

Sri Bhagavad-Tattva-Vigyaan

(A Scientific study of God)

By

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Who is God?

Srimat Jiva Goswâmpâd has stated in the third chapter of Sri Bhagavat-Sandarbha – “There is an absolute Mass of Bliss that possesses an inherent power. He has inexpressible qualities and is the root source of divine Power. His inherent power comprises of sub-powers, the chief of these being, ‘Hlâdini *Shakti*’ or the Power of Bliss. Hlâdini Shakti has a special property – devotion or *Bhakti*. When sages situated in extremely high spiritual position, so much so, that they have realized Brahman, experience this Mass of Bliss, they get Bhakti in their hearts. Their internal and external senses are drenched with Bhakti. Then Bhakti manifests That supreme Shakti (Mass of Bliss) as the Hero of various Leelâs with a multitude of capabilities. This is Bhagavân or God.

In simple terms, Sri Bhagavân is a transcendental *Tattva* and has all the powers to the fullest extent. Therefore, we conclude that –

“Sri Bhagavân has all the powers – material or spiritual.”

–(B.S.17th chapter)

The *Vaishnav-toshani* purport of Srimad-Bhâgavatam (10.12.11) has stated as follows –

“Bhagavân is a comprisal of extraordinary swarup, majesty and sweetness. Swarup means ‘supreme bliss’, majesty refers to unparalleled and infinite lordship and sweetness implies unmatched, all-captivating natural beauty, excellence and leelâs.”

In other words – Sri Bhagavân is a supernatural Tattva that is eternal, conscious and blissful. He has absolute sovereignty and beauty. No one has equal or more supremacy than He does, no body can compare with Him in all-mesmerizing looks and excellences and neither can anyone match Him in beautiful leelâs. Such is Sri Bhagavân.

Shruti and *Upanishads* mention often that the Supreme Brahman is eternal, conscious and blissful (*sat-chit-ânanda*).

“The Supreme Being is sat-chit-ânanda.” – (Nri Purva 1.6)

“I am absolute and sat-chit-ânanda.” – (Maitri.3.12)

“The Supreme One is Truth, conscious and eternal.”

– (Taittiriya Upanishad¹.2.1.1)

¹ The Taittiriya Upanishad forms the seventh, eighth and ninth chapters of the Taittiriya Âranyak of the Krishna Yajur Ved. These chapters are known as Shikshâ Valli, Ânanda Valli and Bhrigu Valli, respectively.

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"Verily know the Supreme One to be bliss."

– (Brihad-Āranyak Upanishad¹.2.9.28)

"We know for sure that the Supreme One is bliss."

– (Taittiriya Upanishad.2.6.1.)

Shrutis often repeat that Parabrahman is extremely majestic. He is all knowing, the ultimate decision-maker, the Great Controller, colossal – the sun, moon and all heavenly bodies move by His command. All universe is resplendent with His almighty existence.

"ishāvāsyam idam sarvam"

"sarvasya prabhum ishānam sarvasya sharanam brihat."

"esha sarvashwara esha sarvagnyah esho'ntaryāmi"

'vashi sarvasya lokasya sthasvarasya charasya cha'

Sage Yagnavalkya² told Gārgi –

"etasya vā aksharasya prashāsane gārgi surya-chandramasou vidhritou toshthat, etasya vā aksharasya prashāsane gārgi dyāvā prithivyou vidhrite tishthata."

Sri Gitā too says –

"shashi-surya-netram"

Sri Bhagavān is incapable of describing His majesty, so He is telling Arjun –

"Everything that is majestic, rich and powerful – know it to be a part of my potency." – (B.G.10.41)

The material universe comprises of just one part of the Lord's majesty while the remaining three-fourth is in the divine world. We see in the Chhândogya Upanishad –

"Where does Sri Bhagavān reside? He resides in His infinite glory."

