

Bhakti Sangha Bhagavatam Class

5.5.23

Verse, Translation and Purport

|| 5.5.23 ||

na brāhmaṇais tulaye bhūtam anyat
paśyāmi viprāḥ kim ataḥ param tu
yasmin nṛbhiḥ prahutaṁ śraddhayāham
aśnāmi kāmaṁ na tathāgni-hotre

O respectful brāhmaṇas, as far as I am concerned, no one is equal or superior to the brāhmaṇas in this world. I do not find anyone comparable to them. When people know My motive, after performing rituals according to the Vedic principles they offer food to Me with faith and love through the mouth of a brāhmaṇa. When food is thus offered unto Me, I eat it with full satisfaction. Indeed, I derive more pleasure from food offered in that way than from the food offered in the sacrificial fire.

According to the Vedic system, after the sacrificial ceremony the brāhmaṇas are invited to eat the remnants of the offered food.

When the brāhmaṇas eat the food, it is to be considered directly eaten by the Supreme Lord.

Thus no one can be compared to qualified brāhmaṇas.

The perfection of evolution is to be situated on the brahminical platform.

Any civilization not based on brahminical culture or guided by brāhmaṇas is certainly a condemned civilization.

Presently human civilization is based on sense gratification, and consequently more and more people are becoming addicted to different types of things.

No one respects brahminical culture.

Demoniac civilization is attached to ugra-karma, horrible activities, and big industries are created to satisfy unfathomable lusty desires.

Consequently the people are greatly harassed by governmental taxation.

The people are irreligious and do not perform the sacrifices recommended in Bhagavad-gītā.

Yajñād bhavati parjanyaḥ: [Bg. 3.14] by the performance of sacrifice, clouds form and rain falls.

Due to sufficient rainfall, there is sufficient production of food.

Guided by the brāhmaṇas, society should follow the principles of Bhagavad-gītā.

Then people will become very happy.

Annād bhavanti bhūtāni: when animals and man are sufficiently fed with grains, they become stronger, their hearts become tranquil and their brains peaceful.

They can then advance in spiritual life, life's ultimate destination.

Theme-I

Understanding the Context

Why is Context
Important?

pūrvāparānurodhena
ko nv artho 'bhimato bhavet
ity ādyam ūhanam tarkaḥ
śuṣka-tarkam tu varjayet

A meaning should be accepted (arthah nu abhimato bhavet) with reference to what precedes and follows (pūrvā aparā anurodhena). Such reasoning is the logic to be used (ity ādyam ūhanam tarkaḥ). Dry logic should be rejected (śuṣka-tarkam tu varjayet). (Vaiṣṇava Tantra)

Rsabhadev emphasizes to his ksatriya sons the importance of acting under the guidance of brahmanas (21-24)

|| 5.5.21-22 ||

Among the living beings (**bhūteṣu**), the snakes (**ye sarīrpāḥ**) are superior to the plants (**vīruḍbhya uduttamā**). Animals are superior to the snakes (**teṣu sabodha-niṣṭhāḥ**). Humans are superior to animals (**tato manuṣyāḥ pramathāḥ**). Superior to humans are the Gandharvas (**tatah api gandharva-siddhā**). Superior to them are the Kinnaras (**vibudhānugā ye**). Indra is superior to all of them (**deva-asurebhyo maghavat-pradhānā**). Sons of Brahmā like Dakṣa are superior to Indra (**dakṣa ādayah brahma-suths tu teṣām**). Śiva, son of Brahmā, is superior to Dakṣa (**teṣām bhavaḥ paraḥ**) and Brahmā is superior to Śiva (**sah atha viriñca-vīryaḥ**). I am superior to Brahmā (**sah mat-paraḥ**). The best of the brāhmaṇas are worshipped by me (**aham dvija-deva-devaḥ**).

In order to teach that the brāhmaṇas should be
served, he shows that they are best among all
people in four verses.

Similar teachings with a different Context

Case – I

Kapiladev's Teachings to Mother Devahuti

Theme III – In practice of Bhakti offense creates obstruction –
Don't disrespect Jivas (3.29.21-34)

Text 28

jīvāḥ śreṣṭhā hy ajīvānām
tataḥ prāṇa-bhṛtaḥ śubhe
tataḥ sa-cittāḥ pravaraś
tataś cendriya-vṛttayaḥ

O Mother (**śubhe**)! Living immovable entities are superior to withered ones (**jīvāḥ śreṣṭhā hy ajīvānām**). Superior to them are entities with greater life symptoms (**tataḥ prāṇa-bhṛtaḥ**). Superior to them are the entities with higher consciousness and movement (**tataḥ pravaraś sa-cittāḥ**). Superior than them are entities with senses, such as trees (**tataś ca indriya-vṛttayaḥ**).

Verse Summary: But, this equal vision does not mean that the devotee does not see gradation in the jivas

Theme III – In practice of Bhakti offense creates obstruction – Don't disrespect Jivas (3.29.21-34)

Text 29

tatrāpi sparśa-vedibhyaḥ
pravarā rasa-vedinaḥ
tebhyo gandha-vidaḥ śreṣṭhās
tataḥ śabda-vido varāḥ

Superior to the trees with touch sensation (**tatra api sparśa-vedibhyaḥ pravarā**) are beings with taste sensation (**rasa-vedinaḥ**). Superior to them are living entities with a sense of smell (**tebhyo gandha-vidaḥ śreṣṭhāḥ**), and superior to them are living entities that can hear (**tataḥ śabda-vido varāḥ**).

