed; anu-following; ye-who; ca-and; tam-that.

O best of kings, a person who has no information of the spirit soul is very much attached to his material body.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

To show the different conceptions of identity and the different kinds of love they create, in these two verses (52 and 53) Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes the difference between the foolish and the wise. In this verse he says: "One's children and other persons are not as dear to a person as his own self is dear."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here the word "dehātma-vādinām" describes persons who do not understand the truth. For they who think the material body is the self, the material body is most dear. Such persons think they themselves are most dear. Because they think they are the material body, they think the material body is most dear.

Here "hi" means "certainly", and "ca" means "but". The word "rājanya-sattama" (O best of kings implies: "Some kings are materialists and identify the self as the material body. Other kings, who are impersonalists, are superior to them. Still other kings, who are devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, are better than all others. O Mahārāja Parikṣit, because You are very dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa, you are the best of kings."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

They who are bewildered about the true identity of the self think that the self is the material body. To describe the nature of such persons Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī here declares that children and other persons in relation to one's body are not as dear as one's own body.

## Text 53

deho 'pi mamatā-bhāk cet

tarhy asau nātma-vat priyaḥ  
yaj jīryaty api dehe 'smin  
jīvitāśā baliyasi

dehaḥ-body; api-even; mamatā-bhāk-possessive; cet-if; tarhi-then; asau-he; na-not; ātma-the self; vat-likje; priyaḥ-dear; yat-what; jīryati-ages; api-also; dehe-in the body; asmin-in this; jīvita-to life; āśā-hope; baliyasi-is strong.

A person who has no information of the spirit soul is very much attached to his material body, so much so that even in old age he wants to preserve the body in so many artificial ways, thinking that his old and broken body can be saved.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here the word "yat" means "because". The gist of this verse is: "Even in old-age, when death approaches, the living entity still yearns to stay alive."

Here is the meaning: Even when it is certain that one will not continue to remain alive, the conditioned soul continues to identify the material body as his self. Thus he places his love in the material body.

Or, the word "yat" may mean "in which". Interpreted in this way, the verse means: "When the body grows old, the living entity yearns to remain alive. In this way he acts like a fool.

"A wise person, however, does not identify the material body as his self. Thus he does not place his love in the material body. Thus in his old-age a wise person does not yearn to remain alive."

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

The gist of this verse is: "Wise persons think 'The material body is mine, not I.'" This has already been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī.

In his commentary Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī said, "nātīvāsthā", which means "The wise think, 'The material body may die, or it may live.'" Thus they are not very concerned about the material body's fate.

Or, these words may mean: "The foolish think the material body is their identity. However, the wise know, 'I am not the material body.'" Therefore the material body is not very dear to the wise."

Here the word "yat" means "because". This means "Because the conditioned soul thinks the material body is his self, when the body grows old and becomes defeated by diseases and other troubles, he still yearns to stay alive within that dying body.

"A person who is wise, however, finds that the desire 'Let my body remain alive' becomes gradually weaker. This is because he gradually understands that he is not the material body. He is different. Thus his love for the material body grows gradually weaker."

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is: "The materialists, who affirm that the material body is the self, eventually become wise. Then they also understand that self is the soul, not the material body, and the soul is to be loved, not the material body."

When a person who thinks "I am this body" becomes a little wise, he begins to understand, "I am not this body. Rather, this body is mine." At that time the soul becomes dear to him. Then the material body is not as dear as the soul to him. This means the body is only dear because it has a relationship with the soul.

The second half of this verse gives the direct experience of ordinary persons as evidence to prove this. A person may see that the death of the material body is naturally very painful. Thus he will pray, "Let my death not be painful." Although such a person may intelligently understand that he is actually a spirit soul and not the material body, still his yearning to remain alive in the material body may be even stronger than that knowledge.

#### Text 54

tasmāt priyatamaḥ svatāmā  
sarveṣām api dehinām  
tad-artham eva sakalam  
jagad etac carācaram

tasmāt-therefore; priyatamaḥ-most dear; svatāmā-own self; sarveṣām-of all; api-also; dehinām-embodied souls; tad-artham-for its sake; eva-indeed; sakalam-all; jagat-world; etac-this; carācaram-moving and unmoving beings.

