

Bhakti Sandarbha

by

Srila Jiva Goswami

Part-8

Assorted Bhakti Topics - III

Anuccheda – 121

**Theme: Only Bhakti should be
Performed**

Thus it is established that bhakti is the abhidheya.

Though bhakti is taught in many places with mixture of karma or other processes, it should be understood that such statements are spoken to make persons who are fixed in other processes successful by relating the process to bhakti and to make them perform pure bhakti alone by developing a taste for bhakti.

In order to show that bhakti alone is the abhidheya, though its glory was explained previously, it will be explained again and again by all sages.

The intention is to show that other than bhakti nothing should be done.

Thus it is said that bhakti is the supreme dharma and bestows all desires.

3.25.44

etāvān eva loke 'smin
puṁsām niḥśreyasodayaḥ
tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena
mano mayy arpitam sthiram

The mind offered to me (**mano mayy arpitam**) with *pure bhakti* (**tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena**) with steadiness (**sthiram**) alone (**etāvān eva**) creates the highest benefit for men (**puṁsām niḥśreyasa udayaḥ**) in this world (**asmin loke**).

|| 2.3.10 ||

akāmaḥ sarva-kāmo vā
mokṣa-kāma udāra-dhīḥ |
tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena
yajeta puruṣam param ||

The person desiring destruction of all desires (**akāmaḥ**), the person with all desires (**sarva-kāmo vā**), and even the person with an intense desire for liberation (**mokṣa-kāma**), if he has good intelligence (**udāra-dhīḥ**), will worship the Supreme Lord (**yajeta puruṣam param**) with pure bhakti (**tīvreṇa bhakti-yogena**).

|| 11.15.35 ||

sarvāsām api siddhīnām
hetuḥ patir ahaṁ prabhuḥ
ahaṁ yogasya sāṅkhyasya
dharmasya brahma-vādinām

I am (**ahaṁ**) the cause, the maintainer and the master (**hetuḥ patir prabhuḥ**) of all siddhis of the yoga system (**yogasya sarvāsām api siddhīnām**), of jñāna (**sāṅkhyasya**), of niṣkāma-karma (**dharmasya**), and of the searchers for Brahman (**brahma-vādinām**).

In Skanda Purāṇa in the conversation between Sanat-kumāra and Mārkaṇḍeya it is said:

**viśiṣṭaḥ sarva-dharmāṇām dharmo viṣṇv-arcanam nṛṇām |
sarva-yajña-tapo-homa-tīrtha-snānaiś ca yat phalam ||
tat-phalam koṭi-guṇitam viṣṇum sampūjya cāpnuyāt |
tasmāt sarva-prayatnena nārāyaṇam ihārcayet ||**

The special dharma (**viśiṣṭaḥ dharmah**) among all dharmas (**sarva-dharmāṇām**) for humans (**nṛṇām**) is worship of Viṣṇu (**viṣṇv-arcanam**). The results (**phalam**) of all sacrifices, austerities, oblations, visits to holy places and baths in holy places (**sarva-yajña-tapo-homa-tīrtha-snānaiś ca**), if multiplied a million times (**tat-phalam koṭi-guṇitam**), are attained by worshipping Viṣṇu (**viṣṇum sampūjya cāpnuyāt**). Therefore (**tasmāt**) with all attention (**sarva-prayatnena**) one should worship Nārāyaṇa (**nārāyaṇam ihārcayet**).

aśvamedha-sahasrāṇām
sahasraṁ yaḥ karoti vai |
na tat phalam avāpnoti
mad-bhaktair yad avāpyate ||

The person who performs (**yaḥ karoti vai**) a million horse sacrifices (**aśvamedha-sahasrāṇām sahasraṁ**) does not attain (**na avāpnoti**) the result (**tat phalam**) that my devotee attains (**yad mad-bhaktair avāpyate**). (Bṛhan-nāradiya Purāṇa)

Bhakti destroys all inauspiciousness.

॥ 6.1.17 ॥

sadhrīcīno hy ayam loke
panthāḥ kṣemo 'kuto-bhayāḥ
suśīlāḥ sādhave yatra
nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇāḥ

The path followed by persons (**ayam loke panthāḥ**) who are friendly, virtuous (**suśīlāḥ sādhave**), and surrendered to Nārāyaṇa (**nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇāḥ**) is certain (**sadhrīcīnaḥ**), auspicious (**kṣemaḥ**), and without fear of obstacles (**akuto-bhayāḥ**).

The commentary says, “The fear in jñāna caused by loneliness and the fear in karma caused by envy does not arise in bhakti.”

In Skanda Purāṇa, Dvārakā-māhātmya, the Lord says:

**mad-bhaktim vahatām puṁsām
iha loke pare 'pi vā |
nāsubham vidyate loke
kula-koṭim nayed divam ||**

The person who performs bhakti (**mad-bhaktim vahatām puṁsām**) has no inauspiciousness (**nāsubham vidyate**) in this or the next life (**iha loke pare 'pi vā loke**). He leads millions of his family members to the spiritual world (**kula-koṭim nayed divam**).

smṛte sakala-kalyāṇa-
bhājanam yatra jāyate |
puruṣam tam ajam nityam
vrajāmi śaraṇam harim ||

I surrender (**vrajāmi śaraṇam**) to the eternal, unborn Lord (**tam ajam nityam puruṣam harim**). By remembering him (**yatra smṛte**), one possesses all auspiciousness (**sakala-kalyāṇa-bhājanam jāyate**). (Viṣṇu Purāṇa 5.17.17)

Bhakti destroys all obstacles:

|| 10.2.33 ||

tathā na te mād̥hava tāvakāḥ kvacid
bhraśyanti mārgāt tvayi baddha-sauhr̥dāḥ
tvayābhiguptā vicaranti nirbhayā
vināyakānīkapa-mūrdhasu prabho

O Mād̥hava, Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord of the goddess of fortune (**mād̥hava prabho**), if devotees (**tāvakāḥ**) completely in love with You (**tvayi baddha-sauhr̥dāḥ**) sometimes fall from the path of devotion (**kvacid bhraśyanti mārgāt**), they do not fall like nondevotees (**na tathā**), for You still protect them (**tvayābhiguptā**). Thus they fearlessly traverse (**vicaranti nirbhayā**) the heads of their opponents and continue to progress in devotional service (**vināyakānīkapa-mūrdhasu**).

muktā api prapadyante
punaḥ saṁsāra-vāsanām |
yady acintya-mahā-śaktau
bhagavaty aparādhinaḥ ||

If they offend the Lord (**yady bhagavaty aparādhinaḥ**)
endowed with inconceivable śakti (**acintya-mahā-śaktau**),
the liberated souls (**muktā api**) are again subject to
impressions of saṁsāra (**punaḥ saṁsāra-vāsanām**
prapadyante). (Vāsanā-bhāṣya)

They follow desires in saṁsāra again.

Or another meaning is as follows.

Just as the persons who without doubt disrespect you fall in the manner stated in the first verse, and just as without doubt your devotees do not fall, so both are equal in terms of certainty, of falling or not falling.

