



# ŚRĪ BRAHMA SAMHITĀ

WITH THE COMMENTARY DIG-DARŚANĪ-ṬĪKĀ  
OF ŚRĪ JĪVA GOSVĀMĪ

*Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā*

with the *Dig-darśanī-ṭīkā*  
of Jīva Gosvāmī

Translated by  
Bhanu Swami



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International Society for Krishna Consciousness  
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[letters@harekrishna.com](mailto:letters@harekrishna.com)  
[harekrishna.com](http://harekrishna.com)

To correspond directly with the author:

His Holiness Bhanu Swami  
Hare Krishna Land, Injambakkam  
Chennai, 600 041, India  
[info@iskconchennai.com](mailto:info@iskconchennai.com)

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This book is dedicated to His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami  
Prabhupāda, who inspired the world to take up the path of *bhakti*.

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## Introduction

The *Brahma-saṁhitā* is a work often quoted by Gauḍīya *ācāryas*. The fifth chapter of this work was discovered by Lord Caitanya while he was traveling as a *sannyāsī* in the Ādi-keśava temple in South India, as described in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 9.237. When the Lord found this work, tears came to His eyes, He began to tremble and perspire, and His hairs stood on end in ecstasy. He considered the *Brahma-saṁhitā* an expression of the conclusion of all Vaiṣṇava scriptures, and had a copy of it made and brought to Purī.

Since then, the *Brahma-saṁhitā* has been revered among Gauḍīyas. Like *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, it represents Kṛṣṇa as *svayaṁ-bhagavān* and shows His relationship to the forms of Viṣṇu, Śiva, Durgā, Gaṇeśa, and Brahmā. Though the whole of the *Brahma-saṁhitā* has never been located, the fifth chapter stands alone as a short but complete work. It is by and large straightforward, but Jīva Gosvāmī has written a commentary to clarify the ambiguous points.

# Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā

## TEXT 1

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

## TRANSLATION

**Kṛṣṇa is the supreme controller. He is the enjoyer of innumerable consorts and the possessor of an eternal form of knowledge and bliss. Though He is without origin, He is the source of all other forms of God and is the cause of all causes. He is Govinda, the boy who cares for the cows.**

## COMMENTARY

Rūpa Gosvāmī, whose younger brother was Śrī-vallabha and whose older brother is Sanātana Gosvāmī, is my good fortune. Indeed, he is the good fortune of all living entities.

May the excellence of Kṛṣṇa's form be honored in my heart! It is by Kṛṣṇa's mercy that I desire to explain the *Brahma-saṁhitā*.

This work, passed down by the sages, though difficult to understand, is, on careful consideration, filled with meaning. In considering the proper meaning of this work, I take shelter of the greatest sage among sages, Vedavyāsa.

Though the *Brahma-saṁhitā* has a hundred chapters, this fifth chapter is complete in itself because it succinctly expresses the essential meaning of all the scriptures. What persons of pure intelligence realize in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and other works is present here. What I have explained extensively in *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha*, I have reviewed, and some of those points I have used to explain the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. Thus my heart is full of joy.

## The Word *Kṛṣṇa*

The *Bhāgavatam* verse (1.3.28) that begins *ete cāmśa-kalāḥ puṁsaḥ kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam* establishes Kṛṣṇa as the primary form of Bhagavān. The same is stated in *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ* in the first verse of the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. The word *kṛṣṇa* denotes a specific form of the Lord, whose name is Kṛṣṇa. This same form is denoted by great devotees such as Śukadeva Gosvāmī in verses like the following:

*sa vismayotphulla-vilocano harim  
sutam vilokyānakadundubhis tadā  
kṛṣṇāvatārotsava-sambhramo 'sprśan  
mudā dvijebhyo 'yutam āpluto gavām*

“When Vasudeva saw his extraordinary son, his eyes were struck with wonder. In transcendental jubilation, he mentally collected ten thousand cows and distributed them among the *brāhmaṇas* as a transcendental festival for the appearance of Kṛṣṇa.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.3.11)

The same form of the Lord is denoted in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* of the *Sāma Veda* in the words, *kṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya devakī-nandanāya*: “Unto Kṛṣṇa, Vāsudeva, the son of Devakī.”<sup>1</sup>

Placing the word *kṛṣṇa* first in a series of names of the Lord in this verse from the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* also indicates the supreme position of Kṛṣṇa’s name. Garga Muni indicates the same in the *Bhāgavatam* (10.8.13–14) by mentioning the name of Kṛṣṇa before the name of Vāsudeva:

*āsan varṇās trayo hy asya  
grhṇato 'nuyugam tanūḥ  
śuklo raktas tathā pīta  
idānīm kṛṣṇatām gataḥ  
  
prāg ayaṁ vasudevasya  
kvacij jātas tavātmajaḥ  
vāsudeva iti śrīmān  
abhijñāḥ sampracakṣate*

“Your son Kṛṣṇa appears as an incarnation in every millennium. In the past, He assumed three different colors – white, red, and yellow – and now He has appeared in a blackish color. ... For many reasons, this beautiful son of yours sometimes appeared previously as the son of Vasudeva. Therefore, those who are learned sometimes call this child Vāsudeva.”

The *Brahma-saṁhitā* begins with the words *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ* to indicate, at the outset, that Kṛṣṇa is the principal form of God. This is similar to filling a pot with milk before using it for anything else, thus putting the pot to the best use first.<sup>2</sup> That Kṛṣṇa’s name is the chief name of the Lord is also stated by the Lord in the *Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa* of the *Padma Purāṇa* in the conversation between Nārada and Kuśadvaja:

*nāmnām mukhyatamaṁ nāma  
kṛṣṇākhyam me paran-tapa*

“O conquerer of enemies, my name Kṛṣṇa is the chief among all names.”

Similarly, in the 108 names of the Lord mentioned in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, it is said:

*sahasra-nāmnām puṇyānām  
trir-āvṛtṭyā tu yat phalam  
ekāvṛtṭyā tu kṛṣṇasya  
nāmaikam tat prayacchati*

“The auspicious results obtained by reciting a thousand names of the Lord three times can be obtained by reciting the name of Kṛṣṇa once.”

This statement of the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa*, that three thousand names of Viṣṇu are equal to one name of Kṛṣṇa, also applies to the name Govinda, mentioned in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (*anādir ādir govindaḥ* and later, *govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*). Though the person indicated by the name Govinda is Kṛṣṇa, the name Govinda is used to indicate His special identity as a cowherd.

The other words in the verse, starting with the word *īśvaraḥ*, describe Kṛṣṇa’s unique nature, using the conventional meaning of the word *kṛṣṇa*, already denoted as the son of Nanda. The same singularity of Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda, is stated by Garga:

*āsan varṇās trayo hy asya  
grhṇato 'nuyugaṁ tanūḥ  
śuklo raktas tathā pīta  
idānīm kṛṣṇatām gataḥ*

*bahūni santi nāmāni  
rūpāṇi ca sutasya te  
guṇa-karmānurūpāṇi  
tāny ahaṁ veda no janāḥ*

“Your son Kṛṣṇa appears as an incarnation in every millennium. In the past, He assumed three different colors – white, red, and yellow – and now all these are included in one form. Thus he is called Kṛṣṇa.... Your son has many forms and names according to his transcendental qualities and activities. These are known to me, but people in general do not understand them.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.8.13, 15)

Here then is the meaning of these two verses. In every *yuga* the body of the person known as Kṛṣṇa, accepting various *avatāra* forms, appears with the colors white, red, and yellow. These white, red, and yellow *avatāras* have directly appeared within Kṛṣṇa as His limbs now that Kṛṣṇa has descended on earth. Thus Kṛṣṇa is the principal name and form, since He is indicated as the cause of all other forms and the most attractive among all of them.<sup>3</sup> Thus all the other forms belong to Him (*bahūni rūpāṇi*). Therefore, prominence is given to Kṛṣṇa’s name because that name denotes the person who, due to His specific qualities, is the most prominent.

### **The Etymological Meaning of the Word *Kṛṣṇa***

The conventional meaning of Kṛṣṇa as the son of Nanda, possessor of supreme qualities, agrees with the etymological meaning of the word:

*kṛṣir bhū-vācakaḥ śabdo  
ṇaś ca nirvṛtivācakaḥ  
tayor aikyaṁ paraṁ brahma  
kṛṣṇa ity abhidhīyate*

“*Kṛṣ* means ‘existence’ and *ṇa* means ‘bliss.’ Combined, the two roots indicate that Kṛṣṇa is the supreme form of God.”<sup>4</sup>

This verse cannot refer to another person, for in dealing with worship of Kṛṣṇa and discussion of the eighteen-syllable mantra,<sup>5</sup> a similar verse is seen in the *Gautamīya-tantra*:

*kṛṣi-śabdaś ca sattārtho*  
*ṇaś cānanda-svarūpakāḥ*  
*sukha-rūpo bhaved ātmā*  
*bhāvānanda-mayatvataḥ*

“*Kṛi* means ‘existence’ and *ṇa* means ‘having a form of bliss.’ He is the very form of happiness, because He is composed of the bliss that arises from *prema*.”

Considering the statements of these two verses, their meaning is as follows. The meaning of the root *bhū* in the phrase *kṛṣir bhū-vācakaḥ śabdo* is “that entity by whose power all objects exist.” This is equivalent to the word *bhāva*, meaning “great power,” which is inherent only in the Lord. Because of the meaning of the word *kṛṣ* given in this verse, “having great power,” the word *karṣati*, which is derived from the root *kṛṣ* (to overpower), means “the person who controls all.” The person referred to in this statement is Kṛṣṇa. Thus the two words *bhū* and *kṛṣ* are said to have the same meaning. In the second verse from the *Gautamīya-tantra*, *kṛṣ* is said to indicate *sattā*, or existence (*kṛṣi-śabdaś ca sattārtho*). That is because “existence” is another meaning of the root *bhū* (to exist).

Now, if we want to define a pot, we should infer one element (the pot) as a cause and the other element (the descriptive term) as an effect, by establishing a relationship of cause and effect. When we define a pot, we assume that it exists, and thus describing that the pot exists (“pot means the existence of a pot”) does not tell us anything unique about the pot. We cannot assume it means existence of some other object, like cloth (“pot means the existence of cloth”), nor should we assume that it means simply existence (“pot is existence”), as both would be meaningless as definitions. In the same way, the use of the word *kṛṣ* in describing Kṛṣṇa should not mean merely “existence” but “the cause of the existence of everything.” This should also be the sense of the word *ākarṣam*, the noun derived from

the root *kṛṣ*; it should mean “the power of controlling everything in all existence” rather than the literal meaning “attraction.” Therefore, for defining Kṛṣṇa, when it is said that “*kṛṣ* means existence,” taking that meaning literally is meaningless. Another more specific meaning of “existence” must be inferred.

*Ṇa* stands for *nirvṛtti*, which means bliss. The combination of the two words *kṛṣ* and *ṇa* (*tayor aikyam*), “the Lord as the basis of all things and the cause of bliss to all” indicates *param brahma* by identification of case (*sāmānādhikarāṇya*) in the sentence.

Brahman means that object (*bṛhanam vastu*) which is the outstanding nourisher among all things, and *param brahma* means the greatest among all nourishers, or the nourisher who is greater than all other nourishers. That *param brahman*, or “greatest nourisher,” is called Kṛṣṇa (*tayor aikyam param brahma kṛṣṇa ity abhidhīyate*).

If one takes the word *kṛṣ* to mean simply “attraction” and combines that meaning with the word *ṇa*, meaning simply “bliss,” a relation of cause and effect between the object being described and the two modifying words cannot be established, since Kṛṣṇa and “attraction and bliss” are equal to each other. Kṛṣṇa, the greatest object, is attraction and bliss. This is similar to saying “ghee is life.” What we really mean by that statement is that ghee causes long life. Similarly, when we say “Kṛṣṇa is attraction,” we mean that Kṛṣṇa, having power over all things, causes attraction or is attractive to all things.

The meanings of Brahman just given are supported by the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (1.12.57), which gives the following derivation of the word *brahman*:

*bṛhattvād bṛmhaṇatvāc ca  
tad brahma paramam vidur*

“Brahman is known as the supreme entity because it is the greatest [*bṛhattva*] and because it is the nourisher of all things [*bṛmhaṇatva*].”

How can this be said? The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* is referring to *śruti* statements. The *śruti* states that *brahma* is that which is great and produces greatness.<sup>6</sup>

Another definition, in the *Bṛhad-gautamīya-tantra*, also describes Kṛṣṇa as Brahman:

*kṛṣi-śabdaś ca sattārtho  
ṇaś cānanda-svarūpakah  
sattā-svānandayor yogāt  
cit param brahma cocyate*

“The word *kṛṣ* means ‘existence’ and *ṇa* denotes a form of bliss. Because Kṛṣṇa is the cause of existence and thus the cause of bliss for all beings, He is called the Supreme Brahman with consciousness.”

Though the monists consider *kṛṣ* (existence) and *ṇa* (bliss) to have the same meaning, indicating one Brahman without qualities, the grammarians have acknowledged that the words *kṛṣ* and *ṇa* have different meanings. The word *sat* means the supreme cause of all things in existence. Why? This is proved by the statement *sad eva saumyedam agra asīt*: “That which is called *sat* existed before everything.” (*Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 6.2.1) Also, if the two words *sattā* and *ānanda* had the same meaning, then one of the words would be redundant. It would be like describing an object by repeating two different words that both mean the same thing (like defining a *kadamba* tree as a *vṛkṣa* and *taru*, two words for “tree”). In addition, that definition does not produce a relationship of an object being defined and its descriptive modifier. It simply says “Brahman is Brahman (*sat*).” Therefore, the argument that the syllables *kṛṣ* and *ṇa*, which indicate existence and bliss, simply indicate the Supreme Brahman, is refuted.

The verse *kṛṣi-śabdaś ca sattārtho ṇaś cānanda-svarūpakah sukha-rūpo bhaved ātmā bhāvānanda-mayatvataḥ* can be further explained. The first line indicates that Kṛṣṇa is full of bliss and endowed with the power to attract, or rule over, all beings. The second line means that since He has a most blissful form and thus attracts and rules all, the *jīvas* experience happiness (*sukha-rūpo bhaved ātmā*) because of the bliss (*ānanda-mayatvataḥ*) arising from *prema* (*bhāva*).

Thus it should be understood that the word *kṛṣṇa* means “he who is greatest by form and qualities, since he is the personification of bliss and the ruler and attractor of all beings.” He is conventionally known as the son of Devakī. The ability of the son of Vasudeva to give bliss to all is seen in the *Vāsudevopaniṣad*: *devakī-nandano nikhilam ānandayat*, “The son of Devakī gives bliss to all.” The author of *Nāma-kaumudī* defines *kṛṣṇa* as *param brahma*: *kṛṣṇa-śabdasya tamāla-śyāmala-tviṣi śrī-yaśodā-*

*stanandhaye para-brahmaṇi rūḍhiḥ*, “Kṛṣṇa indicates the Supreme Brahman, *para-brahman*, with the complexion of a dark *tamāla* tree, who drank milk from the breast of Yaśodā.” Thus *kṛṣṇa* indicates He who is composed solely of bliss, who is unchanging and eternally perfect, and who is the son of Devakī.

The word should not be given another meaning (such as “*kṛṣṇa* means ‘black’”). Bhaṭṭa<sup>7</sup> says:

*labdhātmikā satī rūḍhir  
bhaved yogāpahāriṇī  
kalpanīyā tu labhante  
nātmānaṁ yoga-bādhataḥ*

“The conventional meaning of a word overrides its etymological meaning. When context indicates a contradiction to the etymological meaning, the etymological meaning cannot be applied.”

### **Kṛṣṇa is *Para-brahman***

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Kṛṣṇa is also defined as *para-brahman*:

*yūyaṁ nṛ-loke bata bhūri-bhāgā  
lokaṁ punānā munayo ’bhiyanti  
yeṣāṁ gṛhān āvasatīti sākṣād  
gūḍhaṁ paraṁ brahma manuṣya-liṅgam*

“My dear Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, all of you [the Pāṇḍavas] are extremely fortunate, for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, lives in your palace just like a human being. Great saintly persons know this very well, and therefore they constantly visit this house.” (7.10.48)

*aho bhāgyam aho bhāgyaṁ  
nanda-gopa-vrajaukasāṁ  
yan-mitraṁ paramānandaṁ  
pūrṇaṁ brahma sanātanam*

“How greatly fortunate are Nanda Mahārāja, the cowherd men and all the other inhabitants of Vraja-bhūmi! 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.” (10.14.32)

Similarly, the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (4.11.2) says:

*yatrāvātīrṇaṁ kṛṣṇākhyam  
param brahma narākṛti*

“The *para-brahman* in human form is called Kṛṣṇa.”  
The *Bhagavad-gītā* (14.27) says:

*brahmano hi pratiṣṭhāham*

“I am the basis of Brahman.”

And the *Gopala-tāpanī Upaniṣad* says:

*yo 'sau param brahma gopālah*

“The Supreme Brahman is the cowherd boy Kṛṣṇa.”

### **The Word *Īśvara***

Now let us return to the original text. Since the word *īśvara* refers to Kṛṣṇa, who has just been described, *īśvara* here means “the ultimate controller of all things.” This is included in the meaning of the word *kṛṣṇa* when we consider another meaning of the same word given in the *Gautamīya-tantra*:

*athavā karṣayet sarvaṁ  
jagat sthāvara-jaṅgamam  
kāla-rūpeṇa bhagavān  
tenāyaṁ kṛṣṇa ucyate*

“The Lord is called Kṛṣṇa because He overpowers [*karṣayet*], in His form of time, all moving and nonmoving entities in the universe.”

Even the word for *kāla* (time) means “to control.” In the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.2.21) Uddhava gives a complete description of this

controlling aspect of Kṛṣṇa:

*svayaṁ tv asāmyātiśayas tryadhīśaḥ  
svārājya-lakṣmy-āpta-samasta-kāmaḥ  
balim haradbhiś cira-loka-pālaiḥ  
kirīṭa-koṭy-eḍita-pāda-pīṭhaḥ*

“No one is equal to or superior to Him. He is master of the three energies and the three Viṣṇus. All His desires are fulfilled by Lakṣmī and His rulership over His devotees, pastimes, and qualities. He is praised by the sound of the *devatās*’ ten million crowns touching the ground at His lotus feet as those eternal maintainers offer their respects while presenting Him gifts.”

The *Gītā* (10.42) adds, *idaṁ kṛtsnam ekāṁśena sthito jagat*: “By one fragment of My power I pervade and support this whole universe,” and the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* (1.19) says, *eko vaśī sarvagaḥ kṛṣṇa īdyaḥ*: “The one Lord Kṛṣṇa, who controls all and pervades all, should be worshiped.”

### **The Word *Parama***

Because Kṛṣṇa is the controller of all, He is designated as *paramaḥ*. The word *parama* means “the Lord who possesses the most excellent [*para*] energies [*śaktis*] in the form of Lakṣmīs [*mā*].” These energies, or *śaktis*, are described in the *Bhāgavatam*:

*gṛheṣu tāsām anapāyy atarka-kṛn  
nirasta-sāmyātiśayesv avasthitaḥ  
reme ramābhir nija-kāma-sampluto  
yathetaro gārḥaka-medhikāṁś caran*

“The Lord, performer of the inconceivable, constantly remained in each of His queens’ palaces, which were unequaled and unexcelled by any other residence. There, although fully satisfied within Himself, He enjoyed with His pleasing wives, and like an ordinary husband He carried out His household duties.” (10.59.43)

*nāyam śriyo 'ṅga u nitānta-rateḥ prasādaḥ  
svar-yoṣitām nalina-gandha-rucām kuto 'nyāḥ  
rāsotsave 'sya bhujā-daṇḍa-gṛhīta-kaṇṭha-  
labdhāśiṣām ya udagād vraja-vallabhīnām*

“When Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa was dancing with the *gopīs* in the *rāsa-līlā*, the *gopīs* were embraced by the arms of the Lord. This transcendental favor was never bestowed upon the goddess of fortune or other consorts in the spiritual world. Indeed, never was such a thing even imagined by the most beautiful girls in the heavenly planets, whose bodily luster and aroma resemble the lotus flower. And what to speak of worldly women who are very beautiful according to material estimation?” (10.47.60)

*tābhir vidhūta-śokābhir  
bhagavān acyuto vṛtaḥ  
vyarocatādhikam tāta  
puruṣaḥ śaktibhir yathā*

“Encircled by the *gopīs*, who were now relieved of all distress, Lord Acyuta, the Supreme personality of Godhead, shone forth splendidly. My dear King, Kṛṣṇa thus appeared like the Supersoul encircled by His spiritual potencies.” (10.32.10)

It is also said in the *Brahma-saṁhitā* (5.56):

*śriyaḥ kāntāḥ kāntaḥ parama-puruṣaḥ*

“In Goloka reside the most beautiful young women – goddesses of fortune and loving consorts, every one – and their lover, the supreme male.”

The *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* says:

*kṛṣṇo vai paramam daivatam*

“Kṛṣṇa is the Lord endowed with many energies in the form of *gopīs*.”

**The Word Ādi**

Since Kṛṣṇa alone is *parama*, endowed with such energies, He is called *ādi* (first). The *Bhāgavatam* (10.72.15) uses the word *ādyaḥ* to describe Kṛṣṇa:

*śrutvājitaṁ jarāsandhaṁ  
nṛpater dhyāyato hariḥ  
āhopāyaṁ tam evādya  
uddhavo yam uvāca ha*

“When King Yudhiṣṭhira heard that Jarāsandha remained undefeated, he set to pondering, and then the primeval Lord, Hari, told him the means Uddhava had described for defeating Jarāsandha.”

Śrīdhara Svāmī explains in his commentary that the words *ādyaḥ hariḥ* refer to Kṛṣṇa. In the Eleventh Canto also the quality of excellence (*ṛṣabham*) is mentioned along with being first (*ādya*).

*bhava-bhayam apahantuṁ jñāna-vijñāna-sāraṁ  
nigama-kṛd upajahre bhṛṅga-vad veda-sāram  
amṛtam udadhitaś cāpāyayad bhṛtya-vargān  
puruṣam ṛṣabham ādyaṁ kṛṣṇa-sañjñāṁ nato 'smi*

“As the author of the *Vedas*, the Lord, like a bee, has extracted the essence from those *Vedas* in order to destroy fear of material existence. This essence of all knowledge and self-realization is nectar extracted from the Milk Ocean. He has made His devotees drink that nectar, and He has cheated the demons. I offer my obeisances to that Supreme Lord, the original and greatest of all beings, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.” (*Bhāgavatam* 11.29.49)

### ***Anādiḥ***

One should not think being *ādi* (first) means that Kṛṣṇa is no more than one of the many forms that appear in the material world. To make this clear, the word *anādiḥ* is used as well. This indicates that Kṛṣṇa’s forms appearing in the material world are eternal forms existing in the spiritual world. Thus, after stating *eko vaśī sarvagah kṛṣṇa īdyaḥ*, the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* says, *nityo nityānām cetanas cetanānām*: “He is the chief eternal being and the chief conscious being.”

### *Sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*

Because of Kṛṣṇa's status as first, He is called *sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*, the cause of all causes. He is the cause behind even the creator of the material realm, the *puruṣāvatāra*. Devakī says to Kṛṣṇa in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.85.31):

*yasyāṁśāṁśāṁśa-bhāgena  
viśvotpatti-layodayāḥ  
bhavanti kila viśvātmaṁs  
taṁ tvādyāhaṁ gatim gatā*

“O Soul of all that be, the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the universe are all carried out by a fraction of an expansion of an expansion of Your expansion, the *puruṣāvatāra*. Today I have come to take shelter of You, the Supreme Lord.”

The commentary on this statement is as follows. The expansion of Kṛṣṇa, the *puruṣāvatāra*, has an expansion in the form of *māyā*. *Māyā* has an expansion in the form of the *guṇas*, the material modes. This is an explanation of the phrase “an expansion of an expansion of Your expansion” (*yasyāṁśāṁśāṁśa*). By one very small portion of the *guṇas* (*bhāgena*), the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the universe take place. Therefore, Devakī says, “I surrender unto You (*tvā*).”

Similarly, Brahmā prays:

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

“Are You not the original Nārāyaṇa, O supreme controller, since You are the Soul of every embodied being and the eternal witness of all created realms? Indeed, Lord Nārāyaṇa is Your expansion, and He is called Nārāyaṇa because He is the generating source of the primeval water of the universe. He is real, not a product of Your illusory energy.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.14.14)

To explain the derivation of the word Nārāyaṇa, it is said:

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

“The elements of creation that arise from the Lord (*nara*) the wise know as *nāra*. The shelter of these elements, which exists previous to them, is called *ayana*. Thus the *puruṣa* is known as Nārāyaṇa.”

Thus Brahmā states that Nārāyaṇa is an expansion, and Kṛṣṇa is the source. The *Gītā* (10.42) also says, *viṣṭabhyāham idaṁ kṛtsnam ekāṁśena sthito jagat*: “By one of My expansions, the *puruṣa*, I am firmly established in the universe.” In this way, the etymological meaning of the name Kṛṣṇa has again been shown to be true, since He is also the basis of Nārāyaṇa.

