# SRIMAD BHAGAVATAM

# CHAPTER 26, VOLUME 4

# THE STORY OF PURANJANA WHO GOES HUNTING TO THE FORESTS; AND THE STORY OF PURANJANI GETTING ANGRY WITH HIM

# **PREFACE**

This chapter again conveys very profound philosophical contents presented as discourse by saint Narada to the emperor Prachinabarhis. The story is nothing new for an ordinary human being as it depicts his/her predicament seeking after enjoyment of material desires. The wavering mind of Puranjana is depicted very nicely who goes after satisfying more and more varied desires as he goes to the forests for hunting animals for self satiation of his tastes. His wife, Puranjani, becomes very remorseful as her husband had gone for hunting while leaving her alone at home. What happens when he returns home have been described in vivid details which are nothing but the situation as faced by the normal beings.

#### Stanza 1

nārada uvāca sa ekadā maheşvāso ratham pañcāśvam āśu-gam dvīṣam dvi-cakram ekākṣam tri-veṇum pañca-bandhuram

#### Stanza 2

eka-raśmy eka-damanam eka-nīḍaṁ dvi-kūbaram pañca-praharaṇaṁ saptavarūthaṁ pañca-vikramam

#### Stanza 3

haimopaskaram āruhya svarņa-varmākṣayeṣudhiḥ ekādaśa-camū-nāthaḥ pañca-prastham agād vanam

( nārada uvāca ) Saint Narada continued his dialogue with Prachinabarhis.

(ekadā) Once (saḥ) that Puranjana, (maheṣvāsaḥ) holding a big bow, (svarṇa-varmā) wearing golden attire, (akṣayeṣudhiḥ) carrying such large quantities of arrows impossible to be contained in the quiver tied on his back shoulder, (ekādaśa-camū-nāthaḥ) accompanied by the eleventh commander of the army, (vanam agāt) travelled to the forest (pañca-prastham) known as Pancha Prastha, (rathaṁ āruhya) sitting on his chariot, which was ---

(pañcāśvam) driven by five horses (āśu-gam) galloping forward very quickly,

( dvīṣam ) having two poles (or shafts) attached to the carriage,

(dvi-cakram) having two wheels,

( ekākṣam ) having a single axle,

(tri-venum) carrying three masts of flags,

(pañca-bandhuram) tied around with five rounds of ropes,

( eka-raśmyeka-damanam ) having one charioteer holding a single rein (rope),

( eka-nīḍaṁ ) having the seating capacity within it to accommodate only one individual,

( dvi-kūbaram) having two wooden frames to which the yoke was fixed,

(pañca-praharaṇam) decorated with five different kinds of weapons,

(sapta-varūtham) covered with seven coatings,

(pañca-vikramam) capable of five different kinds of processes, and

( haimopaskaram ) having decorations within it made out of gold.

<u>Note</u>: The above stanzas convey the travels of the bodily being during its dreaming stage. The bodily being known as Puranjana travels by sitting on the chariot, which is his body during the dreaming stage.

He gets influenced with his thoughts of attaining satisfaction by hunting animals (going in search of material pleasures and material enjoyment) for which purpose he travels to the forest known as the Pancha Prastha.

The word Pancha Prastha represents the body's five senses. These senses attract him to enjoy those objects of material nature.

The five horses of that chariot represent the five sense organs, namely the eyes, ears, nose, skin and tongue.

The two shafts attached to the chariot are the hankering for material desires and pride in getting such desires fulfilled (Rajas qualities and material desires).

The two wheels of the chariot refer to the sins and the pious deeds done by the bodily being.

The single axle represent the illusion or what is known is the ignorance (-Avidya Maya - perceived as seeing the material objects only for the satisfaction of the material body instead of -Vidya Maya- perceiving the ever permanent single truth through these material objects).

The three flags of the chariot represent the three characteristics like Satva, Rajas and Tamas.