Verse Summary: Gradation in jivas: Inanimate objects < Living immovable entities < Living entities with greater life symptoms < Entities with higher consciousness of movement < Entities with senses < Beings with touch sensation < Beings with taste sensation < Beings with sense of smell < Beings who can hear

Theme III – In practice of Bhakti offense creates obstruction –
Don't disrespect Jivas (3.29.21-34)

Text 30

rūpa-bheda-vidas tatra
tataś cobhayato-dataḥ
teṣāṃ bahu-padāḥ śreṣṭhās
catuṣ-pādas tato dvi-pāt

Entities which can distinguish form are superior (**rūpa-bheda-vidah tatra**). Superior to them are entities with two sets of teeth (**tataḥ ca ubhayato-dataḥ**). Superior to them are beings with many legs (**teṣāṃ bahu-padāḥ śreṣṭhāḥ**). Superior to them are animals with four legs (**catuṣ-pādas tataḥ**). Superior to them are humans with two legs (**dvi-pāt**).

Verse Summary: Gradation in jivas: beings who can distinguish form < entities with 2 sets of teeth < beings with many legs < animals with 4 legs < humans with 2 legs

Theme III – In practice of Bhakti offense creates obstruction –

Don't disrespect Jivas (3.29.21-34)

Text 31

tato varṇās ca catvāras
teṣāṃ brāhmaṇa uttamah
brāhmaṇeṣv api veda-jño
hy artha-jño 'bhyadhikas tatah

Among the humans, those within the *varṇāśrama* are superior (**tatah varṇāḥ ca catvāras**). Among the *varṇas*, the *brāhmaṇas* are the best (**teṣāṃ brāhmaṇa uttamah**). Among the *brāhmaṇas*, one who knows the Vedas is superior (**brāhmaṇeṣv api veda-jño**). Among the knowledgeable *brāhmaṇas*, one who knows the meaning of the Vedas is superior (**tatah artha-jño abhyadhikah**).

Verse Summary: Gradation in jivas: Amongst humans, Non Varnasrama humans < Those in Varnasrama < Brahmanas < Brahmana who knows the vedas < Brahmana who knows the meaning of the vedas

Theme III – In practice of Bhakti offense creates obstruction –
Don't disrespect Jivas (3.29.21-34)

Text 32

artha-jñāt samśaya-cchettā
tataḥ śreyān sva-karma-kṛt
mukta-saṅgas tato bhūyān
adogdhā dharmam ātmanah

Better than the knower of the meaning of the Vedas (**artha-jñāt**) is the brāhmaṇa who can cut doubts (**samśaya-cchettā**). Better than the one who cuts doubts (**tataḥ śreyān**) is the brāhmaṇa who also performs his duties completely (**sva-karma-kṛt**). Better still (**tato bhūyāt**) is the jñānī (**mukta-saṅgah**) who does not enjoy the results of his previous actions of dharma (**adogdhā ātmanah dharmam**).

Verse Summary: Gradation in jivas: Brahmana who can dispel the doubts < Brahmana who also completes his duties completely < Jnani who does not enjoy the results of his previous actions

Theme III – In practice of Bhakti offense creates obstruction – Don't disrespect Jivas
(3.29.21-34)

Text 33

tasmān mayy arpitāśeṣa-
kriyārthātmā nirantaraḥ
mayy arpitātmanaḥ puṁso
mayi sannyasta-karmaṇaḥ
na paśyāmi paraṁ bhūtam
akartuḥ sama-darśanāt

Superior to the *jñānī* (**tasmāt**) is the person (**puṁsah**) who fully dedicates (**nirantaraḥ arpitā aśeṣa**) his activities such hearing and chanting (**kriyā**), his wealth (**artha**), his identity (**ātmā**), his mind and his intelligence (**ātmanaḥ**) to me (**mayy**). I do not see a greater living entity (**na paśyāmi paraṁ bhūtam**) than this person who has offered himself to me (**mayy arpitā ātmanaḥ**), giving up all *varṇāśrama* actions (**mayi sannyasta-karmaṇaḥ**), who thinks that the Lord alone inspires his *bhakti* (**akartuḥ**), and who identifies with others' happiness and distress (**sama-darśanāt**).

Verse Summary: Gradation in jivas: Best is the person who dedicates his activities such as hearing and chanting, his wealth, his identity, mind, intelligence etc. to Me, and who identifies with other's sufferings and happiness

However, in such bhakti, offence creates restriction.

Offence generally stems from disrespect to the great devotees.

Though such devotees are difficult to see, many exist.

In order to avoid offences to them, one should pay respects to all living entities, thinking that the Lord is present in all of them.

Unlike the jñānī, my devotee does not have to see everything completely with equal vision, but with gradations.

