

# **A Prayer for Deep Absorption**

A Companion to Śrīla A.C.  
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda's  
*The Nectar of Devotion*

By Kadamba Kanana Swami



# **A Prayer for Deep Absorption**

Kadamba Kanana Swami

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by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

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## Introduction

*The Nectar of Devotion* has been identified by Śrīla Prabhupāda as one of the main literary pillars of this movement along with the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is*, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. *The Nectar of Devotion*, which is a summary study of *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, is very practical. If any book can serve as a handbook on how to practise Kṛṣṇa consciousness, then it is this literature.

I have compiled this book in the hope that it will bring more of Kṛṣṇa into your life. A relationship with Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, brings real joy and real love to our life! It is definitely worthwhile to read *The Nectar of Devotion*, which in a very intricate and extensive way describes what *bhakti*, or devotional service, is all about.

For the past thirteen years I have taught a course at the Māyāpur Institute on *The Nectar of Devotion* as part of *Bhakti Sastrī* studies. This course is not a dry, analytical, intellectual display; rather it is of a transformational nature, because the students are devotees who try to base their lives on these teachings. *The Nectar of Devotion* is both profound and practical, therefore it satisfies the intelligence, the mind and the heart. A teacher must study more than his students. By teaching *The Nectar of Devotion* again and again, year after year, the subject matter has become part of my life. Each year it has been a purifying experience.

Over time I have collected extensive study notes on *The Nectar of Devotion*, and it is my desire that these notes become more widely available. I have referred to translations of the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, specifically to the English translations of Bhanu Mahārāja and Bon Mahārāja which include commentaries of Jīva Gosvāmī and Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura. I have also looked at the translation by David Haberman as well as by Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura for which credit is due to Nārāyaṇa Mahārāja

and Navadvipa dāsa. I have studied the *Waves of Devotion* by Dhanurdhara Swami who did a tremendous amount of work, and found Gauri dāsa's outline, which reveals the structure of the NOD published by the VIHE, very useful. In addition, I looked at translations of the introductory verses of *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* done by Śrīla Prabhupāda in the *Back to Godhead* magazines of 1960 and so on.

The most widely quoted scripture in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* is the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* – I counted 145 references! In this book also, there is a lot of supportive evidence from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. I have also included additional reference material from various other sources, especially the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. These references, which are not cited in *The Nectar of Devotion* or *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, are indicated within brackets as 'additional reference' alongside the text references. In my page references to *The Nectar of Devotion*, I refer specifically to the edition published in 1985 by the BBT.

This book is simply a compilation of my study notes analysing the book and providing background information where relevant. Therefore it is more a companion than a study guide. My intention is to present a book that one can refer to as one is studying *The Nectar of Devotion*, with references that will enable one to go deeper into salient aspects of the subject matter of each chapter. I had a wish but no time to expand it further. Maybe in the future there will be an expanded second edition. Meanwhile I pray this book may serve as a companion to *The Nectar of Devotion* and that *The Nectar of Devotion* may become a companion to your life.

*Ānandāmbudhi-varadhanam,*

May the ocean of transcendental bliss increase.

Your servant,

Kadamba Kanana Swami

Completed on 21 Dec 2017,

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's Disappearance Day

## In relation to the Preface of *The Nectar of Devotion*

The two brothers Rūpa and Sanātana along with their younger brother Anupama, the father of Jīva Gosvāmī, came from a village named Prembagh, in the Jessore District in East Bengal. Even as young men they were very brilliant personalities, and were therefore forcibly recruited in the service of the Nawab Hussain Shah. The Nawab threatened to kill an entire *brāhmaṇa* community and so the brothers were forced to accept a post in his government. In that capacity Rūpa Gosvāmī was known as Dabhir Kasa (private secretary) and Sanātana Gosvāmī, as Sakar Mullick. The seat of the government at that time was in Gauḍa, in the northern Maldah district. Nearby, on the bank of the Gaṅgā in Rāmakeli, was the residence of the brothers. The *Bhakti-ratnākara* mentions that they constructed many cottages near the Gaṅgā and various *brāhmaṇas* and scholars would visit and stay there. The brothers, being very learned, would engage in reading and discussion of scripture with their visitors. It is mentioned in the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* that when Sanātana Gosvāmī did not show up for government duties, it was reported to the Nawab that he was simply engaged, along with a number of *brāhmaṇas*, in reading and hearing from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. We can understand that hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was not a rare occasion, but rather the regular routine in Rāmakeli.

*Bhakti-ratnākara* also mentions that when Sanātana was a young man, he had a dream that a *brāhmaṇa* came to his door and presented him with a copy of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. He awoke and was greatly disappointed that he had received such a rare gift only in a dream. However, on that particular day, a *brāhmaṇa* actually came and gave him a copy of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*. In *Kṛṣṇa-stavamala* it is mentioned that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* was Sanātana's constant companion.

Rūpa and Sanātana were certainly *vaiṣṇavas* before meeting Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is mentioned that they had written letters to Him prior to their meeting. Also, the *Hamsaduta*, an early work of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, describes how Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī is on the verge of death due to intense feelings of separation, and how Lalitā decides to send a swan found in the Yamunā as a messenger to Kṛṣṇa. Interestingly, the book is dedicated: “to Sakara, who is my guru”. Also, Rūpa Gosvāmī describes various holy places in Vṛndāvana which Lalitā tells the swan about, but geographically the location of these places is not correctly given. In a later book *Uddhava Sandeśa*, Rūpa describes a messenger sent by Kṛṣṇa from Mathurā, but this time the sequence and the location of the various holy places is geographically correctly described. Therefore scholars conclude that the *Hamsaduta* was written before Rūpa and Sanātana met Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. In other words they were already *vaiṣṇavas* before the Lord came to Rāmakeli.

[*Hamsaduta & Uddhava Sandeśa*, Jan Brzezinski]

These days one finds Rādhā-kuṇḍa, Śyāma-kuṇḍa, Lalitā-kuṇḍa, Viśākhā-kuṇḍa, as well as Madana Mohan Deities in Rāmakeli. We don’t know exactly what Rāmakeli looked like when Rūpa and Sanātana were there. We understand, however, that although they were devotees, externally they would dress as Muslim ministers and, as described by OBL Kapoor, would be carried in palanquins from Rāmakeli to Gauḍa. Nowadays in Gauḍa there are ruins of the palace of the Nawab and locals point at a building which would have been the jail where Sanātana Gosvāmī was kept after his arrest.

The *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* describes Rūpa Gosvāmī as the perfect replica of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in the sense that he grasped the essence of Mahāprabhu’s teachings. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has been designated as the *rasācārya*, the teacher who perfectly explains the nature of transcendental mellows.

Therefore Rūpa Gosvāmī is considered to be the leader of the six *gosvāmīs*, although he treats his elder brother Sanātana as his spiritual master.

In the concluding words to the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

“By rough calculation it is estimated that Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī finished *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* in Gokula Vṛndāvana in the year 1552. While physically present, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī was living in different parts of Vṛndāvana, and his headquarters were in the temple of Rādhā-Dāmodara in the present city of Vṛndāvana. The place of Rūpa Gosvāmī's *bhajana*, execution of devotional service, is commemorated still. There are two different tomblike structures in the Rādhā-Dāmodara temple; one structure is called his place of *bhajana*, and in the other his body is entombed. Behind this very tomb I have my place of *bhajana*, but since 1965 I have been away. The place, however, is being taken care of by my disciples. By Kṛṣṇa's will, I am now residing at the Los Angeles temple of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. This purport is finished today, the 30th of June, 1969.”

Some terms to note:

### *Gosvāmī*

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in the preface of *The Nectar of Devotion*, that the word *gosvāmī* means ‘master of the senses’ and then explains, “The principle of Lord Caitanya's movement in educating and elevating everyone to the exalted post of a *gosvāmī* is taught in *The Nectar of Devotion*” (preface page xi).

### *Rūpanuga*

He then explains that we are followers of Rūpa Gosvāmī. “They very scrutinizingly studied all the *Vedic* scriptures in order to establish the cult of Caitanya Mahāprabhu on the basis of authorized principles of *Vedic* knowledge. The present Kṛṣṇa

consciousness movement is also based on the authority of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhupāda. We are therefore generally known as *Rūpanugas*, followers in the footsteps of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī Prabhupāda."

[*The Nectar of Devotion, preface xii*]

### *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*

The *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* is among Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's principal works, which Śrīla Prabhupāda has translated and summarised as *The Nectar of Devotion*.

The word *bhakti* is translated as 'devotional service'. '*Bhakti*' is based on the *dhātu* or root '*bhaja*', which includes love and service. The word *rasa* is translated as a kind of mellow (an emotional relationship), and more literally, as juice or taste. The word *amṛta* means immortal, or that which exists eternally. It also means nectar, referring to the nectar that offered immortality, which was obtained after the demigods and demons churned the ocean of milk. Finally, the word *sindhu* means ocean. In the material world one may sometimes get a drop of enjoyment, but devotional service offers an ocean (*sindhu*), of transcendental enjoyment. In this way, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī compares devotional service to an ocean of transcendental mellows.

Prabhupāda writes, "The basic principle of the living condition is that we have a general propensity to love someone. No one can live without loving someone else." (preface page xv). He continues, "The *Nectar of Devotion* will teach us how to turn the one switch that will immediately brighten everything, everywhere. One who doesn't know this method is missing the point of life."

[*The Nectar of Devotion, preface page xvi*]

At the present moment we are finding so many ways to utilise our propensity to love, but factually we are missing the real

point: Kṛṣṇa. We are watering all parts of the tree but missing the tree's root.

### *bhoga* (sense enjoyment) and *tyāga* (renunciation)

There is not only *bhakti-rasa*, or taste in devotional service, but also mundane *rasa*, or worldly taste. However, there we will find only *capala-sukha* or flickering happiness. Therefore, one cannot be steady in mundane relationships. One will find oneself tossed by alternating waves of *bhoga* (sense enjoyment) and *tyāga* (renunciation). Let's say for example that we are tired of the daily routine at home and in desperate need of a holiday. We look at a brochure, find the perfect holiday destination and proceed with the bookings. However, when we arrive, it's not what we expected it to be. The hotel is further away from the beach than we thought; even the weather is not perfect, and after a few days, all we can think about is returning home. On our return, we are so happy to be back home, yet, before we left, we were so eager to leave. That is *bhoga* and *tyāga*! But *bhakti-rasa*, the taste of devotional service, does not finish with the end of life. It continues perpetually and is therefore called *amṛta* or immortal.

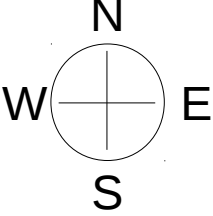
## **Analysis of the Introduction to *The Nectar of Devotion***

The introduction includes the *Maṅgalācaraṇa* or the invocation prayers. This establishes the objective of the book and invokes blessings from great *vaiṣṇavas*. There is also a brief description of the contents of the book and an explanation of the various divisions of the ocean of pure devotional service.

The opening verse of *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.1* describes Kṛṣṇa as *akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ*, the complete personal manifestation of all transcendental mellows. In the spiritual world Kṛṣṇa is surrounded by a great variety of loving devotees, who all have a unique personal relationship with Him. There are five primary rasas and another seven within these. The list is found in this chapter.

The next major verse of *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.11 anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam*, provides the prerequisite for becoming a resident of the spiritual sky. Currently we are residents of this world and therefore we are trying to become *anya-abhilāṣitā-śūnyam*, free from any desire other than to serve Kṛṣṇa.

Jīva Gosvāmī points out that the evidence to support Rūpa Gosvāmī's *anya-abhilāṣitā* verse defining pure devotional service is found in the *Nārada-pañcarātra*. We have included an interesting table showing how Rūpa Gosvāmī's verse and the *Nārada-pañcarātra* verse correspond.

Topics	<b>The Introduction is part of the Eastern Division of the <i>Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu</i></b> 1st Wave, <i>Sāmānya Bhakti</i>		
<p><b><i>Maṅgalācaraṇa:</i></b> auspicious invocation (Objective, Blessings, Obeisances)  <i>akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ</i>  Kṛṣṇa is the embodiment of all <i>rasas</i>.  He maintains eternal relationships with various devotees, attracted to serve Him in different <i>rasas</i>.  The dearest devotee of all is Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī</p>	<p>5 direct <i>rasas</i> <i>mādhurya</i>, <i>vātsalya</i>, <i>sakhya</i>, <i>dāsya</i>, <i>śānta</i>  7 indirect <i>rasas</i> <i>hāsya</i>—laughter <i>adbhūta</i>—astonishment <i>vīra</i>—chivalry <i>karuna</i>—compassion <i>raudra</i>—anger <i>bhayānaka</i>—dread <i>bībhatsa</i>—ghastliness</p>	<p>Ocean – Liberation  River – Path  Shark – Devotee  Net- time  Volcano- Impersonalist  Analogy  Division of <i>Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu</i></p> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>pg 409</p>	<p>Rūpa Gosvāmī sees himself unfit for writing.  Śrīla Prabhupāda: “The proper attitude for a preacher  Without initiation by a bona fide spiritual master, actual connection with Kṛṣṇa consciousness is never performed.</p>
<p><i>anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam</i>  If we desire to be accepted among such eternally liberated <i>prema-bhaktas</i>, then we must be free from any other desire, free from <i>karma</i> and <i>jñāna</i>.</p>	<p><b>Kṛṣṇa</b> – includes all expansions, His devotees  <b><i>śīlanam</i></b> – cultivation, <i>samādhi</i>  (<i>ceṣṭā-rūpa</i> &amp; <i>bhāva-rūpā</i>)  <b><i>ānukūl</i></b> – <b><i>favourable</i></b>, not like Rāvaṇa or Kaṁsa</p>	<p><u>Proof for</u> <u>“<i>anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam</i>”</u> <b><i>Nārada-pañcarātra:</i></b> “<i>sarvopādhi-vinirmuktaṁ</i>” &amp; <i>Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam</i> 3.29.12-13: <i>bhakti</i> flows to Kṛṣṇa as Gaṅgā to sea. No desire for 5 types of liberation</p>	<p><b><i>anya-abhilāṣitā</i></b> – literally other desire-ness, which stems from the root-desire to enjoy and control separate from Kṛṣṇa</p>

## Four Divisions

Rūpa Gosvāmī compares *bhakti* or devotional service to an ocean. *The Nectar of Devotion* provides a detailed description of many aspects that are part of that ocean. In the introduction we see that the ocean of *bhakti-rasa* (the taste of devotional service) is divided into four sections:

- *Pūrva-vibhāga* — Eastern Division
- *Dakṣiṇa-vibhāga* — Southern Division
- *Paścimā-vibhāga* — Western Division
- *Uttara-vibhāga* — Northern Division

The *Pūrva-vibhāga* – the Eastern side of the *Bhakti Ocean* is further sub-divided into four waves:

*Pūrva-vibhāga* – Eastern Division

4 *laharīs* - 4 Waves

First Wave: *Sāmānya-Bhakti* — Overview of Devotional Service

- Introduction and Chapter 1 of *The Nectar of Devotion*

Second Wave: *Sādhana-Bhakti* — Devotional Service in Practice

- Chapter 2-16 of *The Nectar of Devotion*

Third Wave: *Bhāva-Bhakti* — Devotional Service in Ecstasy

- Chapter 17-18 of *The Nectar of Devotion*

Fourth Wave: *Prema-Bhakti* — Devotional Service in Pure Love of Godhead

- Chapter 19 of *The Nectar of Devotion*

[Refer to *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 409]

In essence, the Eastern Division gives us an overview of how to go from the beginning stages to the advanced stages of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in ecstasy and in pure, unalloyed love. The remainder of *The Nectar of Devotion* in the southern, western and

northern division describes these advanced stages in more detail.

## ***Maṅgalācaraṇa***

We will begin with the *Maṅgalācaraṇa* or auspicious invocation (literally, offering at the lotus feet). In the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja explains that the purpose of a *maṅgalācaraṇa* is threefold: to establish the objective, to invoke blessings, and to offer obeisances.

The objective of the first verse of the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* is to establish Kṛṣṇa as *akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ*, the personification of one who completely explores the depth of loving relationships with his eternally liberated devotees. This is the eternal situation of the spiritual world and the objective of the book.

This first major verse establishes the objective:  
The Spiritual World

*Maṅgalācaraṇa* [*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.1]

*akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ*  
*prasṛmara-ruci-ruddha-tārakā-pāliḥ*  
*kalita-śyāmā-lalito*  
*rādhā-preyān vidhur jayati*

First translation

*akhila-rasa-amṛta-mūrtiḥ*—the reservoir of all pleasure, in which exist all the mellows of devotional service, namely *śānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhyā*, *vātsalyā* and *mādhuryā*; *prasṛmara*—spreading forth; *ruci*—by His bodily luster; *ruddha*—who has subjugated; *tārakā*—the *gopī* named Tārakā; *pāliḥ*—the *gopī* named Pāli; *kalita*—who has absorbed the minds of; *śyāmā*—the *gopī* named Śyāmā; *lalitaḥ*—and the *gopī* named Lalitā; *rādhā-preyān*—dearliest to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī; *vidhuḥ*—Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *jayati*—all glories to.

Let Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, be glorified! By virtue of His expanding attractive features, He subjugated the *gopīs* named Tārakā and Pāli and absorbed the minds of Śyāmā and Lalitā. He is the most attractive lover of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and is the reservoir of pleasure for devotees in all transcendental mellows.

Second translation

*akhila-rasa-amṛta-mūrtiḥ*—the reservoir of all pleasure, in which exist all the mellows of devotional service, namely *śānta*, *dāsyā*, *sakhya*, *vātsalya* and *mādhurya*; *prasṛmara*—spreading forth; *ruçi*—taste; *ruddha*—covered; *tārakā*—star; *pāliḥ*—the range; *kalita*—who has absorbed the minds of; *śyāmā*—dark; *lalitaḥ*—pastimes; *rādhā-preyān*—the star *Anurādhā*; *vidhuḥ*—the full moon; *jayati*—victorious.

The full moon, which destroys suffering and creates happiness with its cooling rays, shines everywhere with its excellent qualities and beauty. It is the very form of nectar filled with all tastes. It eclipses the host of stars by its light, accepts the playful gestures of the night, and fondly enters the *Viśākhā* constellation in the spring season.

There are two interpretations of this text:

- The first describes Kṛṣṇa in his relationship with various leaders (*yūthesvaris*) of different groups (*yūtha*) of *gopīs*, Tārakā, Pāli, Śyāmā and Lalitā. Tārakā is the leader of a group of *gopīs* who are in competition with Rādhārāṇī's group (*vipakṣa*); Pāli is the leader of a neutral group (*taṭastha-pakṣa*); Śyāmā is the leader of a group that is friendly with Rādhā's own group (*suhṛt-pakṣa*); and Lalitā is leading Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's own group (*sva-pakṣa*). Therefore the names of the *gopīs* are mentioned in a particular sequence.
- The second interpretation of the verse is where *tārakā* is taken to mean star; *pāliḥ*- a range; *śyāmā*- dark; *lalitaḥ*-

pastime, and *rādhā-preyān*- the star *Anurādhā*. In this second interpretation there is a description of the full moon night in the spring season, which is a time for *rāsa-līlā* pastimes.

Rūpa Gosvāmī's literary and poetic genius is revealed by his reference to the double meaning of this verse.

## An explanation of the 12 *Rasas*

There is a list of 12 *rasas*, out of which five are known as direct or primary *rasas*; *mādhurya* – conjugal, *vātsalya* – parental, *sakhya* – friendship, *dāsya* – servitorship, *śānta* – neutrality.

Additionally, there are seven indirect or secondary *rasas* that exist within the primary *rasas*: *adbhūta* – wonder, *hāsya* – laughing, *vīra* – chivalry, *bībhatsa* – ghastliness, *raudra* – anger, *bhayānaka* – dread, *karuna* – compassion.

For example, in a relationship of friendship (*sakhya*), or in a parental (*vātsalya*) or conjugal (*mādhurya*) relationship, there may be feelings of laughter (*hāsya*) or dread (*bhayānaka*) etc.

Śrīla Prabhupāda began a translation of the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* which he published in his *Back to Godhead* magazine. In an April 1960 edition he included the following verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, where the original *Bhāgavatam* commentator Sridhar Swami identified a large variety of *rasas*, either direct or indirect.

*mallānām aśanir nṛṇām nara-varaḥ strīṇām smaro mūrtimān  
gopānām sva-jano 'satām kṣīti-bhujām śāstā sva-pitroḥ śīsuḥ  
mṛtyur bhoja-pater virāḍ aviduṣām tattvaṁ paraṁ yoginām  
vṛṣṇīnām para-devateti vidito raṅgam gataḥ sāgrajaḥ*

The various groups of people in the arena regarded Kṛṣṇa in different ways when He entered it with His elder brother. The wrestlers saw Kṛṣṇa as a lightning bolt, the men of Mathurā as the best of males, the women as Cupid in person, the cowherd men as their relative, the impious rulers as a chastiser, His

parents as their child, the King of the Bhojas as death, the unintelligent as the Supreme Lord's universal form, the *yogīs* as the Absolute Truth and the Vṛṣṇis as their supreme worshipable Deity.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.43.17]

The following *rasas* were identified in the above verse:

- fury [by the wrestlers],
- wonder [by the men], *anya-abhilāṣitā-sūnyam*
- conjugal attraction [the women],
- laughter [the cowherds],
- chivalry [the kings],
- mercy [His parents]
- terror [Kamśa],
- ghastliness [the unintelligent],
- peaceful neutrality [the yogis]
- loving devotion [the Vṛṣṇis].

[*Back to Godhead, Volume 3 part 17, April 5, 1960*

(from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* commentary by Sridhar Swami)]

Below follows an excerpt of Prabhupāda's translation of the *akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ* verse, following the second interpretation:

"Metaphorically *Bidhu* means the moon. As such the Lord is compared with the moon although He is sometimes compared with the most powerful sun. He is compared with the moon per excellence not in the sense that the moon is less powerful than the sun. On the other hand, He is not compared with the sun on account of the sun's inability to counteract the fatigue of a tiresome man. It is the light of the moon only which is soothing to such tiresome person. We want to drink *rasa* for getting ourselves relief from the tiresome effect of dry material life. Tiresome people in order to mitigate the fatigue of day's labour try to eschew a particular type of *rasa* from the more tiresome sounds of radio and other materialistic instruments of relaxation but the foolish people do not know that real *rasa* is flowing

under the Lotus Feet of Lord Śrī Krishna. He is constantly disseminating the flow of transcendental *rasas* in the soothing way of the moonlight. Therefore He is compared with the moon which has a specific cooling effect on the fatigued person. In the spring the moonlight is still more soothing. The spring moon is the sum total of all the *rasas* of other seasons and thus Śrī Krishna is compared with the moon delightfully displayed along with the twinkling stars of the name Tārakā etc. In that metaphorical explanation the word *Ruddha* means covered and *Pāli* means the range. In other words the rays of the moon has covered the twinkling light of the range of stars. This beautiful feature of the moon is exhibited at night which is compared with the name of dark *śyāmā*. In this metaphorical combination of words *Lalitā* means pastime and *amṛta* is the moon light itself.

As the moonlight, stars and their reciprocal pastime all concerned in the night alone, so also Lord Śrī Krishna's pastime in the highest zest of transcendental *Rasa* is possible at night alone along with Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Her eternal associates. In that night illuminated by the moon the stars known as *Anurādhā* or *Rādhā* is more intimately connected with the star known by the name Vishaka. As the moon is more beautiful on the full moon night of spring, similarly the attraction of Krishna is fully displayed in the matter of exchanging *rasa*."

[Back to Godhead, Volume 3 part 17, April 5,1960]

### *Viśrāma Mandira*

Another noteworthy verse is the third verse of the *Maṅgalācaraṇa* where Rūpa Gosvāmī states that he has written the book as an offering to Sanātana Gosvāmī providing him with a *Viśrāma Mandira*, a transcendental resting place. In the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* Sanātana Gosvāmī raised the question: 'Ke āmi? Kene āmāya jāre tāpa-traya?' "Who am I? Why do the threefold miseries always give me trouble?" Everyone in the material world needs such a transcendental resting place, where one will find peace from the miseries of material existence. A

transcendental personality like Sanātana Gosvāmī is not affected by the material energy, but he still needs a transcendental resting place to offer him relief from the pangs of love in separation from Kṛṣṇa.

This love in separation of Kṛṣṇa, as the six *gosvāmīs* experienced it, is described by Śrīnivāsa Ācārya in his *Ṣaḍ-gosvāmy-aṣṭaka*;

*he rādhe vraja-devike ca lalite he nanda-sūno kutaḥ  
śrī-govardhana-kalpa-pādapa-tale kālindī-vane kutaḥ  
ghoṣantāv iti sarvato vraja-pure khedair mahā-vihvalau  
vande rūpa-sanātanau raghu-yugau śrī jīva-gopālakau*

I offer my respectful obeisances to the Six Gosvāmīs, namely Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī and Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, who were chanting very loudly everywhere in Vṛndāvana, shouting, 'Queen of Vṛndāvana, Rādharāṇī! O Lalitā! O son of Nanda Mahārāja! Where are you all now? Are you just on the hill of Govardhana, or are you under the trees on the bank of the Yamunā? Where are you?' These were their moods in executing Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

[*Ṣaḍ-gosvāmy-aṣṭaka* 8]

## Explanation of pure devotional service

The next major verse in the book is the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.11 the *anya-abhilāṣitā śūnyam* verse, describing *uttama bhakti* or pure devotional service. Such pure devotional service is the state one must attain to be eligible to enter into the spiritual world. The *anya-abhilāṣitā* verse exists as a goal to strive for, *ceṣṭā-rūpa* (which refers to the endeavour we make by practising devotional service or *sādhana bhakti*), and as a state attained, *bhāva-rūpā* (which refers to our consciousness), by a liberated soul in *bhāva* or *prema-bhakti*.

The second major verse describes the stage to attain to enter the spiritual world

*anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyam  
jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam  
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-  
śīlanam bhaktir uttamā*

One should render transcendental loving service to the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa favourably and without desire for material profit or gain through fruitive activities or philosophical speculation. That is called pure devotional service.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.11]

*anya-abhilāṣitā-sūnyam*

*anya-abhilāṣitā-sūnyam*—without desires other than those for the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, or without material desires (such as those for meat-eating, illicit sex, gambling and addiction to intoxicants)

In the *Bhagavad-gītā*, Kṛṣṇa speaks of rivers of desires flowing into the ocean of consciousness. Śrīla Prabhupāda elaborates further in the purport:

“Although the vast ocean is always filled with water, it is always, especially during the rainy season, being filled with much more water. But the ocean remains the same—steady; it is not agitated, nor does it cross beyond the limit of its brink. That is also true of a person fixed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. As long as one has the material body, the demands of the body for sense gratification will continue. The devotee, however, is not disturbed by such desires, because of his fullness. A Kṛṣṇa conscious man is not in need of anything, because the Lord fulfills all his material necessities. Therefore he is like the ocean—always full in himself. Desires may come to him like the waters of the rivers that flow into the ocean, but he is steady in his activities, and he is not even slightly disturbed by desires for

sense gratification. That is the proof of a Kṛṣṇa conscious man—one who has lost all inclinations for material sense gratification, although the desires are present. Because he remains satisfied in the transcendental loving service of the Lord, he can remain steady, like the ocean, and therefore enjoy full peace. Others, however, who want to fulfill desires even up to the limit of liberation, what to speak of material success, never attain peace. The fruitive workers, the salvationists, and also the *yogīs* who are after mystic powers are all unhappy because of unfulfilled desires. But the person in Kṛṣṇa consciousness is happy in the service of the Lord, and he has no desires to be fulfilled. In fact, he does not even desire liberation from the so-called material bondage. The devotees of Kṛṣṇa have no material desires, and therefore they are in perfect peace.”

[*Bhagavad-gītā* 2.70, purport]

### *jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam*

*Jñāna* — by the knowledge of the philosophy of the monist *Māyāvādīs*; *karma*—by fruitive activities; *ādi*—by artificially practising detachment, by the mechanical practice of *yoga*, by studying the *Sāṅkhya* philosophy, and so on; *anāvṛtam*—not covered

### *ānukūlyena kṛṣṇa-anuśīlanam*

*ānukūlyena* - favourable; *kṛṣṇa-anuśīlanam* - cultivation of service in relationship to Kṛṣṇa

### *bhaktiḥ uttamā*

*bhaktiḥ uttamā*—first-class devotional service

### Three types of *uttama-adhikārīs*

In the *Bhakti-sandarbhā*, *Anuccheda* 187, Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī mentions three categories of *Uttama-adhikārīs*:

*mūrcchita-kaṣāya*

- An example is Nārada Muni as the son of a maidservant.
- He has some traces of material desire originating from the mode of goodness in a dormant stage
- He has two feet in the material world, but both eyes on the spiritual world

*Nirdhūta-kaṣāya*

- An example is Śukadeva Gosvāmī
- He has no trace of material desire
- He has one foot in the material world and one foot in the spiritual world

*Bhagavat-pārṣada-deha-prāpta*

- An example is Nārada Muni in his present position
- He has attained his spiritual body
- He has both feet in the spiritual world

The *Nārada-pañcarātra* provides evidence

The *Nārada-pañcarātra* provides the evidence for the *anya-abhilāṣitā-sūnyam* verse.

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in *The Nectar of Devotion*:

‘Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has also quoted a definition from the *Nārada-pañcarātra*, as follows: "One should be free from all material designations and, by Kṛṣṇa consciousness, must be cleansed of all material contamination. He should be restored to his pure identity, in which he engages his senses in the service of the proprietor of the senses."

So when our senses are engaged for the actual proprietor of the senses, that is called devotional service. In our conditional state, our senses are engaged in serving these bodily demands. When the same senses are engaged in executing the order of Kṛṣṇa, our activities are called *bhakti*.

As long as one identifies himself as belonging to a certain family, a certain society or a certain person, he is said to be covered with designations. When one is fully aware that he does not belong to any family, society or country, but is eternally related to Kṛṣṇa, he then realizes that his energy should be employed not in the interests of so-called family, society or country, but in the interests of Kṛṣṇa. This is purity of purpose and the platform of pure devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.'

*[The Nectar of Devotion, page xxv]*

In his commentary on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.11, Jiva Gosvāmī shows how the verse below, composed by Rūpa Gosvāmī, is based on the *Nārada-pañcarātra*

<p><i>anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu- śīlanam bhaktir uttamā</i></p>	<p><i>sarvopādhi-vinirmuktaṁ tat-paratvena nirmalam hṛṣīkeṣa hṛṣīkeśa- sevanam bhaktir ucyate</i></p>
<p>When first-class devotional service develops, one must be devoid of all material desires, knowledge obtained by monistic philosophy, and fruitive action. The devotee must constantly serve Kṛṣṇa favourably, as Kṛṣṇa desires.</p> <p>[<i>Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu</i> 1.1.1]</p>	<p><i>Bhakti</i>, or devotional service, means engaging all our senses in the service of the Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of all the senses. When the spirit soul renders service unto the Supreme, there are two side effects. One is freed from all material designations, and, simply by being employed in the service of the Lord, one's senses are purified.</p> <p>[<i>Nārada-pañcarātra</i>]</p>
<p><i>anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam</i> devoid of all other desires</p>	<p><i>sarvopādhi-vinirmuktaṁ</i> free from all material designation</p>
<p><i>ānukūlyena</i> favourable</p>	<p><i>tat-paratvena</i> taking Him as the highest object</p>
<p><i>ānuśīlanam</i> cultivation</p>	<p><i>sevanam</i> service</p>
<p><i>jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam</i> not covered by <i>karma</i> and <i>jñāna</i></p>	<p><i>nirmalam</i> faultless</p>

## Other points of interest

Other points of interest in the introduction to *The Nectar of Devotion* are:

### Sharks swim deep in the ocean

In the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.4-5 Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī offers a *vaiṣṇava* interpretation of an analogy commonly used by

impersonalists, namely, of rivers (all paths) merging into an ocean (of liberation). Rūpa Gosvāmī has explained that devotees are like sharks; they never swim in the shallow waters of the rivers (the paths where the impersonalists dwell). The devotees like sharks swim deep in the ocean (of real liberation of *Bhakti-rasa*), and thus they cannot be reached by the nets (of time) of a fisherman.

In *The Nectar of Devotion*, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

‘Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī prays to his spiritual master, Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī, for the protection of *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* or “The Ocean of the Pure Nectar of Devotional Service,” from the argumentative logicians who unnecessarily meddle in the science of service to the Lord. He compares their arguments and logic to volcanic eruptions in the midst of the ocean. In the midst of the ocean, volcanic eruptions can do very little harm, and similarly, those who are against devotional service to the Lord and who put forward many philosophical theses about the ultimate transcendental realization cannot disturb this great ocean of devotional service.’

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page xx]

## The attitude of a preacher

“The author of *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, very humbly submits that he is just trying to spread Kṛṣṇa consciousness all over the world, although he humbly thinks himself unfit for this work. That should be the attitude of all preachers of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement, following in the footsteps of Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī. We should never think of ourselves as great preachers, but should always consider that we are simply instrumental to the previous *ācāryas*, and simply by following in their footsteps we may be able to do something for the benefit of suffering humanity.”

