



BHĀGAVATA PRADĪPIKĀ

Bask in the Illumination of the Bhāgavatam

September 2022 | Issue 63

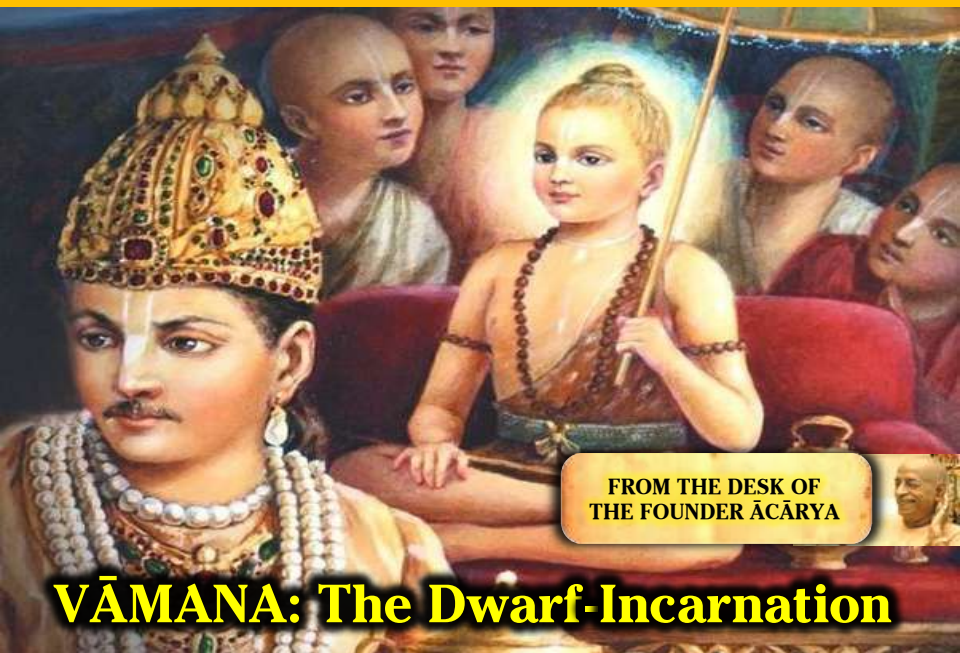
A Monthly E-Magazine from the Bhaktivedanta Vidyapitha with Illuminating Perspectives on the Srimad-Bhagavatam

The Bhāgavata purāṇa

Dedicated to His Divine
Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta
Swāmi Prabhupāda
Founder-Ācārya of the
International Society for
Kṛṣṇa Consciousness

Bhadra
Purnima &
Rādhāṣṭamī
Special

Inside: The Dwarf Incarnation | Thematic Study: Radharani |
Bhāgavata darśana: Submissiveness | Analogy Arena | Verse of the Month



FROM THE DESK OF
THE FOUNDER ĀCĀRYA

VĀMANA: The Dwarf-Incarnation

Incarnation of Lord Vāmana

In the fifteenth incarnation, the Lord assumed the form of a dwarf-brāhmaṇa [Vāmana] and visited the arena of sacrifice arranged by Mahārāja Bali. Although at heart He was willing to regain the kingdom of the three planetary systems, He simply asked for a donation of three steps of land. SB 1.3.19

What exactly does the Lord take away?

