

An Overview of

Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā

(Translation and Purports by His Divine Grace
Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvatī Goswami Ṭhākura)

Course presented by
His Holiness Bhakti Caitanya Swami

VAISNAVA INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

Śrīla Prabhupāda on Śrī-Brahma-saṁhitā

The following verse and purport appear in Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya Lila Chapter 9, verses 239-240.

siddhānta-śāstra nāhi 'brahma-saṁhitā'ra sama
govinda-mahimā jñānera parama kāraṇa
alpākṣare kahe siddhānta apāra
sakala-vaiṣṇava-śāstra-madhye ati sāra

There is no scripture equal to the Brahma-saṁhitā as far as the final spiritual conclusion is concerned. Indeed, that scripture is the supreme revelation of the glories of Lord Govinda, for it reveals the topmost knowledge about Him. Since all conclusions are briefly presented in the Brahma-saṁhitā, it is essential among all the Vaiṣṇava scriptures.

PURPORT

The Brahma-saṁhitā is a very important scripture. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu acquired the Fifth Chapter from the Ādi-keśava temple. In that Fifth Chapter, the philosophical conclusion of acintya-bhedābheda-tattva (simultaneous oneness and difference) is presented. The chapter also presents methods of devotional service; the eighteen-syllable Vedic hymn; discourses on the soul, the Supersoul and fruitive activity; an explanation of Kāma-gāyatrī, kāma-bīja and the original Mahā-Viṣṇu; and a detailed description of the spiritual world, specifically Goloka Vṛndāvana. Brahma-saṁhitā also explains the demigod Gaṇeśa; Garbhodakaśāyī Viṣṇu; the origin of the Gāyatrī mantra; the form of Govinda and His transcendental position and abode; the living entities; the highest goal; the goddess Durgā; the meaning of austerity; the five gross elements; love of Godhead; impersonal Brahman; the initiation of Lord Brahmā; and the vision of transcendental love enabling one to see the Lord. The steps of devotional service are also explained. The mind; yoga-nidrā; the goddess of fortune; devotional service in spontaneous ecstasy; incarnations beginning with Lord Rāmacandra; Deities; the conditioned soul and its duties; the truth about Lord Viṣṇu; prayers; Vedic hymns; Lord Śiva; the Vedic literature; personalism and impersonalism; good behavior; and many other subjects are also discussed. There is also a description of the sun and the universal form of the Lord. All these subjects are conclusively explained in a nutshell in the Brahma-saṁhitā.

A. Texts 1-6: The Paribhāsa Sutra, and Description of Lord Kṛṣṇa's Abodes

Text 1 - Preamble

- a) The Paribhasa Sutra
- b) The glories of Śrī Kṛṣṇa

Text 2 - The spiritual place of Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes.

- a) General characteristics of Kṛṣṇa's abode.
- b) Goloka and Gokula are identical.

Text 3 - Realisation of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

- a) Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes
- b) Methods for seeing the non-manifestive pastimes.
- c) The glories of the eighteen letter mantra.

Text 4 - Kṛṣṇa's abode.

- a) The centre of the lotus whorl.

Text 5 - Svetadvīpa.

- a) Mathura and Dvaraka - the surrounding external plane of Gokula.
- b) A comparison of Vrindavana, Mathura and Dvaraka.
- c) Goloka's inaccessibility.
- d) Sri Navadvīpa dhama.
- e) The importance of the appearance of Lord Caitanya.

Text 6 - Kṛṣṇa's unalloyed position.

- a) The spiritual energy
- b) The mundane, or deluding energy.

B. Texts 7-21: The Material Creation

1. The Process of Creation from Maha Viṣṇu, through Śambhu (7-10)

Text 7 - The Creative Glance.

- a) Lord Maha Visnu, the part of the part of Kṛṣṇa.
- b) The Lord's desire.
- c) The Lord glances, and indirectly contacts māyā.

Text 8 - Association with Maya.

- a) The Lord is ever detached.
- b) Lord Sambhu, the male symbol.
- c) Maya's two aspects.
- d) The Supreme Lord is the actual cause.

Text 9 - Procreation.

- a) The original creative desire.
- b) The seed of mundane sex.

Text 10 - The manifest state (Maha Tattva.)

2. The position and function of Maha Viṣṇu (11-20).

Text 11 – Maha Viṣṇu, the master of the mundane world.

- a) The Lords inconceivable power.