The five ropes with which the chariot is bound are the five kinds of air passing within the body. These are prāṇa, apāna, udāna, samāna and vyāna.

The rein represents the mind, the charioteer represent the intelligence, the sitting place represent the heart, the two wooden frames to which the yoke is fixed are the feeling of lamentation and illusions (as the bodily being feels sad by not getting all that it wants and more and more desires become illusions when it fails to achieve all of them).

The decoration with five kinds of amunitions represent the process through which the sense organs work through form, taste, sound, smell and touch.

The seven coatings represent the elements with which the body is constituted such as skin, muscle, fat, blood, marrow, bone and semen.

The five kinds of movements represent the five working senses through which the living entity transacts its actions.

The golden ornaments decorated all over the chariot and the golden dress attire indicate the influence of Rajas upon the living entity to achieve whatever the desires imagined by it.

The quiver in which the arrows are stored beyond its holding capacity means the innumerable and unfulfilled desires of the living entity.

The eleventh commander of the army represents the mind of the living entity responsible for all sorts of prompting and imagination towards fulfilment of the material enjoyment.

#### Stanza 4

cacāra mṛgayāṁ tatra dṛpta ātteṣu-kārmukaḥ vihāya jāyām atad-arhāṁ mṛga-vyasana-lālasaḥ

(atad-arhām) Though it was not possible for Puranjana to separate himself (jāyām) from his wife, (tatra) on that particular day (vihāya) he left aside his wife, (mṛga-vyasana-lālasaḥ) got himself too much propelled towards hunting of the animals, (ātteṣu-kārmukaḥ) equipped himself with his bow and arrows, (dṛptaaḥ) and very proudly (cacāra) carried out (mṛgayām) the hunting.

Note: Interpreting from the point of view of the Jeeva Atma, the context in which the words used in the above stanzas are -- "mṛga-vyasana-lālasaḥ" is the great interest being shown in the fulfilment of more and more material desires; "iṣu" are the driving force to achieve those material accomplishments; "kārmukaḥ" the persistence or the strong determination towards achieving the goal

of material accomplishments; and " $j\bar{a}y\bar{a}$ " though refers to his wife, it represents the intelligence (in the context of leaving aside his intelligence).

#### Stanza 5

āsurīm vṛttim āśritya ghorātmā niranugrahaḥ nyahanan niśitair bāṇair vaneṣu vana-gocarān

(ghorātmā) That Puranjana, who became heartless (niranugrahaḥ) and merciless (āśritya) because of his complete dependence (vṛttim) on his Tamas quality (total ignorance of darkness) (āsurīm) which can be equated with that of the demons, (nyahanat) killed (vana-gocarān) wild animals (vaneṣu) in the forests (niśitair) with sharp (bāṇaiḥ) arrows.

<u>Note</u>: The inner meaning of the above stanza is that Puranjana possessed for himself the wild animals (the materials) for the satisfaction of his senses with his arrows representing his keenness to achieve his desires.

In this stanza, the killing of the animals has been condemned equating it with "āsurīm vṛttim āśritya" as such deeds are demonic in nature conducted out of total ignorance. Why this, when it is considered necessary for the kings to go for hunting? Even for sane persons who seek knowledge of self realization, they must have food to sustain themselves - (here the equation with animal hunting is meant as seeking of normal food as far as the sane persons are concerned). The following three stanzas clarify these points.

#### Stanza 6

tīrtheșu pratidṛṣṭeșu

# rājā medhyān paśūn vane yāvad-artham alaṁ lubdho hanyād iti niyamyate

"(rājā) When a king, (alam lubdhaḥ) because of his inclination to eat meat, engages himself in the act of hunting animals in the forests, (tīrtheṣu) he must confine himself to such hunting for the specific purpose of offerings in "Shraddha" (offerings to ancestors) and such other select occasions (pratidṛṣṭeṣu) which happens at best only once in a year and which occasions are as per the prescriptions of the Vedas.