**Similar teachings with a
different Context**

Case – II

**Lord Narayana trying to
Pacify/Chastise the 4
Kumaras**

|| 3.16.2-3 ||

śrī-bhagavān uvāca

etau tau pārṣadau mahyaṁ jayo vijaya eva ca
kadarthī-kṛtya mām yad vo bahv akrātām atikramam

yas tv etayor dhṛto daṇḍo bhavadbhir mām anuvrataiḥ
sa evānumato 'smābhir munayo deva-helanāt

The Lord said: O ^{↑ 4 kunārās}sages (**munayo**)! Since my two followers (**etau tau pārṣadau mahyaṁ**) Jaya and Vijaya (**jayo vijaya eva ca**), ignoring me (**mām kdarthī-kṛtya**), have seriously offended you (**vah bahv atikramam akrātām**), I permit (**asmābhir anumato**) the punishment given by you (**sa evā bhavadbhir dhṛto daṇḍo**), who are dedicated in vows to me (**mām anuvrataiḥ**), since they have committed offense to me (**yah tu etayor deva-helanāt**).

etau tau pārṣadau mahyam – “These are my two associates”

This indicates, “O fools! You cursed my associates. You have used too much force.”

mām kadhāthī-kṛtya vah bahv atikramam akrātām –
“Ignoring my intentions, they offended you”

However, since previous to offending the Kumāras, the door keepers had not ignored the Lord’s intentions, this is a crooked utterance of the Lord, indicating that the Lord was actually angry with the Kumāras.

asmābhir anumato sa evā bhavadbhir dhṛto daṇḍo –

“The punishment is permitted by me”

If I had not given my permission, then the punishment ordered by you would not take place at all. The reason is that you would feel worthless if I cancelled the curse.

My respect for brāhmaṇas intoxicates you.

|| 3.16.4 ||

tad vaḥ prasādayāmy adya
brahma daivam param hi me
tad dhīty ātma-kṛtam manye
yat sva-pumbhir asat-kṛtāḥ

Today (**adya**) I must ask you for forgiveness (**tad vaḥ prasādayāmy**). I worship the brāhmaṇas above everybody else (**brahma daivam param hi me**). Since my servants disrespected you (**yat sva-pumbhir asat-kṛtāḥ**), I consider that I have committed the offense to you (**tad dhi ātma-kṛtam ity manye**).

yat sva-pumbhir asat-kṛtāḥ tad dhi ātma-kṛtaṁ ity
manye – “Since my servants disrespected you, I
consider that I have committed the offense to you”

This shows the Lord’s great love for the door keepers,
taking them as his very self.

|| 3.16.5 ||

yan-nāmāni ca gr̥hṇāti
loko bhṛtye kṛtāgasi
so 'sādhu-vādas tat-kīrtim
hanti tvacam ivāmayah

When a servant commits sin (**bhṛtye kṛta agasi**) using the name of his master (**yat-nāmāni ca gr̥hṇāti**), the master gets criticized (**sah loko asādhu-vādah**) and has his fame destroyed (**tat-kīrtim hanti**), just as a white spot on the skin condemns a person as a leper (**tvacam iva āmayah**).

|| 3.16.6 ||

yasyāmṛtāmala-yaśaḥ-śravaṇāvagāhaḥ
sadyaḥ punāti jagad āśvapacād vikunṭhaḥ
so 'ham bhavadbhya upalabdha-sutīrtha-kīrtiś
chindyām sva-bāhum api vaḥ pratikūla-vṛttim

I, that Supreme Lord (**sah aham vikunṭhaḥ**), by hearing whose nectarine glories (**yasya amṛta amala-yaśaḥ-śravaṇa avagāhaḥ**), the whole universe, including the dog eater (**jagad āśvapacād**), is purified (**sadyaḥ punāti**), who am famous as a tīrtha because of you (**bhavadbhya upalabdha-sutīrtha-kīrtih**), will cut off my own arm (**chindyām sva-bāhum api**) if it commits offense against you (**vaḥ pratikūla-vṛttim**).

bhavadbhya upalabdha-sutīrtha-kīrtih – “I have attained fame as a tīrtha because of you.”

These are just words of respect for the sages.

chindyām sva-bāhum api – “I will cut off my own arm ”

Since the Lord identifies the door keepers as his arms, the statement shows his great attachment to them.

|| 3.16.7 ||

yat-sevayā caraṇa-padma-pavitra-reṇuṁ
sadyaḥ kṣatākhila-malam pratilabdha-śīlam
na śrīr viraktam api mām vijahāti yasyāḥ
prekṣā-lavārtha itare niyamān vahanti

Even Laksmī (**śrīh api**) to whom I show no attachment (**viraktam mām**), but to gain whose favor (**yasyāḥ prekṣā-lavārtha**) others perform vows (**itare niyamān vahanti**), does not give up (**na vijahāti**) the dust of my feet (**caraṇa-padma-pavitra-reṇuṁ**) which immediately destroy all contamination (**sadyaḥ kṣata akhila-malam**) and are full of all qualities (**pratilabdha-śīlam**). But these feet are made pure by service to devotees like you (**yat-sevayā**).

yat-sevayā – “My feet are made pure by service to you.”

