

SRIMAD BHAGAVATAM

CHAPTER 20, VOLUME 4

THE DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN SHRI MAHA VISHNU AND THE EMPEROR PRTHU

PREFACE

The contents of this chapter has to be seen in continuation with those of the previous chapter. Even though Prthu could not complete his hundredth horse offering in his Aswamedha Yajna, the Yajna was considered to have been concluded as Prthu was not required to show his supremacy by conducting such deeds. He, by his own position as the emperor, had already achieved much more than what this Yajna could have provided him. These were the advice of Lord Brahma when the learned brahmins wanted to annihilate Indra into the fire of worship through their powerful Vedic hymns, as Indra was creating hurdles for the smooth conduct of the Yajna. These have been explained in the previous chapter.

In this chapter, Shri Maha Vishnu Himself, as the Yajna Murti, manifests before Prthu on the conclusion of the Yajna and gives a discourse to Prthu which are very profound and truthful. These words of the Bhagavan expressed as the statements of truth to Prthu are not only for the emperor Prthu but for all the human beings who are in the pursuit of knowledge.

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Stanza 1

maitreya uvāca
bhagavān api vaikuṅṭhaḥ
sākaṁ maghavatā vibhuḥ
yajñair yajña-patis tuṣṭo
yajña-bhuk tam abhāṣata

**(maitreya uvāca) Maitreya Maharshi said to Vidura :
(vaikuṅṭhaḥ api) (Apart from Lord Brahma - as explained in
the previous chapter), Shri Maha Vishnu as well,
(vibhuḥ) Who is all powerful, (bhagavān) Who is the
repository of all the qualities and prosperities, (yajña-bhuk)
Who is the One Who ultimately accepts unto Himself all the
offerings made in the Yajnas, (yajña-patiḥ) and Who is the
Lord of all the Yajnas,
(maghavatā sākaṁ) accompanied by Indra, (tuṣṭaḥ) became
very much happily satisfied (yajñaiḥ) with the performance
of Yajna by Prthu (abhāṣata) and said (tam) to the emperor
Prthu.**

Stanza 2

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
eṣa te 'kāṛṣīd bhaṅgaṁ
haya-medha-śatasya ha
kṣamāpayata ātmānam
amuṣya kṣantum arhasi

**(śrī-bhagavān uvāca) Shri Bhagavan said to the emperor Prthu:
(eṣaḥ) This Indra (akāṛṣīd) had brought about (bhaṅgaṁ)
impediment (te haya-medha-śatasya) in the performance of the
hundredth of your Aswamedha Yajna. (ha) That was very
sad; but, (ātmānam) as Indra is (kṣamāpayataḥ) seeking pardon
(arhasi) it would be very worthy of you (kṣantum) to forgive
(amuṣya) him.**

Stanza 3

*sudhiyaḥ sādhave loka
naradeva narottamāḥ
nābhidruhyanti bhūtebhyo
yarhi nātmā kalevaram*

(naradeva) Hey the emperor! (narottamāḥ) Those great ideal human beings, (sudhiyaḥ) who are intelligent (sādhave) and who conduct themselves in a saintly manner, (na abhidruhyanti) do not inflict any hurt at all (bhūtebhyah) to the living beings (loka) in this world. (yarhi) That is because (kalevaram) this material body (ātmā na) is not the actual Atma.

Note : The intelligent persons do not get encouraged by the false pride of bodily consciousness as they are very much aware that the body is not the Atma. Therefore, such persons consider all living beings in equanimity and do not inflict hurt upon them. This is the inner meaning of the above stanza.

Stanza 4

*puruṣā yadi muhyanti
tvādrśā deva-māyayā
śrama eva paraṁ jāto
dīrghayā vṛddha-sevayā*

(yadi) If (puruṣāḥ) persons (tvādrśāḥ) like you (who have acquired greatness in knowledge) (muhyanti) get bewildered (deva-māyayā) with the illusions of the Maya Shakti of the Bhagavan, (vṛddha-sevayā) all the efforts put in to acquire such knowledge (dīrghayā) over a long period of time (eva jātaḥ) can just become (paraṁ śramaḥ) only a routine activity without any purpose.

Stanza 5

*ataḥ kāyam imaṃ vidvān
avidyā-kāma-karmabhiḥ
ārabdha iti naivāsmi
pratibuddho 'nuṣajjate*

(atah) Therefore, (vidvān) those learned persons (pratibuddhaḥ) who are conscious of the fact (imaṃ kāyam) that this body (ārabdhaḥ iti) begins to unveiled through (avidyā-kāma-karmabhiḥ) the awareness about its own form, the desires arising out of such an awareness and the activities undertaken to fulfil such desires etc., (anuṣajjate na eva) do never get themselves attached zealously (āsmi) to this body.