Because they are bound with friendship to you (baddha-sauhr̥dāḥ), having great faith as sādhakas, the devotees are protected by you and wander about traversing the heads of their opponents. It is thus said:

tvām sevatām sura-kṛtā bahavo 'ntarāyāḥ
svauko viraṅghya paramam vrajatām padam te
nānyasya barhiṣi balin dadataḥ sva-bhāgān
dhatte padam tvam avitā yadi vighna-mūrdhni

The devatās place many obstacles (**sura-kṛtā bahavo antarāyāḥ**) on the path of those who worship you (**tvām sevatām**) and surpass Svarga (**svah-okah viraṅghya**) and attain Vaikuṅṭha (**te paramam padam vrajatām**), but those who offer the devatās their assigned shares in sacrificial performances (**barhiṣi balin dadataḥ sva-bhāgān**) encounter no such obstacles (**na anyasya**). But because you are the protector of your devotee (**yadi tvam dhatte avitā**), he is able to step over the head of whatever obstacle the devatās place before him (**padam vighna-mūrdhni**).

|| 11.2.35 ||

yān āsthāya naro rājan
na pramādyeta karhicit
dhāvan nimīlya vā netre
na skhalen na pated iha

O King (**rājan**)! One who accepts this process of devotional service (**yān āsthāya narah**) will never be affected by pride (**na pramādyeta karhicit**). Even while running with eyes closed (**dhāvan nimīlya vā netre**), he will never trip or fall (**na skhalen na pated iha**).

Brahmā and others speak to the Lord.

Anuccheda – 122

**Theme: Only Bhakti should be
Performed (Contd....)**

3.21.24

na vai jātu mṛṣaiva syāt
prajādhyaḥṣa mad-arhaṇam
bhavad-vidheṣv atitarām
mayi saṅgr̥bhitātmanām

Director of the progeny (**prajādhyaḥṣa**)! The worship (**mad-arhaṇam**) of persons such as you (**bhavad-vidheṣv**) who fully concentrate on me in their hearts (**mayi saṅgr̥bhitātmanām**) is never fruitless (**na vai jātu mṛṣaiva syāt**).

Saṅgr̥bhitātmanām means “persons who are bound to me” as in the following:

|| 11.14.18 ||

**bādhyamāno 'pi mad-bhakto
viṣayair ajitendriyaḥ
prāyaḥ pragalbhayā bhaktyā
viṣayair nābhibhūyate**

If my devotee (**mad-bhaktah**) has not fully conquered his senses (**ajitendriyaḥ**), he may be harassed by material desires (**viṣayair bādhyamāno 'pi**), but because of his generally strong bhakti (**prāyaḥ pragalbhayā bhaktyā**), he will not be defeated by sense gratification (**viṣayair nābhibhūyate**).

“Being bound” means that sometimes the person becomes attracted to the Lord by meditation. He is thus not defeated.

SB 11.20.27-28

jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu
nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu
veda duḥkhātmakam kāmān
parityāge 'py anīśvaraḥ

tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ
śraddhānur dr̥ṭha-niścayaḥ
juṣamāṇaś ca tān kāmān
duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan

Having awakened faith in the narrations of My glories (**jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu**), being disgusted with all prescribed activities (varṇāśrama) (**nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu**), knowing that all sense gratification leads to misery (**veda duḥkhātmakam kāmān**), but still being unable to renounce all sense enjoyment (**parityāge apy anīśvaraḥ**), My devotee should remain happy (**tato prītaḥ**) and worship Me (**mām bhajeta**) with great faith and conviction (**śraddhānur dr̥ṭha-niścayaḥ**). Even though he is sometimes engaged in sense enjoyment (**juṣamāṇaś ca tān kāmān**), My devotee knows that all sense gratification leads to a miserable result (**duḥkha udarkāmś**), and he sincerely repents such activities (**ca garhayan**).

Classic Symptoms of Vaidhi Sadhaka

- **jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu** – Has awakened faith in the process of bhakti
- **nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu** – Disgusted with all prescribed duties
- **veda duḥkhātmakam kāmān** – Understands that sense gratification leads to misery
- **parityāge 'py anīśvaraḥ** – Still unable to give up sense gratification
- **juṣamāṇaś ca tān kāmān duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan** – Unable to give up sense gratification, he sincerely repents for engaging in such acts

Krsna's instructions to such Sadhakas

- **tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ śraddhānur dṛṭha-niścayaḥ** - Remain happy and worship Me with great faith and conviction

It is understood here that the tendency in bhakti is for the devotee to reveal his miserable condition to the Lord.

Śukadeva speaks to Kardama.

Anuccheda – 123

**Theme: Only Bhakti should be
Performed (Contd....)**

7.5.43-44

dig-gajair dandaśūkendrair abhicārāvapātanaiḥ
māyābhiḥ sannirodhaiś ca gara-dānair abhojanaiḥ

hima-vāyv-agni-salilaiḥ parvatākramaṇair api
na śaśāka yadā hantum apāpam asuraḥ sutam
cintām dīrghatamām prāptas tat-kartum nābhyapadyata

When Hiraṇyakaśipu (**yadā asuraḥ**) could not kill (**hantum śaśāka na**) his innocent son (**apāpam sutam**) by throwing him beneath the feet of big elephants (**dig-gajair**), throwing him among huge snakes (**danda-śūka-indraih**), employing destructive spells (**abhicāra**), hurling him from the tops of hills (**avapātanaiḥ**), conjuring up illusory tricks (**māyābhiḥ**), imprisoning him (**sannirodhaiḥ ca**), administering poison (**gara-dānaiḥ**), starving him (**abhojanaiḥ**), exposing him to severe cold, winds, fire and water (**hima-vāyu-agni-salilaiḥ**), or throwing heavy stones on him to crush him (**parvata ākramaṇaiḥ api**), he began to contemplate the situation deeply (**cintām dīrghatamām prāptah**). He did not succeed (**na abhyapadyata**) in killing him (**tat-kartum**).

One should also see Viṣṇu Purāṇa descriptions.

The elephant tusks were harder than thunderbolts, but Prahlāda did not feel them.

|| 10.6.3 ||

na yatra śravaṇādīni
rakṣo-ghnāni sva-karmasu
kurvanti sātvatām bhartur
yātudhānyaś ca tatra hi

My dear King, wherever people in any position perform their occupational duties of devotional service by chanting and hearing [śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ SB 7.5.23] (**yatra sātvatām bhartur rakṣo-ghnāni śravaṇādīni sva-karmasu kurvanti**), there cannot be any danger from bad elements (**na tatra yātudhānyah**). Therefore there was no need for anxiety about Gokula while the Supreme Personality of Godhead was personally present (**implied**).

yatra pūja-paro viṣṇor vahnis tatra na bādhate |
rājā vā taskaro vāpi vyādhayaś ca na santi hi ||
pretāḥ piśācāḥ kūṣmāṇḍa-grahā bāla-grahās tathā |
ḍākinyo rākṣasās caiva na bādhante'cyutārcakam ||

When a person worships Viṣṇu (**yatra pūjā-paro viṣṇoh**), there are no obstacles (**vahnis tatra na bādhate**), no (**na santi hi**) wicked kings, no thieves and no illness (**rājā vā taskaro vāpi vyādhayaś ca**). Pretas, Piśācas, Kūṣmāṇḍas (**pretāḥ piśācāḥ kūṣmāṇḍa**), Bāla-grahas, Ḍākinis and Rākṣasas (**bāla-grahās tathā ḍākinyo rākṣasās caiva**) do not obstruct the worshipper of Viṣṇu (**na bādhante acyuta arcakam**). (Nārada Purāṇa 1.10.8-9)

Nārada speaks to Yudhisthira.

