

**Bhakti Sandarbha**

**by**

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# Part-9

## Assorted Bhakti Topics - III

# Anuccheda – 140

**Theme: Results of Bhakti**

Bhakti is the highest form of happiness.

ato vai kavayo nityam  
bhaktim paramayā mudā |  
vāsudeve bhagavati  
kurvanty ātma-prasādanīm ||

Thus (**atah**) with great joy (**paramayā mudā**) the wise (**kavayah**) constantly perform bhakti (**nityam bhaktim kurvanty**) - which gives joy to the mind (**ātma-prasādanīm**) - to Lord Kṛṣṇa (**vāsudeve bhagavati**). (SB 1.2.22)

karmaṇy asminn anāśvāse  
dhūma-dhūmrātmanām bhavān |  
āpāyayati govinda-  
pāda-padmāsavaṁ madhu ||

You (**bhavān**) let us, blackened by the smoke (**dhūma-dhūmrātmanām**) at this uncertain sacrifice (**asminn anāśvāse karmaṇy**), drink (**āpāyayati**) the intoxicating nectar of the lotus feet of Govinda (**govinda-pāda-padmāsavaṁ madhu**). (SB 1.18.12)

Having shown the happiness in the state of sādhana, the happiness in perfection is shown.

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

My devotees (**te**), who are always satisfied to be engaged in my service (**sevayā pūrṇāḥ**), are not interested (**na icchanti**) even in the four principles of liberation [sālokya, sārūpya, sāmīpya and sārṣṭi] (**sālokyādi-catuṣṭayam**), although these are automatically achieved by their service (**mat-sevayā pratītam**). What then is to be said of any perishable happiness (**kuto anyat kāla-viplutam**)? (**SB 9.4.67**)

Other types of happiness are impermanent (kāla-viplutam).

Since bhakti is permanent, it is nirguṇa.

But it is greater than sālōkya etc. which are also permanent.

Viṣṇu speaks to Durvāsā.

# Anuccheda – 141

**Theme: Results of Bhakti  
(Contd...)**



Bhakti gives rati for the Lord.

evam nirjita-ṣaḍ-vargaiḥ  
kriyate bhaktir īśvare  
vāsudeve bhagavati  
yayā samlabhyate ratiḥ

Bhakti (**bhaktih īśvare**) is performed by these methods (**kriyate evam**), devoid of lust, anger, greed, illusion, pride and hatred (**nirjita-ṣaḍ-vargaiḥ**). By this method (**yayā**), rati to Vāsudeva (**ratiḥ vāsudeve bhagavati**) is obtained (**samlabhyate**). (SB 7.7.33)

rājan patir gurur alam bhavatām yadūnām  
daivam priyaḥ kula-patiḥ kva ca kiṅkaro vaḥ  
astv evam aṅga bhagavān bhajatām mukundo  
muktim dadāti karhicit sma na bhakti-yogam

O King Parīkṣit (**rājan**)! Kṛṣṇa (**bhagavān mukundo**) was the protector, instructor (**patih guruh**), object of worship, giver of affection (**daivam priyaḥ**), and the protector (**kula-patiḥ**) of both the Yadus and Pāṇḍavas (**bhavatām yadūnām**). But he was sometimes your servant (**kva ca kiṅkaro vaḥ**). The Lord gives liberation (**muktim dadāti karhicit**) but not even bhāva-bhakti (**na bhakti-yogam**) to those who worship him (**bhajatām**). (SB 5.6.18)

One may worry that the Lord will never give rati, but worry arises from lack of proper discrimination.

The word karhicit in this case means “he does not give rati (bhakti-yoga) all the time.”

The phrase karhicit api is not used.

The affix cit indicates “not constantly.”

If one repeats bhakti for a long time, then the Lord gives rati. This is understood from the following:

satyaṁ diśaty arthitam arthito nṛṇāṁ  
naivārthado yat punar arthitā yataḥ  
svayaṁ vidhatte bhajatām anicchatām  
icchāpidhānaṁ nija-pāda-pallavam

The Lord certainly gives (**satyaṁ diśaty**) desired objects to devotees who request them (**arthitam arthito nṛṇāṁ**), but he does not give those objects (**na eva arthadah**) in such a way that the devotee will ask again after finishing his enjoyment (**yat punar arthitā yataḥ**). In other words, he gives his lotus feet (**svayaṁ vidhatte nija-pāda-pallavam**), which include all desirables (**icchāpidhānaṁ**), to those worshippers (**bhajatām**) who do not even desire them (**anicchatām**). (SB 5.19.27)

Bhakti is also the only cause of pleasing the Lord.

nālaṁ dvijatvaṁ devatvaṁ ṛṣitvaṁ vāsuraṭmajāḥ  
prīṇanāya mukundasya na vṛttaṁ na bahu-jñatā

na dānaṁ na tapo nejyā na śaucaṁ na vratāni ca  
prīyate 'malayā bhaktyā harir anyad viḍambanam

O sons of demons (**asura atma jāḥ**)! Being a brāhmaṇa (**dvijatvaṁ**), devatā (**devatvaṁ**) or sage (**ṛṣitvaṁ vā**), good conduct (**vṛttaṁ**), learning (**bahu-jñatā**), charity (**dānaṁ**), austerity (**tapah**), worship (**ijyā**), cleanliness (**śaucaṁ**) and vows (**vratāni ca**) cannot please the Lord (**na alaṁ mukundasya prīṇanāya**). The Lord is pleased (**prīyate harih**) by pure bhakti (**amalayā bhaktyā**). Other than bhakti, everything else is a cause of mockery (**anyat viḍambanam**). (**SB 7.7.51-52**)

manye dhanābhijana-rūpa-tapaḥ-śrutaujas-  
tejaḥ-prabhāva-bala-pauruṣa-buddhi-yogāḥ  
nārādhanāya hi bhavanti parasya puṁso  
bhaktyā tutoṣa bhagavān gaja-yūtha-pāya

I think that (**manye**) wealth, family, beauty, austerity, learning, power of the senses (**dhana-abhijana-rūpa-tapaḥ-śruta-ojas**), splendor, power, strength of the body, effort, intelligence, karma, jñāna or aṣṭāṅga-yoga (**tejaḥ-prabhāva-bala-pauruṣa-buddhi-yogāḥ**) cannot satisfy the Lord (**nārādhanāya hi bhavanti parasya puṁso**). The Lord was satisfied with the king of the elephants (**bhagavān gaja-yūtha-pāya tutoṣa**) by his devotion to the Lord (**bhaktyā**). (SB 7.9.9)

# Anuccheda – 142

**Theme: Bhakti Pleases the  
Lord**

“Why does bhakti give happiness to the Lord who already has eternal, unsurpassed bliss? It would contradict his eternity and unsurpassed nature.”