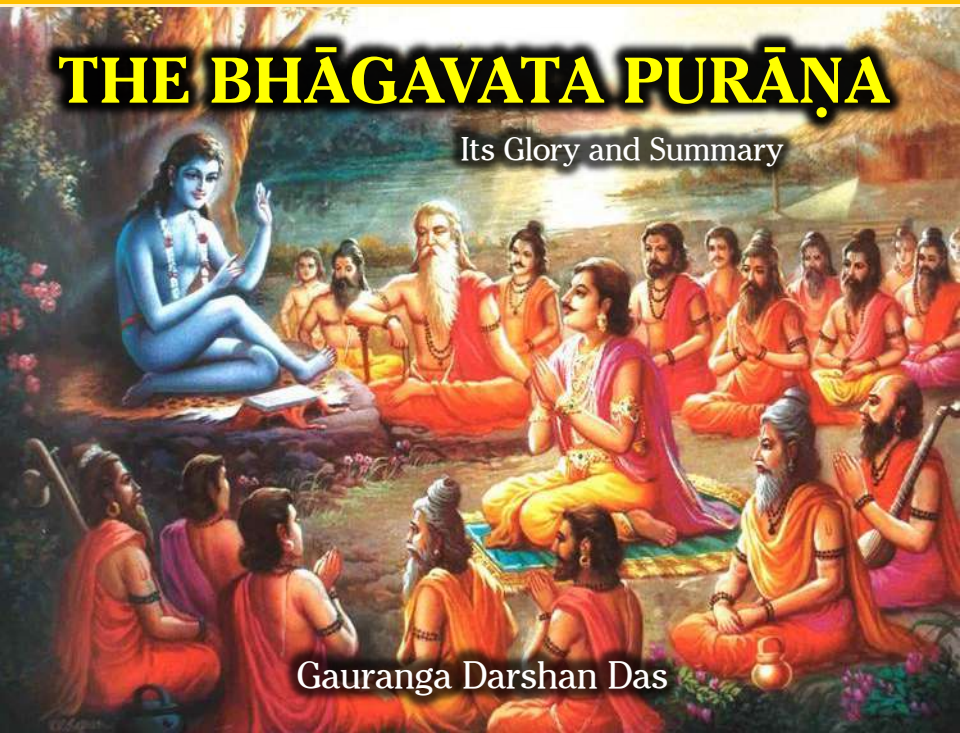
The Lord takes away all one's material possessions and also one's mind. If one delivers his mind to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa (sa vai manaḥ kṛṣṇa-padāravindayoḥ [SB 9.4.18]), one can naturally sacrifice everything to satisfy Him. Although Bali Mahārāja was a devotee, he was attached to material possessions, and therefore the Lord, being very kind to him, showed him special favor by appearing as Lord Vāmana to take away all his material possessions, and his mind as well. SB 8.19.32 P

Similarity between Kṛṣṇa and Vāmana Lilas

Vāmanadeva first expanded Himself to the universal form and then reduced Himself to the original Vāmana-rūpa. Thus He acted exactly like Lord Kṛṣṇa, who, at the request of Arjuna, first showed His universal form and later resumed His original form as Kṛṣṇa. The Lord can assume any form He likes, but His original form is that of Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam [SB 1.3.28]). According to the capacity of the devotee, the Lord assumes various forms so that the devotee can handle Him. This is His causeless mercy. When Lord Vāmanadeva resumed His original form, Lord Brahmā and his associates collected various paraphernalia for worship with which to please Him. SB 8.21.5

THE BHĀGAVATA PURĀṆA

Its Glory and Summary



Gauranga Darshan Das

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is the literary incarnation of Kṛṣṇa. After Kṛṣṇa left this world, He descended in the form of this book to give light in the darkness of this age of Kali. The *Bhāgavatam* is the masterpiece literature that gave complete satisfaction to the heart of its author, who wasn't satisfied with his earlier works. The *Bhāgavatam* is considered the crown jewel of all scriptures, and the ripened fruit of the desire tree of all scriptures (SB 1.1.3).

Śrīmad Bhāgavatam is a voluminous *mahā-purāṇa* consisting of 18,000 *ślokas* divided into 335 chapters and 12 cantos, that describe 10 topics namely – *sarga* (primary creation of the universe by the Lord), *visarga* (secondary creation by Brahmā and his sons), *sthānam* (universal cosmology), *poṣaṇam* (protection by the Lord), *ūti* (inclination to act), *manvantara* (reign of Manus, the fathers of mankind), *iśānukatha* (the stories of the Lord and His devotees), *nirodha* (destruction of the universe), *mukti* (liberation) and *āśraya* (the supreme shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa) – that present essential guidelines for the spiritual wellbeing of humanity.

Despite having written rich literatures such as the Vedas, the Purāṇas and so on, Vyāsa felt an incompleteness at heart. It was then that his *guru* Nārada Muni came to him and suggested that he write *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in a way that *bhakti-yoga* is repeatedly emphasized and Lord Kṛṣṇa's qualities and activities are vividly described.