Anuccheda – 124

**Theme: Only Bhakti should be
Performed (Contd....)**

3.22.37

śārīrā mānasā divyā
vaiyāse ye ca mānuṣāḥ
bhautikāś ca katham kleśā
bādhante hari-saṁśrayam

O Vidura (**vaiyāse**)! How can miseries (**katham kleśā**) arising from the body, mind, ghosts (**śārīrā mānasā divyā**), other humans (**mānuṣāḥ**), or natural conditions (**bhautikāś ca**) bind up a person who has taken shelter of the Lord (**bādhante ye hari-saṁśrayam**)?

It is also said:

na ca durvāsasaḥ śāpo
vajraṁ cāpi śacīpateḥ |
hantum samartham puruṣam
hr̥disthe madhusūdane ||

When a person's mind is fixed on Viṣṇu (**puruṣam**
hr̥disthe madhusūdane) the curse of Durvāsā
(**durvāsasaḥ śāpah**) and the thunderbolt of Indra
(**vajraṁ cāpi śacīpateḥ**) cannot harm him (**na ca**
hantum samartham). (Garuḍa Purāṇa 1.234.33)

Maitreya speaks to Vidura.

Anuccheda – 125

**Theme: Destruction of
aprārabdha sins by bhakti**

Since sins are destroyed, even aprārabdha sins are destroyed.

yathāgniḥ su-samṛddhārciḥ
karoty edhāmsi bhasmasāt
tathā mad-viṣayā bhaktir
uddhavaināmsi kṛtsnaśaḥ

O Uddhava (**uddhava**)! Just as a blazing fire (**yathāgniḥ su-samṛddhārciḥ**) turns firewood into ashes (**karoty edhāmsi bhasmasāt**), similarly, devotion to me (**tathā mad-viṣayā bhaktir**) completely burns to ashes sins committed by my devotees (**enāmsi kṛtsnaśaḥ**). (SB 11.14.19)

The commentary says, “Just as blazing fire for cooking turns wood to ashes, so bhakti to me using words etc. destroys all sins.

The Lord calls out to Uddhava in astonishment at the greatness of his own bhakti.

O Uddhava! Hear this with astonishment.”

It is also said:

yathāgniḥ su-samṛddhārciḥ
karoty edhāmsi bhasmasāt |
pāpāni bhagavad-bhaktis
tathā dahati tat-kṣaṇāt ||

Just as fire (**yathāgniḥ su-samṛddhārciḥ**) turns wood to ashes (**karoty edhāmsi bhasmasāt**), bhakti to the Lord (**tathā bhagavad-bhaktih**) burns up sins immediately (**pāpāni dahati tat-kṣaṇāt**). (Padma Purāṇa 5.85.31)

॥ 6.2.15 ॥

patitaḥ skhalito bhagnaḥ
sandaṣṭas tapta āhataḥ
harir ity avaśenāha
pumān nārhati yātanāḥ

A person (**pumān**) who chants the name of the Lord (**harir ity avaśena āha**) while falling from a cliff (**patitaḥ**), stumbling on the road (**skhalitaḥ**), receiving injury in his body (**bhagnaḥ**), being bitten by snakes (**sandaṣṭaḥ**), being burned with fever (**taptaḥ**) or being attacked with sticks (**āhataḥ**) will not suffer hellish punishment (**na arhati yātanāḥ**).

Though the potential mood or imperative mood is not used in the verb, the statement can still be regarded as an injunction similar to the statement pūṣāpraviṣṭa-bhāgo yad āgneyāṣṭā-kapālo bhavati: the portion of Pūṣā should be divided into eight portions of Agni.

This statement is also not expressed as an injunction but acts as such.

Direct injunctions are also given:

|| 2.1.5 ||

**tasmād bhārata sarvātmā
bhagavān īśvaro hariḥ |
śrotavyaḥ kīrtitavyaś ca
smartavyaś cecchatābhayam||**

O descendant of King Bharata (**bhārata**), therefore (**tasmād**), the Lord (**hariḥ**) who is Paramātmā, Bhagavān and Lord of power (**sarvātmā bhagavān īśvarah**), should be heard about, glorified and remembered (**śrotavyaḥ kīrtitavyaś ca smartavyaś ca**) by those desiring freedom from fear (**icchatā abhayam**).

The word tasmāt indicates a reason and thus indicates the fault of not hearing and glorifying the Lord.

Just as fire burns by its nature, bhakti also manifests effect without dependence on rules.

|| 11.2.35 ||

yān āsthāya naro rājan
na pramādyeta karhicit
dhāvan nimīlya vā netre
na skhalen na pated iha

O King (**rājan**)! One who accepts this process of devotional service (**yān āsthāya narah**) will never be affected by pride (**na pramādyeta karhicit**). Even while running with eyes closed (**dhāvan nimīlya vā netre**), he will never trip or fall (**na skhalen na pated iha**).

The word *su-samṛddhārciḥ* (blazing fire) in the Padma Purāṇa quotation refutes the notions that bhakti is dependent on other sādhana, that it is hard to perfect, and that its results are slow.

Thus Padma Purāṇa says the effect is immediate (*tat-kṣaṇāt*).

The Lord speaks.

Anuccheda – 126

**Theme: Destruction of
aprārabdha sins by bhakti
(Contd...)**

|| 6.1.15 ||

kecit kevalayā bhaktyā
vāsudeva-parāyaṇāḥ
aghaṁ dhunvanti kārtsnyena
nīhāram iva bhāskaraḥ

Some persons (**kecit**), who surrender to Kṛṣṇa (**vāsudeva-parāyaṇāḥ**), completely destroy sins (**aghaṁ dhunvanti kārtsnyena**) only by pure bhakti (**kevalayā bhaktyā**), just as the sun destroys fog (**nīhāram iva bhāskaraḥ**).

The commentary says, “The word kecit (some) indicate that a person performing bhakti as a main item is rare.

Those who surrender to Vāsudeva do not depend on austerity or other practices (kevalayā).

They do not need special qualification.

But because others do not have faith they do not surrender.

Because the devotees have faith they are called vāsudeva-parāyaṇāḥ.”

The sun by its own rays destroys unlimited fog by its nature, without effort.

Similarly devotees by bhakti destroy unlimited sins without effort.

Anuccheda – 127

**Theme: Destruction of
aprārabdha sins by bhakti
(Contd...)**

|| 6.1.16 ||

na tathā hy aghavān rājan
pūyeta tapa-ādibhiḥ
yathā kṛṣṇārpita-prāṇas
tat-puruṣa-niṣevayā

O King (**rājan**)! A sinful person (**aghavān**) cannot become purified (**na tathā hy pūyeta**) by austerities and other processes (**tapa-ādibhiḥ**) to the extent (**yathā**) that the devotees who offer their lives to Kṛṣṇa (**kṛṣṇa arpita-prāṇah**) become purified by service to the Lord (**tat-puruṣa-niṣevayā**).

The commentary says, “This verse explains that bhakti is superior to jñāna.

Jñāna does not purify sin to the same extent that a person who has offered his life to Kṛṣṇa purifies sins by serving the Lord.”

Previously jñāna was mentioned as a means of atonement:

|| 6.1.11 ||

śrī-bādarāyaṇir uvāca
karmaṇā karma-nirhāro
na hy ātyantika iṣyate
avidvad-adhikāritvāt
prāyaścittaṃ vimarśanam

Śukadeva said: Completely counteracting sin (**ātyantika karma-nirhārah**) is not at all possible (**na hy iṣyate**) by performing atonement (**karmaṇā**), for it is done out of ignorance (**avidvad-adhikāritvāt**). Real atonement is attaining jñāna (**prāyaścittaṃ vimarśanam**).