(vane) On such select occasions, he is allowed to go to the forests (hanyāt) and kill (medhyān) only certain category of non prohibited (paśūn) animals (yāvad-artham) and that too only that much which are exactly required for such occasion." (iti) In this manner (niyamyate) the killing of animals has been restricted very strictly by the Vedas.

<u>Note</u>: The scriptures do not propagate hunting or killing of animal. On the other hand the scriptures have put restrictions on such killings. The restrictions have been mentioned within inverted commas in the meaning to the above stanza.

# Stanza 7

ya evam karma niyatam vidvān kurvīta mānavaḥ karmaṇā tena rājendra jñānena na sa lipyate

Addressing King Prachinabarhis saint Narada said - (
rājendra) Hey the great king! (yaḥ mānavaḥ) A person, (vidvān)
who uses his intelligence (kurvīta) and performs (karma)
those deeds

(niyatam) according to the prescriptions of the Vedas (evam) in this manner, (sah na lipyate) does not get himself involved

into the fruitive deeds ( karmaṇā ) arising out of such actions performed by him ( tena ) incidentally, ( jñānena ) even when he is in full knowledge of such deeds.

#### Stanza 8

anyathā karma kurvāņo mānārūḍho nibadhyate guṇa-pravāha-patito naṣṭa-prajño padadyadhaḥ

(anyathā) On the other hand, (mānārūḍhaḥ) when a person performs deeds as he likes according to his wishes, riding high on his pride (karma) of doing such actions, (nibadhyate) he is bound to the results (kurvāṇaḥ) of having carried out such actions.

(guṇa-pravāha-patitaḥ) Such a person gets himself entrapped into this worldly life of multitudinal characteristics like Rajas, Tamas and Sattva.

(naṣṭa-prajñaḥ) He then loses his intelligences (adhaḥ padadi) and falls down to such stages from where it becomes difficult for him to retrieve himself.

<u>Note</u>: Just by coincidence, saint Narada had to divert from the main topic and explain through the stanzas 6 to 8 about the violence being inflicted to the animals and the prescriptions as per the Vedas. Now he is bringing the discussions back to the hunting being conducted by Puranjana.

## Stanza 9

tatra nirbhinna-gātrāṇāṁ citra-vājaiḥ śilīmukhaiḥ viplavo 'bhūd duḥkhitānāṁ duḥsahaḥ karuṇātmanām (tatra) Within that forest (nirbhinna-gātrāṇām) lay bodies of many animals split open by the pierced (śilīmukhaiḥ) arrows (of Puranjana) (citra-vājaiḥ) with different kinds of feathers (duḥkhitānām) while some of the animals were crying in pain with the agony of their departing lives. (viplavaḥ) Such were the great destructions (abhūt) happened over there in that forest (duḥsahaḥ) the sight of which was unbearable (karuṇātmanām) to any merciful person.

#### Stanza 10

śaśān varāhān mahiṣān gavayān ruru-śalyakān medhyān anyāṁś ca vividhān vinighnan śramam adhyagāt

(śramam adhyagāt) Puranjana became so much tired after simply killing (śaśān) the rabbits, (varāhān) boars, (mahiṣān) buffalos, (gavayān) bisons, (ruru-śalyakān) black deers, porcupines, (anyān) and these apart (vividhān) different kinds of animals (vinighnan) whichever could be hunted by him.

<u>Note</u>: In this manner, through the above stanzas, the dream stage of the living entity has been explained. From here onwards, the discussion goes forward by describing the living entity's condition when he enjoys himself with his wife known as the intelligence capable of analysing the comforts arising from the materials.

For describing about his progenies and family life, (which appear in the next chapter) more spice has been added to the story by presenting the anger of his wife, who is the main character representing the intelligence, arising out of separation from love of her husband. Simultaneously the meek following of Puranjana on the instructions of his wife are also beautifully described. These matters are the subject of discussions till the end of this chapter.

