

श्रीलघुभागवतामृतम्  
Śrī Laghubhāgavatāmṛtam

श्रीरूपगोवामिना विरचितम्  
by

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmin

Edited, translated, and annotated

by

Neal Delmonico

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## Chapter 1

# भगवत् - तत्त्व - निरूपणम्

ओं नमः श्रीकृष्णाय

नमस्तस्मै भगवते कृष्णायकुण्डमेधसे ।  
 यो धत्ते सर्वभूतानामभवायोशतीः कलाः ॥ १ ॥  
 कृष्णावर्णा त्विषाकृष्णां साङ्गोपाङ्गास्त्रपार्षदम् ।  
 यज्ञैः सङ्कीर्तनप्रायैर्यजन्ति हि सुमेधसः ॥ २ ॥  
 मुखारविन्दनिस्यन्दमकरन्दभरतुन्दिला ।  
 ममानन्दं मुकुन्दस्य सन्दुग्धां वेणुकाकली ॥ ३ ॥  
 श्रीचैतन्यमुखोद्गीर्णा हरे कृष्णोति वर्णिकाः ।  
 मज्जन्तो जगत् प्रेम्नि विजयन्तां तदाह्वयाः ॥ ४ ॥  
 श्रीमत्प्रभुपदाम्भोजैः श्रीमद्भागवतामृतम् ।  
 यद्गतानि तदेवेदं संक्षेपेण निषेव्यते ॥ ५ ॥  
 इदं श्रीकृष्णतद्भक्तसम्बन्धादमृतं द्विधा ।  
 आदौ कृष्णामृतं तत्र सुहृद्भ्यः परिवेष्यते ॥ ६ ॥  
 निर्बन्धं युक्तिविस्तारे मयात्र परिमुञ्चता ।  
 प्रधानत्वात्प्रमाणेषु शब्द एव प्रमाण्यते ॥ ७ ॥  
 यतस्तैः शास्त्रयोशित्वादिति न्यायप्रदर्शनात् ।  
 शब्दस्यैव प्रमाणत्वं स्वीकृतं परमर्षिभिः ॥ ८ ॥  
 किञ्च तर्काप्रतिष्ठानादिति न्यायविधानतः ।  
 अमीभिरेव सुव्यक्तं तर्कस्यानादरः कृतः ॥ ९ ॥

*Om! Obeisance to Śrī Kṛṣṇa!*

Obeisance to that supreme person Kṛṣṇa of sharp intelligence, who assumes beautiful forms for the release of all living beings.<sup>1</sup> (1)

[In the Age of Kali] intelligent people worship him, on whose lips are the syllables *kṛṣ-ṇa* and whose complexion is not dark, along with his limbs, sublimbs, and companions, by means of sacrifices that are mainly congregational glorification.<sup>2</sup> (2)

May the low, sweet sounds of Mukunda's flute, enlivened by abundant nectar flowing from his lotus-lips, milk [increase] my bliss. (3)

May the syllables "hare kṛṣṇa," bursting from the lips of Śrī Caitanya, his own names, submerging the universe in divine love, be victorious! (4)

The ambrosia of the *bhāgavata* that was extensively manifested [lit., spread out, as one might a feast] by the lotus-like feet of my master [Sanātana] is here sipped [or tasted] only briefly.<sup>3</sup> (5)

This ambrosia is of two types because of connection with Śrī Kṛṣṇa and connection with his *bhaktas*. I will first serve to our friends the ambrosia of Kṛṣṇa.<sup>4</sup> (6)

I have given up any insistence on using argumentation in this work. Because it is predominant among the sources of knowledge, verbal testimony [*śabda*] alone is made the source of knowledge here. Since it is shown in the reasoning text [the *Brahma-sūtras*] that "scripture is the source [lit. womb (of knowledge)], verbal testimony alone is accepted as evidence by the greatest seer [Vyāsa]. (7-8)

Moreover, because of the position taken in the reasoning text [again *Brahma-sūtras*]: "because of the instability of argument," clearly he does not respect argumentation.<sup>5</sup> (9)

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<sup>1</sup>Bhāg. 10.87.46.

<sup>2</sup>Bhāg. 11.5.32.

<sup>3</sup>[The word *bhāgavata* in *bhāgavatāmṛta* does not refer solely to the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa* as it may at first seem. It means all things relating to the Lord Bhagavān. That is, *bhaktas* and their various levels of attainment, practices, stories, names, forms, and so forth. Sanātana has drawn on a vast body of literature in formulating his text, other Purāṇas, Upaniṣads, Itihāsas, and other various stray texts on *bhakti*. His work is really a thesis in the form of story incorporating everything available to him in his day. There is of course much that wasn't available. Still, it is an extraordinary work and Rūpa felt it needed to be briefly summarized. That is the genesis of his *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta*.