It is said in scriptures that the Lord is eternal and has unsurpassed bliss.

Scripture also says that bhakti pleases the Lord.

Thus it is understood that the Lord composed of the highest bliss has his svarūpa-śakti named hlādinī which gives bliss to himself and others, just as light manifests itself and others as well.



Its highest function is bhakti. Bhagavān bestows this śakti to his associates.

It remains there eternally.

By relationship with that śakti, the Lord is highly pleased.

Bhakti (full of his hlādinī-śakti) thus pleases the Lord who is the form of joy (prīti).

yat-prīṇanād barhiṣi deva-tiryāṅ-  
manuṣya-vīrut-trṇam āviriñcāt  
prīyeta sadyaḥ sa ha viśva-jīvaḥ  
prītaḥ svayam prītim agād gayasya

When the Lord is pleased (**yat-prīṇanād**), immediately (**sadyaḥ**) all devatās, animals (**deva-tiryag**), humans, plants, grass (**manuṣya-vīrut-trṇam**), and all beings up to Brahmā (**āviriñcāt**) become satisfied (**prīyeta**). The Lord, the life of the universe (**sah viśva-jīvaḥ**), the very form of satisfaction (**prītaḥ svayam**), became satisfied (**prītim agād**) at the sacrifice of King Gaya (**gayasya barhiṣi**). (SB 5.15.13)

# Anuccheda – 143

**Theme: Bhakti Pleases the  
Lord (Contd...)**

Though the Lord is satisfied in himself and always complete, an insignificant object can give him pleasure.

**tatropanīta-balayo raver dīpam ivādṛtāḥ |**  
**ātmārāmaṁ pūrṇa-kāmaṁ nija-lābhena nityadā ||**  
**prīty-utphulla-mukhāḥ procur harṣa-gadgadayā girā |**  
**pitaram sarva-suhṛdam avitāram ivārbhakāḥ ||**

Offering him gifts (**tatra upanīta-balayo**) like offering a lamp to the sun (**raver dīpam iva**), faces blossoming in affection (**prīty-utphulla-mukhāḥ**), they began to speak with words choked up with joy (**procur harṣa-gadgadayā girā**) to Kṛṣṇa, who is always satisfied with his own qualities (**nija-lābhena nityadā pūrṇa-kāmaṁ**), who is satisfied with himself (**ātmārāmaṁ**), and who is always their friend and protector (**sarva-suhṛdam avitāram**), like a father protecting his children (**pitaram ivārbhakāḥ**). (SB 1.11.4-5)

The people of Dvārakā offered items as if offering a lamp to the sun.

Their praises were for pleasing him. They were like children and Kṛṣṇa was like a father.

The Lord's quality of being pleased is mentioned: he was the friend of all (sarva-suhṛdam).

The quality of a friend is that he gives protection (avitāram).

Though he was satisfied in himself, he was pleased with the people just as a father is pleased with his son who shows affection in his relationship with the father.

There is the example of the kalpa-taru.

The mercy of the Lord, expressed because of their bhakti, is given to those persons who pray for his prīti and worship him, since it is necessary that he respond to them.

The Lord rejoices in bhakti though he is the form of bliss.

Sūta speaks.

# Anuccheda – 144

**Theme: Lord is the cause of  
Bhakti in the jīva**

The Lord is the cause of manifesting his bhakti-śakti in the jīva.

He is the cause of engaging their senses.

The jīva is an ābhāsa or an assistant in this matter.

The strong mercy of the Lord is the cause of the devotee's attraction to the Lord.

Expressing this, the previous meaning is established:



kim varṇaye tava vibho yad-udīrito 'suh  
saṁspandate tam anu vān-mana-indriyāṇi  
spandanti vai tanu-bhṛtām aja-śarvayoś ca  
svasyāpy athāpi bhajatām asi bhāva-bandhuḥ

O Almighty Lord (**vibho**), how can I possibly describe you (**tava kim varṇaye**)? You awaken the vital air (**yad-udīrito asuh**), which then impels (**tam anu saṁspandate**) the mind, senses and power of speech to act (**vān-mana-indriyāṇi**). This is true for all ordinary conditioned souls (**spandanti vai tanu-bhṛtām**) and even Brahmā and Śiva (**aja-śarvayoś ca**). So it is certainly true for me (**svasyāpy**). Nevertheless (**athāpi**), you become the intimate friend (**bhāva-bandhuḥ asi**) of those who worship you (**bhajatām**). (SB 12.8.40)

O Lord! How can I describe you? How much of your mercy can I describe?

Because by you the prāṇa, being inspired, carries out its functions and after that (anu), speech, mind and senses act. The word vai expresses that this is well known.

The śruti also expresses this positively and negatively with śrotrasya śrotram: you are the ear of the ear. (Kena Upaniṣad 1.2)

This is so not only for ordinary living entities but also for Brahmā and Śiva.

Therefore it is also true for me.

No one is independent.

For the person who worships you by speech and mind inspired by you, you are the friend (bandhuḥ), because of bhakti (bhāva) given by you.

Mārkaṇḍeya speaks to Nara-nārāyaṇa.