In the literatures that Vyāsa had written before, there was an overemphasis on the four *puruṣārthas* (goals of life) namely *dharma* (religious rituals), *artha* (money), *kāma* (desire for enjoyment) and *mokṣa* (liberation). Usually, people perform *dharma* to get *artha* and fulfill their *kāma*. And when they are frustrated in *kāma*, they think of *mokṣa* or getting rid of material life. But there is something more valuable and beyond these four – *pañcama-puruṣārtha*, the fifth goal of life which is *prema* or love of God, which can be developed only by selfless performance of *bhakti*. It is *bhakti* alone that gives a pure spirit soul unending spiritual joy in loving God. The *Bhāgavatam*'s emphasis on reaching *prema* through *bhakti-yoga*.

After writing the *Bhāgavatam*, Vyāsadeva taught it to his son Śukadeva Gosvāmī, who later narrated it to King Parīkṣit in seven days. By sincerely hearing, studying, and speaking the *Bhāgavatam* one develops pure love for Lord Kṛṣṇa, who becomes captivated in the heart of such a devotee.

Śrīla Prabhupāda, has established the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness, based on the teachings of the *Gīta* and the *Bhāgavatam*. Although he had established over hundred temples across the globe, and toured the world over fourteen times in his stupendous efforts to spread *bhakti-yoga*, despite so much of management and outreach, so many disciples and travelling, he gave special importance to translating *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* into English and explaining it as per the needs of the modern world in his purports. While everyone was sleeping in the silence of the night, he would be awake, working on the book *Bhāgavatam*. Here is a brief outline of the entire *Bhāgavatam*.

The First Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describes the supremacy of *bhakti* and categorically presents that Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, through the conversation between Suta Gosvāmī and the Naimiṣāraṇya sages. Sūta Gosvāmī describes the birth and activities of Parikshit Maharaj who chastised even Kali personified. When Parikshit was cursed by Sringī to die in seven days, he heard the *Bhagavatam* from Śukadeva Gosvāmī. This canto vividly describes the exclusive dependence of the devotee on Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's nature as *bhakta-vatsala*.



In the Second Canto, Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes the supremacy of *bhakti yoga*, while presenting various other process on the Vedic landscape, like *devatā* worship, meditation on *virāt rūpa* and *paramātma* as a part of Aṣṭāṅga yoga. He also describes the *catuh-sloki bhāgavatam* and defines the ten topics of *Bhāgavatam*. This canto establishes the supremacy of devotional service unto Kṛṣṇa as the topmost spiritual path for the entire humanity.

In the Third and Fourth Cantos, Śukadeva describes the creation of the universe done by the Lord, and the sub-creation done by Brahmā and his sons, Varāhadeva's pastimes, teachings of Lord Kapila and the episodes of Dakṣa, Dhruva, Anga, Vena, Pṛthu, Prācinabarhi and the Pracetās – all as a part of the conversation between Maitreya and Vidura. The Third Canto elaborately describes how the Supreme Lord is the source and sustenance of the entire cosmos. Through the various prayers of pure devotees, the Fourth Canto establishes the superiority of *bhakti* over *karma* and *jñana*, and specifically the glory of the process of *sravaṇam*.

In the Fifth Canto Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes the dynasty of King Priyavrata and the geography of the universe – the positioning of its various planetary systems. The majesty and grandeur of the Lord's creation is unfathomable for an ordinary human. It's recommended that one faithfully adhere to scriptural teachings and pursue the spiritual path.

The Sixth Canto describes how the Supreme Lord protects His devotees (*poṣaṇam*) through the wonderful examples of Ajāmila, Indra, Citraketu and Vṛtrasura. Even if sometimes the devotees transgress the codes of *dharma* circumstantially, the Lord compassionately forgives and purifies them.

The Seventh Canto describes the pastimes of Lord Nṛsimha and His unalloyed devotee Prahlāda. This canto also describes various features of *varṇāśrama dharma*. While pure devotees like Prahlāda have full faith about the all-pervading nature of the Supreme Lord, atheists like Hiraṇyakaśipu arrogantly disbelieve even in the existence of God.