Indra's sin for killing Vṛtra was cancelled by meditation on the Lord:

॥ 6.13.17 ॥

tato gato brahma-giropahūta
ṛtambhara-dhyāna-nivāritāghaḥ
pāpas tu digdevatayā hataujās
taṁ nābhyabhūd avitaṁ viṣṇu-patnyā

When the reaction to the offense of committing sin on the strength of atonement was destroyed (**tato nivārita aghaḥ**) by meditation on the Lord (**ṛtambhara-dhyāna**), he was invited back to Svarga by the brāhmaṇas (**brahma-girā upahūta**). The sin of killing a brāhmaṇa (**pāpas tu**), depleted of its strength by Śiva, guardian of the northeast (**dig devatayā hata ojāh**), could not overcome him (**taṁ na abhyabhūd**), since he was also protected by Lakṣmī, who lives in the lotus (**avitaṁ viṣṇu-patnyā**).

॥ 6.13.18 ॥

taṁ ca brahmarṣayo 'bhyetya
hayamedhena bhārata
yathāvad dīkṣayāṁ cakruḥ
puruṣārādhanena ha

O King (**bhārata**)! The brāhmaṇa sages approached him (**brahmarṣayah taṁ abhyetya**) and had him properly perform a horse sacrifice (**hayamedhena yathāvad dīkṣayāṁ cakruḥ**) with worship of the Supreme Lord (**puruṣa ārādhanena ha**).

The performance of the horse sacrifice was for common people who believed that the horse sacrifice was the atonement.

“How could the killing of Vṛtra who was a great devotee of the Lord, having prema, can be atoned for by worship of the Lord?

A great offense is destroyed only by experiencing its effects or by mercy of the Lord.”

There was no fault in Indra since he was inspired by the Lord. Thus worship of the Lord was the atonement.

Vṛtra’s killing was instructed by the Lord in order to remove his demonic nature. Thus there is no fault.

Śukadeva speaks.

Anuccheda – 128

**Theme: Destruction of
prārabdha sins by bhakti**

Bhakti destroys prārabdha sins sometimes:

3.33.6

yan-nāma-dheya-śravaṇānukīrtanād
yat-prahvaṇad yat-smaraṇād api kvacit |
śvādo 'pi sadyaḥ savanāya kalpate
kutaḥ punas te bhagavan nu darśanāt

To say nothing of the spiritual advancement of persons who see the Supreme Person face to face (**kutaḥ punas te bhagavan nu darśanāt**), even a person born in a family of dog-eaters (**śvādah api**) immediately (**sadyah**) becomes eligible (**kalpate**) to perform Vedic sacrifices (**savanaya**) if he once (**kvacit**) utters the holy name of the Supreme Personality of Godhead or chants about Him (**yan-nāma-dheya-śravaṇa anukīrtanād**), hears about His pastimes, offers Him obeisances (**yat-prahvaṇad**) or even remembers Him (**Smaranad**).

3.33.7

aho bata śva-paco 'to garīyān
yaj-jihvāgre vartate nāma tubhyam
tepus tapas te juhuvuḥ sasnur āryā
brahmānūcur nāma grṇanti ye te

How astonishing (**aho bata**)! The outcaste (**śva-pacah**) on the tip of whose tongue (**yaj-jihvā agre**) your name appears (**vartate nāma tubhyam**) becomes the *guru* (**atah garīyān**)! All those who chant your name (**te nāma grṇanti ye**), becoming most respectable (**āryā**), have completed all austerities (**tapas tepuh**), all sacrifices, all bathing (**juhuvuḥ sasnuh**) and all study of the Vedas (**brahmānūcur**).

Śvādaḥ means a class of people who eat dogs.

In the present tense it refers to a person with such a nature (his present karma).

For a person who on some occasion ate a dog there is atonement and the past tense would be used.

Such a usage would be opposed to the maxim that conventional usage (a low class person) prevails over etymological meaning (literally a dog eater as explained above).

This is how sages explain the word.

Savana means a soma sacrifice.

From one aṅga of bhakti, such as hearing the Lord's name, immediately the prārabdha sin which produced his low birth unfavorable for sacrifice is destroyed (though other qualities are also necessary for performing sacrifice).

The Lord also says to Uddhava:

11.14.21

**bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyaḥ
śraddhayātmā priyaḥ satām
bhaktiḥ punāti man-niṣṭhā
śva-pākān api sambhavāt**

Only by bhakti (**bhaktyā ekayā**) performed with full faith (**śraddhayā**) can the devotees obtain me (**satām aham grāhyaḥ**), Paramātmā (**ātmā**), the object of love (**priyaḥ**). Bhakti fixed in me (**mad-niṣṭhā bhaktiḥ**) purifies (**punāti**) even a dog eater of his low birth (**śva-pākān api sambhavāt**).

If this takes place for the dog eater, what can be said for other persons?

However in this verse the qualification is just the destruction of the prārabdha-karma which made the person a dog eater.

In order to perform the soma sacrifice there is necessity of other qualities as well.

Though a young brāhmaṇa is qualified by his physical birth, his performance of sacrifice depends on sāvitra-dīksā.

By that second birth, he learns proper conduct and rules.

His birth alone does not allow him to perform sacrifice.

Thus the former dog eater is to be worshipped like a performer of sacrifice (but does not perform sacrifices).

This is Śrīdhara Svāmī's explanation.

In any case, it is clear that by removing the fault of low birth, prārabdha-karma was destroyed.

The commentary on the second verse says, “The first verse is explained.

Aho bata indicates astonishment.

On whose tongues (even a dog eater) exists your name, or because your name exists on their tongues, those persons have performed all austerities.

Austerity and other things mentioned are included in chanting your name. Thus these people are most pure.”

The Lord says to Uddhava that bhakti purifies the dog eater (SB 11.14.21).

Clearly prārabdha karma is destroyed by bhakti, since the fault of low birth has been destroyed.

Bhakti also destroys sickness caused by prārabdha karma:

Skandha Purana

**ādhayo vyādhayo yasya
smaraṇān nāma-kīrtanāt |
tad eva vilayaṁ yānti
tam anantaṁ namāmy aham ||**

I offer respects (**namāmy aham**) to the unlimited Lord (**tam anantaṁ**). By remembering him (**yasya smaraṇād**) or chanting his name (**nāma-kīrtanāt**) mental and physical affliction (**ādhayo vyādhayo**) is destroyed (**tad eva vilayaṁ yānti**).

**prārabdha-pāpa-haratvaṃ ca
kvacid upāsakecchā-vaśāt**

By the desire of the worshipper (**upāsaka icchā-vaśāt**),
prārabdha karmas are sometimes destroyed (**prārabdha-
pāpa-haratvaṃ kvacid**). (Nāma-kaumudī.)

Devahūti speaks.

Anuccheda – 129

**Theme: Destruction of desires
(vāsanā) causing sins**

Desires (vāsanā) which cause sin are destroyed by bhakti:

|| 6.2.17 ||

tais tāny aghāni pūyante
tapo-dāna-vratādibhiḥ
nādharmajaṃ tad-dhṛdayaṃ
tad apīśāṅghri-sevayā

Sins are destroyed (**tāny aghāni pūyante**) by austerity, charity and vows (**taiḥ tapo-dāna-vrata ādibhiḥ**) but the root of sin is not destroyed (**na adharma-jaṃ tad-dhṛdayaṃ**). However by bhakti to the Lord, even the root of sin, namely desire, is destroyed (**tad api īśāṅghri-sevayā**).