### ***Vigrahaḥ***

Even those who claim that the roots in the word *kṛṣṇa*, *kṛṣ* and *ṇa*, simply mean “supreme bliss” and do not indicate a person cannot deny the fact that Kṛṣṇa has inherent powers, which is made apparent by descriptive words like *īśvara* in the verse under discussion. It would be inappropriate to attribute these qualities to some other object or person, since Kṛṣṇa is described as supreme in power (*īśvara*) and the supreme cause (*sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*).

Nonetheless, there is an objection. In addition, the *śruti* says:

*ānando brahma iti  
ko hy evānyāt kaḥ prāṇyād yad  
eṣa ākāśa ānando na syāt  
ānandād īmāni bhūtāni jāyante*

“Brahman is bliss. Who could breathe without this Brahman if this blissful Brahman were not present? From bliss all entities are born.” (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 2.7.1 and 5)

*na tasya kāryam karam ca vidyate  
na tat-samaś cābhyadhikaś ca dṛśyate*

*parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate  
svābhāvīkī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca*

“He has no body and no senses. No one is equal to Him or higher than Him. His supreme power is manifold. His actions are naturally revealed with knowledge and strength.” (*Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad*)

An opponent may thus say, “Though you say that, according to the etymology, *kṛṣṇa* means ‘he who attracts all, he who is the greatest, and he who is bliss,’ from that definition itself He should actually be considered formless, for bliss cannot have a form, in view of those quotations already mentioned.”

That may be true, but the Lord, by being endowed with *parama-śakti*, supreme energies, possesses an extraordinary form, full of eternal bliss. Thus the verse states *sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha*. He *is* bliss, but He also has a form comprised of eternity, knowledge, and bliss. In the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.22), Brahmā says:

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

“Therefore this entire universe, which like a dream is by nature unreal, nevertheless appears real, and thus it covers one’s consciousness and assails one with repeated miseries. This universe appears real because it is manifested by the potency of illusion emanating from You, whose unlimited transcendental forms are full of eternal happiness and knowledge.”

Also the *Gopāla-tāpanī* and *Hayaśīrṣa Upaniṣads* say, *sac-cid-ānanda-rūpāya kṛṣṇāyākliṣṭa-kārmaṇe*: “I offer my respects unto Kṛṣṇa who, with a *form* of eternity, knowledge, and bliss, is unafflicted by suffering.”

Also, the 108 names of Kṛṣṇa mentioned in the *Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa* describe Him as *nanda-vraja-janānandī sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ*: Kṛṣṇa’s form – made up of eternity, knowledge, and bliss – gives joy to the people of Vraja.

## *Sad-vigrahaḥ*

*Sac-cid-ānanda-vigraha* means the following. *Sat-vigraha* means that His form does not change. In the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.2.26) the *devatās*, headed by Brahmā, pray to the Lord (using the word *satya* repeatedly):

*satya-vrataṁ satya-param tri-satyaṁ  
satyasya yoniṁ nihitaṁ ca satye  
satyasya satyam ṛta-satya-netraṁ  
satyātmakaṁ tvāṁ śaraṇaṁ prapannāḥ*

“O Lord, You never deviate from Your vow, which is always perfect because whatever You decide is perfectly correct and cannot be stopped by anyone. Being present in the three phases of cosmic manifestation – creation, maintenance, and annihilation – You are the Supreme Truth. Indeed, unless one is completely truthful, one cannot achieve Your favor, which therefore cannot be achieved by hypocrites. You are the active principle, the real truth, in all the ingredients of creation, and therefore You are known as *antaryāmī*, the inner force. You are equal to everyone, and Your instructions apply for everyone, for all time. You are the beginning of all truth. Therefore, offering our obeisances, we surrender unto You. Kindly give us protection.”

Devakī says:

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

“After millions of years, at the time of cosmic annihilation, when everything, manifested and unmanifested, is annihilated by the force of time, the five gross elements enter into the subtle conception, and the manifested categories enter into the unmanifested substance. At that time, You alone remain, and You are known as Ananta Śeṣa-nāga.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.3.25)

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

“No one in this material world has become free from the four principles birth, death, old age, and disease, even by fleeing to various planets. But now that You have appeared, my Lord, death is fleeing in fear of You, and the living entities, having obtained shelter at Your lotus feet by Your mercy, are sleeping in full mental peace.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.3.27)

And Brahmā also prays:

*adyaiva tvad rte 'sya kiṁ mama na te māyātvam ādarśitam  
eko 'si prathamam tato vraja-suhr̥d-vatsāḥ samastā api  
tāvanto 'si catur-bhujās tad akhilaiḥ sākam mayopāsītās  
tāvanty eva jaganty abhūs tad amitam brahmādvayaṁ śiṣyate*

“Have You not shown me today that both You Yourself and everything within this creation are manifestations of Your inconceivable potency? First You appeared alone, and then You manifested Yourself as all of Vṛndāvana’s calves and cowherd boys, Your friends. Next You appeared as an equal number of four-handed Viṣṇu forms, who were worshiped by all living beings, including me, and after that You appeared as an equal number of complete universes. Finally, You have now returned to Your unlimited form as the Supreme Absolute Truth, one without a second.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.14.18)

Additionally, the *Gītā* (14.27) says, *brahmano hi pratiṣṭhāham*: “I am the basis of Brahman, which is eternal.” The *Gītā* (15.18) also says:

*yasmāt kṣaram atīto 'ham  
akṣarād api cottamaḥ  
ato 'smi loke vede ca  
prathitaḥ puruṣottamaḥ*

“Because I am superior to the conditioned and the liberated *jīvas*, I am celebrated in the *Vedas*, both the *śrutis* and *smṛtis*, as the Supreme Person.”

The *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* says:

*janma-jarābhyāṁ bhinnah sthānur ayam acchedyo 'yaṁ yo 'sau  
saurye tiṣṭhati  
yo 'sau goṣu tiṣṭhati, yo 'sau gāḥ pālayati, yo 'sau gopeṣu tiṣṭhati  
govindān mṛtyur bibheti*

“He is unchanging, free from birth and old age. He who stays in Vṛndāvana is indivisible. Death fears Govinda, who stays with the cows, who protects the cows, and who resides with the cowherd people.”

In this verse the word *saurya* comes from *saurī*, the Yamunā. The neighboring area, Vṛndāvana, is called *saurya*.

### ***Cid-vidyā***

The statement *cid-vidyā*, “having a body of knowledge,” means that the Lord’s form has the power to reveal itself to others, because it is self-revealing.<sup>8</sup> It is not dependent on another object to reveal it. Brahmā has stated the same in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.23):

*ekas tvam ātmā puruṣaḥ purāṇaḥ  
satyaḥ svayaṁ-jyotir ananta ādyaḥ  
nityo 'kṣaro 'jasra-sukho nirañjanaḥ  
pūrṇādvayo mukta upādhito 'mṛtaḥ*

“You are the one Supreme Soul, the primeval Supreme Personality and the Absolute Truth – self-manifested, endless, and beginningless. You are eternal and infallible, perfect and complete, without any rival, and free from all material designations. Your happiness can never be obstructed, nor have You any connection with material contamination. Indeed, You are the indestructible nectar of immortality.”

The *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* (1.26) says:

*yo brahmāṇaṁ vidadhāti pūrvaṁ  
yo vidyāstasmai gopāyati sma kṛṣṇaḥ  
taṁ ha daivam ātma-buddhi-prakāśaṁ  
mumukṣur vai śaraṇamanuvrajeta*

“Those desiring liberation should take shelter of Kṛṣṇa, who reveals Himself to others’ perception and who in the past created Brahmā and protected spiritual knowledge for him.”

The *Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad* says:

*na cakṣuṣā paśyati rūpam asya*

“One cannot see His form with the material eye.”

And the *Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* (3.2.4) says:

*yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas  
tasyaiṣa ātmā vṛṇute tanuṁ svām*

“The Lord reveals His form to whomsoever He chooses.”

### ***Ānanda-vigrahaḥ***

*Ānanda-vigraha* means that Govinda is the abode of the purest, highest *prema*, complete with all its components. This is made clear in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.49) as well:

*brahman parodbhave kṛṣṇe  
iyān premā katham bhavet  
yo ’bhūta-pūrvas tokeṣu  
svodbhaveṣv api kathyatām*

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

Vasudeva says (*Bhāgavatam* 10.3.13):

*vidito ’si bhavān sākṣāt  
puruṣaḥ prakṛteḥ paraḥ  
kevalānubhavānanda-  
svarūpaḥ sarva-buddhi-dṛk*

“My Lord, You are the Supreme Person, beyond material existence, and You are the Supersoul. Your purely blissful form can be perceived by transcendental knowledge, by which You can be understood as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I now understand Your position perfectly.”

*Śruti* says:

*ānandaṁ brahmaṇo rūpaṁ*

“The form of Brahman is bliss.”

Since the Lord’s form of eternity, knowledge, and bliss is perfect and intrinsic, that form is nondifferent from Him. Thus the words *ātmā* and *vigraha* may be used as synonyms. It has been shown that the Lord, unlike the *jīva*, is not embodied (*dehī*); He does not have a material body separate from the *ātmā*. Śukadeva says:

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

“You should know Kṛṣṇa to be the original Soul of all living entities. For the benefit of the whole universe, He has, out of His causeless mercy, appeared as an ordinary human being [*dehīvābhāti*]. He has done this by the strength of His mercy.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.14.55)

In this verse, *māyā* means “mercy.” The *Viśva-prakāśa* dictionary says, *māyā dambhe kṛpāyām ca*: “*Māyā* means ‘pride’ and ‘mercy.’”

### ***Govinda***

Since Kṛṣṇa eternally possesses the type of form just discussed, for the purposes of absorbing Himself in pastimes He sometimes appears as the king of the Vṛṣṇis and sometimes as Govinda, the cowherd boy. In the Twelfth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (12.11.25), Sūta explains:

*śrī-kṛṣṇa kṛṣṇa-sakha vṛṣṇy-ṛṣabhāvani-dhruḡ-  
rājanya-vaṁśa-dahanānapavarga-vīrya*

*govinda gopa-vanitā-vraja-bhṛtya-gīta*  
*tīrtha-śravaḥ śravaṇa-maṅgala pāhi bhṛtyān*

“O Kṛṣṇa! O friend of Arjuna! O chief among the descendants of Vṛṣṇi! O destroyer of those kings that are disturbing elements on this earth! O Lord whose prowess never deteriorates! O Govinda! O Lord whose fame purifies the universe and gives pleasure to the ears, because it is sung by Uddhava, the servant of the *gopīs* of Vraja! O Lord, please protect Your devotees.”

Though Kṛṣṇa performs pastimes in Vṛndāvana and Dvārakā, His form as Govinda [unique to Vṛndāvana] is the most worthy of worship because Govinda is endowed with the most affectionate form, pastimes, and associates. Thus the *Brahma-saṁhitā* uses the name Govinda to distinguish the Vṛndāvana Kṛṣṇa from the Dvārakā Kṛṣṇa. This Govinda will later be praised in the verse that starts with the words *cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu kalpa-vṛkṣa*. Govinda, which means “the Lord of the cows,” should not be considered an inferior name, because after Surabhi bathed Kṛṣṇa for His victory over Indra, Indra honored Him with the name Govinda.

(*Bhāgavatam* 10.27.23) In the chapter of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* preceding Indra’s praise of Govinda, Śukadeva prays, *prītyān na indro gavām*: “May the Lord of the cows be pleased with us.” If Kṛṣṇa is the shelter of all beings, and then is called the shelter of the cows, it indicates that Kṛṣṇa remains perfect in His status. Calling Kṛṣṇa Govinda – Lord of the cows – does not indicate a lesser being, an inferior *vaiśya*. The *Go-sūkta* says:

*gobhyo yajñāḥ pravartante*  
*gobhyo devāḥ samutthitāḥ*  
*gobhir vedāḥ samudgīrṇāḥ*  
*ṣaḍ-aṅga-padaka-kramāḥ*

“Sacrifices take place because of the cows. The *devatās* appear because of the cows. The *Vedas*, with their six *aṅgas*, appear because of the cows.”

These cows have appeared on earth from the supreme planet, Goloka. In the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad*, Brahmā himself states that he worships the Lord as Govinda:

*govindam sac-cid-ānanda-vigraham vṛndāvana-sura-bhūruha-  
talāsīnam satatam samarud-gaṇo 'ham toṣayāmi*

“I, along with the Maruts, satisfy Govinda, the form of eternity, knowledge, and bliss, who sits beneath a desire tree in Vṛndāvana.”

In addition, in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (10.14.34) Brahmā prays to attain the association of the Lord in His form as the son of Nanda:

*tad bhūri-bhāgyam iha janma kim apy aṭavyām  
yad gokule 'pi katamāṅghri-rajo- 'bhiṣekam  
yaj-jīvitam tu nikhilam bhagavān mukundas  
tv adyāpi yat-pada-rajah śruti-mṛgyam eva*

“My greatest possible good fortune would be to take any birth whatever in this forest of Gokula and have my head bathed by the dust falling from the lotus feet of any of its residents. Their entire life and soul is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mukunda, the dust of whose lotus feet is still being searched for in the Vedic mantras.”

Brahmā addresses the Lord as the son of the cowherd Nanda (*paśu-pa* – of the cowherd; *aṅgajāya* – unto the son):

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

“My dear Lord, You are the only worshipable Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and therefore I offer my humble obeisances and prayers just to please You. O son of the king of the cowherds, Your transcendental body is dark blue like a new cloud, Your garment is brilliant like lightning, and the beauty of Your face is enhanced by Your *guñjā* earrings and the peacock feather on Your head. Wearing garlands of various forest flowers and leaves, and equipped with a herding stick, a buffalo horn, and a flute, You stand beautifully with a morsel of food in Your hand.”

(*Bhāgavatam* 10.14.1)

Therefore, other meanings for the word *govinda*, indicating various great powers, are not accepted. The *Gautamīya-tantra*, in its description of the ten-syllable mantra,<sup>9</sup> after reiterating that since Kṛṣṇa is all-powerful He is the Supreme Lord, concludes that He is also a cowherd boy:

*gopīti prakṛtiṁ vidyāj janas tattva-samūhakaḥ  
anayor āśrayo vyāptyā kāraṇatvena ceśvaraḥ  
sāndrānandaṁ paraṁ jyotir vallabhatvena kathyate  
athavā gopī prakṛtir janas tad-aṁśa-maṇḍalam  
anayor vallabhaḥ proktaḥ svāmī kṛṣṇākhyā īśvaraḥ  
kārya-kāraṇayor īśaḥ śrutibhis tena gīyate  
aneka-janma-siddhānām gopīnām patir eva vā  
nanda-nandana ity uktas trailokyānanda-varḍhanaḥ*

“Those persons possessing truth know that *gopī* means *prakṛti*. *Jana* means the assembly of all the material elements. The shelter of *prakṛti* and its elements is the Lord since He is the final cause and pervades everything. Or, *gopī* can mean the spiritual *prakṛti*, and *jana* can mean the assembly of secondary forms of the Lord. The Lord (*īśvara*) known as Kṛṣṇa is called *vallabha*, the master of Lakṣmī and of the other forms of God. *Vallabha* means the supreme light, condensed bliss. The word *gopī* means *prakṛti*, the energy of the Lord called *māyā*, which is the material cause of the universe. The word *jana* means *tattva-samūhaka*, the elements starting with *mahat-tattva*. The shelter of both is the Supreme Lord, the supreme light composed of condensed bliss. This is the meaning of *vallabha*. The Lord of cause (*prakṛti*) and effect (*pañca-mahābhūta*) is thus glorified by the *śrutis* in this mantra. Another meaning is that Kṛṣṇa is the master of many cowherd women who achieved perfection after many births. He who is the son of Nanda, Nanda-nandana, increases the bliss of the three worlds.”<sup>10</sup>

There are two reasons He is called *īśvara*, the possessor of all powers: He pervades everything as effect (*kārya*), and He is the ultimate cause (*kāraṇa*). *Prakṛti* also refers to the *śakti* of the Lord called Mahā-lakṣmī, who appears in Vaikuṅṭha. She is beyond *māyā* and arises from the Lord’s *svarūpa*. *Aṁśa-maṇḍalam* refers to the forms of Saṅkarṣaṇa and others. *Aneka-janma-siddhānām* means “after endless births in the material world.” This does not indicate that the *gopīs* are all *sādhana-siddhas*, but that they,

like Kṛṣṇa, appear in the material world countless times just to perform pastimes with Him. Thus the Lord says in the *Gītā*, *bahūni me vyatītāni janmāni tava cārjuna*: “O Arjuna, You and I have passed many births in this world.” (*Gītā* 4.5)

Though Kṛṣṇa is eternal, Garga has also said that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Nanda. Though he says the following, it can be explained logically that Kṛṣṇa is actually Nanda’s son.

*prāg ayaṁ vasudevasya  
kvacij jātas tavātmajaḥ  
vāsudeva iti śrīmān  
abhijñāḥ sampracakṣate*

“For many reasons, this beautiful son of yours sometimes appeared previously as the son of Vasudeva. Therefore, those who are learned sometimes call this child Vāsudeva.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.8.14)

He appeared to be the son of Vasudeva because He appeared in Vasudeva’s mind: *āviveśāṁśa-bhāgena mana ānakadundubheḥ*, “He entered with all of His potential opulences into the mind of Vasudeva.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.2.16) And, *dadhāra sarvātmakam ātma-bhūtaṁ kāṣṭhā yathānanda-karaṁ manastah*: “Devakī became beautiful by carrying Lord Kṛṣṇa, the original consciousness for everyone, the cause of all causes, within the core of her heart, just as the east becomes beautiful by carrying the rising moon.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.2.18)

But simultaneously He appeared to Nanda in Vraja. This point is supported by many scriptures. Though He made an appearance to Vasudeva, He also appeared as the son (*ātmaja*) of Nanda. Nanda and Yaśodā’s pure, great *prema* for Him, filled with parental affection, is most appropriate. Similarly, though Varāha appeared to take birth from the nostril of Brahmā, simultaneously He appeared on Varāha-loka, though the common people didn’t see this. Pure *prema* belongs to Nanda but is obstructed in Vasudeva because Vasudeva’s love is mixed with the knowledge that Kṛṣṇa is the Lord. Thus it is correct when Garga says that Kṛṣṇa, though the son of Nanda (*tavātmajaḥ*), is also the son of Vasudeva. Śukadeva confirms that Kṛṣṇa is the son of Nanda:

*nāyaṁ sukhāpo bhagavān  
dehināṁ gopikā-sutaḥ  
jñānināṁ cātma-bhūtānāṁ  
yathā bhaktimatām iha*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, the son of Mother Yaśodā, is accessible to devotees engaged in spontaneous loving service, but He is not as easily accessible to mental speculators, to those striving for self-realization by severe austerities and penances, or to those who consider the body the same as the self.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.9.21)

The knowers of *āgama* confirm this by saying:

*sakala-loka-maṅgalo nanda-gopa-tanayo devatā*

“Kṛṣṇa, the son of Nanda, is auspiciousness for the whole world.”  
(*Gautamīya-tantra*)

In the *Gautamīya-tantra*’s description of the ten-syllable mantra as well, this fact was acknowledged (*nanda-nandana ity uktas trailokyānanda-vardhanaḥ*). One should also consult the *Vaiṣṇava-toṣaṇī* commentary on the verse beginning *nandas tv ātmaja utpannaḥ*.<sup>11</sup>

## TEXT 2

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

## TRANSLATION

**The abode [*dhāma*] of Kṛṣṇa called Gokula is the supreme abode. It is the center [pericarpel or hypanthium] of a lotus with a thousand petals and is sustained by a portion of the spiritual energy of Baladeva called Ananta.**

## COMMENTARY

This verse presents the eternal *dhāma* suitable for the form of Govinda. There is a lotus with a thousand petals. It should be understood that this lotus is made of *cintāmaṇi*, since it will later be explained that the earth there is made of *cintāmaṇi* (*bhūmiś cintāmaṇi-gaṇamayī*). It is *mahat-padam*, “the most excellent place.” The words *mahat-padam* can also indicate that this is Mahā-vaikuṅṭha, the place of the majestic form of Kṛṣṇa. However, out of fear that there are too many possible meanings, the meaning is made specific by adding the phrase *gokulākhyam*, “it is called Gokula.” Thus *mahat-padam* does not refer to Mahā-vaikuṅṭha.

By applying the principle that the conventional meaning overrides the literal meaning, *gokula* (literally, “a cowshed”) is defined by the conventional meaning “the spiritual living place of the cowherd people of Vraja.” In the same sense it is said in the Tenth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, *bhagavān gokuleśvaraḥ*: “He is the Lord of Gokula, the cowherd village.” The word *gokula* will be used with this sense later in the *Brahma-saṁhitā*. This *dhāma* is also called *vana-vaikunṭha* in the scriptures.<sup>12</sup> This place of Kṛṣṇa may be called “great” (*mahat-padam*) because it has a huge palace (*mahāntaḥpuram*) suitable for living with many others – with Nanda, Yaśodā, and other devotees. That Kṛṣṇa lives together with them will be shown later. The nature of this *dhāma* is then explained. It exists eternally (*sambhavam*) as a purely spiritual, self-effulgent portion of Baladeva called Ananta (*anantāmśa*). This is also understood from the Vaiṣṇava scriptures (*tantra*). Or the phrase can mean “it is the dwelling place (*sambhava*) of Baladeva, of whom Ananta is a portion (*ananto ’mśa*).”

### TEXT 3

*karṇikāraṁ mahad yantraṁ  
 ṣaṭ-koṇaṁ vajra-kīlakam  
 ṣaḍ-aṅga-ṣaṭ-padī-sthānaṁ  
 prakṛtyā puruṣeṇa ca*

*premānanda-mahānanda  
 rasenāvasthitam hi yat*

*jyotī-rūpeṇa manunā  
 kāma-bījena saṅgatam*

### TRANSLATION

The pericarpel of the lotus is also a great *yantra* with six points and a diamond centerpiece. The six parts of the mantra are placed on the six points of the *yantra*. The *yantra* is accompanied by material nature [*prakṛti*, the deity of the *yantra*] and the supreme person [*puruṣa*, the deity of the mantra]. This *yantra* produces a variety of blissful mellows [*rasas*] arising from transcendental love for the Lord [*prema*]. The *yantra* is also endowed with the *kāma-bīja*, a self-revealing nonmaterial mantra.

### COMMENTARY

Two verses now speak of the pericarpel, the center, of the lotus. This *pīṭha*, or “sacred abode,” is the chief abode, the abode of the king of mantras – the eighteen-syllable Kṛṣṇa mantra. This *pīṭha* is worshiped by everyone. A *yantra* is a diagram that for purposes of worship embodies a particular mantra. The *yantra* is described in this verse. Within it there is a form with six points (*ṣaḍ-koṇam*). In the center, shining like a diamond (*vajra-kīlakam*), is the *bīja* of the mantra. The syllable *ca* in the verse indicates other elements in this *yantra*. One should understand that the *kīlaka*, or central pivot, is composed of four letters (*klīm*) and that the other words are in the dative case.

The purpose of the six points is explained as follows. The six points are the abodes of the six parts of the eighteen-syllable mantra. *Prakṛti* refers to the dwelling place of the mantra, which is directly Kṛṣṇa because He is its final cause (*kāraṇa*). Moreover, when reciting the *ṛṣi* (meter), the presiding deity, and other factors concerning the mantra, *prakṛti* is mentioned as Kṛṣṇa.<sup>13</sup> The word *puruṣa* refers to the presiding deity of the mantra. The *yantra* is established with these two – *prakṛti* and *puruṣa* (*prakṛtyā puruṣeṇa ca avasthitam*). Kṛṣṇa appears in the mantra in four ways: as the final cause (*kāraṇa*), as the presiding deity (*adhiṣṭhātr-devatā*), as the letters of the mantra (*varṇa*), and as the object of worship (*ārādhyā*). Here the *kāraṇa* and *adhiṣṭhātr-devatā* forms are mentioned (as *prakṛti* and

*puruṣa*). The *ārādhyā* form was mentioned previously with *īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ*. The letters of the mantra (*varṇa*) will be revealed later with *kāmaḥ kṛṣṇāya* (verse 24). As the *Hayaśīrṣa-pañcarātra* says:

*vācyatvaṁ vācakatvaṁ  
devatā-mantrayor iha  
abhedenocyate brahma  
tattva-vidbhir vicārataḥ*

“The wise conclude that the deity expressed in the mantra and the mantra itself are nondifferent, O Brahmā.”

The *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* says:

*vāyur yathaiko bhuvanaṁ praviṣṭo  
janya janye pañca-rūpo babhūva  
kṛṣṇas tathaiko 'pi jagad-dhitārthaṁ  
śabdenāsau pañca-pado vibhāti*

“Just as one air entered the universe and became five forms, Kṛṣṇa, though having one form, exists as five syllables in sound for the benefit of the world.”

Sometimes Durgā is considered the *adhiṣṭhātr-devatā* by considering the nondifference between the *śakti* and possessor of *śakti*. The *Gautamīya-tantra* says:

*rādhā durgā śivā durgā  
lakṣmī durgā prakīrtitā  
gopāla-viṣṇu-pūjāyām  
ādy-antā na tu madhyamā*

“Durgā is a name for Rādhā, Parvatī, and Lakṣmī, in the worship of Gopāla, Śiva, and Viṣṇu.”

*yaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ saiva durgā syād  
yā durgā kṛṣṇa eva saḥ  
anayor antarādarśī  
saṁsārān no vimucyate*

“Kṛṣṇa is nondifferent from Rādhā (Durgā). Rādhā is nondifferent from Kṛṣṇa. He who sees difference between Them cannot be liberated from this world.”

Thus Kṛṣṇa is the Lord and Durgā is His *svarūpa-śakti*, not the Durgā associated with the material world. This is the derivation of the word *durga*: with great difficulty (*dur*) in worship, she is understood (*ga*). The *Nārada-pañcarātra* says in the conversation of Śrutividya:

*jānāty ekā parā-kāntā  
saiva durgā tad-ātmikā  
yā parā paramā śaktir  
mahā-viṣṇu-svarūpiṇī*

*yasyā vijñāna-mātreṇa  
parāṇām paramātmanah  
muhūrtād eva devasya  
prāptir bhavati nānyathā*

*ekeyam prema-sarvasva-  
svabhāvā śrī-kuleśvarī  
anayā sulabho jñeya  
ādi devo 'khileśvaraḥ*

*bhaktir bhajana-sampattir  
bhajate prakṛtiḥ priyam  
jñāyate 'tyanta duḥkhena  
seyam prakṛtir ātmanah*

*durgeti gīyate sadbhir  
akhaṇḍa-rasa-vallabhā  
asyā āvarikā śaktir  
mahā-māyākhileśvarī*

*yayā mugdham jagat sarvam  
sarva-dehābhimānataḥ*

“The supreme lover of Viṣṇu, called Durgā, knows. She is the supreme, transcendental *śakti*, the counterpart of Mahā-viṣṇu. By realizing her, one immediately attains the Supreme Lord, the Supreme Soul among all souls. There is no other way of realizing the Lord. She alone has the nature of complete *prema*. She alone is the goddess of all beauty. By her one can easily realize the Supreme Lord. She is devotion, a wealth of worship. She, called *prakṛti*, worships her lover. Because it is only with great difficulty that the *ātmā* comes to know this *prakṛti*, the saints call her Durgā, ‘hard to understand.’ She is the Lord’s consort, full of complete *rasa*. Her secondary *śakti* is the goddess in charge of *mahā-māya*, the material realm. By this expansion the universe is bewildered because she makes the *jīvas* think in terms of their bodies.”

In the *Sammohana-tantra*, Durgā says to Jayā:

*yan nāmnā nāmnī durgāham  
guṇair guṇavatī hy aham  
yad-vaibhavā mahā-lakṣmī  
rādhā nityā parādvayā*

“It is I who am designated by the name Durgā. I am full of all qualities. But my source is the supreme, eternal Mahā-lakṣmī, Rādhā, who is nondifferent from me.”

In this *dhāma* or *yantra* there is bliss in the form of *prema* (*premānanda*), which becomes a variety of mature *rasas* filled with even greater bliss (*mahānanda*). This assumes another form as the self-revealing or spiritual (*jyotī-rūpeṇa*) mantra (*manunā*) of the *kāma-bīja*. Though *kāma-bīja* is part of the mantra, it is mentioned separately as a mantra since it is sometimes used independently.

#### TEXT 4

*tat-kiñjalkam tad-amśānām  
tat-patrāṇi śriyām api*

#### TRANSLATION

**Around the pericarpel is a wall with spires like stamens. In that place are also groves and bowers, like petals, that serve as various divisions for Kṛṣṇa’s cowherd girlfriends, the *gopīs*.**

### COMMENTARY

After the *dhāma* of Kṛṣṇa has been described, the surrounding areas or coverings are described in one line. *Kiñjalka* means “filaments,” but in this case refers to the surrounding wall covered with turrets or spires. *Aṁśānām* refers to other areas within the *dhāma* where great devotees who share similar emotions reside. They will have emotions suitable for the place already mentioned, Gokula. Śukadeva has described those favorable emotions as follows:

*evam kukudminam hatvā  
stūyamānaḥ dvijātibhiḥ  
viveśa goṣṭham sa-balo  
gopīnām nayanotsavaḥ*

“Having thus killed the bull demon Ariṣṭa, He who is a festival for the *gopīs*’ eyes entered the cowherd village with Balarāma.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.36.15)

And after the killing of Kāmsa, Kṛṣṇa Himself says to Nanda:

*yāta yūyam vrajam tāta  
vayam ca sneha-duḥkhitān  
jñātīn vo draṣṭum eṣyāmo  
vidhāya suhrdām sukham*

“Now you should all return to Vraja, dear Father. We shall come to see you, Our dear relatives who suffer in separation from Us, as soon as We have given some happiness to your well-wishing friends.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.45.23)

The petals (*patrāṇi*) of the lotus are the special groves and bowers that belong to the dearest *gopīs* such as Rādhā. The word *śriyām* (women) refers only to the *gopīs*, since they are specifically mentioned in the

eighteen-syllable mantra. Rādhā and others are described as follows in the *Gautamīya-tantra*:

*devī kṛṣṇamayī proktā  
rādhikā para-devatā  
sarva-lakṣmī-mayī sarva-  
kāntiḥ sammohinī parā*

“Beloved Rādhā, filled with thoughts of Kṛṣṇa, is the supreme goddess. She is the embodiment of all women, possesses all beauty, and is the supreme bewilderer.”

The *Matsya Purāṇa* says:

*vārāṇasyāṁ viśālākṣī  
vimalā puruṣottame  
rukmiṇī dvāravatyāṁ tu  
rādhā vṛndāvane vane*

“In Varāṇasī, Viśālākṣī presides. In Purī, Vimalā presides. In Dvārakā, Rukmiṇī presides. And in Vṛndāvana, Rādhā presides.”

The *Rk-pariśiṣṭa* says:

*rādhayā mādhavo devo mādhavenaiva rādhikā vibhrājante janeṣvā*

“Mādhava is revealed to the people through Rādhā, and Rādhā is revealed through Mādhava.”

If one has more specific questions, one can consult the *Kṛṣṇārcana-dīpikā*. Besides the groves of the *gopīs*, one should understand that there are roads where the profuse petals (groves) come together, and there are cowsheds at the ends of those roads. Because this lotus is actually Gokula, it includes cowsheds and other things related to cows.

In another place there is this description:

*sahasrāraṁ padmaṁ dala-tatiṣu devībhir abhitaḥ  
parīto go-saṅkhair api nikhila-kiñjalka-militaiḥ  
kavātaiḥ yasyāsti svayam akhila-śaktyā prakāṭita-  
prabhāvaḥ satyaḥ śrī-parama-puruṣas taṁ kila bhaje*

“I worship that thousand-petaled lotus. The edges of its petals are lined with cowherds and *gopīs*, who surround the center of the lotus, where its many seedpods are furnished with filaments. Within that lotus resides the Supreme Person, the embodiment of truth, whose powers are revealed through His own energies.”

*Go-saṅkhaiḥ* is correct. This refers to cowherd men. The *Amara-koṣa* dictionary says the following words are synonyms: *gope gopāla-gosaṅkhya-godhug-ābhira-vallabhā*. The *parama-puruṣa* is Kṛṣṇa, whose powers are revealed through His manifold energies (*akhila-śaktyā prakāṣita-prabhāvaḥ*). The word *kavātaiḥ* indicates that there are doors or gates at all entrances to the pericarpel of the lotus.

## TEXT 5

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

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

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

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

## TRANSLATION

**This Gokula is surrounded by an astonishing square area called Śvetadvīpa and Goloka. This is divided into four parts that are the abodes of four Viṣṇu forms – Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Aniruddha, and Pradyumna. Goloka is endowed with the four goals of human endeavor and with the methods to attain them. It is guarded by obstructions in the form of ten spears pointing in the ten directions [including up and down]. It is endowed with the eight treasures and the eight mystic perfections [*siddhis*]. It is surrounded by the ten protectors of the directions in the form of their mantras, as well as the four *Vedas*. It is resplendent with astonishing energies [*śaktis*].**

### COMMENTARY

The four verses comprising this particular text describe the enclosure around Gokula. Around the outer portion of Gokula is a square area called Śvetadvīpa. This is another name for Goloka.<sup>14</sup> Though it may be said that Gokula partakes of the nature of Śvetadvīpa, it is acknowledged as a different place, since in this verse the different name designates a different area. But it should be understood that the place called Vṛndāvana (Gokula) exists within the square area. The *Svāyambhuva Āgama*, after stating *dhyāyet tatra-viśuddhātmā idaṁ sarvaṁ krameṇa ca*: “the pure soul should meditate on all this step by step,” says, *tan-madhye vṛndāvanaṁ kusumitaṁ nānā-vṛkṣa-vihaṅgamaṁ saṁsmaret*: “In the center one should meditate on Vṛndāvana full of flowers, trees, and birds.”

In the *Bṛhad Vāmana Purāṇa*, before the prayers of the *śrutis*, there are the following verses:

*ānanda-mātram iti yad  
vadanti hi purāvidah  
tad-rūpe darśayāsmākaṁ  
yadi deyo varo hi nah*

*śrutvaitad darśayāmāsa  
svaṁ lokaṁ prakṛteḥ param  
kevalānubhavānanda-  
mātram akṣaram avyayam*

*yatra vṛndāvanam nāma  
vanam kāma-dughair drumaiḥ  
manorama-nikuñjādhyam  
sarvartu-sukha-saṁyutam*

“If you are going to give us a boon, show us the form that the ancient sages say is unadulterated bliss.’ Having heard this, He showed them His own planet, beyond matter, undecaying, and unchanging, composed only of bliss. In this place there was a forest called Vṛndāvana, furnished with desire trees, attractive groves, and the happiness of all seasons.”

By dividing that square area into four parts (*catuṣkṛtam*) there are situated in four *dhāmas* four expansions, starting with Vāsudeva. These forms are situated in celestial chariots for performance of eternal pastimes in Śvetadvīpa (Goloka).<sup>15</sup> This area is endowed with the four goals of human endeavor (*puruṣārthaiḥ*)<sup>16</sup> and the means of accomplishing them (*hetubhiḥ*). It is also surrounded by the ten protectors of the ten directions, beginning with Indra, in the form of their mantras (*manu-rūpaiḥ*). The colors black, yellow, red, and white (*śyāmair gauraiś ca raktaiś ca śuklaiś ca*) refer to the four *Vedas*. Similarly, the Tenth Canto describes the presence of the *Vedas* in Goloka, *kṛṣṇam ca tatra cchandobhiḥ stūyamānam suvismitāḥ*: “They were especially amazed to see Kṛṣṇa Himself there, surrounded by the personified *Vedas*, who were offering Him prayers.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.28.17) *Śakti* (*śaktibhiḥ*) refers to Vimalā and others.<sup>17</sup>

This place called Goloka (surrounding Gokula) is described in the *Bhāgavatam* (10.28.10):

*nandas tv atīndriyam dṛṣṭvā  
loka-pāla-mahodayam  
kṛṣṇe ca sannatim teṣām  
jñātibhyo vismito ’bravīt*

“Nanda Mahārāja had been astonished to see for the first time the great opulence of Varuṇa, the ruler of the ocean planet, and also to see how Varuṇa and his servants had offered such humble respect to Kṛṣṇa. Nanda described all this to his fellow cowherd men.”

Here, *atīndriyam* means “astonishing.” [The next verse (*Bhāgavatam* 10.28.11) says:]

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

“The cowherd men considered that Kṛṣṇa must be the Supreme Lord, and their minds, O King, were filled with eagerness. They thought, ‘Will the Supreme Lord bestow upon us His transcendental abode, which is hard to understand?’”

Here, *svagatiṁ* means “His own abode.” *Sūkṣmām* means “hard to understand.” *Upādhāsyat* stands for *upadhāsyati* (will He bestow). This is what they decided to ask for.

*iti svānām sa bhagavān  
vijñāyākhila-dṛk svayam  
saṅkalpa-siddhaye teṣām  
kṛpayaitad acintayat*

“Because He sees everything, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, automatically understood what the cowherd men were conjecturing. Wanting to show His compassion to them by fulfilling their desires, the Lord thought as follows.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.28.12)

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

“My own dearest people (*janaḥ*), the inhabitants of Vraja, by their own ignorance think that they are wandering in this world (*etasmīn loka*) among higher and lower destinations (*gatiṣu*) such as *devatās*, animals, etc. They do not know their real abode.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.28.13)

*Janaḥ*, standing for *sva-jana*, means “My [Kṛṣṇa’s] own people,” the residents of Vraja. The same usage is found in the verse *sālokya-sārṣṭi-*

*sāmīpya-sārūpyaikatvam apy uta/ dīyamānam na gṛhṇanti vinā mat-sevanam janāḥ* (*Bhāgavatam* 3.29.13), where *janāḥ* also stands for *sva-janāḥ*, “My devotees.” Though *jana* can also refer to people in general, that meaning is inappropriate in this context. Kṛṣṇa thinks of the people of Vraja as His own people:

*tasmān mac-charaṇam goṣṭham  
man-nātham mat-parigraham  
gopāye svātma-yogena  
so 'yam me vrata āhitaḥ*

“I must therefore protect the cowherd community by My transcendental potency, for I am their shelter, I am their master, and indeed they are My own family. After all, I have taken a vow to protect My devotees.”  
(*Bhāgavatam* 10.25.18)

These devotees (*janāḥ*) are, in the high or low bodies of *devas* or animals (*uccāvacāsu gatiṣu*), bewildered concerning their destination (*svām gatim*) in this material world (*etasmīn*). They think that their destination is the impersonal Brahman since they play the role of contaminated souls. They do not know their real goal. This is because, for the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in the material world, part of their awareness is covered. This is understood from the following statement:

*iti nandādayo gopāḥ  
kṛṣṇa-rāma-kathāṁ mudā  
kurvanto ramamāṇās ca  
nāvindan bhava-vedanām*

“In this way all the cowherd men, headed by Nanda Mahārāja, enjoyed topics about the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma with great transcendental pleasure, and they could not even perceive material tribulations.”  
(*Bhāgavatam* 10.11.58)

From this statement it is understood that the inhabitants of Vraja could not actually be afflicted by the activities of lust due to ignorance (*avidyā-kāma-karmabhiḥ*).

*iti sañcintya bhagavān  
mahā-kāruṇiko hariḥ  
darśayām āsa lokam svam  
gopānām tamasaḥ param*

“Thus deeply considering the situation, the all-merciful Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari revealed to the cowherd men His own abode, which is beyond material darkness.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.28.14)

Therefore He showed them the actual planet of the cowherd men, Goloka (*gopānām svam lokam*). This planet is beyond the material energy (*tamasaḥ*) since it arises from Kṛṣṇa’s *svarūpa-śakti*.

*satyam jñānam anantam yad  
brahma-jyotiḥ sanātanam  
yad dhi paśyanti munayo  
guṇāpāye samāhitāḥ*

“Lord Kṛṣṇa revealed the indestructible spiritual effulgence, which is unlimited, conscious, and eternal. Sages see that spiritual existence in trance, when their consciousness is free of the modes of material nature.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.28.15)

This verse describes Goloka as full of eternity, knowledge, and bliss.

*te tu brahma-hradam nītā  
magnāḥ kṛṣṇena coddhṛtāḥ  
dadṛśur brahmaṇo lokam  
yatrākṛūro ’dhyagāt purā*

“The cowherd men were brought by Lord Kṛṣṇa to the Brahma-hrada, where Akrūra would go in the near future [*purā*], and were submerged in the water and then lifted up. The cowherd men then saw the abode of the Lord.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.28.16)

This verse explains how, from within Bhauma Vṛndāvana, Kṛṣṇa revealed Goloka to the cowherd men. He brought them to Brahma-hradam, also called Akrūra-tīrtha, and He submerged them in the water there and pulled them out. On emerging from the water, they attained His abode – the

planet that is supremely great (*brahmaṇaḥ lokam*) called Goloka. *Brahmaloka* can also refer to spiritual planets, as in the following verse:

*mūrdhabhiḥ satyalokas tu  
brahmalokaḥ sanātanaḥ*

“Satyaloka, the topmost planetary system, is situated on the head of the [universal] form. The spiritual planets, however, are eternal.” (*Bhāgavatam* 2.5.39)

By this analysis, *brahmaṇaḥ lokam* refers to a place other than Vaikuṅṭha and yet still full of majesty. What is the *brahma-hrada*? It is the place where, relative to the events described, Akrūra would come in the future (*purā*). Giving synonyms for *purā*, the dictionary makers say, *purā purāne nikaṭe prabandātīta-bhāviṣu*. *Purā* means “ancient” and “in proximity,” as well as “in the near past” and “in the near future.” This is the usage of the word in context, where it is used to describe the greatness of the *tīrtha*.

*nandādayas tu taṁ dr̥ṣṭvā  
paramānanda-nirvṛtāḥ  
kṛṣṇaṁ ca tatra cchandobhiḥ  
stūyamānaṁ su-vismitāḥ*

“Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherd men felt the greatest happiness when they saw that transcendental abode. They were especially amazed to see Kṛṣṇa Himself there, surrounded by the personified *Vedas*, who were offering Him prayers.”<sup>18</sup> (*Bhāgavatam* 10.28.17)

*Svām gatim* means “their own planet,” the planet of the cowherd men. It acts as a possessive form of *sva* (own). Thus it refers to Goloka. By specifically mentioning Kṛṣṇa in this verse, Goloka is established as separate from Vaikuṅṭha. Indra describes this place in the *Hari-vamśa* (2.19.29–35):

*svargād ūrdhvaṁ brahma-loko brahmar̥ṣi-gaṇa-sevitaḥ  
tatra soma-gatiś caiva jyotiṣāṁ ca mahātmanām  
tasyopari gavāṁ lokaḥ sādhyās taṁ pālayanti hi  
sa hi sarva-gataḥ kṛṣṇa mahākāśa-gato mahān  
upary upari tatrāpi gatis tava tapomayī*

*yāñ na vidmo vayanñ sarve prcchanto 'pi pitāmaham  
gatiḥ śama-damādhyānāñ svargaḥ sukṛta-karmañām  
brāhmye tapasi yuktānāñ brahma-lokaḥ parā gatiḥ  
gavām eva tu yo loko durāroho hi sā gatiḥ  
sa tu lokas tvayā kṛṣṇa sīdamānaḥ kṛtātmanā  
dhṛto dhṛtimatā vīra nighantopdadravāñ gavām*

“Above the heavenly planets is Brahmaloĳa, Vaikuñṭha, worshiped by the *Vedas*, the sages, Garuḁa, and others. It is the goal of Śiva, of the liberated souls, and of the devotees. Above this is the planet of cows, protected by the perfected devotees. O Kṛṣṇa, it is all-pervading, great, and attained after realization of the Lord. Above that is Your abode [Gokula], full of great powers, which I cannot understand though I have asked Brahmā. One can reach Svarga by control of the senses and mind and by execution of pious acts. One can reach Vaikuñṭha by engaging in meditation on Viṣṇu. But it is very difficult to attain Goloka. And the planet protected personally by You [Gokula], O hero, and which destroys the suffering of the cows and other inhabitants, is the residence of the determined and disciplined devotees.”

The meaning of this verse cannot be deciphered from what these words typically mean. (The words *brahmaloka*, *soma*, and *sādhyā* cannot have their conventional meanings as that would be contradictory.) Brahmaloĳa is considered superior to Svarga. However, the meaning here is that this Brahmaloĳa must be above the three worlds. It cannot be the planet of Lord Brahmā. It is not attained by going to the moon (*soma-gatiḥ*), since all these planets, including the moon, are below Dhruvaloka. This place is not protected by the Sādhyas. Persons who protect Svarga, born from *devatās*, cannot at all protect that place. What to speak then of Goloka?

But if this is the planet of cows, how can it be all-pervading? This is a special feature the Lord’s inconceivable energy has bestowed on His form and planet. What else needs to be said? Using the phrase *upary upari tatrāpi* (even beyond all that), Indra shows that to him Kṛṣṇa’s abode is astonishing. Thus he says that he does not understand that place. Thus this quotation proves there is a spiritual Goloka, different from the Goloka in the material realm.<sup>19</sup>

In the *Mokṣadharmā* section of the *Mahābhārata* (12.330.68) the Lord says:

*evam̐ bahu-vidhai rūpaiś  
carām̐tha vasundharām̐  
brahma-lokaṁ ca kaunteya  
golokaṁ ca sanātanam*

“I move about in many forms on earth, in Vaikuṅṭha, and in eternal Goloka, O Kaunteya.”

Svargaloka is identified as follows:

*bhūrlokaḥ kalpitaḥ padbhyām̐  
bhuvārloko 'sya nābhitaḥ  
hṛdā svarloka urasā  
mahārloko mahātmanaḥ*

“The lower planetary systems, up to the limit of the earthly stratum, are said to be situated in His legs. The middle planetary systems, beginning from Bhuvārloka, are situated in His navel. And the still higher planetary systems [*svārloka*], occupied by the demigods and highly cultured sages and saints, are situated in the chest of the Supreme Lord.” (*Bhāgavatam* 2.5.38)

Thus according to this verse from the Second Canto, Svarga refers to the five planetary systems starting with Svarga and ending with Satyaloka. Above that is the planet called Brahmāloka, a planet composed only of Brahman, or spirit. It is called Brahmāloka because it is full of eternity, knowledge, and bliss. This may be called the planet of Bhagavān. The Second Canto also equates Brahmāloka with the spiritual world:

*mūrdhabhiḥ satya-lokas tu brahma-lokaḥ sanātanaḥ*, “Satyaloka, the topmost planetary system, is situated on the head of the form. The spiritual planet Brahmāloka, however, is eternal.” (*Bhāgavatam* 2.5.39) The commentary also says that this Brahmāloka is eternal Vaikuṅṭha and that it is neither created nor within the material realm. *Śruti* says, *eṣa brahman-lokaḥ eṣa ātma-lokaḥ*: “Brahmāloka is the planet of the Supreme Soul.”

This Brahmāloka is served by the *brahmarṣis* and others. However, here *brahma* means the *Vedas*, who are Brahman incarnate. *Rṣis* refers to sages such as Nārada. *Gaṇa* refers to Garuḍa, Viṣvaksena, and other servants of the Lord. This Brahmāloka is served by the *Vedas*, the sages such as Nārada, and devotees like Garuḍa. Since they take shelter of that place, they

can go there. *Soma* means *sa umā*, he who resides with Umā, Parvatī. In other words, *soma* means Śiva. *Soma-gatiḥ* means that Vaikuṅṭha (*tatra*) is the goal of Śiva.

*sva-dharma-niṣṭhaḥ śata-janmabhiḥ pumān  
viriñcatām eti tataḥ param hi mām  
avyākṛtaṁ bhāgavato 'tha vaiṣṇavaṁ  
padaṁ yathāhaṁ vibudhāḥ kalātyaye*

“A person who executes his occupational duty properly for one hundred births becomes qualified to occupy the post of Brahmā, and if he becomes more qualified, he can approach Lord Śiva. A person who is directly surrendered to Lord Kṛṣṇa, or Viṣṇu, in unalloyed devotional service is immediately promoted to the spiritual planets. Lord Śiva and other demigods attain these planets after the destruction of this material world.” (*Bhāgavatam* 4.24.29)

Though *soma* would normally be inflected in the genitive, as are the words that follow it (*jyotiṣām* and *mahātmanām*), *soma* is for metrical reasons simply compounded with *gati* without inflection. The word *gati* should be supplied also for the words *jyotiṣām* and *mahātmanām*. *Jyoti* refers to Brahman, and thus *jyotiṣām* refers to persons merged in Brahman – the liberated souls. All souls are not of this type, however. The great souls, such as the Kumāras, who even after liberation worship the Lord with interest, are called *mahātmanām*.

*muktānām api siddhānām  
nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ  
sudurlabhaḥ praśāntātmā  
koṭiṣv api mahā-mune*

“O great sage, among many millions who are liberated and perfect in knowledge of liberation, one may be a devotee of Lord Nārāyaṇa, or Kṛṣṇa. Such devotees, who are fully peaceful, are extremely rare.” (*Bhāgavatam* 6.14.5)

*yoginām api sarveṣām  
mad-gatenāntar-ātmanā  
śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām  
sa me yukta-tamo mataḥ*

“Of all *yogīs*, the one with great faith who always abides in Me, thinks of Me within himself, and renders transcendental loving service to Me is the most intimately united with Me in yoga and is the highest of all. That is My opinion.” (*Gītā* 6.47)

Among liberated souls, the devotees are considered best. Thus Vaikuṅṭha is the goal of Śiva, the liberated souls, and the devotees. Above this (*tasya upari*) is the planet of the cows, Goloka. Eternal associates of the Lord – who are fully accomplished (*sādhyāḥ*), who are the ideal forms of the *devatās* and the basis for the *devatās* of the material world, and who take the role of protectors – protect Goloka. The *Ṛg Veda* uses the word *sādhyā* in the same way:

*te ha nākaṁ mahimānaḥ sacantaḥ yatra pūrve sādhyāḥ santi devāḥ*

“These great souls, eternally accomplished beings, reside in the spiritual realm.”

The *Padma Purāṇa*, *Uttara-khaṇḍa*, says:

*tatra pūrve ye ca sādhyā  
viśve devāḥ sanātanāḥ  
te ha nākaṁ mahimānaḥ  
sacantaḥ śubha-darśanāḥ*

“Those who are accomplished from the past, the eternal associates, with glorious appearance, reside in that abode.”