Therefore it is his own self that is most dear to every embodied living being, and it is simply for the satisfaction of this self that the whole material creation of moving and nonmoving entities exists.\*\*\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

Here the words "tad-artham eva sakalam" mean that everything exists to please the soul.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

In the word "carācaram", "cara" refers to the body, children, and other moving entities", and "acara" refers to the home and other stationary objects. The material world consists of these two: the moving and the unmoving. The word "api", which means "also", is connected to the word "sakalam".

Or, this verse means: "The entire material universe, with its material bodies, objects related to material bodies, and moving and unmoving things is meant for the spirit souls, who perform yajñas and other activities to attain various results and benefits there." The remainder of this verse has already been explained by Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī. Or, the word "tad-artham" means "to enjoy that".

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

In the word "carācaram", "cara" refers to wife, children, and other persons", and "acara" refers to home, utensils, clothing, and other things. Thus it is proved, by ordinary vision, that everyone love's his own self more than he loves his children or other persons.

### Text 55

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

kṛṣṇam-in the Supreme Personality of Godhead; enam-this; avehi-just try to understand; tvam-you; ātmānam-the soul; akhilātmanām-of all living entities; jagad-dhitāya-the benefit of the whole universe; saḥ-He; api-certainly; atra-here; dehī-a human being; iva-like; ābhāti-appears; māyayā-by His internal potency.

You should know Kṛṣṇa as the original soul of all ātmās (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 with the strength of His own internal potency.\*

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī:

In this very Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī offers a prayer glorifying Lord Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī:

Here the words "ātmānam akhilātmanām" mean "the Supersoul who is present in the4 hearts of all conditioned souls", "enam" means "Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the son of Yaśodā", "so 'pi" means "even though He is like this" or "even though He has descended to the material world", "dehīva" means "like an ordinary conditioned souls", and "ābhāti" means "is manifested". He is manifested by His Yogamāyā potency (māyayā). Thus foolish persons think that Lord Kṛṣṇa is part of the material world although in truth he is beyond the material world in every respect. That was stated in the very beginning of these prayers.

The word "iva" means that Lord Kṛṣṇa generally manifests His transcendental opulences. Or, "dehīvābhāti māyayā" may mean "By His mercy (māyayā), He appears (bhāti) exactly (ā) like (iva) an ordinary conditioned soul (dehī).

To properly understand these words one should understand (avehi) that Lord Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇam) is the most dear Supersoul (ātmānam) present in the hearts of all conditioned souls (akhilātmanām), and He has descended to this world for the benefit of the conditioned souls (jagad-dhitāya). The meaning here is that the Lord

has descended to this world in His form of Kṛṣṇa to remove the sufferings of the living entities and bring them transcendental bliss.

Here someone may protest: "If it is said that the individual souls naturally love Lord Kṛṣṇa because He is the Supersoul present in their hearts, then why do the demons not love Lord Kṛṣṇa also? He is the Supersoul in their hearts as well."

The passage beginning here with the words "so 'pi" is spoken to answer this question. Although Lord Kṛṣṇa is not different from His transcendental body, before the demons Lord Kṛṣṇa presents Himself as an ordinary conditioned soul (dehīva) with an external material body. Lord Kṛṣṇa does this with the covering power (āvaraṇa-śakti) of His illusory potency (māyayā). He does this because His form is naturally the abode of spiritual love. Therefore He covers that form before the demons. In the Mahā-Varāha Purāṇa it is said:

deha-dehi-vibhedo 'yaṁ  
neśvare vidyate kvacit

"There is no difference in Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, between Himself and His body."\*

Here is the meaning: Only when he is not covered by His āvaraṇa-śakti (covering potency) is Lord Kṛṣṇa perceived as the object of love. In this world it is seen that many people slander Lord Kṛṣṇa, falsely ascribing to Him many horrible faults. That is why Lord Kṛṣṇa conceals Himself before such people. However when one serves the Lord with devotion, that covering potency becomes removed and one can see the Lord as He is.