The Vedas and Upanishads also tell us about Sri Bhagavān's sweetness. The Aryan rishis worshiped Sri Bhagavān intensely; therefore, they realized the entire creation as an expression of the Lord's sweetness. The

¹ It is widely known for its philosophical statements, and is ascribed to Rishi Yagnavalkya. Its name is literally translated as "great-forest-book". It includes three sections, namely, *Madhu Kanda*, *Muni Kanda* (or *Yajnavalkya Kanda*) and *Khila Kanda*. The *Madhu Kanda* explains the teachings of the basic identity of the individual or *jiva* and the Atman. *Muni Kanda* includes the conversations between the sage Yajnavalkya and his wife, Maitreyi. Various methods of worship and meditation are dealt in the *Khila Kanda*.

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mantra "*madhuvâtâ ritâyate madhuksharanti sindhava*" of the Rig Ved says –

"The breeze is laden with sweet fragrance; the seas ooze sweetness, the plants, the days and nights and the earth are all sweet."

They must have relished someone Who is extraordinarily sweet and full of *ras* – otherwise they would not have made a statement that expresses such a sweet bhâv.

Madhuvidyâ of Brihad-Âranyak says –

"Paramâtmâ Sri Bhagavân is the sweetness in everything."

Sri Bhagavân is absolute; He is naturally majestic and sweet. He is the ocean of sachchidânanda. He is the embodiment of love, ras and joy. His body is not material; therefore, it is eternal. His body is made up of bliss.

"His body and soul are non-different." – (Kurma Purân)

"All forms of Sri Bhagavân are eternal and changeless. These forms do not have a beginning or an end. They are not material, but transcendental."
– (Varâha Purân)

"All the forms of Sri Bhagavân are true, conscious, infinite and made up of blissful ras. Even the sages who are extremely pure-hearted and are learned in the Vedânta cannot realize Their glory." – (S.B.10.13.54)

This is why the gyânis consider His body as an illusion.

Sriman-Mahâprabhu has told Sârvabhauma Bhattâchârya –

*ishwarer sri bigraha sach-chidanandâkâr,
se bigrohe koho sattva guner bikâr.
sri bigroho je nâ mane sei to pâshandi,
adrishya asprishya hoy se jom-dandi.*

Meaning – "The Supreme Being's form is sachchidânanda. How can you say it is made of sattva-gun? Who does not accept that Sri Bhagavân's form is eternal and blissful is verily an atheist."

Sri Bhagavân's form is sachchidânanda; this is why it is simultaneously omnipresent and place-bound. Sri Bhagavân's power is inconceivable, therefore He is capable of such contradictions. Just because He is in the form of a deity, it does not mean that He is only there and nowhere else. Sri Bhagavân is almighty, hence He is present everywhere, in everything eternally. A material object can be present in a certain place at one time, however this is not the case with Sri Bhagavân. He is beyond the rules of the material world. Sri Bhagavân is beyond time, beyond the rules of action and reaction, beyond material attributes. His Deity is non-different from Himself. His Deity is without a beginning and end. It was so in the

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distant past; it is so today and will remain like this in the everlasting future.

Sri Bhagavân's body is not made up of the Five Elements (earth, water, fire, air and space). These comprise only material objects.

"Who considers Sri Bhagavân's body to comprise of the Five Elements is banned from performing all auspicious activities mentioned in the Shrutis and the Smritis." –

In fact, Sri Bhagavân's birth and activities are divine, they are untouched by the illusory energy (they are not an illusion) and they are loving expressions of His divine leelâ-shakti. The divine abode is the inexhaustible source of leelâ-ras. Innumerable forms of that One Supreme Being sport therein. From there He takes mercy on the living beings and descends in the material earth. Here He expresses various sweet divine pastimes and again draws these leelâs within Himself. This is the mystery of Sri Bhagavân's appearance and disappearance.

"Who knows this secret of my divine birth and activities (pastimes) in truth and principle are freed from the bonds of birth and karma; they become free of illusion and attain Sri Bhagavân." – (B.G.4.9)

Sripâd Râmânujâchârya has explained this verse as follows –

"The Blessed Lord is saying – A devotee may have inauspicious qualities that stop him from approaching my lotus feet; however if he knows the truth and principle behind my divine birth and activities, then that knowledge destroys countless inauspicious qualities and the devotee surrenders unto me in this very life, endears himself to me and attains me."