Or the meaning can be as follows. Brahmā prays, *tad bhūri-bhāgya iha janma kim apy aṭavyām yad gokule 'pi*: “My greatest possible good fortune would be to take any birth whatever in this forest of Gokula.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.14.34)

Thus when the greatest devotees achieve perfection, they attain bodies of *gopīs* and *gopas*. In these perfected forms (*sādhyā*) they maintain

Goloka.

Through some descriptive terms, Goloka has been established as the highest place. That (*sa*) place is all-pervading. Like Nārāyaṇa, that place spreads itself into all objects of the material and spiritual worlds. Some who follow the process of *krama-mukti*<sup>20</sup> attain that realization of the all-pervading *dhāma*. It is like the vision of Vaiṣṇava Brahmā had while sitting on his lotus in the material world and which is described in the Second Canto. As already described, it was also seen by the inhabitants of Vraja after they were submerged in Akrūra-tīrtha.

This Goloka is described as *mahān*, or “great,” because it is nondifferent from the form of the Lord. The *śruti* in fact equates the word *mahān* with the Lord: *mahāntam vibhum ātmānam*, “The Lord, the soul, is great.” (*Kaṭha Upaniṣad* 2.22) Goloka is great because the Lord is great. *Mahākāśa* refers to Brahman as well, since this is shown logically in the *Vedānta-sūtra* (1.1.22): *ākāśas tal-liṅgād*, “The word *ākāśa* denotes Brahman [because that is what the text indicates].” This place, Goloka, is attained after realizing the form of Brahman (*mahākāśa-gataḥ*), just as Ajāmila attained Vaiṣṇava after realizing *ātmā*, or Brahman.

However, higher than Goloka is *tava gatiḥ*, “Your place.” This refers to the place where Govinda plays. This place is not ordinary but *tapomayī*. In this context *tapa* means “unimpeded power.” In the *Sahasra-nāma-bhāṣya* it is also said, *paramam yo mahat tapaḥ*: “The Lord is supreme, great, and full of power [*tapa*].” *Śruti* says, *sa tapo 'tapyata*: “The Lord, being heat, gives off heat.” (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 2.6) Thus according to *śruti*, *tapa* refers to the Lord. It means that He reveals great power, so His abode reveals great power.

Next it is stated that even persons like Brahmā cannot understand this place: *yām na vidmo vāyam*, “... which I do not understand [though I have asked Brahmā].” Then Indra explains that the place called Gokula is the essence of all things. One can attain Svarga by sense control, and one can attain Vaiṣṇava, or the Brahmaloaka of the *prema-bhaktas*, by having a controlled mind (*yuktānām*), which means concentrating the mind on Viṣṇu (*tapasi*) with the intention of attaining Brahmaloaka (*brāhmye*). Brahmaloaka refers again to Vaiṣṇava and *tapa* refers to using the mind, for the *śruti* says that *tapaḥ* is “filled with knowledge” (*jñāna-mayam tapaḥ*). (*Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad* 1.1.9) This Brahmaloaka is beyond *prakṛti* (*parā*).

The *Bhāgavatam* (10.35.25) explains that Kṛṣṇa delivers the cows and everyone else from the heat of the day (*mocayan vraja-gavām dina-tāpam*). Thus *nighnatopadravān gavām*, “this place destroys all harm to the cows,” means that the place by its very nature destroys all problems for all the inhabitants of Vraja. This is because it is controlled by the actions of its residents, who are dedicated to serving in a suitable mood. This place is difficult to attain because of the rarity of this type of mood. Having described Goloka, the verse then describes that Gokula is different from Goloka.

That place, Gokula, is *tvayā dhṛtaḥ*, “protected by You [Kṛṣṇa].” For example, You lifted up Govardhana to protect it. This place is also described in the *Vedas*.

*tām vām vāstūny uśmasi gamadhyai  
yatra gāvo bhūri-śṛṅgā ayāsaḥ  
atrāha tad urugāyasya vṛṣṇaḥ  
paramam padam avabhāti bhūri*

“We desire to attain the places where Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma perform pastimes. In that place the cows, endowed with great qualities, have large horns. In that place it is said that the supreme house of the Lord shines brilliantly.” (*Rg Veda* 1.154.6)

We desire to attain (*gamadhyai uśmasi*) the places of pastimes (*vāstūni*) of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma (*vām*). What is the nature of those places? In those places (*yatra*) there are cows with large horns (*bhūri-śṛṅgā*) and with many magnificent qualities (*ayāsaḥ*). In the *Upaniṣads*, *bhūri* means “great” rather than “many.” It can also mean “having many auspicious qualities.” The *Amara-koṣa* says, *ayaḥ śubhavaho vidhiḥ*: “The word *ayaḥ* means ‘having auspiciousness’ or ‘fate.’” As in the word *devāsa*, *ayāsa* is a combination of *aya* (good fortune) and the suffix *asa*. In that place (*atra*), famous as Goloka, they say that the supreme abode (*paramam padam*) of the Lord (*urugāyasya*) who fulfills all desires (*vṛṣṇaḥ*) shines profusely (*bhūri*). In the *Mādhyandinī* branch of the *Yajur Veda* it is said, *dāmāni uśmasi*: “We desire the Lord’s abodes.” Another version has *viṣṇoḥ* instead of *vṛṣṇaḥ*.

## TEXT 6

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

## TRANSLATION

**Goloka is self-revealing, full of eternity and bliss, and superior to anything else. It is the place for those who have no material interests, and it has no contact with the material world.**

## COMMENTARY

Now we return to explaining the main text. With the conception that the universe and the Paramātmā dwelling within are nondifferent, one *puruṣa* is glorified as both the Lord and the universe in the *Puruṣa-sūkta* and other verses. In the same way, the Lord and Goloka are simultaneously glorified as one by seeing Goloka and its controller as nondifferent. The word *deva* refers both to Goloka and to its controller, Govinda. *Sadānandaṁ* is the *svarūpa*, or essence, of Goloka. Thus that place is full of eternity and bliss, like Govinda. It is in the neuter gender to conform with the *śruti* statement, *vijñānam ānandaṁ brahma*: “Brahman is knowledge and bliss.” (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 3.9.28) It is the place for those who are indifferent to all things except Govinda (*ātmārāmasya*). It has no contact with the material world (*prakṛtyā na samāgamaḥ*).

*pravartate yatra rajas tamas tayoh  
sattvaṁ ca miśraṁ na ca kāla-vikramaḥ  
na yatra māyā kim utāpare harer  
anuvratā yatra surāsurārcitāḥ*

“In that personal abode of the Lord, the material modes of ignorance and passion do not prevail, nor is there any of their influence in goodness. There is no predominance of the influence of time, so what to speak of the illusory, external energy; it cannot enter that region. As devotees, and

without discrimination, both the demigods and the demons worship the Lord.” (*Bhāgavatam* 2.9.10)

### TEXT 7

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

### TRANSLATION

**The Lord, as enjoyer, is never separated from His internal energy. As the supreme person and supreme controller, He enjoys with His internal energy and, when desiring to create the universes, releases His energy of time to carry out the creation.**

### COMMENTARY

This verse shows that the Lord, in His *puruṣa* portion as the soul of the material universe, does not share the material world’s qualities, for even after final dissolution of the material universes, this *puruṣa* remains. That the *puruṣa* involved in creation is an expansion of Kṛṣṇa is stated in the *Bhāgavatam* (10.85.31):

*yasyāṁśāṁśāṁśa-bhāgena  
viśvotpatti-layodayāḥ  
bhavanti kila viśvātmaṁs  
taṁ tvādyāhaṁ gatiṁ gatā*

“O Soul of all that be, the creation, maintenance, and destruction of the universe are all carried out by a fraction of an expansion of an expansion of Your expansion. Today I have come to take shelter of You, the Supreme Lord.”

But will the Lord, like the *jīva*, not become contaminated by enjoying with His energy? If so, then He could not be considered the Lord. The next line answers: He attains enjoyment only with His internal potency, His *svarūpa-śakti*, Ramā (*ātmanā ramayā*). Only the *jīvas* under the influence

of the material world are involved with *māyā*. The internal potency is described by Brahmā in the Third Canto of the *Bhāgavatam* (3.9.23):

*eṣa prapanna-varado ramayātma-śaktyā  
yad yat kariṣyati grhīta-guṇāvatārah*

“The Supreme Lord, the Personality of Godhead, is always the benefactor of the surrendered souls. His activities are always enacted through His internal potency, Ramā, the goddess of fortune.”

Arjuna also describes the Lord’s spiritual energy:

*tvam ādyaḥ puruṣaḥ sākṣād  
īśvaraḥ prakṛteḥ paraḥ  
māyām vyudasya cic-chaktyā  
kaivalye sthita ātmani*

“You are the original Personality of Godhead, who expands Himself all over the creation and is transcendental to material energy. You have cast away the effects of the material energy by dint of Your spiritual potency. You are always situated in eternal bliss and transcendental knowledge.” (*Bhāgavatam* 1.7.23)

But how can the creation of the material universe take place without the influence of the Lord? It takes place simply by the Lord’s desire to create (*sisṛkṣayā*). And thus the Lord discharges time (*tyakta-kālam*) in order to create the universe. Due to the Lord desiring it, and due to His subsequently discharging time, the universe is created. Nevertheless, He remains enjoying with Ramā. For easier grammatical understanding, *tyakta-kālah* (a phrase modifying the Lord) can be substituted for *tyakta-kālam* (an adverbial phrase modifier). The meaning would be “The Lord, with a desire to create the universes, having discharged His time energy, enjoys with this internal energy.” Thus the material world makes its appearance only by the influence of the Lord’s energy in the form of time, as illustrated in the following verses.

*prabhāvaṁ pauruṣaṁ prāhuḥ  
kālam eke yato bhayam*

*ahaṅkāra-vimūḍhasya  
kartuḥ prakṛtim tyuṣaḥ*

“The influence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is felt in the time factor, which causes fear of death due to the false ego in the deluded soul who has contacted material nature.” (*Bhāgavatam* 3.26.16)

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

“By the influence of eternal time, the Supreme Living Being in His feature as the transcendental *puruṣa* incarnation, who is a plenary expansion of the Supreme and the Lord of all *jīvas*, impregnates *prakṛti* with the *jīvas*.” (*Bhāgavatam* 3.5.26)

## TEXT 8

*niyatiḥ sā ramā devī  
tat-priyā tad-vaśam tadā  
tal-liṅgam bhagavān śambhur  
jyoti-rūpaḥ sanātanaḥ  
yā yoniḥ sāparā śaktiḥ  
kāmo bījaṁ mahad dhareḥ*

## TRANSLATION

**Ramā, under the control of the Lord, is self-manifesting and dear to the Lord. The Lord’s eternal form called Śambhu, whose body is consciousness, is represented figuratively by the *liṅgam*, and the inferior energy [a portion of Ramā] is represented by the *yoni*. Śambhu develops the desire to see *māyā* for creating the universes, and *mahat-tattva* [a transformation of *prakṛti*, having been injected with the *jīvas*] then appears as the seed of creation.**

## COMMENTARY

Who is Ramā? The first line of this verse answers: She whom the Lord controls (*niyatih*) is called Ramā. She is the Lord’s *śakti* arising from His *svarūpa* and is thus self-manifesting or shining – nonmaterial (*devi*). The Twelfth Canto (12.11.20) says:

*anapāyinī bhagavatī  
śrīḥ sākṣād ātmano hareḥ*

“The goddess of fortune, Śrī, who never leaves the Lord’s side, appears with Him in this world as the representation of His internal potency.”

In his commentary, Śrīdhara Svāmī gives the following explanation. *Anapāyinī hareḥ śaktih* means that the Lord’s energy is inseparable (*anapāyinī*) from Him because it is directly His part (*sākṣād ātmanah*). Because it is a spiritual form belonging to the Lord’s *svarūpa*, it is considered nondifferent from Him. The word *sākṣāt*, meaning “directly” or “in person,” is used to distinguish this energy from the inferior energy *māyā*, which is described as follows:

*vilajjamānayā yasya  
sthātum īkṣā-pathe ’muyā  
vimohitā vikatthante  
mamāham iti durdhiyaḥ*

“The illusory energy of the Lord cannot stand before the Lord, being ashamed of her position, but those who are bewildered by her always talk nonsense, being absorbed in thoughts of ‘It is I’ and ‘It is mine.’”

(*Bhāgavatam* 2.5.13)

Ramā’s inseparability from the Lord is described also in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*:

*nityaiva sā jagan mātā  
viṣṇoḥ śrīr anapāyinī  
yayā sarvagato viṣṇus  
tathāiveyaṁ dvijottama*

“She, the mother of the universe, is eternally inseparable from the Lord. Just as Viṣṇu is all-pervading, she is all-pervading.” (1.8.17)

*yatha jagat svāmī devadevo janārdanaḥ  
avatāram karoty eṣa tatha śrīḥ tat-sahāyini*

“Just as the Lord of the universe, Janārdana, incarnates in this world, His consort also incarnates with Him.” (1.9.142)

One might object, “But in some places Śiva and Śakti [Durgā] are considered the cause of the world.” Sometimes in the scriptures they are described as such in a figurative way, in which they are the particular limbs of the *puruṣa*, similar to how the Lord is sometimes described figuratively as the universal form. This verse describes Viṣṇu in this way. The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* says:

*yasyāyutāyutāmśamse  
viśva-śaktir iyaṁ sthitā*

“The power involved in creating the universe is situated as a hundred-millionth portion of a portion of the Lord.”

Thus according to this *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* statement, the portion for producing the material world is called Śambhu (another name for Viṣṇu). He is an *aṁśa*, or *liṅga* – a representative of the soul of the universe, the *puruṣa*, who has become indistinct, being covered by His bodily effulgence, and who in turn is an *aṁśa* of Govinda. It should be understood that this Śambhu is not the Śambhu described in verse 45, which begins *kṣīram yathā dadhi vikāra-viśeṣa-yogāt*. The ways in which the two appear are completely different.

That place in which the *jīvas*, figuratively referred to as semen (*vīrya*), are placed is a portion of *māyā* or *prakṛti*, which is also indistinct. This portion is figuratively called the *yoni*. She is called the *aparā-śakti*, the inferior energy known as *pradhāna*, the substance that constitutes the material realm.

Desire (*kāmaḥ*) arises in the Lord’s portion (*hareḥ* stands for a portion of the *puruṣa*, known as Śambhu). Śambhu desires to see Śakti in order that the creation takes place. This combination of Śambhu and Śakti then gives rise to the *mahat-tattva* – *prakṛti* implanted with the *jīvas*. This *mahat-tattva* is conceived from the interaction of Śambhu (a portion of Viṣṇu) and *prakṛti* and becomes the origin (*bījam*) of the universes. The *śruti* describes

this process with the words *so 'kāmayata*: “He desired to create the universe.” (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 1.2.4) The Third Canto of the *Bhāgavatam* (3.5.26) also describes this process:

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

“The Supreme Living Being in His feature as the transcendental *puruṣa* incarnation, who is the Lord’s plenary expansion, impregnates the material nature composed of three modes with the *jīvas* by the influence of eternal time.”

#### TEXT 9

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

#### TRANSLATION

**Thus the living beings [bodies] make their appearance by the portion of Viṣṇu that impregnates the material energy [*prakṛti*] and are known as her offspring.**

#### COMMENTARY

The scriptures dedicated to Śiva describe this operation as independent of Viṣṇu, but they do so only out of ignorance of the full details. The present verse continues the previous description with the understanding that only Viṣṇu performs this task. *Māheśvarī-prajāḥ* means “the offspring of the great consort.”

#### TEXT 10

*śaktimān puruṣaḥ so 'yam  
liṅga-rūpī maheśvaraḥ*

*tasminn āvirabhūl liṅge  
mahā-viṣṇur jagat-patiḥ*

### TRANSLATION

**This powerful person [*puruṣa*] who assumes an indistinct form is actually the Supreme Lord. Having appeared with an indistinct form, Mahā-viṣṇu then appears with a distinct form as the master of all living beings in the universe.**

### COMMENTARY

The first line here replies to those with misconceptions. After that, the second line again distinguishes between the distinctly manifested form of Mahā-viṣṇu and His indistinct form called Śambhu. Therefore the generator of the material realm (*liṅga-rūpī*), who is but an *aṁśa* of Mahā-viṣṇu, is still called the “powerful person” (*śaktimān puruṣa*) and the “great Lord” (*maheśvaraḥ*). Having assumed a subtle form (*tasmin liṅge*), Śambhu then appears with a distinct form (*āvirabhūt*), because he alone is distinct as the master of all exalted and degraded *jīvas* of this universe (*jagat-patiḥ*).

### TEXT 11

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

### TRANSLATION

**This form of Mahā-viṣṇu, the soul of the universe, creates countless universes. Because He has countless *avatāra* forms within the universes, He is said to have countless heads, countless eyes, countless feet, and countless arms.**

### COMMENTARY

This verse further describes the form of Mahā-viṣṇu. His form is described as having thousands of heads and eyes, since this form gives rise to

countless *avatāra* forms. *Sahasrāmśaḥ* means that He has thousands of *avatāra* expansions (*āmśa*). *Sahasra-sūḥ* means that He creates thousands of universes. The word “thousand” (*sahasra*) means that He has not just a thousand, but countless expansions everywhere. This form is described in the Second Canto:

*ādyo ’vatāraḥ puruṣaḥ parasya  
kālaḥ svabhāvaḥ sad-asaṅg-manas ca  
dravyaṁ vikāro guṇa indriyāṇi  
virāṭ svarāṭ sthāsnū carīṣṇu bhūmnaḥ*

“Kāraṇārṇava-śāyī Viṣṇu is the first incarnation of the Supreme Lord, and He is the master of eternal time, space, cause and effects, mind, the elements, the material ego, the modes of nature, the senses, the universal form of the Lord, Garbhodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu [indicated by the word *svarāṭ*], and the sum total of all living beings, both moving and nonmoving.”  
(*Bhāgavatam* 2.6.42)

Śrīdhara Svāmī says in his commentary that the first *puruṣāvatāra* of the Supreme Lord (*ādyo ’vatāraḥ*) for putting *prakṛti* in motion, a form for carrying out pastimes, is He who is described in the scriptures as having a thousand heads.

## TEXT 12

*nārāyaṇaḥ sa bhagavān  
āpas tasmāt sanātanāt  
āviraśīt kāraṇārṇvo  
nidhiḥ saṅkarṣaṇātmakaḥ  
yoga-nidrāṁ gatas tasmin  
sahasrāmśaḥ svayaṁ mahān*

## TRANSLATION

**The Supreme Lord is called Nārāyaṇa because the waters of the Kāraṇa Ocean arise from His eternal form. Nārāyaṇa is nondifferent from Saṅkarṣaṇa. This Mahā-viṣṇu lies in this ocean in divine sleep [*yoga-nidrā*]. Countless *avatāras* reside in Him.**

## COMMENTARY

In three lines this verse describes how Mahā-viṣṇu's Nārāyaṇa form resides in the Kāraṇa Ocean. The water (*āpaḥ*) known as the Causal Ocean appeared from Nārāyaṇa. This water is nondifferent from Nārāyaṇa, or Saṅkarṣaṇa. This means that this form lying on the Kāraṇa Ocean is a portion, or *amśa*, of the Saṅkarṣaṇa of the *caturvyūha* situated as *āvaraṇa* (protective) deities in Goloka. His activity is described as *yoga-nidrā* – being completely absorbed in the bliss derived from His spiritual form.<sup>21</sup> The derivation of the word Nārāyaṇa is as follows:

*āpo nārā iti proktā  
āpo vai nara-sūnavaḥ  
tasya tā ayanam pūrvam  
tena nārāyaṇaḥ smṛtaḥ*

“The words *āpaḥ* and *nārā* are both synonyms for ‘water’ since the waters are considered the sons of Nara, the primeval male, Mahā-viṣṇu.<sup>22</sup> Since these waters take shelter (*ayana*) of Mahā-viṣṇu from the ancient past, He is called Nārāyaṇa.” (*Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 1.4.6)

## TEXT 13

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

## TRANSLATION

**The spirit souls [*jīvas*] in combination with material nature [*prakṛti*] had been resting within the pores of Saṅkarṣaṇa [Mahā-viṣṇu]. They then take the form of golden eggs covered with the five great elements, universes in primitive forms, before they combine.<sup>23</sup>**

## COMMENTARY

This verse describes how the universes arise from Him. The seed exists within the hair holes of Saṅkarṣaṇa (Mahā-viṣṇu). The seed refers to the

*jīvas* who will be placed in the womb of *prakṛti*. First being in a subtle state, this combination of *jīvas* then becomes situated within the pores of *Saṅkarṣaṇa*. Then they take the form of golden eggs covered by the five gross elements in a subtle, uncombined state.<sup>24</sup> *Brahmā* says in the *Bhāgavatam*'s Tenth Canto (10.14.11):

*kvāhaṁ tamo-mahad-ahaṁ-kha-carāgni-vār-bhū-  
sainveṣṭitāṇḍa-ghaṭa-sapta-vitasti-kāyaḥ  
kvedṛg-vidhāvigaṇitāṇḍa-parāṇu-caryā-  
vātādhva-roma-vivarasya ca te mahitvam*

“What am I, a small creature measuring seven spans of my own hand? I am enclosed in a potlike universe covered by material nature, the total material energy, false ego, ether, air, fire, water, and earth. And what is Your glory? Unlimited universes pass through the pores of Your body just as particles of dust pass through the openings of a screened window.”

The universe is also described in the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.11.40–41): “This phenomenal material world is expanded to a diameter of four billion miles, as a combination of eight material elements transformed into sixteen further categories, within and without, as follows. The layers, or elements, covering the universes are each ten times thicker than the one before, and all the universes clustered together appear like atoms in a huge combination.”<sup>25</sup>

#### TEXT 14

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

#### TRANSLATION

**With countless heads, eternal Mahā-viṣṇu, the soul of the universes, enters each of these universal eggs by means of expanded forms [of Viṣṇu, Brahmā, and Śiva].**

## COMMENTARY

This verse describes how the Lord enters each of the universes in separate forms. He does this by producing separate expansions in each universe (*ekāṁśād ekāṁśād*).

### TEXT 15

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

### TRANSLATION

**From His left side Mahā-viṣṇu created Viṣṇu and from His right side Brahmā. He created the effulgent form of Śiva from between His eyebrows.**

## COMMENTARY

What happens at this stage? This verse describes how Mahā-viṣṇu enters the universes. Viṣṇu, Prajāpati Brahmā, and Śiva respectively carry out the roles of maintaining, creating, and destroying all the universes. The forms mentioned here – created by Mahā-viṣṇu outside the universe – are the sources of their further expansions situated within each universe. Just as these forms exist within each universe, they also exist outside of them, presiding over the universes as a whole. Among these forms, Prajāpati Brahmā mentioned in this verse is the form of Hiraṇyagarbha, not the four-headed Brahmā described later. Hiraṇyagarbha is the creator of various *devatās* dwelling within the coverings of the universes. Viṣṇu is the maintainer of all the universes, and Śiva is the destroyer of all the universes. *Kūrca-deśāt* means “from between the eyebrows.” These forms should be understood to reside in the water surrounding Mahā-viṣṇu.

### TEXT 16

*ahaṅkāratmakam viśvaṁ  
tasmād etad vyajāyata*

### TRANSLATION

**Then the universe became filled with false ego [ahaṅkāra] by the agency of Śiva.**

### COMMENTARY

This verse describes another one of Śambhu's activities. The universe became filled (*vyajāyata*) with the subtle element known as false ego, *ahaṅkāra* (*ahaṅkāratmakam*). This means that the universe was then filled with *ahaṅkāra* from Śiva (*tasmāt*), who is the presiding deity of *ahaṅkāra*.

### TEXT 17

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

### TRANSLATION

**While within the universe, the Lord carries out pastimes of creation, maintenance, and destruction through expansions of the three forms previously produced, and He personally enjoys divine sleep, just as He enjoys Lakṣmī in the spiritual realm.**

### COMMENTARY

This verse describes what the three forms Viṣṇu, Brahmā, and Śiva do upon entering the universe. The Lord, having entered the universe, carries out the activities (*līlām*) of maintenance, creation, and destruction through these three forms (*veśaiḥ*) – Viṣṇu, Brahmā, and Śambhu – who are similar to the prototypes who first emanated from Mahā-viṣṇu outside the universes. While they perform these activities, the Lord enjoys *yoga-nidrā*, personified as His consort. This form is like Lakṣmī, associated with all spiritual powers, because this sleep is actually a form of spiritual ecstasy arising

from the bliss of spiritual form (as opposed to material ignorance arising from material form). Just as (*iva*) Lakṣmī associates with the *puruṣa* expansion, *yoga-nidrā* associates with Mahā-viṣṇu in the Kāraṇa ocean.

### TEXT 18

*sisṛkṣāyām tato nābhes  
tasya padmaṁ viniryayau  
tan-nālaṁ hema-nalinam  
brahmaṇo lokam adbhutam*

### TRANSLATION

**When the Lord [Garbhodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu] desired to create, a lotus arose from His navel. This golden lotus with its stalk became the astonishing abode of Brahmā.**

### COMMENTARY

This lotus stalk is known as the planet of Brahmā because, after he makes his appearance in verse 22, it serves as his place of birth and repose.