In this way there are many different degrees of love for Lord Kṛṣṇa. The residents of Vraja love Him to the greatest extent.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī:

The gist of this verse is: "When one sees the truth he comes to the final conclusion that the individual spirit soul is only an intermediate object of love. The final, highest object of love is Lord Kṛṣṇa alone."

Here Brahmā says: "Please know that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supersoul present in the hearts of all conditioned souls." A person loves children and other persons because they bring pleasure to his own material body. In the same way a person loves his own material body because it brings pleasure to himself, the spirit soul. Also in the same way a person loves his true self, his spiritual identity, because he brings pleasure to the Supersoul. The Supersoul is Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose spiritual form is perfect and complete. In Bhagavad-gītā (10.42) Lord Kṛṣṇa declares:

viṣṭabhyāham idaṁ kṛtsnam  
ekāṁṣena sthito jagat

"With a single fragment of Myself I pervade and support this entire creation."\*

Because Lord Kṛṣṇa is the highest object of love, the greatest love is felt for Him. In this way it is seen that the people of Vraja loved Kṛṣṇa even more than they loved their own children.

Fuurthermore, how can those conditioned souls who are not devotees of the Lord, who have no love and devotion for the Lord, and whose knowledge is covered by the illusory potency māyā, directly perceive Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is perceived only by persons who love Him with devotion? Because such persons have given all their love to their children and to other persons, they cannot directly perceive Lord Kṛṣṇa.

However, the residents of Vraja, because they are beyond the touch of the illusory potency māyā, and because they are full of love for Lord Kṛṣṇa, are able to directly perceive Lord Kṛṣṇa as He is. In this way it is seen that the residents of Vraja love Lord Kṛṣṇa more than they love even their own children.

Here it is said that Lord Kṛṣṇa descended to the material world to benefit the conditioned souls (jagad-dhitāya). Nevertheless, His illusory potency (māyayā) makes it seem that He is an ordinary conditioned soul (dehiva). This means that the conditioned souls bewildered by the Lord's illusory potency believe that Lotrd Kṛṣṇa has a body made of material elements.

Or, these words may mean: "Influenced by Lord Kṛṣṇa's illusory potency māyā, the conditioned souls believe that Lord Kṛṣṇa's body is made of the māyā potency. However, the truth is that Lord Kṛṣṇa's body is not made of the māyā potency." Śrī Madhusūdana Saravasvatī explains:

sac-cit-sukaika-vapuṣaḥ puruṣottamasya  
nārāyaṇasya mahimā na hi mānam eti

"No one can count all the glories of Lord Nārāyaṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose form is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss."

He also declares:

cid-ānandākāraṁ jalada-ruci-sāraṁ ṣruti-girāṁ  
vraja-strīṇāṁ hāram. . . .

"Lord Kṛṣṇa charms all the women of Vraja. The Vedas declare that His form, dark like a monsoon cloud, is eternal and full of bliss."

Here someone may protest: "The Supersoul cannot be seen by the senses. Lord Kṛṣṇa, however, was easily seen by everyone. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa cannot be the Supersoul."

To this protest the answer is given: To benefit the living entities in the material world, by His causeless and inconceivable mercy, Lord Kṛṣṇa appears to be an

ordinary conditioned soul. Thus He is directly perceived by the senses of the conditioned souls, although in ordinary circumstances He is never perceived by the material senses of the conditioned souls.

### Text 56

vastuto janatām atra  
kr̥ṣṇam sthāsnu carīṣṇu ca  
bhagavad-rūpam akhilaṁ  
nānyad vastv iha kiñcana

The active principle of everything is Kṛṣṇa, and highly elevated transcendentalists see everything in connection with Him

Srila Sridhara Svami:

The gist of this verse is: Lord Kṛṣṇa in His feature as the Supersoul is not present only in the hearts of all living entities. He is also present everywhere in the world of inert, lifeless matter."

They who know that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the creator of all the universes know that everything moving and inert is in one sense also the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa is the form of the universe. It is not otherwise.

