

SRIMAD BHAGAVATAM

CHAPTER 18, VOLUME 4

THE MILKING OF THE EARTH

PREFACE

The plundering of the earth indiscriminately by the people hampers the production of food required for the living beings in times to come. This leads to a situation whereby the future generation of the living beings will have to go without food.

These concepts are being highlighted through this chapter in great detail. How the earth pleads before the emperor Prthu and the solutions presented by the earth are really marvelous.

Stanza 1

*maitreya uvāca
itthaṁ pṛthum abhiṣṭūya
ruṣā prasphuritādharam
punar āhāvanir bhītā
saṁstabhyātmānam ātmanā*

*(maitreya uvāca) Maitreya Maharshi said to Vidura:
(bhītā) The terrified (avaniḥ) Goddess Earth (saṁstabhya)
settled down (ātmanā) herself (ātmānam) by her own efforts
(abhiṣṭūya) after praising (itthaṁ) in this manner (pṛthum)
emperor Prthu, (prasphuritādharam) whose lips were quivering
(ruṣā) due to anger, (punar āha) and thereafter she continued
her statements.*

Stanza 2

*sanniyacchābhibho manyuṃ
nibodha śrāvitaṃ ca me
sarvataḥ sāram ādatte
yathā madhu-karo budhaḥ*

(abhibho) “Hey the great personality! (sanniyacch) Please control (manyuṃ) your anger. (nibodha) Please understand (me) what I am (śrāvitaṃ ca) trying to convey to you. (budhaḥ) An intelligent person (ādatte) extracts (sāram) the essence (of truth) (sarvataḥ) from all the places (madhu-karaḥ yathā) just like the bee.

Note : Through the following three stanzas the earth is presenting before the emperor Prthu the solutions to initiate life into those numbed seeds of food grains and other plants which have been lying inside her. She is also presenting the greatness of those tested methods of solutions applied by the wise ancestors.

Stanza 3

*asmiṃ loke ’thavāmuṣṃin
munibhis tattva-darśibhiḥ
dr̥ṣṭā yogāḥ prayuktāś ca
puṃsāṃ śreyah-prasiddhaye*

(śreyah-prasiddhaye) In order to obtain the right kind of benefits (puṃsāṃ) for the people (asmiṃ loke) in this world (athavā) or (amuṣṃin) even in the other world, (yogāḥ) the necessary solutions (or the method of carrying out the right kind of deeds) (dr̥ṣṭāḥ) have been visualized (prayuktāḥ ca) and even put into practice (munibhiḥ) by the great saints (tattva-darśibhiḥ) who were capable of perceiving the truth.

Stanza 4

*tān ātiṣṭhati yaḥ samyag
upāyān pūrva-darśitān
avarah śraddhayopeta
upeyān vindate 'ñjasā*

(yaḥ) When a person (avarah) of the subsequent times (ātiṣṭhati) implements (tān) those (upāyān) methods of finding solutions (pūrva-darśitān) as shown by the ancestors (samyak) strictly in accordance with the laid down prescriptions (upetaḥ) and with (śraddhayā) due attention, (vindate) such a person shall attain (upeyān) the desired results (añjasā) very easily.

Stanza 5

*tān anādr̥tya yo 'vidvān
arthān ārabhate svayam
tasya vyabhicaranty arthā
ārabdhās ca punaḥ punaḥ*

(yaḥ) When a person (avidvān) who does not have the required intelligence (anādr̥tya) ignores to implement (tān) those methods of finding solutions as shown by the ancestors (ārabhate) and starts (arthān) those deeds (svayam) all by himself (tasya arthaḥ) all his efforts (vyabhicaranti) shall become faulty (ārabdhāḥ ca) even if he attempts to start them (punaḥ punaḥ) over and over again.

Note : Through the following six stanzas the earth is presenting the necessary solutions with very good reasoning.

Stanza 6

*purā sr̥ṣṭā hy oṣadhayo
brahmaṇā yā viśāmpate
bhujyamānā mayā dr̥ṣṭā
asadbhir adhr̥ta-vrataiḥ*

(viśāmpate) Hey the emperor! (hi) That is because, {referring to the non availability of food grains at the present times} (yāḥ) some of those (oṣadhayaḥ) plant materials (sr̥ṣṭāḥ) which had been created (brahmaṇā) by Lord Brahma (purā) earlier, (bhujyamānāḥ) were being enjoyed (asadbhiḥ) by the people of inappropriate character (adhr̥ta-vrataiḥ) who had not imbibed the required wisdom of Vedic knowledge unlike their ancestors.