# Anuccheda – 145

**Theme: Bhakti is the only  
cause of Realizing and  
Attaining the Lord**

Bhakti is the only cause of realizing the Lord:

śṛṅvanti gāyanti gr̥ṅanty abhīkṣṇaśaḥ  
smaranti nandanti tavehitam janāḥ |  
ta eva paśyanty acireṇa tāvakam  
bhava-pravāhoparamam padāmbujam ||

Persons (**janāḥ**) who constantly (**abhīkṣṇaśaḥ**) hear, sing, speak (**śṛṅvanti gāyanti gr̥ṅanty**), remember and sing to others about your activities (**smaranti nandanti tava īhitam**)—they alone (**ta eva**), without delay (**acireṇa**), are able to see (**paśyanty**) your lotus feet (**tāvakam padāmbujam**) which destroy the influence of material existence (**bhava-pravāha uparamam**). (SB 1.8.36)

# Anuccheda – 146

**Theme:** Bhakti is the only  
cause of Realizing and  
Attaining the Lord (Contd...)

Bhakti is the means of attaining the Lord:

**bhaktyoddhavānapāyinyā  
sarva-loka-maheśvaram  
sarvotpatty-apyayaṁ brahma  
kāraṇaṁ mopayāti saḥ**

O Uddhava (**uddhavā**)! One who worships me with unfailing bhakti (**anapāyinyā bhaktyā**) attains me (**saḥ mām upayāti**) as the Lord of all worlds (**sarva-loka-maheśvaram**), the cause (**kāraṇaṁ**) of creation and destruction (**sarva utpatty-apyayaṁ**), and Brahman (**brahma**). (SB 11.18.45)

The commentary says, “I am the great Lord. That is because from me comes all creation and destruction.

Therefore I am the cause of creation of the world (kāraṇam), the form of Brahman (brahma) who lives in Vaikuṅṭha.

Or I am the cause of the Vedas (brahma kāraṇam). One attains (upa yāti) me with closeness by bhakti.”

Gītā says puruṣaḥ sa paraḥ pārtha bhaktyā labhyas tv ananyayā: the Lord can only be attained by bhakti. (BG 8.22) The Lord speaks.



# Anuccheda – 147

**Theme: Bhakti is the only  
cause of Realizing and  
Attaining the Lord (Contd...)**

The story of Dhruva shows how bhakti bestows results inaccessible to the mind.

He attained the Lord's planet with the highest bhakti.

Bhakti also brings the Lord under control.

na sādhayati mām yogo  
na sāṅkhyam dharmā uddhava  
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo  
yathā bhaktir mamorjitā

O Uddhava (**uddhava**)! I am attained by unmixed bhakti (**yathā bhaktir mamorjitā**). I cannot be attained (**na sādhayati mām**) by mystic yoga (**yogo**), Sāṅkhya philosophy, dharmā (**na sāṅkhyam dharmā**), Vedic study, austerity or renunciation (**na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo**). (SB 11.14.20)

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

Only by bhakti (**ekayā bhaktyā**) with full faith (**śraddhayā**) can the devotees (**satām**) obtain me (**aham grāhyaḥ**), Paramātmā (**ātmā**), the object of love (**priyaḥ**). Bhakti fixed in me (**mad-niṣṭhā bhaktiḥ**) purifies (**punāti**) even a dog eater (**śva-pākān api**) of his low birth (**sambhavāt**). (SB 11.14.21)

The following should be considered in these verses.

In the fourteenth chapter of the Eleventh Canto (21-41) the power of sādhana and sādhya bhakti are described without distinguishing between them, and thus it is hard to distinguish what is sādhana.

However, even then, the greatness of sādhana can be understood by the greatness of the results.

Starting with SB 11.14.1, Uddhava asks particularly about sādhana. The conclusion comes in SB 11.14.26:

yathā yathātmā parimṛjyate 'sau  
mat-puṇya-gāthā-śravaṇābhidhānaiḥ  
tathā tathā paśyati vastu sūkṣmaṁ  
cakṣur yathaivāñjana-samprayuktam

To the degree that the ātmā (**yathā yathā ātmā**) becomes purified (**parimṛjyate**) by hearing and chanting my glories (**mat-puṇya-gāthā-śravaṇa abhidhānaiḥ**), a person (**tathā tathā asau**) is able to perceive my real form and qualities and experience their sweetness (**paśyati vastu sūkṣmaṁ**), just as the eye when smeared with special ointment is able to see finer objects (**cakṣur yathā eva añjana-samprayuktam**). (SB 11.14.26)

In verses 18-22 generally sādhana is indicated, since in sādhya-bhakti there can be no obstacles:

**bādhyamāno 'pi mad-bhaktō  
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 api**), but because of his generally strong bhakti (**prāyaḥ pragalbhayā bhaktyā**), he will not be defeated by sense gratification (**viṣayair nābhibhūyate**). (SB 11.14.18)

**dharmah satya-dayopeto  
vidyā vā tapasānvitā  
mad-bhaktiyāpetam ātmānam  
na samyak prapunāti hi**

Neither dharma (**na dharmah**) endowed with honesty and mercy (**satya-dayā upeto**) nor knowledge obtained with great penance (**vidyā vā tapasānvitā**) can completely purify one's consciousness (**ātmānam samyak prapunāti hi**) if they are bereft of loving service to me (**mad-bhaktiyā apetam**). (SB 11.14.22)

The following verse also glorify sādhana:



**bhuvi puru-puṇya-tīrtha-sadanāny ṛṣayo vimadās  
ta uta bhavat-padāmbuja-hṛdo 'gha-bhid-aṅghri-jalāḥ  
dadhati sakṛn manas tvayi ya ātmani nitya-sukhe  
na punar upāsate puruṣa-sāra-harāvasathān**

Sages free from false pride (**ṛṣayo vimadāh**) live on this earth (**bhuvi**) by frequenting the sacred pilgrimage sites (**puru-puṇya-tīrtha-sadanāny**). Because such devotees keep your lotus feet within their hearts (**te uta bhavat-padāmbuja-hṛdo**), the water that washes their feet destroys all sins (**agha-bhid-aṅghri-jalāḥ**). Having turned their minds toward you (**manas tvayi**), the ever-blissful soul of all existence (**ya ātmani nitya-sukhe**), they no longer dedicate themselves (**na punar upāsate**) to serving family life at home, which simply robs a man of his good qualities (**puruṣa-sāra-harāvasathān**). (SB 10.87.35)

viṣayāviṣṭa-cittānām  
viṣṇv-āveśaḥ sudūrataḥ |  
vāruṇī-dig-gataṁ vastu  
vrajann aindrīm kim āpnuyāt ||

For persons absorbed in material enjoyment (**viṣayāviṣṭa-cittānām**) absorption in Viṣṇu is most difficult (**viṣṇv-āveśaḥ sudūrataḥ**). A person going east (**vrajann aindrīm**) cannot catch (**kim āpnuyāt**) an object going west (**vāruṇī-dig-gataṁ vastu**). (Viṣṇu Purāṇa)

This shows the power of sādhana bhakti to draw the mind from material attractions.