Srila Sanatana Gosvami:

Lord Kṛṣṇa is described as the creator, the first cause of all causes. Thus He is directly perceived as everything that exists. It is not otherwise. The remainder of this verse has already been explained by Srila Sridhara Svami[[]]. The result of attaining this knowledge is described in this verse.

They who know that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supersoul present in all living beings know that the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa resides everywhere. Thus He is manifest everywhere.

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti:

The gist of this verse is: The wise know that even the spirit soul, the material body, one's children, and all else that may be objects of love are, in one sense, also Kṛṣṇa. Therefore Lord Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate object of love."

They who understand Kṛṣṇa know that Kṛṣṇa's form is all that exists, both moving and inert. Because He is the creator of all, He is, in one sense, the same as His creation.

### Text 57



sarveṣāṃ api vastūnām  
bhavārtho bhavati sthitaḥ  
tasyāpi bhagavān kṛṣṇaḥ  
kim atad vastu rūpyatām

The original, unmanifested form of material nature is the source of all material things, and the source of even that subtle material nature is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. What, then, could one ascertain to be separate from Him?\*\*\*

Srila Sridhara Svami:

After hearing the previous verse, someone may ask: "Why is this so?" This verse is spoken in reply.

Here the word bhavarthah" means the greatest goal". That which is transformed to become the material world is called bhavat", or bhava". Thus bhava" means the cause of the material world". Because He is the cause of that bhava", Lord Kṛṣṇa is called bhavarthah". What person or thing (kim), then, may be said to be (rupyatam) separate from or superior to (atat) Lord Kṛṣṇa?

Srila Sanatana Gosvami:

After hearing the previous verse, someone may ask: "Why is this so?" This verse, which declares, "It is so because, being the cause of all, Lord Kṛṣṇa is present everywhere," is spoken in reply. The remainder of this verse has already been explained by Srila Sridhara Svami.

Or, someone may protest: "If all beings and everything else are in reality not different from the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa, then how can it be said that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supersoul present in all living beings?" This verse is spoken to answer that protest.

If in the previous verse (56) the word janatam" is understood to be preceded by an apostrophe (vastuto 'janatam), then persons who do not understand (ajanatam) the truth are described there. Interpreted in this way, that verse means: "They who do not understand the truth of Lord Kṛṣṇa think that Lord Kṛṣṇa is identical with everything. However, they who know the truth know that Lord Kṛṣṇa is separate. He is not identical with everything." Why is that so? The answer is given in this verse (57): "Because He is the creator, Lord Kṛṣṇa must be different from His creation."

Here it is said that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the artha" (goal). Devotion for the transcendental forms of Lord is the greatest goal that can be attained, a goal greater even than knowledge of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

In the previous verse (56) the word sthasnu" refers to Lord Kṛṣṇa's Deity forms and carisnu" refers to Lord Kṛṣṇa's devotees. Or, sthasnu" may refer to Lord Kṛṣṇa's non-moving Deity forms and carisnu" refers to His Deity form, such as Salagrama-sila, that move from place to place.

Therefore they who know (janatam) that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the highest form of the Personality of Godhead (bhagavad-rupam) and is the supreme controller also know that no one is greater than He is and no one (anyat) is the giver of liberation

or other gifts (vastu) more than He is. Thus Lord Krsna is described by the word bhagavad-rupam" or the word vastu".

Then this verse (57) explains that the word vastu" here really means the highest feature of the Personality of Godhead". Interpreted in this way, the word vastu" has the same meaning as artha".

Or, these words may mean that of all goals (vastu), the best goal is love (bhava) for Lord Krsna. Thus Lord Krsna, who is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the master of all opulences, is the highest object (artha) of love (bhava). Thus Lord Krsna Himself is attained by falling in love with Him.

Or, these words may mean that because He manifests all opulences in full, Lord Krsna, the son of Maharaja Nanda, is superior even to that Lord Narayana, the supreme controller. Here vastu" means the supreme goal", atat" means better than Him", and nirupyatam" means may be said". Thus, to the rhetorical question, Who is greater than Him?" the implied answer is, No one is better than Him." The remainder of the verse is the same as in the first interpretation.

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti:

After hearing the previous verse, someone may ask: Why is this so?" This verse is spoken in reply.