(dr̥ṣṭā) I have seen this (mayā) for myself.

Stanza 7

*apālitānādr̥tā ca
bhavadbhir loka-pālakaiḥ
corī-bhūte 'tha loke 'ham
yajñārthe 'grasam oṣadhīḥ*

(bhavadbhiḥ) The persons (loka-pālakaiḥ) who were the kings responsible to administer their kingdoms, (apālitā) could not take necessary measures to prevent the thieves, (anādr̥tā ca) and further, I (the earth) was dishonoured due to the non conduct of the prescribed offerings of worship as per Vedic norms.

(atha) In due course of time, (loke) when the world (corī-bhūte) became filled with thieves, (aham) I (agrasam) withdrew (oṣadhīḥ) these plants within myself (yajñārthe) keeping in mind their utility for the purpose of offerings in worship.

Stanza 8

*nūnaṃ tā vīrudhaḥ kṣīṇā
mayi kālena bhūyasā
tatra yogena dr̥ṣṭena
bhavān ādātum arhati*

(tā vīrudhaḥ) Those plants (kṣīṇāḥ) might have lost their vitality (mayi) as they have remained within me (bhūyasā) for a long (kālena) duration of time. (arhati) I request (bhavān) you (ādātum) to retrieve them (tatra) by applying on them (yogena) the means of solutions (dr̥ṣṭena) as shown by our ancestors.

Stanza 9

*vatsaṃ kalpaya me vīra
yenāhaṃ vatsalā tava
dhoksyē kṣīramayān kāmān
anurūpaṃ ca dohanam*

Stanza 10

*dogdhāraṃ ca mahā-bāho
bhūtānāṃ bhūta-bhāvana
annam īpsitam ūrjasvad
bhagavān vāñchate yadi*

(vīra) Hey the valorous emperor! (mahā-bāho) Hey the most powerful! (bhūta-bhāvana) Hey the protector of the living beings!

(yadi) If (bhagavān) your great personality (vāñchate) is desirous of (annam) ensuring the suitable food materials (bhūtānāṃ) for the living beings, (īpsitam) according to their liking (ūrjasvat) and providing the necessary nourishment to them,

(kalpaya) you must arrange (me) for my sake (anurūpaṁ) an appropriate (vatsaṁ) calf, (dohanam ca) the milking vessel (dogdhāraṁ ca) and the milkman.

(yena) Through these arrangements (ahaṁ) I (dhokṣye) shall be able to fulfil (vatsalā) with love and affection (tava) to you

(kāmān) all your requirements (kṣīramayān) which will have in them the milk content (complete nourishment) to the fullest extent.

Stanza 11

*samāṁ ca kuru māṁ rājan
deva-vr̥ṣṭaṁ yathā payaḥ
apartāv api bhadrāṁ te
upāvarteta me vibho*

(vibho) Hey the most capable person! (rājan) Hey the emperor!

(yathā) The manner in which (payaḥ) the rainwater (deva-vr̥ṣṭaṁ) showered down by the rain-God during the rainy season (upāvarteta) can be held in retention (me) within me

(apartau api) even after the passing away of the rainy season, (kuru) you must make way for such retention of water within me (samāṁ ca) by evenly structuring (māṁ) my surface.

(te bhadrāṁ) Let good things happen to you.”

Stanza 12

*iti priyaṁ hitaṁ vākyaṁ
bhūva ādāya bhūpatiḥ
vatsaṁ kṛtvā manuṁ pāṇāv
aduhat sakalauśadhīḥ*

(bhūpatiḥ) The emperor Prthu, (ādāya) after accepting (priyam) these satisfying (hitam) and benefits endowing (vākyam) statements (bhuvaḥ) of the goddess Earth (iti) in this manner (kṛtvā) invoked (manum) Swayambhuva Manu (vatsam) as the calf, (aduhat) and milked (pāṇau) in his palm (sakalauśadhīḥ) all the wealth of the seeds and plants from the earth.

Stanza 13

**tathāpare ca sarvatra
sāram ādadate budhāḥ
tato 'nye ca yathā-kāmaṁ
duduhuḥ pṛthu-bhāvitām**

{ (pare) All other (budhāḥ ca) intelligent persons (ādadate) obtain for themselves (sāram) what is the ultimate essence (sarvatra) in everything (tatā) by following the manner in which the emperor Prthu conducted himself. }

(tataḥ) Subsequently, (yathā-kāmaṁ) according to their own respective desires, (anye ca) all others also (duduhuḥ) milked the earth (pṛthu-bhāvitām) who complied to the wishes of Prthu in the form of a cow.