This is again just external praise by the Lord. Does the Lord’s foot dust become pure by service to brāhmaṇas?
Does that destroy all contamination? By that service
does Lakṣmī never give up the Lord?

|| 3.16.8 ||

nāham tathādmī yajamāna-havir vitāne
ścyotad-ghṛta-plutam adan huta-bhuñ-mukhena
yad brāhmaṇasya mukhataś carato 'nughāsam
tuṣṭasya mayy avahitair nija-karma-pākaiḥ

I do not eat (**na aham admi**) the offerings of the sacrifice (**yajamāna-havir vitāne**) accepted through my mouth in the form of fire (**huta-bhuñ-mukhena**) as much as (**tathā**) I eat (**adan**) the morsels filled with ghee (**ścyotad-ghṛta-plutam anughāsam**) enjoyed by the mouth of the brāhmaṇa (**yad brāhmaṇasya mukhataś carato**) who is satisfied (**tuṣṭasya**) by the results of his actions (**nija-karma-pākaiḥ**) offered to me (**mayy avahitair**).

na ahaṁ admi yajamāna-havir vitāne – “I do not eat the offering of the sacrificer.”

You brāhmaṇas are fond of eating, therefore you must be fed.

It is well known to the people that I eat through the mouth of the brāhmaṇa. Ghasam carataḥ (eating morsels) can also mean that like a respectable cow grazing in the field, the brāhmaṇa rejoices by the respect given by me.

What you think gives me happiness is not service to me.

|| 3.16.9 ||

yeṣām bibharmy aham akhaṇḍa-vikuṅṭha-yoga-
māyā-vibhūtir amalāṅghri-rajah kirīṭaiḥ
viprāms tu ko na viṣaheta yad-arhaṇāmbhaḥ
sadyaḥ punāti saha-candra-lalāma-lokān

Who would not tolerate (**ko na viṣaheta**) the offense of brāhmaṇas (**viprāms**)? I (**aham**), whose foot water (**yad-arhaṇa ambhaḥ**) immediately purifies (**sadyaḥ punāti**) all the planets (**lokān**) and Śiva (**saha-candra-lalāma**), carry on my crown (**kirīṭaiḥ bibharmy**) the brāhmaṇās' pure foot dust (**yeṣām amalāṅghri-rajah**), and by that have attained unlimited wealth of power (**akhaṇḍa-vikuṅṭha-yoga-māyā-vibhūtiḥ**).

yeṣām amalāṅghri-rajah kirītaiḥ bibharmy akhaṇḍa-
vikunṭha-yoga- māyā-vibhūtiḥ – “I have a wealth of
powers because of holding the foot dust of the
brāhmaṇa on my crown. Because of that, my foot water
purifies the whole universe as the Gaṅgā.”

This type of respect is actually just a joke.

|| 3.16.10 ||

ye me tanūr dvija-varān duhatīr madīyā
bhūtāny alabdha-śaraṇāni ca bheda-buddhyā
drakṣyanty agha-kṣata-dṛśo hy ahi-manyavas tān
gṛdhrā ruṣā mama kuṣanty adhidaṇḍa-netuḥ

The enraged servants (**ahi-manyavas tān**) of Yama (**adhidaṇḍa-netuḥ**), with forms like vultures (**gṛdhrā**), angrily tear out (**ruṣā kuṣanty**) the eyes of those who, with vision destroyed by sin (**agha-kṣata-dṛśah**), see difference (**bheda-buddhyā drakṣyanty**) between my forms (**ye me tanūh**) and the brāhmaṇas (**dvija-varān**), cows (**duhatīr**) and shelterless beings (**bhūtāny alabdha-śaraṇāni ca**).

dvija-varān duhatīr ye me tanūh - “The cows and brāhmaṇas are not different from me since they are my body.”

This is also a joke.

|| 3.16.11 ||

ye brāhmaṇān mayi dhiyā kṣipato 'rcayantas
tuṣyad-dhṛdaḥ smita-sudhokṣita-padma-vaktrāḥ
vāṇyānurāga-kalayātmajavad gṛṇantah
sambodhayanty aham ivāham upāhṛtas taiḥ

I am controlled by those (**aham upāhṛtas taiḥ**) who worship the brāhmaṇas who have offended others (**ye kṣipataḥ brāhmaṇān arcayantah**), who see those brāhmaṇas as non-different from me (**mayi dhiyā**), who remain pleased in heart in spite of their harsh words (**tuṣyad-dhṛdaḥ**), showing lotus faces (**padma-vaktrāḥ**) moistened with sweet smiles (**smita-sudhā ukṣita**), and who pacify them (**sambodhayanty**) by praising them (**gṛṇantah**) with words filled with love (**vāṇyānurāga-kalayā**), just as a son praises an angry father (**ātmajavad**).

aham upāhṛtah taiḥ ye kṣipatah brāhmaṇān – “I am controlled by brāhmaṇas who offend others.”

It is the natural quality of the brāhmaṇa to become angry.

I and my devotee laugh at them.

I give natural tolerance only to my devotees and I will be controlled by that alone.

|| 3.16.12 ||

tan me sva-bhartur avasāyam alakṣamāṇau
yuṣmad-vyatikrama-gatiṁ pratipadya sadyaḥ
bhūyo mamāntikam itām tad anugraho me
yat kalpatām acirato bhṛtayor vivāsaḥ

Therefore my servants (**tan me bhṛtayoh**) who did not see the intention of their master (**sva-bhartur avasāyam alakṣamāṇau**), should go to a place suitable for their offense to you (**yuṣmad-vyatikrama-gatiṁ pratipadya**), and quickly again attain a place near me (**sadyaḥ bhūyo mama antikam itām**). Since this punishment is my mercy (**yat vivāsaḥ anugraho me**), let my servants quickly come to me (**yat kalpatām acirato bhṛtayoh**).

