

षड्सन्दर्भनामक-श्रीभागवतसन्दर्भेषु
प्रथमसन्दर्भः तत्त्वसन्दर्भनामकः
In the Six Treatises
or
the Treatises on the Bhāgavata
The First Treatise:
The Tattva-sandarbha

श्रीजीवगोस्वामिना विरचितः
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Tattva-sandarbha: Fundamental Principles

श्रीकृष्णो जयति

कृष्णवर्णं त्विषाकृष्णं साङ्गोपाङ्गास्त्रपार्षदम् ।
 यज्ञैः सङ्कीर्तनप्रायैर्यजन्ति हि सुमेधसः ॥ १ ॥ (भा. ११.५.३२)
 अन्तःकृष्णं बहिर्गौरं दर्शिताङ्गादिवैभवम् ।
 कलौ सङ्कीर्तनाद्यैः स्मः कृष्णचैतन्यमाश्रिताः ॥ २ ॥
 जयतां मथुराभूमौ श्रीलरूपसनातनौ ।
 यौ विलेखयतस्तत्त्वं ज्ञापकौ पुस्तिकामिमाम् ॥ ३ ॥
 को ऽपि तद्वान्धवो भट्टो दक्षिणद्विजवंशजः ।
 विविच्य व्यलिखद्वन्थं लिखिताद्वृद्धवैष्णवैः ॥ ४ ॥
 तस्याद्यं ग्रन्थनालेखं क्रान्तव्युत्क्रान्तखण्डितम् ।
 पर्यालोच्याथ पर्यायं कृत्वा लिखति जीवकः ॥ ५ ॥
 यः श्रीकृष्णपदाम्भोजभजनैकाभिलाषवान् ।
 तेनैव दृश्यतामेतदन्यस्मै शपथो ऽर्पितः ॥ ६ ॥

Opening Benedictions (मङ्गलाचरण)

May Śrī Kṛṣṇa be victorious!

The intelligent worship him
whose letters are *k-ṛ-ṣ-ṇ-a*,
who by luster is not black (*akṛṣṇa*),
along with his limbs, sub-limbs,
weapons and companions,
by sacrificial rites composed
mostly of collective praise.¹ (1)

Inside he's Kṛṣṇa; outside he's Gaura.
The might of his limbs and so forth are demonstrated.
We have sought shelter in Śrī Kṛṣṇacaitanya
In the Age of Kali by means of *saṅkīrtana*, etc. (2)

May they be victorious,
the treasures of Mathurā,
Śrīla Rūpa and Sanātana,
Who teach me the principles
and are making me write this book. (3)

Someone, their friend, born a Bhaṭṭa
In a family of southern *brāhmaṇas*,
After investigating wrote this book
From the writings of ancient Vaiṣṇavas. (4)

His original composition of the book
skipped things, put things out of order,
and was fragmentary. After
noticing this, a little life form [Śrī Jīva]
re-organized and finished it. (5)

May this work only be seen
By one whose only desire
Is to worship Śrī Kṛṣṇa's
lotus feet. Let others be cursed. (6)

¹See the notes in the appendix for a discussion of the early interpretations of this verse from the *Bhāgavata* (11.5.32) which became quite important to the Caitanya tradition.

(श्रीमद्भागवतं श्रीमन्मन्त्रदेशिकमीश्वरम् ।
श्रीमद्भागवतार्थानां सन्दर्भं कर्तुमाश्रये ॥)²

अथ नत्वा मन्त्रगुरुन् गुरुन् भागवतार्थदान ।

श्रीभागवतसन्दर्भं सन्दर्भं वशिम् लेखितुम् ॥ ७ ॥

यस्य ब्रह्मेति संज्ञां क्वचिदपि निगमे याति चिन्मात्रसत्ता-

प्यंशो यस्यांशकैः स्वैर्विभवति वशयन्नेव मायां पुमांश्च ।

एकं यस्यैव रूपं विलसति परमव्योम्नि नारायणाख्यं

स श्रीकृष्णो विधत्तां स्वयमिह भगवान्प्रेम तत्पादभाजाम् ॥ ८ ॥

अथैवं सूचितानां श्रीकृष्णतद्वाच्यवाचकतालक्षणसम्बन्धतद्भजनलक्षणविधेय-
सपर्यायाभिधेयतत्प्रेमलक्षणप्रयोजनाख्यानामर्थानां निर्णयाय तावत्प्रमाणं निर्णयिते ।

²Found in two mss. and one printed edition used by Puridas.

(I seek shelter in the *Bhāgavata*
my mantra teacher, and the Controller,
in order to create this treatise
On the teachings of the *Bhāgavata*.)³

Thus, bowing to my *mantra* teachers
ānd to those who taught to me
The meanings of the *Bhāgavata*,
I wish to write a treatise called
The *Śrī Bhāgavata Sandarbha*. (7)

He whose consciousness and being
are sometimes called Brahman in the Veda,
whose partial form, Puruṣa,
rules with his own portions
while controlling *māyā*,
and whose one form sports in higher space
by the name Nārāyaṇa—
may *that* Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Bhagavān,
himself bestow divine love on
those who worship him here. (8)

Sources of Knowledge (Pramāṇa) (प्रमाणम्)

Now that they have been introduced, in order to demonstrate the objects of our study: Śrī Kṛṣṇa [the subject of this book], the conveyed-conveyor relationship this book has with him, worship of him as the thing enjoined in this book which is synonymous with the thing taught taught in the book, and love of him which is the ultimate purpose of this book, first of all the sources of knowledge are ascertained.⁴

³Not found in all mss and editions.

⁴There is much to consider in this sentence. The four *anubandhas* (connections) are given here which are very important for the reader to know what she is getting into: 1) the subject of the book [Kṛṣṇa], 2) the relationship of the book to that subject [conveyor-conveyed], 3) the main point or teaching of the book [worship of Kṛṣṇa], and its ultimate purpose [helping readers to attain divine love]. But before any of this can be discussed it is important to settle the question of epistemology or answer the question: how does one gain valid knowledge on these topics? Thus, with that first statement he raises the question of *pramāṇa* or the valid means of knowing.

तत्र पुरुषस्य भ्रमादिदोषचतुष्टयदुष्टत्वात्सुतरामलौकिकाचिन्त्यस्वभाववस्तुस्पर्शा-
योग्यत्वाच्च तत्प्रत्यक्षादीन्यपि सदोषाणि ॥ ९ ॥

ततस्तानि न प्रमाणानीत्यनादिसिद्धसर्वपुरुषपरम्परासु सर्वलौकिकालौकिकज्ञान-
निदानत्वादप्राकृतवचनलक्षणो वेद एवास्माकं सर्वातीतसर्वाश्रयसर्वाचिन्त्याश्चर्यस्व-
भावं वस्तु विविदिषतां प्रमाणम् ॥ १० ॥

In this endeavor, because they are troubled by the four failings of human beings (*puruṣa*) headed by error and therefore are unsuitable for gaining knowledge of objects whose essential natures are beyond the mundane world and are inconceivable, the sources of knowledge headed by direct perception are faulty.⁵ (9)

The Vedas Only Source of Numinous Knowledge

Therefore, those are not valid sources of knowledge. But, because of being beginninglessly established as primary causes of all phenomenal (*laukika*) and numinous (*alaukika*) knowledge in the traditions of all human beings, the Vedas, which are characterized by noumenal statements, are the sole source of valid knowledge for those of us who want to know about the numinous reality whose nature is above all, the support of all, inconceivable by all, and astonishing to all.⁶ (10)

⁵The four human failings that Jīva Gosvāmin refers to are: *bhrama* (error), *pramāda* (oversight), *vipralipsā* (the desire to mislead), and *karaṇāpātava* (inaccuracy of the senses). As for the *pramāṇa* Jīva lists 10 in his *Sarva-samvādinī*: *pratyakṣa* (direct sense experience), *anumāna* (inference), *śabda* (verbal testimony of authority), *aṛṣa* (testimony of the sages), *upamāna* (similarity, comparison), *arthāpatti* (implication), *abhāva* (absence), *sambhava* (possibility), *aitihya* (tradition), *ceṣṭā* (effort). Though it seems to me that these faults apply to all the *pramāṇas*, Śrī Jīva says that they do not apply to *śabda*, verbal testimony. His appeal is strangely enough to sensual evidence. He says we “see” the other *pramāṇas* to give incorrect knowledge because of their being faulty, but we do not “see” that in the case of *śabda*. But how can this be? In fact, that verbal authority is also flawed is implied by the very steps families of *brāhmaṇa* priests took to insure that the Vedas were transmitted as flawlessly as possible.

⁶“Those” refers to *pratyakṣa*, and the other *pramāṇa*. Here, though, it is interesting to note that Śrī Jīva rejects those *pramāṇa* only in the matter of knowing the *vastu* or numinous reality that is astonishing, above all, the foundation of all, and inconceivable to all, etc. The other *pramāṇa* are inadequate for knowing in this special case. So his is a kind of Non-Overlapping Magisterium (NOM) argument like that offered by some who argue that science and religion have separate domains of validity that do not overlap. (See for instance, Stephen Jay Gould’s essay “Non-overlapping Magisteria” in the journal *Natural History* [1997] and his later book *Rock of Ages* [1999]. See also Richard Dawkins criticism of Gould’s claim in Dawkins, Richard (1998), “When Religion Steps on Science’s Turf.” *Free Inquiry*.)

तच्चानुमतं तर्काप्रतिष्ठानात् (ब्र. सू. २.१.११) इत्यादौ, अचिन्त्याः खलु ये भावा न तांस्तर्केण योजयेत् (म. भा. ६.५.१२) इत्यादौ शास्त्रयोनित्वात् (ब्र. सू. १.१.३) इत्यादौ। श्रुतेस्तु शब्दमूलत्वात् (ब्र. सू. २.१.२७) इत्यादौ।

पितृदेवमनुष्याणां वेदश्चक्षुस्तवेश्वर।

श्रेयस्त्वनुपलब्धे ऽर्थे साध्यसाधनयोरपि ॥ (भाग. ११.२०.४) इत्यादौ ॥

११ ॥

तत्र च वेदशब्दस्य सम्प्रति दुष्पारत्वाद्दुरधिगमार्थत्वाच्च तदर्थनिर्णायकानां मुनीनामपि परस्परविरोधाद्वेदरूपो वेदार्थनिर्णायकश्चेतिहासपुराणात्मकः शब्द एव विचारणीयः। तत्र च यो वा वेदशब्दो नात्मविदितः सो ऽपि तद्दृष्ट्यानुमेय एवेति सम्प्रति तस्यैव प्रमोत्पादकत्वं स्थितम्। तथा हि महाभारते मानवीये च इतिहासपुराणाभ्यां वेदं समुपबृंहयेदिति (म. भा. १.१.२६७)। पूरणात्पुराणमिति चान्यत्र।

And that is confirmed [in the following quotations]: “Because of the instability of argument,”⁷ and so forth; “those things that are inconceivable may not be grasped by argument,”⁸ and so forth; “scripture is the cause.”⁹ and so forth; “But [not Brahman] because revealed scripture is based on verbal authority (*śabda*).”¹⁰ and so forth.