Note : The first part of the statement made in Stanza 13 is a statement of principle which has been conveyed as a matter of coincidence. The emperor Prthu was wise enough to understand the inherent meaning conveyed by the goddess Earth. (Refer to the meaning of Stanza 2 above). This enabled him to calm himself down and work according to the sincere advices conveyed by the earth. All the intelligent persons in the world are capable of understanding the principle conveyed by the earth. Therefore the first part in this stanza 13 is a statement of fact applicable to all

the intelligent persons as an ideal principle to be applied upon themselves.

Through the following stanza the subsequent milking processes are being described.

Stanza 14

*r̥ṣayo duduhur devīm
indriyeṣv atha sattama
vatsaṁ br̥haspatiṁ kṛtvā
payaś chandomayaṁ śuci*

*(sattama) Hey the greatest among the good people (Vidura) !
(atha) Thereafter, (r̥ṣayaḥ) the saints (kṛtvā) invoked
(br̥haspatiṁ) Brhaspati (vatsaṁ) as the calf.
(duduhuh) They milked (devīm) from the Goddess Earth
(indriyeṣu) in the vessels of the sense organs (śuci payah) the
purest milk (chandomayaṁ) in the form of the Vedic
knowledge.*

Note : The inheriting of the Vedic knowledge within one's mind is through reciting them with the words of expression and listening such expression of words through the sense of hearing. Therefore, for the purpose of milking the Vedic knowledge the saints determined the sense organs as the appropriate vessel.

Stanza 15

*kṛtvā vatsaṁ sura-gaṇā
indraṁ somam adūduhan
hiraṇmayena pātrena
vīryam ojo balaṁ payah*

*(sura-gaṇāḥ) The demigods (kṛtvā) invoked (indram) Lord
Indra (vatsam) as the calf, (hiraṇmayena) and in the golden
(pātreṇa) vessel (adūduhan) milked from the earth (payaḥ) such
milk
(somam) which is the form of the pure nectar of Amrit known
as the Somaras,
(vīryam) providing energy to the mind,
(ojaḥ) providing strength to the sense organs,
(balam) and giving immense powers to the body.*

Stanza 16

*daiteyā dānavā vatsam
prahlādam asurarṣabham
vidhāyādūduhan kṣīram
ayaḥ-pātre surāsavam*

*(daiteyā) The demon categories of people who were the
descendants of Diti (dānavā) as well as Dhanu, (vidhāya)
invoked (prahlādam) Prahlada, (asurarṣabham) the greatest
personality in their group, (vatsam) as the calf (adūduhan) and
milked from the earth (kṣīram) the milk (ayaḥ-pātre) in the
iron vessel (surāsavam) in the form of the intoxicating drinks
such as Sura and Asava.*

Stanza 17

*gandharvāpsaraso 'dhukṣan
pātre padmamaye payaḥ
vatsam viśvāvasum kṛtvā
gāndharvam madhu saubhagam*

*(gandharvāpsarasah) The Gandharvas and the Apsaras women,
(kṛtvā) invoked (viśvāvasum) Vishwavasu (vatsam) as the calf*

*(adhukṣan) and milked from the earth (payaḥ) the milk (pātre)
in the vessel (padmamaye) of lotus flower
(gāndharvaṃ) in the form the songs, (madhu) the sweetness of
conversation (saubhagam) and beauty.*

Stanza 18

*vatsena pitaro 'ryamṇā
kavyaṃ kṣīram adhukṣata
āma-pātre mahā-bhāgāḥ
śraddhayā śrāddha-devatāḥ*

*(pitaraḥ) The forefathers, (mahā-bhāgāḥ) who were highly
experienced (śrāddha-devatāḥ) and were the demigods of the
departed ancestors, (aryamṇā) invoked Aryama (vatsena) as
the calf (adhukṣata) and milked from the earth (kṣīram) the
milk (āma-pātre) in the mud pot (raw and unbaked)
(śraddhayā) with care and attention
(kavyaṃ) in the form of their food.*

Stanza 19

*prakalpya vatsaṃ kapilaṃ
siddhāḥ saṅkalpanāmayīm
siddhiṃ nabhasi vidyāṃ ca
ye ca vidyādharaḥ*

*(siddhāḥ) The Sidhas (prakalpya) invoked (kapilaṃ) the saint
Kapila (vatsaṃ) as the calf (duduhuḥ) and milked from the
earth the milk (nabhasi) in the vessel of space (saṅkalpanāmayīm
) in the form of all the eight yogic perfections (namely yama,
niyama, āsana, prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhāraṇā, dhyāna and samādhi)
which can be exercised according to their own will.
(vidyādharaḥ ye ca) In the same manner, as far as the
Vidyadharas were concerned, (duduhuḥ) they milked from*

the earth the milk (vidyām ca) in the form of knowledge relating to their capacity to travel through space. (They also invoked the saint Kapila as the calf and used the space as their vessel as did by the Siddhas).