Note : It is possible to say that due to the liking towards one's own progenies etc. one can develop attachment to the bodily concept. This concept is being negated through the following stanza.

Stanza 6

*asaṃsaktah śarīre 'smi
amunotpādite gr̥he
apatye draviṇe vāpi
kaḥ kuryān mamatām budhah*

(api) Is it possible (kaḥ budhah) for any knowledgeable person, (asaṃsaktah) who does not have the feeling of attachment (smi śarīre) to this body, (kuryāt) to acquire (mamatām) the feeling of ownership (gr̥he) in the homes, (apatye) the

children, (draviṇe vā) the properties etc., (utpādite) which have been created (amunā) based on the very same body?

Note : It is said through the above stanza that any knowledgeable person who does not have attachment to his own body, shall never have the feeling of ownership in matters connected with the body such as the progenies, properties and such other matters.

Now, through the following two stanzas, Shri Bhagavan is explaining the concept about the distinct understanding about the Atma and how it is not to be equated with the material body.

Stanza 7

*ekah śuddhaḥ svayaṁ-jyotir
nirguṇo 'sau guṇāśrayaḥ
sarva-go 'nāvṛtaḥ sākṣī
nirātmātmānanaḥ paraḥ*

**(asau ātmā) This Atma --
(ekah) stays as such without any transformation, remains consistently as single;
(śuddhaḥ) is the purest and ever permanent form;
(svayaṁ-jyotiḥ) is self effulgent;
(nirguṇaḥ) is independent of any specific characteristic,
(guṇāśrayaḥ) but at the same time all the characteristics (like Satva, Rajas and Tamas) depend upon it;
(sarva-gaḥ) is spread out everywhere without any gap anywhere;
(anāvṛtaḥ) does not have any covering over it;
(sākṣī) remains as a permanent witness to all the happenings;
(nirātmā) does not have any other Atma within it.
(paraḥ) For these reasons, the Atma is altogether distinct from the material body (ātmanaḥ) while the material body is not at all the Atma.**

Note : The descriptions about the Atma have been made very eloquently through the above stanza. The Atma is not the body. It is very distinct from the body. What are the characteristics for these distinction? These are being made clear. The Atma is single form whereas the body assumes variable forms because of childhood, youth, old age etc. The Atma is ever pure whereas the body is greatly dirty. The Atma is self effulgent whereas the body is only consisting of material elements, which by themselves do not have the powers of effulgence. The Atma is without any specific characteristic but at the same time the characteristics depend upon it. The body has all the characteristics and it depends on such characteristics. The Atma is spread out everywhere, has no covering/curtain over it, and remains as a witness to all the happenings. The body is limited to its size, shape, and can be spotted at one particular place. There is no Atma for the Atma. The body has it. Therefore, there are nine specifications through which the distinction has been made clear here.

Stanza 8

*ya evaṁ santam ātmānam
ātma-sthaṁ veda pūruṣaḥ
nājyate prakṛti-stho 'pi
tad-guṇaiḥ sa mayi sthitaḥ*

(yaḥ pūruṣaḥ) When a person (veda) understands (ātmānam) the Atma (evaṁ santam) of this description (ātma-sthaṁ) being situated within him, (saḥ) that person (prakṛti-sthaḥ api) while being placed in his body of material nature, (sthitaḥ) firmly roots himself (mayi) in Me, the Supreme Conscious Knowledge, (na ajyate) and does not get affected (tad-guṇaiḥ) by the changes of material nature.

Note : Through the following four stanzas, it is being explained as to who can experience this situation as described in Stanza 8.

Stanza 9

*yaḥ sva-dharmeṇa mām nityam
nirāśīṭh śraddhayānvitaḥ
bhajate śanakais tasya
mano rājan prasīdati*

(rājan) Hey the emperor ! (yaḥ) When a person, (nirāśīṭh) without aspiring for any desires, (anvitaḥ) with uninhibited (śraddhayā) focus, (nityam) and on a continuous basis (bhajate) worships (mām) Me (sva-dharmeṇa) while performing his own righteous duties, (tasya manaḥ) such a person's mind (prasīdati) becomes pure (śanakaiḥ) slowly but surely.

Note : What is the benefit or greatness of this purity of mind for a person? This is being explained through the following stanza.