The sinful heart of adharmajam tad-dhṛdayam is not purified by austerity or charity.

It is purified (destroyed) by service to the Lord's feet.

**aprārabdha-phalam pāpam
kūṭam bījam phalonmukham |
krameṇaiva pralīyeta
viṣṇu-bhakti-ratātmanām ||**

Aprārabdha (**aprārabdha-phalam pāpam**), kūṭa, bīja and prārabdhakarmas (**kūṭam bījam phalonmukham**) are destroyed (**krameṇaiva pralīyeta**) for those absorbed in Viṣṇu bhakti (**viṣṇu-bhakti-ratātmanām**). (Padma Purāṇa)

Aprārabdha refers to karmas other than those to be experienced in this life.

Kūṭa means a karma which will mature into a bīja.

A bīja will mature into prārabdha karma (phalonmukham).

The Viṣṇu-dūtas speak to the Yama-dūtas.

This verse probably should be placed under a previous heading of destruction of aprārabdha or prārabdha karmas.

Anuccheda – 130

**Theme: Destruction of
ignorance, the cause of desires**

Bhakti destroys ignorance:

|| 4.11.30 ||

tvam̐ pratyag-ātmani tadā bhagavaty ananta
ānanda-mātra upapanna-samasta-śaktau
bhaktim̐ vidhāya paramām̐ śanakair avidyā-
granthim̐ vibhetsyasi mamāham̐ iti prarūḍham̐

When you were five years old (**tadā**), by performing pure devotion to the Lord (**bhagavaty paramām̐ bhaktim̐ vidhāya**), who is the soul within (**pratyag-ātmani**), unlimited (**ananta**), full of bliss (**ānanda-mātra**), and endowed with all energies (**samasta-śaktau-upapanna**), you gradually cut (**śanakair vibhetsyasi**) the strong knot of ignorance (**prarūḍham̐ avidyā-granthim̐**) concerning I and mine (**mama aham̐ iti**).

kṛtānuyātrā-vidyābhir
hari-bhaktir anuttamā |
avidyām nirdahaty āśu
dāva-jvāleva pannagīm ||

Incomparable bhakti (**hari-bhaktir anuttamā**) quickly destroys (**nirdahaty āśu**) ignorance (**avidyām**) by knowledge which accompanies the bhakti (**kṛtānuyātrā-vidyābhir**), just as a forest fire destroys a snake (**dāva-jvāleva pannagīm**). (Padma Purāṇa)

Manu speaks to Dhruva.

Anuccheda – 131

Theme: Bhakti pleases everyone

Bhakti pleases everyone:

|| 4.31.14 ||

**yathā taror mūla-niṣecanena
tr̥pyanti tat-skandha-bhujopaśākhāḥ
prāṇopahārāc ca yathendriyāṇām
tathaiva sarvārhaṇam acyutejyā**

Just as the branches and twigs are satisfied (**yathā tr̥pyanti tat-skandha-bhuja-upaśākhāḥ**) by watering the root (**taror mūla-niṣecanena**), and just as the senses are satisfied (**yathā indriyāṇām**) by nourishing the life air (**prāṇa upahārāt**), by worshipping the Supreme Lord (**tathā eva acyuta ijyā**) all are worship is accomplished (**sarva arhaṇam**).

|| 4.9.46 ||

surucis taṁ samutthāpya
pādāvanatam arbhakam
pariṣvajyāha jīveti
bāṣpa-gadgadayā girā

Suruci raised the boy up (**surucih arbhakam samutthāpya**) when he fell at her feet (**taṁ pāda avanatam**). Embracing him (**pariṣvajya**), she said with choked voice and tears (**āha bāṣpa-gadgadayā girā**), “May you live long (**jīva iti**)!”

|| 4.9.47 ||

yasya prasanno bhagavān
guṇair maitry-ādibhir hariḥ
tasmai namanti bhūtāni
nimnam āpa iva svayam

Just as water flows naturally to a lower level (**nimnam āpa iva svayam**), all living beings (**bhūtāni**) naturally offer respect (**namanti**) to that person (**tasmai**) with whom the Lord is pleased (**yasya bhagavān hariḥ prasannah**), because of his qualities and friendliness (**guṇair maitry-ādibhir**).

Suruci, the step-mother, was inimical previously.

Dhruva was respected by her because of his worship of the Lord.

Jagat Prinanam and Jagatam Anurakta (Padma Purana)

yenārcito haris tena
tarpitāni jaganty api |
rajyanti jantavas tatra
jangamāḥ sthāvarā api ||

He who worships the Lord (**yena harih arcitah**) is pleasing to all living entities (**tarpitāni jaganty api**); and all the inhabitants of the world (**jantavah tatra**), both moving and non-moving (**jangamāḥ sthāvarā api**), are pleasing to him (**tena rajyanti**).

Anuccheda – 132

Theme: Bhakti produces good qualities

Bhakti is the cause of good qualities like jñāna and vairāgya.

|| 5.18.12 ||

**yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā
sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ
harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇā
manorathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ**

The devatās constantly dwell (**tatra samāsate surāḥ**) with all good qualities (**sarvair guṇai**) in that person who has pure bhakti for the Lord (**yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā**). There are no good qualities (**kuto mahad-guṇā**) in the non-devotee (**harāv abhaktasya**) who chases after temporary material objects (**manorathena asati dhāvatah**) with desire for material pleasure (**bahiḥ**).

Bhakti is the cause of all bliss in Svarga, liberation and the spiritual abodes of the Lord.

|| 11.20.32-33 ||

yat karmabhir yat tapasā jñāna-vairāgyataś ca yat
yogena dāna-dharmeṇa śreyobhir itarair api

sarvaṁ mad-bhakti-yogena mad-bhaktō labhate 'ñjasā
svargāpavargaṁ mad-dhāma kathañcid yadi vāñchati

Everything that can be achieved by fruitive activities, penance (**yat karmabhir yat tapasā**), knowledge, detachment (**jñāna-vairāgyataś ca yat**), mystic yoga, charity, religious duties (**yogena dāna dharmeṇa**) and all other means of perfecting life (**śreyobhir itarair api**) is easily achieved by My devotee (**sarvaṁ mad-bhaktah labhate 'ñjasā**) through loving service unto Me (**mad-bhakti-yogena**). If somehow or other My devotee desires (**kathañcid mad-bhaktah yadi vāñchati**) promotion to heaven, liberation, or residence in My abode (for service) (**svargāpavargaṁ mad-dhāma**), he easily achieves such benedictions (**sarvaṁ anjasā labhate**).

Since bhakti gives the highest happiness by its nature, it makes all practice and results of karma, jñāna and other sādhanas detestable.

|| 11.14.14 ||

na pārameṣṭhyam na mahendra-dhiṣṇyam
na sārvaḥmaṁ na rasādhipatyam
na yoga-siddhīr apunar-bhavam vā
mayy arpitātmeccati mad vinānyat

One who has fixed his consciousness on me (**mayy arpita ātmā**) desires (**icchati**) neither the position or abode of Brahmā or Indra (**na pārameṣṭhyam na mahendra-dhiṣṇyam**), nor an empire on the earth (**na sārvaḥmaṁ**), nor sovereignty in the lower planetary systems (**na rasādhipatyam**), nor the eightfold perfection of yoga (**na yoga-siddhīr**), nor liberation (**apunar-bhavam vā**). Such a person desires me alone (**mad vinānyat**).