Stanza 20

*anye ca māyino māyām
antardhānādbhutātmanām
mayām prakalpya vatsam te
duduhur dhāraṇāmayīm*

(anye te) The others (māyinaḥ ca) such as the persons with mystic powers, (antardhānādbhutātmanām) who engage themselves in the pursuit of knowledge of their own disappearance from the sight of others, (prakalpya) invoked (mayām) Mayan (vatsam) as the calf (duduhuh) and milked from the earth (māyām) the milk in the form of the mystic knowledge (antardhānādbhutātmanām) enabling them to assume any form as per their wish.

Stanza 21

*yakṣa-rakṣāṃsi bhūtāni
piśācāḥ piśitāsanāḥ
bhūteśa-vatsā duduhuh
kapāle kṣatajāsavam*

(yakṣa-rakṣāṃsi) The Yakshas, the Rakshas, (bhūtāni) the ghosts, (piśācāḥ) the witches, (piśitāsanāḥ) and all others who are habituated eating only flesh, (bhūteśa-vatsāḥ) invoked Rudra as the calf (duduhuh) and milked the earth (kapāle) in the vessel of skull (kṣatajāsavam) the milk in the form of the intoxicating drink of blood.

Stanza 22

*tathāhayo dandaśūkāḥ
sarpā nāgāś ca takṣakam
vidhāya vatsam duduhur
bila-pātre viṣam payaḥ*

(*tathā*) In the same manner, (*ahayaḥ*) the snakes without hoods, (*dandaśūkāḥ*) the smaller category of poisonous creatures like the scorpions etc., (*sarpāḥ*) the snakes with hoods,

(*nāgāḥ ca*) and the divine serpents (*vidhāya*) invoked (*takṣakam*) Takshaka (the chief of snakes) (*vatsam*) as the calf (*duduhur*) and milked from the earth (*viṣam payaḥ*) the milk in the form of poison (*bila-pātre*) within the vessel of their potholes of poisons.

Stanza 23

*paśavo yavasam kṣīram
vatsam kṛtvā ca go-vṛṣam
araṇya-pātre cādhuḥṣan
mṛgendreṇa ca damṣṭriṇaḥ*

Stanza 24

*kravyādāḥ prāṇinaḥ kravyam
duduhur sve kalevare
suparṇa-vatsā vihagāś
caram cācaram eva ca*

(*paśavaḥ*) The animals who eat green vegetation (*kṛtvā*) invoked (*go-vṛṣam*) the bull, the carrier of Lord Shiva, (*vatsam*) as the calf (*araṇya-pātre*) and in the vessel of the forests

(*adhukṣan*) milked from the earth (*yavasam ca*) the milk in the form of green grass.

(*kravyādāḥ*) As far as the flesh eating (*prāṇinaḥ*) animals (*daṁṣṭriṇaḥ*) with sharp teeth (*ca*) are concerned , (*mrgendreṇa*) they invoked the lion as the calf (*duduhuh*) and milked from the earth (*kṣīram*) the milk (*kravyam ca*) in the form of flesh (*sve*) within their own bodies.

(*vihagāḥ*) The birds (*suparṇa-vatsāḥ*) invoked Garuda as the calf (*ca*) and milked from the earth (*caram*) the milk in the form of worms and insects (*acaram eva*) as well as the fruits and roots.

Stanza 26

*vata-vatsā vanaspatayah
prthag rasamayaṁ payah
girayo himavad-vatsā
nānā-dhātūn sva-sānuṣu*

(*vanaspatayah*) The trees (*vata-vatsāḥ*) invoked the banyan tree as the calf (*duduhuh*) and milked from the earth (*payah*) the milk (*prthak*) in the form of several (*rasamayaṁ*) juicy contents. (*girayah*) The mountains (*himavad-vatsāḥ*) invoked the Himalayas as the calf (*duduhuh*) and milked from the earth (*nānā-dhātūn*) the milk in the form of different kinds of minerals (*sva-sānuṣu*) in their own respective mountain ridges.