The result is described later in chapter fourteen:

katham vinā roma-harṣam  
dravatā cetasā vinā  
vinānandāśru-kalayā  
śudhyed bhaktyā vināśayaḥ

Without bhakti (**bhaktyā vinā**) how can the heart melt (**katham dravatā cetasā**)? Without melting of the heart (**dravatā cetasā vinā**), how can one's hairs stand on end (**katham roma-harṣam**) and tears come to the eyes (**katham ānandāśru-kalayā**)? Without hair standing on end and tears in the eyes (**vinā**) how can the consciousness become purified (**katham śudhyed āśayaḥ**)? (SB 11.14.23)

The following shows sādhya-bhakti. It goes without saying that all impurities are destroyed:

vāg gadgadā dravate yasya cittam  
rudaty abhīkṣṇam hasati kvacic ca  
vilajja udgāyati nr̥tyate ca  
mad-bhakti-yukto bhuvanam punāti

A devotee whose speech is choked up (**yasya vāg gadgadā**), whose heart is melted (**dravate yasya cittam**), who cries continually (**rudaty abhīkṣṇam**) and sometimes laughs (**hasati kvacic ca**), sometimes feels ashamed (**vilajja**), sometimes sings loudly (**udgāyati**) and sometimes dances (**nr̥tyate ca**)—a devotee thus fixed in loving service to me (**mad-bhakti-yukto**) purifies the entire universe (**bhuvanam punāti**). (SB 11.14.24)

Thus, though the person performing sādhana may be troubled by material desire, these desires do not stop his progress. (Sādhana destroys them.)

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 (**tathā**), devotion to me (**mad-viṣayā bhaktir**) completely burns to ashes (**kṛtsnaśaḥ**) sins committed by my devotees (**enāmsi**). (SB 11.14.19)

This refers to sādhana, for even nāmābhāsa destroys all sins.

na sādhayati mām yogo  
na sāṅkhyam dharmā uddhava  
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo  
yathā bhaktir mamorjitā

O Uddhava (**uddhava**)! I am attained by unmixed bhakti (**yathā bhaktir mamorjitā**). I cannot be attained (**na sādhayati mām**) by mystic yoga (**yogo**), Sāṅkhya philosophy, dharmā (**na sāṅkhyam dharmā**), Vedic study, austerity or renunciation (**na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo**). (SB 11.14.20)

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

Only by bhakti (**ekayā bhaktyā**) with full faith (**śraddhayā**) can the devotees (**satām**) obtain me (**aham grāhyaḥ**), Paramātmā (**ātmā**), the object of love (**priyaḥ**). Bhakti fixed in me (**mad-niṣṭhā bhaktiḥ**) purifies (**punāti**) even a dog eater (**śva-pākān api**) of his low birth (**sambhavāt**). (SB 11.14.21)

These verses refer to sādhana-bhakti, since it is compared to other sādhanas and śraddhā is also mentioned.

Mentioning faith in the sādhyā would be redundant.

Though the Lord is controlled by sādhyā-bhakti (prema), examples are given of the Lord being controlled by sādhana also, since prema is generally attained by a person performing sādhana.

Moreover it is said if the Lord is not controlled, he does not give prema:



rājan patir gurur alam bhavatām yadūnām  
daivam priyaḥ kula-patiḥ kva ca kiṅkaro vaḥ  
astv evam aṅga bhagavān bhajatām mukundo  
muktim dadāti karhicit sma na bhakti-yogam

O King Parīkṣit (**rājan**)! Kṛṣṇa (**bhagavān mukundo**) was the protector, instructor (**patih guruh**), object of worship, giver of affection (**daivam priyaḥ**), and the protector (**kula-patiḥ**) of both the Yadus and Pāṇḍavas (**bhavatām yadūnām**). But he was sometimes your servant (**kva ca kiṅkaro vaḥ**). The Lord gives liberation (**muktim dadāti karhicit**) but not even bhāva-bhakti (**na bhakti-yogam**) to those who worship him (**bhajatām**). (SB 5.6.18)

The meaning is that sādhana bhakti directly brings about control of the Lord.

**dharmah satya-dayopeto  
vidyā vā tapasānvitā  
mad-bhaktyāpetam ātmānam  
na samyak prapunāti hi**

Neither dharma (**na dharmah**) endowed with honesty and mercy (**satya-dayā upeto**) nor knowledge obtained with great penance (**vidyā vā tapasānvitā**) can completely purify one's consciousness (**ātmānam samyak prapunāti hi**) if they are bereft of loving service to me (**mad-bhaktyā apetam**). (SB 11.14.22)

This verse indicates sādhanā since it shows that dharma and other sādhanas are ineffective and since purification of consciousness is shown to manifest in sādhyā-bhakti elsewhere.

Verse 23 indicates sādhanā since it shows the great purification which results from sādhanā bhakti:

katham vinā roma-harṣam  
dravatā cetasā vinā  
vinānandāśru-kalayā  
śudhyed bhaktyā vināśayaḥ

Without bhakti (**bhaktyā vinā**) how can the heart melt (**katham dravatā cetasā**)? Without melting of the heart (**dravatā cetasā vinā**), how can one's hairs stand on end (**katham roma-harṣam**) and tears come to the eyes (**katham ānandāśru-kalayā**)? Without hair standing on end and tears in the eyes (**vinā**) how can the consciousness become purified (**katham śudhyed āśayaḥ**)? (SB 11.14.23)

Thus verse 17 and others also refer to sādhana:

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 api**), but because of his generally strong bhakti (**prāyaḥ pragalbhayā bhaktyā**), he will not be defeated by sense gratification (**viṣayair nābhibhūyate**). (SB 11.14.18)

The Lord speaks.

# Anuccheda – 148

**Theme: Bhakti is the Highest  
Dharma**

It should be accepted that direct bhakti is the highest dharma.