Here the words sarvesam api vastunam" mean of all moving and inert living beings". The word bhava" means that from which the created beings come (bhavanti)". Here bhava" means the unmanifested material nature (pradhana), which is the cause of the material world". The word artha" also means cause". Thus bhavarthah" means Lord Krsna, who is the creator of the unmanifested material nature (pradhana), which is itself the creator of the material world". The words kim atad vastu rupyatam" mean Who is greater than Him?"

Or, vastunam" means of the intelligence and the senses", and bhavarthah" means the cause of the cause". Thus the word bhavarthah" indirectly refers to Lord Krsna (the cause of the cause of the intelligence and senses).

Thus it is hinted that the individual spirit souls are parts and parcels of Lord Krsna, the complete whole. Thus the words kim atad vastu rupyatam" mean What can be said to be different from Lord Krsna?" Therefore, because He is the complete whole, Lord Krsna is the final object of all service.

## Text 58

samāśritā ye pada-pallava-plavaṁ  
mahat-padaṁ puṇya-yaśo murāreḥ  
bhavāmbudhir vatsa-padaṁ paraṁ padaṁ  
padaṁ padaṁ yad vipadāṁ na teṣāṁ

For one who has accepted the boat of the lotus feet of the Lord, who is the shelter of the cosmic manifestation and is famous as Mukunda, or the giver of mukti, the ocean of the material world is like the water contained in a calf's hoofprint. Param padam, or the place where there are no material miseries, or

Vaikuntha, is his goal, not the place where there is danger in every step of life.\*

Srila Sridhara Svami:

The gist of this verse, which sums up the meaning of the entire chapter, is: Because Lord Krsna is the highest goal, by taking shelter of Him alone one easily, without any great struggle, attains liberation."

Punya-yasah" means He whose glories are sacred", and murareh" means He, Lord Krsna". The words samasrita ye pada-pallava-plavam" mean the great devotees take shelter of the boat that is His lotus feet".

Here mahat-padam" may mean the feet (padam) that are the shelter of the great devotees (mahat)", or it may mean the feet (padam) that are very great and exalted (mahat)". These feet make the great ocean of the material world (bhavambudhih) become like the water contained in a calf's hoofprint (vatsa-padam).

Here param padam" means the world (padam) of Vaikuntha (param)." The persons who attain Vaikuntha never again enter the material world (padam) of calamities (vipadam). Once they depart from the material world, they never return.

Srila Sanatana Gosvami:

The gist of this verse is: They who take shelter of Lord Krsna and do not take shelter of anyone else attain happiness, freedom from suffering, and residence in the spiritual world."

The word pallava" here means that Lord Krsna's feet are likened to flowers (pallava) because they are soft and reddish. Or, pallava" may mean that Lord Krsna's feet are like kalpa-vrksa trees and His toes are like twigs or buds on those trees.

The word plava" means boat". Asritah" means that because they have faith in Lord Krsna and because they completely surrender to Him and take shelter of Him, the devotees enter the boat of Lord Krsna's lotus feet.

Here mahat" means either of the liberated souls" or of the great devotees like Narada". Padam" means shelter". Punya" means either supremely auspicious", or the best". Yasah" means famous as the killer of Aghasura".

Murareh" means either Lord Krsna, the Supreme Personality of Godhead" or Lord Krsna, who killed the demon Mura, the chief general of Narakasura's army". Or perhaps punya-yasah" means He who makes the devotees famous for their saintliness". Perhaps the word mahat-padam" is an adjective modifying punya-yasah".

The remainder of this verse has already been explained by Srila Sridhara Svami. Or perhaps the words yad vipadam na tesam" mean because of Lord Krsna the devotees are never troubled by obstacles and calamities".

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti:

In this way it is proved that Sri Krsna is the resting place of pure spiritual love. The gist of this verse is: By taking shelter of Lord Krsna's lotus feet one crosses beyond the world of maya and is able to directly see Lord Krsna. In this way the superior position of they who take shelter of Lord Krsna's feet is described."