[*Nectar of Devotion*, page xx]

## *Tadīya* – The associates and paraphernalia of the Lord

The associated and paraphernalia of the Lord are also invested with transcendental power.

“The impersonalists sometimes misunderstand devotional service in such a way that they divide Kṛṣṇa from His paraphernalia and pastimes. For example, the *Bhagavad-gītā* is spoken on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, and the impersonalists say that although Kṛṣṇa is of interest, the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra isn't. The devotees, however, also know that the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra by itself has nothing to do with their business, but in addition they know that “Kṛṣṇa” does not mean just Kṛṣṇa alone. He is always with His associates and paraphernalia.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page xxiii]

### *Pāda-sevanam*

*Pāda-sevanam* is included in *Tadīya*:

‘According to one's taste and strength, hearing, chanting and remembrance may be followed by *pāda-sevanam*. One obtains the perfection of remembering when one constantly thinks of the lotus feet of the Lord. Being intensely attached to thinking of the Lord's lotus feet is called *pāda-sevanam*. When one is particularly adherent to the process of *pāda-sevanam*, this process gradually includes other processes, such as seeing the form of the Lord, touching the form of the Lord, circumambulating the form or temple of the Lord, visiting such places as Jagannātha Purī, Dvārakā and Mathurā to see the Lord's form, and bathing in the Ganges or Yamunā. Bathing in the Ganges and serving a pure *Vaiṣṇava* are also known as *tadīya-upāsanam*. This is also *pāda-sevanam*. The word *tadīya* means "in relationship with the Lord." Service to the *Vaiṣṇava*, Tulasī, Ganges and Yamunā are included in *pāda-sevanam*. All

these processes of *pāda-sevanam* help one advance in spiritual life very quickly.'

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.5.23-24, purport]  
(Additional Reference)

### *Tīrtha* and Holy *Dhāmas*

Places connected with Kṛṣṇa's pastimes or devotional service to Him become *tīrthas*, places of pilgrimage. These places are filled with transcendental energy which acts as touchstone and transforms and blesses all living beings there. Kṛṣṇa also manifests the spiritual world within this material world in the form of the holy *dhāmas*, which awaken natural love. The difference between a *tīrtha* and the holy *dhāma* is that a *tīrtha* is a sacred place which is invested with Kṛṣṇa's energy and is temporarily manifested in the material world, whereas the *dhāma* is eternal and continuous to exist within and after this material world. The *dhāma* is non-different from Balarāma. Then there are paraphernalia used by Kṛṣṇa or His Deity or His pure devotee, which are all invested with transcendental power and mercy. The devotees of Kṛṣṇa are also filled with transcendental power and mercy according to their surrender in service. Places and paraphernalia related to them, also become *tadīya*. In this way Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the sentient Lord or Lord with a heart filled with love, showers His blessings upon all personalities or objects that come in touch with Him. Even demons who are killed by Him attain liberation. Kṛṣṇa is indeed the embodiment of mercy and love.

# Chapter 1 – Characteristics of Pure Devotional Service

The first chapter of *The Nectar of Devotion* is dedicated to an explanation of the third major verse *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.17, which describes how devotional service purifies one from sinful reactions. In comparison to the happiness one experiences through devotional service, the happiness from impersonal liberation looks insignificant. Gradually the devotee is able to attract Kṛṣṇa Himself by the depth of his love for Him.

*Bhakti* is first practised as a process to gradually elevate oneself from the material state and then the goal is attained, where *bhakti* means to enter into an eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa.

So in the three verses from the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.1, 1.1.11 and 1.1.17 we find a description of the perfect relationships of the spiritual world, then the prerequisite for attaining pure devotional service and finally, a step by step progression towards that goal. These verses provide the foundation for the book. Now our objectives are clear; we want to become residents of the spiritual world and follow a process to attain the state of pure devotional service.

<p><b>Topics</b></p>	<p><b>Six Characteristics of <i>Bhakti</i> – From removing imperfections to perfect love of God</b></p> <p>The first Chapter is part of the Eastern Division of the <i>Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu</i></p> <p>1st Wave, <i>Sāmānya Bhakti</i></p>		
<p><b><i>kleśaghñī śubhadā</i></b></p> <p>The result of pure devotional service in six characteristics</p>	<p><b><i>kleśaghñī</i></b> – destroys suffering</p> <p><b><i>śubhadā</i></b> – all auspicious</p> <p><b><i>mokṣa-laghutākṛt</i></b> – derides liberation</p> <p><b><i>su-durlabhā</i></b> – rarely attained</p> <p><b><i>sāndrānanda-viśeṣātmā</i></b> – condensed bliss</p> <p><b><i>śrī-kṛṣṇākaraṣiṇī</i></b> – attracts Kṛṣṇa</p>	<pre> graph TD     Pāpam["Pāpam (sinful action)"] --&gt; Aprārabdha["Aprārabdha (unmanifest reaction)"]     Aprārabdha --&gt; Kūṭam["Kūṭam (stock, seeds) (sinful disposition)"]     Aprārabdha --&gt; Prārabdha["Prārabdha (manifest reaction)"]     Kūṭam --&gt; Bijaṁ["Bijaṁ (sinful desire)"]     Bijaṁ --&gt; Pāpam     Prārabdha --&gt; Phala["Phala (fruits)"]   </pre>	<p><b><i>śubhadā</i></b></p> <p>Love for all living entities &amp; object of love for all.</p> <p>Bestows all good qualities. Bestows happiness.</p> <p><b><i>sāndrānanda-viśeṣātmā</i></b> <i>brahmānanda</i> x 1 trillion can not compare to atomic fraction of bliss from the ocean of <i>bhakti</i></p>

## Characteristics of devotional service from the conditioned stage to pure devotional service

The third major verse describes the characteristics of devotional service from the conditioned stage to pure devotional service

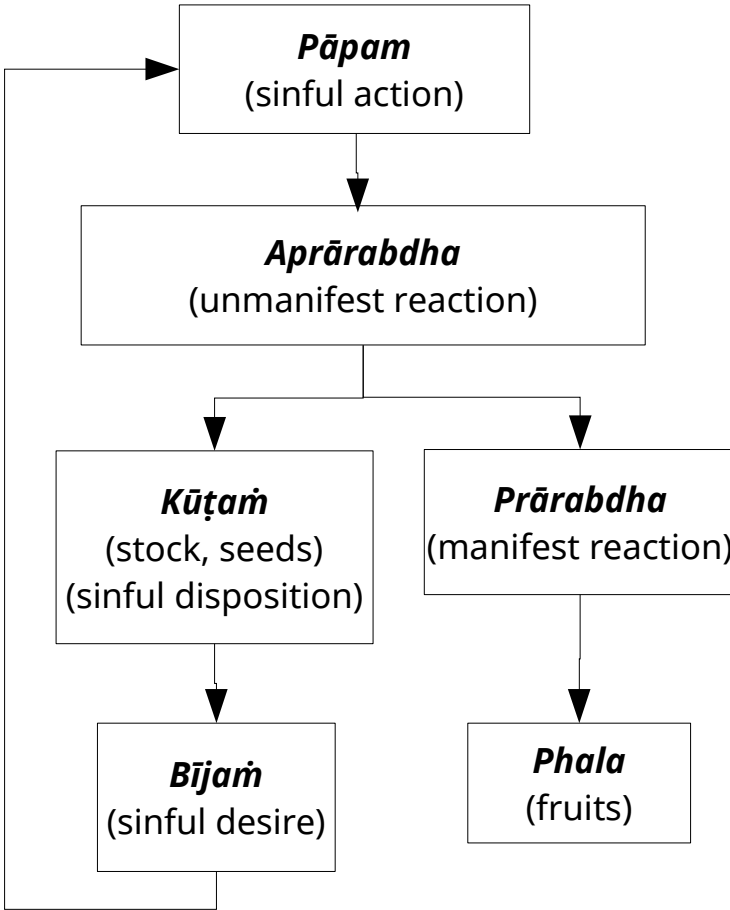
*kleśa-ghnī śubha-dā mokṣa-  
laghutā-kṛt su-durlabhā  
sāndrānanda-viśeṣātmā  
śrī-kṛṣṇākarṣiṇī ca sā*

Pure devotional service brings immediate relief from all kinds of material distress. It is the beginning of all auspiciousness and it minimizes the value of liberation. It is rarely achieved, but is the only means to attract Kṛṣṇa and automatically puts one into transcendental pleasure.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.17*]

*kleśa-ghnī*

Pure devotional service reduces or nullifies all kinds of suffering



by Dhanurdhara Swami

### *Aprārabdha-karma*

*aprārabdha-phalaṁ pāpaṁ  
kūṭaṁ bījaṁ phalonmukham  
krameṇaiva praliyeta  
viṣṇu-bhakti-ratātmanām*

There are different stages of dormant reactions to sinful activities to be observed in a sinful life. Sinful reactions may be just waiting to take effect [*phalonmukha*], reactions may be still further dormant [*kūṭa*], or the reactions may be in a seed-like state [*bīja*]. In any case, all types of sinful reactions are

vanquished one after another if a person engages in the devotional service of Lord Viṣṇu.

[*Padma Purāṇa*]

### *Prārabdha*

As defined in Monier Williams Dictionary this term refers to one who has commenced or begun an undertaking. In the context of our discussion about *karmic* reactions, this definition of the word *prārabdha* means that now the reactions of the *karma* has actually begun to bear fruit.

“Although one may neutralize the reactions of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* sinful life through austerity, charity, vows and other such methods, these pious activities cannot uproot the material desires in one’s heart. However, if one serves the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, he is immediately freed from all such contaminations.”

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.2.17]

### *śubhadā*

Pure devotional service has been described as all auspicious. This all auspiciousness, according to Rūpa Gosvāmī, has 3 qualities and these are listed below:

- *jagat-prīṇanādidvaya-pradatvam* – possessing love for all entities and becoming the object of affection for all living entities
- *sad-guṇādi-pradatvam* – bestows all good qualities
- *sukhapradatvam* – bestows happiness

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.28-30]

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains, “Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī has analyzed the different sources of happiness. He has divided happiness into three categories, which are (1) happiness derived from material enjoyment, (2) happiness derived by identifying oneself with the

Supreme *Brahman*, and (3) happiness derived from Kṛṣṇa consciousness."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 10]

Of these, the happiness of devotional service is superior. There are two reasons: firstly, it is eternal whereas the others are temporary, and secondly, it includes and excels the pleasures found in other types of happiness.

Only the happiness of devotional service is eternal. Neither liberation, mystic perfection nor sense gratification can bring eternal happiness

Śrīla Prabhupāda on the life of an ISKCON devotee

"These Kṛṣṇa conscious boys and girls – in sixty centres they are living in the best houses. They are eating the best food. They are in the best consciousness. They have got the best hope. Everything best. Their feature of body is best. What material happiness do you want more than this? They have got wife, children, happiness, home – everything full. So material happiness is nothing to a Kṛṣṇa conscious person. Material happiness will roll at his feet, saying, "Please take me." There is no need for asking for it. Simply be steady and ask Kṛṣṇa, "Please engage me in Your service!" Then your satisfaction will automatically come. Don't bother for material happiness."

[Śrīla Prabhupāda lecture, New York, 19/07/1971]

(Additional Reference)

Further evidence from the *Nārada-pañcarātra*

"In the *Nārada-pañcarātra* it is also said that any person who has developed even a small amount of devotional service doesn't care a fig for any kind of happiness derived from religiousness, economic development, sense gratification or the five kinds of liberation. Any kind of happiness derived from religiousness, economic development, liberation or sense gratification cannot even dare to enter into the heart of a pure devotee. It is stated

that as the personal attendants and maidservants of a queen follow the queen with all respect and obeisances, similarly the joys of religiousness, economic development, sense gratification and liberation follow the devotional service of the Lord. In other words, a pure devotee does not lack any kind of happiness derived from any source. He does not want anything but service to Kṛṣṇa, but even if he should have another desire, the Lord fulfils this without the devotee's asking."

[*The Nectar of Devotion* page 13-14]

### *mokṣa-laghutākṛt*

Pure devotional service derides the happiness from liberation.

"When even a little attraction for the Lord grows in the heart, the four objects of human attainment, *artha*, *dharma*, *kāma*, *mokṣa*, become insignificant like grass, shameful to appear before *bhakti*."

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.33]

### *sudurlabhā*

Pure devotional service is rarely attained

Rūpa Gosvāmī quotes *Tantra śāstra* and Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura explains that until one has undergone all the stages from *śraddhā* to *āsakti*, *bhāva* will not be attainable. Even if *āsakti* is attained, Kṛṣṇa does not award *bhāva* easily.

BR. Sridhar Mahārāja says that if one tries to jump over one stage, then that stage will be hollow.

Śrī Viśvanātha Cakravartī comments that *bhāva-bhakti* cannot be attained unless one has undergone the course of spiritual practices, starting from *śraddhā* followed by *sādhu-saṅga*, *bhajana-kriyā*, *anartha-nivṛtti*, *niṣṭhā*, *ruci*, and *āsakti*. Unless one has undergone these stages of spiritual practices, *bhāva-bhakti* is not attainable. So the twofold difficulties are: firstly, *bhāva-bhakti* is not awakened even if the different stages of *sādhana-*

*bhakti* have been undergone for a long time until the stages of *āsakti* or attachment and *ruci* or taste are reached; secondly, even if there is attachment and taste, Lord Hari does not bestow it soon-He tests His devotee for long and then only *bhāva* is bestowed by the Lord and is not attained by the individual by his own efforts.

[Commentary on *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.35]

There are 9 stages of devotional service which an aspiring devotee generally has to go through

- *śraddhā* – initial faith
- *sādhū-saṅga* – devotee association
- *bhajana-kriyā* – regulated process
- *anartha-nivṛtti* – annihilating impurities
- *niṣṭhā* – fixed determination
- *ruci* – taste
- *āsakti* – attachment
- *bhāva* – ecstasy
- *prema* – love

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.4.15-16]

### *sāndrānanda-viśeṣātmā*

Pure devotional service results in incalculably condensed bliss. In *bhāva* and *prema*, devotional service becomes very densely blissful. Not a moment is wasted and one is always absorbed in service of Kṛṣṇa. Lord Caitanya's followers were chanting *Hare Kṛṣṇa* between bites while taking *prasādam* and relishing the greatest bliss.

*sāndrānanda-viśeṣātmā*

*brahmānando bhaved eṣa cet parārdha-guṇī-kṛtaḥ  
naiti bhakti-sukhāmbhodheḥ paramāṇu-tulām api*

*Bhakti* is composed of a special condensed bliss. The bliss of *brāhmaṇa* realization accumulated by *samādhi* lasting for half of Brahma's life cannot compare to one drop of the ocean of happiness of *bhakti*.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.38]

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

“Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī says that if *brahmānanda*, or the happiness of becoming one with the Supreme, is multiplied by one trillionfold, it still cannot compare to an atomic fraction of the happiness derived from the ocean of devotional service.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 15]

### *śrī-kṛṣṇākarṣiṇī*

Pure devotional service attracts Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

*śrī-kṛṣṇākarṣiṇī*

*kṛtvā hariṁ prema-bhājaṁ priya varga samanvitam  
bhaktir vaśīkarotīti śrī-kṛṣṇākarṣiṇī matā*

*Prema-Bhakti* is called *kṛṣṇa-ākarṣiṇī*, i.e. possessing the power of attracting Lord Kṛṣṇa because such *bhakti* charms Kṛṣṇa into complete submission because of the devotee’s endearing love and affection for Him and His entourage.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.1.41]

“God is great, but devotional service is greater than God because it attracts Him.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 17]

“Nārada Muni continued: My dear Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, all of you [the Pāṇḍavas] are extremely fortunate, for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, lives in your palace just like a human being. Great saintly persons know this very well, and therefore they constantly visit this house.”

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.10.48]

In chapter 14 of the *Kṛṣṇa book* it is mentioned that Kṛṣṇa is known as *Acyuta*, infallible, because he never fails to notice the smallest service rendered by anyone. In that sense, devotional service in any stage is always *śrī-kṛṣṇa-ākarṣiṇī*, attracting Kṛṣṇa. However, there are differences in the services rendered. In the

example of Nārada as the son of the maidservant, the Lord appeared before him being satisfied with his devotional service, but only to tell him that in this lifetime he would not see the Lord again. On the other hand, Kṛṣṇa could not hide from the *gopis*. They were eagerly looking for Him after he had disappeared from the *rasa* dance, following His footsteps. When finally they came upon Lord Nārāyaṇa, they said, “Oh, Supreme Personality of Godhead, please accept our obeisances. Have you seen Kṛṣṇa?” It turned out that Kṛṣṇa had been hiding in the four-armed form of Nārāyaṇa, but being attracted by their pure devotion, He could not maintain His disguise and showed His original form as Kṛṣṇa.

## Chapter 2 – The First Stages of Devotion

When a materially conditioned soul begins devotional service in practice, this practice is known as *sādhana-bhakti*. In this chapter an introduction of such practice is made in a generic way. It is mentioned that *bhakti* is generally a continuation from a previous life and is further awakened. However, even when individuals have had no previous connection, *bhakti* can still be awakened in him by the association of a devotee.

A child needs to learn to walk even though walking is inherent in his nature; similarly, *bhakti* must be practised although it is a natural quality of the soul. So Kṛṣṇa consciousness is within every living entity.

The table called 'Eastern Division' shows us the basic contents of the eastern division. Then a brief explanation of *sādhana*, *bhāva* and *prema bhakti* follows. But the emphasis in this chapter (and in all the chapters up to and including chapter 16) is on *sādhana-bhakti*.

Finally we elaborate on the impetus for taking up devotional service: firstly, owing to a connection from previous lives, and secondly, due to the association of devotees.

*Bhakti* operates on taste or natural attraction to devotional service accompanied by philosophical understanding.

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Awakening Bhakti</b> <b>Chapter Two – Eastern Division, 2nd Wave, Sādhana Bhakti</b> <i>Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.1.44-1.2.15</i> <i>Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu Chapter 2-14 Vaidhi-sādhana Bhakti</i>		
<b>Sādhana Bhakti</b> Devotional service in practice. <i>Bhakti</i> is innate; the practice awakens our dormant nature. The path of argument will never be safe or conclusive. Therefore follow in the footsteps of the authorities. Two types: <i>Vaidhi-bhakti</i> – according to rules and regulations. <i>Rāgānuga-bhakti</i> – spontaneous attachment	Three Categories of devotional service: <b>sādhana-bhakti</b> – in practice <b>bhāva-bhakti</b> – in ecstasy <b>prema-bhakti</b> – in pure love	<i>Bhakti</i> is generally a continuation from previous life. <i>Bhakti</i> is natural, innate, although it must be practised, example: a child must practise walking although walking is natural	Taste is the key to advancement, e.g. taste for reading <i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> or <i>Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam</i> . Taste comes from previous life and from association with devotees
	To always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Him – all rules and prohibitions of scripture serve this principle	<i>Vidhi</i> - positive injunction <i>Niṣedha</i> -prohibition This is relevant to all <i>āśramas</i>	For the <i>sādhaka varṇāśrama</i> is relevant

So far we have identified three major verses, which provide the foundation of *The Nectar of Devotion*. Now we will continue to discuss *sādhana-bhakti*, *bhāva-bhakti*, and *prema-bhakti*, which completes the entire eastern division of the book.

<b>Eastern Division</b>
1. <i>akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ</i> – Establishes Objective: The Spiritual World
2. <i>anyābhilāṣitā-sūnyarṇ</i> – Describes the stage to attain to enter the Spiritual World
3. <i>kleśaghñī śubhadā</i> – Describes the progress from the conditioned stage to pure <i>bhakti</i>
4. <i>sādhana-bhakti</i> – Devotional service in practice
5. <i>bhāva-bhakti</i> – Devotional service in ecstasy
6. <i>prema-bhakti</i> – Devotional service in pure love

## Categories of Devotional Service

There are three categories of devotional service:

1. *sādhana bhakti* refers to devotional service in practice

This is the program of gradual cultivation of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

There are 64 limbs or aspects of devotional service, which engage the senses and the mind in the service of Kṛṣṇa and then gradually, step by step, awaken faith, attachment, and devotional service in pure love, *śraddhā ratir bhaktir anukramiṣyati*

2. *bhāva bhakti* refers to devotional service in ecstasy

Some might argue that there should be only two categories, namely, *sādhana bhakti* and *sādhya(goal)/prema-bhakti*. In *bhāva bhakti* there remains a trace of offence committed to a *vaiṣṇava*, therefore there is *kleśa* or distress<sup>1</sup> and *vighna* or impediments.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu*, page 22]

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<sup>1</sup> *kleśa* is of 5 types: *avidyā* – ignorance, *asmita* – false ego, *rāga* – attachment, *dveṣa* – hatred, *abhiniveśa* – perseverance in bodily enjoyment.

3. *prema-bhakti* refers to devotional service in pure love

One who is always fully immersed in activities related to Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is completely unacquainted with impediments, *vighna* or material distress, *kleśa*, and who incessantly tastes the bliss of *prema* is called a *siddha-bhakta*.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.280]

<b><i>sādhana bhakti</i></b> 1st – 2nd	<b><i>bhāva bhakti</i></b> 1st – 4th	<b><i>prema-bhakti</i></b> All 6 [Nectar of Devotion, page 19]
1. <i>kleśaghñī</i> (eliminates suffering)	✓	✓
2. <i>śubhadā</i> (all- auspicious)	✓	✓
	3. <i>mokṣa-laghutā- kṛt</i> (derides liberation)	✓
	4. <i>su-durlabhā</i> (rarely attained)	✓
		5. <i>sāndrānanda- viśeṣātmā</i> (condensed bliss)
		6. <i>śrī-kṛṣṇa-ākarsṇī</i> (attracts Kṛṣṇa)

As mentioned previously, Lord Kṛṣṇa is known as Acyuta because He is never forgetful of a little service rendered by His devotee. One can say that all devotional service attracts Kṛṣṇa. However, no devotee can equal the quality of service in pure love by Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī; therefore she can attract Kṛṣṇa more

than anyone else. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prayed *gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ*, we are only the servant of the servant of the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa. We serve those who are greater servants of Kṛṣṇa than ourselves because they can please and therefore attract Kṛṣṇa more than we can.

[Kṛṣṇa book, Chapter 14]  
(Additional Reference)

## Taste – the key to advancement

For persons who have a natural taste for understanding books like *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, devotional service is easier than for those who are simply accustomed to mental speculation and argumentative processes.

Taste comes from:

- previous life
- association with devotees

Devotional service is the result of a previous connection or association of a devotee

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “No one can take to devotional service unless he has had some previous connection with it. For example, suppose in this life I practice devotional service to some extent. Even though it is not one-hundred-percent perfectly performed, whatever I have done will not be lost. In my next life, from the very point where I stop in this life, I shall begin again. In this way there is always a continuity. But even if there is no continuity, if only by chance a person takes interest in a pure devotee's instruction, he can be accepted and can advance in devotional service.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 19]

Kṛṣṇa is all-attractive, yet some people have turned away from Him and now want to exploit the material energy for their own sense enjoyment. However, devotees create all kinds of

opportunities for devotional service and people may engage in devotional service even unknowingly. For example, when the *hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana* party comes through the street, people may not know what it's all about, but nonetheless they are getting purified through *ajñāta-sukṛti*, unknown spiritual benefit. Such unknown spiritual benefit accumulates and eventually leads to attraction to devotional service. There can also be previous devotional service that was consciously performed and has created an attachment to do it again.

In the purport to *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya 22.45* Śrīla Prabhupāda writes: "Pious activities can be divided into three categories: pious activities that awaken one's dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness are called *bhakty-unmukhī sukṛti*, pious activities that bestow material opulence are called *bhogonmukhī sukṛti*, and pious activities that enable the living entity to merge into the existence of the Supreme are called *mokṣonmukhī sukṛti*. These last two awards of pious activity are not actually fortunate. Pious activities are fortunate when they help one become Kṛṣṇa conscious. The good fortune of *bhakty-unmukhī* is attainable only when one comes in contact with a devotee. By associating with a devotee willingly or unwillingly, one advances in devotional service, and thus one's dormant Kṛṣṇa consciousness is awakened". (Additional Reference)

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 22.45, purport*]  
(Additional reference)

## ***Sādhana-bhakti* – devotional service in practice**

### Definition:

“When we wish to develop our innate capacity for devotional service, there are certain processes which, by our accepting and executing them, will cause that dormant capacity to be invoked. Such practice is called *sādhana bhakti*.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 20]

*kṛti-sādhyā bhavet sādhyā-  
bhāvā sā sādhanābhidhā  
nitya-siddhasya bhāvasya  
prākāṣyam ḥṛdi sādhyatā*

*kṛti-sādhyā*—which is to be executed by the senses; *bhavet*—should be; *sādhyā-bhāvā*—by which love of Godhead is acquired; *sā*—that; *sādhana-abhidhā*—called *sādhana-bhakti*, or devotional service in practice; *nitya-siddhāsya*—which is eternally present; *bhāvasya*—of love of Godhead; *prākāṣyam*—the awakening; *ḥṛdi*—in the heart; *sādhyatā*—potentiality.

When transcendental devotional service, by which love for Kṛṣṇa is attained, is executed by the senses, it is called *sādhana-bhakti*, or the regulative discharge of devotional service. Such devotion eternally exists within the heart of every living entity. The awakening of this eternal devotion is the potentiality of devotional service in practice.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.2]

*Sādhana-bhakti* or devotional service in practice employs the senses and the mind.

“Practice means employing our senses in some particular type of work. Therefore devotional service in practice means utilizing our different sensory organs in service to Kṛṣṇa. Some of the senses are meant for acquiring knowledge, and some are meant

for executing the conclusions of our thinking, feeling and willing. So practice means employing both the mind and the senses in practical devotional service.

A child must practice walking: This practice is not for developing something artificial. For example, a child learns or practices to walk. This walking is not unnatural. The walking capacity is there originally in the child, and simply by a little practice he walks very nicely. Similarly, devotional service to the Supreme Lord is the natural instinct of every living entity."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 20]

"Even uncivilized men like the aborigines offer their respectful obeisances to something wonderful exhibited by nature's law, and they appreciate that behind some wonderful exhibition or action there is something Supreme."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 20]

'We can develop our innate capacity for devotional service through *sādhana-bhakti*. Every living entity under the spell of material energy is held to be in an abnormal condition of madness. In the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* it is said, "Generally, the conditioned soul is mad, because he is always engaged in activities which are the causes of bondage and suffering." The spirit soul in his original condition is joyful, blissful, eternal and full of knowledge.

Only by his implication in material activities has he become miserable, temporary and full of ignorance. This is due to *vikarma*. *Vikarma* means "actions which should not be done."

Therefore, we must practice *sādhana-bhakti*— offer *maṅgala-ārati* (Deity worship) in the morning, refrain from certain material activities, offer obeisances to the spiritual master and follow many other rules and regulations which will be discussed here one after another. As a man's mental disease is cured by the directions of a psychiatrist, so does the practice of *sādhana-*

*bhakti* cure the conditioned soul of his madness under the spell of *māyā*, material illusion.'

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 20-21]

## Two divisions of *sādhana-bhakti*

*Sādhana-bhakti* may be divided into 2 parts:

- *Vaidhi* – refers to devotional service which is performed according to regulative principles
  - *Rāgānuga* – refers to devotional service which is performed spontaneously out of natural love for Kṛṣṇa
1. *Vaidhi*: "When there is no attachment or no spontaneous loving service to the Lord, and one is engaged in the service of the Lord simply out of obedience to the order of the spiritual master or in pursuance of the scriptures, such obligatory service is called *vaidhi-bhakti*."

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.6]

2. *rāgānuga*: "In the beginning, by the order of his spiritual master, one rises early in the morning and offers *ārati*, but then he develops real attachment. When he gets this attachment, he automatically tries to decorate the Deity and prepare different kinds of dresses and thinks of different plans to execute his devotional service nicely. Although it is within the category of practice, this offering of loving service is spontaneous."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 22]

## The Chief Regulative Principle

*smartavyaḥ satataṁ viṣṇur*  
*vismartavyo na jātucit*  
*sarve vidhi-niṣedhāḥ syur*  
*etayor eva kiṅkarāḥ*

Kṛṣṇa is the origin of Lord Viṣṇu. He should always be remembered and never forgotten at any time. All the rules and

prohibitions mentioned in the *śāstras* should be the servants of these two principles.

[*Padma Purāṇa*]

*Vidhi* refers to rules which are favourable for devotional service.

*Niṣedha* refers to prohibitions, such as

- Avoidance of sin
- Abandonment of apathy toward the Lord
- Atonement of sins

All of the above are attendants of this chief regulative principle, which is to always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Him.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu, page 120*]

To always remember Kṛṣṇa and never forget Him, is a principle that applies to all *āśramas*.

## *Varṇāśrama*

*mukha-bāhūru-pādebhyaḥ  
puruṣasyāśramaiḥ saha  
catvāro jajñire varṇā  
guṇair viprādayaḥ pṛtha*

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.5.2*]

This is an important quote from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* Eleventh Canto, which we should memorize. It divides the various *varṇas* and *āśramas* as part of the social body.

- head – *sannyāsīs* and *brāhmaṇas*
- arms – *vānaprastha* and *kṣatriyas*
- waist – *gṛhasthas* and *vaiśyas*
- legs – *brahmacārīs* and *śūdras*

The statement below is relevant to devotional service in practice, *sādhana bhakti*. In the liberated stage of *bhakti*, *varṇāśrama* is not required.

The injunction herein is that one has to act according to his position, and by such activities one must satisfy the Supreme Personality or else fall down from one's position.

- The *brāhmaṇas* preach transcendental sound and eat on behalf of the Lord
- The *kṣatriyas* protect people from *māyā*
- The *vaiśyas* are involved with agriculture and trading
- The *śūdras* assist the higher classes with labour

[Refer to *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 25]

“The Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement is so nice that there is no need of even designating oneself *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya*, *śūdra*, *brahmacārī*, *gṛhastha*, *vānaprastha*, *sannyāsī*. Let everyone be engaged in whatever occupation he now has. Simply let him worship Lord Kṛṣṇa by the results of his activities in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 26]

## Chapter 3 – Eligibility of the Candidate for Accepting Devotional Service

The word 'eligibility' is a translation from the Sanskrit word '*adhikāra*'. The word '*adhikāra*' can also be translated as 'authorized'. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is explained that according to the depth of one's faith, one is authorized to enter into the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. This chapter describes the qualifications of the neophyte devotee or *kaniṣṭha*; the intermediate devotee or the *madhyama*, and the topmost devotee or the *uttama*, who is transcendental to material nature.

The chapter quotes extensively from *The Nectar of Devotion* and also from the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. At the time of the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* had not been written as yet, but there are a lot of points addressed there that are relevant to *The Nectar of Devotion*.

Rūpa Gosvāmī points out that the pursuits of *karma* (sense enjoyment) and *jñāna* (liberation), which he compares to witches, are impediments to devotional service.

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Eligibility or <i>adhikāra</i></b> <b>Chapter Three – Eastern Division, 2nd Wave, <i>sādhana Bhakti</i></b> Chapter 2-14 <i>Vaidhi-sādhana Bhakti</i>	
<b><i>Kaniṣṭha-adhikārī</i></b> weak faith <b><i>madhyama-adhikārī</i></b> not expert in arguing on revealed scripture firm faith <b><i>uttama-adhikārī</i></b>	By association with <i>mahātmā</i> attraction develops but also attachment to fruitive activity and sense gratification remain	4 types of people come to Kṛṣṇa consciousness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distressed – Gajendra</li> <li>• Desiring wealth – Dhruva</li> <li>• Inquisitive – sages of Naimiṣāraṇya</li> <li>• Wise – Four Kumāras</li> </ul>
expert in <i>śāstra</i> and a living example sees love of God as the goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No <i>bhukti</i> and <i>mukti</i></li> <li>• Analogy of two witches</li> </ul>	More evidence from <i>śāstra</i> on <i>bhukti</i> and <i>mukti</i>

Śrīla Prabhupāda points out that devotional service is attained by the mercy of a *vaiṣṇava*.

By association with *Mahatmas* cent per cent engaged in devotional service, one may attain a little attraction for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. At the same time one may remain very attached to fruitive activities and material sense enjoyment.

[Refer to *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 29]

The living being is by nature pleasure seeking, *ānanda-mayo 'bhyāsāt*, as stated in the *Vedānta-sūtra*. Here, in this material world, we find ourselves in a desert deprived of happiness. The little drops of sense enjoyment that we experience do give us moments of pleasure, but don't last and again we are unfulfilled, looking everywhere for enjoyment. The three modes of material

nature create a great variety of circumstances, sometimes bringing enjoyment and sometimes suffering. Even when we endeavour very hard for enjoyment, there is no guarantee that it will be attained and we become frustrated and distressed. In the association of devotees one gets a taste of devotional service and one might become attracted to Kṛṣṇa and develop a little faith: “Maybe here I will find happiness?” However, at the same time, we hold on to the old activities that have brought us sense enjoyment so many times before.

## Description of four kinds of pious men who begin devotional service

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī quotes the *Bhagavad-gītā*:

*catur-vidhā bhajante mām  
janāḥ su-kṛtino 'rjuna  
ārto jijñāsur arthārthī  
jñānī ca bharatarṣabha*

*catur-vidhāḥ*—four kinds of; *bhajante*—render services; *mām*—unto Me; *janāḥ*—persons; *su-kṛtinaḥ*—those who are pious; *arjuna*—O Arjuna; *ārtaḥ*—the distressed; *jijñāsuḥ*—the inquisitive; *artha-arthī*—one who desires material gain; *jñānī*—one who knows things as they are; *ca*—also; *bharata-ṛṣabha*—O great one amongst the descendants of Bharata.