Stanza 10

*parityakta-guṇaḥ samyag
darśano viśadāśayaḥ
śāntim me samavasthānam
brahma kaivalyam aśnute*

(viśadāśayaḥ) Such a person whose mind becomes very clear, (parityakta-guṇaḥ) moulds himself disassociated from the influences of material nature, (samyag darśanaḥ) turns into a person of right knowledge about his own self (the Atma), (aśnute) and experiences (kaivalyam) the position of emancipation (samavasthānam) which is the ever constant and unchangeable situation (me) of My own (brahma) Supreme

Conscious Form (śāntim) and that person remains in that eternal bliss.

Note : Through the following stanza it is being explained what is meant by the equanimity of vision or what is the true knowledge about self (Atma).

Stanza 11

*udāsīnam ivādhyakṣam
dravya-jñāna-kriyātmanām
kūṭa-stham imam ātmānam
yo vedāpnoti śobhanam*

**(yaḥ veda) The person who understands that (imam ātmānam) this Atma,
(udāsīnam) which by itself does not involve in any actions or deeds (kūṭa-stham) and which is ever permanent and unchangeable,
(adhyakṣam iva) is only superintending or witnessing (dravya-jñāna-kriyātmanām) the actions of the body through its sense organs, mind etc.,
(āpnoti) attains (śobhanam) auspicious brilliance.**

Note : There can be a doubt as to how the Atma, which is considered constant and ever permanent without any changes, can remain so / or exist like that when the person, within whom such Atma is perceived, is subjected to the influences of the various tendencies (Gunas) like Satva, Rajas and Tamas.

Stanza 12

*bhinnasya liṅgasya guṇa-pravāho
dravya-kriyā-kāraka-cetanātmanah
drṣṭāsu sampatsu vipatsu sūrayo*

na vikriyante mayi baddha-sauhrdāḥ

*(liṅgasya) It is only the material body,
(dravya-kriyā-kāraka-cetanātmanah) which has a form and shape
containing within itself the intelligence about senses and
sense organs, (bhinnasya) which is distinct from the Atma,
(guṇa-pravāhaḥ) that gets influenced by the changes of
material nature (like the three qualities of Satva, Rajas and
Tamas).*

*(sūrayaḥ) Those self realized persons (baddha-sauhrdāḥ) who
are unflinchingly devoted (mayi) to Me (na vikriyante) shall
never get perturbed/or influenced by (sampatsu) the pleasures
(vipatsu) or the miseries (dr̥ṣṭāsu) which appear before them.*

Stanza 13

*samaḥ samānottama-madhyamādhamah
sukhe ca duḥkhe ca jitendriyāśayah
mayopaklptākhila-loka-saṁyuto
vidhatsva vīrākhila-loka-rakṣaṇam*

*(vīra) Hey the courageous emperor ! You must --
(samānottama-madhyamādhamah) have equanimous approach
towards people who are greater than you, who are equal to
you and who are below you,
(samaḥ) be in the same mental condition when faced with the
situation (sukhe ca) of pleasures (duḥkhe ca) or miseries,
(jitendriyāśayah) be in a position unaffected by the influences of
the senses and sense organs by winning over them,*

*(vidhatsva) and carry out (akhila-loka-rakṣaṇam) the protection
of this entire world through your rule of law
(upaklptākhila-loka-saṁyutaḥ) considering all the inhabitants (all
the life forms) of this world as a single family which has been
created (mayā) by Me.*

Note : It is necessary to carry out punishments while doing the job of protecting the world through rule of law. Is it not advisable then to leave this kind of work and opt for sitting and offering prayers? Shri Bhagavan is clarifying this possible doubt through the following stanza.

Stanza 14

*śreyah prajā-pālanam eva rājño
yat sāmparāye sukrāt śaṣṭham aṁśam
hartānyathā hr̥ta-puṇyah prajānām
araksitā kara-hāro 'gham atti*

*(prajā-pālanam eva) To give protection to his people alone
(śreyah) is auspicious (rājñah) for a king. (yat) That is
because (sukrāt) out of the benevolent work done by the king
towards his people, (hartā) he attains for himself (śaṣṭham
aṁśam) one sixth of good deeds (sāmparāye) in the other world
after his death.*

*(anyathā) If he is not (araksitā) carrying out his prescribed
duties of protecting (prajānām) his people (kara-hārah) and
collects only taxes without giving them due protection,
(hr̥ta-puṇyah) the king loses all his auspiciousness (atti) and
experiences (agham) only sins.*

Stanza 15

*evam dvijāgryānumatānuvṛtta-
dharma-pradhāno 'nyatamo 'vitāsyāḥ
hrasvena kālena gr̥hopayātān
draṣṭāsi siddhān anurakta-lokaḥ*

*(avitā) You shall protect (asyāḥ) this world (evam) in the
manner explained by me (dvijāgryānumatānuvṛtta-dharma-*

pradhānaḥ) by giving due importance to the righteous methods of administration as permitted by the great brahmins which were followed as such by the ancestors, (*anyatamaḥ*) while at the same time keeping yourself away unattached to all those deeds.