Note : Through the stanzas 9 and 10 the goddess Earth conveys to Prthu as to how she shall bestow the prosperities to all the beings. The following stanza concludes with a generalised final statement the process of extracting from the earth in the form of milk for

various categories of living beings, including the people of other planets.

Stanza 26

*sarve sva-mukhya-vatsena
sve sve pātre pṛthak payaḥ
sarva-kāma-dughām pṛthvīm
duduhuḥ pṛthu-bhāvitām*

(sarve) All others (sva-mukhya-vatsena) invoked their own respective important personalities as their calf (duduhuḥ) and milked (pātre) in the vessels (sve sve) of their own convenience (payaḥ) the milk as per their requirement (pṛthak) separately (pṛthvīm) from the earth (sarva-kāma-dughām) which now was in a position to bestow all the prosperities (pṛthu-bhāvitām) and which fully complied to the wishes of the emperor Prthu.

Stanza 27

*evaṁ pṛthv-ādayaḥ pṛthvīm
annādāḥ svannam ātmanaḥ
doha-vatsādi-bhedena
kṣīra-bhedaṁ kurūdvaha*

(kurūdvaha) Hey Vidura ! (evaṁ) In this manner, (annādāḥ) the seekers of food (pṛthv-ādayaḥ) such as Prthu and all others (duduhuḥ) milked (pṛthvīm) from the earth (svannam) their respective important food items (ātmanaḥ) for themselves (kṣīra-bhedaṁ) in the form of different categories of milk (doha-vatsādi-bhedena) by making use of different kinds of vessels, calves etc.

Stanza 28

*tato mahīpatiḥ prītaḥ
sarva-kāma-dughām̐ pṛthuh
duhitṛtve cakāremām̐
preṇṇā duhitṛ-vatsalaḥ*

**(tataḥ) Thereafter, (prītaḥ) the extremely happy
(pṛthuh mahīpatiḥ) emperor Prthu, (preṇṇā) because of his love
(imām̐) towards the earth, (sarva-kāma-dughām̐) who gave in
plenty of varied prosperities, (duhitṛ-vatsalaḥ) showed such an
affection as if she was his own daughter (cakāra) and
accepted the earth (duhitṛtve) as his daughter.**

Stanza 29

*cūrṇayan sva-dhanuṣ-kotyā
giri-kūṭāni rāja-rāt
bhū-maṇḍalam idaṁ vainyaḥ
prāyaś cakre samam̐ vibhuḥ*

**(rāja-rāt) The emperor (vainyaḥ) Prthu, (vibhuḥ) the
personification of all the good qualities, (samam̐ cakre)
levelled up evenly (prāyaś) most (idaṁ bhū-maṇḍalam) part of
this planet earth (cūrṇayan) by piercing and flattening (giri-
kūṭāni) the mountain tops (sva-dhanuṣ-kotyā) with the edge of
his bow.**

Stanza 30

*athāsmiṁ bhagavān vainyaḥ
prajānām̐ vṛttidaḥ pitā
nivāsān kalpayām̐ cakre
tatra tatra yathārhataḥ*

Stanza 31

*grāmān purah pattanāni
durgāṇi vividhāni ca
ghoṣān vrajān sa-śibirān
ākarān khetā-kharvatān*

(atha) Subsequently, (bhagavān) the supreme emperor (vainyah) Prthu, (pitā) became the father (prajānām) for his people (vṛttidah) as the provider of livelihood for them. (kalpayām cakre) He created (asmin) on this planet earth, (tatra tatra) at various locations (yathārhatāḥ) according to the suitability, (nivāsān) places of residence like (grāmān) the villages, (purah) towns, (pattanāni) and large urban centres, apart from (vividhāni) different kinds of (durgāṇi) forts, (ghoṣān) habitation for hunters, (vrajān) cattle sheds and habitation places for cowherds, (ākarān) mining places (sa-śibirān) cantonments consisting of the camps of the armed forces, (khetā-kharvatān) agricultural villages, mountain inhabitation areas etc.

Stanza 32

*prāk pṛthor iha naivaiṣā
pura-grāmādi-kalpanā
yathā-sukham vasanti sma
tatra tatrākutobhayāḥ*

(pṛthoh prāk) Before the time of Prthu (na eva) there existed absolutely no (kalpanā) planned arrangement (iha) in this world (eṣā) for these kinds of (pura-grāmādi) towns and villages etc. (vasanti sma) All the inhabitants stayed comfortably (tatra tatra) in their respective places (yathā-sukham) with comforts and happiness (akutobhayāḥ) without any fear.

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***This concludes the eighteenth chapter of volume four of Srimad
Bhagavatam
Hari Om***