O lord, your Veda is the eye
of ancestors, gods, and humans,
most beneficial in matters unperceived,
in what’s to be achieved,
and the means to achieve it.¹¹ (11)

The Histories and Ancient Lore Complete the Vedas

And, on this subject, because the texts of the Veda are difficult to study in entirety, their meanings are difficult to understand, and because even sages who try to determine their meanings contradict one another, one should take into account the scripture consisting of the histories (*itihāsa*) and ancient lore (*purāṇa*) which is a form of the Veda and which ascertains its meanings. Moreover, since those Vedic statements which are not self-revealed¹² should be inferred by examining them (the histories and ancient lore), nowadays they stand as creators of real knowledge. So, indeed, it is said in the *Mahābhārata*¹³ and the *Laws of Manu*:¹⁴ “The histories and ancient lore should augment the Veda.” And elsewhere it is said: “They are Purāṇa because they complete (*pūraṇa*) [the Veda].”

⁷*Brahma-sūtra*, 2.1.11. *Tarka* here means inference, the instrument of argument.

⁸*Mahābhārata*, 6.5.12.

⁹*Brahma-sūtra*, 1.1.3. Scripture is the cause of correct knowledge.

¹⁰*Brahma-sūtra*, 2.1.27. That is, our knowledge that Brahman has no parts rests on revealed scripture which is based on verbal authority.

¹¹*Bhāg.*, 11.20.4.

¹²“Due to loss or concealment of many branches, some Vedic injunctions are not self-revealed.” See Sitanath Goswami in his edition of the *Tattva-sandarbhā*, p. 15, fn. 1.

¹³*Mbh.*, 1.1.267.

¹⁴This text is not found in the *Manu-smṛti* according to Sitanath Goswami, p. 15, fn. 2.

न चावेदेन वेदस्य बृंहणं सम्भवति । न ह्यपरिपूर्णस्य कनकवलयस्य त्रपुणा पूरणं युज्यते ।

ननु यदि वेदशब्दः पुराणमितिहासं चोपादत्ते, तर्हि पुराणमन्यदन्वेषणीयम् । यदि तु न, न तर्हीतिहासपुराणयोरभेदो वेदेन । उच्यते विशिष्टैकार्थप्रतिपादकपद-
कदम्बस्यापौरुषेयत्वाद्भेदे ऽपि स्वरक्रमभेदाद्भेदनिर्देशो ऽप्युपपद्यते । ऋगादिभिः
सममनयोरपौरुषेयत्वेनाभेदो माध्यन्दिनश्रुतावेव व्यज्यते एवं वा अरे ऽस्य महतो
भूतस्य निश्चसितमेतद्यद्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदो ऽथर्वाङ्गिरस इतिहासः पुराणमि-
त्यादिना (बृ. उ. २.४.१०) ॥ १२ ॥

अतएव स्कान्दप्रभासखण्डे

पुरा तपश्चचारोग्रममराणां पितामहः ।
आविर्भूतास्ततो वेदाः सषडङ्गपदक्रमाः ॥
ततः पुराणमखिलं सर्वशास्त्रमयं ध्रुवम् ।
नित्यशब्दमयं पुण्यं शतकोटिप्रविस्तरम् ॥
निर्गतं ब्रह्मणो वक्रात्तस्य भेदान्निबोधत ।
ब्राह्मं पुराणं प्रथममित्यादि । (स्क. पु. २.३-५)

Nor is it possible for the Veda to be augmented by something that is not Veda. Nor, indeed, is it fitting to complete an incomplete gold bracelet by adding tin.

Now, if the Vedic scripture includes the ancient lore and histories, then some other ancient lore (*purāṇa*) [that is not Veda] must be searched out. If none is found, then the histories and ancient lore are not non-different from the Veda. To this it is replied: because those collections of words (the histories and ancient lore) establishing the same specialized meanings are also without human authors, they are not different from the Veda. And because of their differences in word order and in use of accents, they can be also be called different. Their non-difference from the Ṛg and other Vedas because they are not by human authors is suggested by the Mādhyandina scripture (*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*): “thus, indeed, that which is the exhalation of this great being is the Ṛg Veda, Yajur Veda, Sāma Veda, Atharvāṅgirasas (Veda), the history, and the ancient lore.”¹⁵ (12)

Therefore, in the *Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāṇa*:

Previously the grandfather
of the immortals performed
severe austerities. From him
the entire body of ancient lore¹⁶
comprising all disciplines, everlasting,
composed of eternal words,
auspicious, a billion stanzas long¹⁷
came out of Brahmā's mouth.
Understand its divisions:
first came the *Brahma Purāṇa*.¹⁸

¹⁵*Bṛhad-āraṇyaka*, 2.4.10.

¹⁶*purāṇa*

¹⁷100 x 10,000,000.

¹⁸*Skanda Purāṇa*, *Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa*, 2.3-5.

अत्र शतकोटिसङ्ख्या ब्रह्मलोके प्रसिद्धेति तथोक्तम् ।

तृतीयस्कन्धे च ऋग्यजुःसामाथर्वाख्यान् वेदान् पूर्वादिभिर्मुखैः (भा. ३.१२.३७)
इत्यादिप्रकरणे

इतिहासपुराणानि पञ्चमं वेदमीश्वरः ।

सर्वेभ्य एव वक्त्रेभ्यः ससृजे सर्वदर्शनः ॥ इति । (भा. ३.१२.३९)

अपि चात्र साक्षादेव वेदशब्दः प्रयुक्तः पुराणेतिहासयोः । अन्यत्र च पुराणं पञ्चमो वेदः । इतिहासः पुराणं च पञ्चमो वेद उच्यते (भाग. १.४.२०) । वेदानध्यापयामास महाभारतपञ्चमान् (म. भा. १२.३४०.११) इत्यादौ । अन्यथा वेदानित्यादावपि पञ्चमत्वं नावकल्पेत समानजातीयनिवेशितत्वात्सङ्ख्यायाः ।

Here it is also said: “a billion stanzas are well-known in the world of Brahmā.”

And in the *Third Skandha*:

The Ṛg, Yajur, Sāma, and
Atharva Vedas [came] from
his mouths starting from the eastern.¹⁹

And on this same topic:

The histories and ancient lore
are the fifth Veda. The controller,
seer of all, created them
from all of his mouths.²⁰

Here the word Veda is used directly for the ancient lore and histories. Elsewhere, too, the ancient lore is called the fifth Veda:

The history and ancient lore
are said to be the fifth Veda,²¹
He taught the Vedas with the
Mahābhārata as the fifth,²²

and so forth. Otherwise, “fiveness” would not fit with the word “Vedas” because when counting, things of the same kind are placed together.

¹⁹Bhāg., 3.12.37.

²⁰ibid., 3.12.39.

²¹ibid., 1.4.20.

²²*Mahābhārata*, 12.340.11.

भविष्यपुराणे कार्ष्णं च पञ्चमं वेदं यन्महाभारतं स्मृतमिति । तथा च सामकौथु-
मीयशाखायां छान्दोग्योपनिषदि च—

ऋग्वेदं भगवो ऽध्येमि यजुर्वेदं सामवेदमथर्वणं चतुर्थमितिहासं पुराणं पञ्चमं
वेदानां वेदम् (छा. उ. ७.१.२) इत्यादि ।

अतएव अस्य महतो भूतस्य (बृ. उ. २.४.१०) इत्यादावितिहासपुराणयोश्चतु-
र्णामेवान्तर्भूतत्वकल्पनया प्रसिद्धप्रत्याख्यानं निरस्तम् । तदुक्तं ब्राह्मं पुराणं प्रथम-
मित्यादि ॥ १३ ॥

पञ्चमत्वे कारणं च वायुपुराणे सूतवाक्यम्

इतिहासपुराणानां वक्तारं सम्यगेव हि ।

मां चैव प्रतिजग्राह भगवानीश्वरः प्रभुः ॥

एक आसीद्यजुर्वेदस्तं चतुर्धा व्यकल्पयत् ।

चातुर्होत्रमभूत्तस्मिन्नेन यज्ञमकल्पयत् ॥

आध्वर्यवं यजुर्भिस्तु ऋग्भिर्होत्रं तथैव च ।

औद्गात्रं सामभिश्चैव ब्रह्मत्वं चाप्यथर्वभिः ॥ (वायु पु. ६०.१६-१८)

आख्यानैश्चाप्युपाख्यानैर्गाथाभिर्द्विजसत्तमाः ।

पुराणसंहिताश्चक्रे पुराणार्थविशारदः ॥

यच्छिष्टं तु यजुर्वेद इति शास्त्रार्थनिर्णयः । इति (वायु पु. ६०.२१-२२)

In the *Bhaviṣya Purāṇa* [is found:] “And the fifth Veda belongs to Kṛṣṇa [Dvaipāyana Vyāsa] which is remembered as the *Mahā-bhārata*.” And in the Kauthumīya branch of the Sāmaveda, the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*:

I study, O Bhagavas, the Ṛgveda, the Yajurveda, the Sāmaveda, the fourth, the Atharvan, and the fifth, the history and ancient lore, which is the Veda of the Vedas.²³

Therefore, the well-known opposing explanation based on the speculation that the history and ancient lore referred to in the statement “[the exhalation] of this great being ...”²⁴ are [sections] within the four Vedas themselves is refuted.²⁵ That is also stated in: “The *Brahmā Purāṇa* was the first ...” (13)

And the reason for its being the “fifth” is a statement of Sūta in the *Vāyu Purāṇa*:²⁶

He accepted me as the speaker
of the complete histories and
ancient lore, Bhagavān,
the master and controller did.
There was one *Yajur Veda*;
that he divided into four.
It became the work of four priests.
in that way he created
the sacrificial rite:
Adhvaryu through the Yajur hymns,
Hotṛ through the Ṛg Veda hymns;
Udgātṛ through the Sāman hymns;
Brahman through the Atharvan hymns.

...

Then with legends, sub-legends, and
musical verses, the foremost
of the twice-born made Purāṇas
and Saṃhitās, versed in their meaning.
What remains is [also] the Yajur Veda.
Such is the meaning of scripture.

²³ *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 7.1.2.

²⁴ *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 2.4.10.

²⁵ This is a argument made by Śrī Śaṅkara in his commentary on that Upaniṣad.