### TEXT 19

*tattvāni pūrva-rūḍhāni  
kāraṇāni parasparam  
samavāyāprayogāc ca  
vibhinnāni pṛthak pṛthak*

*cic-chaktyā sajjamāno 'tha  
bhagavān ādi-pūruṣaḥ  
yojayan māyayā devo  
yoga-nidrām akalpayat*

### TRANSLATION

**All the ingredient elements of creation, which had previously made their appearance, remained separate from each other because they did not have the potency to combine. The first person [*ādi-puruṣa*], Mahā-**

**viṣṇu, decorated with His spiritual potency, brought them together through His potency of illusion [māyā] and then entered a state of divine sleep.**

### **COMMENTARY**

Three couplets (the two couplets of verse 19 and the single couplet of verse 20) describe the process of creation according to the Third Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, during which Mahā-viṣṇu finally wakes the mass of *jīvas*. In two verses Brahmā describes how the Lord brings the elements together through His own energy and then goes to sleep, being indifferent to the process of creation.

### **TEXT 20**

*yojayitvā tu tāny eva  
praviveśa svayaṁ guhām  
guhām praviṣṭe tasmims tu  
jīvātmā pratibudhyate*

## TRANSLATION

**Having combined the elements, and before going to sleep, Mahā-viṣṇu entered the universe [as Garbhodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu]. When He entered the universe, the *jīvas* awoke.**

## COMMENTARY

This is the third of the three verses just mentioned. *Yojayitvā*, “after conglomerating,” refers to the interval between the Lord’s combining the elements and going into *yoga-nidrā*. The word *guhām* refers to the form the universes take after the elements have been combined. *Prabudhyate*, “were awakened,” means that the *jīvas* woke up from the sleep that had started at the last destruction of the universe.

## TEXT 21

*sa nityo nitya-sambandhaḥ  
prakṛtiś ca paraiva sā*

## TRANSLATION

**The *jīva* is eternal, and his relationship to the Lord is also eternal. The *jīva* is described as having a superior nature.**

## COMMENTARY

This half couplet, known in the science of Sanskrit meter as a *pāda*, describes the nature of the *jīva*. He is endowed with an eternal connection to the Lord; the word *nitya* means extending in time with no beginning or end. The relationship between the *jīva* and the Lord is like the ray of light and its relationship to the sun.

The *Nārada-pañcarātra* says:

*yat-taṭasthaṁ tu cid-rūpaṁ  
sva-saṁvedyād vinirgatam  
rañjitaṁ guṇa-rāgeṇa  
sa jīva iti kathyate*

“The *jīva* is a conscious entity situated on the border, emanating from the Lord’s consciousness and colored by the *guṇas*.”

And in the *Gītā* (15.7), the Lord Himself says, *mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ*: “The eternal *jīva* is part of Me in this world.”

The *jīva* is called *prakṛti*, belonging to the superior nature, because he is situated in his natural form as a conscious witness. Describing the *jīva* as *prakṛti* also indicates that the *jīva* has the capacity to perceive his dependence on the Lord. This is spoken of as if it were already accomplished. The *Gītā* (7.5) describes the eternal *svarūpa* of the *jīva*: *prakṛtim viddhi me parām jīva-bhūtām*, “Know the *jīva* to be My superior *prakṛti*.” Similarly, *śruti* describes the *svarūpa* of the *jīva*: *dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā*, “Two birds are together on a branch of a tree.” (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 4.6)

## TEXT 22

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

## TRANSLATION

**In the navel of the Lord a lotus appeared for the mass of *jīvas*. In that lotus, first Hiraṇyagarbha Brahmā appeared, and then the Brahmā with four mouths and the four *Vedas*.**

## COMMENTARY

This verse describes how the *puruṣa* created from Himself a residence for the mass of all *jīvas* after He entered the universe. Hiraṇyagarbha Brahmā, who identifies himself as the body composed of the mass of *jīvas*, arose for enjoyment. That is described in the second line.

## TEXT 23

*sañjāto bhagavac-chaktyā  
tat-kālaṁ kila coditaḥ*

*sisṛkṣāyām matim cakre  
pūrva-saṁskāra-saṁskṛtaḥ  
dadarśa kevalam dhvāntam  
nānyat kim api sarvataḥ*

### TRANSLATION

**At that time, after having appeared, Brahmā was inspired by the energy of the Lord, so he developed the desire to create the worlds under the influence of his previous impressions. But he saw only darkness and nothing else in all directions.**

### COMMENTARY

These three lines describe the activity of the four-headed Brahmā. The meaning is clear.

### TEXT 24

*uvāca puratas tasmai  
tasya divya sarasvatī  
kāmaḥ kṛṣṇāya govinda  
he gopī-jana ity api  
vallabhāya priyā vahner  
mantram te dāsyati priyam*

### TRANSLATION

**A divine voice then spoke to him directly and gave him the dear mantra composed of the *kāma-bīja*, the words *kṛṣṇāya*, *govinda*, *gopī-jana-vallabhāya*, and the syllable dear to fire [*svāhā*].<sup>26</sup>**

### COMMENTARY

This verse describes the mercy the Lord gave to Brahmā because he had attained the good fortune of having previously worshiped the Lord. The meaning is clear.

### TEXT 25

*tapas tvam tapa etena  
tava siddhir bhaviṣyati*

### TRANSLATION

**“You are an expert in meditation. You should meditate using this mantra. You will attain your desires.”**

### COMMENTARY

The sixteenth and twenty-first consonants are described according to the Third Canto.<sup>27</sup> They form the word *tapa* (austerity or meditation). The meaning is clear.

### TEXT 26

*atha tepe sa suciram  
prīṇan govindam avyayam  
śvetadvīpa-patiṁ kṛṣṇam  
goloka-stham parāt param*

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

*bhūmiś cintāmaṇis tatra  
karṇikāre mahāsane  
samāsīnam cid-ānandaṁ  
jyoti-rūpaṁ sanātanam*

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

### TRANSLATION

**Brahmā sat in meditation for a long time and in so doing pleased the highest form of God, indestructible Govinda, Kṛṣṇa, Lord of Śvetadvīpa in Goloka, the land made of wish-fulfilling gems [cintāmaṇi]. Govinda is worshiped from a distance by material nature in the form of its modes. He has a self-revealing eternal form of knowledge and bliss. He is seated on a large throne in the pericarpel of a lotus with millions of stamens and thousands of petals, playing a flute with His lotus mouth, and surrounded by the cowherd girls and praised by other associates.**

### COMMENTARY

These four couplets describe how Brahmā, using this mantra in order to attain his particular desire, became endowed with powers for creation of the universe and then, using the verses of praise that will follow, worshiped Govinda in His abode called Goloka. The words *prakṛtyā guṇa-rūpiṇyā rūpiṇyā paryupāsitam* mean that the Lord is worshiped by *prakṛti* embodied (*rūpiṇyā*) in the form of the three *guṇas* – *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. *Pari* of *paryupāsitam* stands for *paritas*, meaning “around.” The *guṇas* are situated outside Goloka and worship Govinda through meditation and other processes, though they do not do so directly, because they do not have access to the *dhāma*. The *Bhāgavatam* says, *māyā paraity abhimukhe ca vilajjamānā*, “*Māyā*, ashamed, runs away from the presence of the Lord.” (*Bhāgavatam* 2.7.47), and, *tava balim udvahanti samadanty ajayānimiṣāḥ*, “The demigods and material nature herself offer You tribute.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.87.28) The word *aṁśaiḥ* refers to the Lord’s associates, who are situated around Him in protective layers (*āvaraṇa*).

### TEXT 27

*atha veṇu-ninādasya  
trayī-mūrti-mayī gatīḥ  
sphurantī praviveśāsu  
mukhābjāni svayambhuvah*

*gāyatrīm gāyatas tasmād  
adhigatya sarojajah*

*saṁskṛtaś cādi-guruṇā  
dvijatām agamat tataḥ*

### TRANSLATION

**Then the embodiment of the *Vedas*, the Gāyatrī mantra emanating from the sound of Kṛṣṇa’s flute, appeared in the four mouths of Brahmā, having entered his eight ears. Uttering the Gāyatrī mantra, Brahmā, now purified, attained second birth from the original guru, Kṛṣṇa.**

### COMMENTARY

After receiving the Gāyatrī mantra from the mantra’s presiding deity, Kṛṣṇa, whom Brahmā had worshiped,<sup>28</sup> attained the status of the twice-born. This is described in two couplets. *Trayī-mūrti* refers to the Gayatrī mantra because Gāyatrī is the embodiment of the three *Vedas*. This becomes clear in the second couplet. The sequence (*gatiḥ*) of syllables that make up the Gāyatrī mantra entered Brahmā’s mouths – meaning he uttered the mantra – after first entering his eight ears. The original guru was Kṛṣṇa.

### TEXT 28

*trayyā prabuddho ’tha vidhir  
vījñāta-tattva-sāgaraḥ  
tuṣṭāva veda-sāreṇa  
stotreṇānena keśavam*

### TRANSLATION

**Enlightened by this Gāyatrī, Brahmā became thoroughly versed in the highest truth. He satisfied Keśava by the following verses of praise, which are in agreement with the statements of the *Vedas*.**

### COMMENTARY

Having obtained the mantra from the Lord, Brahmā then praised Him with the following verses. The rest of the verse is clear.

## TEXT 29

*cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu kalpa-vṛkṣa-  
lakṣāvṛteṣu surabhīr abhipālayantam  
lakṣmī-sahasra-śata-sambhrama-sevyamānaṁ  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

## TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, who, surrounded by desire trees, affectionately tends the cows in stables with walls made of *cintāmaṇi*. He is eagerly served by countless *gopīs*.**

## COMMENTARY

In Goloka many different places – such as the arena of the *rāsa* dance – can be realized using particular mantras – such as the Bṛhad-dhyāna mantra – by which one attains realization of a particular pastime in that particular place. However, Brahmā offers his first verse of praise to Govinda by describing many pastimes suitable to the place called Gokula, which is the chief of all abodes since it is situated in the center of Goloka. With great absorption and the deepest love (*abhi*, “in all ways”) Govinda protects the cows by taking them to the forest or cow pens. But Sometimes in private there are most extraordinary events – the countless *gopīs* serving Govinda with the greatest love. The word *lakṣmī* here refers to the beautiful young *gopīs*.<sup>29</sup>

## TEXT 30

*veṇuṁ kvaṇantam aravinda-dalāyatākṣam  
barhāvataṁsam asitāmbuda-sundarāṅgam  
kandarpa-koṭi-kamanīya-viśeṣa-śobhaṁ  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

## TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, who plays a flute, whose eyes are like lotus petals, who wears a peacock feather on His head, whose**

**bodily hue is attractive like a dark cloud, and whose beauty is more spectacular than that of millions of Cupids.**

### COMMENTARY

Brahmā has already described the *svārasikī* (continuous) pastimes in the extraordinary abode called Gokula, within Goloka, which is filled with houses that have walls made of gems empowered to fulfill all one desires, and where, as it will later be described, all words are song, all steps a dance.

Now here in this verse we have within a second abode a single pastime – realized through a specific type of meditation on Kṛṣṇa – which is devoid of variegated activities and places in which all words are song and all steps are dance.<sup>30</sup> This is a realization of only one pastime that takes place in only one place. This is described in this verse and the next. The meaning of this verse is clear.

### TEXT 31

*ālola-candraka-lasad-vanamālya-vaṁśī-  
ratnāṅgadam praṇaya-keli-kalā-vilāsam  
śyāmaṁ tri-bhaṅga-lalitam niyata-prakāśam  
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, eternally manifesting His dark form, which is curved in three places and decorated with jewelled arm bands, a flute, and a swinging flower garland that shines like the moon.<sup>31</sup>**

### COMMENTARY

Govinda’s pastimes are artful (*kalā*) and full of playfulness (*keli*) and affection (*praṇaya*). The *Amara-koṣa* says, *drava-keli-parīhāsāḥ*: “The word *keli* means ‘sporting’ or ‘joking.’”

### TEXT 32

*aṅgāni yasya sakalendriya-vṛttimanti  
paśyanti pānti kalayanti ciraṁ jaganti  
ānanda-cinmaya-sad-ujjala-vigrahasya  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, whose individual limbs, possessing the functions of all the senses, are [through a glance] forever creating, maintaining, and annihilating the worlds, because those attractive limbs are made of eternity, knowledge, and bliss.**

### COMMENTARY

Having described two types of pastimes,<sup>32</sup> in this verse Brahmā speaks of the excellent powers produced by Govinda's peerlessly inconceivable energy. Four verses describe this. In these verses, the powers of Govinda's form are described. His hand can see and His eye can protect; each of His limbs has the power to accomplish the actions of the others. Thus it is said, *sarvataḥ pāṇi-pādaṁ tat sarvato 'kṣi-śiro-mukham*: "Everywhere are His hands and feet, and everywhere are His eyes, head, and mouth." (*Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* 3.16) This verse describes how He can use His limbs interchangeably in seeing and thus creating, protecting, and destroying universes. However, He can also use His limbs spontaneously in His multitudinous pastimes. The cause of this particular quality of His form is thus explained: His form is filled with bliss and knowledge.

### TEXT 33

*advaitam acyutam anādim ananta-rūpam  
ādyaṁ purāṇa-puruṣaṁ nava-yauvanaṁ ca  
vedeṣu durlabham adurlabham ātma-bhaktau  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, who has no equal, who is infallible in protecting His devotees, who is the source of all others but**

**expands into infinite forms, who is topmost, who exists before all others but is eternally youthful, and who is rarely attained by those studying the *Vedas* but is easily attained by those devoted to Him.**

### COMMENTARY

This and the next two verses confirm Govinda's extraordinary powers. The word *advaitam* means that Govinda has no equal, just as a king cannot be compared to others. In the *Bhāgavatam*'s Third Canto (3.2.12) Uddhava says, *vismāpanam svasya ca*: "His actions are amazing."<sup>33</sup> The *Kāśi-khāṇḍa* explains the word *acyutam*:

*na cyavante hi yad bhaktāḥ  
mahatyāṁ pralayāpadi  
ato 'cyuto 'khile loke  
sa ekaḥ sarvago 'vyayaḥ*

"He is called Acyuta, all-pervading, indestructible, and supreme in all the worlds because by His mercy His devotees do not fall from their exalted positions even at the time of the destruction of the universe."

His mercy is further illustrated in the following verses:

*kaṁso batādyākṛta me 'ty-anugrahaṁ  
drakṣye 'ṅghri-padmaṁ prahito 'munā hareḥ  
kṛtāvātārasya duratyayaṁ tamaḥ  
pūrve 'taran yan-nakha-maṇḍala-tviṣā*

"Indeed, today King Kaṁsa has shown me extreme mercy by sending me to see the lotus feet of Lord Hari, who has now appeared in this world. Simply by the effulgence of His toenails, many souls in the past have transcended the insurmountable darkness of material existence and achieved liberation."  
(*Bhāgavatam* 10.38.7)

Akrūra says further:

*yad arcitaṁ brahma-bhavādibhiḥ suraiḥ  
śriyā ca devyā munibhiḥ sa-sātvataiḥ*

*go-cāraṇāyānucaraiś carad vane  
yad gopikānām kuca-kuṅkumāṅkitam*

“Those lotus feet are worshiped by Brahmā, Śiva, and all the other demigods, by the goddess of fortune, and also by the great sages and Vaiṣṇavas. Upon those lotus feet the Lord walks about the forest while herding the cows with His companions, and those feet are smeared with the *kuṅkuma* from the *gopīs*’ breasts.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.38.8)

Uddhava says:

*yā vai śriyārcitam ajādibhir āpta-kāmair  
yogeśvarair api yad ātmani rāsa-goṣṭhyām  
kṛṣṇasya tad bhagavataḥ caraṇāravindam  
nyastam staneṣu vijahuḥ parirabhya tāpam*

“The goddess of fortune herself, along with Lord Brahmā and all the other demigods, who are masters of yogic perfection, can worship the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa only within her mind. But during the *rāsa* dance Lord Kṛṣṇa placed His feet upon these *gopīs*’ breasts, and by embracing those feet the *gopīs* gave up all distress.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.47.62)

And Śukadeva describes how the inhabitants of Vraja were amazed on seeing merciful Kṛṣṇa:

*iti sañcintya bhagavān  
mahā-kāruṇiko hariḥ  
darśayām āsa lokam svam  
gopānām tamasaḥ param*

“Thus deeply considering the situation, the all-merciful Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari revealed to the cowherd men His abode, which is beyond material darkness.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.28.14)

*nandādayas tu tam dṛṣṭvā  
paramānanda-nivṛtāḥ  
kṛṣṇam ca tatra cchandobhiḥ  
stūyamānam su-vismitāḥ*

“Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherd men felt the greatest happiness when they saw that transcendental abode. They were especially amazed to see Kṛṣṇa Himself there, surrounded by the personified *Vedas*, who were offering Him prayers.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.28.17)

The words *anādim*, *ananta-rūpam*, and *ādyam* are illustrated in the Eleventh Canto during a discussion on Sāṅkhya philosophy in which the Lord teaches that Brahman remains after the total destruction of the universes.

*kālo māyā-maye jīve  
jīva ātmani mayy aje  
ātmā kevala ātma-stho  
vikalpāpāya-lakṣaṇaḥ*

“Time merges into the Supreme Lord, present in the form of the omniscient Mahā-puruṣa, the original activator of all living beings. That origin of all life merges into Me, the unborn [*anādi*] Supreme Soul, who remains alone [*ādyam*], established within Himself. It is from Him that all creation [*ananta-rūpam*, “the creator of many forms”] and annihilation are manifested.” (*Bhāgavatam* 11.24.27)

*eṣa sāṅkhya-vidhiḥ proktaḥ  
saṁśaya-granthi-bhedanaḥ  
pratilomānulomābhyām  
parāvara-dṛśa mayā*

“Thus I, the perfect seer of everything material and spiritual, have spoken this knowledge of Sāṅkhya, which destroys the illusion of doubt by scientific analysis of creation and annihilation.” (*Bhāgavatam* 11.24.29)

Brahmā explains how the Lord is *puruṣaḥ purāṇaḥ*, “the primeval Supreme Personality”:

*ekas tvam ātmā puruṣaḥ purāṇaḥ  
satyaḥ svayaṁ-jyotir ananta ādyaḥ  
nityo 'kṣaro 'jasra-sukho nirañjanaḥ  
pūrṇādvayo mukta upādhito 'mṛtaḥ*

“You are the one Supreme Soul, the primeval Supreme Personality, the Absolute Truth – self-manifested, endless, and beginningless. You are eternal and infallible, perfect and complete, without any rival and free from all material designations. Your happiness can never be obstructed, nor have You any connection with material contamination. Indeed, You are the indestructible nectar of immortality.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.14.23)

The inhabitants of Mathurā also describe the *purāṇa-puruṣa*:

*pun̄yā bata vraja-bhuvo yad ayaṁ nṛ-liṅga  
gūḍhaḥ purāṇa-puruṣo vana-citra-mālyah  
gāḥ pālayan saha-balah kvaṇayaṁś ca veṇuṁ  
vikrīḍayāñcati giritra-ramārcitāṅghriḥ*

“How pious are the tracts of land in Vraja, for there the primeval Personality of Godhead, disguising himself with human traits, wanders about, enacting His many pastimes! Adorned with wonderfully variegated forest garlands, He whose feet are worshiped by Lord Śiva and goddess Ramā vibrates His flute as He tends the cows in the company of Balarāma.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.44.13)

The derivation of the word *purāṇa* is “though existing previously (*purā*), it remains fresh (*nava*).” Thus *purāṇa* and *nava-yauvana* are words that can exist together without contradicting one another.

*gopyas tapaḥ kim acarān yad amuṣya rūpaṁ  
lāvaṇya-sāram asamordhvam ananya-siddham  
dṛgbhiḥ pibanty anusavābhinaṁ durāpam  
ekānta-dhāma yaśasaḥ śriya aiśvarasya*

“What austerities must the *gopīs* have performed! With their eyes they always drink the nectar of Lord Kṛṣṇa’s form, which is the essence of loveliness and is not to be equaled or surpassed. That loveliness is the only abode of beauty, fame, and opulence. It is self-perfect, ever fresh, and extremely rare.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.44.14)

*yasyānanaṁ makara-kunḍala-cāru-karṇa-  
bhrājat-kapola-subhagaṁ savilāsa-hāsam*

*nityotsavam na tatrpur dṛśibhiḥ pibantyo  
nāryo narāś ca muditāḥ kupitā nimeś ca*

“Kṛṣṇa’s face is decorated with ornaments, such as earrings resembling sharks. His ears are beautiful, His cheeks brilliant, and His smiling attractive to everyone. Whoever sees Lord Kṛṣṇa sees a festival [because He is constantly blossoming]. His face and body are fully satisfying for everyone to see, but the devotees are angry at the creator for the disturbance caused by the momentary blinking of their eyes.” (*Bhāgavatam* 9.24.65)

In listing the qualities of Kṛṣṇa, starting with *satyaṁ śaucam* (truthfulness and cleanliness), Parīkṣit says:

*ete cānye ca bhagavan  
nityā yatra mahā-guṇāḥ  
prārthyā mahattvam icchadbhir  
na viyanti sma karhicit*

“These and many other transcendental qualities are eternally present in Him and are never separated from Him.” (*Bhāgavatam* 1.16.29)

The *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad*, in describing the form of the Lord suitable to meditate on, says:

*gopa-veśam abhrābham taruṇam kalpa-drumāśritam*

“He is eternally beautiful, the color of a rain cloud, wearing the dress of a cowherd, and sitting under a desire tree.”

In this verse, the word *taruṇa* (literally, “young”) actually means He has beauty that is always fresh (*nava-yauvana*).

This form is rarely attained by studying the *Vedas*:

*āsām aho caraṇa-reṇu-juṣām ahaṁ syām  
vṛndāvane kim api gulma-latauṣadhīnām  
yā dustyajam sva-janam ārya-patham ca hitvā  
bhejur mukunda-padavīm śrutibhir vimṛgyām*

“The *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana have given up the association of their husbands, sons, and other family members, who are very difficult to give up, and they

have forsaken the path of chastity to take shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda, Kṛṣṇa, for which those learned in the *Vedas* search. Oh, let me be fortunate enough to be one of the bushes, creepers, or herbs in Vṛndāvana, because the *gopīs* trample them and bless them with the dust of their lotus feet.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.47.61)

*tad bhūri-bhāgyam iha janma kim apy aṭavyām  
yad gokule 'pi katamāṅghri-rajo- 'bhiṣekam  
yaj-jīvitam tu nikhilam bhagavān mukundas  
tv adyāpi yat-pada-rajah śruti-mṛgyam eva*

“My greatest possible good fortune would be to take any birth whatever in this forest of Gokula and have my head bathed by the dust falling from the lotus feet of any of its residents. Their entire life and soul is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mukunda, the dust of whose lotus feet is still being searched for in the Vedic mantras.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.14.34)

The Lord is easily attained by His devotees:

*bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyaḥ  
śraddhayātmā priyaḥ satām  
bhaktiḥ punāti man-niṣṭhā  
śva-pākān api sambhavāt*

“Only by practicing unalloyed devotional service with full faith in Me can one obtain Me, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I am naturally dear to My devotees, who take Me as the only goal of their loving service. By engaging in such pure devotional service, even the dog-eaters can purify themselves from the contamination of their low birth.” (*Bhāgavatam* 11.14.21)

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

“O Almighty Lord, in the past many *yogīs* in this world achieved the platform of devotional service by offering all their endeavors unto You and

faithfully carrying out their prescribed duties. Through such devotional service, perfected by the processes of hearing and chanting about You, they came to understand You, O infallible one, and could easily surrender to You and achieve Your supreme abode.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.14.5)

[The following two paragraphs are found in the Haridās edition]

In what aspect is the Lord actually *advaita*, or “incomparable,” taking the literal meaning? Kṛṣṇa is incomparable in giving His own body to His devotees. Thus the devotee is superior to the Lord. “How can we say that He alone remains and is thus called *acyuta*? Viṣṇu alone remains after the cosmic annihilation.” No, the actual meaning should be that in giving Himself to His devotees, He in no way loses His independence as the Lord. That is why He is called *acyuta*. He never fails to take pleasure in His devotees. “Are you praising Nārāyaṇa, then? For He has the qualities of *acyuta* and *anādi*.” No, *anādi* means “without beginning.” It refers to He who is the final cause of all other things and is without cause, being self-revealing. Nārāyaṇa’s source is Kṛṣṇa. “How can one person protect all beings?” Thus it is said that He has unlimited forms. Or *ananta-rūpa* can mean that to help the *jīvas* He enters the material world unlimitedly. Or *ananta-rūpa* can mean He has a spiritual form that is unlimited by material standards, from a portion of which arise all qualities, such as unlimitedness.

To show, in Kṛṣṇa over Nārāyaṇa, the perfection of all qualities like *ananta*, the word *ādyam* is used. This means Kṛṣṇa has an expanded form called Nārāyaṇa. “Then Kṛṣṇa should also be designated as the *puruṣa*.” No, He is instead called the *purāṇa-puruṣa*, the person who appears before the *puruṣa*, who is Mahā-viṣṇu. Mahā-viṣṇu is just Kṛṣṇa’s expansion. “Then He should be very old.” No, He is very young – of *kaiśora* age, ever youthful. The word *ca* indicates that simultaneously He has always existed in this manner; He is not new. Inconceivably, He remains eternally young. “But Nārāyaṇa alone is praised in the *Vedas*.” If one knows the real meaning of the *Vedas*, then Kṛṣṇa can be attained by studying them. But actually, only by *bhakti* is Kṛṣṇa to be known. Thus He is easily attained by His devotee (*adurlabham ātma-bhaktau*).