Rasādhipatyam means ruling the lower planets.

Apunar bhavam is personal liberation.

The devotee who has offered his ātmā to me does not desire any object produced in these places.

He desires me, the result of sādhana-bhakti, greater than all puruṣārthas.

The Lord speaks.

Anuccheda – 133

Theme: **Bhakti is Nirguṇa**

In order to describe bhakti as nirguṇa, it is said that all karma is endowed with guṇa starting with karma offered to the Lord (being in sattva):

**mad-arpaṇam niṣphalam vā
sāttvikam nija-karma tat
rājasam phala-saṅkalpam
himsā-prāyādi tāmasam**

Work performed as an offering to Me (**nija-karma mad-arpaṇam**), (occasionally) without consideration of the fruit (**niṣphalam vā**), is considered to be in the mode of goodness (**sāttvikam**). Work performed with a desire to enjoy the results is in the mode of passion (**rājasam phala-saṅkalpam**). And work impelled by violence and envy is in the mode of ignorance (**himsā-prāyādi tāmasam**). (SB 11.25.23)

Actions offered to me without material desire are in sattva.

Actions which desire results are in rajoguṇa.

Actions with violence, cheating and hatred (himsa-prāyādi) are in ignorance.

Anuccheda – 134-135

**Theme: Bhakti is Nirguṇa
(Contd...)**

After speaking of other processes being thoroughly in the three guṇas, direct bhakti is designated as nirguṇa.

**kaivalyam sattvikam jñānam
rajo vaikalpikam ca yat
prākṛtam tāmasam jñānam
man-niṣṭham nirguṇam smṛtam**

Absolute knowledge is in the mode of goodness (**kaivalyam sattvikam jñānam**), knowledge based on duality is in the mode of passion (**rajo vaikalpikam ca yat**), and foolish, materialistic knowledge is in the mode of ignorance (**prākṛtam tāmasam jñānam**). Knowledge based upon Me, however, is understood to be transcendental (**mad-niṣṭham nirguṇam smṛtam**). SB

11.25.24

Tamas has knowledge like that of small children or fools.

Rajas has knowledge with options concerning the body.

Sattva has knowledge of the impersonal Brahman, with distinction of the pure jīva from the body (kaivalyam).

The realization of kevala is incomplete with knowledge of only the spiritual identity of the jīva (tvam), since that knowledge itself is dependent on knowledge of the Lord (tat).

In consciousness endowed with sattva there is first realization of the subtle jīva in its pure state.

Complete, pure Brahman is then realized by realizing jīva's non-difference from a single form of consciousness.

That knowledge is in sattva because its cause is sattva.

Gītā also says *sattvāt sañjāyate jñānam*: knowledge arises from *sattva-guṇa*. (BG 14.17)

|| 6.14.2 ||

devānām śuddha-sattvānām
ṛṣīṇām cāmalātmanām
bhaktir mukunda-carāṇe
na prāyeṇopajāyate

Bhakti to the Lord's lotus feet (**bhaktir mukunda-carāṇe**) rarely develops (**na prāyeṇa upajāyate**) even in the devatās with minds in sattva-guṇa (**devānām śuddha-sattvānām**) and in pure sages (**ca ṛṣīṇām amalātmanām**).

|| 6.14.5 ||

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

O great sage (**mahā-mune**)! Greater than those who are jīvanmukta and greater than those who attain liberation (**muktānām api siddhānām**) is the devotee of Lord Nārāyaṇa (**nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ**). Such a devotee, who is in śānta or other rasas (**praśāntātmā**), is very rare (**su-durlabhaḥ**), even among ten million people (**koṭiṣv api**).

In these verses, it is stated that bhakti does not develop from sattva-guṇa.

|| 6.14.1 ||

śrī-parīkṣid uvāca
rajas-tamaḥ-svabhāvasya
brahman vṛtrasya pāpmanaḥ
nārāyaṇe bhagavati
katham āsīd dṛḍhā matiḥ

King Parīkṣit said: O brāhmaṇa (**brahman**)! Since he was sinful (**pāpmanaḥ**), with a nature of rajas and tamas (**rajas-tamaḥ-svabhāvasya**), how could Vṛtrāsura (**katham vṛtrasya**) have firm attachment to Nārāyaṇa (**nārāyaṇe bhagavati dṛḍhā matiḥ āsīd**)?

Though sattva-guṇa was absent, Vṛtra had bhakti.

Thus sattva-guṇa is not a cause of bhakti.

Later it is explained the cause of his bhakti was association with Nārada in his previous birth.

|| 7.5.32 ||

naiṣāṃ matis tāvad urukramāṅghrim
spr̥śaty anarthāpagamo yad-arthah
mahīyasāṃ pāda-rajo-'bhiṣekam
niṣkiñcanānām na vṛṇīta yāvat

As long as their intelligence (**yāvat matic**) does not accept (**na vṛṇīta**) the dust from the feet (**pāda-rajo-abhiṣekam**) of devotees (**mahīyasāṃ**) having no material desires (**niṣkiñcanānām**), the intelligence of these people (**eṣāṃ matic**) will not realize the lotus feet of the Lord (**spr̥śaty tāvad urukrama aṅghrim**), whose secondary goal (**yad-arthah**) is destruction of saṃsāra (**anartha apagamah**).

The cause of bhakti is association with a great devotee who is the pure receptacle of the Lord's fragrant mercy.

**tulayāma lavenāpi
na svargaṁ nāpunar-bhavam |
bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya
martyānām kim utāśiṣaḥ ||**

Let us not compare (**na tulayāma**) even a particle of devotee association (**lavenāpi bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya**) to Svarga or liberation (**svargaṁ apunar-bhavam**), what to speak of any blessings in this world (**kim uta martyānām āśiṣaḥ**). (SB 1.18.13)

Since devotee association is greater than liberation which is nirguna, it is the highest type of nirguna.

The cause of bhakti is association with a great devotee who is the pure receptacle of the Lord's fragrant mercy.

**tulayāma lavenāpi
na svargaṁ nāpunar-bhavam |
bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya
martyānām kim utāśiṣaḥ ||**

Let us not compare (**na tulayāma**) even a particle of devotee association (**lavenāpi bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya**) to Svarga or liberation (**svargaṁ apunar-bhavam**), what to speak of any blessings in this world (**kim uta martyānām āśiṣaḥ**). (SB 1.18.13)

Since devotee association is greater than liberation which is nirguna, it is the highest type of nirguna.

|| 7.1.1 ||

śrī-rājovāca

samaḥ priyaḥ suhr̥d brahman
bhūtānām bhagavān svayam
indrasyārthe katham daityān
avadhīd viṣamo yathā

The King said: O brāhmaṇa (**brahman**)! How did the Lord (**katham bhagavān svayam**), the best friend of all beings (**bhūtānām suhr̥d**), who is equal and affectionate to all beings (**samaḥ priyaḥ**), kill the demons (**avadhīd daityān**) for Indra (**indrasya arthe**) as if partial (**viṣamo yathā**)?

The Lord does not show real mercy to the devatās having guṇas but to devotees like Prahlāda.

The nirguṇa nature of devotee association is shown by the manifestation of nirguṇa nature in the great devotees.

Bhakti is taken up after destruction of association with the guṇas.