O best among the Bhāratas, four kinds of pious men begin to render devotional service unto Me—the distressed, the desirer of wealth, the inquisitive, and he who is searching for knowledge of the Absolute.

[*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.16]

Rūpa Gosvāmī also offers examples among personalities of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that represent these four categories and who take up devotional service;

- Distressed – Gajendra
- Desirous of wealth – Dhruva

- Inquisitive – Sages of Naimiṣāraṇya
- Wise – Four Kumāras

(Out of these four, one who is wise is very dear to Kṛṣṇa)

“A wise man who becomes attached to Kṛṣṇa does not want any return from Him, either in the form of relieving distress, or in gaining money. That means from the very beginning his basic principle of attachment to Kṛṣṇa, more or less, is love.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 31]

“It can be concluded that a person who is free from the bodily concept of life is an eligible candidate for pure devotional service.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 32]

After some initial attraction to Kṛṣṇa, His devotees and the world of Kṛṣṇa consciousness, a person may become a regular practitioner of devotional service. There are three categories of devotees mentioned in scripture, in the *Nectar of Devotion*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*.

## Description of three categories of devotees

### *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī*

The third class devotee

- His faith is not strong.
- His faith can be changed by strong argument.
- He does not recognize the decision of scripture.

*yo bhavet komala-śraddhaḥ  
sa kaniṣṭho nigadyate*

*yaḥ*—anyone who; *bhavet*—may be; *komala*—soft; *śraddhaḥ*—having faith; *saḥ*—such a person; *kaniṣṭhaḥ*—neophyte devotee; *nigadyate*—is said to be.

“One whose faith is not very strong, who is just beginning, should be considered a neophyte devotee.”

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.19]

*arcāyām eva haraye  
pūjām yaḥ śraddhayate  
na tad-bhakteṣu cānyeṣu  
sa bhaktaḥ prākṛtaḥ smṛtaḥ*

*arcāyām*—Deity; *eva*—certainly; *haraye*—to Lord Hari; *pūjām*—worship; *yaḥ*—who; *śraddhayā*—faithfully; *īhate*—engages; *na*—not; *tad*—of Kṛṣṇa; *bhakteṣu*—toward the devotees; *ca*—and; *anyeṣu*—toward people in general; *saḥ*—he; *bhaktaḥ prākṛtaḥ*—materialistic devotee; *smṛtaḥ*—is called

A devotee who faithfully engages in the worship of the Deity in the temple but does not behave properly toward other devotees or people in general is called a *prākṛta-bhakta*, a materialistic devotee, and is considered to be in the lowest position.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.47]

**Vaiṣṇava** – whoever chants the holy name once

Satyaṛāja Khān said, “My dear Lord, being a householder and a materialistic man, I do not know the process of advancing in spiritual life. I therefore submit myself unto Your lotus feet and request You to give me orders.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied, “Without cessation continue chanting the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Whenever possible, serve Him and His devotees, the *Vaiṣṇavas*.”

Upon hearing this, Satyaṛāja said, “How can I recognize a *Vaiṣṇava*? Please let me know what a *Vaiṣṇava* is. What are his common symptoms?”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu replied, “Whoever chants the holy name of Kṛṣṇa just once is worshipable and is the topmost human being.

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 15.103-106]

(Additional reference)

*madhyama-adhikārī*

- He is not expert in arguing on the strength of revealed scriptures.
- He has firm faith in the procedure of devotional service unto Kṛṣṇa.

*yaḥ śāstrādiṣv anipuṇaḥ  
śraddhāvān sa tu madhyamaḥ*

*yaḥ*—anyone who; *śāstra-ādiṣu*—in the revealed scriptures; *anipuṇaḥ*—not very expert; *śraddhāvān*—full of faith; *saḥ*—he; *tu*—certainly; *madhyamaḥ*—second-class or middle-class devotee

He who does not know scriptural argument very well but who has firm faith is called an intermediate or second-class devotee.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.18]

*īśvare tad-adhīneṣu  
bālīṣeṣu dviṣatsu ca  
prema-maitrī-kṛpopekṣā  
yaḥ karoti sa madhyamaḥ*

*īśvare*—unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *tad-adhīneṣu*—to persons who have taken fully to Kṛṣṇa consciousness; *bālīṣeṣu*—unto the neophytes or the ignorant; *dviṣatsu*—to persons envious of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa's devotees; *ca*—and; *prema*—love; *maitrī*—friendship; *kṛpā*—mercy; *upekṣāḥ*—negligence; *yaḥ*—anyone who; *karoti*—does; *saḥ*—he; *madhyamaḥ*—a second-class devotee

An intermediate or second-class devotee, called *madhyama-adhikārī*, offers his love to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is a sincere friend to all the devotees of the Lord, shows mercy to ignorant people who are innocent and disregards those who are envious of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.46]

## *Vaiṣṇavatara* – A person who is always chanting the holy name of the Lord

As in the previous year, one of the inhabitants of Kulīna-grāma submitted a petition to the Lord, saying, “My Lord, kindly tell me what my duty is and how I should execute it.”

The Lord replied, “You should engage yourself in the service of the servants of Kṛṣṇa and always chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa. If you do these two things, you will very soon attain shelter at Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet.”

The inhabitant of Kulīna-grāma said, “Please let me know who is actually a *Vaiṣṇava* and what his symptoms are.” Understanding his mind, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu smiled and gave the following reply.

“A person who is always chanting the holy name of the Lord is to be considered a first-class *Vaiṣṇava*, and your duty is to serve his lotus feet.”

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 16.69-72*]  
(Additional reference)

## *Uttama-adhikārī*

- He is expert in the study of relevant scriptures.
- He is also expert in putting forward arguments in terms of those scriptures.
- He can present conclusions with discretion.
- He can consider the ways of devotional service in a decisive way.
- He understands the goal is to attain the loving service of Kṛṣṇa.
- He knows Kṛṣṇa is the only object of worship and love.
- He strictly follows rules and regulations under the training of a bona fide spiritual master and obeys him in accord with revealed scriptures.
- He never deviates from higher authority.

- He has firm faith in scriptures by understanding with all reason and arguments.

*śāstre yuktau ca nipuṇaḥ  
sarvathā dṛḍha-niścayaḥ  
prauḍha-śraddho 'dhikārī yaḥ  
sa bhaktāv uttamo mata*

*śāstre*—in the revealed scriptures; *yuktau*—in logic; *ca*—also; *nipuṇaḥ*—expert; *sarvathā*—in all respects; *dṛḍha-niścayaḥ*—who is firmly convinced; *prauḍha*—deep; *śraddhaḥ*—who has faith; *adhikārī*—eligible; *yaḥ*—who; *saḥ*—he; *bhaktau*—in devotional service; *uttamaḥ*—highest; *mataḥ*—is considered

One who is expert in logic and in understanding the revealed scriptures, and who always has firm conviction and deep faith that is not blind, is to be considered a topmost devotee in devotional service.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.17]

*śrī-havir uvāca  
sarva-bhūteṣu yaḥ paśyed  
bhagavad-bhāvam ātmanaḥ  
bhūtāni bhagavaty ātmany  
eṣa bhāgavatottamaḥ*

*śrī-haviḥ uvāca*—Śrī Havir said; *sarva-bhūteṣu*—in all objects (in matter, spirit, and combinations of matter and spirit); *yaḥ*—anyone who; *paśyet*—sees; *bhagavat-bhāvam*—the ability to be engaged in the service of the Lord; *ātmanaḥ*—of the supreme spirit soul, or the transcendence beyond the material concept of life; *bhūtāni*—all beings; *bhagavati*—in the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *ātmani*—the basic principle of all existence; *eṣaḥ*—this; *bhāgavata-uttamaḥ*—a person advanced in devotional service.

Śrī Havir said: The most advanced devotee sees within everything the soul of all souls, the Supreme Personality of

Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Consequently he sees systematically everything in relation to the Supreme Lord and understands that everything that exists is eternally situated within the Lord.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.45]

*Vaiṣṇavatama* – he whose very presence makes others chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa

The following year, the inhabitants of Kulīna-grāma again asked the Lord the same question. Hearing this question, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu again taught them about the different types of *Vaiṣṇavas*.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said, “A first-class *Vaiṣṇava* is he whose very presence makes others chant the holy name of Kṛṣṇa.”

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* 16.73-74]

(Additional reference)

*śraddhāvān jana haya bhakti-adhikārī*  
*‘uttama’, ‘madhyama’, ‘kaniṣṭha’ — śraddhā-anusārī*

*śraddhāvān jana*—a person with faith; *haya*—is; *bhakti-adhikārī*—eligible for discharging transcendental loving service to the Lord; *uttama*—first class; *madhyama*—intermediate; *kaniṣṭha*—the lowest class; *śraddhā-anusārī*—according to the proportion of faith.

A faithful devotee is a truly eligible candidate for the loving service of the Lord. According to one’s faith, one is classified as a topmost devotee, an intermediate devotee or an inferior devotee.

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* 22.64]

<b><i>kaniṣṭha, madhyama and uttama – adhikārī</i></b> <b>(from the perspective of <i>adhikāra</i> – eligibility)</b>				
Category of <i>Vaiṣṇava</i>	The <i>adhikāra</i> , the level of access	Stages of <i>Bhakti</i>	Affliction by <i>māyā</i> ( <i>Mādhurya Kaḍambinī</i> )	Focus
<i>Kaniṣṭha-adhikārī</i>	External form of the <i>saṅkīrtana</i> Movement	<i>śraddhā</i> – faith <i>sādhu-saṅga</i> – devotee association <i>bhajana-kriyā</i> – regulated worship <i>anartha-nivṛtti</i> – purification	tinge of spiritualization a bit more concrete spiritual localized, material aspect in full force slowly diminishes	<i>sambhanda</i> – connection
<i>Madhyama-adhikārī</i>	The Substance: The perfect Process of Devotional Service	<i>Niṣṭhā</i> – fixed determination	spiritual influence more pervasive material influence somewhat decreased	<i>abhidheya</i> – spiritual growth
<i>Uttama-adhikārī</i>	The Divine Presence of the Lord	<i>ruci</i> – taste <i>āśakti</i> – attachment <i>bhāva</i> – ecstasy <i>prema</i> – love	spiritual predominant, material localized spiritual complete, material a trace a shadow absent	<i>prayojana</i> – the ultimate goal

## The eligibility of the three categories of devotees

Explanation of the above:

The Sanskrit word *adhikāra* may be translated as authorized, right, qualified. One could say that according to one's surrender and faith one is authorized to enter the transcendental realm. The *kaniṣṭha*, *madhyama*, and *uttama adhikārī* each have a different level of authorization to enter into Lord Caitanya's *saṅkīrtana* movement.

The *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* mainly has access to the external form of the *saṅkīrtana* movement.

In the *Bhāgavatam* verse it is explained that the *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* faithfully engages in the worship of the Deity in the temple but does not behave properly toward other devotees, or people in general. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura has commented in *Jaiva Dharma, chapter 8*: "Already, it has been established that *śraddhā*, faith, is the seed of devotion. To worship the Deity of the Lord with *śraddhā* is certainly *bhakti*, but without worshipping and serving the devotee of the Lord one cannot execute *śuddha-bhakti*. This position of serving the Lord but not His pure devotee can be described as being, at best, a step inside the portals of the realm of *bhakti*."

The *kaniṣṭha-adhikārī* is sometimes known as *prākṛta-bhakta*, a devotee concerned with the material energy. He primarily relates to the external form of the *saṅkīrtana* movement. He also penetrates into the second level of 'the perfect process', but he can't go very deep. He has difficulty living by the scriptures and relies on his own intelligence in trying to find happiness.

The *madhyama-adhikārī* is absorbed in the substance of the perfect process of devotional service

*śraddhā-śabde — viśvāsa kahe sudṛḍha niścaya  
kṛṣṇe bhakti kaile sarva-karma kṛta haya*

*Śraddhā* is confident, firm faith that by rendering transcendental loving service to Kṛṣṇa one automatically performs all subsidiary activities. Such faith is favourable to the discharge of devotional service.

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 22.62*]

(Additional reference)

The *madhyama-adhikārī* has firm faith that by following a life of *bhakti* all good things will be attained, and therefore he takes full shelter of scripture. He depends on Kṛṣṇa's mercy and as a result, feels closely connected to this mercy at any time. Therefore he is a blissful and inspired devotee. He also has his struggles with material desires, but he is firmly convinced that such desires lead to no benefit and therefore he doesn't want them.

### The *uttama-adhikārī* feels the divine presence of the Lord

The *Uttama adhikārī* lives in the relationship with the Supreme Lord. This may become the emotional focus in the stage of *ruci* and then gradually mature to the stage of *prema*.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura has written in the *Mādhurya Kaḍambinī*:

“When the materialistic aspect of *ahantā* and *mamatā* is extremely deep, one remains in the cycle of birth and death. When a causeless particle of faith develops and one thinks of becoming a *vaiṣṇava* and serving the Lord, *ahantā* and *mamatā* becomes slightly spiritualized and the *jīva* becomes qualified for devotional service. At the stage of *sādhu-saṅga*, the tinge of spiritualization becomes more concrete. At the stage of *anishthita bhajana-kriyā*, the spiritualization is localized in one place, whereas the material aspect is in full force. At the stage of *niṣṭhā*, spiritualization becomes more pervasive and the materialistic influence decreases somewhat. At the stage of *ruci*, spiritualization of me and mine becomes dominant and the

materialistic aspect becomes localized. At the stage of *āsakti* the spiritual aspect becomes complete and the material aspect becomes a trace. At the stage of *bhāva* the spiritual aspect becomes thorough and the material aspect becomes a shadow, occasionally appearing. At the stage of *prema*, the spiritual aspect becomes extremely intense and the material aspect is completely absent.

At the stage of *bhajana-kriyā*, meditation on the Lord is mixed with other topics and is temporary. At the stage of *niṣṭhā*, meditation on the Lord has a trace of other topics. At the stage of *ruci*, other topics are absent and the meditation is long lasting. At the stage of *āsakti*, meditation becomes deep. During *bhāva*, by meditation, the Lord appears in the mind. Achieving *prema*, along with the appearance of the Lord in the mind, there is direct association with the Lord."

[*Mādhurya Kaḍambinī, eighth shower of nectar*]

(Additional reference)

"The *Uttama adhikārī* develops an inclination towards *antaraṅga-sevā*, service according to one's eternal spiritual identity. In the stage of *prema* the *siddha-deha* is fully developed and becomes a *pārṣada* devotee of the Lord, one who is present in the pastimes of the Lord."

[*Mādhurya Kaḍambinī, eighth shower of nectar*]

(Additional Reference)

## **Evidence that devotees have no interest in *bhukti* or *mukti***

Liberation stands with folded hands

There is a famous example of Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura, who was completely absorbed in devotional service.

Śrīla Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura has said:

*bhaktis tvayi sthitararā bhagavan yadi syād  
daivena naḥ phalati divya-kiśora-mūrtiḥ  
muktiḥ svayaṁ mukulitāñjaliḥ sevate 'smān  
dharmārtha-kāma-gatayaḥ samaya-pratikṣāḥ*

If I am engaged in devotional service unto You, my dear Lord, then very easily can I perceive Your presence everywhere. And as far as liberation is concerned, I think that liberation stands at my door with folded hands, waiting to serve me—and all material conveniences of *dharmā* [religiosity], *artha* [economic development] and *kāma* [sense gratification] stand with her.

[Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta 107]

### The witches of *karma* and *jñāna*

In this context '*karma*' refers to the desire to enjoy the fruits of one's labour for oneself. '*Jñāna*' refers to the tendency to liberate oneself from material involvement by intellectually analysing the difference between spirit and matter, and then cultivating detachment from matter. However, *bhakti* is not concerned with enjoying the material energy (*karma*), or with cultivating detachment from it (*jñāna*); *bhakti* involves engaging the senses and the material energy in the service of Kṛṣṇa.

*bhukti-mukti-sprhā yāvat  
piśācī hr̥di vartate  
tāvat bhakti-sukhasyātra  
katham abhyudayo bhavet*

*bhukti*—for material enjoyment; *mukti*—and for liberation from material existence; *sprhā*—desires; *yāvat*—as long as; *piśācī*—the witches; *hr̥di*—within the heart; *vartate*—remain; *tāvat*—that long; *bhakti*—of devotional service; *sukhasyātra*—of the happiness; *atra*—here; *katham*—how; *abhyudayaḥ*—awakening; *bhavet*—can there be.

The material desire to enjoy the material world and the desire to become liberated from material bondage are considered to be two witches, and they haunt one like ghosts. As long as these

witches remain within the heart, how can one feel transcendental bliss? As long as these two witches remain in the heart, there is no possibility of enjoying the transcendental bliss of devotional service.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.22]

Another quite graphic example has been given by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta. Sometimes we have a person who eats a lot and yet remains skinny and weak. It may be that the person has worms, which take all the nourishment of whatever he eats. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta said that as long as we are affected by the worms of *karma* and *jñāna*, we cannot get the nourishment of *bhakti*.

[*Lord Chaitanya's Teachings*, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura]  
(Additional Reference)

## *Bhakti* is free from impurity

*Bhakti* is *sarvopādhi-vinirmuktaṁ tat-paratvena nirmalam hṛṣīkeṇa hṛṣīkeśa-sevanam bhaktir ucyate*, the devotee is not bound to any external designation, free from impurity and simply interested in satisfying the senses of Kṛṣṇa. For this purpose *ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ*, he can accept whatever is favourable and *prātikūlyasya varjanam*, or he can either renounce any aspect of the material energy which is unfavourable. A devotee measures good and bad, decides what to do and not to do, by whatever merit the activity or object may have for Kṛṣṇa.

## Further Evidence from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*

Lord Kapila to Devahūti:

*bhaktiyā pumāñ jāta-virāga aindriyād  
dṛṣṭa-śrutān mad-racanānucintayā  
cittasya yatto grahaṇe yoga-yukto  
yatiṣyate ṛjubhir yoga-mārgaiḥ*

*bhaktyā*—by devotional service; *pumān*—a person; *jāta-virāgaḥ*—having developed distaste; *aindriyāt*—for sense gratification; *dṛṣṭa*—seen (in this world); *śrutāt*—heard (in the next world); *mat-racana*—My activities of creation and so on; *anucintayā*—by constantly thinking about; *cittasya*—of the mind; *yattaḥ*—engaged; *grahṇe*—in the control; *yoga-yuktaḥ*—situated in devotional service; *yatiṣyate*—will endeavour; *ṛjubhiḥ*—easy; *yoga-mārgaiḥ*—by the processes of mystic power.

Thus consciously engaged in devotional service in the association of devotees, a person gains distaste for sense gratification, both in this world and in the next, by constantly thinking about the activities of the Lord. This process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness is the easiest process of mystic power; when one is actually situated on that path of devotional service, he is able to control the mind.

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.25.26]

Uddhava to Lord Kṛṣṇa:

*ko nv īśa te pāda-saroja-bhājām  
 sudurlabho 'rtheṣu caturṣv apīha  
 tathāpi nāhaṁ pravṛṇomi bhūman  
 bhavat-padāmbhoja-niṣevaṇotsukaḥ*

*kaḥ nu īśa*—O my Lord; *te*—Your; *pāda-saroja-bhājām*—of the devotees engaged in the transcendental loving service of Your lotus feet; *su-durlabhaḥ*—very difficult to obtain; *artheṣu*—in the matter of; *caturṣu*—in the four objectives; *api*—in spite of; *iha*—in this world; *tathā api*—yet; *na*—do not; *aham*—I; *pravṛṇomi*—prefer; *bhūman*—O great one; *bhavat*—Your; *pada-ambhoja*—lotus feet; *niṣevaṇa-utsukaḥ*—anxious to serve.

O my Lord, devotees who engage in the transcendental loving service of Your lotus feet have no difficulty in achieving anything within the realm of the four principles of religiosity, economic development, sense gratification and liberation. But, O great

one, as far as I am concerned, I have preferred only to engage in the loving service of Your lotus feet.

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.4.15]

Lord Kapila to Devahūti:

*naikātmatām me spr̥hayanti kecin  
mat-pāda-sevābhiratā mad-ihāḥ  
ye 'nyonyato bhāgavatāḥ prasajya  
sabhājayante mama pauruṣāṇi*

*na*—never; *eka-ātmatām*—merging into oneness; *me*—My; *spr̥hayanti*—they desire; *kecit*—any; *mat-pāda-sevā*—the service of My lotus feet; *abhiratāḥ*—engaged in; *mat-ihāḥ*—endeavouring to attain Me; *ye*—those who; *anyonyataḥ*—mutually; *bhāgavatāḥ*—pure devotees; *prasajya*—assembling; *sabhājayante*—glorify; *mama*—My; *pauruṣāṇi*—glorious activities.

A pure devotee, who is attached to the activities of devotional service and who always engages in the service of My lotus feet, never desires to become one with Me. Such a devotee, who is unflinchingly engaged, always glorifies My pastimes and activities.

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.25.34]

Dhruva Maharaja:

*yā nirvṛtis tanu-bhṛtām tava pāda-padma-  
dhyānād bhavaj-jana-kathā-śravaṇena vā syāt  
sā brahmaṇi sva-mahimany api nātha mā bhūt  
kim tv antakāsi-lulitāt patatām vimānāt*

*yā*—that which; *nirvṛtiḥ*—bliss; *tanu-bhṛtām*—of the embodied; *tava*—Your; *pāda-padma*—lotus feet; *dhyānāt*—from meditating upon; *bhavat-jana*—from Your intimate devotees; *kathā*—topics; *śravaṇena*—by hearing; *vā*—or; *syāt*—comes into being; *sā*—that bliss; *brahmaṇi*—in the impersonal *Brahman*; *sva-mahimani*—Your own magnificence; *api*—even; *nātha*—O Lord; *mā*—never; *bhūt*—exists; *kim*—what to speak of; *tu*—then; *antaka-asi*—by the

sword of death; *lulitāt*—being destroyed; *patatām*—of those who fall down; *vimānāt*—from their air planes.

My Lord, the transcendental bliss derived from meditating upon Your lotus feet or hearing about Your glories from pure devotees is so unlimited that it is far beyond the stage of brahmānanda, wherein one thinks himself merged in the impersonal Brahman as one with the Supreme. Since brahmānanda is also defeated by the transcendental bliss derived from devotional service, then what to speak of the temporary blissfulness of elevating oneself to the heavenly planets, which is ended by the separating sword of time? Although one may be elevated to the heavenly planets, he falls down in due course of time.

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.9.10]

## Chapter 4 – Devotional Service surpasses all liberation

This chapter provides even more evidence that devotees have no interest in *karma* (sense gratification) and *jñāna* (liberation). It is interesting to note that the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the main source and also provides the principle evidence for the conclusions of the *Gauḍīya-sampradāya*. So it is significant that in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* as well, the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most quoted literature to substantiate that devotional service surpasses all desire for liberation.

There is also an explanation of the famous *ātmārāma* verse as well as relevant quotes on liberation from *The Nectar of Devotion*.

<b>Topics</b>	<p><b>The entire chapter simply provides more evidence from scripture that <i>Bhakti</i> surpasses all liberation</b></p> <p><b>Chapter Four – Eastern Division, 2nd Wave, <i>sādhana Bhakti</i></b></p> <p>Chapter 2-14 <i>Vaidhi-sādhana Bhakti</i></p>		
17 Verses from <i>Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam</i> are cited as evidence	The <i>Hayaśiṛṣa-pañcarātra</i> is quoted twice. Reference to a verse by Hanumān quoted in <i>Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu</i> 1.2.49	The <i>Nārada-pañcarātra</i> is quoted once	The <i>ātmārāma</i> verse from <i>Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam</i> is discussed

### Evidence from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*

The following verses from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* support that devotional service surpasses all liberation:

*na kāmaya nātha tad apy ahaṁ kvacin  
na yatra yuṣmac-caraṇāmbujāsavaḥ  
mahattamāntar-hṛdayān mukha-cyuto  
vidhatsva karṇāyutam eṣa me varaḥ*

My dear Lord, I therefore do not wish to have the benediction of merging into Your existence, a benediction in which there is no existence of the nectarean beverage of Your lotus feet. I want the benediction of at least one million ears, for thus I may be able to hear about the glories of Your lotus feet from the mouths of Your pure devotees.

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 4.20.24]

*yo dustyajān kṣīti-suta-svajanārtha-dārān  
prārthyām śriyaṁ sura-varaiḥ sadayāvalokām  
naicchan nṛpas tad-ucitaṁ mahatām madhudviṭ-  
sevānurakta-manasām abhavo 'pi phalguḥ*

Śukadeva Gosvāmī continued: My dear King, the activities of Bharata Mahārāja are wonderful. He gave up everything difficult for others to give up. He gave up his kingdom, his wife and his family. His opulence was so great that even the demigods envied it, yet he gave it up. It was quite befitting a great personality like him to be a great devotee. He could renounce everything because he was so attracted to the beauty, opulence, reputation, knowledge, strength and renunciation of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa is so attractive that one can give up all desirable things for His sake. Indeed, even liberation is considered insignificant for those whose minds are attracted to the loving service of the Lord.

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 5.14.44]

*na nāka-prṣṭhaṁ na ca pārameṣṭhyaṁ  
na sārva-bhaumaṁ na rasādhipatyam  
na yoga-siddhīr apunar-bhavaṁ vā  
samañjasa tvā virahayya kāṅkṣe*

O my Lord, source of all opportunities, I do not desire to enjoy in Dhruvaloka, the heavenly planets or the planet where Lord Brahmā resides, nor do I want to be the supreme ruler of all the earthly planets or the lower planetary systems. I do not desire to be master of the powers of mystic *yoga*, nor do I want liberation if I have to give up Your lotus feet.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.11.25]

*nārāyaṇa-parāḥ sarve  
na kutaścana bibhyati  
svargāpavarga-narakeṣv  
api tulyārtha-darśinaḥ*

Devotees solely engaged in the devotional service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Nārāyaṇa, never fear any condition of life. For them the heavenly planets, liberation and the hellish planets are all the same, for such devotees are interested only in the service of the Lord.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.17.28]

*ārādhanaṁ bhagavata  
īhamānā nirāśiṣaḥ  
ye tu necchanty api paraṁ  
te svārtha-kuśalāḥ smrtāḥ*

Although those who are interested only in worshipping the Supreme Personality of Godhead do not desire anything material from the Lord and do not even want liberation, Lord Kṛṣṇa fulfils all their desires.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.18.74]

*tuṣṭe ca tatra kim alabhyam ananta ādye  
kiṁ tair guṇa-vyatikarād iha ye sva-siddhāḥ  
dharmādayaḥ kim aguṇena ca kāṅkṣitena  
sāraṁ juṣāṁ caraṇayor upagāyatām naḥ*

Nothing is unobtainable for devotees who have satisfied the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the cause of all causes, the original source of everything. The Lord is the reservoir of

unlimited spiritual qualities. For devotees, therefore, who are transcendental to the modes of material nature, what is the use of following the principles of religion, economic development, sense gratification and liberation, which are all automatically obtainable under the influence of the modes of nature? We devotees always glorify the lotus feet of the Lord, and therefore we need not ask for anything in terms of *dharma*, *kāma*, *artha* and *mokṣa*.

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.6.25]

*śrī-indra uvāca*

*pratyānītāḥ parama bhavatā trāyatā naḥ sva-bhāgā  
daityākrāntaṁ hṛdaya-kamalaṁ tad-grhaṁ pratyabodhi  
kāla-grastaṁ kiyad idam aho nātha śuśrūṣatāṁ te  
muktis teṣāṁ na hi bahumatā nārasimhāparaiḥ kim*

King Indra said: O Supreme Lord, You are our deliverer and protector. Our shares of sacrifices, which are actually Yours, have been recovered from the demon by You. Because the demoniac king Hiraṇyakaśipu was most fearsome, our hearts, which are Your permanent abode, were all overtaken by him. Now, by Your presence, the gloom and darkness in our hearts have been dissipated. O Lord, for those who always engage in Your service, which is more exalted than liberation, all material opulence is insignificant. They do not even care for liberation, not to speak of the benefits of *kāma*, *artha* and *dharma*.

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 7.8.42]

*ekāntino yasya na kañcanārthaṁ  
vāñchanti ye vai bhagavat-prapannāḥ  
aty-adbhutaṁ tac-caritaṁ sumaṅgalaṁ  
gāyanta ānanda-samudra-magnāḥ  
tam akṣaraṁ brahma paraṁ pareśam  
avyaktam ādhyātmika-yoga-gamyam  
atīndriyaṁ sūkṣmam ivātidūram  
anantam ādyaṁ paripūrṇam īde*

Unalloyed devotees, who have no desire other than to serve the Lord, worship Him in full surrender and always hear and chant about His activities, which are most wonderful and auspicious. Thus they always merge in an ocean of transcendental bliss. Such devotees never ask the Lord for any benediction. I, however, am in danger. Thus I pray to that Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is eternally existing, who is invisible, who is the Lord of all great personalities, such as Brahmā, and who is available only by transcendental *bhakti-yoga*. Being extremely subtle, He is beyond the reach of my senses and transcendental to all external realization. He is unlimited, He is the original cause, and He is completely full in everything. I offer my obeisances unto Him.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 8.3.20-21]

*mat-sevayā pratītaṁ te  
sālokyādi-catuṣṭayam  
necchanti sevayā pūrṇāḥ  
kuto 'nyat kāla-viplutam*

My devotees, who are always satisfied to be engaged in My loving service, are not interested even in the four principles of liberation [*sālokyā, sārūpya, sāmīpya* and *sārṣṭī*], although these are automatically achieved by their service. What then is to be said of such perishable happiness as elevation to the higher planetary systems?

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 9.4.67]

*na nāka-prṣṭhaṁ na ca sārva-bhaumam  
na pārameṣṭhyam na rasādhipatyam  
na yoga-siddhīr apunar-bhavam vā  
vāñchanti yat-pāda-rajah-prapannāḥ*

Those who have attained the dust of Your lotus feet never hanker for the kingship of heaven, limitless sovereignty, the position of Brahmā or rulership over the earth. They are not interested even in the perfections of *yoga* or in liberation itself.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.16.37]

*duravagamātma-tattva-nigamāya tavātta-tanoś carita-  
mahāmṛtābdhi-parivarta-pariśramaṇāḥ  
na parilaṣanti kecid apavargam apīśvara te caraṇa-saroja-haṁsa-  
kula-saṅga-viṣṣṭa-gṛhāḥ*

My Lord, some fortunate souls have gotten relief from the fatigue of material life by diving into the vast nectar ocean of Your pastimes, which You enact when You manifest Your personal forms to propagate the unfathomable science of the self. These rare souls, indifferent even to liberation, renounce the happiness of home and family because of their association with devotees who are like flocks of swans enjoying at the lotus of Your feet.

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.87.21]

*na kiñcit sādhave dhīrā  
bhaktā hy ekāntino mama  
vāñchanty api mayā dattaṁ  
kaivalyam apunar-bhavam*

Because My devotees possess saintly behaviour and deep intelligence, they completely dedicate themselves to Me and do not desire anything besides Me. Indeed, even if I offer them liberation from birth and death, they do not accept it.

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.20.34]

*na pārameṣṭhyam na mahendra-dhiṣṇyam  
na sārvabhaumam na rasādhipatyam  
na yoga-siddhīr apunar-bhavam vā  
mayy arpitātmechhati mad vinānyat*

One who has fixed his consciousness on Me desires neither the position or abode of Lord Brahmā or Lord Indra, nor an empire on the earth, nor sovereignty in the lower planetary systems, nor the eightfold perfection of *yoga*, nor liberation from birth and death. Such a person desires Me alone.

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.14.14]

*śrī-bhagavān uvāca  
naivecchaty āśiṣaḥ kvāpi  
brahmarṣir mokṣam apy uta  
bhaktim parām bhagavati  
labdhavān puruṣe 'vyaye*

Lord Śiva replied: Surely this saintly *brāhmaṇa* does not desire any benediction, not even liberation itself, for he has attained pure devotional service unto the inexhaustible Personality of Godhead.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 12.10.6]

*muktānām api siddhānām  
nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ  
su-durlabhaḥ praśāntātmā  
koṭiṣv api mahā-mune*

O great sage, among many millions who are liberated and perfect in knowledge of liberation, one may be a devotee of Lord Nārāyaṇa, or Kṛṣṇa. Such devotees, who are fully peaceful, are extremely rare.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 6.14.5]

*tathā paramahaṁsānām  
munīnām amalātmanām  
bhakti-yoga-vidhānārthaṁ  
kathaṁ paśyema hi striyaḥ*

You Yourself descend to propagate the transcendental science of devotional service unto the hearts of the advanced transcendentalists and mental speculators, who are purified by being able to discriminate between matter and spirit. How then can we women know You perfectly?

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.8.20]

## ātmārāma verse

In this chapter there is also a reference to the *ātmārāma* verse. This is a famous verse which has been extensively explained in the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī mentions that Caitanya Mahāprabhu gave sixty-one explanations of the verse. The Lord then commented that every verse of the *Bhāgavatam* has unlimited meanings.