²⁶ *Vāyu Purāṇa*, 60.16-18, 21-22

ब्रह्मयज्ञाध्ययने च विनियोगो दृश्यते ऽमीषांयद्वाह्यणानीतिहासपुराणानीति ।
सो ऽपि नावेदत्वे सम्भवति । अतो यदाह भगवान् मात्स्ये

कालेनाग्रहणं मत्वा पुराणस्य द्विजोत्तमाः ।
व्यासरूपमहं कृत्वा संहरामि युगे युगे ॥ इति (मत्स्य पु. ५३.८९)

पूर्वसिद्धमेव पुराणं सुखसङ्ग्रहाय सङ्कल्पयामीति तत्रार्थः । तदनन्तरं ह्युक्तम्

चतुर्लक्षप्रमाणेन द्वापरे द्वापरे सदा ।
तदष्टादशधा कृत्वा भूर्लुके ऽस्मिन् प्रभाष्यते ।
अद्याप्यमर्त्यलोके तु शतकोटिप्रविस्तरम् ।
तदर्थो ऽत्र चतुर्लक्षः सङ्क्षेपेण निवेशितः ॥ (मत्स्य पु. ५३.९-११) इति ।

अत्र तु यच्छिष्टं तु यजुर्वेद इत्युक्तत्वात्तस्याभिधेयभागश्चतुर्लक्षस्त्वत्र मर्त्यलोके
सङ्क्षेपेण सारसङ्ग्रहेण निवेशितः । न तु रचनान्तरेण ॥ १४ ॥

तथैव दर्शितं वेदसहभावेन शिवपुराणस्य वायवीयसंहितायाम्

सङ्क्षिप्य चतुरो वेदांश्चतुर्धा व्यभजत्प्रभुः ।
व्यस्तवेदतया ख्यातो वेदव्यास इति स्मृतः ॥
पुराणमपि सङ्क्षिप्तं चतुर्लक्षप्रमाणतः ।
अद्याप्यमर्त्यलोके तु शतकोटिप्रविस्तरम् ॥ (शिव पु. १.३३-३४)

And the use of these in the study of the Brahma-yajña (the study of the Vedas) is also found in the words, “which are the Brāhmaṇas, the histories, and the ancient lore (Purāṇas).” That is not possible if they are not Veda. Therefore, it is said by the Lord in the *Matsya Purāṇa*:²⁷

Thinking that with time the Purāṇa
would not be accepted [because of length],
Best of brāhmaṇas, I appear
Age after age in Vyāsa’s form
And make it more condensed.

The previously established Purāṇa I summarize so it is easily accepted. That is the meaning here. And immediately after that it is said:²⁸

Four hundred thousand stanzas long
it always is in each Dvāpara.
Dividing it into eighteen,
it appears in this world of Earth.
Even now in the world of gods
it is a billion verses vast.
Therefore, it has been shortened here
to four hundred thousand verses.

But here, because it is said: “what remains is [also] the Yajur Veda,” its significant [or essential] portion, consisting of four hundred thousand stanzas, has been placed here in the mortal world as an abbreviated core. But, this is not a composition separate [from the Veda]. (14)

Thus it is shown as accompanying the Veda in the *Vāyaviya-saṃhitā* of the *Śiva Purāṇa* (1.33-34):

He shortened them, the clever one,
And split the Vedas into four
Because Master split the Veda,
He was known as Vedavyāsa.
The Purāṇa, too, he shortened
To four hundred thousand verses.
Even now in the world of gods
It is ten trillion verses vast.

²⁷ *Matsya Purāṇa*, 53.8-9.

²⁸ *ibid*, 53.9-11.

सङ्क्षिप्तमित्यत्र तेनेति शेषः । स्कान्दमाग्नेयमित्यादिसमाख्यास्तु प्रवचननिबन्ध-
नाः काठकादिवत । आनुपूर्वीर्निर्माणनिबन्धना वा । तस्मात्कचिदनित्यत्वश्रवणं त्वा-
विर्भावतिरोभावापेक्षया । तदेवमितिहासपुराणयोर्वेदत्वं सिद्धम् । तथापि सूतादीना-
मधिकारः । सकलनिगमवल्लीसत्फलश्रीकृष्णनामवत ।

यथोक्तं प्रभासखण्डे—

मधुरमधुरमेतन्मङ्गलं मङ्गलानां
सकलनिगमवल्लीसत्फलं चित्स्वरूपम् ।
सकृदपि परिगीतं श्रद्धया हेलया वा
भृगुवर नरमात्रं तारयेत्कृष्णनाम् ॥ इति ॥

यथा चोक्तं विष्णुधर्मे—

ऋग्वेदो ऽथ यजुर्वेदः सामवेदो ऽप्यथर्वणः ।
अधीतास्तेन येनोक्तं हरिरित्यक्षरद्वयम् ॥ इति ।

अथ वेदार्थनिर्णायकत्वं च वैष्णवे -

भारतव्यपदेशेन ह्याम्नायार्थः प्रदर्शितः ।
वेदाः प्रतिष्ठिताः सर्वे पुराणे नात्र संशयः ॥ इत्यादौ ।

Here “shortened” is done “by him.” However, the titles “Of Skanda,” “Of Agni,” and so forth are related to the speakers of the texts (not the authors) like the “Kāṭhaka,” and so forth. Or, it is because they arranged the order of the texts. Therefore, when it is sometimes heard that they are impermanent, it is but a matter of their appearing and disappearing. Thus, it is proven that the histories and ancient lore are Veda. Nevertheless, the bards (*sūtas*) have a right to them. And, like the name of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, they are the real fruit of the vine of all the Vedas.

As it is said in the *Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa*:²⁹

This is sweetest of the sweet,
most auspicious of the auspicious,
the real fruit of the vine
of all the Vedas, consciousness
by nature, sung even once,
with faith or neglectfully,
O best of Bhṛgu, it saves
anyone, this name of Kṛṣṇa.

And as it is stated in the *Viṣṇudharma*:

The Ṛg Veda, Yajur Veda
Sāma Veda, and Atharvan
have been studied by him who says
the two syllables “Hari.”

And now their being ascertainers of the meaning of the Vedas in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*:

By the work named Bhārata
is the meaning of the sacred texts (Vedas)
revealed. The Vedas are all
established in the Purāṇa.
About this there is no doubt.

²⁹A section of the *Skānda Purāṇa*.

किं च वेदार्थदीपकानां शास्त्राणां मध्यपातिताभ्युपगमे ऽप्याविर्भावकवैशिष्ट्या-
त्तयोरेव वैशिष्ट्यम् । यथा पाद्रे

द्वैपायनेन यद्वुद्धं
ब्रह्माद्यैस्तन्न बुध्यते ।
सर्वबुद्धं स वै वेद
तद्वुद्धं नान्यगोचरः ॥ १५ ॥

स्कान्दे

व्यासचित्स्थिताकाशादवच्छिन्नानि कानिचित् ।
अन्ये व्यवहरन्त्येतान्युरीकृत्य गृहादिव ॥ इति ।

तथैव दृष्टं श्रीविष्णुपुराणे पराशरवाक्यम्-

ततो ऽत्र मत्सुतो व्यास अष्टाविंशतिमे ऽन्तरे ।
वेदमेकं चतुष्पादं चतुर्धा व्यभजत् प्रभुः ॥
यथात्र तेन वै व्यस्ता वेदव्यासेन धीमता ।
वेदस्तथा समस्तैस्तैर्व्यासैरन्यैस्तथा मया ॥
तदनेनैव व्यासानां शाखाभेदान् द्विजोत्तम ।
चतुर्युगेषु रचितान् समस्तेष्ववधारय ॥
कृष्णद्वैपायनं व्यासं विद्धि नारायणं प्रभुम् ।
को ऽन्यो हि भुवि मैत्रेय महाभारतकृद्भवेत् ॥ (वि. पु. ३.४.२५) इति ।

Moreover, even granting that they are among the scriptures that are illuminators of the meaning of the Vedas, because of the difference in the way they appeared, there is a distinction between them. As in the *Padma Purāṇa*:

What was known by Dvaipāyana
was not known by Brahmā and others.
The Veda is known indeed by all.
What he knew was not in the ken of others. (15)

In the *Skandha Purāṇa*:

These statements arising out of
the space in Vyāsa's mind
others make use of as if
they brought them from their own houses.

So, too, a statement of Parāśara is found in the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*:³⁰

Thus,³¹ here³² my son, Master Vyāsa,
in the twenty-eighth period³³
divided the one Veda,
having four sections, into four.
As, in this case, it was divided
by the brilliant Vedavyāsa,
the Veda was so divided
by all those other Vyāsas
as well as by me. Thus, through this,
O best of the twice born, other
Vyāsas created different
branches in all the four ages;
think about it. Know that Vyāsa
Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana is
Lord Nārāyaṇa. Who else on earth
O Maitreya, could be creator
of the Mahābhārata?

³⁰ *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*, 3.4.25.

³¹ Because human beings became weak in memory and unable to learn the whole Veda (Rādhāmohana Gosvāmin).

³² On the planet earth.

³³ The period of the twenty-eighth Manu.

स्कान्द एव -

नारायणाद्विनिष्पन्नं ज्ञानं कृतयुगे स्थितम् ।
 किञ्चित्तदन्यथा जातं त्रेतायां द्वापरे ऽखिलम् ॥
 गौतमस्य ऋषेः शापाज् ज्ञाने त्वज्ञानतां गते ।
 सङ्कीर्णबुद्धयो देवा ब्रह्मरुद्रपुरःसराः ॥
 शरण्यं शरणं जग्मुर्नारायणमनामयम् ।
 तैर्विज्ञापितकार्यस्तु भगवान् पुरुषोत्तमः ॥
 अवतीर्णो महायोगी सत्यवत्यां पराशरात् ।
 उत्सन्नान् भगवान् वेदान् उज्जहार हरिः स्वयम् ॥ इति ।

वेदशब्देनात्र पुराणादिद्वयमपि गृह्यते । तदेवमितिहासपुराणविचार एव श्रेयान्
 इति सिद्धम् । तत्रापि पुराणस्यैव गरिमा दृश्यते । उक्तं हि नारदीये -

वेदार्थादधिकं मन्ये पुराणार्थं वरानने ।
 वेदाः प्रतिष्ठिताः सर्वे पुराणे नात्र संशयः ॥
 पुराणमन्यथा कृत्वा तिर्यग्योनिमवाप्नुयात् ।
 सुदान्तो ऽपि सुशान्तो ऽपि न गतिं क्वचिदाप्नुयात् ॥ इति । १६ ॥

In the *Skanda Purāṇa*, too:

Knowledge born from Nārāyaṇa
 was upright in the Kṛta Age
 became somewhat mistaken in
 the Tretā Age, and completely
 mistaken in the Dvāpara.
 When, through Gautama's curse, knowledge
 turned into ignorance, the gods
 with diminished intellects
 headed by Brahmā and Rudra,
 went to happy Nārāyaṇa.
 They told him what needs to be done.
 Lord Puruṣottama became
 incarnate as a great *yogī*
 in Lady Satyāvati from
 Parāśara. Lord Hari saved
 the corrupted Vedas himself.

