

Bṛhat Parāśara Horā Śāstra — Chapter 2

Avatāra-kathanādhyaḥ

(The Chapter on the Narration of Divine Incarnations)

1. What does this chapter describe? (Verse 2.0)

It begins the explanation of the *Avatāras* — the divine incarnations of Lord Viṣṇu, who manifest for cosmic purposes such as creation, protection, and balance.

2. What question does Sage Maitreya ask Parāśara? (Verse 2.1)

Maitreya asks:

“O revered sage, the incarnations of Viṣṇu such as Rāma and Kṛṣṇa — are these forms mixed with portions of individual souls (jīvas), or are they wholly divine in nature?”

3. How does Parāśara respond? (Verse 2.2)

Parāśara replies:

“Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, Nṛsimha, and Varāha are *pūrṇa-avatāras* — complete incarnations of the Lord. Other incarnations are *aṁśa-avatāras* — partial, being united with portions of jīvas.”

4. How many incarnations does Viṣṇu have? (Verse 2.3)

Parāśara explains:

“The unborn Supreme Self, Viṣṇu (Janārdana), has countless incarnations. In the form of the planets (*grahas*), He dispenses the fruits of every being’s actions (karma).”

5. Why do the planetary incarnations appear? (Verse 2.4)

“They manifest for three divine purposes:

1. To destroy the strength of the demons (*daityas*),
2. To strengthen the power of the gods (*devas*), and
3. To establish righteousness (*dharma*).

Thus, auspicious beings take birth through the planetary forms.”

6. Which incarnations correspond to which planets? (Verses 2.5–2.7)

Planet (Graha)	Divine Incarnation (Avatāra)
Sun (Sūrya)	Rāma
Moon (Candra)	Kṛṣṇa (Yadunāyaka)
Mars (Bhūmiputra)	Nṛsimha
Mercury (Soma-suta)	Buddha
Jupiter (Guru)	Vāmana
Venus (Śukra)	Paraśurāma (Bhārgava)
Saturn (Śani, son of the Sun)	Kūrma (Tortoise)
Rāhu (Saimhikeyā)	Varāha (Boar)
Ketu	Matsya (Fish)

All these are planetary incarnations of the Supreme Lord, through which He acts in the world.

7. Are there other divine manifestations through the planets? (Verse 2.7)

Yes. All other incarnations also arise through the planets (*kheṭa-jāḥ*).

Those in whom the divine portion (*Paramātmā-amśa*) is predominant are called *Khecaras* — celestial beings moving in the heavens.

8. Who are the living beings (Jīvas)? (Verse 2.8)

Those in whom the individual-soul portion (*Jīva-amśa*) is predominant are called *Jīvas*.

Even they originate from the planets — for the Supreme Lord's power flows through the Sun and other grahas into all living beings.

9. What happens to the Avatāras after their purpose is fulfilled? (Verse 2.9)

"All incarnations — Rāma, Kṛṣṇa, and others — arise from the Supreme Being.

After completing their divine mission, they merge back into that same Supreme Essence."

10. What about the portions of Jīvas that accompany them? (Verse 2.10)

"From the divine incarnations emanate portions of Jīvas, from whom arise humans, sages, and other beings. After their tasks are done, they too merge into the same Supreme Being, returning to the Unmanifest (*Avyakta*)."

11. What truth does Parāśara summarize at the end? (Verse 2.11)

“O Brāhmaṇa, I have explained to you that Supreme Reality from which all beings are born, in which all exist, and into which all return — as known by the wise.”

12. Can this knowledge be understood without astrology (Jyotiṣa)? (Verse 2.12)

“No. Without the divine science of Jyotiṣa, no one can ever truly understand these cosmic truths. Therefore, it must certainly be studied — especially by the Brāhmaṇas.”

13. What happens to one who mocks astrology? (Verse 2.13)

“He who, without understanding, criticizes or ridicules Jyotiṣa, suffers in the hell called *Raurava* and is born blind in his next life.”

Summary Flow — Chapter 2 at a Glance

1. Maitreya asks if divine incarnations contain Jīva portions.
2. Parāśara distinguishes between *complete* and *partial* incarnations.
3. Viṣṇu manifests endlessly — even as the planets.
4. Planets act as instruments for justice and balance in the cosmos.
5. Each planet corresponds to a divine Avatāra.
6. Beings with more divine essence are *Devas*; those with more Jīva essence are *Jīvas*.
7. All arise from the Supreme, fulfill their function, and return to Him.
8. Jyotiṣa is the sacred light that reveals this divine connection.
9. To disregard Jyotiṣa is to deny divine wisdom itself.