<sup>4</sup>[The first part of Rūpa's work is called the "Ambrosia of Kṛṣṇa" and relates to Kṛṣṇa himself and his various names, forms, qualities, and sports. The second part is the "Ambrosia of Kṛṣṇa's Bhaktas" and organizes the *bhaktas* into the familiar hierarchy of blessedness. Rūpa maintains here the metaphor of serving a feast that he began in the last verse.

<sup>5</sup>Some problematic verses for me. I don't find the making of *śabda* the main form of evidence

अथोपास्येषु मुख्यत्वं वक्तुमुत्कर्षभूमतः ।  
कृष्णस्य तत्स्वरूपाणि निरूप्यन्ते क्रमादिह ॥१०॥

स्वयं रूपस्तदेकात्मरूप आवेशनामकः ।  
इत्यसौ त्रिविधं भाति प्रपञ्चातीतधामसु ॥ ११ ॥

तत्र स्वयरूपः

अनन्यापेक्षि यद्रूपं स्वयरूपः स उच्यते ॥ १२ ॥

ईश्वरः परमः कृष्णः सच्चिदानन्दविग्रहः ।  
अनादिरादिर्गोविन्दः सर्वकारणकारणम् ॥ १३ ॥

अत्र तदेकात्मरूपः

यद्रूपं तदभेदेन स्वरूपेण विराजते ।  
आकृत्यादिभिरन्यादृक् स तदेकात्मरूपकः ।  
स विलासः स्वांश इति धत्ते भेदद्वयं पुनः ॥ १४ ॥

तत्र विलासः

स्वरूपमन्याकारं यत्तस्य भाति विलासतः ।  
प्रायेणात्मसमं शक्त्या स विलासो निगद्यते ॥ १५ ॥

परमव्योमनाथस्तु गोविन्दस्य यथा स्मृतः ।  
परमव्योमनाथस्य वासुदेवश्च यादृशः ॥ १६ ॥

स्वांशः

तादृशो न्यूनशक्तिं यो व्यनक्ति स्वांश ईरितः ।  
सङ्कर्षणादिर्मत्स्यादिर्यथा तत्तत्स्वधामसु ॥ १७ ॥

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well considered. For one thing verbal testimony is thoroughly dependent on sense perception. On has no access to it except through sense perception. For another, the step from words to meaning is regarded by many thinkers as one involving inference.



Now, to convey the primacy of Kṛṣṇa among the objects of worship from the point of view of excellence, his own forms are described here in order. (10)

He appears in three ways in the abodes beyond the material manifestation: in his own form, in a form that is essentially the same as that, and in a possession form. (11)

Among those, his own form:

The form that is not dependent on any other is called his “own form.” (12)

The supreme controller is Kṛṣṇa whose form is being, consciousness and bliss. He is without a beginning, the beginning [of all else], Govinda, the cause of all causes.<sup>6</sup> (13)

In this, his “essentially the same” form:

The form that exists in its very nature as non-different from that [the own form (*svayamrūpa*) of Kṛṣṇa], though in figure and so forth it appears different, is the essentially the same as that” (*tadekātman*) form. It again has two varieties: the *vilāsa* (sportive) and *svāṁśa* (own part). (14)

Among them the *Vilāsa* form:

Because of sport when his essential nature is differently configured though in power nearly the equal [with him], it is called a *vilāsa* form, such is the Lord of the Paramavyoma<sup>7</sup> (Nārāyaṇa) for Govinda and Vāsudeva for the Lord of the Paramavyoma.<sup>8</sup> (15-16)

Own part:

One who manifests less power than that is called *svāṁśa*, as with Saṅkarṣaṇa and so forth and Matsya and so forth in their respective abodes.<sup>9</sup> (17)

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<sup>6</sup>*Brahma-saṁhitā*, 5.1. It is interesting that Rūpa does not appeal to the *Bhāgavata* here, but to the *Brahma-saṁhitā*, a tantric text. I think that the grammatical structure of the *Bhāgavata* 1.3.27 makes it clear that Kṛṣṇa is Bhagavān, but that does not exclude Viṣṇu from also being Bhagavān in the same way and same sense.

<sup>7</sup>Highest Heaven.

<sup>8</sup>Here there is no fragmentation of the essential form of Kṛṣṇa. It just has a different figure or shape and is nearly equal in power. In other words, it is not partial in any way except that not all of the power is present. This would agree with Rāpa’s statement recognizing Kṛṣṇa and Viṣṇu as not different, but only distinguishable in terms of *rasa*, which is to say that not all of the qualities of Kṛṣṇa are visible in Viṣṇu. Those qualities are there because of Kṛṣṇa’s *śakti*.