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Sri Bhagavân has three Shaktis

"Whoever knows Sri Krishna's *swarup* and three Shaktis has no doubt about Him." – (C.C.)

We have already mentioned that Bhagavân is an absolute and almighty Tattva. Now we are analyzing His strength. We can understand Him better if we know His potency. Sri Bhagavan has three principal Shaktis.

"These three Shaktis are as follows –

1. **Chit-shakti** – We also call it 'swarup-shakti'. It is 'antarangâ' or internal. It has infinite opulence and the divine realms such as the countless Vaikunthas are made of this Shakti.
2. **Mâyâ-shakti** – It is the 'bahirangâ' or external Shakti. The material world comprising of innumerable universes is made up of this Shakti.
3. **Jiv-shakti** – It is also called 'tatasthâ-shakti'. It is present in all the living beings.

These three Shaktis further consist of infinite Shaktis."

- (C.C.)

Chit-shakti

(Internal potency)

"We hear about the Shakti of the Divine Being"

- (Shwetâshwatar Upanishad)

This Shakti is nothing but the 'chit-shakti' or the 'Antarangâ shakti'. This Shakti is the closest to Sri Bhagavan. This is why we call it 'internal'. It is self-manifesting and is the opposite of non-conscious. Hence, it is 'consciousness' or 'chit-shakti' ('chit' means conscious). It is present in Supreme Being's *swarup*. Therefore, we also call it 'swarup-shakti'. It is greater than the other two Shaktis in nature and glory. Therefore, it is 'Parâ-shakti' or 'supreme shakti'. Thus, it has the following names –

- Antarangâ-shakti
- Chit-shakti
- Swarup-shakti
- Parâ-shakti

"Sri Krishna is sat-chit-ânanda. His chit-shakti takes three forms -

1. Sandhini – when the swarup-shakti manifests the property 'sat', we call it 'sandhini'.

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2. Samvit – When the swarup-shakti conveys knowledge or consciousness, it is expressing itself as 'samvit'.
3. Hlâdini – when the swarup-shakti expresses bliss, we call it 'hlâdini'." – (C.C.)

Although Sri Bhagavân is 'sat' personified, He exists and makes others existent using the sandhini-shakti. Sri Bhagavân is the embodiment of knowledge. Yet He uses the samvit-shakti to know Himself and make others know about Him. Sri Bhagavan is Bliss, yet He relishes joy using Hlâdini-shakti and makes others relish too. Just as we cannot separate Sri Bhagavân's sat, chit and ânanda, sandhini, samvit and hlâdini too are intermingled with each other.

We have stated that chit-shakti is self-manifested. When the sun rises, it shows itself and illuminates other substances. Similarly, chit-shakti manifests itself as well as other objects. It is a conglomeration of sandhini, samvit and hlâdini. **Chit-shakti has a property called 'vishuddha-satva'** (= especially pure goodness). Sri Bhagavan uses this property of His swarup-shakti while appearing. All three – hlâdini, sandhini and samvit – are present together in vishuddha-satva. However sometimes they manifest themselves in equal amounts and sometimes in different proportions. 'Vishuddha-satva' gains special names depending on the extent of hlâdini, samvit and sandhini expressed in it. Some of them are as follows –

- **Âdhâr-shakti** – When sandhini-shakti expresses itself to a large degree, then 'vishuddha-satva' is called 'âdhâr-shakti'. Sri Bhagavan manifests His abode using this power.

"When sandhini-shakti is dominant we call it as 'shuddha-satva' (not to be confused with vishuddha-satva). Sri Bhagavan's power rests on this. His parents, abode, home, bed etc are made up of shuddha-satva." – (C.C.)

- **Âtma-vidya** – When samvit-shakti makes up the major portion of vishuddha-satva, we call it 'âtma-vidyâ.' It has two forms – (a) knowledge (b) harbinger of knowledge. It gives knowledge to the worshiper.

"The function of samvit is to give knowledge about Sri Krishna's divinity and all sorts of spiritual awareness."
– (C.C.)

