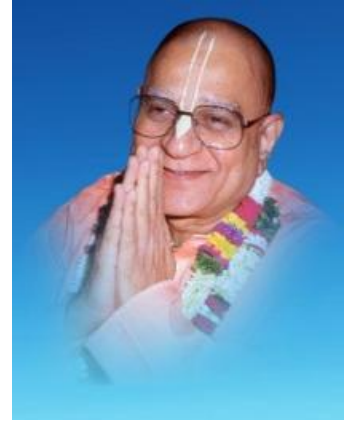


Bhagavat Kathamrita

By His Divine Grace Srila Bhakti Swarupa Tirtha Goswami Maharaj



Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

October 2009

Volume 1 Issue 1

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- How to Become Free by His Divine Grace Srila B.S. Tirtha Goswami Maharaj

Rarity of Human Life

labhdvā Sudurlabham idam bahu-sambhāvante mānusyam arthadam anityam apiha dhirah

This is a sloka from Srimad Bhagavatam which contains 18,000 verses, which in turn, is an elaboration of Srimad Bhagavata Gita which contains 700 verses. Bhagavata Gita was spoken in an emergency on a battlefield, therefore 700 verses. But then, it requires an elaboration. So, Naradaji requested VyasaDeva, his disciple, to expand these 700 verses to 18,000 verses. Because he's a literary incarnation of God. So, in this Bhagavatam, in this sloka, it says, *labhdvā sudurlabham idam - labhdvā* means having obtained, *idam* means this human body, *bahu-sambhāvante - sambhāvante* means lifetimes, *bahu* means many. After many lifetimes, we have received this human form. *Anityam* means impermanent or ephemeral, just opposite to permanent. This body is ephemeral but the soul is eternal. So, he says all the bodies are ephemeral. There are 8,400,000 varieties of life. So it is explained like this...*jalaja nava-laksani sthavara laksa-vimsati. Jalaja nava laksani -* aquatic animal varieties, 900,000. That means in one variety, there will be trillions of living entities. So you can imagine in the water all over the universe, *nava laksani - 900,000* varieties are there. So once, in one lifetime, I was a small fish. So, I had a fish father, fish mother, fish wife, fish children, fish brother, fish sister...It's all over..Then, I became a whale, then whale father, whale mother...like

this.. Then, *sthavara laksa vimsati. Sthavara* means immobile. That is vegetable kingdom. Plants, trees, creepers, etc. *laksa vimsati - 2 million* varieties. In London, I visited a place called Kew Gardens. It's a huge garden so we went around...So, some people were working on the lawn. So, those women called us...They asked me, "Have you seen the whole thing?" I said, "yes, nice." She said, "you're amazed, no?" I said, "no." Then, she said, "How's that you're not amazed?" I said, "why should I be amazed?" She said, "you know we are monitoring 2000 varieties here, the biggest garden in the world." Then I said, "Krishna maintains 2,000,000 varieties - *laksa vimsati*. What I'm trying to say is that 2,000 varieties is not a big thing. And what is *sthavara*? Trees..standing here. They're all atheists. In one lifetime, those who did not accept existence of God, those who denied His existence, they became trees. And they have to stand like this...for hundreds of years. Only in devotee's house, whatever the creepers are there, they're lucky. They're fortunate so lord gives them a chance to grow around the periphery of devotee's house. Then, *krmayo rudra-sankhyakah - krmayo* means insects, reptiles, snakes. *Rudra* means eleven. 1,100,000. So, many right from the worms in the stool to the biggest snake, Vasuki, all of them come in that group. *paksinam*

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dasa-laksanam -the bird variety is 1,000,000. Then, *trimsal-laksani pasavah* - 3,000,000 animals. Starting from red ant to the huge elephant - the entire range. And, *catur-laksani manusah* - 400,000 varieties. So, if you add this, you get 8,400,000 varieties. So after transmigrating through 8,000,000 sub-human species of life, we've come into this human body. Therefore, Bhagavatam says, *labhdvā Sudurlabham idam* - after many lifetimes, *mānusyam arthadam anityam*- all 8,400,000 varieties of bodies are *anityam*.
- continued in the next issue.

How to Become Free

In this world, everyone wants to be free. No one likes to be controlled. Whether an individual, a community, a race or a nation, there is always a hankering for freedom. Even a small child never likes to be controlled. The moment we try to control a child, he or she will rebel. Factory workers revolt when the management tries to control them by imposing restrictions. A student adversely reacts, sometimes even violently, when a teacher attempts to discipline him. Thus, there is an innate tendency in all living beings, including animals and birds, to be free. That is why when a rat is released from a rat trap, it simply flees and when a bird is let out of a cage, it flies out with lightning speed.

Why is everyone anxious to be free? It is because freedom brings happiness. In fact, complete happiness is actually possible only in a state of full freedom. Conditioning brings unhappiness. This is because the person controlled has to carry out the instructions of a controller compulsorily against his willingness. There is a constant psychological stress and a physiological strain in the absence of full freedom.

History teaches us that many have sacrificed their lives to achieve freedom for their nation. The world has been periodically witnessing mass revolutions in many countries and civilizations whenever people were deprived of their freedom. There is only suffocation in slavery, whereas freedom brings infinite joy.

However, what we do not understand is that freedom obtained in this world is not real freedom. Therefore, there is no lasting happiness. People of a free nation continue to

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suffer although they might have become free from the clutches of a tyrannical President or a dictator. Similarly, a bird may enjoy temporary freedom only to be again caught by a hunter. A rat freed from a trap has all the possibility of getting trapped again. In other words, the struggle for achieving freedom in this material world is an exercise in futility because such freedom cannot bring actual joy or bliss that a living being has been hankering after, life after life.
- continued in the next issue.

Srimad-Bhagavatam Meditation

*kaler dosa-nidhe rājann
asti hy mahān gunah
kirtanād eva krsnasya
mukta sangah param vrajet* (SB 12.3.51)

My dear King, although Kali-yuga is an ocean of faults, there is still one good quality about this age: Simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mahā-mantra, one can become free from material bondage and be promoted to the transcendental kingdom.

Bhagavat Kathamrita

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