In this way the devotees take shelter (asritah) only of the boat (plavam) of the lotus feet (pada-pallava) of Lord Krsna (murareh), whose fame (yasah) is charming, beautiful, and pleasing to the heart (punya).

Someone may ask: "What is that boat like?" The answer is given in the word mahat-padam", which means it gives shelter to the great devotees". For these devotees the ocean of the material world (bhavambudhih) becomes like a calf's hoof-print (vatsa-padam) that can be crossed without any great effort.

Param padam" means Sri Vrndavana, Vaikuntha, and the other transcendental abodes of the Lord". The words yad vipadam na tesam" mean For them there is never a host of calamities". The idea is that these great devotees do not meditate on any object other than Lord Krsna.

### Text 59

etat et sarvam ākhyātām  
yat prṣṭo 'ham iha tvayā  
tat kaumāre hari-kṛtām  
paugaṇḍe parikīrtitam

Since you inquired from me, I have fully described to you those activities of Lord Hari that were performed in His fifth year, but not celebrated until His sixth.  
\*\*\*

Srila Sridhara Svami:

Srila Sridhara Svami does not comment on this verse.

Srila Sanatana Gosvami:

Here the word yat" means either what was explained in detail" or what was glorified". Yat prsto. . .iha" means what was asked in this topic".

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti:

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti does not comment on this verse.

### Text 60

etat suhṛdbhiś caritam murāreḥ  
aghārdanam śadvala-jemanam ca  
vyaktetarād rūpam ajorv-abhīṣṭavam  
śṛṇvan gṛṇann eti naro 'khilārthān

These descriptions of Lord Krsna's pastimes with His cowherd boys, His eating

with them on the bank of the Yamuna, and Lord Brahma's prayers unto Him are all transcendental subject matters. Anyone who hears, recites, or chants them surely gets all his spiritual desires fulfilled.\*

Srila Sridhara Svami:

Lord Krsna's pastimes with His friends are described in many verses of Srimad-Bhagavatam. For example, in Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.12.5 it is said:

musnanto 'nyonyam sikyadin. . .

All the cowherd boys used to steal one another's lunch bags. When a boy came to understand that his bag had been taken away, the other boys would throw it farther away, to a far distant place, and those standing there would throw it still farther. When the proprietor of the bag became disappointed, the other boys would laugh, the proprietor would cry, and then the bag would be returned."\*

Thus are mentioned the killing of Aghasura (aghardanam), and (ca) taking lunch on the forest grass (sadvala-jemana). The word vyaktetarat" means different (itara) from matter (vyakta)", or, in other words made of pure, transcendental goodness". The word rupam" means the forms of the calves and the boys protecting the calves". Or, the word vyaktetarat" may mean forms meant for enjoying spiritual pastimes". In the word ajorv- abhistavam" aja" means of Brahma", uru" means great" and abhistavam" means prayers". The words srnvan grnann eti naro 'khillarthan" mean Anyone who hears, recites, or chants these prayers surely gets all his spiritual desires fulfilled."

Srila Sanatana Gosvami:

What more need be said? They who take shelter of Lord Krsna attain all spiritual perfections. The gist of this verse is: By hearing of these pastimes, or in any other way coming into contact with them, one attains the fulfillment of all spiritual desires." The remainder of this verse has already been explained by Srila Sridhara Svami.

Or, the words etat suhrdbhis caritam murareh aghardanam" refer to all these pastimes, beginning with the killing of Aghasura and concluding with Brahma's prayers, for Lord Krsna enjoyed all these pastimes with His friends. In this way Brahma speaks eloquent prayers glorifying Lord Krsna and His associates. The pastimes of stealing the gopas' lunchboxes and other like pastimes are not specifically mentioned here, for they were already described in the narration of Aghasura's death.

The word vyaktetaram", meaning, beyond the world of matter", is an adjective describing all of Lord Krsna's pastimes, for they are all spiritual and beyond the touch of the material world. The word vyaktetaram" not ending in t" is a poetic license of the sages (arsa). (Note: In the reading accepted for this text it does indeed end in t"). The words srnvan grnan" mean being engaged in the activities of

hearing and chanting". The word narah" means anyone". No special qualification is needed here.