“O master! You say that those who commit offense to the brāhmaṇas commit offense to you. Why do you again show affection for those two?”

I cannot control myself.

It is not possible to give up my natural qualities.

Since this punishment is also my mercy to them, not punishment, may the two servants quickly live (viḥasaḥ) with me again.

Theme-II

Brahmanas and Vaisnavas

Section-II – Prahlada Maharaja's Prayers (8-50)

॥ 7.9.8 ॥

śrī-prahrāda uvāca

brahmādayaḥ sura-gaṇā munayo 'tha siddhāḥ
sattvaikatāna-gatayo vacasām pravāhaiḥ
nārādhitum puru-guṇair adhunāpi pipruḥ
kim toṣṭum arhati sa me harir ugra-jāteḥ

Prahlāda said: How is it possible for me (*kim me arhati*), who have been born in a family of demons (*ugra-jāteḥ*), to please the Lord (*sah toṣṭum*)? The devatās headed by Lord Brahmā (*brahmādayaḥ sura-gaṇā*) and all the sages and Siddhas (*munayo atha siddhāḥ*) who are immersed in sattva-guṇa (*sattva ekatāna-gatayo*) could not properly worship the Lord (*adhunāpi na ārādhitum pipruḥ*) by streams of excellent words (*puru-guṇaih vacasām pravāhaiḥ*).

Verse Summary: How can a person like me, born in a demoniac family, please the Lord, when even persons of the caliber of Brahma could not please Him with excellent prayers?

- O remarkable Lord! It is hard to understand what quality you see in me that you are so merciful.
- Possessing sattva is not the cause of your mercy.
- What then to speak of a person possessing tamas?
- The devatās' and sages' minds are completely immersed in sattvic dharma, jñāna and austerity. We are immersed in adharma, ajñāna and material enjoyment.

- And simply praising you is not a cause of your mercy.
- They praised you with streams of words, which were fresh, cool, sweet and pure like water, and which were embellished with ornaments and literary suggestions (puru-guṇaiḥ), but they were not able to make the you satisfied (ārādhayitum) with them.
- You are satisfied with me though I am born in a family possessing great tamas (ugra-jāteḥ).

Section-II – Prahlada Maharaja's Prayers (8-50)

|| 7.9.9 ||

manye dhanābhijana-rūpa-tapaḥ-śrutaujas-
tejah-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 (dhanā-abhijana-rūpa-tapaḥ-śruta-ojas), splendor, power, strength of the body, effort, intelligence, karma, jñāna or aṣṭāṅga-yoga (tejah-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).

Verse Summary: Actually, the Lord is not pleased by janma, aisvarya, sruta or sri. He is satisfied only by bhakti. Gajendra is the proof.

- You are not pleased by offerings of great wealth or other things.
- You are not pleased with birth in a good family (abhijana), strength of the senses (ojas), splendor (tejas), power (prabhāva), exertion (pauruṣa), or karma, jñāna or aṣṭāṅga-yoga. How can I satisfy you?
- By bhakti the Lord was satisfied.

- The past tense is used to indicate that one need not search out any further proof. This is your nature.
- Also the extraordinary power of bhakti is indicated.
- I have a trace of bhakti by the mercy of Nārada, and this must please you.

Section-II – Prahlada Maharaja’s Prayers (8-50)

|| 7.9.10 ||

viprād dvi-śaḍ-guṇa-yutād aravinda-nābha-
pādāravinda-vimukhāt śvapacaṁ varīṣṭham
manye tad-arpita-mano-vacanehitārtha-
prāṇaṁ punāti sa kulam na tu bhūrimānaḥ

I consider (manye) a dog-eater (śvapacaṁ) who has dedicated everything—mind, words, activities, wealth and life—to the Supreme Lord (tad-arpita-mano-vacana-īhita-artha-prāṇaṁ) superior (varīṣṭham) to a brāhmaṇa who has all twelve items of the previous verse (viprād dvi-śaḍ-guṇa-yutād) but who is averse to the lotus feet of the Lord (aravinda-nābha-pādāravinda-vimukhāt). He purifies his whole family (sah kulam punāti), whereas the so-called respectable person does not (na tu bhūrimānaḥ).

Verse Summary: In fact, a dog eater who is endowed with devotion is better than a qualified Brahmana bereft of devotion. While the dog eater purifies his whole family by his devotion, the Brahmana cannot even purify himself.

- What else needs to be said?
- One should consider absence or presence of bhakti.
- I consider a dog-eater superior to a brāhmaṇa without bhakti, what to speak of kṣatriyas and others, even if endowed with the twelve items mentioned in the previous verse.

- What to speak of the brāhmaṇa with only seven or eight, or three or four of those items. And what to speak of a brāhmaṇa with none of those qualities.
- Śrīdhara Svāmī says that these qualities without bhakti produce only pride.