- **Guhya-vidyâ** – When hlâdini is dominant in vishuddha-satva, it is called 'guhya-vidya' (secret knowledge). It has two forms – (a) devotion (b) harbinger of devotion. It gives loving devotion or 'prem-bhakti' to a devotee.

"When we condense Hlâdini we get 'prem'. It is made up of blissful and conscious (or divine) ras". – (C.C.)

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- **Murti** – When sandhini, samvit and hlâdini manifest in equal amounts in vishuddha-satva we call it as 'murti'. Sri Bhagavan's Holy Form manifests due to this Shakti.

Mâyâ-shakti

(External potency)

Sri Bhagavân has described His external Mâyâ-shakti to Brahmâji with His own Holy mouth –

"I am the only object worth accomplishing. When one cannot understand this and realizes something else, it is 'mâyâ'. Maya cannot exist on its own - just like a reflection or darkness." - (S.B.2.9.3)

Mâyâ's first characteristic is that, when we do not realize Sri Bhagavân, we appreciate Mâyâ. We do not turn towards Him and in stead consider Mâyâ true. So let us understand that those who have not realized Sri Bhagavân, or have turned away from Him are the ones who consider their body and everything related to the body as real. They do not comprehend that these substances are all Mâyâ. It naturally follows that if we realize Sri Bhagavân we will not feel the effect of Mâyâ. We will know that Mâyâ's activities are temporary and material pleasure will never tempt us.

Sri Bhagavân has stated another characteristic of Mâyâ – "it cannot exist on its own". This means that Mâyâ cannot exist without Sri Bhagavân. It is true that when we do not experience Sri Bhagavân, we fall into the clutches of Mâyâ. However, it is also true that Sri Bhagavân is the source of Mâyâ. Power (Shakti) has to come from a powerful person (Shaktimân). There is and cannot be any power other than Sri Bhagavân (since He is almighty). So this means that Mâyâ also comes from Him. Nevertheless, we should also know that Mâyâ is His external potency and does not exist within Him. It is a power working in the material world (outside the divine empire).

Sri Bhagavân has explained Mâyâ further with two examples – "just like (a) reflection and (b) darkness". We can see the reflection of the sun in a water body. The sun's reflection is very far from the sun and it is in the world. Similarly, Mâyâ occurs outside the divine realm. Sri Bhagavân's internal potency works in His transcendental world while Mâyâ manifests itself in the material world.

We may ask – "Power exists within the powerful person. When Mâyâ is present so far from the Supreme Being then how can you call it His Shakti?" The answer is – A powerful person the **source** of power. It cannot survive without him. We cannot see the sun's reflection in the

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absence of the sun. Therefore, although Mâyâ exists far from the Supreme Being He is its source."

Another example – "like darkness". If we stare long enough at the sun's reflection, its glare blinds us and we begin to see darkness. This darkness is present within us and not in the sun. However, this darkness arises out of the sun. We experience it because of the sun. Likewise, although the Supreme Being is the source of Mâyâ it exists outside Him. Sri Jiva Goswâmpâd says, "External Mâyâ is of two types – (a) Jiva-mâyâ (b) Guna-mâyâ.

(a) **Jiva-mâyâ** – When we stare at the sun's reflection in a water body, its glare blinds us. Similarly, the Mâyâ that covers our intelligence is called 'Jiva-mâyâ'. It has two functions –

- To cover – Mâyâ covers our intelligence and does not allow us to know our swarup. It prevents us from learning that we are originally transcendental beings.
- To distract – Mâyâ distracts us from the lotus feet of Sri Bhagavân and instead throws our mind into non-conscious matter. It makes us feel that we are this body and makes our mind wander in objects of sense gratification.

(b) **Guna-mâyâ** - As we continue to look intently at the reflection of the sun, the darkness assumes many shapes. Similarly, Mâyâ presents three gunas – satvah, rajah, tamah - in various shapes to us.

"The material world is not a source at all. Nature is without any consciousness. Sri Krishna takes mercy and implants His Shakti in it. When a piece of iron encounters fire, the fire transmits its quality to the iron (that is the iron becomes red hot like the fire). Similarly due to His Shakti, Nature assumes some attributes or gunas." – (C.C.)