By the word Veda here, the pair, Purāṇa (ancient lore) and Itihāsa (history), are also meant. Thus, the investigation of the histories and ancient lore is established as better. Then, too, the ancient lore is seen as more weighty. It is said in the *Nārada Purāṇa*:

Greater than the Vedas' meaning
 is the meaning of the Purāṇas.
 O lovely faced, the Vedas are
 all present in the Purāṇas;
 there is no doubt. By neglecting
 the Purāṇas one may enter
 an animal womb. Even well
 self-controlled and very peaceful
 ones may never reach the goal. (16)

स्कान्दप्रभासखण्डे

वेदवन्निश्चलं मन्ये पुराणार्थं द्विजोत्तमाः ।
 वेदाः प्रतिष्ठिताः सर्वे पुराणे नात्र संशयः ॥
 बिभेत्यल्पश्रुताद्वेदो मामयं चालयिष्यति ।
 इतिहासपुराणैस्तु निश्चलो ऽयं कृतः पुरा ॥
 यन्न दृष्टं हि वेदेषु तद्वृष्टं स्मृतिषु द्विजाः ।
 उभयोर्यन्न दृष्टं हि तत् पुराणैः प्रगीयते ॥
 यो वेदं चतुरो वेदान् साङ्गोपनिषदो द्विजाः ।
 पुराणं नैव जानाति न च स स्याद्विचक्षणः ॥ (२.९०-९३) इति ।

अथ पुराणानामेवं प्रामाण्ये स्थितेऽपि तेषामपि सामस्त्येनाप्रचरद्रूपत्वान्नाना-
 देवताप्रतिपादकप्रायत्वादर्वाचीनैः क्षुद्रबुद्धिभिरर्थो दुरधिगम इति तदवस्थ एव सं-
 शयः । यदुक्तं मात्स्ये

पञ्चाङ्गं च पुराणं स्यादाख्यानमितरत्स्मृतम् ।
 सात्त्विकेषु च कल्पेषु माहात्म्यमधिकं हरेः ॥
 राजसेषु च माहात्म्यमधिकं ब्रह्मणो विदुः ।
 तद्वदग्नेश्च माहात्म्यं तामसेषु शिवस्य च ।
 सङ्कीर्णेषु सरस्वत्याः पितृणां च निगद्यते ॥ इति ।

In the *Prabhāsa-khaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāṇa*:³⁴

I consider, best of twice-born,
the meaning of the Purāṇas to be
as unmoving as the Vedas.
The Vedas are all present in
the Purāṇas, there is no doubt.
The Veda fears that after
a little hearing “this one
will make me change.” However
the Itihāsas and Purāṇas
made this meaning unmoving
before. What is not found in
the Vedas is found in the
smṛti texts, twice-born, and what
is not found in either is sung
in the Purāṇas. One who knows
the four Vedas, along with the
supplements and Upaniṣads,
but does not know the Purāṇas
is not a learned person.

Now, even though the evidential nature of the Purāṇas is established, because they are not circulated in their entirety and because they mainly establish many deities, their meaning is difficult for modern readers of small intelligence to understand. In this situation there is doubt. As it is said in the *Matsya Purāṇa*:

And Purāṇas should have five limbs.
Story is viewed as additional.
And in the transparent³⁵ texts
Hari is glorified more.
And in the translucent³⁶ texts
Brahmā is glorified more.
Like that, Agni’s greatness is
in opaque³⁷ texts and Śiva’s.
And in the mixed are described
The greatness of Sarasvatī
and of the forefathers as well.

³⁴ *Skanda Purāṇa, Prabhāsakhaṇḍa*, 2.90-93.

³⁵ *Sattvika*

³⁶ *Rājasika*

³⁷ *Tāmasika*

अत्राग्नेस्तत्तदग्नौ प्रतिपाद्यस्य तत्तद्यज्ञस्येत्यर्थः। शिवस्य चेति चकाराच्छ्रि-
वायाश्च। सङ्कीर्णेषु सत्त्वरजस्तमोमयेषु कल्पेषु बहुषु। सरस्वत्याः नानावाण्यात्म-
कतदुपलक्षिताया नानादेवताया इत्यर्थः। पितॄणां कर्मणा पितृलोकः (बृ. आ. उ.
१.५.१६) इति। श्रुतेस्तत् प्रापककर्मणामित्यर्थः ॥ १७ ॥

तदेवं सति तत्तत्कल्पकथामयत्वेनैव मात्स्य एव प्रसिद्धानां तत्तत्पुराणानां व्य-
वस्था ज्ञापिता। तारतम्यं तु कथं स्यात् येनेतरनिर्णयः क्रियेत। सत्त्वादितारतम्ये-
नैवेति चेत्, सत्त्वात् सञ्जायते ज्ञानम् (गीता १४.१७) इति सत्त्वं यद्वह्न्यदर्शनमिति च
न्यायात् सात्त्विकमेव पुराणादिकं परमार्थज्ञानाय प्रबलमित्यायातम्। तथापि पर-
मार्थेऽपि नानाभङ्गा विप्रतिपद्यमानानां समाधानाय किं स्यात्। यदि सर्वस्यापि वेद-
स्य पुराणस्य चार्थनिर्णयाय तेनैव श्रीभगवता व्यासेन ब्रह्मसूत्रं कृतं तदवलोकनेनैव
सर्वोऽर्थो निर्णय इत्युच्यते। तर्हि नान्यसूत्रकारमुन्यनुगतैर्मन्येत। किं चात्यन्तगू-
ढार्थानामल्पाक्षराणां तत्सूत्राणामन्यार्थत्वं कश्चिदाचक्षीत। ततः कतरदिवात्र समा-
धानम्। तदेव समाधेयम्यद्य एकतममेव पुराणलक्षणमपौरुषेयं शास्त्रं सर्ववेदेतिहा-
सपुराणानामर्थसारं ब्रह्मसूत्रोपजीव्यं च भवद्भुवि सम्पूर्णं प्रचरद्रूपं स्यात्। सत्यमु-
क्तम्, यत् एव च सर्वप्रमाणानां चक्रवर्तिभूतमस्मदभिमतं श्रीमद्भागवतमेवोद्भाषितं
भवता ॥ १८ ॥

Here “Agni’s” refers to the various fire ceremonies to be undertaken through the various types of fire. The “and” with “Śiva’s” includes Pārvatī, wife of Śiva. “Mixed” means the many texts made of transparent, translucent, and opaque parts. “Of Sarasvatī” means of the many gods that are implied by her many words. “Of the forefathers” means of the rites that cause one to attain the world of the forefathers based on the revealed text “by rites [one gains] the world of the fathers [ancestors],”³⁸ (17)

That being the case, in the *Matsya Purāṇa* the arrangement of the various well-known Purāṇas is specified according to those texts’ traits.³⁹ But how can one establish a hierarchy by which one may determine the greater and the lesser among them? What if one creates a hierarchy using the qualities transparency (*sattva*), translucency (*rajas*), and opacity (*tamas*), for instance. Since we learn from the *Gītā* that: “from transparency arises knowledge,”⁴⁰ and from logic that: “transparency is seeing Brahman,”⁴¹ we arrive at the conclusion that transparent (*sāttvika*) Purāṇas are more powerful for knowing the highest truth. Still, even in the matter of the supreme truth, there are, by many twists and turns, contradictory claims. How can one reconcile them?⁴² If it is said that Lord Vyāsa, in order to ascertain the meaning of all the Vedas and Purāṇas, wrote the *Brahma-sūtra* and by studying it all the meanings may be settled, it would not be accepted by the followers of the other sages who wrote other *sūtra* works.⁴³ Moreover, someone might declare other meanings for those aphorisms (*sūtra*) since they are very brief and have extremely subtle meanings. What is the solution here? There would be a solution if there were one scripture which had all the traits of a Purāṇa, but which was not a human production and which was the essence of the meanings of all the Vedas, histories, and ancient lore, supportive of the *Brahma-sūtra*, and existing on earth in a full, widely disseminated form. Truly spoken!—since you have brought to our minds the *Śrīmad-bhāgavata* which is veritably the emperor of all means of knowing and is dear to us. (18)

³⁸ *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 1.5.16.

³⁹ Baladeva explains this as giving the number of Purāṇas, the results of giving them as gifts, and their descriptions.

⁴⁰ Bg., 14.17: सत्त्वात् सञ्जायते ज्ञानम्

⁴¹ सत्त्वं यद्ब्रह्मदर्शनम्

⁴² Baladeva: ie., the claims of those who describe it as possessing qualities, as not possessing qualities, as possessing knowledge as a quality, as dull matter and so forth by many winding arguments.

⁴³ Other authors of *sūtra* works like Gautama, Kapila, Patañjali, Jaimini, and Kaṇāda.

यत् खलु पुराणजातमाविर्भाव्य ब्रह्मसूत्रं च प्रणीयाप्यपरितुष्टेन तेन भगवता निजसूत्राणामकृत्रिमभाष्यभूतं समाधिलब्धमाविर्भावितं यस्मिन्नेव सर्वशास्त्रसमन्वयो दृश्यते । सर्ववेदार्थलक्षणां गायत्रीमधिकृत्य प्रवर्तितत्वात् । तथा हि तत्स्वरूपं मात्स्ये —

यत्राधिकृत्य गायत्रीं वर्णयते धर्मविस्तरः ।
 वृत्रासुरवधोपेतं तद्भागवतमिष्यते ॥ (म. पु., ५३.२०)
 लिखित्वा तच्च यो दद्याद्धेमसिंहसमन्वितम् ।
 प्रौष्ठपद्यां पौर्णमास्यां स याति परमां गतिम् ।
 अष्टादशसहस्राणि पुराणं तत् प्रकीर्तितम् ॥ (म. पु., ५३.२२) इति ।

अत्र गायत्रीशब्देन तत्सूचकतदव्यभिचारिधीमहिपदसंवलिततदर्थ एवेष्यते । सर्वेषां मन्त्राणामादिरूपायास्तस्याः साक्षात्कथनानर्हत्वात् । तदर्थता च जन्माद्यस्य यतः (भाग., १.१.१) तेन ब्रह्म हृदा इति सर्वलोकाश्रयत्वबुद्धिवृत्तिप्रेरकत्वादिसाम्यात् । धर्मविस्तर इत्यत्र धर्मशब्दः परमधर्मपरः । धर्मः प्रोज्झितकैतवो ऽत्र परमः (भाग., १.१.२) इत्यत्रैव प्रतिपादितत्वात् । स च भगवद्धानादिलक्षण एवेति पुरस्ताद्वक्त्रीभविष्यति ॥ १९ ॥

He, [Vyāsa] the Lord, manifested all the Purāṇas and then, being unsatisfied after composing the *Brahma-sūtra*, manifested [the *Bhāgavata*] which is like a genuine commentary on his own *sūtras*. He received it in a trance and in it one finds a reconciliation of all scriptures because it begins with the [Sūrya/Brahma]-Gāyatrī which possesses the meaning of all the Vedas. Thus indeed is its nature [described] in the *Matsya Purāṇa*:

That in which, having based itself
on the *gāyatrī*, the expanse
of sacred teaching is described,
including Vṛtra's killing—that
is known as the *Bhāgavata*.

...

And one who, having copied it,
gifts it with a golden lion
on the full moon day of Bhādra⁴⁴
reaches the highest of goals.
That Purāṇa is famed for
having eighteen thousand verses.⁴⁵

By the word *gāyatrī*, here, its [the *gāyatrī* mantra's] meaning is intended since it possesses the word *dhīmahī*, "let us meditate," which is inseparable from and indicative of it. This is so because of the unsuitableness of directly speaking it [the *gāyatrī*] which the original form of all *mantras*. And its meaning is intended because, in the expressions, "from whom proceed birth, and the rest," and "he spread Brahman by means of the heart,"⁴⁶ there is a similarity [with the meaning of the *gāyatrī*] in indicating the foundation of all the worlds and in indicating the one who is the inspirer of the operations of the intellect. Teaching in "expanse of sacred teaching" means the "highest teaching" because of the statement "the highest teaching, freed of all deceit," in the *Bhāgavata*.⁴⁷ And its [the *Bhāgavata*'s] being characterized by meditation on the Lord will become clear as we proceed. (19)

⁴⁴August-September.

⁴⁵Matsya Purāṇa, 53.20-22

⁴⁶Bhāg., 1.1.1.

⁴⁷ibid., 1.1.2.