Text 12 - Lord Maha Visnu as Narayana.

- a) Maha Visnu is called Narayana.
- b) Yoga-nidra.

Text 13 – The Birth of the universes.

- a) Their seed-like origin.
- b) The Lord exhales.
- c) Enlargement.
- d) Non-conglomeration.

Text 14 - Garbhodakasayi Visnu.

- a) The chronology of creation.
- b) Garbhodakasayi Vishnu's identity.
- c) Description of Garbhodakasayi Visnu.

Text 15 - Visnu, Brahma and Śambhu.

- a) Ksirodakasayi Visnu.
- b) Brahma.
- c) Śambhu.

Text 16 - Śambhu in relation to jivas.

Text 17 - Preservation, creation and destruction.

Text 18 - Brahma's origin.

Text 19 - The universes develop.

- a) Comprehending the creation.
- b) Prayers by the controlling deities.
- c) Entrance of the Lord and His energy.
- d) Formation of the universal egg.

Text 20 - Garbhodakasayi Visnu enters the universe.

- a) Awakening of the Jivas.
- b) The universal form.

- c) The Garbhodaka ocean.
- d) The lord divides the Virat.

Text 21 - The Jivas.

C. Texts 22-28: Brahmā's Birth and Initiation

Text 22 - The divine lotus.

- a) The Padma kalpa.
- b) The lotus emerges.

Text 23 - Brahma's birth.

Text 24 - Brahma receives instruction.

- a) Lord Brahma's confusion.
- b) Tapasya
- c) Brahma instructed.

Text 25 - Spiritual austerity.

Text 26 - Brahma's desire.

- a) Brahma's devotion.

Text 27 - Initiated into kama-Gayatri.

- a) History of Kama Gayatri.
- b) Explanation of Kama Gayatri.
- c) Kṛṣṇa's moon like beauty.

Text 28 - Brahma's eternal identity.

D. Texts 29-55: Govindam Ādi-puruṣam, Tam Aham Bhajāmi

1. The Unprecedented Glory of Lord Kṛṣṇa (29-38).

Text 29 - Cintamani dhama.

- a) Cintamani - Transcendental Gems.
- b) Kalpa vrksa - desire trees.
- c) Kama - dhenu - cows yielding all desires.
- d) Unlimited Goddesses of fortune.

Text 30 - Kṛṣṇa's matchless beauty.

- a) Kṛṣṇa's flute playing.
- b) Kṛṣṇa's lotus eyes.
- c) Kṛṣṇa's bodily hue.

Text 31 - Kṛṣṇa's amorous pastimes.

- a) His pastimes of love.
- b) Flower garlands and ornaments.
- c) The Syamasundara form.

Text 32 - Kṛṣṇa's transcendental form.

Text 33 - Kṛṣṇa's transcendental nature.

- a) Cid dharma.
- b) Kṛṣṇa reconciles all contradictions.
- c) Realisation by devotion.

Text 34 - Kṛṣṇa is rarely achieved.

- a) The paths of Jnana and Yoga.
- b) Kṛṣṇa is known by bhakti.

Text 35 - Acintya bhedabheda-Tattva

- a) Kṛṣṇa and his potencies are inseparable.
- b) The Lord is all pervasive.

Text 36 - Five kinds of devotion.

- a) The devotional creeper.
- b) The process of devotional service.
- c) Santa Bhakti - rasa - Neutral love of God.
- d) Dasya Bhakti - rasa - Servitude
- e) Sakhya Bhakti - rasa - Fraternal loving devotion.
- f) Vatsalya Bhakti - rasa - Parenthood..
- g) Madhura Bhakti rasa - Conjugal love.

Text 37 - Srngara rasa.

- a) Ingredients of conjugal love.
- b) 64 fine arts and crafts.
- c) Manifest and nomanifest pastimes.
- d) Parakiya Rasa.
- e) The purity of Kṛṣṇa's Parakiya Rasa.
- f) Srila Jiva Goswami's conclusions.
- g) Disputes among pure devotees
- h) Srila Visvanatha Cakravati Thakura's conclusions.
- i) A warning.

Text 38 - The eye of devotion.

- a) Kṛṣṇa reveals himself.
- b) Seeing Kṛṣṇa face to face.

2. Kṛṣṇa is the Basis of All Existence (39-42).

Text 39 - Kṛṣṇa is the source of all incarnations.