Even offering ordinary material activities to the Lord perfects those actions. This is also called the highest dharma.

**yo yo mayi pare dharmah  
kalpyate niṣphalāya cet  
tad-āyāso nirarthah syād  
bhayāder iva sattama**

O Uddhava, greatest of saints (**sattama**)! If dharma is offered to me (**yo yo mayi pare dharmah kalpyate cet**) without personal motivation (**niṣphalāya**), endeavoring for results (**tad-āyāso**) becomes meaningless (**nirarthah syād**) just as expressions of fear or lamentation are useless in dangerous situations (**bhayāder iva**).  
(SB 11.29.21)

Dharma in the form of direct bhakti, hearing and chanting, destroys all sins:

**śruto 'nupaṭhito dhyāta  
ādr̥to vānumoditaḥ  
sadyaḥ punāti sad-dharmo  
deva-viśva-druho 'pi hi**

Pure devotional service rendered to the Supreme Lord (**sad-dharmah**), consisting of hearing, chanting, meditating (**śruto anupaṭhito dhyāta**), accepting it with faith (**ādr̥taḥ**), or praising others who perform it (**vā anumoditaḥ**), immediately purifies (**sadyaḥ punāti**) even those who are envious of the Lord and the universe (**deva-viśva-druho 'pi hi**). (SB 11.2.12)



prāhāsmān yamunā-bhrātā sādaram hi punaḥ punaḥ |  
bhavadbhir vaiṣṇavas tyājyo viṣṇum ced bhajate naraḥ ||  
vaiṣṇavo yad-gr̥he bhunkte yeṣām vaiṣṇava-saṅgatiḥ |  
te'pi vaḥ parihāryāḥ syus tat-saṅga-hata-kilbiṣāḥ ||

Yamarāja (**yamunā-bhrātā**) repeatedly (**punaḥ punaḥ**) says with respect (**sādaram prāhāsmān**), “You should avoid (**bhavadbhir tyājyo**) a man (**naraḥ**) if he worships Viṣṇu (**viṣṇum ced bhajate vaiṣṇavaḥ**). You should not punish persons (**te'pi vaḥ parihāryāḥ syuh**) who feed devotees (**vaiṣṇavo yad-gr̥he bhunkte**) or associate with devotees (**yeṣām vaiṣṇava-saṅgatiḥ**). All their sins have been destroyed by that association (**tat-saṅga-hata-kilbiṣāḥ**).” (Padma Purāṇa)

**hari-bhakti-parāṇām tu  
saṅginām saṅga-mātrataḥ |  
mucyate sarva-pāpebhyo  
mahā-pātakavān api ||**

By association (**saṅga-mātrataḥ**) with the devotees (**hari-bhakti-parāṇām tu saṅginām**) even the most sinful person (**mahā-pātakavān api**) is freed of all sins (**mucyate sarva-pāpebhyo**). (Nārada Purāṇa 1.36.61)

Thus it follows that Yama orders in this way:

jihvā na vakti bhagavad-guṇa-nāmadheyam  
cetaś ca na smarati tac-caraṇāravindam  
kṛṣṇāya no namati yac-chira ekadāpi  
tān ānayadhvam asato 'kṛta-viṣṇu-kṛtyān

Bring to me the non-devotees (**tān asato ānayadhvam**) who have never served Viṣṇu (**akṛta-viṣṇu-kṛtyān**), whose heads (**yad-śirah**) have never once bowed (**ekadā api no namati**) to Kṛṣṇa (**kṛṣṇāya**), whose tongues have never pronounced (**jihvā na vakti**) the name and qualities of the Lord (**bhagavad-guṇa-nāmadheyam**), whose minds have never remembered (**cetaś na smarati**) his lotus feet (**tat-caraṇāravindam**). (SB 6.3.29)

śaṭhenāpi namaskāram  
kurvataḥ śārṅgadhanvine |  
śata-janmārjitam pāpam  
tat-kṣaṇād eva naśyati ||

Those who offer respects (**namaskāram kurvataḥ**) to the Lord (**śārṅgadhanvine**) even with deception (**śaṭhenāpi**) instantly destroy (**tat-kṣaṇād eva naśyati**) the sins of a hundred births (**śata-janmārjitam pāpam**). (Skanda Purāṇa)

Bring those who do not offer respects. The reason they do not offer respects is that they are materialists (asataḥ).

They are materialists because they have never done activities for the Lord.

Brahmā says:

sa kartā sarva-dharmāṇām bhakto yas tava keśava |  
sa kartā sarva-pāpānām yo na bhaktas tavācyuta ||  
pāpaṁ bhavati dharmo 'pi tavābhaktaiḥ kṛto hare |  
niḥśeṣa-dharma-kartā vāpy abhakto narake hare |  
sadā tiṣṭhati bhaktas te brahmahāpi vimucyate ||

O Keśava (**keśava**)! Your devotee (**yah tava bhaktah**) has performed all dharma (**sah sarva-dharmāṇām kartā**). He who is not your devotee (**yah na tava bhaktah**) has performed all sin (**sah sarva-pāpānām kartā**). O Lord (**hare**)! Dharma performed by the non-devotee (**tava abhaktaiḥ kṛto dharmah api**) is sin (**pāpaṁ bhavati**). O Lord (**hare**)! Though the non-devotee (**abhaktah**) does unlimited dharma (**niḥśeṣa-dharma-kartā vāpy**) he remains eternally in hell (**narake sadā tiṣṭhati**). The devotee (**te bhaktah**), though he kills a brāhmaṇa (**brahmahāpi**), is liberated (**vimucyate**). (Skanda Purāṇa)

man-nimittam kṛtam pāpam  
api kṣemāya kalpate |  
mām anādr̥tya dharmo 'pi  
pāpam syān mat-prabhāvataḥ ||

One who has done sin by acts for me (**man-nimittam kṛtam pāpam api**) is liberated (**kṣemāya kalpate**). One who performs dharma (**dharmo 'pi**) but disrespects me (**mām anādr̥tya**) commits sin (**pāpam syāt**) by my influence (**mat-prabhāvataḥ**). (Padma Purāṇa)

Therefore it was rightly said in SB 7.11.10 that acts of bhakti must be included in dharma (destroyers of sin).