(*anurakta-lokaḥ*) You shall acquire great fame, whereafter, (*hrasvena*) within a short (*kālena*) period of time, (*draṣṭāsi*) shall happen to meet (*siddhān*) the great saints (Sanat Kumars) (*gṛhopayātān*) who shall be coming to your home on their own accord.

Stanza 16

*varam ca mat kañcana mānavendra
vr̥ṇīṣva te 'haṁ guṇa-śīla-yantritaḥ
nāhaṁ makhair vai sulabhas tapobhir
yogena vā yat sama-citta-varṭī*

(*mānavendra*) Hey the emperor! (*vr̥ṇīṣva*) You are free to ask (*mat*) from me (*kañcana varam ca*) anything you desire. (*ahaṁ*) I am (*te guṇa-śīla-yantritaḥ*) very much impressed with your good qualities. (*ahaṁ vai na sulabhaḥ*) I can never be attained so easily through (*makhaiḥ*) Yajnas, (*tapobhiḥ*) penances (*yogena vā*) or practice of Yoga. (*yat*) That is because (*sama-citta-varṭī*) I reside only within the hearts of those well meaning people whose thinking is well balanced with equanimity.

Stanza 17

*maitreya uvāca
sa itthaṁ loka-guruṇā
viśvaksenena viśva-jit
anuśāsita ādeśaṁ
śirasā jagṛhe hareḥ*

*(maitreya uvāca) Maitreya Maharshi said to Vidura! (viśva-jit)
The conqueror of the world, (saḥ) the emperor Prthu,
(anuśāsitaḥ) was instructed (ittham) in this manner
(loka-guruṇā) by the teacher of the world, (viśvaksenena) Shri
Hari. (jagrhe) He accepted completely (hareḥ) Shri Hari's
(ādeśam) instructions (śirasā) by bending his head before
Him.*

Stanza 18

*sprśantaṃ pādayoḥ premṇā
vrīḍitaṃ svena karmaṇā
śata-kratuṃ pariṣvajya
vidveṣaṃ visasarja ha*

*(pariṣvajya) The emperor Prthu embraced (śata-kratuṃ) Indra,
(sprśantaṃ) who touched (pādayoḥ) Prthu's feet (premṇā) with
respect and love (vrīḍitaṃ) and was ashamed (svena) for his
(karmaṇā) deeds towards Prthu. (visasarja) Thus Prthu gave
up (vidveṣaṃ) the feeling of enmity towards Indra. (ha)
What a wonder!*

Stanza 19

*bhagavān atha viśvātmā
prṥhunopahr̥tārhaṇaḥ
samujjihānaya bhaktyā
gr̥hīta-caraṇāmbujah*

Stanza 20

*prasthānābhimukho 'py enam
anugraha-vilambitaḥ
paśyan padma-palāsākṣo
na prasthe suhr̥t satām*

(*atha*) Thereafter, (*bhagavān*) Shri Hari, (*viśvātmā*) the embodied personality of the entire universe, (*pr̥thunā*) was offered worship by Prthu (*bhaktyā*) with his devotion (*samujjihānayā*) raised up to new heights as the worship progressed in stages (*upahr̥tārhaṇaḥ*) through various kinds of offerings to His lotus feet (*gr̥hīta-caraṇāmbujah*) which were held and caressed by Prthu with his hands for a long time. (*padma-palāsākṣah*) As Lotus Eyed Shri Hari, (*suhṛt*) Who is the closest friend (*satām*) of good people, (*prasthānābhimukhaḥ api*) was trying to leave from that place, (*anugraha-vilambitaḥ*) because of his desire to bestow His blessings to His devotees, that Shri Hari delayed his departure (*enam paśyan*) and glancing Prthu through His graceful eyes (*na pratasthe*) did not move ahead.

Note : Through the above stanza, the profound compassion of Shri Hari has been established. Through the following two stanzas Prthu's devotion is being explained.