*sūta uvāca*  
*ātmārāmāś ca munayo*  
*nirgranthā apy urukrame*  
*kurvanty ahaitukīm bhaktim*  
*ittham-bhūta-guṇo hariḥ*

*sūtaḥ uvāca*—Sūta Gosvāmī said; *ātmārāmāḥ*—those who take pleasure in *ātmā* (generally, spirit self); *ca*—also; *munayaḥ*—sages; *nirgranthāḥ*—freed from all bondage; *api*—in spite of; *urukrame*—unto the great adventurer; *kurvanti*—do; *ahaitukīm*—unalloyed; *bhaktim*—devotional service; *ittham-bhūta*—such wonderful; *guṇaḥ*—qualities; *hariḥ*—of the Lord

Sūta Gosvāmī said: All different varieties of *ātmārāmas* [those who take pleasure in the *ātmā*, or spirit self], especially those established on the path of self-realization, though freed from all kinds of material bondage, desire to render unalloyed devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead. This means that the Lord possesses transcendental qualities and therefore can attract everyone, including liberated souls.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.7.10,

Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 45]

Liberation is described to be of five types, but only four are acceptable to *vaiṣṇavas*.

## Five Types of Liberation

- *sārūpya* (equal bodily feature)

- *sālokya* (equal facility to live on the same planet with the Lord)
- *sārṣṭi* (equal possession of opulence like the Lord)
- *sāmīpya* (association with the Lord)
- *sāyujya* (to become one with the Lord)

*Sāyujya* is not acceptable to the *vaiṣṇavas*. Only 4 kinds of liberation are acceptable, but not desired by devotees.

## *Sāyujya* is unacceptable

*sāyujya' śunite bhaktera haya ghrṇā-bhaya  
naraka vāñchaye, tabu sāyujya nā laya*

When a devotee hears of *sāyujya-mukti*, he feels disgust, shame, and fear. He would rather go to hell than merge into the formless *Brahman*.

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 6.268*]

Hanumān explains why *sāyujya* is never acceptable to a *vaiṣṇava*

*ataeva prasiddham śrī-hanumad-vākyam  
bhava-bandha-cchide tasyai sprhayāmi na muktaye  
bhavān prabhur ahaṁ dāsa iti yatra vilupyate*

I do not desire liberation that cuts the bondage of material life, because in that state of liberation, awareness that you are the master and I am the servant disappears.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.49*]

## Why the other 4 types of liberation are not desirable

In this world we work for a reward that is greater than the work we perform. Otherwise we would not be motivated to work. Yet a devotee is not looking for any benefit from devotional service other than more devotional service. After all, nothing can

compare to devotional service; pure devotional service is *suprasīdati*, completely satisfying. So only devotional service can exclusively be the reward for devotional service. Therefore devotees do not desire any of the four kinds of liberation. However, if these are attained, it would be acceptable because these don't obstruct one from engaging in devotional service.

## **Vraja Bhakti is topmost**

“Out of many kinds of devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the one who is attracted to the original form of the Lord, as Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana, is considered to be the foremost, first-class devotee. Such a devotee is never attracted by the opulences of Vaikuṅṭha, or even of Dvārakā, the royal city where Kṛṣṇa ruled. The conclusion of Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī is that the devotees who are attracted by the pastimes of the Lord in Gokula, or Vṛndāvana, are the topmost devotees.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, pages 45-46]

Such devotees are deeply absorbed in the ecstasy of serving Kṛṣṇa and have no attraction to anything else, *anya-abhilāṣitā śūnyam*.

## Chapter 5 – The Purity of Devotional Service

“Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī states that devotional service is transcendental to all material considerations and that it is not limited to any particular country, class, society or circumstance. As stated in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, devotional service is transcendental and has no cause. Devotional service is executed without any hope for gain, and it cannot be checked by any material circumstances. It is open for all, without any distinction, and it is the constitutional occupation of the living entities.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 47]

In this chapter of *The Nectar of Devotion*, Śrīla Prabhupāda highlights the great efforts made by his spiritual master, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, to establish that Kṛṣṇa consciousness is open to all, regardless of caste or creed.

Special credit is given to Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta who risked his life by standing up against caste *gosvāmīs* and had to face violent attacks from opponents during the *Navadvīpa-maṇḍala parikramā*.

There is also extensive discussion on *varṇāśrama*.

<b>Topics</b>	<b>Anyone without considering caste or creed can practice <i>Bhakti</i></b> <b>Chapter Five – Eastern Division, 2nd Wave, <i>sādhana Bhakti</i></b> Chapter 2-14 <i>Vaidhi-sādhana Bhakti</i>		
Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura defeated the <i>Nityānanda-varṁśa</i> and <i>smārta-brāhmaṇas</i> and established that everyone can become a <i>vaiṣṇava</i>	There is extensive discussion on <i>varṇāśrama</i>	There is no need for ritualistic performance and no need for five <i>yajñas</i> to counteract sin	No need for atonement

## Devotional service is open to all

“After the disappearance of Lord Nityānanda, Bengal became predominated by the *Nityānanda-varṁśa*, the family lineage of Lord Nityānanda. They claimed that only they could be *guru*. Their disciples would be known as the *Nityānanda-parivāra* and could not give initiation themselves. Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura smashed these (*Nityānanda-varṁśa*) ideas. It is now correctly and practically established that devotional service is not restricted to a particular class of men. Our Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement in the Western world is based on the above-mentioned proposition of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Prabhupāda, our spiritual master. On his authority, we are claiming members from all sections of the Western countries. The so-called *brāhmaṇas* claim that one who is not born into a *brāhmaṇa* family cannot receive the sacred thread and cannot become a high-grade *Vaiṣṇava*. But we do not accept such a theory, because it is not supported by Rūpa Gosvāmī nor by the strength of the various scriptures. Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī

specifically mentions herein that every man has the birthright to accept devotional service and to become Kṛṣṇa conscious.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 47]

## **Varṇāśrama**

A question may be raised about the extent to which *varṇāśrama* is relevant for a *vaiṣṇava*.

### Even without *varṇāśrama*

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.5.17 Nārada Muni said to Vyāsadeva, “Even if one doesn’t execute his specific occupational duty, but immediately takes direct shelter of the lotus feet of Hari (Kṛṣṇa), there will be no fault on his part.”

[Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 49]

### Further questions on *varṇāśrama*

- What is the purpose of *varṇāśrama*?

*Varṇāśrama* is a system to place all different kinds of people within society under the protection of the Lord’s instruction with the aim of gradually elevating mankind to the mode of goodness. The next step is *saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*, to perform the duties of *varṇāśrama* for the pleasure of the Lord.

- Which *varṇas* are the most important? Why?

The *brāhmaṇas* and the *kṣatriyas*, because they place the duties of *dharma* before personal desire, whereas *vaiśyas* and *sūdras* place personal desire before prescribed duty.

- What is the position of one who is not following *varṇāśrama dharma*?

One who is not following *varṇāśrama* is riding in the *manoratha*, the chariot of the mind. He will be pulled by the senses and gradually go down into material entanglement. However, even if one is not following *varṇāśrama*, but somehow by good fortune

comes into contact with devotees and takes up devotional service, all success can be attained.

- To what extent is *varṇāśrama* relevant for a *vaiṣṇava*?

*Varṇāśrama* is a division of society that offers various duties for different individuals according to their nature. When we take up spiritual life, we can't be immediately free from the modes of material nature. *Varṇāśrama* regulates the activities of various types of personalities according to the modes of nature they have acquired and provides them with relevant duties to conduct their lives. A *vaiṣṇava* can engage in the duties relevant to his nature and at the same time engage in devotional service. For example, if one has an inclination toward business, then one can engage that in the service of the Lord. Of course a liberated soul can do anything required for the service of the Lord.

If someone has an injury, they may have to walk with crutches for a while, but once they return to full health they can discard the crutches. In the same way *varṇāśrama* provides a support system for the souls, who are covered by the modes of material nature. Once liberated from the modes of nature, one doesn't require this support system any longer.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu prayed:

*nāhaṁ vipro na ca nara-patir nāpi vaiśya na sūdro  
nāhaṁ varṇī na ca gr̥ha-patir no vanastho yatir vā  
kintu prodyan-nikhila-paramānanda-pūrnāmṛtābdher  
gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ*

I am not a *brāhmaṇa*, I am not a *kṣatriya*, I am not a *vaiśya* or a *sūdra*. Nor am I a *brahmacārī*, a householder, a *vānaprastha* or a *sannyāsī*. I identify Myself only as the servant of the servant of the servant of the lotus feet of Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the maintainer of the *gopīs*. He is like an ocean of nectar, and He is the cause of universal transcendental bliss. He is always existing with brilliance.

[Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 13.80]  
(Additional Reference)

## **Vaiṣṇavas and Brāhmaṇas**

*A Vaiṣṇava* is automatically a *Brāhmaṇa*

“A *Vaiṣṇava* automatically becomes a *brāhmaṇa*. This idea is also supported by Sanātana Gosvāmī in his book *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, which is the *Vaiṣṇava* guide. There he has clearly stated that any person who is properly initiated into the *Vaiṣṇava* cult certainly becomes a *brāhmaṇa*, much as the metal known as *Kaṁsa* (bell metal) is turned into gold by the mixture of mercury. A bona-fide spiritual master, under the guidance of authorities, can turn anyone to the *Vaiṣṇava* cult, so that naturally he may come to the topmost position of a *brāhmaṇa*.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī warns however, that if a person is properly initiated by a bona fide spiritual master, he should not think that simply by the acceptance of such initiation his business is then finished. One still has to follow the rules and regulations very carefully. If, after accepting the spiritual master and being initiated one doesn't follow the rules and regulations of devotional service, then he is again fallen."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 48]

### *Vaiṣṇavas* surpass the *brāhmaṇas*

"All are qualified for *hari-bhakti*."

[*Padma Purāṇa*, Quoted in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.61]

"In the country known as Mayūradhvaja, the lower caste people who are considered less than *śūdras* are also initiated in the *vaiṣṇava* cult of devotional service. And when they are properly dressed, with *tilaka* on their bodies and beads in their hands and on their necks, they appear to be coming from *Vaikuṅṭha*. In fact they look so beautiful that they immediately surpass the ordinary *brāhmaṇas*."

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.62 from *Skanda Purāṇa*, *Kāśī-khaṇḍa*,  
Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 48]

## Performance of Sacrifice

No need for the five types of sacrifice to counteract sin

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Eleventh Canto, fifth chapter, verse 41, Karabhājana Muni addresses Mahārāja Nimi as follows: "My dear King, if someone gives up his occupational duties as they are prescribed for the different *varṇas* and *āśramas*, but takes complete shelter, surrendering himself unto the lotus feet of the Lord, such a person is no more a debtor, nor has he any obligation to perform the different kinds of activities we render to the great sages, ancestors, living entities and family and

society members. Nor has he any need to bother executing the five kinds of *yajñas* [sacrifices] for becoming free from sinful contamination. Simply by discharging devotional service, he is freed from all kinds of obligations.”

[Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 51]

## More on the five kinds of *yajñas*

The *Manu-saṁhitā* explains that there are five places of slaughter in the household: the fire place, the grinding stone, the broom, the pestle and mortar, the water pot. So householders are meant to counteract these activities by performing five types of sacrifice. These five types of *yajñas* are mentioned in the *Taittirīya-āranyaka 2.10* as: *brahma-yajña*, or study/teaching; *śāstra: deva-yajña*, or offering oblations in *agni-hotra* to the demigods; *pitṛ-yajña*, or offering *tarpaṇa* (literally pleasing) to the ancestors; *manuṣya-yajña*, or feeding/giving shelter to human beings, *bhūta-yajña*, or feeding all living beings. However, for one who is engaged in devotional service, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes that there is no need for five kinds of *yajñas* for becoming free from sinful contamination.

## Atonement

In the sixth Canto of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Śukadeva Gosvāmī and Mahārāja Parīkṣit discuss the topic of atonement for one’s sins. The conclusion is that although such atonement may counteract the reactions to sinful activities, only pure devotional service can remove both the reactions as well as the sinful desires from the heart.

In the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* it is described that Sanātana Gosvāmī came to *Jagannātha Purī* for a second meeting with the Lord. He was well received by the associates of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu with friendship, mercy and respect. The Lord and His associates were sitting on a raised platform, and although Sanātana Gosvāmī and Haridāsa Ṭhākura were invited to sit with

them, they did not do so, considering that they were very fallen due to their previous connection with the *yavanas*. Even though they had taken up devotional service they never forgot their previous background. A low birth or a fallen background is an impetus to cultivate humility.

## Chapter 6 – How to Discharge Devotional Service

In this chapter we find a description of the sixty four limbs of *bhakti*. One can either practice some or all and in this way one can cultivate natural attraction to continue serving Kṛṣṇa in that way. Special importance is given to the five principle limbs of *bhakti*. It is stated in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* that if any one of these five is performed even a little, there is rapid progress made in the development of *Kṛṣṇa prema*.

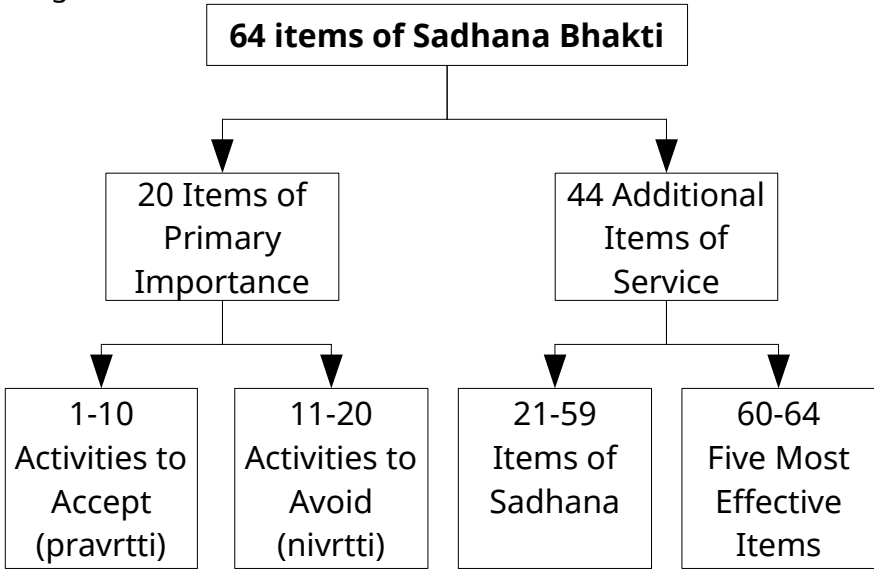
<b>Topics</b>	<b>A list of the sixty-four limbs of <i>Bhakti</i></b> <b>Chapter Six – Eastern Division, 2nd Wave, <i>Sādhana Bhakti</i></b> Chapter 2-14 <i>Vaidhi-sādhana Bhakti</i>		
A list of the 64 limbs of <i>Bhakti</i> is provided. The <i>Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu</i> divides them into categories	The <i>Waves of Devotion</i> provides a useful diagram	The Table of Contents of the <i>Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu</i> by Bhanu Swami provides a basis for the 44 additional items of service.	5 principle limbs of <i>bhakti</i> are introduced. They will be more elaborately described in chapters 12 and 13.

In his book the *Waves of Devotion*, Dhanurdhara Swami has done a tremendous amount of work in analyzing *The Nectar of Devotion* based on studies of the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* and commentaries, as well as deep reflection on their meanings. I am simply taking advantage of his work. The diagram below is his. This chapter of *The Nectar of Devotion* provides a list of the sixty four limbs of *bhakti*, highlighting some as the most important ones. Dhanurdhara Mahārāja has organized this list in charts and also provides more detailed information from the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. I have also used the translation of the

*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* by Bhanu Swami. They are giants; in this book a dwarf is trying to capture the moon.

## The 64 limbs of *sādhana-bhakti*

Diagram 1



### 10 activities to accept:

1. *Śrī Guru-padāśraya* – taking shelter of the lotus feet of Sri Guru
2. *Śrī Kṛṣṇa-dīkṣā-śikṣādi* – receiving initiation and spiritual instruction
3. *Prītipūrvaka-guru-sevā* – serving Sri Guru with love
4. *Sādhū-mārgānusāraḥ* – following the path of the *sādhus*
5. *Bhajana-rīti-nīti-praśna* – questions about the procedures of *bhajana*
6. *Kṛṣṇārthe-akhila-bhoga-tyāga* – renunciation of all material enjoyment for the sake of Kṛṣṇa
7. *Tīrtha-vāsaḥ tīrtha-māhātmya-śravaṇam ca* – to live in a sacred place and to hear the greatness of such places

8. *Svabhakti-nirvāhānurūpa bhojanādi-svīkāram* – accepting only what is required for the sustenance of *bhakti*
9. *Śrī Ekādaśī-vrata* – observing vow on *ekādaśī*
10. *aśvattha-tulasī-dhātṛī-go-brāhmaṇa-vaiṣṇava-sammānam* – offering respect to the *aśvattha*, *tulasī*, *āmalaka* tree, the cows, the *brāhmaṇas* and the *vaiṣṇavas*

### 10 activities to avoid:

11. *asādhu-saṅga-tyāgaḥ* – giving up the association of non-devotees
12. *bahu-śiṣya-karaṇa-tyāgaḥ* – to give up the desire to make many disciples
13. *bahvārambha tyāgaḥ* – giving up too many undertakings
14. *bahu-śāstra-vyākhyā-vivādādi tyāgaḥ* – renouncing the study of many scriptures in order to make novel explanations and arguments
15. *vyavahāre kārpaṇya-tyāga* – giving up miserly behaviour
16. *śoka-krodhādi-tyāgaḥ* – giving up lamentation, anger, etc.
17. *devatāntara-nindā-tyāgaḥ* – giving up blasphemy and disrespect of other devatās
18. *prāṇimātre udvega-tyāgaḥ* – giving up harassment of other living entities
19. *sevāparādha-nāmāparādha-tyāgaḥ* – giving up all offences in regards to *seva* and *nama*
20. *guru-kṛṣṇa-bhakta-nindā sahana tyāgaḥ* – one should not tolerate blasphemy of Sri Guru, Sri Kṛṣṇa, or the devotees

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu-bindu*]

### 44 additional items of service:

1. Whole body – 11 items
2. Voice – 5 items
3. Taste – 2 items
4. Smell – 1 item
5. Touch – 1 item
6. Sight – 2 items
7. Hearing – 1 item

- |                |   |         |
|----------------|---|---------|
| 8. Mind        | - | 9 items |
| 9. Tadiya seva | - | 4 items |
| 10. Mixed      | - | 3 items |
| 11. Principle  | - | 5 items |

Diagram 1 was made by Dhanurdhara Swami

The list of 44 additional items is based on the table of contents of Bhanu Swami's translation of the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*.

We can see how *sādhana bhakti* is implementing *Nārada-pañcarātra* verse, *hṛṣīkeṇa hṛṣīkeśa-sevanam bhaktir ucyate* to engage the senses in pleasing the senses of the Lord.

In the *Bhagavad-gītā* 15.7, with the words, *manaḥ saṣṭhānīndriyāṇi*, Kṛṣṇa counts the mind among the senses.

## Five principle limbs of *Bhakti*

These five limbs of devotional service are the best of all. Even a slight performance of any of them awakens love for Kṛṣṇa

*sādhu-saṅga, nāma-kīrtana, bhāgavata-śravaṇa*  
*mathurā-vāsa, śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana*

*sādhu-saṅga*—association with devotees; *nāma-kīrtana*—chanting the holy name; *bhāgavata-śravaṇa*—hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; *mathurā-vāsa*—living at Mathurā; *śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana*—worshipping the Deity with faith and veneration.

One should

1. associate with devotees,
2. chant the holy name of the Lord,
3. hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*,
4. reside at Mathurā and
5. worship the Deity with faith and veneration

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 22.128]

(Additional reference)

## **Chapter 7 – Evidence Regarding Devotional Principles**

In this chapter some of the sixty four limbs of *bhakti* are described in more detail and special attention has been given to *Guru-tattva*. Many other important elements of spiritual life are highlighted, such as chanting, following *ekādaśī*, and residing in a sacred place. The rationale behind the injunction not to make many disciples, or read many books or construct temples, is also explained. Straightforwardness in ordinary dealings, having a compassionate *vaiṣṇava* mood of not giving pain to any living entity and demigod worship is also discussed.

<b>Topics</b>	<b><i>Aṅgas of Bhakti</i> explained in more detail</b> <b>Chapter Seven – Eastern Division, 2nd Wave, <i>Sādhana Bhakti</i></b> Chapter 2-14 <i>Vaidhi-sādhana Bhakti</i>		
64 <i>aṅgas</i> : First 3 most important on <i>guru-tattva</i> . This remains the foundation on an ongoing basis throughout our spiritual life	Accepting the shelter of a bona fide spiritual master. Accepting <i>dīkṣā</i> and <i>śikṣā</i> from him. Serving the spiritual master with faith and confidence	Following in the footsteps of saintly persons. Those who don't follow guru, <i>sādhu</i> and <i>śāstra</i> and concoct their own way of <i>bhakti</i> are <i>sahajiyās</i>	Rūpa Gosvāmī points out that Buddhists are not devotees of Lord Buddha. They are not following revealed scriptures
<p>Other <i>aṅgas</i>:</p> <p>Enquiring about eternal religious principles. Giving up anything material for Kṛṣṇa's satisfaction. Residing in a sacred place. Accepting only what is necessary. Fasting on <i>ekādaśī</i>. Offering respect to Banyan trees. Giving up the company of non-devotees. Not accepting unfit disciples. Not constructing many temples. Not reading too many books. Straightforwardness in ordinary dealings. Equilibrium in loss and gain. To not neglect the demigods. To not give pain to any living entity.</p>			

We still refer to the 64 limbs of *bhakti*. From the first 20, the first 3 are most important.

## **Guru-tattva**

1. Accepting the shelter of a bona fide spiritual master  
*ādau guru-pādāśraya* – taking shelter of the lotus feet of a bona fide spiritual master. This is not just a matter of choosing a spiritual master and then surrendering to him. Rather, it is surrender on an ongoing basis, surrender at every moment after that first step towards surrender. In this way surrender to *guru* remains with us at every moment and becomes the very foundation of our spiritual life
2. Accepting initiation from the spiritual master and receiving instructions from him
3. Serving the spiritual master with faith and confidence

*yasya deve parā bhaktir  
 yathā deve tathā gurau  
 tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ  
 prakāśante mahātmanaḥ*

Unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master, all the imports of *Vedic* knowledge are automatically revealed.

[Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad 6.23]

## Definitions of an *Ācārya*

### From the *Vāyu Purāṇa*

“In the *Vāyu Purāṇa* an *Ācārya* is defined as one who knows the import of all *Vedic* literature, explains the purpose of the *Vedas*, abides by their rules and regulations, and teaches his disciples to act in the same way.”

[*Vāyu Purāṇa*,  
 Quoted in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Ādi 1.46, purport*]

## From the *Upadeśāmṛta*, Nectar of Instruction

*vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam  
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam  
etān vegān yo viśaheta dhīraḥ  
sarvām apīmām pṛthivīm sa śiṣyāt*

A sober person who can tolerate the urge to speak, the mind's demands, the actions of anger and the urges of the tongue, belly and genitals is qualified to make disciples all over the world.

[*The Nectar of Instruction*, 1]

## Different Roles of *Guru*

I first saw the concept of breaking up the identity of the *Guru* into different roles in a book called, "As Good as God", by Mans Broo, a devotee scholar known as Brighu dāsa. I have added to these roles in the list below:

- Direct representative of Kṛṣṇa (*sākṣād-dharitvena*)
- External manifestation of the Supersoul
- Formal connection with the *paramparā*
- Gives *Mantra* (*dīkṣā*)
- Spiritual Father ("My dear spiritual sons and daughters...") The Veda is mother, and the initiation is the second birth
- Ever well-wisher
- Our best friend (*suhṛdaḥ suhṛdam*)
- Absolute authority (*guru-avajñā*)
- Only way to attain Kṛṣṇa (*yasyāprasādān na gatiḥ kuto 'pi*)
- Captain of the boat of transcendental knowledge (*śikṣā*)

## No need for initiation?

“One does not have to undergo initiation or execute the activities required before initiation. One simply has to vibrate the holy name with his lips. Thus even a man in the lowest class [*caṇḍāla*] can be delivered.”

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 15.108*]

(Additional reference)

This statement of the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* may appear confusing and contradictory to the instructions given by Rūpa Gosvāmī. The point that is being made in the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* is that the holy name is not dependent on any other means; the chanting of the holy name in itself can award full perfection in spiritual life. However, in the purport to this *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* verse we find that the *ācāryas* nonetheless stress the need for initiation. Without initiation it will be difficult to continue chanting the holy name. Initially we have no taste for chanting, but the relationship with the spiritual master gives us the inspiration to go on chanting. We should also note that at the time of initiation in Lord Caitanya’s *saṅkīrtana* movement, the spiritual master gives *hari-nāma*, the holy name (and then also *gāyatrī*, which is the *Vedic dīkṣā*). At this time he is not only giving *hari-nāma*, but also his blessings, which attracts the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. The spiritual master has purchased Kṛṣṇa by his devotional service, so these blessings are very powerful.

In the *Vedic* context *dīkṣā* or initiation means receiving the *gāyatrī mantra*, the 18-syllable *Gopāla Mantra*.

Bhakti Pramode Puri Maharaja writes, “All these statements show that the *Mahā-mantra* of the Holy Names is more powerful than any other *mantra*, including the 18-syllable *Gopāla mantra*. One who has initiation in the *mantra* is given the right to practice the *vidhi-mārga*, whereas someone who chants the *Mahā-mantra*, whether initiated or not, is given the qualifications for all situations in life. In particular, a practitioner of the

*rāgānuga* path quickly attains his desired goal in Vraja by taking shelter of the worship of the Holy Name. For one on the *vidhi-mārga* or *arcana-mārga*, the ecstatic mood of Vraja is vague and distant. Spiritual practices on the *vidhi-mārga* have no power to bestow this mood. *Vidhi-mārga vraja-bhāva pāite nāhi śakti.*"

[*The Art of sādhana, Chapter IX, Ways of Chanting*]  
(Additional reference)

"One who accepts himself as a spiritual master, has a fool for a disciple."

[HH Jayadvaita Swami]  
(Additional reference)

## *Sahajiyās*

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes: "Those who do not strictly follow the principles of revealed scriptures are generally called *sahajiyās*—those who have imagined everything to be cheap, who have their own concocted ideas, and who do not follow the scriptural injunctions. Such persons are simply creating disturbances in the discharge of devotional service."

[*The Nectar of Devotion, page 61*]

## *Buddha, an Incarnation of the Lord*

The Buddhists or other religionists who do not care for revealed scriptures sometimes say that there are many devotees of Lord Buddha who show devotional service to Lord Buddha. Rūpa Gosvāmī doesn't accept them as devotees, because they are not following the *Vedas*. Therefore they are atheists!

[Refer to *The Nectar of Devotion, page 61*]

## **Residing in a sacred place**

*One who resides in Dvārakā for six months, one month, even a fortnight, awaits elevation to Vaikuṅṭha-loka.*

The Demigods see the residents of *Jagannātha Purī* as four-handed.

[Refer to *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 62]

## Chanting a minimum of sixteen rounds daily

“It may be said that one should chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* at least one hundred thousand times daily on his beads. But if this is not possible, then one must minimize his chanting according to his own capacity. Generally, we recommend our disciples to chant at least sixteen rounds on their *japa* beads daily, and this should be completed. But if one is not even able to chant sixteen rounds, then he must make it up the next day. He must be sure to keep his vow. If he does not strictly follow this out, then he is sure to be negligent. That is offensive in the service of the Lord. If we encourage offences, we shall not be able to make progress in devotional service. It is better if one fixes up a regulative principle according to his own ability and then follows that vow without fail. That will make him advanced in spiritual life.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 63]

In the *Caitanya-bhāgavata*, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu said he would only accept offerings from a '*lakḥpati*'. This is a term that was used to describe a wealthy man, one who has one hundred thousand rupees. Then he qualified what he meant. A *lakḥpati*, was one who chanted a hundred thousand names daily, i.e. sixty-four rounds. Śrīla Prabhupāda, to accommodate the modern man, brought it down to sixteen rounds, with the same benefit of going back to Godhead. He could lower the threshold because he had purchased Kṛṣṇa with his extraordinary devotional service.

The provision that one may carry rounds forward to the next day is meant for real emergency situations and should not become part of regular practice.

Once we take a vow we must maintain it. Therefore we practice the standard required for initiation for a while before making the vow.

## **Ekādaśī**

*hari-vāsara-sammāno, yathā brahma-vaivarte  
sarva-pāpa-praśamanaṁ puṇyam ātyantikam tathā  
govinda-smāraṇaṁ nṛṇām ekadaśyām upoṣaṇam*

*Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa*: “Ekādaśī destroys all a person’s sin, bestows limitless piety, and causes them to remember Govinda.”

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.109]

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, “The basic principle is not just to fast but to increase one’s faith and love for Govinda, or Kṛṣṇa. The real reason for observing fasting on *Ekādaśī* is to minimize the demands of the body and to engage our time in the service of the Lord by chanting or performing similar service. The best thing to do on fasting days is to remember the pastimes of Govinda and to hear His holy name constantly.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 63]

## **Worship of sacred trees**

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes that in the *Skanda Purāṇa* it is directed that a devotee should offer water to the *tulasī* plant and *āmalaka* trees. The worship of *tulasī* is a regular practice among *vaiṣṇavas*. Practically every temple in Vṛndāvana has a *tulasī stambha*, a raised platform for *tulasī-devī*. In Deity worship *tulasī* leaves are used. As mentioned in the *Padma Purāṇa*, the Lord will not accept any offering without a *tulasī* leaf. *Gauḍīya vaiṣṇavas* also chant their *japa* on *tulasī* beads. Haridāsa Ṭhākura, the *Nāmācārya*, was chanting his three hundred thousand names daily seated in front of *tulasī*.

## Worship of *tulasī*

1. Worship of *tulasī* is the essence of all devotional activities.
2. The leaves, flowers, roots, bark, branches, trunk, and shade of *tulasī-devī* are all spiritual.
3. One who with devotion applies the paste of *tulasī* wood to the Deity of Kṛṣṇa will always live close to Kṛṣṇa.
4. One who puts mud from the base of the *tulasī* tree on his body and worships the Deity of Lord Kṛṣṇa gets the results of one hundred days worship each day.
5. *Puspasara* – One who offers a *tulasī mañjarī* to Lord Kṛṣṇa gets the benefit of offering all other varieties of flowers, and goes to the abode of Kṛṣṇa.
6. *Visvapavani* – One who sees or comes near a house or garden where the *tulasī* plant is present gets rid of all his sinful reactions, including that of killing a *brāhmaṇa*.
7. *Kṛṣṇajīvani* – Lord Kṛṣṇa happily lives in the house, town, or forest where *tulasī-devī* is present.
8. A house where *tulasī-devī* is present never falls on bad times, and it becomes purer than all holy places.
9. The fragrance of *tulasī-devī* purifies all who smell it.
10. Lord Kṛṣṇa and all the demigods live in a house where mud from the base of the *tulasī* tree is found.
11. Without *tulasī* leaves, Lord Kṛṣṇa does not like to accept flowers, food, or sandalwood paste.
12. One who worships Lord Kṛṣṇa daily with *tulasī* leaves attains the results of all kinds of austerity, charity, and sacrifice. In fact, he has no other duties to perform, and he has realized the essence of the scriptures.

[*Padma Purāṇa*]

## Worship of *Tamāla* and *Kadamba*

*Gauḍīya vaiṣṇavas* give special importance to the *Tamāla* tree. Having a blackish colour, it represents Kṛṣṇa. *Tamāla* trees are rare and Śrīla Prabhupāda was very pleased that there was a *Tamāla* tree on the land that was donated for the construction of

the Kṛṣṇa Balarāma temple. He gave strict orders that the tree could not be cut and Surabhi Swami, the architect, incorporated the tree in to the design. In his latter days Śrīla Prabhupāda would sit under the *Tamāla* tree in Vṛndāvana.

In the same way the *Kadamba* tree, because of its golden colour, represents Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

## Worship of *Aśvattha* or Banyan

In the 10<sup>th</sup> chapter of the *Bhagavad-gītā* a list of extraordinary manifestations of opulences (*vibhūti*) in this world is provided: "Of the *Ādityas* I am Viṣṇu, of lights I am the radiant sun, of the *Maruts* I am Marīci, and among the stars I am the moon. Of the *Vedas* I am the *Sāma Veda*; of the demigods I am Indra, the king of heaven; of the senses I am the mind; and in living beings I am the living force [consciousness]. Of all the *Rudras* I am Lord Śiva, of the *Yakṣas* and *Rākṣasas* I am the Lord of wealth [Kuvera], of the *Vasus* I am fire [*Agni*], and of mountains I am Meru. Of priests, O Arjuna, know Me to be the chief, Bṛhaspati. Of generals I am Kārttikeya, and of bodies of water I am the ocean. Of the great sages I am Bṛḡu; of vibrations I am the transcendental *om*. Of sacrifices I am the chanting of the holy names [*japa*], and of immovable things I am the Himālayas. Of trees I am the *pippala* (Banyan) tree."