The **Eighth Canto's** main topic is *manvantara* or the reigns of the fourteen *manus* in the current day of Brahmā. As a part of this description, we hear the episodes of Gajendra, Samudra Manthan, King Bali's deliverance by Lord Vāmana and the pastimes of Matsya avatāra. In all the episodes of this canto, the Lord's protection aspect is vividly described.

The **Ninth canto** describes the dynasties of the sun and the moon. Some prominent kings of the sun dynasty were Sudyumna, Ambarīṣa, Sagara, Ikṣvāku and Lord Rāmacandra. And the moon dynasty has kings like Purūrava, Yayāti, Yadu etc., and Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared in this great dynasty. However glorious a dynasty may be, none of its members can forever enjoy its opulence. Only the devotional service one has rendered to the Lord with a sincere heart remains with the self as a permanent asset.

The **Tenth and Eleventh cantos** elaborately describe the appearance of Lord Kṛṣṇa, His pastimes in Vrindavan, Mathura, Dwaraka and Hastinapur, and also His teachings to Uddhava and His enigmatic disappearance. The nectar of tenth canto, especially the Vrindavan pastimes, constitute the most precious gift for the devotees to absorb themselves in love of Kṛṣṇa. The *Mauṣala līla* and the *Uddhava Gīta* teach us the temporary nature of this world.

In the **Twelfth Canto**, Śukadeva Gosvāmī describes the four types of *pralaya* or annihilation, and then King Parīkṣit attains liberation. In front of the great destructions or changes that happen at the end of a day and the life of Brahmā, the small losses we experience in the material world including death, are actually insignificant.

Śrīla Vṛndāvana Dāsa Ṭhākūra writes in the *Caitanya Bhāgavata* that no inauspiciousness can enter a house that has *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. On the full moon day of Bhādra month, if one places *Bhāgavatam* on a golden throne and gives it as a gift, one surely attains the supreme destination.

THEMATIC STUDY

RADHARANI



She Even Enchants Kṛṣṇa

It is also described that the Lord sometimes becomes mad after the beauty of Rādhārāṇī. Poets describe that under those circumstances, although Lord Kṛṣṇa is Madana-mohana, He becomes Madana-dāha, or enchanted by the beauty of Rādhārāṇī. Actually the Lord's beauty is superexcellent, surpassing even the beauty of Lakṣmī in Vaikuṅṭha. The devotees of the Lord in the Vaikuṅṭha planets want to see the Lord as the most beautiful, but the devotees in Gokula or Kṛṣṇaloka want to see Rādhārāṇī as more beautiful than Kṛṣṇa. SB 3.15.42

Who is Radharani?

This material attraction certainly cannot attract the Supreme Lord. When He wants to be attracted by a woman, He has to create such a woman from His own energy. That woman is Rādhārāṇī. It is explained by the Gosvāmīs that Rādhārāṇī is the manifestation of the pleasure potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. When the Supreme Lord wants to derive transcendental pleasure, He has to create a woman from His internal potency. SB 3.31.38

rādhā kṛṣṇa-praṇaya-vikṛtīr hlādinī śaktīr asmāt. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa are the same. Kṛṣṇa, by expanding His pleasure potency, becomes Rādhārāṇī. SB 10.13.20

Praying for Radharani's MERCY

In Vṛndāvana all the pure devotees pray for the mercy of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, the pleasure potency of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is a tenderhearted feminine counterpart of the supreme whole, resembling the perfectional stage of the worldly feminine nature. Therefore, the mercy of Rādhārāṇī is available very readily to the sincere devotees, and once She recommends such a devotee to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Lord at once accepts the devotee's admittance into His association. SB 2.3.23

VERSE OF THE MONTH



Glories of Srimad Bhagavatam

SB 12.13.18

*śrīmad-bhāgavatam purāṇam amalam yad vaiṣṇavānāṁ priyam
yasmin pāramahāṁsyam ekam amalam jñānam param gīyate
tatra jñāna-virāga-bhakti-sahitam naiṣkarmyam āviṣkṛtam
tac chr̥ṇvan su-paṭhan vicāraṇa-paro bhaktyā vimucyen naraḥ*

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is the spotless Purāṇa. It is most dear to the Vaiṣṇavas because it describes the pure and supreme knowledge of the paramahāṁsas. This Bhāgavatam reveals the means for becoming free from all material work, together with the processes of transcendental knowledge, renunciation and devotion. Anyone who seriously tries to understand Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, who properly hears and chants it with devotion, becomes completely liberated.