एवं स्कान्दे प्रभासखण्डे च यत्राधिकृत्य गायत्रीमित्यादि।

सारस्वतस्य कल्पस्य मध्ये ये स्युर्नरामराः ।

सद्वृत्तानोद्भवं लोके तच्च भागवतं स्मृतम् ॥

लिखित्वा तच्च इत्यादि। अष्टादशसहस्राणि पुराणं तत् प्रकीर्तितमिति पुराणा-
न्तरं च

ग्रन्थो ऽष्टादशसाहस्रो द्वादशस्कन्धसम्मितः ।

हयग्रीवब्रह्मविद्या यत्र वृत्रवधस्तथा ।

गायत्र्या च समारम्भस्तद्वै भागवतं विदुः ॥ इति ।

अत्र हयग्रीवब्रह्मविद्या इति वृत्रवधसाहचर्येण नारायणवर्मैवोच्यते। हयग्रीव-
शब्देनात्राश्वशिरा दधीचिरेवोच्यते। तेनैव च प्रवर्तिता नारायणवर्मख्या ब्रह्मविद्या।
तस्याश्वशिरस्त्वं च षष्ठे यद्वा अश्वशिरो नाम (भाग. ६.९.५२) इति

Thus, in the *Prabhāsakhaṇḍa* of the *Skanda Purāṇa*, beginning with “in which, having based itself on the *gāyatrī* [followed with]:

proclaiming stories in the world
of the humans and immortals
who lived in Sarasvatī’s age,
and that is the *Bhāgavata*.

And then the rest after “having copied it, ...” follows and [the verse] ends with:

Eighteen thousand verses in length
is that Purāṇa’s appraisal.

And another Purāṇa:

The book of eighteen thousand
possessing twelve branches—
in which appears Hayagrīva’s
spell of Brahman along with
the killing of Vṛtra—
begins with the *gāyatrī*.
That they know as *Bhāgavata*.

Here “Hayagrīva’s spell of Brahman” is said to be the “Armor (*varman*) of Nārāyaṇa”⁴⁸ that accompanies the killing of Vṛtra.⁴⁹ By the words “horse-neck (*hayagrīva*)” here is meant the horse-headed sage Dadhici. He initiated the spell of Brahman called the “Armor of Nārāyaṇa.” His having a horse’s head is confirmed in the Sixth Skandha: “or Horsehead by name”⁵⁰

⁴⁸This also known as a *kavaca* which means “armor of mail” or an amulet or charm meant to provide protection for the one who chants it. Indra is said to use it for protection from his powerful enemies. See Bhāg., 6.8.

⁴⁹Bhāg., 6.9-12.

⁵⁰Bhāg., 6.9.52. The story behind how Dadhici came to have a horse’s head is given by Śaṅkara in his commentary on the *Brhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, 2.5.16, based on some passages from the *Śatapatha-brāhmaṇa* (14.1-5). Dadhici wanted to teach the Honey (*madhu*) meditation to the Aśvins, but Indra previously had warned him that if he ever taught that meditation, Indra would cut off his head. The Aśvins being expert surgeons suggested a way around that. They suggested that they surgically remove his head, keep it safely hidden, and replace it with a horse’s head. Dadhici agreed and so it was done. Dadhici taught the Aśvins the Honey meditation and while doing so Indra came and cut off Dadhici’s horse head. After Indra departed, the Aśvins replaced Dadhici’s head. The Honey meditation is found in both the *Brhad-āraṇyaka* (2.5.1-15) and *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (3.1-5). According to Śaṅkara only the Honey meditation was taught, but because of Indra’s interference, the spell of Brahman was not. The Honey meditation is included in an appendix of this book.

अत्र प्रसिद्धं नारायणवर्मणो ब्रह्मविद्यात्वं च

एतच्छ्रुत्वा तथोवाच दध्यङ् आथर्वणस्तयोः ।

प्रवर्ग्यं ब्रह्मविद्यां च सत्कृतो ऽसत्यशङ्कितः ॥ इति

टीकोत्थापितवचनेन चेति । श्रीमद्भागवतस्य भगवत्प्रियत्वेन भागवताभीष्टत्वेन च परमसात्त्विकत्वम् । यथा पाद्मे अम्बरीषं प्रति गौतमप्रश्नः :

पुराणं त्वं भागवतं पठसे पुरतो हरेः ।

चरितं दैत्यराजस्य प्रह्लादस्य च भूपते ॥

तत्रैव व्यञ्जुलीमाहात्म्ये तस्य तस्मिन्नुपदेशः

रात्रौ तु जागरः कार्यः श्रोतव्या वैष्णवी कथा ।

गीतानामसहस्रं च पुराणं शुकभाषितम् ।

पठितव्यं प्रयत्नेन हरेः सन्तोषकारणम् ॥

तत्रैवान्यत्र

अम्बरीष शुकप्रोक्तं नित्यं भागवतं शृणु ।

पठस्व स्वमुखेनैव यदीच्छसि भवक्षयम् ॥

Here it is known that the Armor of Nārāyaṇa is a Brahman spell through a verse cited in [Śrīdhara's] commentary:

Hearing this, Dadhyaṇ (Dadhīci),
the son of the sage Atharvan,
taught the Pravargya⁵¹ and a Brahman
spell⁵² to those two Aśvins,
being respected by them and
fearful of not keeping his word.

Because the *Bhāgavata* is dear to the Lord and because it is loved by his *bhaktas* it is the highest among the Sāttvika (transparent) Purāṇas. As [we see] in Gautama's response to King Ambariṣa in the *Padma-purāṇa*:

You should read in front of Hari
the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*
and the life story of the king
of Daityas,⁵³ Prahlāda, o king.

In the same text (*Padma-purāṇa*), in a section called the *Vyañjuli-māhātmya*, there is an instruction for this reading:

One should remain awake at night
and should listen to Vaiṣṇava
stories. The Gītā, the thousand
names of Viṣṇu, the Purāṇa
spoken by Śuka should be read
with great care for Hari's pleasure.

In another section of the same text (*Padma-purāṇa*):

O Ambariṣa! Listen to
the *Bhāgavata* spoken by
Śuka every day. Read it loud
with your own voice if you wish for
freedom from worldly existence.

⁵¹A preliminary ceremony for the Soma rite.

⁵²The "Armor of Nārāyaṇa."

⁵³The descendants of Diti, daughter of Dakṣa, wife of Kaśyapa, who were considered demons in Hindu mythology.

स्कान्दे प्रह्लादसंहितायां द्वारकामाहात्म्ये -

श्रीमद्भागवतं भक्त्या पठते हरिसन्निधौ ।
जागरे तत्पदं याति कुलवृन्दसमन्वितः ॥ २० ॥

गारुडे च

पूर्णः सो ऽयमतिशयः ।
अर्थो ऽयं ब्रह्मसूत्राणां भारतार्थविनिर्णयः ॥
गायत्रीभाष्यरूपो ऽसौ वेदार्थपरिवृंहितः ।
पुराणानां सामरूपः साक्षाद्भगवतोदितः ॥
द्वादशस्कन्धयुक्तो ऽयं शतविच्छेदसंयुतः ।
ग्रन्थो ऽष्टादशसाहस्रः श्रीमद्भागवताभिधः ॥ इति ।

ब्रह्मसूत्राणामर्थस्तेषामकृत्रिमभाष्यभूत इत्यर्थः । पूर्वं सूक्ष्मत्वेन मनस्य् आवि-
र्भूतं तदेव सङ्क्षिप्य सूत्रत्वेन पुनः प्रकटितम्पश्चाद्विस्तीर्णत्वेन साक्षाच्छ्रीभागवत-
मिति । तस्मात्तद्भाष्यभूते स्वतःसिद्धे तस्मिन् सत्यर्वचीनमन्यदन्येषां स्वस्वकपो-
लकल्पितं तदनुगतमेवादरणीयमिति गम्यते ।

In the *Skanda Purāṇa*, in the *Glorification of Dvārakā* from the *Hymns of Prahlāda*:

One who reads with devotion
the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* near
Hari while remaining awake
at night, goes to his abode
with his entire family. (20)

And in the *Garuḍa Purāṇa*:

Extremely full is this one.
It's the meaning of the Brahman
aphorisms; it ascertains
the meaning of the *Bhārata*.
It's a commentary on the
Gāyatrī mantra and expands
the meaning of the Vedas.
It is the Sāma Veda of
the Purāṇas and is spoken
by the Lord himself, It has twelve
branches, a hundred sections, and
eighteen thousand verses, and is
named the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*.

The meaning of “meaning of the Brahman aphorisms” is that it is not an artificial commentary. What initially appeared subtly in his mind was again manifested briefly as aphorisms. Later, that was elaborated directly as the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata*. Therefore, while it is the self-established commentary on those aphorisms, the commentaries of others are invented in their own skulls. However, those commentaries that follow it (the *Bhāgavata*) are to be respected. So it is understood.

भारतार्थविनिर्णयः

निर्णयः सर्वशास्त्राणां भारतं परिकीर्तितम् ।
 भारतं सर्ववेदाश्च तुलामारोपिताः पुरा ।
 देवैर्ब्रह्मादिभिः सर्वैर्ऋषिभिश्च समन्वितैः ॥
 व्यासस्यैवाज्ञया तत्र त्वत्यरिच्यत भारतम् ।
 महत्त्वाद्भारवत्त्वाच्च महाभारतमुच्यते ॥

इत्याद्युक्तलक्षणस्य भारतस्यार्थविनिर्णयो यत्र सः । श्रीभगवत्येव तात्पर्यं त-
 स्यापि । तदुक्तं मोक्षधर्मे नारायणीये श्रीवेदव्यासं प्रति जनमेजयेन

इदं शतसहस्राद्धिं भारताख्यानविस्तरात् ।
 आमथ्य मतिमन्थेन ज्ञानोदधिमनुत्तमम् ॥
 नवनीतं यथा दध्नी मलयाच्चन्दनं यथा ।
 आरण्यकं च वेदेभ्य ओषधिभ्यो ऽमृतं यथा ॥

Now, its ascertaining the meaning of the *Bhārata*:

The *Bhārata* is widely praised
as the conclusion of all scriptures.
And, before, all the Vedas were
considered equal to the
Bhārata by the gods headed
by Brahmā along with all sages.
By the order of Vyāsa
the *Bhārata* was elevated
because of its greatness (*mahattva*) and its
weightiness (*bhāravattva*) to the status of
being called *Mahābhārata*.⁵⁴

Thus, it (the *Bhāgavata*) is that in which one finds the conclusion
of the meaning of the *Bhārata* as described in the passage just cited.
And its intended meaning points only to the Lord. That is stated by
Janamejaya to Vedavyāsa in the *Mokṣadharmā* in the *Nārāyaṇīya*.⁵⁵

From the *Bhārata* narrative,
a hundred thousand verses long,
after churning with your mind's
churning stick this unsurpassed ocean
of knowledge, then, just as butter
comes from milk, just as sandalwood
comes from the Malaya hills,
just as the forest texts come from
the Vedas, just as nectar comes
from medicinal herbs, this

⁵⁴Sitanath Goswami identifies this last verse with *Mahābhārata*, *Ādiparvan*, 1.274. But, the previous verses (1.272-3) though different have the same implication as the ones given here. They are:

पुरा किल सुरैः सर्वैः समेत्य तुलया धृतम् ।
चतुर्भ्यः सरहस्येभ्यो वेदेभ्यो ह्यधिकं यदा ॥
तदा प्रभृति लोकेऽस्मिन् महाभारतमुच्यते ।

Before, indeed, all the suras,
gathering together, held it
as equal [to the Vedas]. When it became
greater than the four Vedas
with their secret parts, ever since
then, in this world it was called
the *Mahābhārata*.