- a) Innumerable forms of Godhead.
- b) Avatara.
- c) Kṛṣṇa is Godhead in full.
- d) Kṛṣṇa is the source of all avataras.
- e) Lord Caitanya is Svayam - Rupa Govinda.

Text 40 - Kṛṣṇa is the basis of Brahman.

- a) The Brahman defined.
- b) Brahman and Bhagavan.
- c) Brahman is without variety.
- d) Those attracted to Brahman.
- e) Bhakti minimises impersonal realisation.

Text 41 - Kṛṣṇa is the support of all existence.

Text 42 - Govinda's Glorious pastimes.

- a) The process of remembrance.
- b) The Gopis meditation.
- c) Kṛṣṇa's eternal Lila.

3. Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Lord of all Lords (43-52).

Text 43 - Gradations of realms.

- a) Devi - dhama.
- b) Mahesa - dhama.
- c) Hari - dhama.
- d) Goloka -dhama.
- e) Goloka's sweetness.

Text 44 - Goddess Durga.

- a) The presiding deity of Devi - dhama.
- b) The prison master.
- c) The spiritual Durga.

Text 45 - Lord Śambhu.

- a) The nature of Śambhu.
- b) Śambhu as a Guna -avatara.
- c) Śambhu as an Acarya.

Text 46 - The presiding deities of Hari Dhama.

- a) The presiding deities of Hari - dhama.
- b) Ksirodakasayi Visnu's qualities.

Text 47 - Ananta Sesa.

- a) Balarama is the origin of Ananta.
- b) Ananta Deva's residences.
- c) Anantadeva - The Lord's servitor.
- d) The glories of Anantadeva.

Text 48 - Maha Visnu's breath.

Text 49 - Lord Brahma.

- a) The post of Brahma.
- b) Lord Brahma's activities.

Text 50 - Sri Ganesha.

- a) Ganesha's worshipers.
- b) Means of satisfying Ganesha.

Text 51 - Govinda is the basis.

Text 52 - Sri Suryadeva.

- a) The sun - god's delegated authority.
- b) Suryadeva's duties.

4. The Laws of Karma are under Kṛṣṇa's Control (53-54)

Text 53 - The wheel of Karma.

- a) 8,400,000 varieties.
- b) The Aryans.
- c) Varnasrama - dharma.
- d) Penance.
- e) Virtues and vices.

Text 54 - Freedom from Karma.

- a) Bhakti counteracts sins.
- b) The fire of ordeal.
- c) The Lord favours his devotees.

5. The Process of Sādhana Bhakti (55)

Text 55 - Sadhana Bhakti.

- a) Vaidhi sadhana bhakti.
- b) Raganuga sadhana bhakti.
- c) Eligibility for raganuga bhakti.
- d) Kamanuga bhakti.
- e) Sambandhanuga bhakti.
- f) Method of raganuga bhakti.

E. (Text 56): Goloka Vr̥ndāvana, the Lord's Supreme Abode

Text 56 - A view of Goloka.

- a) The wonders of Goloka.
- b) The confidential reason for lord Caitanya's advent.

F. (Texts 57-62): Lord Kṛṣṇa Instructs Brahmā

Text 57 - The Lord empowers Brahma.

- a) Brahma satisfies the Lord.

Text 58 - Sambandha, Abhideya and Prayojana.

- a) The Catuh - sloki Bhagavatam.
- b) Sambandha, Abhideya and Prayojana.
- c) Dasa - Mula Tattva.

Text 59 - Sri Nama Tattva.

- a) Uttama bhakti.
- b) The holy name's identity.
- c) Benefits of chanting the holy names.
- d) The three stages of chanting.
- e) The Yuga dharma.
- f) The practice of the holy name.
- g) The meaning of the maha mantra.

Text 60 - Prema bhakti.

- a) Basic aspects of prema.
- b) Mahabhava.
- c) Divyonmada - Transcendental madness.
- d) Madana - Meeting together.
- e) Vipralambha - Love in separation.
- f) Sambhoga - Love in union.

Text 61 - Gauna dharma.

Text 62 - Acintya bhedabheda tattva.

- a) The Vedic schools of thought.
- b) The anti Vedic theories.
- c) Srila Vyasadeva's version.
- d) Direct and indirect meanings.
- e) Parinama vada verses Vivarta vada.
- f) Omdara, the maha vakya.
- g) Attainment of prema.
- h) Final instructions