**The Case Study of
Ambarish Maharaja and
Durvasa Muni**

|| 9.4.63 ||

śrī-bhagavān uvāca
aham bhakta-parādhīno
hy asvatantra iva dvija
sādhubhir grasta-hṛdayo
bhaktair bhakta-jana-priyaḥ

The Lord said: O brāhmaṇa (dvija)! I am completely under the control of my devotees (aham bhakta-parādhīno). I am not at all independent (hy asvatantra). My heart is controlled by the pure devotees (sādhubhir grasta-hṛdayo). What to speak of my devotee (bhaktair), even those who are devotees of my devotee are very dear to me (bhakta-jana-priyaḥ).

Just as Brahmā and Siva cannot save you because they are dependent on me, so I also am dependent, and cannot save you.

↑ Duryasa muni ↓

“You become dependent on your devotees by your nature but this is not desired by the devotees. You are thus independent.”

That is true, I am independent, but by my will I become dependent on my devotees, because I cannot give up my various sentiments towards them.

This is expressed by the word iva.

Therefore my mercy exists in their mercy.

The Lord's mercy follows the mercy of the devotees.

This is well known to all people and is known to you.

Persons protected by the devotees are dear to me, what to speak of the devotees themselves.

O ignorant brāhmaṇa! Do you not consider this?

|| 9.4.64 ||

nāham ātmānam āśāse
mad-bhaktaiḥ sādhubhir vinā
śriyam cātyantikīm brahman
yeṣām gatiḥ aham parā

O brāhmaṇa (brahman)! Without the devotees (mad-bhaktaiḥ sādhubhir vinā), who take shelter of only me (yeṣām gatiḥ aham parā), I do not desire to enjoy my own bliss (nāham ātmānam āśāse) by my six great qualities (śriyam ātyantikīm).

Duṣṭāṅga muni

“How much are the devotees your object of affection?”

Listen. I am called ātmārāma because I enjoy my own bliss. But I do not desire that enjoyment (ātmānam) without the devotees.

More than my own bliss from my svarūpa, I desire the bliss from the svarūpas of my devotees.

Lord & the devotees

Though (both) of us have spiritual forms, the mature form of the spiritual function called mercy exists in the bhakti within the devotee, since it is the essence of the cit-śakti, since it gives bliss even to my svarūpa, and since it attracts my svarūpa.

I eternally possess my six great qualities but, without the devotees, I consider these to be barren.

I am the one object (gatiḥ) of those devotees.

|| 9.4.65 ||

ye dārāgāra-putrāpta-
prāṇān vittam imaṁ param
hitvā mām śaraṇam yātāḥ
katham tāms tyaktum utsahe

Since pure devotees (ye) give up their homes, wives, children, relatives (hitvā dāra-āgāra-putra-āpta), riches and even their lives (prāṇān vittam) simply to serve me (mām śaraṇam yātāḥ), without any desire for material improvement in this life or in the next (imaṁ param), how can I give up such devotees at any time (katham tāms tyaktum utsahe)?

“You are affectionate to brāhmaṇas. Therefore do not ignore me, a brāhmaṇa.”

That is true. But how can I ignore the devotees?

I will have to give them up automatically if I protect you who offended the devotee. That is expressed in this verse.

For me, the devotees have given up attachment to wife and children, objects of affection, difficult to give up.

What have you, a brāhmaṇa, given up? Please tell me.

You cannot say that Ambarīṣa did not give up anything.

When you engaged the demon to kill him, he did not move a step, since he did not consider his body important.

But you, who prayed to Brahmā and Śiva for protection, ran all over the universe to protect your body, though you are an ātmārāma with complete detachment.

I know the true value of him and you. What else should I
(tell you--such a fool?)

|| 9.4.66 ||

mayi nirbaddha-hṛdayāḥ
sādhavaḥ sama-darśanāḥ
vaśe kurvanti mām bhaktyā
sat-striyaḥ sat-patiṁ yathā

As chaste women (yathā sat-striyaḥ) bring their gentle husbands (sat-patiṁ) under control by service (bhaktya) vaśe kurvanti), the pure devotees (sādhavaḥ), who see others' suffering as their own (sama-darśanāḥ) and are completely attached to me in the core of the heart (mayi nirbaddha-hṛdayāḥ), bring me under their full control (mām vaśe kurvanti).

I am hard to control (durvaśa) by Brahmavādīs like you, Durvāsā, but I am controlled by the devotees.

Since their hearts are fixed in me, they are without material desire (sādhavaḥ) and they see others' suffering as their own (sama-darśanāḥ).

॥ 9.4.67 ॥

(mat-sevayā) (pratītam te)
(sālokyādi-catustayam)
(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-catustayam**), 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**)?

This verse shows their high position because of their lack of material desire.

Though these types of liberation are achieved (pratītam) automatically, they do not desire them.

These types of liberation are not destroyed by time, whereas other things such as attaining Brahmaloaka are destroyed.

|| 9.4.68 ||

sādhavo hrdayam mahyam
sādhūnām hrdayam tv aham
mad-anyat te na jānanti
nāham tebhyo manāg api

The pure devotee (**sādhavo**) is my very heart (**hrdayam mahyam**): what pains him pains me (implied). I am the heart of the pure devotee (**sādhūnām hrdayam tv aham**): what pleases him pleases me (implied). My devotees do not know anything else but me (**mad-anyat te na jānanti**), and I do not know more than they do (**nāham tebhyo manāg api**).