It was also said that the varṇāśrama system originates from the limbs of the Lord. (SB 11.5.2)

Bhakti must always be performed as per the rule sarva-vidhi niṣedāḥ syuḥ: all rules and prohibitions are servants of always remembering the Lord and never forgetting him.

This is the highest nitya-karma or dharmic rule.

In the absence of chanting, remembering and offering respects all other devotional actions would also be absent.

Thus the verse under discussion says the person is devoid of activities for the Lord (akṛta-viṣṇu-kṛyān).

By mentioning the various organs as agents, the order is given for chanting, remembering and offering respects even if the person is unwilling.

The lotus feet are particularly mentioned to indicate Yamarāja's bhakti, not to make a rule of only remembering the Lord's feet.

By ordering his servants to bring the non-devotees he also orders them not to bring devotees since the order to take the non-devotees is final. *Vaivasvataṁ saṁyamaṇaṁ prajānām: Yama punishes his citizens. (Ṛg Veda 10.14.1)*



sakṛn manah kṛṣṇa-padāravindayor  
niveśitam tad-guṇa-rāgi yair iha  
na te yamaṁ pāśa-bhṛtaś ca tad-bhaṭān  
svapne 'pi paśyanti hi cīrṇa-niṣkṛtāḥ

Persons (**yaih**) who only once absorb their mind (**sakṛd manah niveśitam**) in Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet (**kṛṣṇa-padāravindayoh**), even in dreams (**svapne api**), or even though the mind still has material attraction (**tad-guṇa-rāgi**), do not see (**na paśyanti**) the servants of Yama (**yamaṁ pāśa-bhṛtaḥ tad-bhaṭān**) since they have accomplished all atonement (**cīrṇa-niṣkṛtāḥ**) by that remembrance (**implied**). (SB 6.1.19)

The power of remembering the Lord is such that it destroys all attraction to objects that may appear to the person (tad-guṇa-rāgi).

Similarly it is said:

**aham amara-gaṇārcitena dhātrā  
yama iti loka-hitāhite niyuktaḥ |  
hari-guru-vimukhān praśāsmi martyān  
hari-caraṇa-praṇatān namaskaromi ||**

I am Yama (**aham yama**), engaged (**niyuktaḥ**) by the Lord who is worshipped by the devatās (**amara-gaṇa arcitena dhātrā**), for punishing or rewarding people (**loka-hitāhite**). I punish (**praśāsmi**) those who are averse to the Lord (**hari-guru-vimukhān martyān**) and offer respects (**namaskaromi**) to those who respect the Lord's feet (**hari-caraṇa-praṇatān**). (Nṛsiṃha Purāṇa 9.2)

na brahmā na śivāgnīndrā  
nāham nānye divaukaṣaḥ |  
śaktās tu nigrahaṁ kartuṁ  
vaiṣṇavānāṁ mahātmanām ||

Brahmā, Śiva, Agni, Indra (**brahmā śivāgnīndrā**), myself (Skanda) or any devata (**aham anye divaukaṣaḥ**) cannot punish (**na śaktās tu nigrahaṁ kartuṁ**) the great devotees of the Lord (**vaiṣṇavānāṁ mahātmanām**). (Skanda Purāṇa)

Yama speaks to his servants.

# Anuccheda – 149

**Theme: Bhakti is the Highest  
Dharma (Contd...)**

By once worshipping the Lord, life becomes completely successful. Śaunaka says:

**āyur harati vai puṁsām  
udyann astam ca yann asau |  
tasyarte yat-kṣaṇo nīta  
uttama-śloka-vārtayā ||**

Both by rising and by setting (**yad udyann astam ca**), the sun (**asau**) decreases the duration of life of everyone (**āyur harati vai puṁsām**), except one (**tasya rte**) who utilizes the time (**yat-kṣaṇo nīta**) by discussing topics of the Supreme Lord (**uttama-śloka-vārtayā**). (SB 2.3.17)

By bhakti-ābhāsa alone Ajāmila destroyed sin. Bhakti is the cause of attaining the supreme goal while destroying all karmas.

vartamānaṃ ca yat pāpaṃ  
yad bhūtaṃ yad bhaviṣyati |  
tat sarvaṃ nirdahaty āśu  
govindānala-kīrtanāt ||

All sins past, present and future (**vartamānaṃ ca yat pāpaṃ yad bhūtaṃ yad bhaviṣyati**) are burned up (**tat sarvaṃ nirdahaty āśu**) by the fire of chanting Govinda's name (**govindānala-kīrtanāt**). (Laghu-bhāgavatāmṛta)

Even by some relationship with bhakti, there is destruction of sin:

sa samārādhito devo  
muktikṛt syād yathā tathā |  
anicchayāpi huta-bhuk  
saṁspr̥ṣṭo dahati dvija ||

The Lord (**sah devah**) gives liberation (**muktikṛt syād**) by being worshipped (**samārādhito**) just as fire (**yathā huta-bhuk**) by contact (**saṁspr̥ṣṭo**) destroys (**dahati**) even if not desired (**anicchayāpi**). (Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa)

In a discussion between Umā and Śiva it is said:

dīkṣā-mātreṇa kṛṣṇasya  
narā mokṣam labhanti vai |  
kim punar ye sadā bhaktyā  
pūjayanty acyutam narāḥ ||

By initiation with Kṛṣṇa mantra (**dīkṣā-mātreṇa kṛṣṇasya**) any man attains liberation (**narā mokṣam labhanti vai**). What then to speak of (**kim punar**) those who worship Acyuta with bhakti (**ye sadā bhaktyā pūjayanty acyutam**)? (Skanda Purāṇa)

akāmād api ye viṣṇoḥ  
sakṛt pūjām prakurvate |  
na teṣām bhava-bandhas tu  
kadācid api jāyate ||

Those who worship Viṣṇu (**ye viṣṇoḥ pūjām prakurvate**) once (**sakṛt**) without material desires (**akāmād api**) are no longer (**na teṣām kadācid**) subject to material bondage (**bhava-bandhah jāyate**). (Nārada Purāṇa 36.58)



sakṛd uccārayed yas tu  
nārāyaṇam atandritaḥ |  
śuddhāntaḥkaraṇo bhūtvā  
nirvāṇam adhigacchati ||

The person who utters (**uccārayed yas tu**) the name of Nārāyaṇa (**nārāyaṇam**) only once (**sakṛd**) with attention (**atandritaḥ**) becomes pure in heart (**śuddhāntaḥkaraṇo bhūtvā**) and attains liberation (**nirvāṇam adhigacchati**). (Padma Purāṇa)

Elsewhere it is said:

samparkād yadi vā mohād  
yas tu pūjayate harim |  
sarva-pāpa-vinirmuktaḥ  
prayāti paramam padam ||

If one worships the Lord (**yas tu pūjayate harim**) by mixing with others who are worshipping (**samparkād**) or by mistake (**vā mohād**), one becomes free of all sin (**sarva-pāpa-vinirmuktaḥ**) and goes to Vaikuṇṭha (**prayāti paramam padam**).