Stanza 21

*sa ādi-rājo racitāñjalir harim
vilokitum nāśakad aśru-locanaḥ
na kiñcanovāca sa bāṣpa-viklavo
hr̥dopaguhyāmum adhād avasthitaḥ*

(*saḥ ādi-rājah*) The very first emperor Prthu, (*racitāñjaliḥ*) as he stood with his folded hands (*aśru-locanaḥ*) and his eyes filled with full of tears of joy, (*na aśakat*) was simply incapable of (*vilokitum*) looking at (*harim*) Shri Hari. (*saḥ*) He (*na uvāca*) could not utter (*kiñcana*) anything (*bāṣpa-viklavaḥ*) as his voice was getting choked up. (*avasthitaḥ*) As he stood in this manner

(upaguhya) he embraced (amum) Shri Hari (hṛdā) within his heart (adhāt) and placed Him inside there.

Stanza 22

**athāvamṛjyāśru-kalā vilokayann
atrpta-dṛg-gocaram āha pūruṣam
padā sprśantam kṣitim aṁsa unnate
vinyasta-hastāgram uraṅga-vidviṣaḥ**

(atha) Thereafter, (avamṛjya) wiping out (āśru-kalāḥ) the droplets of his tears (atrpta-dṛg-gocaram) and getting no contentment at all to his eyes (vilokayan) despite looking at Shri Hari again and again, (āha) Prthu addressed (pūruṣam) Shri Bhagavan, (vinyasta-hastāgram) Who was standing with the tip of His hand placed (unnate) on the raised (aṁse) shoulder (uraṅga-vidviṣaḥ) of Garuda (padā) while His pious feet (sprśantam) touched (kṣitim) the earth.

Stanza 23

**prthur uvāca
varān vibho tvad varadeśvarād budhaḥ
katham vṛṇīte guṇa-vikriyātmanām
ye nārakāṇām api santi dehinām
tān īśa kaivalya-pate vṛṇe na ca**

**(prthur uvāca) Prthu said to Bhagavan :
(vibho) Hey the Most powerful Personality!
(katham) How can (budhaḥ) a knowledgeable person (vṛṇīte)
seek (tvat) from You, being
(varadeśvarāt) the Supreme Lord of all the demigods with
their own powers of granting wishes,
(varān) such benedictions of prosperities**

*(guṇa-vikriyātmanām) suitable for the body conscious person
which can lead to turbulences in his mind due to the
influences of the characteristics like Satva, Rajas and
Tamas?*

*(īśaḥ) Hey the Protector of the world! (kaivalya-pate) Hey the
One Who bestows deliverance!*

*(ca) I am certainly (na vṛṇe) not going to seek from you (ye)
such of (tān) those prosperities (santi) which are available
(dehinām api) even to those bodies (nārakāṇām) who live in hell.*

Note : Through Stanza 16, Shri Bhagavan had given permission to Prthu to seek whatever he wanted. Prthu is conveying that the bestowing of benedictions are meant for those who enjoy them for their bodily pleasures. He further makes it clear that he does not have any inclination towards such benedictions. However, through Stanza 23 Prthu is addressing Bhagavan as “(kaivalya-pate) Hey the One Who bestows deliverance!” But did he seek deliverance? He feels that he does not need that as well. Then what else he was seeking for? This is being made clear through the following stanza.

Stanza 24

*na kāmāye nātha tad apy ahaṁ kvacin
na yatra yuṣmac-caraṇāmbujāsavaḥ
mahattamāntar-hṛdayān mukha-cyuto
vidhatsva karṇāyutam eṣa me varaḥ*

*(nātha) Hey the Protector! (ahaṁ) I (na kāmāye) do not seek
anything (kvacit) at all, (tat api) even if it is the deliverance
as such, (yatra na) if that does not contain--*

*(yuṣmac-caraṇāmbujāsavaḥ) the pure nectar arising out of Your
pious lotus feet*

*(mahattamāntar-hṛdayāt) which originate from within the hearts
of the greatest devotees of Yours (mukha-cyutaḥ) and poured*

**out through their mouths in the sweetest form of your
praises.**

**(vidhatsva) If you kindly grant me (karṇāyutam) ten thousand
ears (for listening to the glories of Bhagavan) (varah eṣaḥ)
that shall be the greatest boon (me) which I can seek for
myself.**

Note : If one does not seek moksha or deliverance, there is a possibility of the person getting trapped into the influences of attachment and anger. Then how come one can expect to enjoy the nectar of the praises about Shri Bhagwan? This doubt is being cleared through the following stanza.