Though I want to give you the suitable result for causing pain to my devotee, I do not do so.

Understand that this is because I am affectionate to brāhmaṇas. That is expressed in this verse.

The devotees are my heart: you, who wanted to afflict my Ambarīṣa, have afflicted my heart.

↓ DURVĀSA MUVĪ

“If I have offended you then I fall at your feet for forgiveness.”

I am the devotees' heart: when the devotee's heart is pleased, I am pleased. Go to Ambarīṣa and please him.

“But he invited me and then did not feed me, and instead he ate. Do you not see his fault?”

They do not know anything except me. Ambarīṣa does what I desire him to do.

↓ D-M

“Therefore I ask you. Please reply. Between a brāhmaṇa and a Dvādaśī, which is more respectable as dharma?”

Please go. Ask Ambarīṣa. He will teach you, since you are so ignorant of the conclusions of the scriptures on dharma.

Do not have any shame about this. I also have no knowledge. I do not know anything more than they do.

Since the śruti says that drinking water is both eating and not eating, Ambarīṣa has equally respected the brāhmaṇa and the Dvādaśī.

But you are ignorant. You do not know that. This is hinted.

And Durvāsā had not asked Ambarīṣa about this, since he should be made to understand the superiority of the Dvādaśī over all dharma because of its bhakti by seeing result of his actions.

॥ 9.4.69 ॥

upāyaṁ kathayiṣyāmi
tava vipra śṛṇusva tat
ayaṁ hy ātmābhicāras te
yatas taṁ yāhi mā ciram
sādhuṣu prahitaṁ tejaḥ
prahartuḥ kurute 'śivam

O brāhmaṇa (vipra)! I will tell you the method for your protection (tava upāyaṁ kathayiṣyāmi). Please listen (tat śṛṇusva). Go immediately to Ambarīṣa (mā ciram taṁ yāhi) because of whom you uttered a curse (yataḥ te ayaṁ ātma abhicārah). One's so-called prowess, when employed against the devotee (sādhuṣu prahitaṁ tejaḥ), certainly harms the person who employs it (prahartuḥ kurute aśivam).

I will clearly tell you the method of deliverance. Please listen.

Go to Ambarīṣa whom you cursed in order to kill him.

He is merciful and will save you. No one else can.

You should not think that Ambarīṣa will harm you since he is a devotee (sādhuṣu).

॥ 9.4.70 ॥

tapo vidyā ca viprāṇām
niḥśreyasa-kare ubhe
te eva durvinītasya
kalpete kartur anyathā

For a brāhmaṇa (viprāṇām), austerity and learning are certainly auspicious (tapo vidyā ubhe niḥśreyasa-kare), but when acquired by a person of bad conduct (te eva durvinītasya), such austerity and learning give opposite results (kartuh anyathā kalpete).

“How is it possible that a kṣatriya like Ambarīṣa is capable of delivering me, endowed with austerity and knowledge?”

Austerity and knowledge cannot exist in you, since you are not qualified.

Rather they become the opposite.

Knowledge and austerity in a person of bad conduct produce opposite results.

|| 9.4.71 ||

brahmaṁs tad gaccha bhadram te
nābhāga-tanayaṁ nṛpam
kṣamāpaya mahā-bhāgaṁ
tataḥ śāntir bhaviṣyati

O brāhmaṇa (**brahman**)! You should therefore go immediately to King Ambarīṣa, the son of Mahārāja Nābhāga (**tad gaccha nābhāga-tanayaṁ nṛpam**). I wish you all good fortune (**bhadram te**). Satisfy the great devotee (**kṣamāpaya mahā-bhāgaṁ**) and you will have peace (**tataḥ śāntir bhaviṣyati**).

|| 9.5.1-2 ||

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When thus advised by Viṣṇu, Durvāsā, harassed by the cakra, approached Mahārāja Ambarīṣa and fell at his feet.

Seeing Durvāsā attempting to praise him, Mahārāja Ambarīṣa was ashamed and, seeing him suffering, was greatly aggrieved. Thus he offered prayers to the weapon of the Lord.

|| 9.5.9 ||

O protector of the universe! As the form of all strength, you are engaged by the Supreme Lord in killing the criminals. For the benefit of our entire dynasty, as a favor to us, favor this poor brāhmaṇa.

“I have been engaged by the Lord for killing your enemies.”

That is not the only engagement. O deliverer of the universe!

Seeing that the cakra would not give up pursuing
Durvāsā, Ambarīṣa makes an oath

|| 9.5.10 ||

If our family has given charity to the proper persons, if we have performed sacrifices, if we have properly carried out our occupational duties, and if we have sheltered brāhmaṇas, may this brāhmaṇa be freed from the burning caused by Sudarśana.

Seeing the cakra disregard his oath, he made a
stronger oath

|| 9.5.11 ||

If the one Supreme Lord, the reservoir of all transcendental qualities, is pleased with us, since he has love for all beings as his very self, may this brāhmaṇa be freed from the pain of being burned.

|| 9.5.12-13 ||

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: When the King offered prayers, the Sudarśana cakra which was burning the brāhmaṇa became completely peaceful because of the request.