#### Stanza 11

tataḥ kṣut-tṛṭ-pariśrānto nivṛtto gṛham eyivān kṛta-snānocitāhāraḥ saṁviveśa gata-klamaḥ

( kṣut-tṛṭ-pariśrāntaḥ ) As he became so tired because of hunger and thirst ( nivṛṭtaḥ ) Puranjana returned from the forests ( tataḥ ) thereafter ( eyivān ) and came back to ( gṛḥam ) his palace.

(kṛṭa-snānocitāhāraḥ) He took bath and had food suiting to his requirements.

(gata-klamaḥ) Thus he got rid of his tiredness (samviveśa) and took rest by lying down on his bed.

#### Stanza 12

ātmānam arhayām cakre dhūpālepa-srag-ādibhiḥ sādhv-alankṛta-sarvāngo mahiṣyām ādadhe manaḥ

(arhayām cakre) He got himself refreshed in a perfect manner by making (ātmānam) his body sense (dhūpālepa-srag-ādibhiḥ) the fragrance of the incense,

and applying on his body the sandalwood paste, putting on his body garland of fragrant flowers.

( sādhv-alaṅkṛṭa-sarvāṅgaḥ ) In this manner he decorated himself and made all his sense organs in good condition. ( ādadhe ) Then he started thinking ( manaḥ ) in his mind ( mahisyām ) about his queen.

#### Stanza 13

trpto hṛṣṭaḥ sudrptaś ca kandarpākṛṣṭa-mānasaḥ na vyacaṣṭa varārohāṁ gṛhiṇīṁ gṛha-medhinīm

# Puranjana,

(trptah ) who was thus fully contented with the intake of food items he had,

( hṛṣṭaḥ ) who was extremely pleased with the application/decoration of various fragrant materials over his body,

(sudṛptaaḥ) became intoxicated with passion (kandarpākṛṣṭa-mānasaḥ) and his mind turned towards lustful desires.

(na vyacaṣṭa ) However, he could not see (varārohām) his beautiful (gṛhiṇīm ) wife (gṛha-medhinīm) who was supposed to keep him satisfied in executing the household activities (including the fulfilment of sensuous desires).

# Stanza 14

antaḥpura-striyo 'pṛcchad vimanā iva vediṣat api vaḥ kuśalaṁ rāmāḥ seśvarīṇāṁ yathā purā na tathaitarhi rocante gṛḥeṣu gṛḥa-sampadaḥ

(Continuing the address saint Narada said:) (vediṣat) Hey Prachinabarhis! (vimanāḥ iva) Puranjana got little disturbed in his mind as he was not in a position to see his wife and, (apṛcchat) therefore, enquired (antaḥpura-striyaḥ) with the women servants of his wife --

(rāmāḥ) "Hey the beautiful women! (seśvarīṇāṁ) You all are always with the queen (vaḥ) and I suppose you are all (api kuśalaṁ) doing fine (purā yathā) as ever before? (na rocante) Don't you experience the same taste and satisfaction (gṛha-sampadaḥ) of the household items of consumptions (gṛheṣu) in our house (etarhi) even now (tathā) as ever before?

## Stanza 15

yadi na syād gṛhe mātā patnī vā pati-devatā vyaṅge ratha iva prājñaḥ ko nāmāsīta dīnavat

(gṛhe) In a home (mātā) when a mother, (patnī vā) or wife (pati-devatā) who considers her husband as a divine being (yadi na syāt) is absent, (ko) which (prājñaḥ) intelligent (nāma) person (āsīta) shall remain in that home (dīnavat) in such a pitiable and sad situation, (rathe iva) just like a person who sits on a chariot (vyaṅge) which has no wheels or appropriate roof over it?