ANALOGY ARENA



If one puts letters in postboxes authorized by the general post office, the function of carrying letters is performed without a doubt. Similarly, the arcā-mūrti can also deliver the same unlimited potency of the Lord as when He is personally present. SB 3.1.18



As a creeper takes shelter of another, stronger tree, similarly the creeper of devotional service, nourished by the devotee, takes shelter of the lotus feet of the Lord and thus becomes fixed. SB 3.2.6



In grammar, when an adjective is taken away from the subject, the subject it modifies does not change. Similarly, when the Lord quits His virāt-rūpa, His eternal form does not change, although there is no material difference between Himself and any one of His innumerable forms. SB 3.4.29

Mission of Submission

The mission of submission is to attain mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Grace is not an object that can be purchased, bribed, or looted. Grace is that divine shower of love that is bestowed on a sincere practitioner who is willing to follow his or her spiritual preceptors.

Why is submission necessary?

- **NO GRACE:** Without following the orders of the guru parampara, one cannot attain grace.
- **NO KNOWLEDGE:** When the student is submissive and is always ready to render service, the reciprocation of knowledge and inquiries becomes perfect. (BG 4.34)
- **NO UNDERSTANDING:** Unless one reads the Bhagavad-gītā in a submissive spirit, it is very difficult to understand Bhagavad-gītā, because it is a great mystery. (BG Intro)



BHĀGAVATA DARŚANA

Jewels of Vaiṣṇava Character

JEWEL FOURTEEN SUBMISSIVENESS

Submission in Hearing

Pariksit Maharaja submissively heard the message of Srimad Bhagavatam for seven continuous days which made him qualified to enter Kṛṣṇa's abode.

Submission although having all Qualifications

Vyasadeva, the literary incarnation of the Supreme Lord, was feeling discontent after writing all literatures for the benefit of the entire mankind. He didn't let his ego come forward in seeking humble guidance from his spiritual master, Narada Muni. He was ready to be chastised and rectified himself based on his guru's instructions

Submission in Giving up one's preconceived Notions

Dhruva Maharaja was determined to kill the race of Yaksas to avenge his brother's death; but when Manu came and explained his folly, Dhruva immediately retreated.

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Nectar Verses

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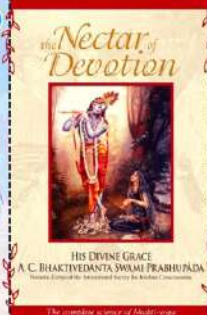
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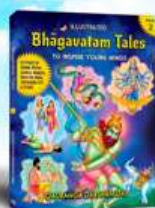


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NOMENCLATURE

SB: Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam

CC: Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta

BG: Bhagavad-gītā

BS: Brahma-saṁhitā

1.1.1: Canto 1, Chapter 1,
Verse 1

1.1.1 P: From Śrīla
Prabhupāda's purport to
SB 1.1.1

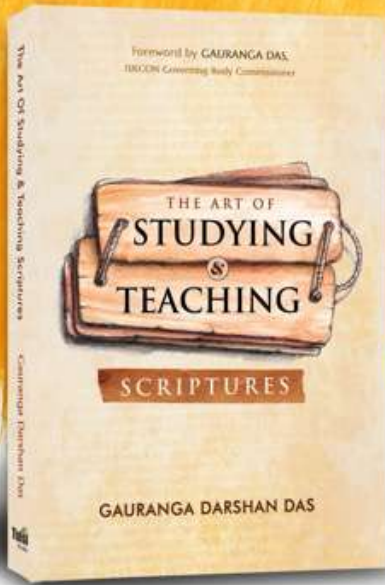
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Bhaktivedānta Vidyāpīṭha, ISKCON
Govardhan Eco Village (GEV),
Galtare, Hamrapur (P.O), Wada
(Taluka), Palghar (District),
Maharashtra, India, 421303.

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