Tatasthâ Jiva-shakti

(The Shakti inside living beings)

The Shâstras prove that the living being is essentially Sri Bhagavân's Shakti. Sri Vishnu Purân says –

"We call Vishnu-shakti or Swarup-shakti as divine power. There is another Shakti called Jiva-shakti. There is a third power that results in ignorance (external Mâyâ-shakti)."

We also find in Sri Gitâ –

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"Sri Krishna told Arjun – O mighty-armed hero, I have an excellent power called Jiva-shakti which is different from Mâyâ-shakti. This excellent power is holding the world."

"The living entity is Shakti (Power) while Sri Krishna is the Shaktimân (powerful person). The scriptures such as Sri Gitâ and Vishnu Purân prove this." – (C.C.)

This Jiva-shakti belongs neither to Swarup-shakti nor to Mâyâ-shakti. We call it 'tatasthâ' – something that lies midway between the two. Sri Bhagavân is almighty conscious being while the Jiva-shakti is atom-like in comparison. Shrutis mention that – the Jiva is as small as the ten thousandth part of the tip of a hair. There are countless jivas. We can classify them into two groups –

- "(a) **Nitya-mukta** (eternally free) – A class of living beings are turned towards Sri Bhagavân and have divine knowledge since time infinite. They are 'Nitya-mukta'.
- (b) **Nitya-baddha** (eternally bound) – This group has forgotten Sri Bhagavân since eternity and is turned away from Him."
– (Paramâtma-Sandarbha)

Sriman-Mahâprabhu has told in Sanâtan-shikshâ –

"Jivas are of two types – (a) eternally free and (b) eternally bound to the material world. Those who are eternally free turn toward Sri Krishna's feet forever. They are His associates and enjoy the pleasure of serving Him. The eternally bound are the ones who have turned away from Him since infinity. They suffer hellish pains in the material world."

– (C.C.)

Sri Bhagavân is the only One worth worshiping

Sriman-Mahâprabhu has told in Sanâtan-shikshâ –

“Jiva forgot that he is the eternal servant of Sri Krishna. Due to this crime, Mâyâ tied a noose round his neck. When he learns this and serves Sri Gurudev and Sri Krishna, he becomes free from Mâyâ’s clutches and attains Sri Krishna’s feet.” – (C.C.)

Since eternity, we have turned away from Sri Bhagavân. Therefore, our heart is always unclean. This is the reason that in spite of being a part of That sat-chit-ânanda (meaning, the jiva is blissful), the living entity is in Mâyâ’s grip and is suffering in various species perpetually. If Jiva wants to break free from Mâyâ’s bondage and enjoy permanent bliss, he has no option but to worship the lotus feet of Sri Bhagavân. He has said with His holy lips –

“O Arjun, My Mâyâ bewitches all living beings. It comprises of the three gunas - sattva, raja, tama. It is verily insurmountable. The tiny jiva can never fight with Mâyâ-shakti and defeat it. Only those who surrender unto me can cross the ocean-like Mâyâ.” – (B.G.7.14)

“Sri Krishna is like the brilliant sun, while Mâyâ is darkness. When Sri Krishna is present, Mâyâ cannot exist.” – (C.C.)

When the jiva, who is Sri Krishna’s eternal servant, wishes to go beyond the dark ocean-like Mâyâ and gain the joyous loving service of Sri Bhagavân, he certainly has to accept the path of God-worship. This is why Sri Krishna has told Arjun –

“O Bhârât, you surrender completely unto the Supreme Being. Then by His mercy, you will gain supreme peace and attain His eternal abode.”
– (B.G.18.62)

In Srimad-Bhagavad-Gitâ, after describing desire-free karma, the path of knowledge and yog-practices, the Lord has said –

“O Arjun, I am repeating the deepest secret, hear my supreme words. You are extremely dear to me – therefore I am telling you. Surrender your heart to me, become my devotee, worship me and bow before me. You are my very dear one – I pledge that if you follow my command you shall certainly get me. Forsake all dharma and take my shelter alone. I will free you from all sins – do not grieve.”
– (B.G.18.64-66)

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“Earlier He (Sri Krishna) advised the principles of the Vedas, karma, yog and gyan. Ultimately, He gave a strong commandment. If the devotee has faith in this commandment, he forsakes all activities and worships Sri Krishna.” – (C.C.)