#### Stanza 16

kva vartate sā lalanā majjantam vyasanārņave yā mām uddharate prajñām dīpayantī pade pade

(kva vartate) Where is (sā lalanā) that most beautiful (yā) woman (uddharate) who lifts (mām) me up (pade pade) at each and every step (majjantam) from drowning (vyasanārṇave) into the miseries of ocean (dīpayantī) by enlightening (prajñām) my intelligence?"

#### Stanza 17

rāmā ūcuḥ
nara-nātha na jānīmas
tvat-priyā yad vyavasyati
bhūtale niravastāre
śayānāṁ paśya śatru-han

# ( rāmā ūcuḥ ) The beautiful women servants of the wife of Puranjana replied:

(nara-nātha) Hey king! (na jānīmaḥ) We just do not know (yat) about the (vyavasyati) real intentions (tvat-priyā) of your dear wife. (śatru-han) Hey the killer of enemies! (paśya) You can see (śayānām) her lying down (bhūtale) on the floor (niravastāre) without even spreading a sheet of cloth.

#### Stanza 18

nārada uvāca
purañjanaḥ sva-mahiṣīm
nirīkṣyāvadhutām bhuvi
tat-saṅgonmathita-jñāno
vaiklavyaṁ paramaṁ yayau

# ( nārada uvāca) Saint Narada continued the discussions with Prachinabarhis:

(purañjanaḥ) Puranjana (nirīkṣya) went and saw (sva-mahiṣīm) his queen (bhuvi) lying down on the floor (avadhutām) who had absolutely no care about her body condition or even the dress she was wearing.

(yayau) He felt (paramam) the greatest (vaiklavyam) discomfort (tat-sangonmathita-jñānaḥ) the moment he came into contact with her as he got bewildered in his thinking.

# Stanza 19

# sāntvayan ślakṣṇayā vācā hṛdayena vidūyatā preyasyāḥ sneha-saṁrambhaliṅgam ātmani nābhyagāt

(sāntvayan) As Puranjana was comforting his wife (ślakṣṇayā) with his soft (vācā) words (vidūyatā) while he himself was feeling regret (hṛdayena) within his heart, (na abhyagāt) he just could not comprehend the depth of anger (ātmani) on him (preyasyāḥ) by his dear (sneha-saṁrambha-liṅgam) wife due to the separation of love from him (as he suddenly went to the forests for hunting).

#### Stanza 20

anuninye 'tha śanakair vīro 'nunaya-kovidaḥ pasparśa pāda-yugalam āha cotsaṅga-lālitām

(atha) Therefore, (anunaya-kovidaḥ) as Puranjana started comforting his wife with his soft words in order to bring her to his fold, (śanakaiḥ) gradually (vīraḥ) that great personality of Puranjana (anuninye) had to persuade her (pasparśa) by touching (pāda-yugalam) both her feet.

(ca) Subsequently, (utsaṅga-lālitām) he placed her on his lap and while caressing her (āha) he started talking to her.

#### Stanza 21

purañjana uvāca nūnam tv akṛta-puṇyās te bhṛtyā yeṣv īśvarāḥ śubhe kṛtāgaḥsv ātmasāt kṛtvā śikṣā-daṇḍam na yuñjate (purañjana uvāca) Puranjana said to his wife:
(śubhe) Hey the most pious woman! (īśvarāḥ) There are
certain masters (na yuñjate) who do not impose (śikṣā-daṇḍaṁ)
any act of punishment (yeṣu) when it comes to the matter of
(kṛtāgaḥsu) erroneous performance by their servants
(ātmasāt kṛtvā) thinking that those servants are after all
working under them.

(te) Such (bhṛṭyāḥ tu) servants are (akṛṭa-puṇyāḥ) very unfortunate. (nūnaṁ) It is certain.

<u>Note</u>: It is being pointed out in the above stanza that it can be considered as ignorance if certain servants think bad if they get any punishment from their master for carrying out erroneous actions.