The Lord says to Uddhava:

॥ 11.25.33 ॥

tasmād deham imaṁ labdhvā
jñāna-vijñāna-sambhavam
guṇa-saṅgam vinirdhūya
mām bhajantu vicakṣaṇāḥ

Therefore (**tasmād**), having achieved this human form of life (**deham imaṁ labdhvā**), which allows one to develop knowledge and realization through bhakti (**jñāna-vijñāna-sambhavam**), those who are intelligent (**vicakṣaṇāḥ**) should free themselves from all contamination of the guṇas (**guṇa-saṅgam vinirdhūya**) and worship me (**mām bhajantu**).

Since knowledge of the Lord is the cause of being nirguṇa, it is also said to be nirguṇa.

However that is not its unique property.

Since impersonal jñāna is a cause of being nirguṇa, if the Lord and bhakti were also merely nirguṇa, there would be no need of distinctions raised in verse SB 11.25.24 between knowledge in sattva and knowledge of the Lord since they would be indistinguishable.

Thus knowledge of the Lord is by its nature nirguṇa (whereas impersonal jñāna, whose nature is sattva, is a cause of being nirguṇa.)

Jñāna is a method in sattva-guṇa.

It causes the nirguṇa state of liberation by conjoining with the Lord's mercy (by worshipping him).

Therefore it is said that the happiness of bhakti is nirguṇa by nature:

**sāttvikam sukham ātmottham
viṣayottham tu rājasam
tāmasam moha-dainyottham
nirguṇam mad-apāśrayam**

Happiness arising from knowledge of ātmā is in sattva (**sāttvikam sukham ātmottham**), happiness arising from sense objects is in rajas (**viṣayottham tu rājasam**) and happiness arising from delusion and degradation is in tamas (**tāmasam moha-dainyottham**). But that happiness arising from activities related to me is beyond the guṇas (**nirguṇam mad-apāśrayam**). (SB 11.25.29)

Bhakti is composed of activities like hearing. These activities of bhakti, caused by bhakti, are also nirguṇa:

śuśrūṣoḥ śraddadhānasya
vāsudeva-kathā-ruciḥ |
syān mahat-sevayā viprāḥ
puṇya-tīrtha-niṣevanāt ||

O brāhmaṇas (**viprāḥ**)! Attraction for topics concerning Kṛṣṇa (**vāsudeva-kathā-ruciḥ**) will arise (**syāt**) by service to the great devotees (**mahat-sevayā**), followed by faith (**śraddadhānasya**), by surrender to the feet of the pure guru (**puṇya-tīrtha-niṣevanāt**), and by the desire to hear (**śuśrūṣoḥ**). (SB 1.2.16)

“According to Matsya, brahma-jñāna arises by the mercy of the Lord. How then is it in the guṇas? It is said:

**madīyaṁ mahimānaṁ ca
param brahmeti śabditam
vetsyasy anugṛhītaṁ me
sampraśnair vivṛtaṁ hr̥di**

By my mercy (**me anugṛhītaṁ**), you will realize (**vetsyasy**) my power (**madīyaṁ mahimānaṁ**) known as the impersonal Brahman (**param brahmeti śabditam**), which will be disclosed in your heart (**hr̥di vivṛtaṁ**) through questions and answers (**sampraśnair**). (SB 8.24.38)”

Two types of brahma-jñāna appear.

Brahma-jñāna arises for the worshippers of Bhagavān as a secondary feature and it appears as the primary feature for worshippers of Brahman.

The worshippers of the Lord accept it somewhat differently because of the bhakti component which is the Lord's śakti.

Brahma-jñāna is the assistant of para bhakti of the Lord according to brahma-bhūta-prasannātmā (BG 18.54) and ātmārāmāś ca munayaḥ.(SB 1.7.10)

Brahma-jñāna is accepted by the worshippers of Brahman to be non-different from the jīvas.

Its result (merging in Brahman), regarded as the highest by some, is not respected by the wisest persons.

nātyantikam vigaṇayanty api te prasādam
kimv anyad arpita-bhayam bhruva unnayais te
ye 'nga tvad-aṅghri-śaraṇā bhavataḥ kathāyāḥ
kīrtanya-tīrtha-yaśasaḥ kuśalā rasa-jñāḥ

Persons who have realized you do not regard attainment of impersonal liberation as your mercy (**nātyantikam te prasādam na vigaṇayanty**), what to speak of (**kim u**) attaining a material position like Indra (**anyad**) which is subject to fear caused by the Lord raising his eyebrow (**arpita-bhayam bhruva unnayais te**). O Lord (**aṅga**)! Those devotees, surrendered to your lotus feet (**ye tvad-aṅghri-śaraṇā**), are expert knowers of rasa (**kuśalā rasa-jñāḥ**) derived from narrations about your fame (**bhavataḥ kathāyāḥ yaśasaḥ**), which should be chanted (**kīrtanya**) and which purify everyone like a tīrtha (**tīrtha**).

(SB 3.15.48)

Since it is contrary to bhakti, this liberation is considered an ābhāsa of mercy, being despised like hell:

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

Devotees solely engaged in the service of Nārāyaṇa (**nārāyaṇa-parāḥ sarve**) never fear any condition of life (**na kutaścana bibhyati**). For them the heavenly planets, liberation and the hellish planets are all the same (**svarga apavarga-narakeṣu api tulyārtha-darśinaḥ**). (SB 6.17.28)

Though some think that liberation is the Lord's mercy, it is actually arises from sattva-guṇa.

The idea comes from the person's imagination.

Kaivalya-jñāna has this nature: it arises from a relationship with sattva-guṇa.

“The internal and external senses of a human are made of the guṇas. How can bhakti which engages these senses be nirguṇa?”

The jñāna-śakti and kriyā-śakti do not in a principal manner belong to the guṇas, nor to the jīva, since the jīva is dependent on the Lord and cannot act or know independently.

The śakti influences a jīva just as a devatā strongly influences a jīva.

The jñāna and kriyā śaktis are the principal qualities of Paramātmā.

dehendriya-prāṇa-mano-dhiyo 'mī
yad-amśa-viddhāḥ pracaranti karmasu
naivānyadā lauham ivāprataptam
sthāneṣu tad draṣṭrapadeśam eti

Only when endowed with consciousness by the Lord (**yad-amśa-viddhāḥ**) do the body, senses, life airs and intelligence (**deha-indriya-prāṇa-mano-dhiyo amī**) move to their objects (**pracaranti karmasu**), just as unheated iron cannot burn (**aprataptam lauham iva**). Without the influence of the Lord they do not move (**na eva anyadā**). The Lord allows (**tad eti**) the jīva, who can see in waking and dream states, to see him (**draṣṭr apadeśam**)--by endowing him with cit-śakti (**sthāneṣu**). (SB 6.16.24)

**prāṇasya prāṇa uta cakṣuṣāś cakṣur uta śrotrasya
śrotram manaso mana**

The Lord is the prāṇa of prāṇa, the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear and the mind of the mind. (Kena Upaniṣad 1.2)

na ṛte tat kriyate kim ca nāre

Without the Lord nothing can be done. (Ṛg Veda)

The internal and external senses are said to be composed of the guṇas because of prominence of actions in the three guṇas.

By prominence of the Supreme Lord (through jñāna and kriyā śaktis), the senses are beyond the guṇas.