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti:

The words suhrdbhis caritam" refer to pastimes like this one described in Srimad-Bhagavatam 10.12.5:

musnanto 'nyonyam sikyadin. . .

All the cowherd boys used to steal one another's lunch bags. When a boy came to understand that his bag had been taken away, the other boys would throw it farther away, to a far distant place, and those standing there would throw it still farther. When the proprietor of the bag became disappointed, the other boys would laugh, the proprietor would cry, and then the bag would be returned."\*

Vyaktetarat" means beyond the material world". The word vyaktetaram" not ending in t" is a poetic license of the sages (arsa). (Note: In the reading accepted for this text it does indeed end in t"). Ajorv-abhistavam" means the great prayers spoken with all sincerity by Brahma".

## Text 61

evam vihāraiḥ kaumāraiḥ  
kaumāraṁ jahatur vraje  
nīlayānaiḥ setu-bandhair  
markatoplavanādibhiḥ

Thus Kṛṣṇa and Balarama spent Their childhood in Vraja playing childhood games, running here and there, building bridges, jumping like monkeys, and playing in many other ways.

Srila Sridhara Svami:

iti sri-paramananda-  
nrsimha-pada-satpadah  
vyakarot sridhara-svami  
yatha-mati vidhi-stavam

As far as he understands them, Sridhara Svami, who is a bumblebee at the lotus feet of supremely blissful Lord Nṛsimhadeva, thus explains the prayers of Brahma.

Srila Sanatana Gosvami:

After thus describing the kaumara (1-5 years) pastimes of Lord Krsna, the speaker of Srimad-Bhagavatam will now describe the pauganda (6-10 years) pastimes of the two brothers: Krsna and Balarama. This verse gives a summary of Lord Krsna's kaumara pastimes.

Here the words jahatur vraje" mean enjoying pastimes like these, Krsna and Balarama remained hidden in the land of Vraja". Vraje" here hints that no other pastimes in any other place are like Lord Krsna's kaumara pastimes in Vraja. Thus the supremely exalted status of Vraja is declared.

The word nilayana" refers to the game where one boy hides and the others search for him. Or, this word may also refer to the following pastime to be described in later words of Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.37.26):

cakrur nilayana-kridas  
cora-palapadesatah. . .

Later that morning Krsna went to play with His cowherd boy friends on the top of the Govardhana Hill. They were imitating the play of thieves and police. Some of the boys became police constables, and some became thieves, and some took the role of lambs."\*

Here setubandha" means using mud and other articles to stop a stream of water". Or it may mean to please His friends, who yearned to see the bridge built by Lord Ramacandra, Lord Krsna and His friends assumed the roles of monkeys and built a bridge as they were playing in the waters of a lake." That pastime occurred to the west of Lord Krsna's birthplace in Mathura Puri.

The word viharaih" is in the plural because the Lord many pastimes and also because He enjoyed them again and again. The word adibhih" hints at many other pastimes, such as playing games where balls are thrown.

Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti:

In Srimad-Bhagavatam (10.12.41) Maharaja Pariksit inquired:

brahman kalantara-krtam  
tat-kalinam katham bhavet

O great sage, how could things done in the past have been described as being done in the present? Lord Krsna performed His pastime of killing Aghasura during His kaumara age. How, then, during His pauganda age, could the boys have described this incident as having happened recently?">\*

In these chapters that question has been answered. After thus completing his

answer to Maharaja Pariksit's question, Srila Sukadeva Gosvami continued his service of narrating Lord Krsna's pastimes.

Here jahatuh" means They were hidden", nilayanaih" means with pastimes where one boy hides and the others search for him", and viharaih" means with the pastimes of His other incarnations, pastimes like building the bridge, journeying to Lanka, and churning the milk ocean".

iti sarartha-darsinyam  
harsinyam bhakta-cetasam  
caturdaso 'yam dasame  
sangatah sangatah satam

As I stay among the Lord's devotees, I have thus concluded this commentary on the fourteenth chapter of the Tenth Canto of Srimad-Bhagavatam, a commentary named Sarartha-darsini, a commentary that pleases the devotees of the Lord.