[*Bhagavad-gītā* 10.21-26]

## Worship of *āmalaka* trees

Once when all the gods and sages (*ṛṣi*) had assembled at the *Tīrtha* of Prabhāsa, Devī, who is Śiva's *śakti*, wanted to worship Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī, who is Viṣṇu's *śakti*, wanted to worship Śiva. Deeply touched their eyes welled over with tears of joy. Where the tears fell to the ground, *āmalaka* trees grew. "... they were born from tears and all the Gods and sages saw Brahma, Viṣṇu and Śiva in the *āmalaka* tree."

[*Brhad-dharma Purāṇa*, XII. 1-35]  
(Additional reference)

The *Skanda Purāṇa* (*Vaiṣṇava-khaṇḍa*, XII. 9-23) describes the *āmalaka* tree. It was the first tree grown in the universe. Viṣṇu is seated at the bottom, Brahma above and Śiva higher still. The sun is in its branches, the gods are in their ramifications and in its leaves, flowers and fruits. Thus the *āmalaka* is the support of all gods. There is one *āmalakī ekādaśī* in the month of *Phālguna*.

### *Dhātrī* (*āmalakī*)

Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī mentioned that the author of *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, always had the *dhātrī* garland round his neck. But the use of the *dhātrī* garland is no more in use amongst the followers of the *Gauḍīya* School of Śrī Caitanya.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.123,  
Commentary Jīva Gosvāmī. B.M. edition]  
(Additional reference)

## Not making many disciples

*na śiṣyān anubadhñīta*  
*granthān naivābhyased bahūn*  
*na vyākhyām upayuñjīta*  
*nārambhān ārabhet kvacit*

A *sannyāsī* must not present allurements of material benefits to gather many disciples, nor should he unnecessarily read many

books or give discourses as a means of livelihood. He must never attempt to increase material opulences unnecessarily.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.13.8]

“One who has accepted the *sannyāsa* order of life is forbidden to accept as a disciple anyone who is not fit. A *sannyāsī* should first of all examine whether a prospective student is sincerely seeking Kṛṣṇa consciousness. If he is not, he should not be accepted. However, Lord Caitanya’s causeless mercy is such that He advised all bona-fide spiritual masters to speak about Kṛṣṇa consciousness everywhere. Therefore, in the line of Lord Caitanya even the *sannyāsīs* can speak about Kṛṣṇa consciousness everywhere, and if someone is seriously inclined to become a disciple, the *sannyāsī* always accepts him. The one point is that without increasing the number of disciples, there is no propagation of the cult of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Therefore, sometimes even at a risk, a *sannyāsī* in the line of Caitanya Mahāprabhu may accept even a person who is not thoroughly fit to become a disciple. Later on, by the mercy of such a bona-fide spiritual master, the disciple is gradually elevated. However, if one increases the number of disciples simply for some prestige or false honour, he will surely fall down in the matter of executing Kṛṣṇa consciousness.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 65-66]

## Not reading many books

“Similarly, a bona fide spiritual master has no business reading many books simply to show his proficiency or to get popularity by lecturing in many places.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 65]

When Lord Caitanya travelled to East Bengal he met with Tapana Miśra, who had become confused about the goal of life due to reading too many books, which apparently offered different views.

## Not constructing temples

“So a bona-fide spiritual master should not personally take any responsibility for constructing temples, but if someone has money and wants to spend it in the service of Kṛṣṇa, an *Ācārya* like Rūpa Gosvāmī may utilize the devotee’s money to construct a nice, costly temple for the service of the Lord. Unfortunately, it happens that someone who is not fit to become a spiritual master may approach wealthy persons to contribute for temple constructions. If such money is utilized by unqualified spiritual masters for living comfortably in costly temples without actually doing any preaching work, this is not acceptable. In other words, a spiritual master needn’t be very enthusiastic for constructing temple buildings simply in the name of so-called spiritual advancement. Rather, his first and foremost activity should be to preach. In this connection, Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Gosvāmī Mahārāja recommended that a spiritual master print books. If one has money, instead of constructing costly temples, one should spend his money for the publication of authorized books in different languages for propagating the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 66]

## Straightforwardness in ordinary dealings

Yudhiṣṭhira observed how the influence of the age of *Kali* began: “All ordinary transactions and dealings became polluted with cheating, even between friends. And in familial affairs, there was always misunderstanding between fathers, mothers and sons, between well-wishers, and between brothers. Even between husband and wife there was always strain and quarrel.”

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.14.4]

One of the *hṛdaya-daurbalyam* or weaknesses of heart, is *kuṭi-nāṭi*, which means duplicity or to pretend. It is explained that this occurs when a business mentality, the tendency to exploit and

manipulate circumstances for personal gain, enters into one's dealings. This is an obstacle to spiritual advancement.

## Worship of Demigods

Śrīla Prabhupāda said, "One should not neglect to offer due respect to the demigods. One may not be a devotee of demigods, but that does not mean that he should be disrespectful to them."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 67]

The demigods are respectable superiors within the universe and must be recognized respectfully. However, a *vaiṣṇava* will never accept *prasādam* which has been offered to a demigod, unless it is similar to the practice in the temple of Lord Jagannātha in Purī, where the *bhoga* is offered to Viṣṇu first and then that Viṣṇu *prasādam* is offered to the demigods. Such remnants can be taken by the *vaiṣṇavas*.

### Evidence from *Hari-nāma-cintāmaṇi*

"Since it is obligatory for the householder to worship the demigods according to his caste, he will worship the demigods and forefathers by offering them the remnants from their Lord, Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, when the devotee sees the *mūrti* of a demigod, he will pay respects to the demigod, seeing the demigod as a *Vaiṣṇava*. However, the devotee will not accept the *prasāda* remnants of an offering that a *māyāvādī* has made to Viṣṇu. Because the *māyāvādī's* chanting and worship are both offensive, the Lord never accepts his offering. Also, to accept offerings made directly to the demigods is an offence to Viṣṇu and obstructs the path of pure devotional service. But by worshipping Kṛṣṇa, the real devotee will give the demigods the Lord's *prasāda* out of respect. Such worship, and receiving such *prasāda*, is not offensive. In this way, the devotee avoids the second offence in chanting the name, and by continuing this process correctly, he achieves love of God."

[Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, *Hari-nāma-cintāmaṇi*, Chapter 5]  
(Additional reference)

## Lord Kṛṣṇa's views in the *Bhagavad-gītā*

*kāmais tais tair hṛta-jñānāḥ  
prapadyante 'nya-devatāḥ  
taṁ taṁ niyamam āsthāya  
prakṛtyā niyatāḥ svayā*

Those whose intelligence has been stolen by material desires surrender unto demigods and follow the particular rules and regulations of worship according to their own natures.

[*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.20]

*antavat tu phalaṁ teṣāṁ  
tad bhavaty alpa-medhasām  
devān deva-yajo yānti  
mad-bhaktā yānti mām api*

Men of small intelligence worship the demigods, and their fruits are limited and temporary. Those who worship the demigods go to the planets of the demigods, but My devotees ultimately reach My supreme planet.

[*Bhagavad-gītā* 7.23]

Rūpa Gosvāmī's statement from the *Viṣṇu-rahasya*  
*viṣṇu-rahasye ca*

*āliṅganam varam manye vyāla-vyāghra-jalaukasām  
na saṅgaḥ śalya-yuktānām nānā-devaika-sevinām*

Also from the *Viṣṇu-rahasya*: I consider it preferable to embrace a snake, a tiger or a crocodile, than to associate with those who worship *devatās*. They are bearers of spears piercing me with their deviant desires.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.112]

So in conclusion a *vaiṣṇava* must respect the demigods, but worship is reserved exclusively for the Supreme Lord.

## Not giving pain to any living entity

This is the statement from *Mahābhārata*: "A person who does not disturb or cause painful action in the mind of any living entity, who treats everyone just like a loving father does his children, whose heart is so pure, certainly very soon becomes favoured by the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

[Quoted from *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 67]

## Chapter 8 – Offences to be avoided

There are lists provided in *The Nectar of Devotion* of offences to be avoided. In this chapter we focus on *nāma-aparādha* (offences to the holy name) and *sevā-aparādha* (offences to the Deity).

There is reference in *The Nectar of Devotion* about the need to worship Gaṇapati as the remover of obstacles. However, Śrīla Prabhupāda makes it clear that worship of Gaṇapati is not required.

<b>Topics</b>	<b>A list of both <i>nāma-aparādha</i> and <i>sevā-aparādha</i> has been provided</b>	
	<b>Chapter Eight – Eastern Division, 2nd Wave, <i>sādhana Bhakti</i></b>	
	Chapter 2-14 <i>Vaidhi-sādhana Bhakti</i>	
2 Categories of offences	<i>nāma-aparādha</i> – offences to the holy name	<i>Sevā-aparādha</i> – offences to the Deity
Also in this chapter:	A controversial statement about Gaṇapati worship being compulsory	

There are two categories of offences

### ***Nāma-aparādha* – offences to the Holy name**

A person who commits all offences is freed from all those offences by taking complete shelter of Hari. But the two-legged animal who commits offence against Hari is freed from those offences by taking shelter of Hari's name. However, though the

name is the friend of all, by committing an offence against the name, a person falls to the lower regions.

[*Padma Purāṇa*,  
Quoted in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.119-120]

*bahu janma kare yadi śravaṇa, kīrtana  
tabu ta' nā pāya kṛṣṇa-pade prema-dhana*

*bahu*—many; *janma*—births; *kare*—does; *yadi*—if; *śravaṇa*—hearing; *kīrtana*—chanting; *tabu*—still; *ta'*—in spite of; *nā*—does not; *pāya*—get; *kṛṣṇa-pade*—unto the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa; *prema-dhana*—love of Godhead.

If one is infested with the ten offences in the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *Mahā-mantra*, despite his endeavour to chant the holy name for many births, he will not get the love of Godhead that is the ultimate goal of this chanting.

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 8.16]

## ***Sevā-aparādha* – offences to the Deity**

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī makes an important point about *sevā-aparādha* (offences to the Deity) by quoting the *Padma Purāṇa*: “One should not allow himself to become neglectful in Deity worship, thinking that the holy name will deliver him from his offences. Chanting the holy name will deliver one from all offences, but if one wilfully employs the name in this way he offends the name and thus neutralizes its effect. An offender to the holy name has no chance of deliverance.”

## **The effect of *nāma-aparādha* & *sevā-aparādha***

“The *anarthas* arising from offences arise specifically from the *nāma-aparādhas*. The *sevā-aparādhas* (offences in Deity worship such as entering the temple with shoes on or in a vehicle) are in themselves not a direct cause of *anarthas*, for *sevā-aparādhas* do

not usually have effect on the real devotee, because, by constant service, by chanting the holy name and by recitation of specific verses that have the power to cancel the effect of any *sevā-aparādha*, these *anarthas* cannot grow. However, if one is careless, thinking he can take advantage of the protection afforded by the above measures, his *sevā-aparādha* becomes *nāma-aparādha*, an *anartha* that will obstruct his progress. He is guilty of the *nāma-aparādha* of committing sin on the strength of the holy name."

[*Mādhurya Kaḍambinī, Third Nectar Shower*]  
(Additional reference)

## The worship of Gaṇapati

After having read in the previous chapter that a *vaiṣṇava* should not worship demigods, we find a statement in this chapter that a devotee should worship Gaṇapati.

"One should begin the worship of the demigod Gaṇapati, who drives away all impediments in the execution of devotional service. In the *Brahma-saṁhitā* it is stated that Gaṇapati worships the lotus feet of Lord Nṛsiṁhadeva and in that way has become auspicious for the devotees in clearing out all impediments. Therefore, all devotees should worship Gaṇapati."

[*The Nectar of Devotion, page 71*]

This instruction is there in *The Nectar of Devotion*, but in letters and conversations Śrīla Prabhupāda makes it clear that such worship should not be implemented.

In a letter to Sivananda:

So far worshipping Gaṇeśa is concerned, that is not necessary. Not that it should be done on a regular basis. If you like you can pray to Gaṇapati for removing all impediments on the path of Krishna Consciousness. That you can do if you like.

[Letter to Sivananda dāsa, August 25, 1971]  
(Additional reference)

And in a conversation with Gurukripa:

Prabhupāda: Kṛṣṇa worship, everyone. Just like we worship also ordinary man if it gives us facility to worship Kṛṣṇa. We go to somebody and worship him, flatter him, because he will give some money, and it will be engaged in Kṛṣṇa's service. The man is not worshipable, but he will help us to worship Kṛṣṇa. Thereby he will be helped and we will be also helped, and Kṛṣṇa will be satisfied. Kṛṣṇa will be satisfied that "My devotee has brought some money from this rascal. All right." That is... (laughter) So Gaṇapati is also devotee. So Gaṇapati, it is not required, but sometimes we do. Just like *gopīs*, they worshipped Goddess Durgā, Kātyāyanī. They did not require, but the social system is that. But they asked that Mother Kātyāyanī, give us the opportunity to have Kṛṣṇa as our husband. The aim is Kṛṣṇa. Generally, they go to worship Devī Durgā for asking material benefit. *Dhanam dehi rūpam dehi yaśo dehi*, the things which we want in material... But the *gopīs*, they do not go for any material things. For Kṛṣṇa. Similarly, we can go to any demigod. Why Gaṇapati? Everyone. But our prayer should be, "Please give us Kṛṣṇa." Then it is correct.

Gurukṛpā: When we were just travelling this last time and collecting, Śrīla Prabhupāda, everyday we were offering some incense to Gaṇeśa, and this prayer in the *Brahma-saṁhitā, yat-pāda-pallava...*

Prabhupāda: *Pallava-yugam vinidhāya kumbha...*

Gurukṛpā: We were saying this, saying, "Give us facility to collect nice *lakṣmī* to use to build the temple in Vṛndāvana."

Yaśodānandana: To build the temple for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in Vṛndāvana.

Prabhupāda: Yes. That is good. Whatever possible facility is available from any person, we beg for it for Kṛṣṇa's service, not for our personal benefit. [break]... they forget Kṛṣṇa. They forget Kṛṣṇa. When they go to worship some other demigod, they

forget Kṛṣṇa, *kāmais tais tair hr̥ta-jñānāḥ* [*Bhagavad-gītā*. 7.20], because they have got so strong material desires that they forget Kṛṣṇa. That is harmful. *Antavat tu phalaṁ teṣāṁ* [*Bhagavad-gītā*. 7.23]. They get some benefit out of the demigod, but that will not stay. *Alpavat, er, antavat. Antavat tu phalaṁ teṣāṁ*. But if you take Kṛṣṇa, then it is not *antavat*, it will go on increasing. If you take to Kṛṣṇa consciousness, it will never end. It will increase. *Ānandāmbudhi-varধানam*, increasing. The ocean does not increase, but Kṛṣṇa consciousness is such a great ocean that it increases only. *Ānandāmbudhi-varধানam*.

[Conversation with Gurukripa, Jan 10, 1974]

(Additional reference)

In the following statement to Bhakta dāsa, a close friend of Gurukripa, Prabhupāda clearly says; “Concerning Gaṇeśa worship, it is not actually necessary for us. But, if someone has the sentiment for getting the blessing of Gaṇeśa to get large amounts of money for Kṛṣṇa’s service, then it is all right. But anyone who takes up this kind of worship must send me at least one hundred thousand dollars monthly – not less. If he cannot send this amount, he cannot do Gaṇeśa worship.”

[Letter of December 28, 1974 to Bhakta dāsa]

(Additional reference)

On the same day Śrīla Prabhupāda sent out a similar letter to various senior devotees to ensure that all confusion would be cleared up:

“I do not encourage you to worship this demigod, Gaṇeśa. It is not required; it is not necessary. Simply worship Kṛṣṇa. Perform nice devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. Then your lives will certainly become perfect. Of course if one has got some sentiment for achieving the blessings of Gaṇeśa for accumulating large sums of money to serve Kṛṣṇa, then he may perform this Gaṇeśa worship, privately, not making a public show. But first of all he must give me \$100,000 per month. Not a single farthing less. If he can supply this amount, \$100,000 per month, then he will be

allowed to do this *Gaṇeśa Pūjā*. Otherwise he should not do it. It will not be good. That is my order.”

[Letter of December 28, 1974]  
(Additional reference)

## Chapter 9 – Further Considerations of Devotional Principles

In this chapter more detail is provided about the sixty four limbs of *bhakti*. We should see how these limbs are part of a process of cultivation while we are in the conditioned stage, and part of an expression of pure devotional service in a liberated stage.

Topics	<b>More details about various <i>aṅgas</i></b> <b>Chapter Nine – Eastern Division, 2nd Wave, <i>sādhana bhakti</i></b> Chapter 2-14 <i>Vaidhi-sādhana Bhakti</i>		
Blasphemy	Must be able to defeat the opposing party by argument. If unable to defeat, then give up life or leave that place	To voluntarily give up one's life is not recommended for the followers of Lord Caitanya.	Makes one fall down bereft of pious credit
<i>Tilaka</i> and <i>Tulasī</i> beads	Delivered from sinful reactions. Attains <i>Kṛṣṇa-loka</i>	Dancing before the Deity	Burns up sinful reactions. Sinful reactions fly away like birds from a tree
Bowing down before the Deity	One who performs 10 horse sacrifices takes birth again By offering <i>praṇāmas</i> to Kṛṣṇa, no more birth	Circumambulating the temple at least 4 times	Has travelled all over the universe and has seen all the holy places where the Ganges flows
<i>Arcanā</i>	An editing mistake	<i>Saṅkīrtana</i>	By chanting one holy name one can be purified from more sins than one can commit

Seeing the deity (prison of mother's womb)	By <i>bhakti</i> there is relief from another birth	<i>Vijñapti</i>	Submission
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## Blasphemy

We should not tolerate criticism of the Lord or His devotee.

“Anyone who fails to leave the place where he hears criticism of the Supreme Lord or His faithful devotee will certainly fall down, bereft of his pious credit.”

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.74.40]

There are three ways of dealing with such insults. If someone is heard blaspheming by words:

1. one should be so expert that he can defeat the opposing party by argument.
2. If he is unable to defeat the opposing party, then the next step is that he should not just stand there meekly, but should give up his life.
3. The third process is followed if he is unable to execute the above-mentioned two processes, and this is that one must leave the place and go away.

If a devotee does not follow any of the above-mentioned three processes, he falls down from his position of devotion.

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 73]

In the *Bhāgavatam* it is mentioned how Dakṣa offended Lord Śiva. Dakṣa's daughter Sati, who was Lord Śiva's wife, then responded:

“If one hears an irresponsible person blaspheme the master and controller of religion, one should block his ears and go away if unable to punish him. But if one is able to kill, then one should

by force cut out the blasphemer's tongue and kill the offender, and after that one should give up his own life."

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 4.4.17]

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in the purport:

"If one is a *brāhmaṇa* he should not give up his body because by doing so he would be responsible for killing a *brāhmaṇa*; therefore a *brāhmaṇa* should leave the place or block his ears so that he will not hear the blasphemy. If one happens to be a *kṣatriya* he has the power to punish any man; therefore a *kṣatriya* should at once cut out the tongue of the vilifier and kill him. But as far as the *vaiśyas* and *śūdras* are concerned, they should immediately give up their bodies."

From this we can conclude how a *vaiṣṇava* should act. A *vaiṣṇava* is already a *brāhmaṇa* and must therefore follow the standard of the *brāhmaṇas*. A *kṣatriya* is not a self-appointed police-man, but rather, the ruler of a country or a village and as the authority he was authorized to mete out punishment according to the law of *dharma*. Currently we are ruled by the modern laws of the state. Even one with the nature of a *kṣatriya* cannot take the law into his own hands. He may be a *kṣatriya*, but he has no authority to punish, therefore he should simply leave.

Committing suicide is a very serious matter condemned as sinful in *Vedic* literature. If it is nonetheless recommended in *The Nectar of Devotion* and the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, then it must be understood that to engage in or even simply witness blasphemy of the Lord or His devotees is very detrimental and will have very serious implications. The Lord Himself is greatly displeased with such blasphemy. Considering the cultural context and modern law, there is no option for *vaiśyas* and *śūdras* to give up their bodies. They should simply follow the policy of blocking the ears and leaving the place. The followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu follow His example, *nāhaṁ vipro na ca nara-patir nāpi vaiśyo na śūdro*, which means I am not a *brāhmaṇa*, *kṣatriya*, *vaiśya* or *śūdra*. Therefore the followers of Mahāprabhu also simply leave

the place of blasphemy. This is confirmed in the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* which demonstrates the conduct of Mahāprabhu's followers. When Haridāsa Ṭhākura visited the house of Hiranya and Govardhana Majumadāra, Gopāla Cakravartī strongly blasphemed Haridāsa. The *vaiṣṇavas* protested and left, and Hiranya and Govardhana who were the offender's employers, immediately dismissed him.

## **Tilaka and tulasī beads**

The *Padma Purāṇa* also mentions, "A person whose body is decorated with the pulp of sandalwood, with paintings of the holy name of the Lord, is delivered from all sinful reactions, and after his death he goes directly to *Kṛṣṇa-loka* to live in association with the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

[Quoted in *Nectar of Devotion*, page 74]

"The servants of Yama will not touch those who have the names of Hari on their body, who have *gopī-candana-tilaka* on their foreheads and who have *tulasī* beads on their chests."

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.123]

"He who has the syllables of Kṛṣṇa's names marked on the body with *candana*, after purifying this world, attains the planet of the Lord."

[From *Padma Purāṇa*,

Quoted in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.124]

## **Dancing before the Deity**

In the *Dvārakā-māhātmya* the importance of dancing before the Deity is stated by Lord Kṛṣṇa as follows: "A person who is in a jubilant spirit, who feels profound devotional ecstasy while dancing before Me, and who manifests different features of bodily expression can burn away all the accumulated sinful reactions he has stocked up for many, many thousands of years." In the same book there is a statement by Nārada

wherein he asserts, "From the body of any person who claps and dances before the Deity, showing manifestations of ecstasy, all the birds of sinful activities fly away upward." Just as by clapping the hands one can cause many birds to fly away, similarly the birds of all sinful activities which are sitting on the body can be made to fly away simply by dancing and clapping before the Deity of Kṛṣṇa.

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 75]

## Bowing down before the Deity

"The purificatory rites performed during ten horse sacrifices cannot equal even one *praṇāma* offered to Kṛṣṇa. A person who performs ten horse sacrifices takes birth again. The person offering *praṇāmas* to Kṛṣṇa does not take birth again."

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.129]

## Circumambulating the temple

It is stated in the *Skanda Purāṇa* that during this period, if someone circumambulates the temple of Viṣṇu at least four times, it is understood that he has travelled all over the universe. By such circumambulation, one is understood to have seen all the holy places where the Ganges water is flowing.

## Arcanā

In *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 77, there is an editing mistake under this topic.

Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

'In the Tenth Canto, eighty-first chapter, verse 19 of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, it is told how Sudāmā, an intimate friend of Kṛṣṇa's, while going to the house of a *brāhmaṇa*, murmured to himself, "Simply by worshipping Kṛṣṇa one can easily achieve all the results of heavenly opulence, liberation, supremacy over the planetary systems of the universe, all the opulences of this

material world and the mystic power of performing the *yoga* system.”

The events leading to Sudāmā’s murmuring this statement are as follows. Śrī Kṛṣṇa had ordered His friend Sudāmā to go to a *brāhmaṇa*’s house and ask for some food. The *brāhmaṇas* were performing a great sacrifice, and Śrī Kṛṣṇa told Sudāmā to plead with them that He and Balarāma were feeling hungry and needed some food. When Sudāmā went there, the *brāhmaṇas* refused to offer anything, but the wives of the *brāhmaṇas*, upon hearing that Śrī Kṛṣṇa wanted some foodstuff, immediately took many palatable dishes and went to offer them to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.’

When we actually check the relevant verse in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.81.19, we find that it describes instead the experience of Sudāmā, the *brāhmaṇa* who had lived in great poverty, and whose home had been transformed into a palace, and his wife into a queen. In short, somehow the stories got mixed up in *The Nectar of Devotion*.

## ***San̄kīrtana***

*nāmno hi yāvatī śaktiḥ  
pāpa-nirharaṇe hareḥ  
tāvat kartuṁ na śaknoti  
pātakam̄ pātakī naraḥ*

Simply by chanting one holy name of Hari, a sinful man can counteract the reactions to more sins than he is able to commit.

[*Bṛhad-viṣṇu Purāṇa*]

## **Seeing the deity**

It is stated in the *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya*, "Persons who are impelled by pure devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and who therefore go to see the Deities of Viṣṇu in the temple will

surely get relief from entering again into the prison house of a mother's womb."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 76]

The *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya* is a widely quoted scripture. It is quoted by Rūpa Gosvāmī in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, by Sanātana Gosvāmī in the *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*, by Jīva Gosvāmī in the *Ṣaṭ-sandarbhā*s and by Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī in the *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*. It is part of the *Nāradiya Purāṇa*, which has 25,000 śloka's. The *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya* consists of 1415 verses, over twenty chapters of the *Nāradiya Purāṇa*. This book covers the life of Dhruva Mahārāja in two chapters, and of Prahlāda Mahārāja in ten chapters. It is also a narration of the glories of *tulasī* and the *aśvattha* tree. An English translation has been done by Bhakti Prajnana Yati Maharaja, from the Caitanya Math in Māyāpur. The latest edition was published in 1999.

## **Vijñapti – submission**

"In the *Skanda Purāṇa* there is a statement about submission unto the lotus feet of the Lord. It is said there that those who are sober devotees can offer their submission to Kṛṣṇa in the following three ways: (1) *samprārthanātmikā*, very feelingly offering prayers; (2) *dainya-vodhikā*, humbly submitting oneself; (3) *lālasā-mayī*, desiring some perfectional stage. This desiring some perfectional stage in spiritual life is not sense gratification. When one realizes something of his constitutional relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, he understands his original position and wants to be reinstated in this position, either as friend, servant, parent or conjugal lover of Kṛṣṇa. That is called *lālasā-mayī*, or very eagerly desiring to go to one's natural position. This *lālasā-mayī* stage of submission comes in the stage of perfect liberation, which is technically called *svarūpa-siddhi*, when the living entity understands, by perfect

spiritual advancement and revelation, his original relationship with the Lord.”

[Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 81]

The *Skanda Purāṇa* has 81 000 verses and is known as a *Saiva Purāṇa*. However, it has a portion dedicated to *Vaiṣṇavism*. We find it quoted throughout the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*.

- *Samprārthanā* (prayers) are statements coming from persons who have not attained the stage of *bhāva*
- *Lālasā* statements come from persons who have attained *bhāva*

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.152,  
Commentary of Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura]

## An Example of *Samprārthanā-vijñapti*

from the *Padma Purāṇa*

“Just as the minds of young women are attracted to a young man and the minds of young men to a young woman, may my mind be attracted to You.”

[Quoted in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.153]

## *Lālasā* – Ardent desire

“O lotus-eyed, When will I dance on the bank of the Yamunā with tears in my eyes while singing Your names?”

Jīva Gosvāmī’s Commentary:

“Superficially, this appears to be a prayer (*samprārthanā*) of someone who has not manifested *bhāva* (since he is praying for it). *Samprārthanā* belongs to someone without the appearance of *bhāva*, whereas *lālasā* or prayers with intense longing belong to a person who has manifested *bhāva*. However, when a prayer (*samprārthanā*) is filled with a similar longing as in *bhāva*, although it is not yet attained, it is also called *lālasā*.”

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.156]

## Chapter 10 – Techniques of Hearing and Remembering

The discussion about the sixty four limbs of *bhakti* continues. The benefits of hearing about the Lord, expecting His mercy, remembering Him and meditating on Him are described in this chapter.

There is also mention of the story of the *brāhmaṇa* who cooks sweet rice for the Lord in meditation.

Topics	<b>Hearing and Remembering</b> <b>Chapter 10 – Eastern Division, 2nd Wave,</b> <b><i>sādhana Bhakti</i></b> Chapter 2-14 <i>Vaidhi-sādhana Bhakti</i>		
Hearing	Hear from authorities who are actually devotees of the Lord	Find superior engagement to give up an inferior one	In Kurukṣetra, a river of nectar is flowing from Kṛṣṇa's mouth
Expecting the Lord's mercy	One should not expect immediate relief from the reactions of past misdeeds	A pure devotee ready to undergo tribulations in devotional service, becomes qualified to enter the transcendental abode	<i>Dāya-bhāk</i> – the lawful inheritor
Remembering	Remembrance occurs if in the mind one establishes his continuous relationship with Kṛṣṇa	<i>Viṣṇu Purāṇa</i> By remembering the Supreme Personality of Godhead one is eligible for all kinds of auspiciousness	<i>Padma Purāṇa</i> By remembering the Supreme Lord at death or during life, one becomes free from all sinful reactions

Meditation is always on the form of Viṣṇu	<i>Nṛsiṃha Purāṇa</i> Meditation on the Lord's lotus feet is transcendental and delivers one from sinful reactions	<i>Viṣṇu Dharma</i> Constant Kṛṣṇa consciousness on transcendental qualities of Kṛṣṇa cleanses one from sinful reactions and one attains the Kingdom of God	<i>Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa</i> The <i>brāhmaṇa</i> who cooked sweet rice in meditation, tested with his finger to see if it had cooled down and burned his finger
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## Hearing

“It is the recommendation of Caitanya Mahāprabhu that one should simply hear from authorities who are actually devotees of the Lord. Hearing from professional men will not help. If we hear from those who are actually self-realized, then the nectarean rivers, like those which are flowing on the moon planet, will flow into our ears.

As stated in *Bhagavad-gītā*, ‘A materialistic person can give up his material hankerings only by becoming situated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.’ Unless one finds a superior engagement, he will not be able to give up his inferior engagement. In the material world everyone is engaged in the illusory activities of the inferior energy, but when one is given the opportunity to relish the activities of the superior energy performed by Kṛṣṇa, then he forgets all his lesser pleasures. When Kṛṣṇa speaks on the Battlefield of Kurukṣetra, to the materialistic person it appears that this is simply talk between two friends, but actually it is a river of nectar flowing down from the mouth of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Arjuna gave aural reception to such vibrations, and thus he became freed from all the illusions of material problems.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 90]

## Expecting the Lord's mercy

*tat te 'nukampāṁ su-samīkṣamāṇo  
bhuñjāna evātma-kṛtaṁ vipākam  
hṛd-vāg-vapurahir vidadhan namas te  
jīveta yo mukti-pade sa dāya-bhāk*

My dear Lord, one who earnestly waits for You to bestow Your causeless mercy upon him, all the while patiently suffering the reactions of his past misdeeds and offering You respectful obeisances with his heart, words and body, is surely eligible for liberation, for it has become his rightful claim.

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.14.8]

## Remembering

"In the neophyte stage one should always engage in hearing *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. This is called *śravaṇa-daśā*, the stage of hearing. By constantly hearing the transcendental holy name of Kṛṣṇa and hearing of His transcendental form, qualities and pastimes, one can attain to the stage of acceptance called *varaṇa-daśā*. When one attains this stage, he becomes attached to the hearing of *kṛṣṇa-kathā*. When one is able to chant in ecstasy, he attains the stage of *smaraṇāvasthā*, the stage of remembering. Recollection, absorption, meditation, constant remembrance and trance are the five items of progressive *kṛṣṇa-smaraṇa*. At first, remembrance of Kṛṣṇa may be interrupted at intervals, but later remembrance proceeds uninterrupted. When remembrance is uninterrupted, it becomes concentrated and is called meditation. When meditation expands and becomes constant, it is called *anusmṛti*. By uninterrupted and unceasing *anusmṛti* one enters the stage of *samādhi*, or spiritual trance. After *smaraṇa-daśā* or *samādhi* has fully developed, the soul comes to understand his original constitutional position. At that time he

can perfectly and clearly understand his eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa. That is called *sampatti-daśā*, the perfection of life.”

[*The Nectar of Instruction 8, purport*]

(Additional Reference)

## Meditation

Śrīla Prabhupāda elaborately explains the story of the South Indian *brāhmaṇa* who cooked for Kṛṣṇa in his mind.

“He would daily execute similar performances as his routine work, and he continued to do so for many, many years. Then one day the *brāhmaṇa* imagined in his meditations that he had prepared some sweet rice with milk and sugar and offered the preparation to the Deity. However, he was not very satisfied with the offering because the sweet rice had been prepared recently and it was still very hot. (This preparation, sweet rice, should not be taken hot. The cooler the sweet rice, the better its taste.) So because the sweet rice had been prepared by the *brāhmaṇa* very recently, he wanted to touch it so that he could know whether it was fit for eating by the Lord. As soon as he touched the sweet rice pot with his finger, he immediately was burnt by the heat of the pot. In this way, his meditation broke. Now, when he looked at his finger, he saw that it was burnt, and he was wondering in astonishment how this could have happened. Because he was simply meditating on touching the hot sweet rice, he never thought that his finger would actually become burnt.