Stanza 25

*sa uttamaśloka mahan-mukha-cyuto
bhavat-padāmbhoja-sudhā kaṇānilaḥ
smṛtiṁ punar vismṛta-tattva-vartmanām
kuyoginām no vitaraty alaṁ varaiḥ*

**(uttamaśloka) Hey the One Who is praised through Vedic
hymns!**

**(saḥ bhavat-padāmbhoja-sudhā kaṇānilaḥ) The tender breeze,
carrying the droplets of nectar of honey from the pious lotus
feet of Yours,**

**(mahan-mukha-cyutaḥ) which originate from within the hearts
of the greatest devotees of Yours and poured out through
their mouths in the sweetest form of Your praises,**

**(vitarati) ensures (punaḥ) rejuvenation about (smṛtiṁ) the
remembrance of the forgotten paths of the right principles
(kuyoginām) even to those Yogis who have deviated from the
actual devotional service.**

**(naḥ) Therefore, I (alaṁ) do not desire anything at all
(varaiḥ) through these benedictions.**

Note : The breeze of devotion removes the dirt of attachments etc. Therefore, Prthu is seeking for unflinched devotion towards the Bhagavan alone as the boon. The deliverance is inherent within such a devotion.

The total devotion results in deliverance. That is the main achievement of the path of devotion. In this case, Prthu is only seeking to follow the devotional path without any expectation about the result. The reasons are explained below.

Stanza 26

*yaśaḥ śivam suśrava ārya-saṅgame
yadr̥cchayā copaśr̥ṇoti te sakṛt
katham guṇa-jñō viramed vinā paśum
śr̥t̥r yat pravavre guṇa-saṅgrahecchayā*

(suśrava) Hey the One Whose glories are very pious!
(upaśr̥ṇoti) When a person listens (sakṛt ca) even once
(yadr̥cchayā) accidentally to the (śivam yaśaḥ) pious glories (
te) of Yours (ārya-saṅgame) in the assembly of Your devotees,
(guṇa-jñāḥ) if that person understands even a little bit about
the purpose of life,
(paśum vinā) and if he is not an animal,
(katham) how can such a person (viramet) withdraw himself
from listening to Your glories?
(śr̥t̥) Even Shri Mahalakshmi (guṇa-saṅgrahecchayā) wanted
to imbibe in her all the good qualities (pravavre) by opting to
remain constantly reciting (yat) such of Your glories.

Note : Therefore, Prthu says that just like Shri Mahalakshmi, he would also leave aside all other benedictions and engage himself in praising the glories of Shri Hari.

Stanza 27

*athābhaje tvākhila-pūruṣottamaṁ
guṇālayaṁ padma-kareva lālasaḥ
apy āvayor eka-pati-sṛḍhoḥ kalir
na syāt kṛta-tvac-caraṇaika-tānayoḥ*

(atha) Therefore, (lālasaḥ) I, being keenly interested, (ābhaje) shall totally dedicate myself in worshipping (tvā) You, (akhila-pūruṣottamaṁ) Who is the Supreme among all the great personalities, (guṇālayaṁ) Who is the reservoir of all the good qualities, (iva) just like (padma-karā) Shri Mahalakshmi worships You. (api na syāt) Is there a possibility of (kaliḥ) a quarrel (āvayoḥ) between ourselves (between Prthu and Mahalakshmi) (eka-pati-sṛḍhoḥ) when both of us shall be competing on a single Master in You (for devotional worship), (kṛta-tvac-caraṇaika-tānayoḥ) even while surrendering our minds totally on to Your pious lotus feet?

Note : Because of the competition in indulging in the deeds of action (performance of the Aswamedha Yajna) Prthu and Indra had to quarrel. Prthu puts forward that such a competition may not arise between him and Mahalakshmi in the matter of devotional service to Shri Hari.

But this competition cannot be ruled out. Because it is possible for Shri Mahalakshmi to make Prthu proud by ushering upon him immense wealth because of which Prthu shall turn away from the devotional service.

Prthu continues to say that even if such an eventuality happens, he shall overcome that obstacle as well because of the mercy of the Bhagavan and engage himself totally on the devotional service.