Sri Bhagavan instructed Arjun on many subjects and eventually revealed the most confidential message hidden in the heart of all Shâstras – worshiping Sri Bhagavan, taking shelter of His lotus feet. He has stated this very clearly. Life is short. We would like to perform various dharmas, clean up our heart and gain the highest goal. However, by then our life is finished. There is neither any time nor the opportunity to reach the goal. As a result, compassionate Sri Bhagavan is telling Arjun to forsake all other dharmas and directly surrender unto Him. He is instructing Arjun about Bhajan. Sri Bhagavan loves those who seek His protection. He has vowed to burn all our sins that become obstacles in the path of Bhakti. Our hearts are stained with material attachment and envy that we have collected since infinity. We can never clean up our heart on our own. So, if we are intelligent, we shall surely take Sri Bhagavan’s shelter with singular devotion and make ourselves blessed. We have to sacrifice our ego completely and depend on His holy feet. Then we will gain the serene touch of His mercy. We shall rest in supreme peace and sanctify ourselves. Those of us who wish to soothe the scorching heat of the three fold miseries and float in the river of love should surrender at His Holy feet with body, mind and soul and take to the path of divine Bhajan. Then, after this karmic body ends, we shall become divine associates and absorb in His service. We will relish Sri Bhagavan’s sweet transcendental beauty, excellences and pastimes forever and they will appear new each time. No scripture or saint disagrees with this. Sri Bhagavan has told Sri Uddhav –

“O Uddhav, I have prescribed duties in the Vedas and have stated that it is good to follow these rules and it is wrong not to obey them. However, in spite of knowing this, if someone considers the Vedic rules to be a disturbance in his meditation upon me, he has firmly decided that he will accomplish the highest goal solely on the strength of my Bhakti, and he has forsaken all dharmas to practice Bhajan, he is a topmost saint.” – (S.B.11.11.32)

Sripad Shukamuni has stated in the beginning of Srimad-Bhâgavatam

*Tasmâd bhârata sarvâtmâ bhagavânishwaro harih,
Shravyah kirtitavyashcha smartavyashchechchatâbhayam.”*

“O Parikshit Mahârâj, Whoever wishes to get rid of fear ought to hear, glorify and reminisce only about Sri Hari, Who is ‘sarvâtmâ’ (present in everybody’s heart) and is the Supreme Controller.” – (S.B.2.1.5)

Sridhar Swâpipad has explained this verse as follows – “Sripad Shukamuni explained that Sri Bhagavan is the only Person worthy of worshiping. To indicate this he has used four names –

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- 'Sarvâtmâ' (present in everybody's heart) ->He is dear to all.
- 'Bhagavân' -> this word stands for beauty.
- Ishwar ->it is necessary to worship Him.
- Hari ->He steals material bondage.

Why does Shukadev Goswâmi use the name 'sarvâtmâ'?

The Vedas, whom we consider as our Mother, too tells us that –

“The supreme Being That dwells in our heart is dearer to us than even our children, wealth and everything else.”

– (Brihad-Âranyak Upanishad.1.4.8.).

“We like the objects not because they are those objects, but because they contain the Supreme One in them.”

– (Brihad-Âranyak Upanishad)

The Supreme Being's consciousness reflects in material objects and makes them worthy of love. He is the soul of the soul. This is why the soul is dear. Paramâtmâ is worthy of selfless love. This Great Soul is amalgamated with everything in the universe – whether it has a soul or not and is making it lovable. Water naturally proceeds towards the sea. Similarly, the love of every living being flows towards Sri Bhagavân. The scriptures say “priya eva varaniya bhavati” (what you love appears great). Since we naturally love Sri Bhagavân, we find Him great and so it is easy to worship Him.