## TEXT 34

*panthās tu koṭi-śata-vatsara-sampragamyo  
vāyor athāpi manaso muni-puṅgavānām  
so 'py asti yat-prapada-sīmny avicintya-tattve  
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, whose toes alone, possessing inconceivable powers, are attained only after a billion years by multitudes of sages who discipline the mind and breath.**

### COMMENTARY

*Prapada-sīmni* means “the tips of His two lotus feet.” Many scriptures testify to His inconceivable powers (*avicintya-tattve*). Nārada says:

*citraṁ bataitad ekena  
vapuṣā yugapat pṛthak  
gṛheṣu dvy-aṣṭa-sāhasraṁ  
striya eka udāvahat*

“It is quite amazing that in a single body Lord Kṛṣṇa simultaneously married sixteen thousand women, each in a separate palace.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.69.2)

The *Gopala-tāpanī Upaniṣad* says:

*eko vaśī sarvagah kṛṣṇa īḍya  
eko 'pi san bahudhā yo'vabhāti*

“Though remaining in one place, worshipable Kṛṣṇa pervades all places. Though He is one, He reveals many forms.”

The truth of the matter is that He is *avicintya-tattva*, “inconceivable.” This is confirmed in the *Bhāgavatam*'s Third Canto (3.33.3):

*sa eva viśvasya bhavān vidhatte  
guṇa-pravāheṇa vibhakta-vīryaḥ  
sargādy anīho 'vitathābhisandhir  
ātmeśvaro 'tarkya-sahasra-śaktiḥ*

“My dear Lord, although personally You have nothing to do, You have distributed Your energies in the interactions of the material modes of nature, and for that reason the creation, maintenance, and dissolution of the cosmic manifestation take place. My dear Lord, You are self-determined and are the Supreme Personality of Godhead for all living entities. For them You created this material manifestation, and although You are one, Your diverse energies can act multifariously. This is inconceivable to us.”

The *Skanda Purāṇa* and the *Mahābhārata* say:

*acintyāḥ khalu ye bhāvā  
na tāṁs tarkena yojayet  
prakṛtibhyaḥ param̐ yac ca  
tad acintyasya lakṣaṇam*

“Inconceivable states are not subject to material logic. The nature of the inconceivable is that it is beyond material objects.”

The *Brahma-sūtra* (2.1.27) says:

*śrutes tu śabda-mūlatvāt*

“Contradictory states can exist in the Lord because the scriptures state this, and scriptures are the root of knowledge.”

*Acintya* refers to something that has power, like a jewel or special medicine, which, when applied to the head, inconceivably affects other parts of the body. This power is suitable for the Lord.

### TEXT 35

*eko 'py asau racayitum jagad-aṇḍa-koṭim  
yac-chaktir asti jagad-aṇḍa-cayā yad-antaḥ  
aṇḍāntara-stha-paramāṇu-cayāntara-stham  
govindam ādi-puruṣam̐ tam aham̐ bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, who creates tens of millions of universes by just one of His energies, who holds the multitude of**

**universes within Himself, and who is simultaneously situated within every atom of the universe.**

### COMMENTARY

This verse further elaborates His inconceivable powers.

*tāvat sarve vatsa-pālāḥ  
paśyato 'jasya tat-kṣaṇāt  
vyadrśyanta ghana-śyāmāḥ  
pīta-kausēya-vāsasaḥ*

“Then, while Lord Brahmā looked on, all the calves and the boys tending them immediately appeared to have complexions the color of bluish rainclouds and to be dressed in yellow silken garments.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.13.46)

This *Bhāgavatam* verse begins to describe Kṛṣṇa’s amazing power. From the forms of the cowherd boys who were expansions of Himself He revealed unlimited *puruṣāvatāras* overseeing unlimited universes.

Yaśodā saw Him holding a multitude of universes within Himself (*jagad-aṇḍa-cayā yad-antaḥ*):

*na cāntar na bahir yasya  
na pūrvam nāpi cāparam  
pūrvāparam bahiś cāntar  
jagato yo jagac ca yaḥ*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead has no beginning and no end, no exterior and no interior, no front and no rear. In other words, He is all-pervading. Because He is not under the influence of the element of time, for Him there is no difference between past, present, and future; He exists in His own transcendental form at all times. Being absolute, beyond relativity, He is free from distinctions between cause and effect, although He is the cause and effect of everything.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.9.13)

Statements from the *śrutis* also indicate the extraordinary power of Kṛṣṇa:

*aṅor aṅīyān mahato mahīyān*

“He is the smallest among the small and the greatest among the great.”  
(*Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad* 3.20)

*yo 'sau sarva-bhūtātmā gopālaḥ*

“Gopāla is the soul of all beings.” (*Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* 2.94)

*eko devaḥ sarva-bhūteṣu gūḍhaḥ*

“He is one person but resides within all living entities.” (*Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* 2.96)

### TEXT 36

*yad-bhāva-bhāvita-dhiyo manujās tathaiva  
samprāpya rūpa-mahimāsana-yāna-bhūṣāḥ  
sūktair yam eva nigama-prathitaiḥ stuvanti  
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, whom men praise with Vedic verses after having fixed their minds on Him with devotion and consequently having attained glorious forms, thrones, vehicles, and ornaments by His mercy.**

### COMMENTARY

This verse speaks of the mercy the Lord shows to various devotees practicing various *sādhana*s. Though the verse refers specifically to devotees attracted to the Lord’s grandeur, Brahmā hints that to the pure devotee the Lord will award much more. Just as those who meditate on the qualities, character, age, pastimes, and clothing of the cowherd boys attain forms and destinations similar to those young cowherds, it is fitting that those who constantly recite the *Vedas* attain goals in accordance with the content of their recitation.

*vaireṇa yaṁ nṛpatayaḥ śiśupāla-pauṇḍra-  
śālvādayo gati-vilāsa-vilokanādyaiḥ  
dhyāyanta ākr̥ta-dhiyaḥ śayanāsanādau  
tat-sāmyam āpur anurakta-dhiyāṁ punaḥ kim*

“Inimical kings like Śiśupāla, Pauṇḍraka, and Śālva were always thinking about Lord Kṛṣṇa. Even while they were lying down, sitting, or engaging in other activities, they enviously meditated on the bodily movements of the Lord, His sporting pastimes, His loving glances on His devotees, and other attractive features displayed by the Lord. Being thus always absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, they achieved spiritual liberation in the Lord’s own abode. What then can be said of the benedictions offered to those who constantly fix their minds on Lord Kṛṣṇa in a favorable, loving mood?” (*Bhāgavatam* 11.5.48)

### TEXT 37

*ānanda-cinmaya-rasa-pratibhāvitābhis  
tābhir ya eva nija-rūpatayā kalābhiḥ  
goloka eva nivasaty akhilātma-bhūto  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, who, though regarding all the inhabitants of Goloka as His very self, resides there exclusively with the young *gopīs*, who are embodiments of the amorous mellow [*madhura-rasa*]. He accepts them as His wives, while they respond to His conjugal affection reciprocally.**

### COMMENTARY

How much more, then, will Govinda reward His dearest devotees, the *gopīs*! This verse describes how He lives in His private place with these dear young ladies exclusively. Though He continuously treats all other inhabitants of Goloka with intense love, regarding them as His very self (*akhila-ātma-bhūtaḥ*), He resides only with the *gopīs* (*tābhir eva nivasati*). This shows their exalted position. The reason is given: they are personifications of His *hlādinī-śakti* (*kalābhiḥ*). Further excellence is

shown. Govinda is *rasa* filled with spiritual bliss (*ānanda-cinmaya-rasa*). This refers to *madhura-rasa* filled with the highest type of *prema*. This is also their corresponding nature (*pratibhāvitābhiḥ*). He is imbued (*bhāvita*) with amorous feelings for them, and they in response (*prati*) are imbued with similar feelings to the same degree. Thus He lives constantly with them. This meaning should be understood from the word *prati*. This is similar to the usage of *pratyupakṛta*, “responding to someone’s favors.” He first of all shows favor to them.

In Goloka He accepts them as His own wives (*nija-rūpatayā*), though during His pastimes on earth He accepts them as the wives of other men. Because it is impossible that they are other men’s wives in reality, since they are the supreme Lakṣmīs or consorts of the Lord, there is an appearance of their being the wives of others by covering the pastime of their actually being His wives alone, which serves to increase the sense of longing in His pastimes on earth. This occurs through His own *māyā*. During the pastimes on earth, He resides with them and at the same time treats them as others’ wives, whereas in Goloka, the place of His unmanifest pastimes, He lives with them as His own consorts. That is indicated by the word *eva* in the phrase *ya eva nija-rūpatayā*. This distinguishes His behavior in Goloka from that of His earthly pastimes. In explaining the ten-syllable Kṛṣṇa mantra used for cultivating meditation on the eternal pastimes, the *Gautamīya-tantra* (2.22) states the same in the following words: *aneka-janma-siddhānām gopīnām patir eva vā*, “He is the husband of many *gopīs*, who achieved that perfection after many births.” The word *eva* in the phrase *goloka eva* indicates that such pastimes are not found anywhere else at all.

### TEXT 38

*premāñjana-cchurita-bhakti-vilocanena  
santaḥ sadaiva hṛdayeṣu vilokayanti  
yam śyāmasundaram acintya-guṇa-svarūpaṁ  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda of beautiful dark complexion, filled with inconceivable qualities, whom the devotees constantly see in their minds during spiritual trance [*samādhi*] permeated with transcendental love [*prema*].**

### COMMENTARY

Though Govinda lives in Goloka, He is also available in other places. The devotees see that form of inconceivable qualities (*acintya-guṇa-svarūpam*) during *samādhi* (*bhakti-vilocanena*) through eyes covered with the ointment of *prema* (*premāñjana-cchurita*). Through such eyes they see that form in their minds (*hṛdayeṣu*) like a reflection whose source is far away. In the *Gītā* (9.29) Govinda says, *ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā mayi te teṣu cāpy aham*: “Those who worship Me with devotion are attached to Me, and I am similarly attached to them.”

### TEXT 39

*rāmādi-mūrtiṣu kalā-niyamena tiṣṭhan  
nānāvātāram akarod bhuvaneṣu kintu  
kṛṣṇaḥ svayaṁ samabhavat paramaḥ pumān yo  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, who, though appearing in the worlds in eternal forms such as Rāma and Nṛsimha with Their characteristic powers, also appears personally with the most attractive pastimes in the supreme form of Kṛṣṇa.**

### COMMENTARY

Sometimes Govinda appears in the material world through one of His expansions. That is expressed in this verse. The supreme person called Kṛṣṇa sometimes appears by revealing various forms such as Rāma, through which He displays powers fixed according to the particular form (*kalā-niyamena*). In addition, He appears in this world (*samabhavat*)

personally. I worship that Govinda, with His most excellent pastimes. The *devatās* describe the *avatāras* in the Tenth Canto:

*matsyāśva-kacchapa-nṛsimha-varāha-haṁsa-  
rājanya-vipra-vibudheṣu kṛtāvatārah  
tvaṁ pāsi nas tri-bhuvanaṁ ca yathādhuneśa  
bhāraṁ bhuvo hara yadūttama vandanāṁ te*

“O supreme controller, Your Lordship previously accepted incarnations as a fish, a horse, a tortoise, Narasimhadeva, a boar, a swan, Lord Rāmacandra, Paraśurāma, and, among the demigods, Vāmanadeva, to protect the entire world by Your mercy. Now please protect us again by Your mercy by diminishing the disturbances in this world. O Kṛṣṇa, best of the Yadus, we respectfully offer our obeisances unto You.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.2.40)

#### TEXT 40

*yasya prabhā prabhavato jagad-aṇḍa-koṭi-  
koṭiṣv aśeṣa-vasudhādi-vibhūti-bhinnam  
tad brahma niṣkalam anantam aśeṣa-bhūtaṁ  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

#### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, whose powerful form radiates an effulgence known as the undifferentiated, unlimited, all-encompassing Brahman, which is completely distinct from the powers it displays in unlimited planets throughout billions of universes.**

#### COMMENTARY

Having stated that Govinda is supreme by being the perfection of all *avatāras*, Brahmā speaks of Govinda’s supremacy in terms of His having the most perfect form. Though the Lord’s personal and impersonal aspects are actually only one form, by one of the Lord’s manifestations with qualities appears the form called Govinda, who is the possessor of various attributes (*dharmī*). By one of the Lord’s manifestations devoid of qualities

appears His form as His attribute (*dharma*) called Brahman. This Brahman is like the halo around the moon.

The *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (6.7.76) declares, *śubhāśrayaḥ sa-cittasya sarvagasya tathātmanaḥ*: “The beautiful Lord is the shelter of the all-pervading, conscious Brahman.” Śrīdhara Svāmī comments that *sarvagasya atmanaḥ* refers to Brahman, and that the Lord is the foundation (*āśraya*) of that Brahman. The Lord says in the *Gītā* (14.27), *brahmano hi pratiṣṭhāham*: “I am the basis of Brahman.” In the Eleventh Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* the Lord enumerates His powers:

*pr̥thivī vāyur ākāśa*  
*āpo jyotir ahaṁ mahān*  
*vikāraḥ puruṣo ’vyaktaṁ*  
*rajaḥ sattvaṁ tamaḥ param*  
*ahaṁ etat prasaṅkhyānaṁ*  
*jñānaṁ tattva-viniścayaḥ*

“I am form, taste, aroma, touch, and sound; false ego; the *mahat-tattva*; earth, water, fire, air, and sky; the living entity; material nature; the modes of goodness, passion, and ignorance; and the impersonal Brahman (*param*). All these items, along with knowledge of their individual symptoms and the steady conviction that results from this knowledge, represent Me.”

(*Bhāgavatam* 11.16.37)

In his commentary, Śrīdhara Svāmī says that in this verse *param* refers to the impersonal Brahman. In the *Bhāgavatam*’s Eighth Canto (8.24.38), Matsya as well speaks of the impersonal aspect of the Lord:

*madīyaṁ mahimānaṁ ca*  
*paraṁ brahmeti śabditam*  
*vetsyasy anugrhītaṁ me*  
*sampraśnair vivṛtaṁ hr̥di*

“You will be thoroughly advised and favored by Me, and because of your inquiries, everything about my glory known as impersonal Brahman will be manifest within your heart.”

Yāmunācārya says:

*yad-aṅdāntara-gocaram ca yad  
daśottarāṅy āvaraṇāni yāni ca  
guṇāḥ pradhānaṁ puruṣaḥ param padam  
parātparam brahma ca te vibhūṭayaḥ*

“The manifestations of Your powers consist of whatever is visible within the universe, the coverings of the universe (each ten times thicker than the previous layer), the *guṇas*, *pradhāna*, the *puruṣa*, the spiritual world, and the impersonal Brahman [*param brahma*].” (*Stotra-ratnam* 14)

And, in the Fourth Canto, Dhruva asserts that the Lord’s form is superior to His impersonal aspect:

*yā nirvṛtis tanu-bhṛtām tava pāda-padma-  
dhyānād bhavaj-jana-kathā-śravaṇena vā syāt  
sā brahmaṇi sva-mahimany api nātha mā bhūṭ  
kiṁ tv antakāsi-lulitāt patatām vimānāt*

“My Lord, the transcendental bliss derived from meditating on Your lotus feet or hearing about Your glories from pure devotees is so unlimited that it is far beyond the stage of *brahmānanda*, wherein one thinks himself merged in the impersonal Brahman as one with the Supreme. Since *brahmānanda* is also defeated by the transcendental bliss derived from devotional service, then what to speak of the temporary blissfulness of elevating oneself to the heavenly planets, which is ended by the separating sword of time? Although one may be elevated to the heavenly planets, he falls down in due course of time.” (*Bhāgavatam* 4.9.10)

The *ātmārāmas* (those who have realized Brahman) are also attracted to the Lord with qualities:

*ātmārāmāś ca munayo  
nirgranthā apy urukrame  
kurvanty ahaitukīm bhaktim  
ittham-bhūta-guṇo hariḥ*

“All different varieties of *ātmārāmas*, especially those established on the path of self-realization, though freed from all kinds of material bondage,

desire to render unalloyed devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead. This means that the Lord possesses transcendental qualities and therefore can attract everyone, including liberated souls.” (*Bhāgavatam* 1.7.10)

Those with specific additional inquiries can consult the *Bhagavat-sandarbha*. Enough has been said here.

### TEXT 41

*māyā hi yasya jagad-aṇḍa-śatāni sūte  
traiguṇya-tad-viśaya-veda-vitāyamānā  
sattvāvalambi-para-sattvaṁ viśuddha-sattvaṁ  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, whose material energy [*māyā*], consisting of the three modes [*guṇas*] described elaborately in the *Vedas*, produces hundreds of universes, while He Himself is pure existence [*viśuddha-sattva*], which manifests His blissful form and is the cause of the material mode of goodness [*sattva*].**

### COMMENTARY

Having shown the glories of Govinda’s form, Brahmā now shows, in this verse and the next, Govinda’s glory in relation to the universe. This verse shows that the external energy, *māyā*, creates inconceivable effects within the universe. It then explains that the Lord is not affected by this *māyā*. Beyond the *sattva* mixed with *rajas* and *tamas* is a pure, unmixed *sattva*,<sup>34</sup> *śuddha-sattva* or *para-sattva*. But purer than that is *viśuddha-sattvaṁ*, which functions by the Lord’s *cit-śakti*.<sup>35</sup> This is explained in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (1.9.44–45):

*sattvādayo na santīṣe  
yatra ca prākṛtā guṇāḥ  
sa śuddhaḥ sarva-śuddhebhyaḥ  
pumān ādyaḥ prasīdatu*

*hlādinī sandhinī saṁvit*  
*tvayy ekā guṇa-saṁśraye*  
*hlāda-tāpa-karī miśrā*  
*tvayi no guṇa-varjite*

“The material *guṇas* of *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas* do not exist in the Lord. May that person, the source of all, purer than the purest, be pleased with me. In You who are the shelter of all spiritual qualities exist the energies of *hlādinī*, *sandhinī*, and *saṁvit*. In You who are devoid of material qualities, the mixture of happiness and distress found in the material world does not exist.”

Further details are given in the *Bhagavat-sandarbha*.

## TEXT 42

*ānanda-cinmaya-rasātmayā manaḥsu*  
*yaḥ prāṇinām pratiphalan smarātām upetya*  
*līlāyitena bhuvanāni jayaty ajasraṁ*  
*govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

## TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, who, by appearing in the minds of the living beings to a small degree and embracing them with amorous love [*madhura-rasa*], causes the living beings to remember Him and in that way perpetually conquers the worlds by His attractive pastimes.**

## COMMENTARY

This verse describes how the Lord’s attractive form completely bewilders this world. *Ānanda-cinmaya-rasa* refers to *madhura-rasa*, the “amorous mellow.” Govinda appears to some degree in the minds of the living beings of this world by embracing them (*ātmayā*) with His *madhura-rasa*. He is described as being reflected (*pratiphalan*) since the Lord appears within the tiny *jīva* as a second form – the *Paramātmā*, endowed with part of the Lord’s all-enchanting nature. This form causes remembrance (*smarātām*

*upetya*). In this way the Lord conquers everyone in all the worlds. The five chapters in the *Bhāgavatam* devoted to *rasa* explain His attractive nature.

*tāsām āvirabhūc chauriḥ  
smayamāna-mukhāmbujaḥ  
pītāmbara-dharaḥ sragvī  
sākṣān manmatha-manmathaḥ*

“Then Lord Kṛṣṇa, a smile on His lotus face, appeared before the *gopīs*. Wearing a garland and a yellow garment, He directly appeared as one who can bewilder the mind of Cupid, who himself bewilders the minds of ordinary people.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.32.2)

The meaning of *manmatha-manmathaḥ* is similar to the phrase in the *Kena Upaniṣad* (1.2), *cakṣuṣaś cakṣuḥ*: “He inspires the eye to see.” Thus *manmatha-manmathaḥ* can mean that He is the source of whatever bewilderment Cupid can cause by love. Though the Lord is the cause of Cupid’s powers of bewilderment through material love, material Cupid’s actions are not pure; they are contaminated, being overcome by material influence.

### TEXT 43

*goloka-nāmni nija-dhāmni tale ca tasya  
devī-maheśa-hari-dhāmasu teṣu teṣu  
te te prabhāva-nicayā vihitāś ca yena  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, by whom respective powers are given to the abodes of Durgā, Śiva, and Viṣṇu situated below His own planet, Goloka.**

### COMMENTARY

Having spoken of the Lord’s glory within the material world, Brahmā now speaks of the Lord’s glory in His spiritual abode. The abodes *devī-dhāma*, *maheśa-dhāma*, and *hari-dhāma* are listed in order of progressive

superiority. Each succeeding place is superior to the last because each has twice as much power as the one before it. This verse establishes that Goloka is higher than all other abodes and is inclusive of all other abodes. It has already been shown that Vṛndāvana, which appears on earth, is also nondifferent from this Goloka.

*sa tu lokas tvayā kṛṣṇa  
sīdamānaḥ kṛtātmanā  
dhṛto dhṛtimatā vīra  
nighantopadravān gavām*

“That planet, protected by You, O hero, and which destroys the suffering of the cows and other inhabitants, is the residence of the determined and disciplined devotees.” (*Hari-varṇśa* 62.33)

This abode of Goloka should be considered the Lord’s only abode (*goloka eva nivasati*) because, even when appearing in Vṛndāvana on earth, the Lord performs pastimes there eternally. Thus the scriptures describe Vṛndāvana as follows.

*vṛndāvanaṁ dvādaśamaṁ  
vṛndayā parirakṣitam  
hariṇādhiṣṭhitam tac ca  
brahma-rudrādi-sevitam*

“The twelfth forest, called Vṛndāvana, is protected by Vṛndā, controlled by Kṛṣṇa, and served by Brahmā, Śiva, and others.” (*Ādi-varāha Purāṇa*)

*kṛṣṇa-kṛīḍā-setu-bandham  
mahāpātaka-nāśanam  
valabhīm tatra kṛīḍārtham  
kṛtvā devo gadādharaḥ*

*gopakaiḥ sahitas tatra  
kṣaṇam ekaṁ dine dine  
tatraiva ramaṇārtham hi  
nitya-kālam sa gacchati*

“The bridge built for Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes destroys the greatest of sins. Having constructed a lookout pavilion there for playing, every day the Lord, holder of the club, goes there in a moment’s time to enjoy with His cowherd friends, eternally.” (*Ādi-varāha Purāṇa*)

In the *Gautamīya-tantra*, Nārada says:

*kim idaṁ dvādaśābhikhyāṁ  
vṛndāraṇyāṁ viśāmpate  
śrotum icchāmi bhagavan  
yadi yogo ’smi me vada*

*śrī-kṛṣṇa uvāca  
idaṁ vṛndāvanaṁ ramyaṁ  
mama dhāmaiva kevalam  
atra ye paśavaḥ pakṣi-  
vṛkṣā kīṭā narāmarāḥ*

*ye vasanti mamādhiṣṇye  
mṛtā yānti mamālayam  
atra yā gopa-kanyāś ca  
nivasanti mamālaye*

*yoginyas tā mayā nityāṁ  
mama sevā-parāyaṇāḥ  
pañca-yojanam evāsti  
vanaṁ me deha-rūpakam*

*kāliṅdīyāṁ suṣumnākhyā  
paramāmṛta-vāhinī  
atra devāś ca bhūtāni  
vartante sūkṣma-rūpataḥ*

*sarva-deva-mayaś cāhaṁ  
na tyajāmi vanaṁ kvacit  
āvirbhāvas tirobhāvo  
bhaven me ’tra yuge yuge*

*tejo-mayam idam ramyam  
adṛśyam carma-cakṣuṣā*

“O master of the people, I desire to hear about the twelve forests of Vṛndāvana. If I am qualified, please tell me. Kṛṣṇa then spoke: ‘This pleasant Vṛndāvana is My only abode. There all cows, animals, birds, insects, and humans are without death. Those who live under My mercy come to My abode on dying. The daughters of the cowherd men live in My abode. Completely giving up all connections, they serve Me continually. This place, measuring five *yojanas*, is nondifferent from My body. The Yamunā, flowing with the sweetest nectar, is the central nerve [*suṣumnā*] of that body. All the *devas* and elements exist there in a spiritual form. I, the embodiment of all *devas*, do not leave that forest for a moment, though I appear and disappear in this world age after age. But this radiant forest full of pleasure is invisible to the material eye.’”

Similarly, eternal *kadamba* trees and other items are described in the *Varāha Purāṇa* and other scriptures. It should be understood that Goloka, which we cannot see, is similar to the Vṛndāvana that we can see. When Kṛṣṇa appears with His associates in a visible manifestation it is called His *avatāra*. At that time, for increasing the excellence of *rasa*, there are various pastimes of separation and meeting and dealing with others’ wives. What is presented here and in other places in the *tantras*, *yāmālas*, *sāṁhitās*, and *pañcarātra* scriptures concerning separation and dealing with others’ wives should be understood to be a few of Kṛṣṇa’s unique pastimes on earth.