While he was thinking like this, in Vaikuṅṭha Lord Nārāyaṇa, seated with the goddess of fortune, Lakṣmī, began to smile humorously. On seeing this smiling of the Lord, all the goddesses of fortune attending the Lord became very curious and asked Lord Nārāyaṇa why He was smiling. The Lord, however, did not reply to their inquisitiveness, but instead immediately sent for the *brāhmaṇa*. An air-plane sent from Vaikuṅṭha immediately brought the *brāhmaṇa* into Lord Nārāyaṇa’s presence. When the *brāhmaṇa* was thus present

before the Lord and the goddesses of fortune, the Lord explained the whole story. The *brāhmaṇa* was then fortunate enough to get an eternal place in Vaikuṅṭha in the association of the Lord and His Lakṣmīs. This shows how the Lord is all-pervading, in spite of His being locally situated in His abode. Although the Lord was present in Vaikuṅṭha, He was present also in the heart of the *brāhmaṇa* when he was meditating on the worshipping process. Thus, we can understand that things offered by the devotees even in meditation are accepted by the Lord, and they help one achieve the desired result."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 94]

# Chapter 11 – Aspects of Transcendental Service

In this chapter is an interesting discussion on servitorship, which may be performed in a general mood or in a more specific mood as a personal attendant. The second category is the best. There is also discussion about devotional service in friendship and about being a surrendered soul.

<b>Topics</b>	<b>More on limbs of <i>Bhakti</i></b> <b>Chapter Eleven – Eastern Division, 2nd Wave, <i>sādhana Bhakti</i></b> Chapter 2-14 <i>Vaidhi-sādhana Bhakti</i>		
<i>dāsya</i> – servitorship	<i>Karmārpaṇam</i> – service within <i>varṇāśrama</i>  <i>Kaiṅkaryam</i> – service like that of a personal attendant	Devotional service in friendship	<i>Viśvāsa</i> – faith in the protection of the Lord, our best friend  <i>Mitra</i> – to become a well-wishing friend of the Lord
Surrendering everything to the Lord	One who gives up all other activities, is protected by Kṛṣṇa in this life and the next.  Kṛṣṇa takes charge of him and guarantees protection from sinful reactions	Offering a favourite article	If one offers the best thing is his possession or anything very pleasing to him, then he will be eternally benefited
Performing all endeavours for Kṛṣṇa	<i>Nārada-pañcarātra</i>  In all situations whether in direct devotional service or in one’s professional life, offer the fruits for the service of the Lord	Being a surrendered soul	<i>Hari-bhakti-vilāsa</i>  Have conviction that He is Yours and act in that way with mind, body and words. In that way one can relish transcendental bliss

Serving <i>tulasī</i>	Offering obeisances and water vanquishes volumes of sinful activities and frees one from being sent to the court of Yamarāja	Seeing or touching <i>tulasī</i> brings relief from distress and disease.  By sowing <i>tulasī</i> , one becomes devoted to Lord Kṛṣṇa	<i>Tulasī</i> offered at Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet leads to love of God
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## ***Dāsya* – Service attitude**

The service attitude is the foundation of all devotional service. (This is not just referring to *dāsya sthāyi-bhāva*, which is one of the five *rasas*, but rather to a general service attitude which is the foundation of all relationships in the five principle *rasas*)

- *karmārpaṇam* – offering the results of various activities within *varṇāśrama*. The system of *varṇāśrama* and the prescribed duties under this system are so designed that the conditioned soul may enjoy in the material world according to his desire for sense gratification and at the same time gradually become elevated to spiritual understanding.

[*Skanda Purāṇa*]

- *kainkaryam* – acting as the menial servant of the Lord, in the mood of a personal attendant of the Lord. This is the recommended attitude for a devotee according to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

[*Nāradīya Purāṇa*]

## Devotional service in friendship

There are two kinds of friendship mentioned in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*:

- *viśvāsa* – trust, faith

In the *Mahābhārata*, Draupadī says, "My dear Govinda, Your promise is that Your devotee can never be vanquished. I believe in that statement, and therefore in all kinds of tribulations I simply remember Your promise, and thus I live."

[Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 96]

- *mitra* – friendship, to become a well-wisher or have friendly feelings toward the Lord

This is a person who is dedicated to serving the Lord, and out of friendship sees and treats Him as a human, and lies down in the Lord's temple.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.192]

## Being a surrendered soul

(*śaraṇāpattiḥ*)

There is a subtle distinction between *ātma-nivedanam* ("surrendering everything to the Lord") and *śaraṇāpattiḥ* ("being a surrendered soul"). *Śaraṇāpattiḥ* means to consider oneself completely subservient to and protected by the Lord. *Ātma-nivedanam* also means self-dedication, but such dedication may be with or without such feelings of subservience and dependence. Bali Mahārāja is an example of *ātma-nivedanam* without a feeling of subservient dependence on the Lord.

[*Waves of Devotion*, page 74]

(Additional reference)

## Serving *tulasī*

In the *Skanda Purāṇa* there is a statement praising the *tulasī* tree as follows: "Let me offer my respectful obeisances unto the *tulasī* tree, which can immediately vanquish volumes of sinful activities.

Simply by seeing or touching this tree one can become relieved from all distresses and diseases.

Simply by offering obeisances to and pouring water on the *tulasī* tree, one can become freed from the fear of being sent to the court of Yamarāja [the King of death, who punishes the sinful].

If someone sows a *tulasī* tree somewhere, certainly he becomes devoted to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

And when the *tulasī* leaves are offered in devotion at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, there is the full development of love of Godhead."

In India all Hindus, even those not belonging to the *Vaiṣṇava* group, take special care of the *tulasī* tree. Even in great cities where it is very difficult to keep a *tulasī* tree, people are to be found very carefully keeping this plant. They water it and offer obeisances to it, because worship of the *tulasī* tree is very important in devotional service.

In the *Skanda Purāṇa* there is another statement about *tulasī*, as follows:

"*Tulasī* is auspicious in all respects. Simply by seeing, simply by touching, simply by remembering, simply by praying to, simply by bowing before, simply by hearing about or simply by sowing this tree, there is always auspiciousness.

Anyone who comes in touch with the *tulasī* tree in the above-mentioned ways lives eternally in the *Vaikuṅṭha* world."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, pages 99-100]

## Chapter 12 and 13 – Further Aspects of Transcendental Service

I have combined Chapter 12 and 13, because both are dealing with the same topic, namely the five principle limbs of devotional service. In *The Nectar of Devotion*, chapter 12 is subdivided in smaller sections each with a separate heading. So I have laid out the substance of that in the chart below. Chapter 13 in *The Nectar of Devotion* is short, with only 3 and a half pages of continuous text, without any further sub-divisions. So I decided not to present the text in a chart; rather I have simply included some highlights from the chapter.

The five principle limbs of *bhakti* are the main substance of our devotional practices. Rūpa Gosvāmī has provided nice quotes about these topics, which I have summarized in the table. Evidence is provided from the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* and sources other than *The Nectar of Devotion* about the importance of these five principle limbs of *bhakti*.

Topics	<b>The Five Principle Limbs of <i>Bhakti</i></b> <b>Chapter 12 &amp; 13 – Eastern Division, 2nd Wave, <i>sādhana Bhakti</i></b> Chapter 2-14 <i>Vaidhi-sādhana Bhakti</i>		
Hearing the revealed scripture Recitation of <i>Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam</i> among devotees	There are some apparent repetitions/ overlapping of topics. Śrīla Prabhupāda follows the <i>Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu</i> .	Mādhavācārya, quoting <i>Skanda Purāṇa</i> , defines revealed scripture	The emphasis is not just on hearing <i>Bhāgavatam</i> , but doing so in the association of devotees

<p>Residing in Mathurā Living in Mathurā</p>	<p><i>Varāha Purāṇa</i> Anyone who becomes attracted by any place other than Mathurā, will be captivated by māyā <i>Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa</i> The results of all pilgrimages in the world are achieved by touching the holy land of Mathurā</p>	<p><i>Padma Purāṇa</i> Liberation is not the highest stage. After that comes devotional service, which is easily achieved by one who lives in Mathurā only for a few seconds</p>	<p>Who will not agree to worship the land of Mathurā? Mathurā will deliver the desires of the devotees, who aspire to be engaged in the devotional service of the Lord</p>
<p>Rendering service to devotees Associating with advanced devotees</p>	<p><i>Padma Purāṇa</i> Of all worship, worship of the Supreme Person is the highest; higher still is worship of devotees [<i>Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam</i> 3.7.19] Service of devotees diminishes miserable material conditions and through it one develops deep love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead</p>	<p><i>Skanda Purāṇa</i> Those with <i>tilaka</i> or body marked with conch, wheel, club, lotus, even seen once can give relief from sinful activities. [<i>Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam</i> 1.19.33] No doubt freed from sin by visiting an advanced devotee, touching feet or offering <i>āsana</i>. Just by remembering them, one becomes purified along with family.</p>	<p><i>Ādi Purāṇa</i> One who claims to be my devotee is not so. Only the person who claims to be the devotee of my devotee is actually my devotee. Therefore one must first accept a devotee as spiritual master</p>

Serving the Deity with great devotion	The comment under this heading in <i>The Nectar of Devotion</i> deals with the benefit of chanting going beyond <i>mukti</i>		
Chanting the Holy Name of the Lord			
Other limbs of <i>bhakti</i> in this chapter:	Serving the Lord according to one's position (financial means)	Performing devotional service in <i>Kārtika</i> (in Mathurā)	Observing festivals celebrating the Lord's activities

## ***Pañca aṅga bhakti* – The Five Principle Limbs of Devotional Service**

*sādhu-saṅga, nāma-kīrtana, bhāgavata-śravaṇa  
mathurā-vāsa, śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana*

*sādhu-saṅga*—association with devotees; *nāma-kīrtana*—chanting the holy name; *bhāgavata-śravaṇa*—hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*; *mathurā-vāsa*—living at Mathurā; *śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana*—worshipping the Deity with faith and veneration.

One should associate with devotees, chant the holy name of the Lord, hear *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, reside at Mathurā and worship the Deity with faith and veneration.

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 22.128*]  
(Additional Reference)

<b><i>Pañca aṅga</i></b>	
1.	Residing in Mathurā ( <i>mathurā-vāsa</i> )
2.	To serve the Deity with faith ( <i>śrī-mūrtira śraddhāya sevana</i> )
3.	Hearing <i>Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam</i> ( <i>bhāgavata-śravaṇa</i> )
4.	Chanting the <i>Hare Kṛṣṇa Mantra</i> ( <i>nāma-kīrtana</i> )
5.	Serving a Devotee ( <i>sādhu-saṅga</i> )

Śrīla Prabhupāda says these practices “are so potent that a small attachment for any of these five items can arouse devotional ecstasy even in a neophyte.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion, page 109*]

*sakala-sādhana-śreṣṭha ei pañca aṅga  
kṛṣṇa-prema janmāya ei pāncera alpa saṅga*

“These five limbs of devotional service are the best of all. Even a slight performance of these five awakens love for Kṛṣṇa.

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 22.129*]

(Additional Reference)

"Devotional ecstasy" refers to *bhāva-bhakti*. "Neophyte," in this context, refers to one with weak attachment. Thus even a neophyte devotee with weak attachment to Kṛṣṇa can quickly achieve *bhāva-bhakti* by practising any one of these five most potent items.

## Residing in Mathurā

“So this attainment of transcendental loving devotional service to the Lord is the goal of life, and it can be achieved very easily for one who lives in *Mathurā-maṇḍala* even for a few seconds.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion, page 108*]

“The places in the eighty-four square mile district of Mathurā area so beautifully situated on the banks of the river Yamunā,

that anyone who goes there will never want to return to this material world.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 111]

“The purport is that the Lord does not award devotional service to ordinary person who are not serious about it. But even such unserious persons who execute devotional service according to the regulative principles during the month of *Kārtika*, and within the jurisdiction of Mathurā in India, are very easily awarded the Lord’s personal service.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 103]

“In these statements about devotional service, sometimes it may appear that the results have been overestimated, but actually there is no over-estimation. Some devotees, as revealed scriptures give evidence, have had immediate results by such association, although this is not possible for all.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 111]

## Serving the Deity with great devotion

In Chapter 13 Śrīla Prabhupāda begins a description of Deity worship and quotes Rūpa Gosvāmī’s famous verse;

*smerām bhaṅgī-traya-paricitām sāci-vistīrṇa-dr̥ṣṭim  
vaṁśī-nyastādhara-kīśalayām ujjalām candrakeṇa  
govindākhyām hari-tanum itaḥ keśi-tīrthopakāṅṭhe  
mā prekṣiṣṭhās tava yadi sakhe bandhu-saṅge ‘sti raṅgaḥ*

My dear friend, if you are indeed attached to your worldly friends, do not look at the smiling face of Lord Govinda as He stands on the bank of the Yamunā at Keśīghāṭa. Casting sidelong glances, He places His flute to His lips, which seem like newly blossomed twigs. His transcendental body, bending in three places, appears very bright in the moonlight.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.239]

“If someone becomes attached to the *śrī-mūrti*, or Deity of Kṛṣṇa, by worshipping at home, then he will forget his relationships of

so-called friend, love and society. Thus it is the duty of every householder to install Deities of the Lord at home and begin the process of worshipping along with all of his family members."

[*The Nectar of Devotion, page 109*]

## Hearing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in the association of devotees

Definitions of revealed scripture:

By Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu

*mā'ye bale,—“āji, bāpa! ki puñthi paḍilā?  
kāhāra sahita ki vā kandala karilā?”*

Mother Śacī asked, "My dear son, what books did You study today? Did You quarrel with anyone?"

*prabhu bale,—“āji paḍilāna kṛṣṇa-nāma  
satya kṛṣṇa-caraṇa-kamala guṇa-dhāma  
satya kṛṣṇa-nāma-guṇa-śravaṇa-kīrtana  
satya kṛṣṇacandrera sevaka ye-ye-jana*

The Lord replied, "Today I read about the names of Kṛṣṇa. The lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa are in fact the reservoirs of transcendental qualities. Hearing and chanting about the qualities and names of Kṛṣṇa is the Truth, and the servants of Kṛṣṇacandra are also the Truth."

*se-i sāstra satya—kṛṣṇa-bhakti kahe yā'ya  
anyathā haile sāstra pāṣaṇḍatva pāya*

"Those literatures that glorify devotional service to Kṛṣṇa are true scriptures; others are simply atheistic.

*yasmin sāstre purāṇe vā  
hari-bhaktir na dṛṣyate  
śrotavyaṁ naiva tat sāstraṁ  
yadi brahmā svayaṁ vadet*

“One should never hear a scripture or a *Purāṇa* that does not prominently describe the devotional service of Hari, even if it is recited by the four-headed Lord Brahmā.”

[*Caitanya-bhāgavata, Madhya-līlā 1.192-196*]

(Additional reference)

By Mādhavācārya from the *Skanda Purāṇa*

“According to Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī, any book which gives enlightenment in the matter of advancing in devotional service is considered to be scripture. Śrīla Mādhavācārya has also defined revealed scriptures as referring to books such as the *Rāmāyaṇa, Mahābhārata, Purāṇas, Upaniṣads, Vedānta*—and any other literature written in pursuance of such revealed scriptures.”

[Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion, page 101*]

### *Vaiṣṇava* literature

In the *Skanda Purāṇa* there is this statement: "A person who is constantly engaged in reading literature enunciating the cultivation of *Vaiṣṇava* devotional service is always glorious in human society, and certainly Lord Kṛṣṇa becomes pleased with him. A person who very carefully keeps such literature at home and offers respectful obeisances to it becomes freed from all sinful reactions and ultimately becomes worshipable by the demigods."

It is also said to Nārada Muni, "My dear Nārada, a person who writes *vaiṣṇava* literature and keeps such literature at home has Lord Nārāyaṇa always residing in his house."

[*The Nectar of Devotion, page 101*]

### Essence of all Vedānta Philosophy

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, Twelfth Canto, Thirteenth Chapter, verse 15, it is stated, "*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the essence of all Vedānta philosophy. Any person who has become attached in some way

or other to the reading of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* cannot have any taste for reading any other literature. In other words, a person who has relished the transcendental bliss of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* cannot be satisfied with mundane writings.”

[Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 101]

## Desire Tree

*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the desire tree of *Vedic* wisdom. (*nigama-kalpa-taror*) Veda itself means the aggregate of all knowledge. different branches of knowledge in *Vedic* writing including: sociology, politics, medicine, military art. So far as spiritual knowledge is concerned, that is also perfectly described there, and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is considered to be the ripened fruit of this desire fulfilling tree of *Vedas*.

[Refer to *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 104-105]

For information on hearing about the book *Bhāgavatam* from the person *Bhāgavatam*, see *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 105.

“Śukadeva Gosvāmī admitted that although he was liberated from within the very womb of his mother, it was only after relishing *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that he became a great devotee.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 105]

## The troublesome almost completely destroyed

*naṣṭa-prāyeṣv abhadreṣu*  
*nityam bhāgavata-sevayā*  
*bhagavaty uttama-śloke*  
*bhaktir bhavati naiṣṭhikī*

*naṣṭa*—destroyed; *prāyeṣu*—almost to nil; *abhadreṣu*—all that is inauspicious; *nityam*—regularly; *bhāgavata*—*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, or the pure devotee; *sevayā*—by serving; *bhagavati*—unto the Personality of Godhead; *uttama*—transcendental; *śloke*—prayers; *bhaktiḥ*—loving service; *bhāvati*—comes into being; *naiṣṭhikī*—irrevocable.

By regular attendance in classes on the *Bhāgavatam* and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.18]

In the UK Śrīla Prabhupāda explained that as one is getting more and more knowledge there is a tendency to become proud. Therefore he says the troublesome is “almost” destroyed and not completely destroyed!

[Paraphrased from Tribhuvanatha dāsa]  
(Additional reference)

## ***Hari-nāma***

*ataeva yady anyāpi bhaktiḥ kalau kartavyā  
tadā tat-saṁyoge naivety uktam*

In *Kali-yuga*, if another *aṅga* of *bhakti* is performed, it must be accompanied by *hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana*.

[Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, *Bhakti-sandarbhā, Anuccheda* 273]  
(Additional Reference)

Śrīla Prabhupāda quotes various scriptures in *The Nectar of Devotion* on the sublime importance of chanting the holy names:

Śukadeva Gosvāmī tells Mahārāja Parīkṣit, "My dear King, if one is spontaneously attached to the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*, it is to be understood that he has attained the highest perfectional stage." It is specifically mentioned that the *karmīs* who are aspiring after the fruitive results of their activities, the salvationists who are aspiring to become one with the Supreme Person, and the *yogīs* who are aspiring after mystic perfections can achieve the results of all perfectional stages simply by chanting the *mahā-mantra*."

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.1.11]

"Anyone who is engaged in chanting My transcendental name must be considered to be always associating with Me. And I may tell you frankly that for such a devotee I become easily purchased."

[Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna, *Ādi Purāṇa*]

"The chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* is present only on the lips of a person who has for many births worshipped Vāsudeva."

[*Padma Purāṇa*]

"There is no difference between the holy name of the Lord and the Lord Himself. As such, the holy name is as perfect as the Lord Himself in fullness, purity and eternity. The holy name is not a material sound vibration, nor has it any material contamination."

[*Padma Purāṇa*]

"The holy name cannot, therefore, be chanted offenselessly by one who has failed to purify his senses. In other words, materialistic senses cannot properly chant the holy names of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra*. But by adopting this chanting process, one is given a chance to actually purify himself, so that he may very soon chant offenselessly.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu has recommended that everyone chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra* just to cleanse the dust from the heart. If the dust of the heart is cleansed away, then one can actually understand the importance of the holy name. For persons who are not inclined to clean the dust from their hearts and who want to keep things as they are, it is not possible to derive the transcendental result of chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*.

One should, therefore, be encouraged to develop his service attitude toward the Lord, because this will help him to chant without any offence. And so, under the guidance of a spiritual master, the disciple is trained to render service and at the same time chant the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mantra*. As soon as one develops his spontaneous service attitude, he can immediately understand

the transcendental nature of the holy names of the *mahā-mantra*.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, pages 107-108]

## Rendering service to devotees

“Let me become a sincere servant of the devotees, because by serving them one can achieve unalloyed devotional service unto the lotus feet of the Lord.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 102]

“Persons whose bodies are marked with *tilaka*, symbolising the conch shell, wheel, club, and lotus – and who keep the leaves of *tulasī* on their heads, and whose bodies are always decorated with *gopī-candana* – even seen once, can help the seer be relieved from all sinful activities.”

[*Skanda Purāṇa*,

Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 102]

In the *Ādi Purāṇa* there is the following statement by Lord Kṛṣṇa Himself, addressed to Arjuna: “My dear Pārtha, one who claims to be My devotee is not so. Only a person who claims to be the devotee of my devotee is actually my devotee.”

[Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 102]

Hiraṇyakaśipu addresses Prahlāda in this way: “My dear son, association is very important. It acts just like a crystal stone, which will reflect anything put before it.”

[From *Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya*,

cited in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 106]

## Chapter 14 – Devotional Qualifications

**(*varṇāśrama*, *tapas* and *vairāgya* are not limbs of *Bhakti*)**

Knowledge, renunciation, austerity and *varṇāśrama* are all preliminary activities that purify on a material platform to create favourable conditions for practising *bhakti*. However, these activities in themselves are not part of *bhakti* and therefore will not awaken love of God. The table provides a more detailed overview and is followed by a discussion on each point.

Topics	<b>Knowledge and Renunciation</b> <b>Chapter 14</b>		
Knowledge and Renunciation	Some argue these are important for <i>bhakti</i>	Cultivation of knowledge and renunciation for Kṛṣṇa consciousness to be accepted in the beginning	Ultimately, this may be rejected, because devotional service is dependent only on desire for such service
	It is the opinion of expert devotees that mental speculation and artificial austerity of <i>yoga</i> practice help to overcome material contamination	They also make the heart harder and harder  That will not help devotional progress  Devotional service is the way to attain devotional progress	<i>bhaktiyā mām abhijānāti</i> <i>[Bhagavad-gītā 18.55]</i>  One can understand me only through devotional service  Renunciation is vow to reject anything not offered to Kṛṣṇa
	Impersonalist try to avoid everything material, but miss opportunity of service to the Lord  → insufficient renunciation  again fall down, become attracted to material contamination	We use machines, typewriters, recorders, microphones, air planes. No problem if used for Kṛṣṇa.  However, principles of devotional service should not be neglected  Spiritual master not to be carried away by wealth and disciples	Devotee has no need for other purification, <i>bhakti</i> is enough.  One may execute one, two, three or all processes of devotional service, and he will achieve the desired goal of being established in devotional service.

## Renunciation

### A device to create renunciation

When the scriptures state that the material world is an illusion it should be understood these words are a device intended to create renunciation

[Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Commentary on  
*Vedānta-sūtra pada 4.7.26*]  
(Additional reference)

### Value of Renunciation

*śraddhāveśa-manyāstṛte sac-chamādyair  
vairāgyodvitti-sirṁhāsanāḍhye  
dharma-prākārāñcite sarva-dātrī  
preṣṭhā viṣṇor bhāti vidyeśvarīyam*

In the temple of faith, which is surrounded by the great walls of religion, sitting on the throne of renunciation and surrounded by courtiers of self-control and other virtues, transcendental knowledge, which is very dear to Lord Viṣṇu, shines with great splendour.

[Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa Commentary on  
*Vedānta-sūtra 3.4.1*]  
(Additional reference)

### Renunciation: Return to Zero

“Renunciation is not the remedy. That is the next point. The Buddhists and Śāṅkarites say, ‘Yes, renunciation is the remedy, leave everything.’ But the *vaiṣṇavas* come with a third proposal. They know it is temporary living in the land of exploitation, but one cannot exist without engagement. Only renunciation means withdrawal, to return to zero. That is not desirable. So the *vaiṣṇavas* say that there is a land of dedication, and that is normal, where every unit is a dedicating unit. And dedication

must be towards the centre. Our inner *ātma*, not mind or mundane intelligence, but transcending all these things our real conception is the soul which has some relationship with the subtler realm. The land of dedication begins with *Vaikuṅṭha* and ends in *Goloka*.”

[B.R. Sridhara Swami, Article “*Exploitation, Renunciation and Dedication*” (*karma, jñāna and bhakti*)]  
(Additional reference)

Detachment from everything that does not help develop *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness

*vairāgya-vidyā-nija-bhakti-yoga-  
śikṣārtham ekaḥ puruṣaḥ purāṇaḥ  
śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanya-śarīra-dhārī  
kṛpāmbudhir yas tam ahaṁ prapadye*

“Let me take shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, *Śrī Kṛṣṇa*, who has descended in the form of Lord *Caitanya Mahāprabhu* to teach us real knowledge, His devotional service and detachment from whatever does not foster *Kṛṣṇa* consciousness. He has descended because He is an ocean of transcendental mercy. Let me surrender unto His lotus feet.”

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 6.254*]  
(Additional reference)

## **Vairāgya**

*rucim udvahatas tatra janasya bhajane hareḥ  
viṣayeṣu gariṣṭho 'pi rāgaḥ prāyo vilīyate*

Translation by Bhanu Swami:

If a person has a taste for worshipping the Lord even though he has strong material attractions, those attractions will be for the most part destroyed during *sādhana* without resorting to *vairāgya*.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.254*]

*anāsaktasya viṣayān  
yathārham upayuñjataḥ  
nirbandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe  
yuktaṁ vairāgyam ucyate*

Translation by Śrīla Prabhupāda:

When one is not attached to anything, but at the same time accepts everything in relation to Kṛṣṇa, one is rightly situated above possessiveness

Translation by Bhanu Swami:

The *vairāgya*, renunciation of that person who employs objects suitable for devotional development, while remaining detached from them, is said to be suitable for *bhakti*

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.255]

*prāpañcikatayā buddhyā  
hari-sambandhi-vastunaḥ  
mumukṣubhiḥ parityāgo  
vairāgyaṁ phalgu kathyate*

Translation by Śrīla Prabhupāda:

On the other hand, one who rejects everything without knowledge of its relationship to Kṛṣṇa is not as complete in his renunciation.

Translation by Bhanu Swami:

Rejection of things related to the Lord by persons desiring liberation, who think that these things are simply material objects, is called useless (*phalgu-*) *vairāgya*

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.256]

*jñāna* and *vairāgya* make the heart hard

*yad ubhe citta-kāṭhinya-hetū prāyaḥ satām mate  
sukumāra-svabhāveyaṁ bhaktis tad-dhetur īritā*

Because *jñāna* and *vairāgya* generally make the heart harsh, the authoritative devotees have concluded that *bhakti* alone, whose nature is very tender, is the cause of entering into *bhakti*

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.249]

*vairāgya* to avoid distraction from Kṛṣṇa

*tyaktvā tūrṇam aśeṣa-maṇḍala-pati-śreṇīm sadā tuccha vat  
bhūtvā dīna-gaṇeśakau karuṇayā kaupīna-kanthāśritau  
gopī-bhāva-rasāmṛtābdhi-laharī-kallola-magnau muhur  
vande rūpa-sanātanau raghu-yugau śrī-jīva-gopālakau*

I offer my respectful obeisances unto the six Gosvāmīs—Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī, Śrī Jīva Gosvāmī, and Śrī Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī—who cast off all aristocratic association as insignificant. To deliver poor, conditioned souls, they accepted loincloths and became mendicants, but they were always merged in the ecstatic ocean of the *gopīs'* love for Kṛṣṇa, and they were always bathing repeatedly in the waves of that ocean.

[*Ṣaḍ-gosvāmy-aṣṭaka* 4]  
(Additional reference)

## **Tapas – Austerity**

In the *Uddhava-gīta*, *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.19.28-32, Uddhava asks, “What is austerity?”

Kṛṣṇa responds, “Renunciation of lust is understood as real austerity.”

Śrīla Prabhupāda introduced the four regulative principles, which include no ‘illicit sex’. The origin of these four principles is found in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, after Kali had surrendered to Mahārāja Parīkṣit and his wife was spared.

*sūta uvāca*  
*abhyarthitas tadā tasmai*  
*sthānāni kalaye dadau*  
*dyūtaṁ pānaṁ striyaḥ sūnā*  
*yatrādharmas̄ catur-vidhaḥ*

Sūta Gosvāmī said: Mahārāja Parīkṣit, thus being petitioned by the personality of Kali, gave him permission to reside in places where gambling, drinking, prostitution and animal slaughter were performed.

[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.17.38]  
 (Additional reference)

By following the four regulative principles one will be saved from the influence of Kali, but because *tapasā* (austerity) is not a limb of *bhakti*, the four regulative principles will not awaken love of God, but rather create preliminary conditions for love of God to grow. Just like ploughing will prepare the field for growing a crop. Thereafter there is planting of seeds, watering, weeding and with time, harvesting can be done.

## **Varṇāśrama**

*varṇāśrama* is not an *aṅga* of *Bhakti*

*saṁmataṁ bhakti-vijñānāṁ bhakty-aṅgatvaṁ na karmaṇām*

The consensus of those knowledgeable of *bhakti* is that *karma* (*varṇāśrama*) is not a limb of *bhakti*

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.246]

*varṇāśramācāra-vatā*  
*puruṣeṇa paraḥ pumān*  
*viṣṇur ārādhyate panthā*  
*nānyat tat-toṣa-kāraṇam*

The Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Viṣṇu, is worshipped by the proper execution of prescribed duties in the system of *varṇa* and *āśrama*. There is no other way to satisfy the Supreme

Personality of Godhead. One must be situated in the institution of the four *varṇas* and *āśramas*.

This is a quotation from the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* (3.8.9). As stated by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura in his *Amṛta-pravāha-bhāṣya*, “The purport is that one can realize life’s perfection simply by satisfying the Supreme Personality of Godhead.” This is also confirmed in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*:

*ataḥ pumbhir dvija-śreṣṭhā  
varṇāśrama-vibhāgaśaḥ  
svanuṣṭhitasya dharmasya  
saṁsiddhir hari-toṣaṇam*

O best among the twice-born, it is therefore concluded that the highest perfection one can achieve by discharging the duties prescribed for one’s own occupation according to caste divisions and orders of life is to please the Personality of Godhead

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.2.13,  
Quoted in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā* 8.58]  
(Additional reference)

## Through devotional service one becomes established in devotional service

“Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī affirms herein that purification of consciousness, purification of bodily activities, austerities, peace of mind, etc. all become automatically manifest in the person who is engaged in devotional service.

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī affirms herein that there are nine different kinds of devotional service, which are listed as hearing, chanting, remembering, serving, worshipping the Deity in the temple, praying, carrying out orders, serving Kṛṣṇa as a friend and sacrificing everything for Him. Each and every one of these processes is so powerful that if anyone follows even a single one of them, he can achieve the desired perfection without fail. For example, if one is attached simply to hearing about the Lord and

another is attached to chanting the glories of the name, both will achieve their desired goal in devotional service. In the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* this has been explained. One may execute one, two, three or all the different processes of devotional service, and at the ultimate end he will achieve the desired goal of being established in devotional service."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 117]

The following examples are listed in *The Nectar of Devotion*:

- *śravaṇam* (Hearing) - Parīkṣit Mahārāja
- *kīrtanam* (Chanting) - Śukadeva Gosvāmī
- *smaraṇam* (Remembering) - Prahlāda Mahārāja
- *Pāda-sevanam* (Serving the Lotus feet) - Lakṣmī devī
- *arcanam* (Worshipping in temple) - Pṛthu Mahārāja
- *vandanam* (Offering Prayers) – Akrūra
- *dāsyam* (Servitorship) – Hanumān
- *sakhyam* (Friendship) – Arjuna
- *ātma-nivedanam* (Surrender of mind, body, soul) - Bali Mahārāja
- All of them – Ambarīṣa Mahārāja

## Chapter 15 – Spontaneous Devotional Service

The chapter provides a definition of *rāgānuga bhakti* and explains the two categories of *rāgātmikā-bhakti*. There is also mention of the *gopis'* love for Kṛṣṇa in comparison to Kubjā's desires.

Topics	<i>rāgātmikā</i> and <i>rāgānuga-bhakti</i> Chapter 15		
<i>rāgātmikā-bhakti</i>	Devotional Service in spontaneous love in a particular <i>rasa</i> as the eternal associates of the Lord, such as cowherds	<i>kāma-rūpa-mādhurya rasa</i> <i>sambandha-rūpa-</i> other 4 <i>rasas</i>	These beings don't have to learn anything about devotional service. They are already perfect.
<i>rāgānuga-bhakti</i>	Spontaneous attraction to follow in the footsteps of the above	Many devotees are first attracted to Kṛṣṇa for some sense gratification, then purified by <i>bhakti</i> , and then spiritual love develops	<i>gopī's</i> 'lusty desires' to satisfy Kṛṣṇa's senses Whereas Kubjā's desires were almost mundane <i>kāma-prāyā</i> (about satisfying her own senses)

### ***Rāgātmikā-bhakti***

*rāgānugā-vivekārtham ādau rāgātmikocyate*

In order to define *rāgānuga bhakti* first *rāgātmikā-bhakti* should be discussed.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.271]

*iṣṭe svārasikī rāgaḥ  
paramāviṣṭatā bhavet  
tan-mayī yā bhaved bhaktiḥ  
sātra rāgātmikoditā*

*Rāga* is defined as spontaneous, deep thirst for the object of love. *Bhakti* that is impelled exclusively by such a thirst is called *rāgātmikā-bhakti*.

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.272]

## Two categories in *rāgātmikā-bhakti*

1. *kāma-rūpa* consists of devotees with intense desire to satisfy the Lord in conjugal love.
2. *sambandha-rūpa* consists of devotees with intense desire to satisfy the Lord as His parent, friend, or intimate servant.