<sup>9</sup>It looks like the main operand here is the degree of manifestation of power. The *vilāsa* forms manifests almost as much power as Govinda while the *svāṁśa* forms significantly less power. That is the sense in which they are part of himself (*sva-aṁśa*).

तत्र आवेशः

ज्ञानशक्त्यादिकलया यत्राविष्टो जनार्दनः ।

त आवेशा निगद्यन्ते जीवा एव महत्तमाः ॥ १८ ॥

वैकुण्ठेऽपि यथा शेषो नारदः सनकादयः ।

अक्रूरदृष्टान्ते चामी दशमे परिकीर्तिताः ॥ १९ ॥

प्रकाशस्तु न भेदेषु गणयते स हि नो पृथक् ॥ २० ॥

तथा हि—

अनेकत्र प्रकटता रूपस्यैकस्य यैकदा ।

सर्वथा तत्स्वरूपैव स प्रकाश इतीर्यते ॥ २१ ॥

द्वारवत्यां यथा कृष्णः प्रत्यक्षं प्रतिमन्दिरं ।

चित्रं वतैतत् इत्यादिप्रमाणेन स सेत्स्यति ॥ २२ ॥

क्वचिच्चतुर्भुजत्वेऽपि न त्यजेत्कृष्णरूपताम् ।

अतः प्रकाश एव स्यात्तस्यादौ द्विभूजस्य च ॥ २३ ॥

प्रपञ्चातीतधामत्वमेषां शास्त्रे पृथग्विधे ।

पाप्मीयोत्तरखण्डादौ व्यक्तमेव विराजते ॥ २४ ॥

Those into whom Janārdana has entered by a portion of his knowledge-power and so forth are called Infused (Āveśa), the greatest living beings, as for example, even in Vaikuṅṭha, Śeṣa, Nārada, and the Sanas. And they are praised in the 10th Book (Chapter 39) in the example of Akrūra. (18-19)

An appearance [*prakāśa*] is not counted among different forms because it is not a separate form.<sup>10</sup> (20)

Therefore:

The appearance in many places at the same time of one form while remaining in all ways his essential form is called an appearance [*prakāśa*], as in Dvārakā where Kṛṣṇa is seen in each palace. That is proven on the evidence of the statement “this is amazing indeed ...”<sup>11</sup> (22)

Even when he has four arms sometimes, he does not depart from his Kṛṣṇa form. Therefore, it would be, from the start, an “appearance” of his two-armed form. (23)

In scripture these each have separate abodes beyond the manifest world. This is revealed clearly in the *Uttara-khaṇḍa* of the *Padma Purāṇa* and other texts. (24)

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<sup>10</sup>Need to distinguish *vilāsa* which I have translated as sportive manifestation from *prakāśa*. Both basically mean to shine forth, but in *vilāsa* there is a slight loss of power and in *prakāśa* it is simply a matter appearing in several places with the same form at once.

<sup>11</sup>Bhāg. 10.69.2.



## Chapter 2

# पुरुषावतार - गुणावतार - निरूपणम्

अथावताराः कथ्यन्ते कृष्णो येषु च पुष्कलः ॥ १ ॥

पूर्वोक्ता विश्वकार्यार्थं अपूर्वा इव चेत्स्वयम् ।

द्वारान्तरेण वाविःस्युरवतारास्तदा स्मृताः ॥ २ ॥

तच्च द्वारं तदेकात्मरूपस्तद्भक्त एव च ।

शेषशाय्यादिको यद्वद्वसुदेवादिकोऽपि च ॥ ३ ॥

पुरुषाख्या गुणात्मनो लीलात्मनश्च ते त्रिधा ॥ ४ ॥

प्रायः स्वांशास्तदावेशा अवतारा भवन्त्यमी ।

अत्र यः स्यात्स्वयंरूपः सोऽग्रे व्यक्तीभविष्यति ॥ ५ ॥

Now, the descents are described among which Kṛṣṇa is the best. (1)

If the previously described [forms] appear themselves as though unprecedented or through some other door, then they are remembered as descents [incarnations]. (2)

And that door is either a form equal to him (*tadekātmarūpa*) or his *bhakta*, like the one who lies on Śeṣa (Nārāyaṇa) and also Vasudeva (Kṛṣṇa's father). (3)

They are of three types: the Giants (Puruṣas), the Quality Descents (Guṇāvatāras), and the Sport Descents (Līlāvatāra). (4)

These descents are generally own-parts or infusions of those. The own form (*svayamrūpa*) that may be here will be made clear later. (5)