

Ayodhya is at the topmost region of Hari Dhama

Q:

Commonly in ISKCON we understand the Ayodhya is the topmost realm within Hari dhama, and above that is Goloka dhama (Dwaraka, Mathura + Vrindavan).

What are the scriptural references which support this understanding?

Ans:

1.

Brhat Bhagavatamrta 2.4.239

“Far from here lies Ayodhya, the splendid city of Raghupati, the divine master of the Raghu dynasty. And beyond that shines the city of Dvaraka, dear to the divine master of the Yadus. Dvaraka resembles the blessed and charming Mathura. Go to that Dvaraka and worship with your eyes your beloved Lord.” [Narada speaks to Gopa Kumar]

2.

Sri Padma Purana 6.228.1, 10-12

There are innumerable divine abodes (e.g. various abodes of gods and goddesses [Maha-brahma, Maha-shambhu, Durga-devi etc.], and many Vaikuthas of the various Avataras of Vishnu, Dvaraka, Mathura-Puri, Goloka-Vrindavana, etc) in Tripad-vibhuti (beyond the divine viraja river); and all of those are made up of suddha-sattva and all filled with supreme bliss of Brahman (Brahmananda)

Beyond all those, there is the supreme abode of Vishnu (i.e. Adi-Vaikuntha). The devotees and servants of Lord's lotus feet reside in the supreme (Adi-)Vaikuntha loka, that Supreme abode of Bhagavan Vishnu, the very embodiment and bestower of the bliss of Brahman.

At the very center of that (Adi-Vaikuntha loka in the Paramavyoma) is situated the divine city renowned by the name of Ayodhya, which is adorned and filled all around by amazing multi-storied buildings and picturesque *vimanas*.

The divine city Ayodhya is in the middle of the topmost part of Adi-Vaikuntha loka. It shows Shri Rama's abode divine Ayodhya is the original root source of all Vaikuntha-lokas, and even the Adi-Vaikuntha loka the abode of Adi-Narayana is present in the outer circle of divine city Ayodhya.