⁵⁵Ma. Bhā., 12.331.24.

समुद्धृतमिदं ब्रह्मन् कथामृतमनुत्तमम् ।
 तपोनिधे त्वयोक्तं हि नारायणकथाश्रयम् ॥ (म. भा., १२.३३१.२४)
 इति ॥ २१ ॥

तथा च तृतीये

मुनिर्विवक्षुर्भगवद्गुणानां
 सखापि ते भारतमाह कृष्णः ।
 यस्मिन्नृणां ग्राम्यसुखानुवादै-
 र्मतिर्गृहीता नु हरेः कथायाम् ॥ इति (भाग., ३.५.१२)

तस्माद्गायत्रीभाष्यरूपो ऽसौ । तथैव हि विष्णुधर्मोत्तरादौ तद्व्याख्याने भगवान्
 एव विस्तरेण प्रतिपादितः । अत्र जन्माद्यस्य इत्यस्य व्याख्यानं च तथा दर्शयिष्यते ।
 वेदार्थपरिवृंहितः । वेदार्थस्य परिवृंहणं यस्मात् । तच्चोक्तमितिहासपुराणाभ्यामित्यादि ।
 पुराणानां सामरूपः । वेदेषु सामवत् स तेषु श्रेष्ठ इत्यर्थः । अतएव स्कान्दे

शतशोऽथ सहस्रैश्च किमन्यैः शास्त्रसङ्ग्रहैः ।
 न यस्य तिष्ठते गोहे शास्त्रं भागवतं कलौ ॥
 कथं स वैष्णवो ज्ञेयः शास्त्रं भागवतं कलौ ।

unsurpassed nectar of story
was raised up, o Brāhmaṇa,
spoken by you, o ocean of
austerity, the basis of
the story of Nārāyaṇa. (21)

So, too, in the Third Skandha:⁵⁶

The sage who wanted to describe
the qualities of the Lord,
that is, your friend Kṛṣṇa⁵⁷ indeed
who spoke the *Bhārata*,
in which by recounting vulgar joys⁵⁸
he gathered the minds of humans
into the story of Hari.

Therefore, it [the *Bhāgavata*] has the form of a commentary on the *Gāyatrī*.⁵⁹ So, too, in texts such as the *Viṣṇu-dharmottara*, in the explantion of the *Gāyatrī* the Lord himself is extensively established. Here the explanation of the statement “the birth and so forth [maintenance and destruction] of this [universe] (*janmādy asya*)” will be shown as well. It [the *Bhāgavata*] expands the meaning of the Vedas; from it the meaning of the Veda is expanded. And that is stated in the previous citation: “by the histories and ancient lore.” It is like the Sāma Veda of the Purāṇas. Being like the Sāma Veda among the Vedas means that it is the best. Therefore, in the Skanda Purāṇa it says:

What is the use of hundreds
or thousands of collections
of other scriptures, if in one’s
house the *Bhāgavata* scripture
is not present in the Age of Kali?
How can one be known as a Vaiṣṇava?

⁵⁶Bhāg., 3.5.12.

⁵⁷Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana.

⁵⁸*Grāmya-sukha-anuvāda* according to Baladeva means the duties of household life filled with examples using mice, cats, vultures, jackels and others. Rādhāmohana Gosvāmī says this about *grāmya-sukha-anuvāda*: first it is to engage those who are lusty, but then through the immediate criticism of vulgar joys the truth of the Lord is made known for their betterment. And thus it is shown that the *Bhāgavata*, whose subject is the meaning of the *Bhārata* and which consists completely of descriptions of the Lord, is better than the *Bhārata*.

⁵⁹aka. the *Sūrya-gāyatrī* or the *Brahma-gāyatrī*, Ṛg Veda, 3.62.10.

गृहे न तिष्ठते यस्य स विप्रः श्वपचाधमः ॥
 यत्र यत्र भवेद्विप्र शास्त्रं भागवतं कलौ ।
 तत्र तत्र हरिर्याति त्रिदशैः सह नारद ॥
 यः पठेत्प्रयतो नित्यं श्लोकं भागवतं मुने ।
 अष्टादशपुराणानां फलं प्राप्नोति मानवः ॥ इति ।

शतविच्छेदसंयुतः । पञ्चत्रिंशदधिकशतत्रयाध्यायविशिष्ट इत्यर्थः । स्पष्टार्थम-
 न्यत । तदेवं परमार्थविवित्सुभिः श्रीभागवतमेव साम्प्रतं विचारणीयमिति स्थितम् ।
 हेमाद्रेर्व्रतखण्डे

स्त्रीशूद्रद्विजबन्धूनां त्रयी न श्रुतिगोचरा ।
 कर्मश्रेयसि मूढानां श्रेय एवं भवेदिह ।
 इति भारतमाख्यानं कृपया मुनिना कृतम् ॥ (भाग. १.४.२५)

इति वाक्यं श्रीभागवतीयत्वेनोत्थाप्य भारतस्य वेदार्थतुल्यत्वेन निर्णयः कृत इति ।
 तन्मतानुसारेण त्वेवं व्याख्येयं भारतार्थस्य विनिर्णयः । वेदार्थतुल्यत्वेन विशिष्य
 निर्णयो यत्रेति । यस्मादेवं भगवत्परस्तस्मादेव यत्राधिकृत्य गायत्रीमिति कृतलक्ष-
 णश्रीमद्भागवतनामा ग्रन्थः श्रीभगवत्पराया गायत्र्या भाष्यरूपो ऽसौ । तदुक्तं यत्रा-
 धिकृत्य गायत्रीमित्यादि । तथैव ह्यग्निपुराणे तस्य व्याख्याने विस्तरेण प्रतिपादितः ।
 तत्र तदीयव्याख्यादिगदर्शनं यथा

A *brāhmaṇa* in whose house
 no *Bhāgavata* exists
 is a lower than a dog-eater.
 Wherever, o Brāhmaṇa, the
Bhāgavata is present,
 there Hari goes along with the gods,
 o Nārada. He who daily reads
 a verse of the *Bhāgavata*,
 gains, o sage, the results of
 reading all eighteen Purāṇas.

“Possessing a hundred sections” means having three hundred and thirty-five chapters. The meaning of the rest is clear. Therefore, the *Bhāgavata* alone is to be considered by those who are interested in knowing the absolute truth properly. This is established.

In the section on the subject of vows of Hemādri [the following verses from the *Bhāgavata* (1.4.25) are cited]:

The three Vedas are not the province
 of women, Śūdras, and friends of
 the twice-born.⁶⁰ For those ignorant
 in rites that are beneficial
 let them find benefit in this.
 Thus, the sage out of compassion
 wrote the *Bhārata* narrative.

Citing this statement as belonging to the *Bhāgavata*, it is confirmed [in the view of Hemādri] that the *Bhāgavata* recognizes the *Bhārata* as equal to the Vedas. In accordance with that view we should explain “ascertain the meaning of the *Bhārata*” as that in which the *Bhārata*’s meaning is ascertained specifically as equal to the meaning of the Vedas. Since the *Bhārata* is thus principally about the Lord, the text named the *Bhāgavata*, which is defined as “that in which the *Gāyatrī* is placed foremost,” has the form of a commentary on the *Gāyatrī* which itself is primarily about the Lord. That is supported by the phrase “that in which the *Gāyatrī* is placed foremost.” This is thus indeed established at length in its explanation in the *Agni Purāṇa*. On this subject a brief look at its explanation follows:

⁶⁰One who is ‘twice-born’ or a Brāhmaṇa by name and birth only and not by acts.

तज्ज्योतिः परमं ब्रह्म भर्गस्तेजो यतः स्मृतः ।

इत्यारभ्य पुनराह

तज्ज्योतिर्भगवान् विष्णुर्जगज्जन्मादिकारणम् ।
 शिवं केचित् पठन्ति स्म शक्तिरूपं पठन्ति च ॥
 केचित् सूर्यं केचिदग्निं दैवतान्यग्निहोत्रिणः ।
 अग्न्यादिरूपो विष्णुर्हि वेदादौ ब्रह्म गीयते ।

अत्र जन्माद्यस्य इत्यस्य व्याख्यानं च तथा दर्शयिष्यते । कस्मै येन विभासितोऽयम् (भाग. १२.१३.१९) इत्युपसंहारवाक्ये च तच्छुद्धम् (भाग. १२.१३.१९) इत्यादिसमानमेवाग्निपुराणे तद्व्याख्यानम् ।

नित्यं शुद्धं परं ब्रह्म नित्यभर्गमधीश्वरम् ।
 अहं ज्योतिः परं ब्रह्म ध्यायेम हि विमुक्तये ॥ इति ।

अत्राहं ब्रह्मेति नादेवो देवमर्चयेत् इति न्यायेन योग्यत्वाय स्वस्य तादृक्त्वभावना दर्शिता । ध्यायेमेति अहं तावद्ध्यायेयं सर्वं च वयं ध्यायेमेत्यर्थः । तदेतन्मते तु मन्त्रेऽपि भर्गशब्दोऽयमदनत एव स्यात् । सुपां सुलुक् इत्य् (पाण. ७.१.३९) आदिना छान्दससूत्रेण तु द्वितीयैकवचनस्यामः सुभावो ज्ञेयः ।

That light is the highest Brahman,
from which comes radiance, luster.
As such is it recalled.

Beginning with this, it says again:

That light is Lord Viṣṇu,
the cause of the birth of the world.
Some read Śiva and some Śakti.
Some say the Sun; some say the Fire.
The fire priests say other gods.
Fire's primal form is Viṣṇu,
in the Veda praised as Brahman.

And the interpretation of “the birth, [maintenance, and destruction] of this [world]” will be shown in that way later, in the *Bhāga-vata* verse (12.13.19): “By whom this was spoken to Brahmā,” and “on that pure, [spotless, free from sadness, immortal, highest being let us meditate].” Thus the interpretation of that [*gāyatrī*] is the same as in the *Agni Purāṇa*.

On the eternal, pure, supreme
Brahman, ever efulgent Lord
let me who am [also] light and Brahman,
meditate for liberation.

Here, with the statement “I am Brahman,” the process of thinking of oneself in that way is shown according to the logic that “one who is not divine should not worship the divine.” The word *dhyāyema*, “let us meditate,” [in the plural instead of singular] means “Let me on my part meditate and let us all meditate.” In the view of the *Agni Purāṇa* the word *bharga* should be a stem ending in *a*.⁶¹ But, by a Vedic grammatical aphorism of Pāṇini (7.1.39) it is to be known that the final *m* is replaced by a final *s* (*bhargas*).

⁶¹In other words, like other nominal stems ending in *a*, in the accusative case (*dvitīyā vibhakti*), as the object of the verb *dhīmahī*, it should end in an *m* (*bhargam*).