Stanza 28

*jagaj-jananyām jagad-īśa vaiśasam
syād eva yat-karmaṇi naḥ samīhitam
karoti phalgv apy uru dīna-vatsalah
sva eva dhiṣṇye 'bhiratasya kim tayā*

**(jagad-īśa) Hey the Controller of the universe!
(syāt eva) There shall definitely be (vaiśasam) distress
(jagaj-jananyām) to The Mother of the Universe, Shri Lakshmi
Devi.
(naḥ) Because, I am also (samīhitam) interested (yat-karmaṇi)
in the work in which Shri Lakshmi Devi is also interested
(engaging in devotional service to the Bhagavan).
(karoti) You do accept (phalgu api) the devotional service of a
devotee, however much insignificant it might be, (uru) as
something great (dīna-vatsalah) because You are
compassionate to your devotees.
(abhiratasya) As You enjoy Yourself permanently (sve eva) in
Your own form (dhiṣṇye) which is based on You alone, (kim)
what need do You have for Yourself (tayā) from Shri Lakshmi
Devi?**

Note : Prthu says impliedly through the above stanza that when Prthu and Indra had differences, Shri Hari was compassionate enough to ensure that all went well. In the same way, Prthu is putting forward that Shri Hari shall take care even if Shri Maha Lakshmi feels angry with Prthu while in competition when both of them engage in devotional service to the same Master.

Stanza 29

*bhajanty atha tvām ata eva sādhave
vyudasta-māyā-guṇa-vibhramodayam*

*bhavat-padānusmaraṇād ṛte satām
nimittam anyad bhagavan na vidmahe*

(ataḥ eva) That is why (sādhaḥ) those devotees, who are totally desireless, (bhajanti) continue to worship (tvām) You (atha) even after they attain the required knowledge about You, (vyudasta-māyā-guṇa-vibhramodayam) Who stand apart and separate from the turmoils arising out of the worldly life consisting of the various characteristics of material nature (the Gunas).

(bhagavan) Hey the reservoir of all the knowledge and prosperities!

(na vidmahe) Therefore, as far as I can understand, (anyat) there is no other (nimittam) purpose (satām) for those devotees, who are desireless, (bhavat-padānusmaraṇād ṛte) other than doing repeatedly Your worship.

Note : Prthu goes on to convey to Shri Hari that His prompting the devotees to seek from Him whatever they want, in a way, does not augur well for a very compassionate Being like Him.

Stanza 30

*manye girām te jagatām vimohinīm
varām vṛṇīṣveti bhajantam āttha yat
vācā nu tanyā yadi te jano 'sitaḥ
katham punaḥ karma karoti mohitaḥ*

(āttha) You order (bhajantam) to those who worship You (iti) in this manner, (varām vṛṇīṣva) “ask for the boons”. (yat) Therefore, (manye) I consider that (te girām) Your words (vimohinīm) are promoting immense desires (jagatām) within the people.

Oh what a wonder! (yadi) If (janaḥ) the people (asitaḥ) do not get themselves bound (tanyā) with the rope (vācā) in the

form of your words, (punaḥ katham) how can they (karma karoti) carry out various deeds (of Karma Marga) (mohitaḥ) by immersing themselves in desires?

Note : Prthu is requesting the Bhagavan not to prompt people to get attracted to the illusions of desires by offering material boons particularly when, the people, left to themselves, always run after the deeds for fulfilling their own desires.

Stanza 31

*tvam-māyayāddhā jana īśa khaṇḍito
yad anyad āśāsta ṛtātmano 'budhaḥ
yathā caret bāla-hitam pitā svayaṁ
tathā tvam evārhasi naḥ samīhitum*

(īśa) Hey the Controller of the Universe ! (tvam-māyayā) Because of the illusionary powers of Your Maya Shakti, (āddhā janaḥ) certainly the people of the world (khaṇḍitaḥ) are in the state of separation from the actual truth. (yat) Therefore, (abudhaḥ) a person who does not have the knowledge about the truth, (ṛtātmanaḥ) keeps You aside (āśāste) and seeks after (anyat) certain other things. (arhasi) I, therefore, request You to kindly favour (naḥ) me (samīhitum) such things as you feel appropriate (tvam eva) on your own accord (tathā) in the same manner (yathā) that (pitā) a father (caret) fulfils (bāla-hitam) the requirements of his child (svayaṁ) understanding his needs all by himself.