The question may arise – we see that only the love of staunch devotees flow towards Sri Bhagavân. Then how can we say that everybody's love is directed to Him? The reply is that, although water naturally flows towards the sea, we do not find all water bodies heading for the same. Only the rivers flow into the sea. If water logs in some hole or ditch, it stops flowing. Gradually, it becomes filthy, rots and worms wriggle in it. We cannot use this water for drinking or bathing. However, it does not mean that this water has lost its property or qualification to move towards the sea. Now if there is torrential rain, and the rainwater enters the ditch, the water rises up. The worms are destroyed. The water becomes pure, enters a stream and into Ganga. It mixes with the water of Ganga and gushes towards the sea without any obstruction. In the same manner, the living being, which has turned away from Sri Krishna - his love is confined to small holes (material objects of sense gratification). Therefore, it has become selfish and filthy. Thousands of worms (material desires) are wriggling in it. The natural function of love, that is, to serve Sri Bhagavân, is lost (just like the ditch-water that loses its potability). Even then, it retains its characteristic to rush towards Sri Bhagavân. If he hears abundant nectarine Harikathâ in the association of pure devotees (this is like the torrential rain), then the sweet talk along with kripâ of the pure devotees enter his heart through his ears. His love forsakes materialism, selfishness and becomes pure. It rushes towards Sri Bhagavân. Gradually it mixes with the Ganga-like Bhakti and flows

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uninterruptedly towards Him. Sripâd Shukamuni has indicated this process by using the name 'sarvâtmâ'.

What does 'Bhagavân' indicate?

Also, He is 'Bhagavân', which indicates that He is immeasurably beautiful and sweet. Tell me, who does not worship beauty? We like to see beautiful things, our ears crave for sweet music, we like to taste beautiful delicious food with the tongue, our nose seeks beautiful fragrance and our skin desires the touch of beautiful soft and luxurious objects. We think of beautiful things and love beauty. The fact that all our senses tend to worship beauty indicates that in reality they would like to adore That 'satyam shivam sundaram' – immensely beautiful and immeasurably sweet Sri Bhagavân. We shall never be satisfied with the material world since it is non-conscious and even happiness here ultimately results in pain. By the grace of pure devotees, when we gain the knowledge of Sri Bhagavân's divine beauty and ras, our senses absorb in Him forever. Then we loathe worldly beauty and enjoyments. Sripâd Shukamuni has used the word 'Bhagavân' because He is the only Person worthy of our adoration.

Why does Shukadev Goswâmi use the name 'Ishwar' ?

The name 'Ishwar' tells us that it is necessary for all humankind to worship Him. This is because by worshiping Him we do well for ourselves – in fact, extremely well.

"Those of us who feel, "I am this body and everything related to this body belongs to me" are always anxious. We constantly worry about losing our possessions. However, if we worship Achyuta (the One Who is steadfast) we lose our fear and gain nectarine divine prem – thus we are blessed."

– (S.B.11.2.30)

On the other hand –

"Who do not worship God are evil, lowest amongst humankind, Mâyâ shrouds their intellect and are âsuric."

- (B.G.7.15)

"The Supreme Controller throws such lowly people in violent species such as tigers and snakes repeatedly." – (B.G.16.19)

This means that it is absolutely necessary for everyone to worship God.

What does 'Hari' mean?

Shukadev Goswâmi has called Sri Bhagavân as 'Hari'. Hari means 'One Who steals. No one is capable of stealing material bondage other than Sri Hari. He not only steals material bondage, but also steals our heart with prem. Sriman-Mahâprabhu has told with His Holy Lips –

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“‘Hari’ has many meanings, of which two are most important – “One Who steals all inauspiciousness’ and ‘One Who steals our heart with prem.” – (C.C.)

What is the main reason for our material bondage? Our sinful tendencies. These are ‘inauspicious qualities’. Sri Hari steals these qualities. Now, we know that people steal only costly items when they want yet do not get. If Sri Hari asks us to give Him our unfavorable qualities, we will certainly give Him, what is the need for Him to steal? Well, we consider all our evil aspects to be good! Therefore, we do not want to give them up! It becomes necessary for Sri Hari to steal them secretly. When our heart becomes empty of all material desires, He fills it nicely with His prem. He steals our heart with His beauty and sweetness. This is why Sri Hari alone is worthy of our adoration.