(Although conjugal love (*kāma*) is also a type of relationship (*sambandha*), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī gives it a separate category to emphasize its pre-eminent position.)

*gopyaḥ kāmād bhayāt kaṁso  
dveṣāc caidyādayo nṛpāḥ  
sambandhād vṛṣṇayaḥ snehād  
yūyaṁ bhaktyā vayaṁ vibho*

My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, the gopīs by their lusty desires, Kaṁsa by his fear, Śiśupāla and other kings by envy, the Yadus by their familial relationship with Kṛṣṇa, you Pāṇḍavas by your great affection for Kṛṣṇa, and we, the general devotees, by our devotional service, have obtained the mercy of Kṛṣṇa.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 7.1.31

Quoted in *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*]

## ***Rāgānuga bhakti***

Śrīla Prabhupāda introduced the topic of *Rāgānuga* in chapter two:

“Another part of *sādhana-bhakti* is called *rāgānuga*. *Rāgānuga* refers to the point at which, by following the regulative principles, one becomes a little more attached to Kṛṣṇa and executes devotional service out of natural love. For example, a person engaged in devotional service may be ordered to rise early in the morning and offer *ārati*, which is a form of Deity worship. In the beginning, by the order of his spiritual master, one rises early in the morning and offers *ārati*, but then he develops real attachment. When he gets this attachment, he automatically tries to decorate the Deity and prepare different kinds of dresses and thinks of different plans to execute his devotional service nicely. Although it is within the category of practice, this offering of loving service is spontaneous. So the practice of devotional service, *sādhana-bhakti*, can be divided into two parts—namely, regulative and spontaneous.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, pages 21-22]

## Definition of *rāgānuga bhakti*

*virājantīm abhivyaṅtām  
vraja-vāsi-janādiṣu  
rāgātmikām anusṛtā  
yā sā rāgānugocyate*

*rāgānuga-bhakti* is defined as that *bhakti* which follows after the *rāgātmikā-bhakti* found distinctively in the inhabitants of Vraja

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.270]

## Kubjā

On the other hand, the lusty desire of Kubjā is described by learned scholars as being "almost lusty desire." Kubjā was a hunchbacked woman who also wanted Kṛṣṇa with a great ecstatic love. But her desire for Kṛṣṇa was almost mundane, and so her love cannot be compared to the love of the *gopīs*. Her

loving affection for Kṛṣṇa is called *kāma-prāyā*, or almost like the *gopīs'* love for Kṛṣṇa.

[*The Nectar of Devotion, page 124*]

## Chapter 16 – Spontaneous Devotion Further Described

This chapter provides some more detail on the topic of spontaneous devotion. To further elaborate on the table, we have supportive evidence on the development of one's eternal relationship with Kṛṣṇa. We have also raised a number of relevant questions, for example, whether our spiritual body is already present, though currently in an unmanifested conditioned state or if it develops by a particular *sādhana*. Evidence is also presented on the particular focus of ISKCON.

Topics	<b><i>rāgānuga</i> in more detail</b> <b>Chapter 16</b>		
Relationship	<p>No one can be Kṛṣṇa's father or mother (He is <i>aja</i>, without birth but Nanda &amp; Yaśodā have the perfect parental mood)</p> <p>The Vṛṣṇis in Dvārakā also have a parental mood</p>	<p>In the stage of devotional service where regulative principles are followed, there is no necessity of discussing this love, for it must develop of itself at a more advanced stage.</p> <p><i>[Nectar of Devotion, page 125]</i></p>	
Eligibility for Spontaneous Service	<p><i>Rāgānuga</i> devotees try to attain the perfection of the <i>rāgātmikās</i></p>	<p>An advanced devotee should always act as neophyte, as long as this body is there</p>	<p>So-called <i>siddha-praṇālī</i> – they imagine themselves in an eternal <i>svarūpa</i>, with-out actual realization</p>

Conjugal love	Follow footsteps of <i>gopīs</i> of Vṛndāvana or Queens of Dvārakā 2 types as husband and wife ( <i>svakīyā</i> ) or paramour ( <i>parakīyā</i> )	Direct contact with the Lord is called <i>keli</i> Others simply remain at a distance and hear about <i>mādhurya</i>	Woman can become friend and man can become <i>gopī</i> e.g. sages of Daṇḍakāraṇya became <i>gopīs</i>
Parenthood or Friendship	To follow in the footsteps of Nanda and Yaśodā or Subala respectively	One should not try to become the father of Kṛṣṇa directly – that could be <i>māyāvāda</i>	<i>puṣṭi-mārga</i> , parental worship in <i>Vallabha-sampradāya</i>

## Supportive quotations on the development of one's relationship with Kṛṣṇa

### *sambandha-rūpa*

"In the attitude of the denizens of Vṛndāvana, such as Nanda Mahārāja and mother Yaśodā, is to be found the ideal transcendental concept of being the father and mother of Kṛṣṇa, the original Personality of Godhead. Factually, no one can become the father or mother of Kṛṣṇa, but a devotee's possession of such transcendental feelings is called love of Kṛṣṇa in a parental relationship."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 125]

### *rāgānuga bhaktas* not strict

"These *rāgānuga* devotees do not follow the regulative principles of devotional service very strictly, but by spontaneous nature they become attracted to some of the eternal devotees such as

Nanda or Yaśodā, and they try to follow in their footsteps spontaneously. There is a gradual development of the ambition to become like a particular devotee, and this activity is called *rāgānuga*."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 125]

Without Nitāi's lotus feet one cannot attain Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa

*nitāi-pada-kamala, koṭi-candra-suśītala*  
*je chāyāy jagata jurāy*  
*heno nitāi bine bhāi, rādhā-kṛṣṇa pāite nāi*  
*ḍṛḍha kori' dharo nitāir pāy*

The lotus feet of Lord Nityānanda are a shelter where one will get the soothing moonlight not only of one, but of millions of moons. If the world wants to have real peace, it should take shelter of Lord Nityānanda. Unless one takes shelter under the shade of the lotus feet of Lord Nityānanda, it will be very difficult for him to approach Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa. If one actually wants to enter into the dancing party of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, he must firmly catch hold of the lotus feet of Lord Nityānanda.

[*Nitāi Pada Kamala*, by Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura]  
 (Additional reference)

Hearing about *rāsa-līlā*

*vikṛḍitam vraja-vadhūbhir idam ca viṣṇoḥ*  
*śraddhānvito 'nuśṛṇuyād atha varṇayed yaḥ*  
*bhaktim parām bhagavati pratilabhya kāmam*  
*hṛd-rogam āśv apahinoty acireṇa dhīraḥ*

He who faithfully hears about the dealings between Lord Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* in the *rāsa* dance and he who describes these activities attain to the perfectional stage of devotional service and simultaneously lose material, lusty desires.

Purport:

A liberated person who hears about the loving affairs of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa is not inclined to have lusty desires. One mundane rogue once said that when the *Vaiṣṇavas* chant the name “Rādhā, Rādhā,” he simply remembers a barber’s wife named Rādhā. This is a practical example. Unless one is liberated, he should not try to hear about the loving affairs between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. If one is not liberated and listens to a relation of the *rāsa* dance, he may remember his own mundane activities and illicit connections with some woman whose name may also be Rādhā. In the conditioned stage one should not even try to remember such things. By practising the regulative principles, one should rise to the platform of spontaneous attraction for Kṛṣṇa. Then and only then should one hear about *rādhā-kṛṣṇa-līlā*.

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya-līlā* 8.255  
(verse from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 10.33.39)]

(Additional reference)

### *Siddha-praṇālī*

*Siddha-praṇālī* is where one *Vaiṣṇava* who has fully realized his eternal identity is assisting another *Vaiṣṇava* of a very advanced level to become fully aware of his spiritual identity. The *ācāryas* comment that this is applicable for a devotee who is at the stage of *prema ruruksa*, which means approaching *prema*. Sometimes, one who is approaching *prema* is helped in this way by a superior *Vaiṣṇava*. In other cases, the eternal spiritual identity is automatically revealed from within the heart.

Premature *siddha-praṇālī* is where the spiritual identity is given to devotees who are not approaching *prema* at all. Such *siddha-praṇālī* is a hoax and is condemned by the bona fide *Vaiṣṇava ācāryas*.

Is our *siddha-deha* (spiritual body) already there or does it develop through a particular *rāgānuga sādhana*?

Our spiritual identity is re-awakened

*nitya-siddha kṛṣṇa-prema 'sādhya' kabhu naya  
śravaṇādi-śuddha-citte karaye udaya*

Pure love for Kṛṣṇa is eternally established in the hearts of the living entities. It is not something to be gained from another source. When the heart is purified by hearing and chanting, this love naturally awakens.

[Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 22.107]  
(Additional Reference)

## Is ISKCON a movement focussed on *vaidhi bhakti*?

*Vidhi-mārga* or *Arcana-mārga* & *Mahā-mantra*

All these statements show that the *Mahā-mantra* of the Holy Names is more powerful than any other *mantra*, including the 18-syllable *Gopāla mantra*. One who has initiation in the *mantra* is given the right to practice the *vidhi-mārga*, whereas someone who chants the *Mahā-mantra*, whether initiated or not, is given the qualifications for all situations in life. In particular, a practitioner of the *rāgānuga* path quickly attains his desired goal in Vraja by taking shelter of the worship of the Holy Name. For one on the *vidhi-mārga* or *arcana-mārga*, the ecstatic mood of Vraja is vague and distant. Spiritual practices on the *vidhi-mārga* have no power to bestow this mood. *Vidhi-mārge vraja-bhāva pāite nāhi śakti*.

[*Bhakti* Pramode Puri Mahārāja,  
*The Art of sādhana, Ways of Chanting*]  
(Additional Reference)

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura said;

"The only motto of the *Gauḍīya Math* was, '*param vijayate śrī-kṛṣṇa-saṅkīrtanam*'

We are initiated in the *mantra kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ*."

ISKCON's primary concern is *saṅkīrtana*, which contains the spontaneous element of devotional service, therefore *rāgānuga* is the focus of ISKCON.

To what extent should ISKCON devotees practice *rāgānuga sādhana*?

If the qualification is eagerness then should we be eager to start practising *rāgānuga-bhakti* as soon as possible?

## Qualification for *rāgānuga-bhakti*

*kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa-bhāvitā matiḥ  
krīyatām yadi kuto 'pi labhyate  
tatra laulyam api mūlyam ekalaṁ  
janma-koṭi-sukṛtair na labhyate*

Pure devotional service in Kṛṣṇa consciousness cannot be had even by pious activity in hundreds and thousands of lives. It can be attained only by paying one price — that is, intense greed to obtain it. If it is available somewhere, one must purchase it without delay.

[Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, *Madhya-līlā* 8.70]

(Additional Reference)

This process of devotional service is sometimes called *puṣṭi-mārga*. *Puṣṭi* means "nourishing," and *mārga* means "path." Such development of sentiment nourishes devotional service to the highest standard. Thus it is called the path of nourishment, or *puṣṭi-mārga*. The *Vallabha-sampradāya*, which belongs to the Viṣṇu Svāmī sect of *Vaiṣṇava* religion, worships Kṛṣṇa in this *puṣṭi-mārga*. Generally devotees in Gujarat worship Bāla Kṛṣṇa, under this heading of *puṣṭi-mārga*.

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 130]

# Chapter 17 – Ecstatic Love

## Third Wave

This chapter and the next describe *bhāva-bhakti* or devotional service in pure ecstatic love. *The Nectar of Devotion* only touches upon these topics with very short descriptions. However, the remaining chapters provide more detail and Rūpa Gosvāmī continues the subject matter in his book entitled *Ujjvala-nīlamaṇi*, which is meant for advanced readers.

Topics	<b><i>Bhāva-bhakti</i></b> <b>Chapter 17</b>		
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>bhāva</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Uttama-adhikārī</i></p>	<p>At that time one's heart becomes illuminated like the sun. The sun is far above, never covered by any cloud; similarly, when a devotee is purified like the sun, in his pure heart there is ecstatic love, more glorious than the sunshine. At that time attachment to Kṛṣṇa is perfect.</p>	<p>At this stage the devotee is on the platform of <i>uttama-adhikārī</i>, perfect devotion. Such a devotee has no agitation from material affections and is interested only in the service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.</p>	<p>shivering of the body, shedding tears</p>
<p>Two ways to attain <i>bhāva</i></p>	<p>by constant association with pure devotees</p> <p>by special mercy of the Lord</p>	<p>Association: Nārada with the <i>bhakti-vedāntas</i> and following their instructions</p>	<p>Causeless Mercy in three ways:</p> <p>by speaking</p> <p>by glancing</p> <p>by good wishes</p>

## ***Bhāva-bhakti is Uttama adhikārī***

By the process of executing regulated devotional service, one is actually elevated onto the transcendental stage, beyond the material modes of nature. At that time one's heart becomes illuminated like the sun. The sun is far above the planetary systems, and there is no possibility of its being covered by any kind of cloud; similarly, when a devotee is purified like the sun, from his pure heart there is a diffusion of ecstatic love which is more glorious than the sunshine. Only at that time is the attachment to Kṛṣṇa perfect. Spontaneously, the devotee becomes eager to serve the Lord in his ecstatic love. At this stage the devotee is on the platform of *uttama-adhikārī*, perfect devotion. Such a devotee has no agitation from material affections and is interested only in the service of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 131]

## **Definition of *bhāva-bhakti***

*śuddha-sattva-viśeṣātmā*  
*prema-sūryāṁśu-sāmya-bhāk*  
*rucibhiś citta-masṛṇya-*  
*kṛd asau bhāva ucyaṭe*

*śuddha-sattva*—by unadulterated goodness; *viśeṣa*—distinguished; *ātmā*—whose nature; *prema*—of love of God; *sūrya*—like the sun; *āṁśu*—a ray; *sāmya-bhāk*—which is similar to; *rucibhiḥ*—by different tastes; *citta*—of the heart; *masṛṇya*—softness; *kṛt*—which causes; *asau*—that softness; *bhāvaḥ*—emotion; *ucyaṭe*—is called.

When devotional service is executed on the transcendental platform of pure goodness, it is like a sun-ray of love for Kṛṣṇa. At such a time, devotional service causes the heart to be

softened by various tastes, and one is then situated in *bhāva* [emotion].

[Quoted in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 23.5*  
(Additional reference)]

### *śuddha-sattva*

“The primary characteristic of *bhāva* is *śuddha-sattva-viśeṣātmā*; it is the stage wherein *śuddha-sattva* enters the devotee's heart. *Śuddha-sattva* is not the material mode of goodness, but the Lord's internal potency — whose function is to revive the living entity's dormant love for Kṛṣṇa.”

[*Waves of Devotion*]  
(Additional reference)]

### *prema-sūryāṁśu*

“*Bhāva* is like the first ray of the sun of *prema* which will soon rise in the heart.”

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.3.1*]

## **How *bhāva* is obtained**

### 1. Through spiritual practices:

- *Vaidhi sādhana*
  - An example is Nārada Muni who followed the directions of the *bhakti-vedāntas*
- *rāgānuga sādhana*
  - In the *Padma Purāṇa* there is the story of a neophyte devotee who, in order to raise herself to the ecstatic platform, danced all night to invoke the Lord's grace upon her

## 2. Through special mercy:

- Firstly, of the pure devotee
  - Prahlaḍa had natural attraction for Kṛṣṇa, because he had Nārada's association in the womb
  - Mgrari, the hunter was transformed by Nārada's mercy
- Secondly, of the Lord
  - This is compared to an honorary degree; one cannot expect it and just wait for it.

Special mercy can be shown simply by speaking, simply by glancing and simply by good wishes.

This apparently accidental development of ecstatic feelings through the causeless mercy of Kṛṣṇa can be divided into three groups: simply by speaking, simply by glancing and simply by good wishes.

1. In the *Nāradiya Purāṇa* there is a statement about development of ecstatic love simply by speaking. Lord Kṛṣṇa said to Nārada, "O best of the *brāhmaṇas*, I wish that you may develop unalloyed devotional service to Me, which is full of transcendental bliss and all auspiciousness."
2. In the *Skanda Purāṇa* there is a statement about developing ecstatic love toward Kṛṣṇa simply by glancing. It is stated, "When the inhabitants of Jāṅgala Province saw the Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, they were so stricken with feeling that they could not withdraw their glance from Him."
3. As far as heartfelt wishes are concerned, there is a statement in the *Śuka-saṁhitā* where Nārada tells Śrīla Vyāsadeva, "You have a son who is the greatest devotee of the Personality of Godhead, and I can observe that

without any following of the regulative principles of devotional service, he is already enriched with many of the symptoms achieved by the execution of devotional service after many, many births."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, pages 133-134]

Prahlāda's ecstatic love was by the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

'As for ecstatic love of Kṛṣṇa, there is a statement in the Seventh Canto, Fourth Chapter, verse 36, of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam*, in which Nārada addresses King Yudhiṣṭhira, "My dear King, it is very difficult to describe the character of Prahlāda. He developed a natural attraction for Kṛṣṇa, and whatever I can explain about his character will simply be an arrangement of words; his actual character is impossible to describe." This means that Nārada himself admitted that the natural development of Prahlāda's ecstatic love was by the grace of Lord Kṛṣṇa.'

[Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 134]

## Chapter 18 – Character of One in Ecstatic Love

In this chapter the focus is on nine symptoms of *bhāva* which Rūpa Gosvāmī has listed. The table provides a quick overview and more detail follows in the text below. We have also addressed the topic of shadow attachment. One can ‘borrow’ ecstasy from the association of advanced devotees or from staying in the holy *dhāma*. Such symptoms are temporary and not of the same depth and intensity as *bhāva*.

Topics	Nine Symptoms of <i>bhāva</i>		
9 symptoms of <i>bhāva</i>	<b>Utilization of time:</b> in service with body, mind and words	<b>Perseverance:</b> one who is undisturbed, when causes for disturbance are present	<b>Pridelessness:</b> When a devotee with all pure realizations is not proud.
	<b>Detachment:</b> senses always desire sense enjoyment, but when a devotee develops transcendental love for Kṛṣṇa, then no more such attraction	<b>Great hope:</b> I have no love for Kṛṣṇa, nor for the causes of developing love of Kṛṣṇa—namely, hearing and chanting.  Still I continue to hope	<b>Eagerness:</b> through those lips comes a sound vibration which drives one madder than a mad elephant. I want so much to see Him at Vṛndāvana!
	<b>Attachment to chanting:</b>  the daughter of King Vṛṣabhānu is now shedding tears and she is anxiously chanting your name, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa	<b>Eager to glorify Kṛṣṇa:</b>  Kṛṣṇa’s beautiful activities attract my heart, and I do not know what to do.	<b>Love for Holy Dhāma:</b>  Pure devotee visits all the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and remembers the Lord.

## Nine symptoms of *bhāva*

1. *avyartha-kālatvaṁ* — Utilization of time. Constant engagement in devotional service, twenty-four hours a day.
2. *kṣāntir* — Perseverance. To remain tolerant and patient, even amid great disturbance.
3. *viraktir* — Detachment. Complete indifference to objects of sense gratification.
4. *māna-sūnyatā* — Pridelessness. One feels humble, even though he is extremely elevated.
5. *āśā-bandhaḥ* — Hope against hope. Firm faith that Kṛṣṇa will deliver one to the highest perfection, even though one feels low and utterly unqualified to achieve it on his own.
6. *samutkaṅṭhā* — Intense eagerness for achieving pure loving service.
7. *nāma-gāne sadā ruciḥ* — Constant attraction to chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa.
8. *āsaktis tad-guṇākhyāne* — Addiction to glorifying Kṛṣṇa's qualities.
9. *prītis tad-vasati-sthale* — Love for living in the Lord's *Dhāma*.

## Utilization of time

An unalloyed devotee who has developed ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa is always engaging his words in reciting prayers to the Lord. Within the mind he is always thinking of Kṛṣṇa, and with his body he either offers obeisances by bowing down before the Deity or engages in some other service. During these ecstatic activities he sometimes sheds tears. In this way his whole life is engaged in the service of the Lord, with not a moment wasted on any other engagement.

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 135]

## Detachment

There are two types of detachment: *vairāgya* and *viraktir*. Before one achieves the stage of *bhāva*, he may be able to manifest *vairāgya*; he can keep himself forcibly separated from the objects of sense gratification, and thus control his senses. At the stage of *bhāva*, however, one manifests a superior type of detachment. This superior detachment is *viraktir*, wherein one completely loses all taste for the objects of the senses. Thus his senses remain entirely controlled, even if he is directly in the midst of sense objects.

Due to self-realization, one becomes fully aware of how insignificant and helpless one is. It is impossible to achieve anything on one's own, not to mention achieving the highest, most rare thing: *kṛṣṇa-prema*. Thus the devotee becomes despondent.

However, self-realization also causes one to understand the omnipotence of the Lord, and the unfathomable affection He has for all living entities. Therefore, although one is completely unable to achieve anything on his own, he is sure that Kṛṣṇa will help him. Thus he becomes fully confident of achieving the highest success, in spite of his disqualifications.

## Pridelessness

“When a devotee, in spite of possessing all the qualities of pure realization, is not proud of his position, he is called pride-less. In the *Padma Purāṇa* it is stated that King Bhagīratha was the emperor above all other kings, yet he developed such ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa that he became a mendicant and went out begging even to the homes of his political enemies and untouchables. He was so humble that he respectfully bowed down before them.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 137]

## Great hope

“In this connection, one prayer by Rūpa Gosvāmī is sufficient to exemplify this hopefulness. He says, “I have no love for Kṛṣṇa, nor for the causes of developing love of Kṛṣṇa—namely, hearing and chanting. And the process of *bhakti-yoga*, by which one is always thinking of Kṛṣṇa and fixing His lotus feet in the heart, is also lacking in me. As far as philosophical knowledge or pious works are concerned, I don’t see any opportunity for me to execute such activities. But above all, I am not even born of a nice family. Therefore I must simply pray to You, Gopījana-vallabha [Kṛṣṇa, maintainer and beloved of the *gopīs*]. I simply wish and hope that some way or other I may be able to approach Your lotus feet, and this hope is giving me pain, because I think myself quite incompetent to approach that transcendental goal of life.” The purport is that under this heading of *āśā-bandha*, one should continue to hope against hope that some way or other he will be able to approach the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 137]

## Eagerness for achieving the desired success

This intense eagerness is very nicely expressed by Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura in his book *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta*. He says, “I am eagerly waiting to see that boy of Vṛndāvana whose bodily beauty is captivating the whole universe, whose eyes are always bounded by black eyebrows and expanded like lotus petals, and who is always eagerly glancing over His devotees and therefore moving slightly here and there. His eyes are always moist, His lips are coloured like copper, and through those lips there comes a sound vibration which drives one madder than a mad elephant. I want so much to see Him at Vṛndāvana!”

[Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 138]

## Attachment to chanting the Holy Names of the Lord

In the same *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* there is another statement, about the chanting of Rādhārāṇī. It is said by one of the associates of Rādhārāṇī, "O Lord Govinda, the girl who is the daughter of King Vṛṣabhānu is now shedding tears, and She is anxiously chanting Your holy name—'Kṛṣṇa! Kṛṣṇa!' "

[Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 138]

## Eagerness to describe the Lord's transcendental qualities

Attachment for chanting the glories of the Lord is also expressed in the *Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta* as follows: "What shall I do for Kṛṣṇa, who is pleasing beyond all pleasurable conceptions, and who is naughtier than all restless boys? The idea of Kṛṣṇa's beautiful activities is attracting my heart, and I do not know what I can do!"

[Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 138]

## Perseverance and love for living in the *dhāma*

Perseverance and love for living in the *dhāma* naturally awakens in the stage of *bhāva*. After all, the *dhāma* is a replica of the spiritual world.

*ṛṇdāvanam parityajya padam ekam na gacchati*

[*Yāmala-tantra*,

Quoted in *Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta* 1.5.461]

"Kṛṣṇa does not leave Vṛṇdāvana, not even by a single step." So naturally the devotee who has great ecstatic attachment for Kṛṣṇa also does not desire to ever leave such a place.

He will also persevere in his attempts to remain in the holy *dhāma* and to remain in the consciousness that prevails in the abode of the Lord.

## ***Raty-ābhāsa***

2 types: shadow attachment and *parā* attachment

### Shadow attachment

If someone, without undergoing the regulative principles of devotional service or without being guided by a bona fide spiritual master, shows such imitative attachment, this is called shadow attachment. Sometimes it is found that a person actually attached to material enjoyment or salvation has the good fortune to associate with pure devotees while they are engaged in chanting the holy name of the Lord. By the good grace of the Lord one may also cooperate and join in the chanting. At that time, simply by the association of such pure devotees, the moon-like rays from their hearts reflect on him, and by the influence of the pure devotees he may show some likeness of attachment caused by inquisitiveness, but this is very flickering.

### *Parā* Attachment

And if by the manifestation of such shadow attachment one feels the disappearance of all material pangs, then it is called *parā* attachment.

Such shadow attachment and *parā* attachment can develop if one associates with a pure devotee or visits holy places like Vṛndāvana or Mathurā, and if an ordinary man develops such attachment for Kṛṣṇa and fortunately performs devotional activities in the association of pure devotees, he can also rise to the platform of pure devotional service. The conclusion is that transcendental attachment is so powerful that if such attachment is seen manifested even in some common man, by

the association of a pure devotee it can bring one to the perfectional stage. But such attachment for Kṛṣṇa cannot be invoked in a person without his being sufficiently blessed by the association of pure devotees.

[*Waves of Devotion*]

## ***Bhāva* attracts Kṛṣṇa**

“The fragrance of the flower of *bhāva-bhakti* of a devotee forcibly attracts Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Lord, like a bee.”

[*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* – Intro by Bon Mahārāja]

## Chapter 19 – Devotional Service in Pure Love of God

Love of God is rarely attained. The word love only exists in relationship with Kṛṣṇa. The chapter gives a quick overview of Love of God, which we have provided in the table and following paragraphs.

Topics	<i>Kṛṣṇa-prema</i> <b>Chapter 19</b>		
Pure Love of God	When one's desire to love Kṛṣṇa in one's particular relationship becomes intensified, this is known as pure love of Godhead.	The word love can be applied only in relationship with the Personality of Godhead. In the material world, love is not applicable at all.	Chanting the holy names of the Lord, he sometimes cries, sometimes talks wildly, sometimes sings and sometimes—without caring for any outsider—dances like a madman.
	Lord's special Mercy "The <i>gopīs</i> did not study the <i>Vedas</i> to achieve Me. Had never been to holy places of pilgrimage. Did not execute any regulative principle. Did not undergo austerity. Simply by My association they have attained the highest perfection of devotional service."	<i>Nārada-pañcarātra</i> A <i>Vaiṣṇava</i> who is incessantly thinking of the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa is to be known as a pure <i>Vaiṣṇava</i> . Anyone in the ecstasy of love of God, cannot even perceive the material distress or happiness coming from the body or mind	Jīva Gosvāmī not yet active at the time the <i>Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu</i> was written (1552)

## What is love?

“When one's desire to love Kṛṣṇa in one's particular relationship becomes intensified, this is known as pure love of Godhead.

The word love can be actually applied only in relationship with the Personality of Godhead. In the material world, love is not applicable at all.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 143]

## Dancing like a madman

“A devotee, in the course of executing the regulative principles of devotional service, develops his natural Kṛṣṇa consciousness, and being thus softened at heart he chants and dances like a madman. While performing chanting of the holy name of the Lord, he sometimes cries, sometimes talks wildly, sometimes sings and sometimes—without caring for any outsider—dances like a madman.”

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.2.40

Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion* page 144]

## Incessantly thinking of Kṛṣṇa

“In the *Nārada-pañcarātra* pure, unalloyed devotional service is explained as being without any motive for personal benefit. If a devotee is continuously in love with Lord Kṛṣṇa and his mind is always fixed upon Him, that devotional attitude will prove to be the only means of attracting the attention of the Lord. In other words, a *Vaiṣṇava* who is incessantly thinking of the form of Lord Kṛṣṇa is to be known as a pure *Vaiṣṇava*.”

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 145]

## Cannot perceive material distress or happiness coming from the body or mind

In the *Nārada-pañcarātra* Lord Śiva therefore tells Pārvatī, “My dear supreme goddess, you may know from me that any person

who has developed the ecstasy of love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and who is always merged in transcendental bliss on account of this love, cannot even perceive the material distress or happiness coming from the body or mind."

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 146]

## Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī's love

[Experiencing previous attachment to Kṛṣṇa (*pūrva-rāga*), Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī thought:] "Since I have heard the name of a person called Kṛṣṇa, I have practically lost My good sense. Then, there is another person who plays His flute in such a way that after I hear the vibration, intense madness arises in My heart. And again there is still another person to whom My mind becomes attached when I see His beautiful lightning-like effulgence in His picture. Therefore I think that I am greatly condemned, for I have become simultaneously attached to three persons. It would be better for Me to die because of this."

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Antya-līlā* 1.142]

(Additional reference)

## Attaining Kṛṣṇa-prema

Love is the fruit of the holy name

*kṛṣṇa-nāmera phala — 'kṛṣṇa, sarva-śāstre kaya*

"All scriptures say that the fruit of chanting the Holy Names is to develop love for Krishna."

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Ādi-līlā* 7.86]

(Additional reference)

Service to the devotee is the root cause of *prema*

*śuddha-bhakata-caraṇa-reṇu, bhajana-anukūla, bakata seva  
parama siddhi prema latikara mula*

To worship the dust of the lotus feet of the pure devotees is most auspicious; service to the devotees is the root cause of the creeper of love of God.

[Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura]  
(Additional reference)

## The mercy of Lord Nityānanda

*heno nitāi bine bhāi, rādhā-kṛṣṇa pāite nāi*

Without the mercy of Lord Nityānanda it is not possible to attain Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa

[Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura]  
(Additional reference)

## Special mercy of the Lord

Kṛṣṇa tells Uddhava, “The *gopīs* in Vṛndāvana did not study the *Vedas* to achieve Me. Nor had they ever been in holy places of pilgrimage. Nor did they devoutly execute any regulative principle. Nor did they undergo any kind of austerity. It is simply by My association that they have attained the highest perfection of devotional service.”

[From *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 11.12.7  
Quoted in *The Nectar of Devotion*, page 144]

## Stages of *Prema*

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains the nature of *prema* in his *Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta*, Chapter 7 and also in *Daśa-mūla Tattva*, Chapter 11. When quoting the Ṭhākura, I have placed the text in quotation marks and my own comments in brackets.

*Prema* - “When it has the power to overcome anything else. When it has become firm enough to withstand all contrary mood.”

*Sneha* - “When *prema* achieves the quality of illuminating the consciousness and melting the heart it is called *sneha*. It has two

varieties *ghṛta-sneha* and *madhu-sneha*. That *sneha* which is extremely dignified is called *ghṛta-sneha*. That *sneha* which is extremely possessive is called *madhu-sneha*. *Rati* has two types: I am his and he is mine. *Madhu-sneha* has the form of 'He is mine.' Rādhārāṇī has such *rati*.

*Māna* - "When *sneha* begins to show duplicity it becomes *māna*." (For example, Rādhārāṇī may show anger and may not be willing to associate with Kṛṣṇa, to increase His attachment for her). "When *Māna* appears even Kṛṣṇa shows fear – out of love."

*Praṇaya* - "When *māna* becomes confidential with constant regard for Kṛṣṇa it is called *praṇaya*."

*Rāga* - "When extreme sorrow and joy become experienced in *praṇaya*, it becomes *rāga*. When *sneha* becomes full of desire it becomes *raga*. When *Rāga* appears even a moment of separation becomes intolerable."

*Anurāga* - "When *rāga* realizes the dear object in newer and newer ways and itself appears in newer and newer ways, it is *anurāga*. With the appearance of *anurāga* the person desires to take birth as an inanimate object just to be close to Kṛṣṇa."

*Mahābhāva* - "When *Anurāga* attains a stage of madness with unequalled amazing appearance, it is called *mahābhāva*."

## More on the nature of *Kṛṣṇa-prema*

"After the mellow of servitorship, there are the mellows of friendship and parental love, which increase to subordinate spontaneous love. The greatness of the love found in friends like Subala extends to the standard of ecstatic love of Godhead.

PURPORT:

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura says that the mellow of neutrality increases to simple love of Godhead. In the mellow of servitorship, love of Godhead increases beyond that to affection, counter-love (anger based on love), love and attachment.

Similarly, the mellow of friendship increases to affection, counter-love, love, attachment and sub-attachment. It is the same with the mellow of parental affection. The special feature of the mellow of friendship exhibited by personalities like Subala is that it increases from fraternal affection to counter-love, to spontaneous attachment, to subordinate attachment, and finally to the ecstasy where all the ecstatic symptoms continuously exist.”

[Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 23.56]

(Additional reference)

“When the materialistic aspect of *ahantā* and *mamatā* is extremely deep, one remains in the cycle of birth and death. When a causeless particle of faith develops and one thinks of becoming a *vaiṣṇava* and serving the Lord, *ahantā* and *mamatā* becomes slightly spiritualized and the *jīva* becomes qualified for devotional service. At the stage of *sādhū-saṅga*, the tinge of spiritualization becomes more concrete. At the stage of *anishthita bhajana-kriyā*, the spiritualization is localized in one place, whereas the material aspect is in full force. At the stage of *niṣṭhā*, spiritualization becomes more pervasive and the materialistic influence decreases somewhat. At the stage of *ruci*, spiritualization of me and mine becomes dominant and the materialistic aspect becomes localized. At the stage of *āsakti* the spiritual aspect becomes complete and the material aspect becomes a trace. At the stage of *bhāva* the spiritual aspect becomes thorough and the material aspect becomes a shadow, occasionally appearing. At the stage of *prema*, the spiritual aspect becomes extremely intense and the material aspect is completely absent.

At the stage of *bhajana-kriyā*, meditation on the Lord is mixed with other topics and is temporary. At the stage of *niṣṭhā*, meditation on the Lord has a trace of other topics. At the stage of *ruci*, other topics are absent and the meditation is long lasting. At the stage of *āsakti*, meditation becomes deep. During

*bhāva*, by meditation, the Lord appears in the mind. Achieving *prema*, along with the appearance of the Lord in the mind, there is direct association with the Lord.”

[*Mādhurya Kaṣambinī*]  
(Additional reference)

“Upon seeing the sign of *sūddīpta-sāttvika*, Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya could immediately understand the transcendental ecstatic transformation in the body of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Such a sign takes place only in the bodies of eternally liberated devotees.

PURPORT:

The word *sūddīpta-sāttvika* is explained as follows by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura: “The *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* mentions eight kinds of transcendental transformations in the bodies of advanced devotees. These are sometimes checked by the devotee, and there are two stages of such checking, technically known as *dhūmāyitā* and *jvalitā*. The *dhūmāyitā* (smoking) stage is exhibited when only one or two transformations are slightly present and it is possible to conceal them. When more than two or three transcendental transformations are manifest and it is still possible to conceal them, although with great difficulty, that stage is called *jvalitā* (lighted). When four or five symptoms are exhibited, the *dīpta* (blazing) stage has been reached. When five, six or all eight symptoms are simultaneously manifest, that position is called *uddīpta* (inflamed). And when all eight symptoms are multiplied a thousand times and are all visible at once, the devotee is in the *sūddīpta* (intensely inflamed) stage. *Nitya-siddha-bhakta* indicates the eternally liberated associates of the Lord. Such devotees enjoy the company of the Lord in four relationships — as servant, friend, parent or conjugal lover.”

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 6.12*]  
(Additional reference)

*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya Chapter 23* is called:

“Life’s ultimate goal – love of Godhead”

This chapter is part of the explanations given by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to Sanātana Gosvāmī in *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Madhya Lila* chapters 20 to 23. These chapters are quite parallel to the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* and many verses are quoted here from the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*. Both in the text and in Śrīla Prabhupāda’s purports, we get more detail on this subject matter of *Prema*.

[*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 23.1-65*]

(Additional reference)

## **Viraha Gītā**

When Akrūra comes to take Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma away from Vṛndāvana, for the *gopīs* the world comes to an end; they express their feeling in the ‘*Viraha Gītā*’- *the Song of Separation*, from *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.39.16-31*. In the final verse the *gopīs* address Kṛṣṇa as, “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhaveti.” Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura gives a very nice explanation. The *gopīs* use the name ‘Govinda’, addressing Kṛṣṇa as ‘He who gives pleasure to the cows’ or ‘He who gives pleasure to the senses’. The *gopīs* say, “Now that you are going, our senses (our cows) are just wandering off with you. You ought to give them protection.” Then considering that hard-hearted Kṛṣṇa may not care, they remind Kṛṣṇa of His mother; “You are not going to kill your mother, Oh Dāmodara, who bound you to a grinding mortar with her love?” Finally, they rest their case with the name ‘Mādhava’- the husband of the Goddess of fortune. “Oh Mādhava, if we would have been your wives, we would have been your property, and you could have killed us or done with us as you like; but we are the property of others, you have no right to destroy what is theirs.”

For them there was no existence without Kṛṣṇa; such was the depth of their love. When Kṛṣṇa finally left, they immediately

began to remember Kṛṣṇa's wonderful activities among themselves. We pray for a drop of that ocean of love of God. The remaining chapters of *The Nectar of Devotion* deal at length with love of God in various mellows.

## ***Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* completed in 1552**

By rough calculation it is estimated that Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī finished *Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* in Gokula Vṛndāvana in the year 1552.

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 401, Concluding Words]

### **Jīva Gosvāmī not yet active**

Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī thus concludes the first division of the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu*, offering up his treatise for the transcendental pleasure of Sanātana Gosvāmī, who has established the transcendental beauty, and of Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, Śrī Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī and Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī. It appears from this statement that the great Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī was not yet active when *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* was written.

[*The Nectar of Devotion*, page 147]

## Epilogue

The *Bhakti-ratnākara* describes how Śrīla Rūpa and Sanātana Gosvāmī resided in Vṛndāvana. On some occasion Rūpa Gosvāmī desired to make a special offering to the Deities. That day a young village girl supplied him with milk, first class rice and other ingredients to make sweet rice. Later, Sanātana Gosvāmī tasted the *mahā-prasādam* and commented on how extraordinary that sweet rice was. He enquired, “Where did you get such exquisite ingredients?”

Rūpa Gosvāmī replied that a young village girl had brought a donation. Sanātana Gosvāmī was quiet and then exclaimed, “Oh! You have accepted service from Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī! That we cannot do! We are her eternal servants only.”

For the six *gosvāmīs* who were immersed in an ocean of *prema*, the boundaries between the material world and the spiritual world, which are impenetrable for ordinary persons, had become an open border and they traversed between the spiritual and material reality.

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī writes in the *Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 1.2.187

*īhā yasya harer dāsyē  
karmaṇā manasā girā  
nikhilāsv api avasthāsu  
jīvan-muktaḥ sa ucyate*

“A person acting in Kṛṣṇa consciousness [or, in other words, in the service of Kṛṣṇa] with his body, mind, intelligence and words is a liberated person, even within the material world, although he may be engaged in many so-called material activities.”

In the *Gaura-gaṇoddeśa-dīpikā* Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī is identified as Śrī Rūpa mañjarī. She is the intimate assistant of Lalitā devī, who is the foremost of the *aṣṭa-sakhīs* and who is the direct servant of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Sanātana Gosvāmī is Lavaṅga-mañjarī, an assistant of Campakalatā. These great personalities

came into this world to assist Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu in spreading his mission. Śrīnivāsa Ācārya writes, *nānā-sāstra-vicāraṇaika-nipuṇau sad-dharma-saṁsthāpakau*, that the six *gosvāmīs* scrutinizingly studied the scripture to present evidence in support of the teachings they had heard from Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Not only were they great scholars, but they themselves had fully realized those teachings and therefore their writings are pure and transcendental. They actually transport the reader to the ocean of transcendental love and give him entrance into the spiritual world. Śrīla Prabhupāda carried Kṛṣṇa and the spiritual world within his heart. He had heard from his spiritual master, the most learned Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, and he had cent percent dedicated himself to fulfilling his desires. He was educated through the medium of English and was therefore the perfect person, specially chosen and empowered by Kṛṣṇa to bring all this knowledge to the modern western world.

*The Nectar of Devotion* not only provides a new outlook on the world; it also changes our taste. It can turn crows into swans, ordinary men into saintly personalities. A blind man can see luminaries in the sky, a dumb man can recite poetry and a lame man will cross over mountains. In this way we can become empowered beyond our imagination and we aspire with great eagerness to enter into this ocean of transcendental love of God.

May the world become a better place!

*svasty astu viśvasya khalah prasīdatām  
dhyāyantu bhūtāni śivaṁ mitho dhiyā  
manaś ca bhadraṁ bhajatād adhokṣaje  
āveśyatām no matir apy ahaitukī*

May there be good fortune throughout the universe, and may all envious persons be pacified. May all living entities become calm by practising *bhakti yoga*, for by accepting devotional service they will think of each other's welfare. Therefore let us all

engage in the service of the supreme transcendence, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and always remain absorbed in thought of Him.

[*Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 5.18.9]

## Glossary of Sanskrit terms

**Acyuta:** a name for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who can never fall down from His position.

**Ādityas:** the demigods who are descendants of Kaśyapa Muni's wife, Aditi.

**Āmalakī tree:** a tree that Nārada Muni brought from the spiritual world to the material realm to please the Supreme Lord. Its fruits are very rich in vitamin C.

**Amṛta:** nectar, the food of the gods, which makes the drinker immortal.

**Ānandamaya:** full of bliss in spiritual realization; Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

**Anartha-nivṛtti:** a stage in the progressive development of devotion to Lord Kṛṣṇa in which one is freed from unwanted desires and karmic reactions; cleansing the heart of all unwanted things

**Anarthas:** unwanted bad habits.

**Anurāga:** sub attachment in ecstatic love of God.

**Anusmṛti:** When remembrance is uninterrupted, it becomes concentrated and is called meditation. When meditation expands and becomes constant, it is called anusmṛti. By uninterrupted and unceasing anusmṛti one enters the stage of samādhi, or spiritual trance.

**Arcana:** the procedures followed for worshipping the arcā-vigraha, the Deity in the temple; engaging all the senses in the service of the Lord.

**Arjuna:** the third son of Pāṇḍu and intimate friend of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa became his chariot driver and spoke the Bhagavad-gītā to him on the battlefield of Kurukṣetra.

**Artha:** economic development.

**Āsana:** seat, or throne; a sitting posture in yoga practice.

**Āśrama:** one of the four spiritual orders of life – brahmacārī-āśrama, or student life; gṛhastha-āśrama, or married life; vānaprastha, or retired life; and sannyāsa-āśrama, or the renounced order of life; the home of the spiritual master, a place where spiritual practices are executed.

**Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa:** Born in the 18th century in the Baleswar district of Orissa, he was initially a learned scholar of the Madhva-sampradāya. He was converted to Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism and became the ardent follower of Viśvanātha Cakravartī Thākura. He is especially renowned for his commentary on Vedānta-sūtra called Govinda-bhāṣya; Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa was a highly renounced pure devotee.

**Balarāma (Baladeva):** the first plenary expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa. He appeared as the son of Rohiṇī and elder brother of Lord Kṛṣṇa. Also known as Balabhadra or Baladeva, present as one of the three Jagannātha deities.

**Bali Māhārāja:** the king of the demons who gave three paces of land to Vamanadeva, the dwarf incarnation of Lord Viṣṇu, and thereby became a great devotee by surrendering everything to Him.

**Bhagavad-gītā:** a seven-hundred verse record of a conversation between Lord Kṛṣṇa and His disciple, Arjuna. The conversation took place between two armies minutes before the start of an immense fratricidal battle. Kṛṣṇa teaches the science of the Absolute Truth and the importance of devotional service to the despondent Arjuna, and it contains the essence of all Vedic wisdom.

**Bhajana:** this term generally indicates the service and worship of the Supreme Lord executed by Vaiṣṇavas from the neophytes up to those who are fully God-realized. The main form that this service takes is the hearing and chanting of the holy name.

Otherwise, the term refers to the singing of devotional songs about Kṛṣṇa, usually accompanied by musical instruments

**Bhakti-rasa:** the mellow derived from devotional service.

**Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu:** one of the principal works on the science of bhakti-yoga, written by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī in the sixteenth century, a confidential associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. All of its conclusions are elaborately supported by reference to the Vedic literatures.

**Bhakti:** devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

**Bhāva-bhakti:** the platform of purified goodness when one's heart melts in devotional service; the first stage of love of Godhead.

**Bhāva:** the stage of transcendental love experienced after transcendental affection.

**Bhṛgu:** the most powerful of the sages born directly from Brahmā.

**Bhukti:** material enjoyment

**Bilvamaṅgala Ṭhākura:** a great devotee-author, whose works include the Kṛṣṇa-karṇāmṛta, the confidential pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

**Brahma-saṁhitā:** a very ancient Sanskrit scripture recording the prayers of Brahmā offered to the Supreme Lord, Govinda.

**Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa:** one of the eighteen Purāṇas. It contains prayers and invocations addressed to Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, as well as descriptions of His transcendental pastimes with Sṛimatī Rādhārāṇī and the other cowherd girls of Vṛndāvana.

**Brahmā:** the first created living being and secondary creator of the material universe. Directed by Lord Viṣṇu, he creates all life forms in the universes.

**Brahmana:** the intelligent class of men, according to the traditional vedic system.

**Brahmānanda:** the spiritual bliss derived from impersonal Brahman realization.

**Bṛhaspati:** the spiritual master of King Indra and chief priest for the demigods.

**Caitanya-caritāmṛta:** translated as "the character of the living force in immortality," it is the title of the authorized biography of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu written in the late sixteenth century and compiled by Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, presenting the Lord's pastimes and teachings.

**Campakalatā:** one of the 8 head principal gopīs of Vṛndāvana.

**Dakṣa:** one of the sons of Brahmā and a chief progenitor of universal population.

**Dāmodara:** a name for Śrī Kṛṣṇa meaning "one who is tied around the waist with rope." This name refers to the Lord's pastime of allowing Mother Yaśodā to bind Him.

**Deity:** As Lord Kṛṣṇa appears in the sound of His holy name, so also He appears within the arcā-avatāra, His incarnation as the Deity worshiped in the temple. The central focus of every ISKCON temple around the world is the worship of Kṛṣṇa's Deity form as represented in stone, metal, wood or as painted pictures.

**Devahūti:** the daughter of Svāyambhuva Manu who was the wife of Kardama Muni and the mother of the Lord's incarnation Lord Kapila.

**Dhāma:** abode, place of residence; usually refers to the Lord's abodes.

**Dharma:** religious principles; one's natural occupation. The capacity to render service, which is the essential quality of a living being.

**Dhruva Mahārāja:** a great devotee who at the age of five performed severe austerities and realized the Supreme

Personality of Godhead. He received an entire planet, the Pole Star.

**Dhūmāyitā:** the stage exhibited by a devotee when only one or two transformations are slightly present and it is possible to conceal them.

**Draupadī:** the daughter of King Drupada, wife of the Pāṇḍavas and a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa. She was born from a sacrificial fire to be the wife of Arjuna.

**Durgā:** Lord Śiva 's wife in a fierce form, presiding over material nature.

**Dvārakā:** the island kingdom of Lord Kṛṣṇa, lying off India's west coast, where He performed pastimes five thousand years ago.

**Gajendra:** the king of the elephants. He was saved from a crocodile by Lord Viṣṇu and awarded liberation.

**Ganapati:** A Demigod also known as Ganesha who is in charge of material opulence and freedom from misfortune.

**Gauḍīya Maṭha:** a Vaisnava institution, originally with 64 temples in India and elsewhere, founded by Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Thākura for propagating the sacred teachings of Lord Caitanya throughout India and the world.

**Gāyatrī:** a sacred mantra that a brāhmaṇa chants silently three times a day at sunrise, noon and sunset to attain the transcendental platform.

**Gopī-candana tilaka:** type of clay used for tilaka and for making auspicious markings on the body.

**Gopīs:** Gopāla Kṛṣṇa's cowherd girl friends, who are His most surrendered and confidential devotees.

**Gosvāmī:** a person who has his senses under full control.

**Govardhana:** a large hill dear to Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees. Kṛṣṇa held it up for seven days to protect His devotees in Vṛndāvana from a devastating storm sent by Indra.

**Govinda:** name of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa, meaning "One who gives pleasure to the land, the cows and the senses"

**Gujarat:** a province in north western India.

**Guru:** spiritual master; one of the three authorities for a Vaiṣṇava. Literally, this term means heavy. The spiritual master is called guru because he is heavy with knowledge.

**Hari-bhakti-vilāsa:** the ritual and devotional practices of the Gauḍīya-vaiṣṇava-sampradāya, codified into twenty chapters by Śrīla Sanātana Gosvāmī and Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī.

**Hari-nāma-saṅkīrtana:** congregational chanting of the holy names of the Supreme Lord.

**Hari:** the Supreme Lord, who removes all obstacles to spiritual progress.

**Haridāsa Ṭhākura:** although born in a Muslim family, he was a confidential associate of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. He was so absorbed in the nectar of the Holy Name that his regular practice was to chant 300,000 names of the Lord daily. Lord Caitanya made him the nāmācārya (teacher of chanting of the holy name).

**Holy Names/Maha Mantra:** a sixteen-word prayer composed of the names Hare, Kṛṣṇa, and Rāma: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare, Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare is the personal form of God's own happiness, His eternal consort, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī. Kṛṣṇa, "the all-attractive one," and Rāma, "the all-pleasing one," are names of God. This prayer means "My dear Rādhārāṇī and Kṛṣṇa, please engage me in Your devotional service." The Vedas recommend the chanting of the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra as the easiest and most sublime method of awakening one's dormant love of God.

**Indra:** the chief demigod of heaven and presiding deity of rain.

**Jagannātha Purī:** place of pilgrimage on the east coast of India where the deity of Jagannātha is worshiped

**Jīva (jīvātmā):** the living entity, who is an eternal soul, individual but part and parcel of the Supreme Lord.

**Jīva Gosvāmī:** one of the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana and the nephew of Rupa and Sanātana Gosvāmīs.

**Jñāna:** knowledge. Material jñāna does not go beyond the material body. Transcendental jñāna discriminates between matter and spirit. Perfect jñāna is knowledge of the body, the soul and the Supreme Lord.

**Jvalitā:** the stage exhibited by a devotee when more than two or three transcendental transformations are manifest and it is possible to conceal them with difficulty.

**Kali-yuga:** the "Age of Quarrel and Hypocrisy " The fourth and last age in the cycle of a mahā-yuga. This is the present age in which we are now living. It began 5,000 years ago and lasts for a total of 432,000 years. It is characterized by irreligious practice and stringent material miseries.

**Kāma:** lust; the desire to gratify one's own senses.

**Kaniṣṭha-adhikārī:** a neophyte devotee in lowest stage of Vaiṣṇava life.

**Kapila:** an incarnation of Kṛṣṇa who appeared in Satya-yuga as the son of Devahūti and Kardama Muni and expounded the devotional Sāṅkhya philosophy, the analysis of matter and spirit, as a means of cultivating devotional service to the Lord.

**Karmīs:** fruitive laborers.

**Kātyāyanī:** the material energy personified. She is also known as Durgā and Kālī and by many other names.

**King Vṛṣabhānu:** Father of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

**Kṛṣṇa-kathā:** discussions or topics spoken by or about Kṛṣṇa.

**Kṛṣṇa:** the original, two-armed form of the Supreme Lord, who is the origin of all expansions

**Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī:** author of the immortal Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, considered the greatest work on the life and philosophy of Lord Caitanya. He composed it in his nineties, despite bodily infirmity.

**Kṛṣṇaloka (Goloka Vṛndāvana):** the planet in the spiritual world where Kṛṣṇa resides.

**Kṣatriya:** third of the four orders of the varṇāśrama system. A warrior who is inclined to fight and lead others. The administrative or protective occupation according to the system of four social and spiritual orders.

**Kumāras:** four learned ascetic sons of Lord Brahmā appearing eternally as children, who became great devotees of the Lord and great authorities on devotional service.

**Kurukṣetra:** a holy place due to the penances of King Kuru. It was here that the great Mahābhārata war was fought and where Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke the Bhagavad-gītā to Arjuna, five thousand years ago.

**Kuṭi-nāṭi:** duplicity or fault-finding.

**Lalitā-devī:** one of the 8 head principal Gopis of Vṛndāvana.

**Lord Narasimha:** Nṛsimha-deva – the half-man, half-lion incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa, who killed the demon Hiranyakasipu and saved His devotee, Prahlada Mahārāja.

**Mādhurya-rasa:** the spiritual relationship in conjugal love in which the Supreme Lord and His devotee reciprocate as lovers.

**Madhusūdana:** a name of Kṛṣṇa, "killer of the Madhu demon."

**Madhvācārya:** a great thirteenth-century Vaiṣṇava spiritual master, who preached the theistic philosophy of pure dualism.

**Madhyama-adhikārī:** devotee who worships the Lord with firm faith, makes friends with His devotees, preaches to the innocent, and avoids atheists.

**Mahā-bhāva:** When bhāva ecstasy is intensified, it is called mahā-bhāva. The symptoms of mahā-bhāva are visible only in the bodies of eternal associates like the gopīs.

**Mahābhārata:** an ancient, Sanskrit, epic history of Bhārata, or India composed by Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsadeva, the literary incarnation of Godhead, in 100,000 verses. The essence of all Vedic philosophy, the Bhagavad-gītā, is a part of this great work.

**Mamatā:** an intimate attachment between the servitor and the served in devotional service.

**Maṅgala-ārati:** the daily pre-dawn worship ceremony honouring the Deity of the Supreme Lord.

**Marīci:** one of the great sages born directly from Lord Brahmā.

**Maruts:** the demigod associates of King Indra, the gods of the air. They number forty-nine and are sons of Diti.

**Māyā:** illusion; an energy of Kṛṣṇa's which deludes the living entity into forgetfulness of the Supreme Lord. That which is not, unreality, deception, forgetfulness, material illusion. Under illusion a man thinks he can be happy in this temporary material world. The nature of the material world is that the more a man tries to exploit the material situation, the more he is bound by māyā's complexities.

**Mayāvādī:** one who propounds the philosophy of Śāṅkarācārya, which basically holds that God is featureless and impersonal.

**Mokṣa:** liberation from material bondage.

**Mukti:** liberation of a conditioned soul from material consciousness and bondage.

**Naimiṣāraṇya:** a sacred forest in central India where the eighteen Purāṇas were spoken and which is said to be the hub of the universe.

**Nāmācārya:** ācārya of the chanting of the holy names (Haridāsa Ṭhākura).

**Nārada Muni:** a pure devotee of the Lord, one of the sons of Lord Brahmā, who travels throughout the universes in his eternal body, glorifying devotional service while delivering the science of bhakti.

**Nārada-pañcarātra:** Nārada Muni's book on the processes of Deity worship and mantra meditation.

**Nārāyaṇa:** a name for the majestic four-armed form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead meaning "He who is the source and goal of all living entities."

**Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura:** a renowned Vaiṣṇava spiritual master in the disciplic succession from Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, who is famous for his many compositions of devotional songs.

**Niṣṭhā:** firm faith

**Nityānanda Prabhu:** the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared as the principal associate of Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

**Pāda-sevanam:** the devotional process of serving at the Lord's feet.

**Padma Purāṇa:** one of the eighteen Purāṇas, or Vedic historical scriptures. It consists of conversations between Lord Śiva and his wife, Pārvatī.

**Parakīya:** the relationship between a married woman and her paramour; particularly the relationship between the damsels of Vṛndāvana and Kṛṣṇa.

**Pārvatī:** Sati, Lord Śiva's consort, meaning daughter of the mountain.

**Phālguna:** one of the months corresponding to January/February or February/March.

**Prahlāda Maharāja:** a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa who was persecuted by his atheistic father, Hiranyakaśipu, but was always protected by the Lord and ultimately saved by the Lord in the form of Nṛsimha-deva.

**Praṇaya:** that mellow of love when there is a possibility to receive direct honour, but it is avoided.

**Prasādam:** the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa." Food prepared for the pleasure of Kṛṣṇa and offered to Him with love and devotion.

**Prayojana:** the ultimate goal of life, to develop love of God.

**Prema-bhakta:** one who has attained pure love of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the highest perfectional stage in the progressive development of pure devotional service

**Rādhā-kunḍa:** a sacred pond near Govardhana Hill in Vraja that was created by Rādhārāṇī and her gopī companions. It is supreme among all the holy places in Vraja and the most exalted holy place for all Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.

**Rādhārāṇī:** Lord Kṛṣṇa's most intimate consort, His feminine counterpart who is the personification of the His internal, pleasure potency.

**Rāga:** attachment in ecstatic love of God.

**Rāgānuga-bhakti:** devotional service following the spontaneous loving service of the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana.

**Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī:** one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, the son of Tapana Misra.

**Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī:** one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, who appeared in 1495 as the son of Govardhana Majumdarā,

**Rāmāyaṇa:** the original epic history about Lord Rāmacandra and Sītā, written by Vālmīki Muni.

**Rāsa-līlā:** the group dancing of Kṛṣṇa and His cowherd girlfriends in His Vṛndāvana pastimes.

**Rasa:** mellow, or the sweet taste of a relationship, especially between the Lord and the living entities.

**Rati:** a strong attraction to God that precedes bhāva (mature ecstasy) and prema (mature love of God).

**Ruci:** Taste

**Rūpa Gosvāmī:** chief of the six great spiritual master Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana who were authorized by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu to establish and distribute the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He extensively researched the scriptures and established the philosophy taught by Lord Caitanya on an unshakable foundation.

**Rūpa-mañjarī:** the intimate servant of Lalitā-devī, who is one of the 8 principal gopis of Vṛndāvana.

**Rūpānuga:** one who follows in the footsteps of Rūpa Gosvāmī.

**Sādhana-bhakti:** following the rules and regulations of devotional service to develop natural love for Kṛṣṇa.

**Sādhū-saṅga:** the association of saintly persons.

**Sahajiyās:** a class of so-called devotees who, considering God cheap, ignore the scriptural injunctions and try to imitate the Lord's pastimes.

**Sāma Veda:** one of the four original Vedas consisting of musical settings of the sacrificial hymns and rich with beautiful songs played by the various demigods.

**Samādhi:** total absorption and trance of the mind and senses in consciousness of the Supreme Godhead and service to Him.

**Sanātana Gosvāmī:** one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana who was authorized by Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu to establish and distribute the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He was the older brother of Rūpa Gosvāmī and accepted by Rūpa Gosvāmī as his spiritual master.

**Sannyāsī:** one in the sannyāsa (renounced) order.

**Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya:** a famous logician, adviser to King Pratāparudra of Orissa who surrendered to Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

**Śāstra:** the revealed scriptures, obeyed by all those who follow the Vedic teachings. Śās means "to regulate and direct" and tra means "an instrument".

**Ṣaṭ-sandarbhā:** six Sanskrit works on the science of devotional service or Vaiṣṇava philosophy by Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī. These works present the entire philosophy and theology of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism in a systematic form. The Bhakti-sandarbhā deals with abhidheya-tattva, which is bhakti (devotion to Kṛṣṇa), and the Prīti-sandarbhā is concerned with prayojana-tattva, pure love of Godhead.

**Satī:** the wife of Lord Śiva and the daughter of Dakṣa, who burned herself alive when her father insulted her husband.

**Skanda Purāṇa:** one of the eighteen Purāṇas, or Vedic historical scriptures. It extensively describes Kali-yuga.

**Śloka:** a couplet of Sanskrit verse, especially one in which each line contains sixteen syllables.

**Smaraṇāvasthā:** When one attains this stage (varaṇa-daśā), he becomes attached to the hearing of kṛṣṇa-kathā. When one is able to chant in ecstasy, he attains the stage of smaraṇāvasthā, the stage of remembering kṛṣṇa-kathā. When one is able to chant in ecstasy, he attains the stage of smaraṇāvasthā, the stage of remembering"

**Sneha:** affection for Kṛṣṇa, at which stage the lover cannot be without the beloved.

**Śrāddha:** firm faith and confidence.

**Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura:** Sarasvatī Ṭhākura Gosvāmī Mahārāja Prabhupāda (1874-1937) the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, and thus the spiritual grandfather of the present day Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement.

**Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam:** the foremost of the eighteen Purāṇas, the complete science of God that establishes the supreme position of Lord Kṛṣṇa. It was glorified by Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu as the amalaṁ purāṇam, "the purest Purāṇa." Also known as the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, this is a work of eighteen thousand verses.

**Śrīnivāsācārya:** a chief follower of the Six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

**Subala:** the father of Śakuni and Gāndhārī. He was the King of Gāndhāra.

**Sudāmā:** one of the cowherd boy associates of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

**Śūdra:** a member of the fourth social order, labourer class, in the traditional Vedic social system. He is meant to render service to the three higher classes, namely the brāhmaṇas, the kṣatriyas, and the vaiśyas.

**Sukadeva Gosvāmī:** an exalted devotee who recited the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to King Parīkṣit during the last seven days of the King's life.

**Sūta Gosvāmī:** the son of Romaharsaṇa. He was the great sage who related the discourse between Parīkṣit Mahārāja and Śukadeva Gosvāmī, which forms the basis of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.

**Svarūpa:** the living entity's original eternal relationship of service to the Lord, the real form of the soul.

**Śyāma:** Kṛṣṇa appearing bluish in colour in the Dvāpara-yuga

**Tadīya:** everything belonging to the Lord.

**Tapas:** austerity or penance.

**Tilaka:** sacred clay markings placed on the forehead and other parts of the body to designate one as a follower of Viṣṇu, Rāma, Śiva, Vedic culture, etc.

**Tīrtha:** a sacred place of pilgrimage associated with a pastime of an incarnation of God, such as a holy river, a temple of the Lord, or the residence or place of meditation of a holy sage or saintly person.

**Tulasī:** a pure devotee in the form of a basil plant held sacred by the Vaiṣṇavas and is very dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Its leaves and mañjarīs (buds) are always offered to His lotus feet.

**Upaniṣads:** one-hundred and eight Sanskrit treatises that embody the philosophy of the Vedas. The term Upaniṣad literally means that which is learned by sitting close to the teacher.

**Uttama-adhikārī:** a first-class devotee who is expert in Vedic literature and has full faith in the Supreme Lord; he can deliver the whole world.

**Vaidhi bhakti:** devotional service under scheduled regulations.

**Vaikuṅṭha-lokas:** variegated spiritual planets situated in the brahma-jyotir.

**Vairāgya:** renunciation; detachment from matter and engagement of the mind in spirit.

**Vaisnava:** a devotee of the Supreme Lord Viṣṇu, or Kṛṣṇa

**Vaiśya:** member of the mercantile or agricultural class, according to the system of four social orders and four spiritual orders.

**Varāha Purāṇa:** one of the eighteen Purāṇas. It deals with the transcendental pastimes of the Lord's boar incarnation.

**Varṇāśrama:** the system of four social and four spiritual orders established in the Vedic scriptures and discussed by Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the Bhagavad-gītā.

**Vedānta-sūtra:** Śrīla Vyāsadeva's conclusive summary of Vedic philosophical knowledge, written in brief codes. The philosophy of the Absolute Truth, which finds implicit expression in the Vedas and the Upaniṣads, was put into a systematic and more explicit form in the Vedānta-sūtra.

**Vedas:** The system of eternal wisdom compiled by Śrīla Vyāsadeva, the literary incarnation of the Supreme Lord, for the gradual upliftment of all mankind from the state of bondage to the state of liberation.

**Vedic:** pertaining to a culture in which all aspects of human life are under the guidance of the Vedas.

**Vikarma:** unauthorized or sinful work, performed against the injunctions of revealed scriptures.

**Virakti:** Detachment

**Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura:** a great ācārya in the Caitanya school of Vaiṣṇavism who composed twenty-four valuable books on the science of bhakti.

**Vṛndāvana:** Kṛṣṇa's eternal abode, where He fully manifests His quality of sweetness; the village on this earth in which He enacted His childhood pastimes five thousand years ago. It is situated on the Western bank of the river Yamunā.

**Vyāsadeva:** the literary incarnation of God, and the compiler of the original Vedic scriptures. He is still living in this world.

**Yamarāja:** the demigod of death.

**Yamunā:** the sacred river where Kṛṣṇa performed many pastimes, flowing through Vṛndāvana.

**Yudhiṣṭhira:** the eldest of the Pāṇḍavas in the Mahābhārata, and the son of Dharmarāja or Yamarāja, the god of death.

**Yūthesvaris:** leader of a group of gopīs.

## About Kadamba Kanana Swami

Kadamba Kanana Swami is a renowned spiritual leader and initiating guru in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON).

His spiritual journey began in his youth, when, as a seeker of truth, he travelled to India. There he was inspired by the teachings of Śrīla Prabhupāda, and found his home in ISKCON, a movement founded by Śrīla Prabhupāda to spread the glories of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Sri Kṛṣṇa, all over the world. Kadamba Kanana Swami dedicated his life to serving that mission.

For many years he resided in the holy land of Vṛndāvana, occupying various managerial positions in the movement, including serving as president of the Kṛṣṇa Balarāma Temple for 5 years. In Śrīdhāma Māyāpur, he managed the construction of the *pushpa samādhi* of Śrīla Prabhupāda.

His chief passion, however, has always been to preach the sublime message of Kṛṣṇa and thus bring peace and joy to humanity. In 1997, he accepted *sannyāsa* from his spiritual master, Śrīpād Jayadvaita Swami. Since then he has been travelling and preaching widely across most continents.

He is also a teacher of scripture, and has lectured extensively on various courses run by academic institutes in Vṛndāvana and Māyāpur. For over 13 years, he has taught a course on *The Nectar of Devotion* at the Māyāpur Institute of Higher Education. This book serves as a reference for those who wish to explore the Eastern Division of *The Nectar of Devotion* in greater depth.

In addition to his profound lectures and courses on *śāstra*, he is an acclaimed *kirtaneer* who is famous for both his rocking tunes as well as his soul-stirring melodies in glorification of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He has numerous disciples and friends whose lives have

been transformed by his personal guidance and mentorship, as well as by his deep realizations about the Supreme Lord.

For more information on his preaching activities, his lectures and music, please visit the following websites:

[www.kksblog.com](http://www.kksblog.com)

[www.kkswami.com](http://www.kkswami.com)