*jayati jana-nivāso devakī-janma-vādo  
yadu-vara-pariṣat svair dorbhir asyann adharmam  
sthira-cara-vṛjina-ghnaḥ su-smita-śrī-mukhena  
vraja-pura-vanitānām vardhayan kāma-devam*

“Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa lives eternally among the cowherd men and the Yādavas and is conclusively both the son of Devakī and Yaśodā. He is the guide of the Yadu dynasty and the cowherd men, and with His mighty arms He kills everything inauspicious in Vraja, Mathurā, and Dvārakā. By His presence He destroys all things inauspicious for all living beings, moving and inert,

as well as the suffering of separation of the inhabitants of Vraja and Dvārakā. His blissful smiling face always increases the desires of the *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana and women of Mathurā and Dvārakā. He remains eternally in this situation.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.90.48)

Vyāsa says in the *Nirvāṇa-khaṇḍa* of the *Padma Purāṇa*:

*paśya tvaṁ darśayiṣyāmi  
svarūpaṁ veda-gopitam  
tato 'paśyam ahaṁ bhūpa  
bālaṁ kālāmbuda-prabham  
gopa-kanyāvṛtaṁ gopaṁ  
hasantaṁ gopa-bāla kaiḥ*

“See! I will show you My form, which is hidden in the *Vedas*.’ I then saw a cowherd boy with the complexion of a black cloud, surrounded by young *gopīs*. He was joking with other cowherd boys.”

The phrase *gopa-kanyā* (young cowherd girls) indicates that the girls were at an age prior to following those rules of *dharma* suitable for mature women.<sup>36</sup> Other meanings should be rejected. In the meditation on Vṛndāvana found in the fourth chapter of the *Gautamīya-tantra* it is said:

*svargād iva paribhraṣṭa  
kanyakā-śata-maṇḍitam  
gopa-vatsa-gaṇākīrṇaṁ  
vṛkṣa-ṣaṇḍaiś ca maṇḍitam*

*gopa-kanyā-sahasrais tu  
padma-patrāyatekṣaṇaiḥ  
arcitaṁ bhāva-kusumais  
trailokyaika-guruṁ param*

“Vṛndāvana is the guru for the three worlds. It is decorated with hundreds of maidens as beautiful as women coming from heaven and ornamented with groves of trees. It is filled with calves and cowherds and worshiped with flowers, offerings of love made by thousands of young *gopīs* with lotus eyes.”

The qualification for seeing Kṛṣṇa is also mentioned in the section on proper conduct:

*ahar-niśam japen mantram  
mantrī niyata-mānasaḥ  
sa paśyati na sandeho  
gopa-veśa-dharam harim*

“With a controlled mind, the chanter should utter the mantra day and night continually. He sees without doubt the Lord wearing the dress of a cowherd.”

And the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* says:

*tad u hovāca brahmaṇo ’sāv anavarataṁ me dhyātaḥ stutaḥ  
parārdhānte so ’budhyata gopaveśo me puruṣaḥ purastād  
āvīrbabhūva*

“I, Brahmā, meditate on and praise Him continually. After half my life I realized Him. He appeared in front of me as a male in the dress of a cowherd.”

Some people speak of Kṛṣṇa as an *avatāra* of Kṣīrodaka-śayī Viṣṇu, but that Viṣṇu form is actually only an *amśa* of Kṛṣṇa. Those who want to study the topic in great detail should consult the *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha*, as the topic is too extensive to be discussed here. Now we return to the main subject.

#### TEXT 44

*sṛṣṭi-sthiti-pralaya-sādhana-śaktir ekā  
chāyeva yasya bhuvanāni bibharti durgā  
icchānurūpam api yasya ca ceṣṭate sā  
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*

#### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, whose energy called Durgā, possessing the powers of carrying out creation, maintenance, and**

**destruction, supports all the worlds, but who, being just His shadow, acts only according to His will.**

### COMMENTARY

Govinda's abode has been shown to be higher than the abodes of Durgā, Śiva, and Viṣṇu. Now, in five verses, following statements in the prayers of the personified *śrutis* in the *Bhāgavatam* (10.87.28), Govinda's superiority to the inhabitants of other abodes is shown:

*tvam akaraṇaḥ sva-rāḍ akhila-kāraka-śakti-dharas  
tava balim udvahanti samadanty ajayānimiṣāḥ  
varṣa-bhujo 'khila-kṣiti-pater iva viśva-sṛjo  
vidadhāti yatra ye tv adhikṛtā bhavataś cakitāḥ*

“Though You have no material senses, You are the self-effulgent sustainer of everyone's sensory powers. The demigods and material nature herself (*ajayā* refers to Durgā) offer You tribute while also enjoying the tribute offered to them by their worshipers, just as subordinate rulers of various districts in a kingdom offer tribute to their lord, the ultimate proprietor of the land, while also enjoying the tribute paid them by their own subjects. In this way the universal creators faithfully execute their assigned services out of fear of You.”

### TEXT 45

*kṣīram yathā dadhi vikāra-viśeṣa-yogāt  
sañjāyate na hi tataḥ pṛthag asti hetoḥ  
yaḥ śambhutām api tathā samupaiti kāryād  
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, who becomes the form of Śiva, who is said to be nondifferent from Govinda but who is also different because of his contact with the transformations of the material energy [*prakṛti*], just as milk becomes yogurt, which can be said to be nondifferent from its cause but acts in a different manner.**

## COMMENTARY

Now in order, after describing Durgā of Devī-dhāma, Brahmā describes Śiva of Maheśa-dhāma.<sup>37</sup> In the example of milk and yogurt, only the part that illustrates cause and effect should be taken. In this world milk becomes yogurt, but the Lord does not become Śiva; He is unchanging. Like *cintāmaṇi*, by His inconceivable energy the Lord continues to exist as He was before, even though He also transforms into Śiva. *Śruti* says:

*eko nārāyaṇa evāgra āsīt na brahmā na ca śaṅkaraḥ sa munir  
bhūtvā samacintayat tata evaite vyajāyanta viśvo hiraṇyagarbho  
'gnir varuṇa-rudrendrāḥ*

*sa brahmaṇā sṛjati rudreṇa nāśayati so 'nutpatti-laya eva hariḥ  
kāraṇa-rūpaḥ paraḥ paramānandaḥ*

“Nārāyaṇa existed before all else. Brahmā and Śiva did not exist. Becoming inspired He began to meditate. Then the universe, Brahmā, Agni, Varuṇa, Śiva, and Indra appeared. Nārāyaṇa creates through Brahmā and destroys through Śiva. Nārāyaṇa is never created or destroyed. He is the supreme cause, full of supreme bliss.”

Śiva should be considered an effect rather than a cause because of His association with the material *guṇas*. The *Bhāgavatam*'s Tenth Canto (10.88.5) says:

*harir hi nirguṇaḥ sākṣāt  
puruṣaḥ prakṛteḥ paraḥ  
sa sarva-dṛg upadraṣṭā  
taṁ bhajan nirguṇo bhavet*

“Lord Hari, however, has no connection with the material modes. He is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the all-seeing eternal witness, who is transcendental to material nature. One who worships Him becomes similarly free from the material modes.”

Thus it is said in the text, *vikāra-viśeṣa-yogāt*: “from association with the derivatives of the material energy [*prakṛti*].”<sup>38</sup> Sometimes Śiva is considered nondifferent from Viṣṇu, but those statements should be

adjusted in light of this verse of the *Brahma-saṁhitā* and other texts. There are no conflicting statements about the final cause. Thus the *Ṛg-veda-śiras* says:

*atha nityo deva eko nārāyaṇaḥ | brahmā nārāyaṇaḥ | śivaś ca nārāyaṇaḥ |  
śakraś ca nārāyaṇaḥ | dvādaśādityāś ca nārāyaṇaḥ | vāsavo nārāyaṇaḥ |  
aśvinī nārāyaṇaḥ | sarve ṛṣayo nārāyaṇaḥ | kālaś ca nārāyaṇaḥ | diśaś ca  
nārāyaṇaḥ | adhaś ca nārāyaṇaḥ | ūrdhvaś ca nārāyaṇaḥ | antar bahiś ca  
nārāyaṇaḥ | nārāyaṇa evedaṁ sarvaṁ jātāṁ jagatyāṁ jagad*

“Nārāyaṇa alone is the eternal Lord. Nārāyaṇa is Brahmā. Nārāyaṇa is Śiva. Nārāyaṇa is Indra. Nārāyaṇa is the twelve Ādityas. Nārāyaṇa is the Vasus. Nārāyaṇa is the Aśvinis. Nārāyaṇa is all the sages. Nārāyaṇa is time. Nārāyaṇa is the directions. Nārāyaṇa is below. Nārāyaṇa is above. Nārāyaṇa is inside and outside. Nārāyaṇa is everything born in the universe.”

And in the Second Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.6.32), Brahmā says:

*srjāmi tan-niyukto 'haṁ  
haro harati tad-vaśaḥ  
viśvaṁ puruṣa-rūpeṇa  
paripāti tri-śakti-dhrk*

“By His will, I create, Lord Śiva destroys, and He Himself, in His eternal form as the Personality of Godhead, maintains everything. He is the powerful controller of these three energies.”

#### TEXT 46

*dīpārcir eva hi daśāntaram abhyupetya  
dīpāyate vivṛta-hetu-samāna-dharmā  
yas tādr̥g eva hi ca viṣṇutayā vibhāti  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

#### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, who expands as Kṣīrodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu [through Mahā-viṣṇu and Garbodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu], and who is nondifferent from Him, just as a large lamp lights a second lamp, which in turn lights a third lamp, which shines just as brightly as the original lamp.**

### COMMENTARY

According to the order mentioned before, in this verse one form of Viṣṇu is described. Related to the description of Śiva as *guṇāvatāra*, Viṣṇu as *guṇāvatāra* is now described. He is considered the final cause because He is identical with the other forms of Viṣṇu. He is actually a portion of a portion of Govinda. A portion of Mahā-viṣṇu is Garbodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu, and His portion is the *guṇāvatāra* mentioned in this verse. Nonetheless, He is still considered another form of Govinda. Just as the quality of light from a small but clean lamp lit, through a series of other lamps, from a main lamp is the same as the quality of light that shines from the original lamp, so Viṣṇu is the same as Govinda in respect to being *īśvara* (though the manifestation of Their qualities and *rasa* are not the same). Because Śiva is the controller of ignorance, he is like a flame from a small lamp covered with soot. Therefore he should be understood to be dissimilar. And in verse 48, this form of Kṣīrodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu will be shown to be an expansion of Kāraṇodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu.

### TEXT 47

*yaḥ kāraṇārṇava-jale bhajati sma yoga-  
nidrām ananta-jagad-aṇḍa-sa-roma-kūpaḥ  
ādhāra-śaktim avalambya parām sva-mūrtim  
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, who, as Mahā-viṣṇu, another spiritual form of Himself, enjoys the trance of divine sleep in the waters of the Kāraṇa Ocean while holding unlimited universes in the pores of His skin and lying upon the supporting energy of Śeṣa.**

## COMMENTARY

Now Kāraṇodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu is described. The irregular placement of the word *sa*, which would normally be placed before *ananta-jagad-aṇḍa*, is an instance of poetic license. The meaning is that Viṣṇu has pores filled with unlimited universes. The phrase *ādhāra-śaktim avalambya parām svamūrtim* means “Mahā-viṣṇu, lying down on His own supreme form as the sustaining energy called Śeṣa.”

## TEXT 48

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

## TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, whose first expansion is Mahā-viṣṇu, the form of the Lord who with each exhalation and inhalation respectively determines the appearance and disappearance of the rulers of all the individual universes [even Kṣīrodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu].**

## COMMENTARY

This verse shows that Mahā-viṣṇu, the maintainer of all the universes, is very different from His *avatāra* Kṣīrodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu (mentioned in verse 46), just as the original Brahmā and Śiva (described in verse 15) are distinct from their counterparts within the material universe. Brahmā describes Mahā-viṣṇu by describing Him in relation to this Kṣīrodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu. “The rulers of all the individual universes” (*jagad-aṇḍa-nāthāḥ*) refers to the forms of Viṣṇu and to the others who for performing their duties remain even after the universes are destroyed. Among these rulers, the forms of Viṣṇu do not die; that is the meaning of *jivanti*.

## TEXT 49

*bhāsvān yathāśma-śakaleṣu nijeṣu tejaḥ  
svīyam kiyat prakāṣayaty api tadvad atra  
brahmā ya eṣa jagad-aṇḍa-vidhāna-kartā  
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, who becomes Brahmā, the creator of the universe [by bestowing His powers to that individual soul], just as the sun displays a small portion of its powers of heat and light in all the sun stones that represent it.**

### COMMENTARY

It has been shown that Durgā and others are under the shelter of Mahā-  
viṣṇu. Related to this, Brahmā's position is now made clear. He is shown to  
be extremely different from the others because he is a *jīva*. Just as the sun  
(*bhāsvān*) reveals to a small degree (*kiyat*) its own light or heat (*tejaḥ*) in all  
its own stones (*nijeṣu aśma-śakaleṣu*), called sun stones (*sūrya-kānta-maṇi*)  
because they are additional (*api*) representatives of the sun, so a special *jīva*  
who displays some powers becomes Brahmā and serves as the sub-creator  
within the universe (*jagad-aṇḍa-vidhāna-kartā*), being a partial  
representative of the Lord. This verse can also refer to the original Brahmā  
outside the material universes. From this one can infer for Śiva a similar  
position of dependence outside the universe. In that case Brahmā and Śiva  
would be known as creators of all the universes. Though Durgā, or *māyā*, is  
the servant of Kāraṇodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu, and the incarnations of Brahmā and  
Viṣṇu within the universe are *avatāras* of Garbhodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu, they are  
all considered to be under the shelter of Govinda because He is the final  
shelter. The following verses should also be considered in this way.

### TEXT 50

*yat-pāda-pallava-yugaṁ vinidhāya kumbha-  
dvandve praṇāma-samaye sa gaṇādhirājaḥ  
vighnān vihantum alam asya jagat-trayasya  
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*

## TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, whose lotus feet Gaṇeśa fixes firmly upon the two bulges on his forehead when offering obeisances so that he may gain the power he needs to destroy all the obstacles in the three worlds.**

## COMMENTARY

In order to remove obstacles in their endeavors, all people first praise Gaṇeśa. Thus people may think that to first praise Gaṇeśa is obligatory. This verse explains his actual position. This point is made even stronger by the words of Kapila given here, for if Śiva, Gaṇeśa's father, takes the water that has washed Lord Viṣṇu's feet on his head, then the position of Gaṇeśa is that much less prominent:

*yac-chauca-niḥsṛta-sarit-pravarodakena  
tīrthena mūrdhny adhikṛtena śivaḥ śivo 'bhūt  
dhyātur manaḥ-śamala-śaila-niṣṛṣṭa-vajraṁ  
dhyāyec ciraṁ bhagavataś caraṇāravindam*

“The blessed Lord Śiva becomes all the more blessed by bearing on his head the holy waters of the Ganges, which has its source in the water that washed the Lord's lotus feet. The Lord's feet act like thunderbolts hurled to shatter the mountain of sin stored in the mind of the meditating devotee. One should therefore meditate on the lotus feet of the Lord for a long time.”  
(*Bhāgavatam* 3.28.22)

## TEXT 51

*agnir mahi gaganam ambu marud diśaś ca  
kālas tathātma-manasīti jagat-trayāṇi  
yasmād bhavanti vibhavanti viśanti yaṁ ca  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

## TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, from whom the three worlds composed of earth, water, fire, air, ether, space, time, mind, and soul**

**appear, by whom they continue their existence, and within whom they enter at the time of universal destruction.**

### **COMMENTARY**

Therefore it is also correct to say that all the elements and their deities are ultimately under the control of Govinda. The verse is clear.

### **TEXT 52**

*yac-cakṣur eṣa savitā sakala-grahāṇām  
rājā samasta-sura-mūrtir aśeṣa-tejāḥ  
yasyājñayā bhramati sambhṛta-kāla-cakro  
govindam ādi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*

### **TRANSLATION**

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, by whose command the sun, the king of all planets, moves in the sky, determining the cycles of time. The sun, endowed with profuse heat and light, reveals the world through his light, gives sight to the eye, and is the personification of all the demigods.<sup>39</sup>**

### **COMMENTARY**

Some claim that the sun is the Supreme Lord. This verse explains the sun's actual position. The meaning is "I worship Govinda, by whose order the sun, who carries the wheel of time and who serves Govinda by revealing things [*yac-cakṣuḥ*] by his light, moves in the sky." In the *Gītā* (15.12), Govinda says:

*yad āditya-gataṁ tejo  
jagad bhāsayate 'khilam  
yac candramasi yac cāgnau  
tat tejo viddhi māmakam*

"Know that the light of the sun, moon, and fire, which illuminates this universe, is My light."

And the *śruti* says:

*bhīṣāsmād vātaḥ pavate bhīṣodeti sūryaḥ*

“The wind blows out of fear of the Lord. The sun rises out of fear of the Lord.” (*Taittirīya Upaniṣad* 2.8)

The sun is also called *caḥṣus* (eye), because it is the eye of the universal form.<sup>40</sup>

### TEXT 53

*dharmo 'tha pāpa-nicayaḥ śrutayas tapāṁsi  
brahmādi-kīṭa-patagāvadhayaś ca jīvāḥ  
yad-datta-mātra-vibhava-prakāṭa-prabhāvā  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, by whom all acts of piety and sin, the knowledge of liberation, all practices to attain liberation, as well as all living beings, including Brahmā, insects, and birds, are endowed with particular potencies to produce particular effects.**

### COMMENTARY

What then can be said of the powers existing in all other things? Their powers must all arise from Govinda. Govinda says in the *Gītā* (10.8):

*ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavo  
mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate*

“I am the source of everything. Due to Me, everything operates.”

### TEXT 54

*yas tv indragopam athavendram aho sva-karma-  
bandhānurūpa-phala-bhājanam ātanoti  
karmāṇi nirdahati kintu ca bhakti-bhājāṁ  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

## TRANSLATION

**I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda, who bestows happiness and distress on the red beetle and on Indra alike as appropriate responses to their actions, and who completely destroys all sinful and pious reactions coming to those who practice loving service to Him.**

## COMMENTARY

The Supreme Lord should be regarded like the rain, which spreads showers everywhere. Thus the Lord is unprejudiced in dispensing appropriate rewards or punishments to all living beings. But, at the same time, Govinda favors His devotees. That is explained in this verse.

*samo 'haṁ sarva-bhūteṣu  
na me dveṣyo 'sti na priyaḥ  
ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā  
mayi te teṣu cāpy aham*

“I am equal to all living beings. I do not hate anyone, nor do I favor anyone. But those who worship Me with devotion are in Me, and I am in them.”  
(*Gītā* 9.29)

*ananyāś cintayanto mām  
ye janāḥ paryupāsate  
teṣām nityābhīyuktānām  
yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*

“But I carry the burden of supply and maintenance of those who desire constant association with Me, and who, thinking only of Me, worship only Me.” (*Gītā* 9.22)

## TEXT 55

*yaṁ krodha-kāma-sahaja-praṇayādi-bhīti-  
vātsalya-moha-guru-gaurava-sevya-bhāvaiḥ  
sañcintya tasya sadṛśīm tanum āpur ete  
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi*

## TRANSLATION

**I worship Govinda, the Supreme Lord, who bestows on His devotees forms similar to His own but appropriate to the sentiments of those who meditate on Him, identifying themselves in a relationship of lover, parent, friend, servant, or son with mixtures of bewilderment, anger, fear, and other secondary emotions.**

## COMMENTARY

If Govinda gives unrivaled results even to His enemies, just imagine how much more He gives to His excellent devotees, who have no desires except those focused exclusively on Govinda! Who else, therefore, is worthy of worship? Only Govinda should be worshiped. Thus Brahmā says, *govindam adi-puruṣam tam aham bhajāmi*. With this, Brahmā completes his praises.

*Sahaja-praṇaya* (natural affection) refers to *sakhya*, “friendship.” *Vātsalya* is the parental relationship. *Moha* is an emotional state in which one forgets everything, caused when the Supreme Lord disappears from the devotee’s vision.<sup>41</sup> *Guru-gauravam* means thinking of Kṛṣṇa as one’s parent or superior identifying oneself as His son (as in the case of His children in Dvārakā).<sup>42</sup> *Sevya* refers to *dāsyā*, in which one identifies oneself as a servant of Kṛṣṇa. These devotees attain bodies similar to the Lord’s to the extent that the given form and qualities are suitable for their particular mood. (Thus devotees with parental love do not attain youthful (*kaiśora*) forms similar to Kṛṣṇa’s; rather, they receive elderly forms. Nevertheless, they have cowherd forms like Kṛṣṇa’s.) For persons absorbed in anger, only those whose anger is in the secondary spiritual *rasa* called *raudra* (and not the inimical anger of demons like Kāmsa) attain such bodies.<sup>43</sup> Vāsudeva, accepting the role of a son, says:

*adṛṣṭvānyatamaṁ loke  
śīlaudārya-guṇaiḥ samam  
ahaṁ suto vām abhavaṁ  
pṛśnigarbha iti śrutaḥ*

“Since I found no one else besides You equal to me in simplicity and other qualities of good character, I have appeared in this world as Your son Pṛśnigarbha.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.3.41)

The *Brahma-sūtra* (4.4.17), illustrating that the devotee does not attain a form exactly like the Lord's, says:

*jagad-vyāpāra-varjam*

“Except for creating universes, the devotees attain all other powers.”

Nārada says:

*prayujyamāne mayi tām  
śuddhām bhāgavatīm tanum  
ārabdha-karma-nirvāṇo  
nyapatat pāñca-bhautikaḥ*

“Having been awarded a transcendental body befitting an associate of the Personality of Godhead, I quit the body made of five material elements, and thus all acquired fruitive results of work stopped.” (*Bhāgavatam* 1.6.28)

These statements appear also to reject the idea that one attains a form completely identical with the Lord's own form.

*vaireṇa yaṁ nṛpatayaḥ śiśupāla-pauṇḍra-  
śālvādayo gati-vilāsa-vilokanādyaiḥ  
dhyāyanta ākr̥ta-dhiyaḥ śayanāsanādau  
tat-sāmyam āpur anurakta-dhiyām punaḥ kim*

“Inimical kings like Śiśupāla, Pauṇḍraka, and Śālva were always thinking about Lord Kṛṣṇa. Even while they were lying down, sitting, or engaging in other activities, they enviously meditated upon the bodily movements of the Lord, His sporting pastimes, His loving glances upon His devotees, and other attractive features displayed by the Lord. Being thus always absorbed in Kṛṣṇa, they achieved spiritual liberation in the Lord's own abode. What then can be said of the benedictions offered to those who constantly fix their minds on Lord Kṛṣṇa in a favorable, loving mood?” (*Bhāgavatam* 11.5.48)

It should be understood that those persons who spontaneously attain concentration on the Lord with a favorable mood, as mentioned in this *Bhāgavatam* verse, obtain much more than what the demons attain. It should also be understood that those who constantly fix their minds on the Lord attain various forms according to the intensity of their concentration.

This also shows the nondifference between the Lord’s form in Goloka and His form on earth (since by thinking of Kṛṣṇa in His earthly pastimes these kings attained Kṛṣṇa and not some other form in the spiritual realm). This eternal nature of Kṛṣṇa’s form is illustrated in the following verse:

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

“Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherd men felt the greatest happiness when they saw that transcendental abode. They were especially amazed to see Kṛṣṇa Himself there, surrounded by the personified *Vedas*, who were offering Him prayers.” (*Bhāgavatam* 10.28.17)

### TEXT 56

*śriyaḥ kāntāḥ kāntaḥ parama-puruṣaḥ kalpa-taravo  
drumā bhūmiś cintāmaṇi-gaṇa-mayi toyam amṛtam  
kathā gānaṁ nāṭyaṁ gamanam api vaṁśī priya-sakhi  
cid-ānandaṁ jyotiḥ param api tad āsvādyam api ca*

*sa yatra kṣīrābdhiḥ sravati surabhībhyaś ca su-mahān  
nimeṣārdhākhyo vā vrajati na hi yatrāpi samayaḥ  
bhaje śvetadvīpaṁ tam aham iha golokam iti yaṁ  
vidantas te santaḥ kṣiti-virala-cārāḥ katipaye*

### TRANSLATION

**I worship this Goloka, where there are unlimited *gopīs* with their beloved, Kṛṣṇa, the supreme form of God, where the trees and land fulfill all desires, where the water is as sweet as nectar, where the speaking is singing and the walking is dancing, where the flute is the best friend by announcing the joyful presence of Kṛṣṇa everywhere, where revealing all things the sun and moon shine with knowledge and bliss eternally in perfect form, and where all relishable things are also full of knowledge and bliss.**

**I worship Goloka, pure and uncontaminated, where extensive oceans of milk flow from the cows, where not even a moment of time passes, and which only a few rare devotees wandering on this earth have realized.<sup>44</sup>**

### COMMENTARY

Brahmā has praised the Lord with verses, showing how Govinda is most worthy of worship. Now in two verses he praises the planet belonging to that Govinda. *Śriyaḥ* can only refer to the young women of Vraja (and not Lakṣmī), since the *gopīs* are frequently mentioned in mantras and methods of meditation. Though these women are unlimited in number (*kāntāḥ*), there is only one male lover (*kāntaḥ*). This shows the superiority of Govinda over exalted Nārāyaṇa and other forms (like the “supreme person,” *parama-puruṣa*). Next, is shown the superiority of Govinda’s abode over other abodes. All of the trees are celebrated as desire trees (*kalpa-taravo drumāḥ*) because every single tree can bestow every possible desire.<sup>45</sup> The earth (*bhūmiḥ*) has a similar potency (*cintāmaṇi-gaṇa-mayī*). Of course, if the earth fulfills all desires, what can be said of things like the Kaustubha jewel (since jewels are the essence of the earth)? The water is tasty like nectar. What then can be said of the taste of the real nectar available there? Similarly, if the speaking is attractive like singing, how much more attractive will be the songs! And if the walking is graceful like dancing, how much more charming will be the dancing there! The flute is considered the dearest friend because its pervasive sound announces Kṛṣṇa’s joy to all people.