In another verse, Sripâd Shukamuni has explained very nicely that we should worship only Sri Bhagavân -

“Our topmost duty is to worship Sri Bhagavân, because He is always present within everyone. He is our soul and hence dearest to us. He is the eternal Truth. He is indestructible and full of adorable qualities. Worshiping Him is a joyous activity. If we worship Him firmly then our ignorance easily disappears.” – (S.B.2.2.6)

Shridhar Swâmipâd has explained this verse as follows –

“We must worship only Sri Bhagavân. Sripâd Shukamuni has stated some extraordinary facts to prove this point.

1. Sri Bhagavân is always presenting every living element, hence, to worship Him we never have to search elsewhere. He knows what is going on in our mind. Therefore, even if we do not use external objects to worship Him and simply make offerings in meditation, He accepts them and is pleased. He is well aware of our infinite past, present and future – so even if we perform Bhajan after hundreds and thousands of lifetimes, He starts giving us His kripâ that will pave our path for Bhajan. If we take one step towards Him, He takes a thousand steps to come near us. Who else, other than Sri Hari is so compassionate?
2. Sri Bhagavân is the Supreme Soul. Therefore, He is our dearest One. We feel naturally happy to serve whom we love. Hence, everyone finds pleasure in serving Sri Hari.
3. Sri Bhagavân is Truth personified. He is not false and temporary like the body and things related to the body. He is the treasure of our soul. He is not perishable like worldly dharmas and karmas. Even if we perform little Bhajan we will surely progress on the path of devotion. We may face repeated obstacles on the path of Bhakti due to inauspicious qualities resulting out of bad association. In spite of this, as soon as our major unworthy

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aspects disappear, we are certain to gain this priceless Bhajan - if not in this life, then in some other life.

4. Sri Bhagavân loves His devotees. He is very much compassionate. He has countless adorable qualities such as these. If we serve Him even a little bit, He considers it great. Even though we may offer Him just a palmful of water and one Tulasi leaf, He gives Himself to His devotee.

The plus point is that Sri Hari's Bhajan is not difficult at all. In fact worshipping Him is highly pleasurable. Sri Bhagavân is Bliss. His Name, excellences and leelâs all express bliss. Therefore, when we relish that joy in hearing and glorifying Him, our Bhajan becomes natural and most joyous. When the sun rises, darkness flees. In the same manner, when we perform Bhajan that is easy as well as pleasurable, our ignorance perishes (this is the side effect of Bhajan). The main effect is – we get Sri Bhagavân's darshan very soon and get His actual sevâ. Then we become fortunate forever and ever.

Here we should also know that the Vedas are self-manifested. They are transcendental. They have revealed the identity of Sri Bhagavân to humanity. We should be grateful to them, for otherwise, we would have never learnt about the Supreme Being Who is eternal, infinite, super natural and inconceivable. The Vedas have declared divine forms such as Sri Krishna, Sri Gourânga, Sri Râm, and Sri Nrisimha etc. as worshiped deities. If we wish our welfare, we must worship them. Nowadays it is a fashion to raise some magicians and successful yogis to the altar and worship them as God. We find this trait (of converting man into God) especially amongst the Bengalis. In Bengal, there is an epidemic of incarnations – so much, so that gullible simpletons are worshipping these cheats to fulfill cheap desires such as money and position. This is why we say – devotees, beware! We are not short of God that we have to search for some new god and worship Him. In this special Kaliyug, Sri Gourânga Mahâprabhu, a hidden incarnation, has appeared and has preached the most confidential path of Sri Krishna-worship. He has revealed how to adore Sri Krishna, Whom all the Vedas, and above all Srimad-Bhâgavatam, the essence of the Vedas prove as the Swayam Bhagavân. Sriman-Mahâprabhu has blest us with this information. We are ever grateful to Him for teaching us how to worship Sri Sri Râdhârâni, Who is Sri Krishna's root potency and Swayam Bhagavân Vrajendra-nandan, Who is sweetness personified. We shall learn about Them more in the following chapters – Scientific study of Sri Krishna and Sri Râdhâ.

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**Jai Sri Radhe**