यत्तु द्वादशे ओं नमस्ते इत्यादि (भाग. १२.६.६७) गद्येषु तदर्थत्वेन सूर्यः स्तुतः । तत् परमात्मदृष्ट्यैव, न तु स्वातन्त्र्येणेत्यदोषः ।

तथैवाग्रे श्रीशौनकवाक्ये (१२.११.२८) ब्रूहि नः श्रद्धधानानां व्यूहं सूर्यात्मनो हरेः इति । न चास्य भर्गस्य सूर्यमण्डलमात्राधिष्ठानत्वम् । मन्त्रे वरेण्यशब्देन । अत्र च ग्रन्थे परशब्देन परमैश्वर्यपर्यन्तताया दर्शितत्वात् ।

तदेवमग्निपुराणे उप्युक्तम्

ध्यानेन पुरुषो ऽयं च द्रष्टव्यः सूर्यमण्डले ।

सत्यं सदाशिवं ब्रह्म विष्णोर्यत् परमं पदम् ॥ इति ।

त्रिलोकीजनानामुपासनार्थं प्रलये विनाशिनि सूर्यमण्डले चान्तर्यामितया प्रादुर्भूतो ऽयं पुरुषो ध्यानेन द्रष्टव्य उपासितव्यः । यत्तु विष्णोस्तस्य महावैकुण्ठरूपं परमं पदम् । तदेव सत्यं कालत्रयाव्यभिचारि, सदाशिवमुपद्रवशून्यं यतो ब्रह्मस्वरूपमित्यर्थः । तदेतद्गायत्रीं प्रोच्य पुराणलक्षणप्रकरणे यत्राधिकृत्य गायत्रीमित्याद्यप्युक्तमग्निपुराणे । तस्मात्

अग्नेः पुराणं गायत्रीं समेत्य भगवत्पराम् ।

भगवन्तं तत्र मत्वा जगज्जन्मादिकारणम् ॥

यत्राधिकृत्य गायत्रीमिति लक्षणपूर्वकम् ।

श्रीमद्भागवतं शश्वत्पृथ्व्यां जयति सर्वतः ॥

But the praise of the Sun god in the prose passages of the Twelfth Skandha (12.6.67) beginning with “oṃ I bow to you ...,” is to be taken as referring to the Higher Self (Paramātmān), not to the Sun independently. Thus they are faultless.

The same is true later in Śrī Śaunaka’s statement (12.11.28), “Tell us who are faithful about the expansion of Hari who is the Sun.” And this efulgence (*bharga*) is not merely located in the orb of the Sun because of the word “excellent” (*vareṇya*) in the [*gāyatrī*] mantra. And in this verse supreme lordship is shown by the word “supreme” (*para*).

Thus, in the *Agni Purāṇa* as well it is said:

And by meditation this person
is to be seen in the circle
of the Sun. Real, ever
auspicious, Brahman, which is
the highest abode of Viṣṇu.

For the sake of the people of the three worlds, when the sun is being destroyed at the time of the destruction of the universe and this Person has appeared as the inner controller [of the sun], he is to be seen through meditation and to be worshipped. But that supreme abode of Viṣṇu in the form of Mahāvaikuṇṭha is real, that is, unchanging in the three times (past, present and future). It is also free from misfortune or calamity since it is of the nature of Brahman. Then, after mentioning the Gāyatrī in the section defining the [*Bhāgavata*]-*Purāṇa*, it is mentioned again as “that [text] in which the Gāyatrī is foregrounded” in the *Agni Purāṇa*. Therefore:

Agreeing with the *Purāṇa*
of Agni that the Gāyatrī
is about the Lord and taking
the Lord as the cause the birth
of the universe, after
defining it as “that in which
the Gāyatrī is emphasized,”
the *Bhāgavata* is ever
victorious in all ways on earth.

तदेवमस्य शास्त्रस्य गायत्रीमधिकृत्य प्रवृत्तिर्दर्शिता ।
यत्तु सारस्वतकल्पमधिकृत्येति पूर्वमुक्तम् । तच्च गायत्र्या भगवत्प्रतिपादकवा-
ग्विशेषरूपसरस्वतीत्वादुपयुक्तमेव । यदुक्तमग्निपुराणे

गायत्र्युक्थानि शास्त्राणि भर्गं प्राणांस्तथैव च ॥
ततः स्मृतेयं गायत्री सावित्री यत एव च ।
प्रकाशिनी सा सवितुर्वाग्रूपत्वात् सरस्वती ॥

अथ क्रमप्राप्ता व्याख्या वेदार्थपरिवृंहित इति । वेदार्थानां परिवृंहणं यस्मात् । त-
च्चोक्तमितिहासपुराणाभ्यामिति । पुराणानां सामरूप इति वेदेषु सामवत् पुराणेषु श्रेष्ठ
इत्य् अर्थः । पुराणान्तराणां केषांचिदापाततो रजस्तमसी जुषमाणैस्तत्परत्वाप्रती-
तत्वे ऽपि वेदानां काण्डत्रयवाक्यैकवाक्यतायां यथा साम्ना तथा तेषां श्रीभागवतेन
प्रतिपाद्ये श्रीभगवत्येव पर्यवसानमिति भावः । तदुक्तम्-

वेदे रामायणे चैव पुराणे भारते तथा ।
आदावन्ते च मध्ये च हरिः सर्वत्र गीयते ॥ इति । (ह. व., १३२.९५)

प्रतिपादयिष्यते च तदिदं परमात्मसन्दर्भे । साक्षाद्भगवतोदितमिति । कस्मै येन
विभासितो ऽयम् (भाग., १२.१३.१९) इत्युपसंहारवाक्यानुसारेण ज्ञेयम् ।

Thus, the inclination to foreground the Gāyatrī of this scripture is shown.

What was said previously about its [the *Bhāgavata*'s] being of the Age of Sarasvatī is fitting since it refers to the Gāyatrī's "Sarasvatī" [the Goddess of Learning and Speech] in the form of particular language suitable for establishing the preeminence of the Lord. As it is said in the *Agni Purāṇa*:

It sings [reveals] the sacred texts,
radiance [Brahman], and the breaths [senses, *dhiyaḥ*];
thus it is known as Gāyatrī
and also as Sāvitrī since
Sarasvatī is its revealer
because she is the verbal form
of Savitṛ, the creator [Sun, Lord].

Now, in due order, the explanation of "supplemented the meaning of the Vedas." That from which the meaning of the Vedas have been supplemented, And that has been stated by the histories and ancient lore. "It is like the Sāma among the Purāṇas" means that like the Sāmaveda among the Vedas, it [the *Bhāgavata*] is the best among the Purāṇas. The focus on the Lord of some Purāṇas that at first glance appear to be qualified by translucence or opaqueness (*rajastamasī*, that is, not transparent [*sattva*]) is not perceived by those who favor them. Nevertheless, just as the Sāma Veda establishes a singularity of voice among the Vedas which variously speak of the three divisions (ritual, knowledge, and worship of the gods), so do the various Purāṇas wind up focused on the Lord who is established by the *Bhāgavata*. This is the idea here. That is stated [in the *Harivaṃśa*, 132.95]:

In the Veda, Rāmāyaṇa,
Purāṇa and Bhārata, too,
In the beginning and the end
as well as in the middle, too,
Hari is praised everywhere.

And this will be established in the *Paramātmā-sandarbha*⁶² It [the *Bhāgavata*] is directly spoken by the Lord, This is to be known according to the closing statement of the Purāṇa, "By whom this was spoken to Brahmā" ⁶³

⁶²The third treatise in the series focused on the Lord as related to the world.

⁶³Bhāg., 12.13.19.

शतविच्छेदसंयुत इति । विस्तारभिया न विविरियते । तदेवं श्रीमद्भागवतं सर्व-
शास्त्रचक्रवर्तिपदमाप्तमिति स्थिते हेमसिंहसमन्वितमित्त् अत्र हेमसिंहासनमारूढ-
मिति टीकाकारैर्यद्व्याख्यातं तदेव युक्तम् ।

अतः श्रीमद्भागवतस्यैवाभ्यासावश्यकत्वं श्रेष्ठत्वं च स्कान्दे निर्णीतम्- शतशो
ऽथ सहस्रैश्च किमन्यैः शास्त्रसङ्ग्रहैः । तदेवं परमार्थविवित्सुभिः श्रीभागवतमेव सा-
म्प्रतं विचारणीयमिति स्थितम् ॥ २२ ॥

अतएव सत्स्वपि नानाशास्त्रेष्वेतदेवोक्तम्- कलौ नष्टशामेष पुराणार्को ऽधुनो-
दितः (भाग. १.३.४५) इति । अर्कतारूपकेण तद्विना नान्येषां सम्यग्वस्तुप्रकाशक-
त्वमिति प्रतिपद्यते । यस्यैव श्रीमद्भागवतस्य भाष्यभूतं श्रीहयशीर्षपञ्चरात्रे शास्त्रप्र-
स्तावे गणितं तन्त्रभागवताभिधं तन्त्रम् । यस्य साक्षाच्छ्रीहनुमद्भाष्यवासनाभाष्यस-
म्बन्धोक्तिविद्वत्कामधेनुतत्त्वदीपिकाभावार्थदीपिकापरमहंसप्रियाशुक्लहृदयादयो व्या-
ख्याग्रन्थाः । तथा मुक्ताफलहरिलीलाभक्तिरत्नावल्यादयो निबन्धाश्च विविधा एव
तत्तन्मतप्रसिद्धमहानुभावकृता विराजन्ते । यदेव च हेमाद्रिग्रन्थस्य दानखण्डे पुरा-
णदानप्रस्तावे मत्स्यपुराणीयतल्लक्षणधृत्या प्रशस्तम् । हेमाद्रिपरिशेषखण्डस्य का-
लनिर्णये च कलियुगधर्मनिर्णये कलिं सभाजयन्त्यार्याः (भाग. ११.५.३६) इत्या-
दिकं यद्वाक्यत्वेनोत्थाप्य यत् प्रतिपादितधर्म एव कलावङ्गीकृतः । अथ यदेव कै-
वल्यमप्यतिक्रम्य भक्तिसुखव्याहारादिलिङ्गेन निजमतस्याप्युपरि विराजमानार्थं म-
त्वा यदपौरुषेयं वेदान्तव्याख्यानं भयादचालयतैव शङ्करावतारतया प्रसिद्धेन वक्ष्य-
माणस्वगोपनादिहेतुकभगवदाज्ञाप्रवर्तिताद्वयवादेनापि तन्मात्रवर्णितविश्वरूपदर्श-
नकृतव्रजेश्वरीविस्मयश्रीव्रजकुमारीवसनचौर्यादिकं गोविन्दाष्टकादौ वर्णयता तट-
स्थीभूय निजवचःसाफलयाय स्पृष्टमिति ॥ २३ ॥

The description “having a hundred sections” is not expanded on out of fear of enlarging the text. Therefore, the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* has achieved the dignity of being the emperor of all scriptures. In that position, the commentators’ interpretation of “along with a golden lion” as “mounted on a golden lion throne” is thoroughly justified.