In Itihāsa-samuccaya, in a discussion between Nārada and Puṇḍarīka it is said:

ye nṛśamsā durācārāḥ pāpācāra-ratāḥ sadā |  
te 'pi yānti param dhāma nārāyaṇa-padāśrayāḥ ||  
lipyante na ca pāpena vaiṣṇavā vīta-kalmaṣāḥ |  
punanti sakalān lokān sahasrāmśur ivoditaḥ ||  
janmāntara-sahasreṣu yasya syān matir īdrśī |  
dāso 'ham vāsudevasya sarvān lokān samuddharet ||  
sa yāti viṣṇu-sālokyam puruṣo nātra saṁśayaḥ |  
kim punas tad-gata-prāṇāḥ puruṣāḥ samyatendriyāḥ ||

Those who are cruel, of bad conduct (**ye nṛśamsā durācārāḥ**) and most sinful (**pāpācāra-ratāḥ sadā**), attain Vaikuṅṭha (**te 'pi yānti param dhāma**) by surrender to Nārāyaṇa (**nārāyaṇa-padāśrayāḥ**). The devotees of Viṣṇu (**vaiṣṇavā**), cleansed of contamination (**vīta-kalmaṣāḥ**), are not touched by sin (**lipyante na ca pāpena**). They purify all the worlds (**punanti sakalān lokān**) like the rising sun (**sahasrāmśur ivoditaḥ**). He who thinks (**yasya syāt matir īdrśī**) “I am the servant of Vāsudeva” (**dāso 'ham vāsudevasya**) delivers all people (**sarvān lokān samuddharet**) for a thousand births (**janmāntara-sahasreṣu**) and goes to the planet of Viṣṇu (**sa yāti viṣṇu-sālokyam**) without doubt (**nātra saṁśayaḥ**). What to speak of (**kim punas**) those who dedicate themselves completely to the Lord (**tad-gata-prāṇāḥ puruṣāḥ**) with controlled senses (**samyatendriyāḥ**).

Therefore it is said:

sakṛd eva prapanno yas  
tavāsmīti ca yācate |  
abhayaṁ sarvadā tasmai  
dadāmy etad vratam mama ||

I make the vow (**etad vratam mama**) that he who surrenders once (**yah sakṛd eva prapannah**) and declares “I am yours” (**tava asmi iti ca yācate**) will be forever without fear (**sarvadā tasmai abhayaṁ dadāmy**).  
(Garuḍa Purāṇa)

It is also said:

**āpannaḥ saṁsṛtiṁ ghorām  
yan nāma vivaśo gṛṇan |  
tataḥ sadyo vimucyeta  
yad bibheti svayaṁ bhayaṁ ||**

The Lord's name (**yan nāma**), which fear personified fears (**yad bibheti svayaṁ bhayaṁ**), immediately liberates (**sadyo vimucyeta**) helpless persons (**vivaśo gṛṇan**) afflicted by the terrors of material existence (**ghorām saṁsṛtiṁ āpannaḥ**). (SB 1.1.14)

The meaning is clear. Śaunaka speaks.

# Anuccheda – 150

**Theme: Bhakti is the Highest  
Dharma (Contd...)**

Thus it is said:

na hi bhagavann aghaṭitam idaṁ  
tvad-darśanān nṛṇām akhila-pāpa-kṣayaḥ  
yan-nāma sakṛc chravaṇāt  
pukkaśo 'pi vimucyate saṁsārāt

O Lord (**bhagavann**)! Nothing is impossible for you (**na hi aghaṭitam idaṁ**). Just from seeing you, all my sins have been destroyed (**tvad-darśanād nṛṇām akhila-pāpa-kṣayaḥ**). By hearing one of your names once (**yan-nāma sakṛt śravaṇāt**), even the outcaste is delivered from the material world (**pukkaśo api vimucyate saṁsārāt**). (SB 6.16.44)

The meaning is clear. Citraketu speaks to Saṅkarṣaṇa.

# Anuccheda – 151

**Theme: Bhakti is the Highest  
Dharma (Contd...)**

Therefore it is also said:

**jīvitam viṣṇu-bhaktasya  
varam pañca dināni vai |  
na tu kalpa-sahasrāṇi  
bhakti-hīnasya keśave ||**

It is better to live (**varam jīvitam**) five days (**pañca dināni vai**) as a devotee of Viṣṇu (**viṣṇu-bhaktasya**) than a thousand kalpas (**na tu kalpa-sahasrāṇi**) without devotion to Viṣṇu (**keśave bhakti-hīnasya**). (Viṣṇu-dharmottara)

In the Third Canto there is a prayer to the Lord while the jīva is in the womb. However, later the jīva becomes absorbed in saṁsāra.



Two types of jīvas are described as one in this description.

One type, very fortunate, praises the Lord and is delivered.

However, not all jīvas have this knowledge of the Lord.

In the ninth month the limbs are complete and the child (the unfortunate one) thinks, “I have died and am again born. Having being born, I will again die.”

His condition is described as follows:

**avānmukhaḥ pīḍyamāno  
jantuś caivaṁ samanvitaḥ  
sāṅkhyam yogaṁ samabhyasyet  
puruṣam vā pañcaviṁśakam  
tataś ca daśame māsi prajāyata**

The suffering embryo (**pīḍyamāno jantuh**) facing forward (**avānmukhaḥ**), endowed with sāṅkhya-yoga (in some cases) (**sāṅkhyam yoga samanvitaḥ**), should worship (**samabhyasyet**) the twenty-fifth person, the Supreme Lord (**puruṣam vā pañcaviṁśakam**). In the tenth month he is born (**tataś ca daśame māsi prajāyata**). (Garbopaniṣad)

Puruṣam vā indicates that some jīvas have knowledge of the Lord. Thus bhakti can be successful in any condition.