#### Stanza 22

paramo 'nugraho daṇḍo bhṛṭyeṣu prabhuṇārpitaḥ bālo na veda tat tanvi bandhu-kṛṭyam amarṣaṇaḥ

(arpitaḥ) In fact the imposition of (daṇḍaḥ) punishment (bhṛṭyeṣu) on the servants (prabhuṇā) by their master (paramaḥ) is a great (anugrahaḥ) blessing for such servants. (tanvi) Hey my dear wife! (bālaḥ) The ignorantly (amarṣaṇaḥ) obstinate servant (veda na) may not understand (tat) that it is

(bandhu-kṛṭyam) the bounden duty of the master as a well wisher to impose such punishment.

# Stanza 23

sā tvam mukham sudati subhrv anurāga-bhāravrīdā-vilamba-vilasad-dhasitāvalokam nīlālakālibhir upaskṛtam unnasam naḥ (sudati) Hey the woman with beautiful teeth! (subhru) Hey the woman with nice eyebrows! (manasvini) Hey the woman with firm determination!

(sā tvam) Such a personality as you are, (pradarśaya) please show properly (naḥ) to me, (svānām) who is your own, (mukham) your lotus like face--

(anurāga-bhāra-vrīḍā-vilamba-vilasad-dhasitāvalokam) which is hanging down because of the feeling of heaviness due to love towards me as well because of your shyness, which blossoms with your beautiful smile while looking sideways through your enchanting eyes, (upaskṛtam) upon which is spread out at many places (nīlālakālibhiḥ) the beautifully flowing blackish curly hair, (unnasam) with a raised nose looking so beautiful, (valgu-vākyam) from which showers your enchanting and sweet words.

# Stanza 24

tasmin dadhe damam aham tava vīra-patni yo 'nyatra bhūsura-kulāt kṛta-kilbiṣas tam paśye na vīta-bhayam unmuditam tri-lokyām anyatra vai mura-ripor itaratra dāsāt

( vīra-patni ) Hey the courageous wife! (or wife of a courageous personality!)

(aham) I shall (dadhe) execute (damam) the severest punishment (tasmin) to anyone (kṛṭa-kilbiṣaḥ) who had done offence (tava) to you provided (yaḥ) he is (anyaṭra) outside the category (bhūsura-kulāt) of the knowledgeable persons (Brahmins) (itaraṭra) or he is anyone who is not (dāsāt) a devotee (mura-ripoh) of Shri Bhagwan.

(na paśye) I fail to see, (tam) however, any person who can do offence to you (unmuditam) and still remain very happy (vīta-bhayam) and without any fear (tri-lokyām) in these three worlds (anyatra vai) and beyond.

## Stanza 25

vaktram na te vitilakam malinam viharşam samrambha-bhīmam avimṛṣṭam apeta-rāgam paśye stanāv api śucopahatau sujātau bimbādharam vigata-kunkuma-panka-rāgam

#### Stanza 26

tan me prasīda suhṛdaḥ kṛta-kilbiṣasya svairam gatasya mṛgayām vyasanāturasya kā devaram vaśa-gatam kusumāstra-vegavisrasta-paumsnam uśatī na bhajeta kṛtye

(tat ) Therefore, (prasīda ) please bestow mercy (me ) upon me,

(suhṛdaḥ) who is your intimate friend, (gatasya) and who had gone (mṛgayām) for hunting to the forests (svairam) on his own accord (vyasanāturasya) because of having come under the influence of bad habits.

( kṛta-kilbiṣasya ) Definitely I have done a great offence to you in this manner.

(kā uśatī) Which lover (na bhajeta) shall not comply (kṛṭye) with the required desires of the youthful friend like me, (vaśa-gataṁ) who has totally come under your control, (kusumāstra-vega-visrasta-pauṁsnam) and who is now so much afflicted with the lustful feelings because of the piercing arrows shot at me by the God of Love (Kamadeva)?

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This completes the twenty sixth chapter of volume four of Srimad Bhagavatam.

Hari Om