Thus, the necessity of studying the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* and its superiority is ascertained in the *Skanda Purāṇa* with “what is the need for hundreds and thousands of other collections of scriptures.” Thus it is established that those who want to know the highest truth should investigate the *Śrīmad Bhāgavata* immediately. (22)

beginning para23

तत्र जीवस्य तादृशचिद्रूपत्वे ऽपि परमेश्वरतो वैलक्षण्यं तदपाश्रयामिति, यया सम्मोहित इति च दर्शयति ॥ ३४ ॥

यर्ह्येव यदेकं चिद्रूपं ब्रह्म मायाश्रयतावलितं विद्यामयं तर्ह्येव तन्मायाविषयतापन्नमविद्यापरिभूतं चेत्ययुक्तमिति जीवेश्वरविभागो ऽवगतः । ततश्च स्वरूपसामर्थ्य-वैलक्ष्येण तद्वितयं मिथो विलक्षणस्वरूपमेवेत्यागतम् ॥ ३५ ॥

न चोपाधितारतम्यमयपरिच्छेदप्रतिबिम्बत्वादिव्यवस्थया तयोर्विभागः स्यात् ॥ ३६ ॥

तत्र यद्युपाधेरनाविद्यकत्वेन वास्तवत्वं तर्ह्यविषयस्य तस्य परिच्छेदविषयत्वासम्भवः । निर्धर्मकस्य व्यापकस्य निरवयवस्य च प्रतिबिम्बत्वायोगो ऽपि । उपाधिसम्बन्धाभावात् बिम्बप्रतिबिम्बभेदाभावात्, दृश्यत्वाभावाच्च । उपाधिपरिच्छिन्नाकाशस्थज्योतिरंशस्येव प्रतिबिम्बो दृश्यते, न त्वाकाशस्य दृश्यत्वाभावादेव ॥ ३७ ॥

There, in that verse (i.e., Bhāg. 1.7.4-5), though the living being *jīva* has that same sort of conscious form, it is shown that its distinction (that is, differing definition, *vailakṣaṇya*) from the supreme lord is that *māyā* is dependent on the supreme lord (*tadapāśrayatām*) and the living being is confused or deluded by that same *māyā* (*yayā sammohitaḥ*). (34)

When Brahman is one, of conscious form, the basis or support of *māyā*, and made of knowledge, then the idea that it is the object of *māyā* and overpowered by ignorance is not correct. Thus, the distinction of the living being from the controller is understood. And thus, because of a distinction in essential capacity, those two (living being and lord) have mutually distinct natures. (35)

Nor can the distinction between the two be due to a hierarchy of adjuncts such as delimitation and reflection. (36)

Various and Sundry Notes

Early Interpretations of *Kṛṣṇa-varṇa* Verse

The verse *kṛṣṇa-varṇam* was not associated with or recognized as a reference to Śrī Caitanya until Śrī Jīva's generation. In fact, he may have been the first to discover Śrī Caitanya in the verse. Śrīnātha Cakravartin, who may have been the first of Śrī Caitanya's followers to write a commentary on the *Bhāgavata*, followed Śrīdhara's interpretation which is as follows:

”He rejects dryness or aridity. By his color or splendor (*tvīṣā*), that is, by his physical beauty, he is not dark, that is, he shines like a sapphire. Or, by his color or splendor he is blue-black, in other words the descent Kṛṣṇa. By this he demonstrates the predominance of the Kṛṣṇa descent in the Age of Kali. Limbs means heart, and so forth. Sub-limbs means the Kaustubha jewel and so forth. Weapons means Sudarśana and so forth. And companions means Sunanda and the rest. *Yajña* means rites of worship. *Saṅkīrtana* means repeating the holy names and hymns in praise of Kṛṣṇa. The rites of worship have those things as their main elements. Intelligent means those with discrimination.”⁶⁴

Clearly, Śrīdhara considered this verse to refer to Śrī Kṛṣṇa and argues that Śrī Kṛṣṇa, though he appeared at the end of the Dvāpara

⁶⁴Śrīdhara Svāmīn on *Bhāg.* 11.5.32: रूक्षतां व्यावर्तयति — त्विषा कान्त्या ऽकृष्णमिन्द्रनीलमणिवदुज्ज्वलम्। यद्वा त्विषा कृष्णं कृष्णावतारम्। अनेन कलौ कृष्णावतारस्य प्राधान्यं दर्शयति। अङ्गानि हृदयादीनि। उपाङ्गानि कौस्तुभादीनि। अस्त्राणि सुदर्शनादीनि। पार्षदाः सुनन्दादयः तत्सहितम्। यज्ञैरर्चनेः। सङ्कीर्तनं नामोच्चारणं स्तुतिश्च तत्प्रधानैः। सुमेधसो विवेकिनः

Age, was the dominant object of worship in the Age of Kali. Śrīnātha and Sanātana Gosvāmin agree with him.

Here is what Śrīnātha Cakravartin has to say about this *kṛṣṇavarṇam* verse:

Kṛṣṇa-varṇa, the one whose qualities are *kṛṣṇa*. What are those qualities? "Kṛṣṇa is Bhagavān himself;" "Kṛṣṇ conveys existence and *ṇa* conveys joy. The unity of the two signifies the highest Brahman, Kṛṣṇa." Such are the qualities of the word *kṛṣṇa*. *Kṛṣṇa-varṇa*, thus, means the one in whom are found the qualities of the word *kṛṣṇa*. It is a compound in which the middle word [*śabda*] is elided. Even in color is that one *kṛṣṇa*, that is, the blue-black color of new clouds. Or, if the word is *akṛṣṇa*, then it means only slightly blue-black because of shining so brightly. Or, the blue-black color of the blue lotus. Or, by *tviṣā* is meant light. Thus it refers to Kṛṣṇa, who is Bhagavān himself, qualified in the fullest manner by Brahman whose form is light. Then *kṛṣṇa-varṇa* can be explained simply as blue (*nila*), since the *Amara-koṣa* assigns the words *śyāma*, *asita*, and *nila* to *kṛṣṇa* as synonyms.

His limbs are everything up to his discus and so forth. His sub-limbs are the Kaustubha jewel and the rest. His companions are his friends, Dāma and the others. By *yajña* is meant "those things that are worshiped," in other words, his actions like lifting Govardhana and such. Or, *yajñas* are things creating good will and those are his sports like the Rāsa Dance with the Gopīs. They worship by means of these kinds of *yajñas*. Because they are eternal, they worship him by means of these. This is the meaning. And how is that done? Primarily by singing praises, that is, they take to singing his praises (*saṅkīrtana*). Thus it is said (Bhāg. 9.24.61):

To show his grace to his *bhaktas*
he spreads his most auspicious fame,
which destroys the sadness, lamentation,
and darkness of those who will be born
in the Age of Kali.

In the Age of Kali, songs of his fame are most appropriate. The intelligent (*sumedhas*) are those in whose knowledge

are songs of his fame.⁶⁵

Here is what Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmin says in his commentary on this verse when it appears in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*:

Tviṣā means "by color" [or splendor] not dark, which means shining like a sapphire. Thus, does he [the author of the *Bhāgavata*] exclude dreariness. Or, it means "Kṛṣṇa endowed with splendor" whereby he shows the centrality of the Kṛṣṇa descent then [in Kali]. Limbs means heart and so forth, sub-limbs means the Kaustubha and such. Weapons means Sudarśana and so forth. Companions means Sunanda and the others. Kṛṣṇa [is worshiped along] with all of those things. By the more exclusive (*ekāntin*) view—sub-limbs means the flute, etc., weapons means his herding stick, and companions means Śrīdāma. The rest is like before. *Yajña* means rites of worship; *sankīrtana* means pronouncing the holy names, songs, and prayers composed of the holy names. The rites of worship are mostly made up of that *sankīrtana*. Intelligent people means those who have discrimination. Thus, too, in the Age of Kali the superiority of *sankīrtana* of the holy names over *pūjā* is established, because of the impossibility of purification of the substances [used in *pūjā*] and so forth and because of its [*sankīrtana*'s] special greatness according to the reasons written. This is the direction interpretation should take.⁶⁶

⁶⁵Śrīnātha Cakravartin, *Śrī Śrīcaitanyamatamañjuṣā*, on *Bhāg.* 11.5.32: कृष्ण इति वर्णा गुणा यस्य। के ते गुणाः ? (भाग. १.३.२८)

कृष्णास्तु भगवान् स्वयम्

कृषिर्भूवाचकः शब्दो णश्च निर्वृतिवाचकः।

तयोरैकं परं ब्रह्म कृष्ण इत्यभिधीयते ॥

इत्यादिकृष्णशब्दगुणाः ; कृष्णेतिशब्दस्य गुणा यत्रेति मध्यपद लोपी समासः। त्विषा ऽपि कृष्णं नवधनश्यामम्, अकृष्णमत्युज्ज्वलत्वादीषत्कृष्णम्, इन्दीवरश्याममिति वा। यद्वा त्विषा ज्योतिषा ज्योतिरूपेण ब्रह्मणा परिपूर्णभावेन विशिष्टं कृष्णं स्वयं भगवन्तम्। तर्हि कृष्णवर्णमिति नीलमिति व्याख्येयम्। कृष्णे नीलासितश्याम इत्याद्यमरः। अङ्गानि आचक्रादीन्युपाङ्गानि कौस्तुभादीनि पार्षदाः सखायो दामादयो यज्ञैरित्यादि इज्यन्ते ऽमीति यज्ञाश्चरितानि गोवर्धनोद्धरणादीनि। अथवा यज्ञा मैत्रिकरणानि तानि च गोपीभिः सह रासविलासादीनि तैर्यजन्ति, नित्यत्वात्तस्यैव चरितैस्तं यजन्तीत्यर्थः। तत् कथमित्याह— सङ्कीर्तनप्रायैः सङ्कीर्तनं त्रैतीति तथा तैः, अत उक्तम् (भा.. ९..२४..६१)

कलौ जनिष्यमाणानां दुःखशोकतमोनुदम्।

अनुग्रहाय भक्तानां सुपुण्यं व्यतनोद्यशः ॥ इति

कलौ तद्यशसो गानमुपपन्नमेव। सुमेधस इति येषां हि मेधायां तद्यशोगानं भवति ॥

⁶⁶त्विषा कान्त्या अकृष्णमिन्द्रनीलमणिवदुज्ज्वलमिति रुक्षतां व्यावर्तयति ; यद्वा, त्विषा विशिष्टं कृष्णमिति श्रीकृष्णावतारस्य तत्र प्राधान्यं दर्शयति। अङ्गानि हृद्यादीनि, उपाङ्गानि कौस्तुभादीनि, अस्त्राणि सुदर्शनादीनि। पार्षदाः सुनन्दादयः। तत्सहितम्। एकान्तिपक्षे—उपाङ्गानि वेष्णादीनि, अस्त्राणि यष्ट्यादीनि, पार्षदाः श्रीदामादय इति पूर्ववद् विज्ञेयम्। यज्ञैः अ-

र्चनैः, सङ्कीर्तनं नामोच्चारणं, गीतं स्तुतिश्च नाममयी, तत्प्रधानैः, सुमेधसः विवेकिनः, एवमपि कलौ पूजातः श्रीमन्नामसङ्कीर्तनस्य माहात्म्यमेव सिद्धम्, द्रव्यशुद्ध्यादेरसम्भवात्, लिखितन्यायेन माहात्म्यविशेषाच्चेति दिक् ॥