Though other jīvas are different, such descriptions where differing types are described in one statement are seen.

Thus the Third Canto in describing the creation during the Padma-kalpa, the creation of the Kumāras is described (which took place in Brahma-kalpa).

The commentary says, “This description of the present kalpa is merged with the description of the Brahma-kalpa because it speaks of Brahma’s creation also.

The description of Varāha is similar.

It is described that during the first Manvantara when the earth was submerged, Varāha appeared from Brahma's nostril, rescued the earth and fought with Hiraṇyākṣa.

However Hiraṇyākṣa was born of Diti, the daughter of Dakṣa, who was born at the end of the sixth Manvantara.

The descriptions are merged because of the common elements of the earth getting submerged and Varāha appearing.

Thus the description of the embryo praying concerns is one type of jīva (who becomes liberated), and the jīva that takes repeated births is another type.

As previously described in that description, bhakti is again the cause of attaining the supreme destination.

**yatīnām viṣṇu-bhaktānām paricaryā-parāyaṇāḥ |  
te dūtāḥ sahasā yānti pāpino 'pi parām gatim ||**

Those servants absorbed in service to the devotees of Viṣṇu (**viṣṇu-bhaktānām paricaryā-parāyaṇāḥ dūtāḥ**) and who are sannyāsīs (**yatīnām**), even if sinful (**pāpino 'pi**) go to the Lord's abode quickly (**te sahasā yānti parām gatim**). (Nārada Purāṇa 1.20.73)

kulānām śatam āgāmi samatītam tathā śatam |  
kārayan bhagavad-dhāma nayaty acyuta-lokatām ||  
ye bhaviṣyanti ye 'tītā ākalpāt puruṣāḥ kule |  
tāms tārayati samsthāpya devasya pratimām hareḥ ||

The person who builds the Lord's temple (**kārayan bhagavad-dhāma**) goes to Vaikuṅṭha (**nayaty acyuta-lokatām**) along with hundreds of his family members of the past and future (**kulānām śatam āgāmi samatītam tathā śatam**). Though they should remain (**ye bhaviṣyanti**) in the family (**puruṣāḥ kule**) for the day of Brahmā (**atītā ākalpāt**), the Lord delivers them (**hareḥ tāms tārayati**) after they install a deity of the Lord (**samsthāpya devasya pratimām**). (Viṣṇu-dharma)

Yama's order to his servant is this:

**yenārcā bhagavad-bhaktyā  
vāsudevasya kārītā |  
navāyutaṁ tat-kulajaṁ  
bhavatāṁ śāsanātigam ||**

Whoever worships (**yena arcā**) Vāsudeva (**vāsudevasya**) with bhakti (**bhagavad-bhaktyā kārītā**) are not subject to your punishment (**bhavatāṁ śāsaṇa atigam**) along with ninety thousand relatives (**navāyutaṁ tat-kulajaṁ**).  
(**Viṣṇu-dharma**)

triḥ-saptabhiḥ pitā pūtaḥ  
pitṛbhiḥ saha te 'nagha  
yat sādho 'sya kule jāto  
bhavān vai kula-pāvanaḥ

O sinless Prahāda (**anagha**)! Your father has been purified (**pitā te pūtaḥ**), along with twenty-one forefathers in your family (**pitṛbhiḥ triḥ-saptabhiḥ saha**). As a devotee (**sādho**), you purify the family (**bhavān**). Because you were born in this family (**yat asya kule jātaḥ**), the entire dynasty has been purified (**kula-pāvanaḥ**). (SB 7.10.18)

Your father along with twenty-one generations of relatives extending to the previous kalpa will be purified. In this life, Prahāda's father's line included Hiraṇyakaśipu, Marīci and Brahmā. Nṛsimha speaks to Prahāda.



# Anuccheda – 152

**Theme: Results of Bhakty-  
ābhāsa**

Even by bhakty-ābhāsa one can destroy all sins and attain the feet of Viṣṇu.

In Nārada Purāṇa it is related that two drunkards imitating cuckoo birds, took pieces of cloth (as wings) and danced in the Lord's temple.

As a result of acting as flag poles in the temple they attained spiritual bodies.

A bird caught by a hunter, escaping from a dog's mouth, flew around the Lord's temple. As a result the bird attained a spiritual body.

Sometimes such persons attain great bhakti from the ābhāsa of bhakti.

For instance it is related in Nārada Purāṇa that Prahlāda in his previous birth in quarrelling with a prostitute on Nṛsimha-caturdāśī fasted and stayed up all night.

(As a result of that accidental devotion he became Prahlāda.)

yasyāvatāra-guṇa-karma-vidāmbanāni  
nāmāni ye 'su-vigame vivaśā grṇanti  
te 'naika-janma-śamalam sahasaiva hitvā  
saṁyānty apāvṛtāmṛtam tam ajam prapadye

I surrender to the Lord without birth (**tam ajam prapadye**), whose names (**yasya nāmāni**), invested with the powers of the Lord's qualities and activities (**avatāra-guṇa-karma-vidāmbanāni**), chanted at the point of death (**asu-vigame grṇanti**) even without attention (**vivaśā**), immediately destroys (**sahasā eva hitvā**) lifetimes of sins (**aneka-janma-śamalam**) and allow men to achieve (**saṁyānty**) the uncovered, true form of the Lord (**apāvṛta amṛtam**). (SB 3.9.15)

“At the point of death” indicates chanting only at that time, by a person of impure condition.

Vivaśa means without intentionally desiring to do so, by some other cause. Amara-koṣa says that vaśa means desire.

The cause of the power is given: the name has equal power whether it refers to the avatāra or the description of the Lord’s activities (karma-vidāmbanāni), such as Giridhari, lifter of Govardhana.

What to speak of the power in the direct names like Kṛṣṇa and Govinda. Brahmā speaks to Garbhodaśayī.