Stanza 32

*maitreya uvāca
ity ādi-rājena nutaḥ sa viśva-dr̥k
tam āha rājan mayi bhaktir astu te*

*diṣṭyedrṣṭī dhīr mayi te kṛtā yayā
māyām madīyām tarati sma dustyajām*

*(maitreya uvāca) Maitreya Maharshi said to Vidura:
(saḥ viśva-drk) Shri hari, Who witnesses everything in this
universe, (nutaḥ) Who was thus praised and worshipped (iti)
in this manner (ādi-rājena) by the emperor Prthu, (tam āha)
said to Prthu.*

*(rājan) “Hey the emperor! (bhaktiḥ astu) Let there be devotion
(te) in you (mayi) towards Me . (diṣṭyā) Fortunately, (te) you
(kṛtā) could submit (mayi) to Me (īdrṣṭī dhīḥ) your thinking in
this manner. (yayā) Due to this (tarati sma) you have been
able to surpass (madīyām māyām) the illusionary powers of
My Maya Shakti (dustyajām) which in fact is very difficult to
cross over.*

Stanza 33

*tat tvam kuru mayādiṣṭam
apramattaḥ prajāpate
mad-ādeśa-karo lokaḥ
sarvatrāpnoti śobhanam*

*(prajāpate) Hey the Ruler of the people ! (tat tvam) Therefore,
you (kuru) can execute (ādiṣṭam) the instructions (mayā) of
Mine (apramattaḥ) without any negligence. (lokaḥ) The people
(mad-ādeśa-karaḥ) who carry out My instructions (āpnoti)
achieve (śobhanam) auspiciousness (sarvatra) at all places.”*

Stanza 34

*maitreya uvāca
iti vainyaṣya rājarṣeḥ
pratinandyārthavad vacaḥ
pūjito ’nugrḥītvainam*

gantum cakre 'cyuto matim

*(maitreya uvāca) Maitreya Maharshi continued his discourse
to Vidura:*

*Shri Maha Vishnu (pratinandya) appreciated in this manner
(arthavat) the meaningful (vacaḥ) words (rājarṣeḥ) of the
saintly emperor (vainyasya) Prthu. (pūjitaḥ) Having been
worshipped by Prthu, (acyutaḥ) Shri Maha Vishnu
(anuḡḥītvā) blessed (enam) him (matim cakre) as He prepared
Himself (gantum) to depart from there.*

Stanza 35

*devarṣi-pitr-gandharva-
siddha-cāraṇa-pannagāḥ
kinnarāpsaraso martyāḥ
khagā bhūtāny anekaśaḥ*

Stanza 36

*yajñeśvara-dhiyā rājñā
vāg-vittāñjali-bhaktitaḥ
sabhājitā yayuḥ sarve
vaikuṇṭhānugatās tataḥ*

*(tataḥ) Thereafter, (devarṣi-pitr-gandharva-siddha-cāraṇa-pannagāḥ)
the demigods, the saints, the forefathers, the Gandharvas, the
Siddhas, the Charanas, the serpent demigods,
(kinnarāpsarasaḥ) the Kinnaras, the Apsaras, (martyāḥ khagāḥ)
the human beings, and others who travel through space,
(bhūtāni) the other living entities, (vaikuṇṭhānugatāḥ) the
followers of Vishnu Bhagwan
(sarve) and many others as well,
(sabhājitāḥ) were all duly honoured (anekaśaḥ) in various
ways (rājñā) by the emperor Prthu,*

(vāg-vittāñjali-bhaktitaḥ) such as through his words, through various kinds of materials, by his folded hands, by expression of devotion etc. (yajñeśvara-dhiyā) keeping in his mind only the thought about Shri Maha Vishnu, (yayuḥ) whereafter all of them departed from there.

Stanza 37

*bhagavān api rājarseḥ
sopādhyāyasya cācyutaḥ
harann iva mano 'muṣya
sva-dhāma pratyapadyata*

(bhagavān) Shri Maha Vishnu, (acyutaḥ) The Supreme Being Who is subject to no transformations, (api) also (pratyapadyata) returned (sva-dhāma ca) to His own place (haran iva) captivating (manaḥ) the heart (amuṣya) of this (rājarseḥ) saintly Prthu, (sopādhyāyasya) who was equally knowledgeable.

Stanza 38

*adr̥ṣṭāya namaskṛtya
nr̥paḥ sandarśitātmane
avyaktāya ca devānām
devāya sva-puraṁ yayau*

(nr̥paḥ) The emperor Prthu (yayau) started his journey back (sva-puraṁ ca) to his own place as well (namaskṛtya) after offering obeisances (devāya) to the Very First Supreme Being (devānām) of all the demigods, (sandarśitātmane) Who had shown to Prthu His own form, (adr̥ṣṭāya) Who was now invisible to Prthu's sight, (avyaktāya) and Who is in fact imperceptible.

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***This concludes the twentieth chapter of Volume four of
Srimad Bhagavatam***

Hari Om