Śukadeva says:

yad yujyate 'su-vasu-karma-mano-vacobhir
dehātmajādiṣu nṛbhis tad asat pṛthaktvāt
tair eva sad bhavati yat kriyate 'pṛthaktvāt
sarvasya tad bhavati mūla-niṣecanam yat

Utilizing one's prāṇa, wealth, actions, mind and words (yad yujyate asu-vasu-karma-mano-vacobhir) for maintaining one's body, sons and others (nṛbhih dehātmajādiṣu) is not proper (tad asat) since this endeavor is separate from the Lord (pṛthaktvāt). Utilizing these same things for service to the Lord is proper (tair eva yat kriyate sad bhavati), since this endeavor is not separate from the Lord (apṛthaktvāt). This is service to all beings (sarvasya tad bhavati) since it is watering the root (mūla-niṣecanam yat). (SB 8.9.29)

Prthaktvāt means taking shelter of someone other than Paramātmā.

Aprthaktvāt means taking shelter of Paramātmā alone.

Thus it is suitable that bhakti is nirguṇa since it functions through the jñāna and kriyā śaktis of the Lord.

Bhakti does not arise from relationship to the guṇas but brahma-jñāna arises from relationship with the guṇas.

Bhakti is associated with the Lord's satisfaction and other qualities.

Thought Kapila speaks of bhakti within the guṇas (tamo guṇa bhakti etc.) and above the guṇas, bhakti is so called only because of the guṇas of the person's mind.

Having described bhakti as nirguṇa by its jñāna, it is then described in Bhāgavatam as nirguṇa by its kriyā.

Because they are related to the Lord, actions like hearing and chanting are under the kriyā-śakti.

Living where the Lord resides is given as an example:

**vanam tu sattviko vāso
grāmyo rājasa ucyate
tāmasam dyūta-sadanam
man-niketam tu nirguṇam**

Residence in the forest is in the mode of goodness (**vanam tu sattviko vāso**), residence in a town is in the mode of passion (**grāmyo rājasa ucyate**), residence in a gambling house displays the quality of ignorance (**tāmasam dyūta-sadanam**), and residence in a place where I reside is beyond the guṇas (**man-niketam tu nirguṇam**). (SB 11.25.25)

Living in the forest refers to the vanaprastha.

Living in the town refers to the gr̥hastha.

Gambling dens are representative of many such places where sinful people reside.

The abode of the Lord, where persons perform service to the Lord, is beyond the guṇas.

Vanam is in apposition to vasaḥ like the phrase “ghee is life” (meaning ghee causes long life).

The forest composed of trees has a prominence of rajas and tamas.

Sattva becomes a secondary guṇa of the forest, because of the mixture with the two other guṇas which are more prominent, though living a solitary life there is sattvic.

But since staying in the forest arises from sattva and increases sattva, living in the forest is regarded as having a prominence of sattva.

Grāmyaḥ means living in the town.

Gambling means living in places where there is gambling.

Similarly my abode means a place where the Lord lives.

That place is nirguṇa because of the power of being related to the Lord, like a touchstone.

Thus the eyes and other senses become nirguṇa by contact with the Lord. Thus it is said:

**diviṣṭhās tatra paśyanti
sarvān eva caturbhujān**

The devatās see that persons living in the Lord’s abode of Puri have four arms. (Brahma Purāṇa)

Śrīdhara comments, “The abode of the Lord is nirguṇa because it is the place of his appearance.”

Anuccheda – 136

**Theme: Bhakti is Nirguṇa
(Contd...)**

Having described the Lord's abode as spiritual, all the activities related to the Lord are described as spiritual:

sāttvikaḥ kārako 'saṅgī
rāgāndho rājasah smṛtaḥ
tāmasah smṛti-vibhraṣṭo
nirguṇo mad-apāśrayaḥ

A performer of action who is free of attachment is in sattva (**sāttvikaḥ kārako asaṅgī**), a performer of action overcome by sense objects is in rajas (**rāgāndho rājasah smṛtaḥ**), and a performer of action who is devoid of inquiry is in tamas (**tāmasah smṛti-vibhraṣṭo**). But a performer of action who has taken shelter of me alone is beyond the guṇas (**nirguṇo mad-apāśrayaḥ**). (SB 11.25.26)

The meaning is that the activities take up the guṇas by the mentality of the agent rather than the objects involved.

The body of the person with a mentality of sattva develops sattva, transforming the lower guṇas.

Anuccheda – 137

**Theme: Bhakti is Nirguṇa
(Contd...)**

After explaining that all actions related to the Lord are nirguṇa, the Lord explains that faith, the cause of action, is also nirguṇa if related to the Lord:

**sāttviky ādhyātmikī śraddhā
karma-śraddhā tu rājasī
tāmasy adharme yā śraddhā
mat-sevāyām tu nirguṇā**

Faith in ātmā is in sattva (**sāttviky ādhyātmikī śraddhā**), faith in prescribed karma is in rajas (**karma-śraddhā tu rājasī**), faith in irreligious activities is in tamas (**tāmasy adharme yā śraddhā**), but faith in my devotional service is beyond the guṇas (**mat-sevāyām tu nirguṇā**). (SB 11.25.27)

Anuccheda – 138

**Theme: Bhakti is Nirguṇa
(Contd...)**

Suddham in the following verse means nirguṇa:

|| 6.2.24-25 ||

ajānilo 'py athākarnya dūtānām yama-kṛṣṇayoh
dharmaṁ bhāgavataṁ śuddhaṁ trai-vedyaṁ ca guṇāśrayam

bhaktimān bhagavaty āśu māhātmya-śravaṇād dhareḥ
anutāpo mahān āsīt smarato 'śubham ātmanaḥ

Hearing (ākarnya) about the pure dharma approved by the Lord (śuddhaṁ bhāgavataṁ dharmaṁ) from the servants of Viṣṇu (kṛṣṇa dūtānām) and the impure dharma recommended in the three Vedas (trai-vedyaṁ ca guṇāśrayam) from the servants of Yama (yama dūtānām), Ajāmila (ajānilah), quickly became filled with devotion to the Lord (āśu bhagavaty bhaktimān āsīt) from hearing the greatness of the Lord (hareḥ māhātmya-śravaṇād), became repentant (mahān anutāpo āsīt) on remembering his sinful actions (ātmanaḥ aśubham smaratah).

The dharma recommended in the three Vedas takes shelter of the guṇas.

The commentary says, “The word Veda means karma-kāṇḍa as in evaṁ trayī-dharmam (BG 9.21).”

Anuccheda – 139

**Theme: Bhakti is Nirguṇa
(Contd...)**

Bhakti is self revealing (svayam-prakāśa), awakening the svarūpa-śakti of the Lord:

yajñāya dharmā-pataye vidhi-naipuṇāya
yogāya sāṅkhya-śirase prakṛtiśvarāya
nārāyaṇāya haraye nama ity udāram
hāsyān mṛgatvam api yaḥ samudājahāra

I offer respects (**nama ity**) to the personification of sacrifice (**yajñāya**), the master of *dharma* (**dharmā-pataye**), who is skilful in the rules for sacrifice (**vidhi-naipuṇāya**), to the personification of *yoga* (**yogāya**), to the head of Sāṅkhya (**sāṅkhya-śirase**), to the Lord of *prakṛti* (**prakṛtiśvarāya**), to Nārāyaṇa, to Hari (**nārāyaṇāya haraye**). Wanting to give up his deer body (**hāsyān mṛgatvam**), he chanted loudly this prayer (**yaḥ udāram samudājahāra**). (SB 5.14.45)

Bhakti appeared on its own, since it was impossible for Bharata, son of R̥ṣabha, to express himself in words at the time of death in the body of a deer.

It took the form of glorifying the Lord.

The same can be seen in Gajendra.

Śukadeva speaks.