The luminaries like the sun and moon are made of knowledge and bliss (*cid-ānandam jyotiḥ*). In the description of Vṛndāvana found in the second chapter of the *Gautamīya-tantra* it is said, *samānodita-candrārkaḥ*: “The sun and moon are similar in brightness when they rise.” Thus the light there is called supreme (*param*) because the moon in Goloka is eternally a full moon. *Api* indicates that this light reveals everything. All the pleasurable (*āśvādyam*) items are also full of knowledge and bliss, since they are made of the Lord’s *cit-śakti*. The nature of the place as imbued with *cit* (transcendental knowledge) is described in the *Bhāgavatam* (10.28.14):

*iti sañcintya bhagavān  
mahā-kāruṇiko hariḥ*

*darśayām āsa lokam svam  
gopānām tamasaḥ param*

“Thus deeply considering the situation, the all-merciful Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari revealed to the cowherd men His abode, which is beyond material darkness.”

The *Hayaśrīṣa-pañcarātra* describes the nature of things in Vaikuṅṭha:

*dravya-tattvam śṛṇu brahman  
pravakṣyāmi samāsataḥ  
sarva-bhoga-pradā yatra  
pādapāḥ kalpa-pādapāḥ*

*gandha-rūpaṁ svādu-rūpaṁ  
dravyaṁ puṣpādikaṁ ca yat  
heyāmśānām abhāvāc ca  
rasa-rūpaṁ bhavec ca tat*

*tvag-bījaṁ caiva heyāmśam  
kaṭhināmśam ca yad bhavet  
sarvaṁ tad bhautikaṁ viddhi  
nahi bhūtamayaṁ hi tat*

*rasavad bhautikaṁ dravyam  
atra syād rasa-rūpakam*

“Hear about the substance of the spiritual realm. I will speak about Brahman in summary. There the trees are desire trees, yielding all enjoyment. There the flowers and other items are all filled with fragrance and taste. The place is bliss itself because there are no inferior sections. Fruits with skin, seeds, and hard parts belong to the material world. Understand that there is no material substance there. All objects are filled with bliss.”

Oceans of milk flow from the cows because the cows are absorbed in hearing the sound of Govinda’s flute. The inhabitants of Goloka do not know time at all (*samayaḥ na vrajati*, “time does not proceed for even half a second”) because they are absorbed in Govinda. Or it can be explained by

saying that “the faults of time do not exist there.” The Second Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.9.10) says:

*pravartate yatra rajas tamas tayoh  
sattvaṁ ca miśraṁ na ca kāla-vikramaḥ  
na yatra māyā kim utāpare harer  
anuvratā yatra surāsurārcitāḥ*

“In that personal abode of the Lord, the material modes of ignorance and passion do not prevail, nor is there any of their influence in goodness. There is no predominance of the influence of time, so what to speak of the illusory, external energy; it cannot enter that region. Without discrimination, as devotees both the demigods and the demons worship the Lord.”

*Śveta* means “pure” and the word *dvīpa* (island) indicates that the place has no connection to matter. Similarly, the *Gopala-tāpanī Upaniṣad* (2.27) says:

*sarasi padmaṁ tiṣṭhati tathā-bhūmyāṁ hi tiṣṭhati*

“The land stands like a lotus in a pond.”

This particular place is known to some (*katipaye*), though to very few (*kṣiti-virala-cārāḥ*), on this earth:

*yaṁ na vidmo vayaṁ sarve prcchanto 'pi pitāmaham*

“We do not know that place. Thus we inquired from Brahmā.” (*Hari-vaṁśa* 2.19.33)

### TEXT 57

*athovāca mahā-viṣṇur  
bhagavantaṁ prajāpatim  
brahman mahattva-vijñāne  
prajā-sarge ca cen matiḥ  
pañca-ślokīm imāṁ vidyāṁ  
vatsa dattāṁ nibodha me*

## TRANSLATION

**Then Mahā-*viṣṇu*<sup>46</sup> spoke to the devotee Brahmā: If you desire to create the bodies of living entities and you also desire knowledge of God, then understand this knowledge given by Me through the following five verses.**

## COMMENTARY

Having recited his prayer, Brahmā then received the mercy of the Lord. The meaning of this verse is clear.

## TEXT 58

*prabuddhe jñāna-bhaktibhyām  
ātmany ānanda-cin-mayī  
udety anuttamā bhaktir  
bhagavat-prema-lakṣaṇā*

## TRANSLATION

**When the soul is awakened by knowledge and devotion, the highest form of loving devotion [*bhakti*] will appear: devotion characterized by bliss and knowledge and endowed with transcendental love [*prema*] for the Lord.**

## COMMENTARY

As an act of mercy, Mahā-*viṣṇu* then spoke these final five verses. This combination of knowledge and devotion is mentioned in the *Bhāgavatam*'s Eleventh Canto (11.19.5):

*tasmāj jñānena sahitaṁ  
jñātvā svātmānam uddhava  
jñāna-vijñāna-sampanno  
bhaja mām bhakti-bhāvataḥ*

“Therefore, My dear Uddhava, through knowledge you should understand your actual self. Then, advancing by clear realization of Vedic knowledge,

you should worship Me in the mood of loving devotion.”

### TEXT 59

*pramāṇais tat-sad-ācārais  
tad-abhyāsair nirantaram  
bodhayan ātmanātmānam  
bhaktim apy uttamām labhet*

### TRANSLATION

**Realizing spontaneously his own nature as a soul by constant practice – by following the saintly devotees of the Lord according to the devotional scriptures – the devotee will attain pure loving devotion [*bhakti*].**

### COMMENTARY

The method of attaining *prema* by *bhakti* and *jñāna* is explained here.<sup>47</sup> Spontaneously (*ātmānā*) one will realize (*bodhayan*) one’s nature as a pure spirit soul (*ātmānam*) by constant practice of those actions typical of the devotees of the Lord (*tat-sad-ācaraiḥ*) according to the devotional scriptures (*pramāṇaiḥ*). Then, that person, taking shelter of the Lord, will attain (and practice) pure loving devotion (*uttamām bhaktim*). In this manner the *śrutis* pray:

*sva-kṛta-pureṣv amīṣv abahir-antara-saṁvarāṇam  
tava puruṣam vadanty akhila-śakti-dhṛto ’mśa-kṛtam  
iti nṛ-gatiṁ vivicya kavayo nigamāvapanam  
bhavata upāsate ’nghrim abhavam bhuvi viśvasitāḥ*

“The individual living entity, while inhabiting the material bodies he has created for himself by his past sinful and pious actions, actually remains uncovered by either gross or subtle matter. This is so because, as the *Vedas* describe, he is part and parcel of You, the possessor of all potencies. Having determined this to be the status of the living entity, learned sages become imbued with faith and worship Your lotus feet, to which all Vedic sacrifices

in this world are offered, and which are the source of liberation.”  
(*Bhāgavatam* 10.87.20)

### TEXT 60

*yasyāḥ śreyas-karaṁ nāsti  
yayā nirvṛtim āpnuyāt  
yā sādhayati mām eva  
bhaktiṁ tām eva sādhayet*

### TRANSLATION

**One should then attain that type of loving devotion to which there is nothing superior [*prema*, “transcendental love” for Kṛṣṇa], by which one attains supreme bliss, and by which one attains Me alone.**

### COMMENTARY

*Prema-bhakti* and nothing else is the goal of that pure loving devotion. In the *Bhāgavatam*’s Fourth Canto (4.24.55) it is said:

*taṁ durārādhyam ārādhya  
satām api durāpayā  
ekānta-bhaktyā ko vāñchet  
pāda-mūlaṁ vinā bahiḥ*

“My dear Lord, pure devotional service is even difficult for liberated persons to discharge, but only devotional service can satisfy You. Who will take to other processes of self-realization if he is actually serious about the perfection of life?”

### TEXT 61

*dharmān anyān parityajya  
mām ekaṁ bhaja viśvasan  
yādṛśī yādṛśī śraddhā  
siddhir bhavati tādṛśī*

*kurvan nirantaram karma  
loko 'yam anuvartate  
tenaiva karmaṇā dhyāyan  
mām parām bhaktim icchati*

### TRANSLATION

**Giving up all other practices, with faith, just worship Me alone. According to one's faith, one attains the goal. Just as the people of the world constantly act in pursuit of their goals, you should desire to attain pure loving devotion to Me while meditating on Me during the performance of service.**

### COMMENTARY

This verse explains that one should perform pure *sādhana-bhakti* (regulated devotional service) by practicing without material desires.

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

“A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of all material desire, without any material desire, or desiring liberation, must ultimately worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead by pure devotional service” (*Bhāgavatam* 2.3.10)

### TEXT 62

*aham hi viśvasya carācarasya  
bījam pradhānam prakṛtiḥ pumāṁś ca  
mayāhitam teja idam bibharsī  
vidhe vidhehi tvam atho jaganti*

### TRANSLATION

**I alone am the highest form among all moving and nonmoving entities of the universe, since I am the most complete form of God. I am both**

**unmanifest matter and He who instigates unmanifest matter. I have bestowed My powers on you. You now possess the necessary powers for creation. O Brahmā, now create the bodies for the living entities in this universe.**

### COMMENTARY

The Lord states with good reasoning that Brahmā's desire to create will be fulfilled. He says, "I am the most excellent (*pradhānam*) among all forms in the universe since I am the seed (*bījam*) of all forms of God, the complete form of *bhagavān*. I am the unmanifested state of matter (*prakṛtiḥ*) since it depends completely on Me. I am the instigator or witness of *prakṛti*, 'the material energy' (*pumān*: Mahā-*viṣṇu*, who glances on *prakṛti* and Kṣīrodaka-śāyī *Viṣṇu*, dwelling within the universe). What more can be said of My powers? You, Brahmā, also possess this power, because I have given it (*mayāhitam*) to you. O Brahmā (*vidhe*), by that power produce (*vidhehi*) the moving and nonmoving bodies of the entities in the universe (*jaganti*).

The *Brahma-saṁhitā*, which in its hundred chapters describes the Lord, was recited by Brahmā and is filled with essential deep knowledge concerning Kṛṣṇa. Though persons with various motives declare many alternative readings and meanings, I have obtained and verified the correct version.

*Here ends Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's Dig-darśanī commentary on the fifth chapter of Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā.*

# Appendixes

## Sanskrit Pronunciation Guide

The system of transliteration used in this book conforms to a system that scholars have accepted to indicate the pronunciation of each sound in the Sanskrit language.

The short vowel **a** is pronounced like the **u** in **but**, long **ā** like the **a** in **far**. Short **i** is pronounced as in **pin**, long **ī** as in **pique**, short **u** as in **pull**, and long **ū** as in **rule**. The vowel **ṛ** is pronounced like the **ri** in **rim**, **e** like the **ey** in **they**, **o** like the **o** in **go**, **ai** like the **ai** in **aisle**, and **au** like the **ow** in **how**. The *anusvāra* (**ṁ**) is pronounced like the **n** in the French word **bon**, and *visarga* (**ḥ**) is pronounced as a final **h** sound. At the end of a couplet, **aḥ** is pronounced **aha**, and **iḥ** is pronounced **ihi**.

The guttural consonants – **k, kh, g, gh,** and **ṅ** – are pronounced from the throat in much the same manner as in English. **K** is pronounced as in **kite**, **kh** as in **Eckhart**, **g** as in **give**, **gh** as in **dig hard**, and **ṅ** as in **sing**.

The palatal consonants – **c, ch, j, jh,** and **ñ** – are pronounced with the tongue touching the firm ridge behind the teeth. **C** is pronounced as in **chair**, **ch** as in **staunch-heart**, **j** as in **joy**, **jh** as in **hedgehog**, and **ñ** as in **canyon**.

The cerebral consonants – **ṭ, ṭh, ḍ, ḍh,** and **ṇ** – are pronounced with the tip of the tongue turned up and drawn back against the dome of the palate. **Ṭ** is pronounced as in **tub**, **ṭh** as in **light-heart**, **ḍ** as in **dove**, **ḍh** as in **red-hot**, and **ṇ** as in **nut**. The dental consonants – **t, th, d, dh,** and **n** – are pronounced in the same manner as the cerebrals, but with the forepart of the tongue against the teeth.

The labial consonants – **p, ph, b, bh,** and **m** – are pronounced with the lips. **P** is pronounced as in **pine**, **ph** as in **uphill**, **b** as in **bird**, **bh** as in **rub-hard**, and **m** as in **mother**.

The semivowels – **y, r, l,** and **v** – are pronounced as in **yes**, **run**, **light**, and **vine** respectively. The sibilants – **ś, ṣ,** and **s** – are pronounced,

respectively, as in the German word *sprechen* and the English words **shine** and **sun**. The letter **h** is pronounced as in **home**.

<sup>1</sup> The *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, belonging to the *Sāma Veda*, says *kṛṣṇāya vāsudevāya devakī-nandanāya*. A slightly different iteration, *kṛṣṇāya devakī-nandanāya vāsudevāya*, is found in the *Tripad-vibhūti Upaniṣad* of the *Atharva Veda*.

<sup>2</sup> *Payasā kumbham pūrayatīti nyāya.*

<sup>3</sup> The verb *kr̥ṣ* can mean “to hold power over others” or “to attract others.”

<sup>4</sup> A similar verse is found in the *Mahābhārata* (5.68.5): *kṛṣir bhūvācakaḥ śabdo ṅaś ca nirvṛtivācakaḥ/ kṛṣṇas tadbhāvayogāc ca kṛṣṇo bhavati śāśvataḥ*.

<sup>5</sup> “Eighteen-syllable mantra” refers to the “Gopāla mantra,” the sixth of seven mantras given to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas at the time of brahminical initiation.

<sup>6</sup> The *Atharva-śikha Upaniṣad* says, *sarvāni bṛṁhayati brahma*. The *Śandilya Upaniṣad* says, *yasmāc ca bṛṁhati bṛṁhayati ca sarvān tasmād ucyate param brahma*.

<sup>7</sup> The Bhaṭṭa referred to here is Kumāriḷa Bhaṭṭa, a Mīmāṃsaka.

<sup>8</sup> Self-revelation is a quality of knowledge.

<sup>9</sup> *Gopī-jana-vallabhāya-svāhā.*

<sup>10</sup> Three meanings of the mantra are given: Kṛṣṇa as impersonal Brahman, as majestic in Goloka, and as intimate in Gokula.

<sup>11</sup> *Bhāgavatam* 10.5.1



<sup>13</sup> Before reciting a mantra it is customary to utter the name of the sage who revealed the mantra (in this case Nārada), the meter (*gāyatrī*), the form of the Lord who is the subject of the mantra (Kṛṣṇa), the *bīja* of the mantra (*klīm*), the *śakti* of the mantra (*svāhā*), the *prakṛti* of the mantra (Kṛṣṇa), the *adhiṣṭhātr-devatā* (*puruṣa*, Kṛṣṇa) and the purpose of uttering the mantra. See the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* 5.146.

<sup>14</sup> The distinction between Gokula and Goloka is also made in the *Laghu-bhāgavatamṛta*. Though the form of Kṛṣṇa is the same in Goloka, there is a mixture of reverence in the relationships. Viśvanātha Cakravartī explains in his commentary on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.303 that those who worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with *vaidhi-bhakti* attain Goloka, whereas those who worship Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa with *rāgānuga-bhakti* attain Gokula.

<sup>15</sup> Here the word *deva-līlā* is used. This refers to the eternal pastimes that take place in the spiritual realm. The pastimes of Śvetadvīpa, or Goloka, are *aparakāṣa* and do not appear on earth. Kṛṣṇa's *nara-līlā* appears on earth in Vṛndāvana and in the spiritual world in Gokula within Goloka.

<sup>16</sup> The *puruṣārthas* generally referred to in the *Vedas* are *dharma*, *artha*, *kāma*, and *mokṣa*. However, in the *pītha-pūja* mentioned in the commentary to the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (6.18) and other texts, *dharma*, *jñāna*, *vairāgya*, and *aiśvarya* are worshiped. Perhaps the *Brahma-saṁhitā* is referring to these items. In any case, how would these things exist in the spiritual world? The personalities who, in the spiritual world, bestow semblances to these things for the purpose of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes reside in that transcendental realm.

<sup>17</sup> The *śaktis* are mentioned in the commentary to the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa* (6.19) in relation to *pīṭha-pūja*: Vimalā, Utkarṣiṇī, Jñānā, Kriyā, Yogā, Prahvī, Satyā, Īśānā, and Anugrahā.

<sup>18</sup> The *Brahma-saṁhitā* verse mentions that in Śvetadvīpa the four *Vedas* are present. Thus the *Bhāgavatam* verse indicates Goloka rather than Gokula.

<sup>19</sup> In the material world there is another planet called Goloka filled with *surabhi* cows.

<sup>20</sup> This refers to the process of gradual liberation achieved by practitioners of *yoga-miśra-bhakti*. They go to Dhruvaloka and Brahmaloaka and then get liberated.

<sup>21</sup> It is called *nidrā*, or “sleep,” because He is indifferent to the material world, and it is called *yoga* because He is blissfully absorbed in His spiritual pastimes.

<sup>22</sup> Nāra means “the offspring of Nara.”

<sup>23</sup> The golden eggs are the shells that surround the universes and are composed of the elements in an uncombined state. *Mahat-tattva* alone does not form the eggs. The elements arise in the following manner: *Mahat-tattva* manifests *ahankāra* in *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. The *sattva* portion gives rise to the mind and intelligence. The *rajas* portion gives rise to the senses. The *tamas* portion gives rise to the sense objects and the five gross elements. The elements in an uncombined state form coverings of the universe. By the will of Viṣṇu, the five gross elements then combine with each other within the universe and become functional for making the planets and celestial bodies there. This is described in the *Brahma-samhitā*, verse 19.

<sup>24</sup> This refers to the state in which the elements remain separate. Only after each element combines in the proportion of half of the main element with one-eighth of each of the other four does that element become functional for making the planets and celestial bodies within the universe.

<sup>25</sup> Viśvanātha mentions in his commentary that there are seven coverings. These are mentioned elsewhere as *mahat-tattva*, *ahañkāra*, ether, air, fire, water, and earth. This is in agreement with *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (3.29.43). But in the verse recited by Brahmā (*Bhāgavatam* 10.14.11), eight elements are mentioned. *Prakṛti* is the eighth covering. An eighth covering is also mentioned in Viśvanātha's commentary to *Bhāgavatam* 10.89.51, in which the *cakra* pierces the covers of the universe for Arjuna. This is also described in addition to the seven layers as being outside the universe (*Bhāgavatam* 3.26.52). The *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* (2.23.15–18) also describes eight coverings. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* only the five gross elements are mentioned. Perhaps this is simply indicatory, standing for the *ahañkāra* and *mahat-tattva* as well.

<sup>26</sup> This refer not to the Gāyatrī mantra but to the Kṛṣṇa mantra. In the verse itself, the word *sarasvatī* can refer to the goddess of learning or the wife of Lord Viṣṇu or simply a divine voice.

<sup>27</sup> The “sixteenth and twenty-first consonants” respectively refer to the syllables *ta* and *pa* in the Sanskrit alphabet.

<sup>28</sup> This is the Kāma-gāyatrī since the commentary says that this Gāyatrī's deity was Kṛṣṇa, whom Brahmā had worshiped.

<sup>29</sup> In this verse there is no trace of Kṛṣṇa in His role as God. This differentiates Gokula from Goloka. This distinction is also made in the *Kṛṣṇa-sandarbha* and the *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta*. The verse also describes a variety of pastimes, not a single pastime, in various places. This is called *svārasikī-līlā*.

<sup>30</sup> The unmanifest pastimes of Kṛṣṇa can be realized in two ways. By meditating on certain mantras, such as the present verse or the Bṛhad-dhyāna mantra mentioned in the *Krama-dīpikā*, one can attain realization of one particular pastime as it occurs in one particular place. This is referred to as *mantropāsana-dhyāna-mayī*. Realization of a variety of pastimes that occur in various places is called *svārasikī-līlā*.

<sup>31</sup> *Candraka* can also refer to the eye of a peacock feather. Given that interpretation, Govinda would have a shining garland and a swinging peacock feather. *Candraka* can also refer to a type of jasmine. That interpretation would mean Govinda has a shining garland of jasmine that sways in the breeze.

<sup>32</sup> *Svārasikī* and *mantropāsana-dhyāna-mayī* pastimes are mentioned in the previous three verses.

<sup>33</sup> Following that it is said: “All the demigods from the upper, lower, and middle universal planetary systems assembled at the altar of the Rājasūya sacrifice performed by Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira. After seeing the beautiful bodily features of Lord Kṛṣṇa, they all contemplated that He was the ultimate dexterous creation of Brahmā, the creator of the human beings.” (*Bhāgavatam* 3.2.13)

<sup>34</sup> This is equated with *sandhinī-śakti*: *sandhinīra sāra aṁśa* – ‘*śuddha-sattva*’ *nāma*. (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 4.64)

<sup>35</sup> The *cit-śakti* is a combination of *sandhinī*, *saṁvit*, and *hlādinī* and manifests as the form of Bhagavān.

<sup>36</sup> Jīva Gosvāmī says here that *kanyā* does not mean the girls were at that time unmarried.

<sup>37</sup> In Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura's commentary on chapter 88 of the *Bhāgavatam's* Tenth Canto, it is explained that Rudra has one abode in the layer of *ahaṅkāra*, Mahā-viṣṇu has His abode in the *mahat-tattva* as well as in the Kāraṇa Ocean, and Durgā has her abode in the layer of *prakṛti*. However, *Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta* (1.3.95) says Śivaloka is beyond the coverings of the universe.

<sup>38</sup> Though Śiva associates with *tamas* (ignorance), he is not contaminated. This is made clear in the *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* (1.2.28): Śiva is without a touch of the material *guṇas* (modes) since he is the Lord; however, the ignorant perceive him, among the *guṇāvatāras*, to be contaminated by *tamo-guṇa* (the mode of ignorance).

<sup>39</sup> Among the nine planetary deities, the sun is the chief.

<sup>40</sup> The sun is the eye of the universal form, and as the deity of that eye it empowers the eyes of all beings in the universe with sight.

<sup>41</sup> The *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (2.4.92) defines *moha*, a *vyabhicāri-bhāva* (a symptom of “aggressive ecstasy”), as follows: “A blank or confused state of mind (an internal inertia) arising from joy, separation, fear, or lamentation is called *moha*. In that state there is falling on the ground, absence of sense perceptions, wandering around, and inactivity.” This emotional state, as well as thirty-two others, operates only in conjunction with the principal *sthāyi-bhāvas* (permanent or continuous ecstasies) of *śānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vatsala*, and *madhura*.

<sup>42</sup> This type of *dāsyā* is called *gaurava-prīti*. It is described in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* (3.2.144).

<sup>43</sup> *Krodha* refers to *raudra-rasa*, and *bhīti* to *bhayanaka-rasa*. These secondary *rasas* support the primary *rasas* in the category of affection; thus they do not exist without that primary *rasa*, which is favorable to Kṛṣṇa. They appear only in devotees. The enemies of Kṛṣṇa exhibit anger toward Kṛṣṇa and fear of Kṛṣṇa, but Rūpa Gosvāmī does not accept these as true *rasas* since they do not have a primary *rasa* in connection with Kṛṣṇa.

<sup>44</sup> This verse indicates *svārasikī* pastimes, as described in the commentary to verse 30. However, according to *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta*, the place it describes is Goloka (or Śvetadvīpa), not Gokula. Thus the inhabitants are aware of Govinda as the Supreme Lord, or *parama-puruṣa*, “supreme person.”

<sup>45</sup> Of course, every inhabitant of the spiritual world desires only to please the Lord.

<sup>46</sup> Some translators take Mahā-viṣṇu to be Kṛṣṇa speaking in this verse. Jīva Gosvāmī does not comment on this. Judging by the context, since Brahmā heard the Kṛṣṇa mantra and meditated on Kṛṣṇa, it would seem the speaker is Kṛṣṇa. Of course Garbodaka-śāyī Viṣṇu instructed Brahmā to meditate, so He could also be the speaker at this point. Nonetheless, if Mahā-viṣṇu is the speaker of this verse, then He is speaking on behalf of Kṛṣṇa, for in the commentary to the last verse (62) of the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, Jīva Gosvāmī refers to Kṛṣṇa as *purṇa-bhagavat-rūpam*, the “complete form of Bhagavān.” This expression is not used in relation to Mahā-viṣṇu.

<sup>47</sup> This seems to recommend the gradual process of development mentioned in the *Gītā*: *niškāma-karma-yoga* followed by *jñāna-yoga*, *aṣṭāṅga-yoga*, and finally *bhakti-yoga*.