Durvāsā, freed from the fire of the Sudarśana cakra, became joyful, offered Ambarīṣa the highest blessings, and praised the King.

|| 9.5.14 ||

durvāsā uvāca

aho ananta-dāsānām

mahattvam dr̥ṣṭam adya me

kṛtāgaso 'pi yad rājan

maṅgalāni samīhase

Durvāsā said: O King (**rājan**)! Today (**adya**) I have witnessed (**dr̥ṣṭam me**) the greatness of the Lord's devotees (**ananta-dāsānām mahattvam**), for although I desired your bad fortune (**yad kṛtāgaso api**), you have prayed for my good fortune (**maṅgalāni samīhase**).

॥ 9.5.15 ॥

duṣkaraḥ ko nu sādḥūnām
dustyajo vā mahātmanām
yaiḥ saṅgrhīto bhagavān
sātvatām ṛṣabho hariḥ

What is impossible to do (kaḥ nu duṣkaraḥ), and what is impossible to give up (dustyajo vā), for devotees (sādḥūnām mahātmanām) who have achieved (yaiḥ saṅgrhītaḥ) the Supreme Lord, the master of the pure devotees (bhagavān hariḥ sātvatām ṛṣabhah)?

What mercy is impossible for them to give, and what offense is impossible for them to overlook?

Just as others take wealth, they take the Lord. But the Lord, after being taken, steals their hearts.

|| 9.5.16 ||

yan-nāma-śruti-mātreṇa
pumān bhavati nirmalaḥ
tasya tīrtha-padaḥ kiṃ vā
dāsānām avaśiṣyate

What is impossible (**kiṃ vā avaśiṣyate**) for the servants of the Lord (**tasya dāsānām**), whose feet are like holy places (**tīrtha-padaḥ**)? Merely by hearing their names (**yan-nāma-śruti-mātreṇa**) a person becomes completely purified (**pumān bhavati nirmalaḥ**).

॥ 9.5.17 ॥

rājann anugrhīto 'ham
tvayātikaruṇātmanā
mad-aghamaṁ pṛṣṭhataḥ kṛtvā
prāṇā yaṁ me 'bhirakṣitāḥ

O King (**rājann**)! I have been favored (**aham anugrhītaḥ**) by you, who are so merciful (**tvayā atikaruṇātmanā**) since you have overlooked my offenses (**yad mad-aghamaṁ pṛṣṭhataḥ kṛtvā**) and saved my life (**me prāṇā abhirakṣitāḥ**).

|| 9.5.18-19 ||

Expecting the return of Durvāsā Muni, the King had not taken his food. Therefore, when the sage returned, the King fell at his feet, pleased him, and fed him sumptuously.

Durvāsā Muni, after eating varieties of palatable food brought with respect, was so satisfied that with great affection he requested the King to eat also, saying, "Please take your meal."

|| 9.5.20 ||

**prīto 'smy anugṛhīto 'smi
tava bhāgavatasya vai
darśana-sparśanālāpair
ātithyenātma-medhasā**

I am very pleased (**prīto asmy**), being favored by my intelligence (**ātma-medhasā anugṛhīto asmi**), by your hospitality (**tava ātithyena**), and by seeing and touching you (**darśana-sparśana**), and by speaking with you (**ālāpair**), a great devotee of the Lord (**bhāgavatasya**).

I have been favored by seeing you, and thus I am pleased.

Asmi is in the present tense. This indicates the previously I was not favored by seeing you, and not pleased, since I became blind with anger and created a demon to burn you, though you were sinless.

If one happens to see a devotee, caused by actions of the devotee, and that gives rise to devotion to the Lord, then those events will give mercy to the brāhmaṇas having austerity and knowledge.

There is no other way.

I am the example of that.

If I did not have intelligence to accept the hospitable words of Ambarīṣa, how could I become saved?

The pain inflicted by the cakra was my great benefactor, delivering me from saṁsāra, and showing the path of bhakti.

|| 9.5.21-22 ||

All the blessed women in the heavenly planets will continuously chant about your spotless activities at every moment, and the people of this world will also chant your most purifying glories continuously.

Śukadeva Gosvāmī said: Thus being satisfied, Durvāsā took permission and left, continuously glorifying the King. Through the sky, he went to Brahmaloaka, which is devoid of dry reasoning.

Durvāsā went to Brahmaloaka to speak to his Brahma-realized friends about his deliverance, the great influence of bhakti and the devotees, and about the Lord who is controlled by the devotees.

But, I am not like
Ambarisa Maharaj. I
don't have such good
qualities

3.25.21

titikṣavaḥ kārūnikāḥ
suhṛdaḥ sarva-dehinām
ajāta-śatravaḥ śāntāḥ
sādhavaḥ sādhu-bhūṣaṇāḥ

Such devotees are tolerant (**titikṣavaḥ**), merciful (**kārūnikāḥ**), friendly to all beings (**suhṛdaḥ sarva-dehinām**), without enemies (**ajāta-śatravaḥ**), gentle (**śāntāḥ**), straightforward (**sādhavaḥ**) and respectful to other devotees (**sādhu-bhūṣaṇāḥ**).

Verse Summary: How to identify such a devotee? -
Secondary characteristics of such a devotee – titikṣava,
karunika etc

3.25.22

mayy ananyena bhāvena
bhaktim kurvanti ye dr̥dhām
mat-kṛte tyakta-karmāṇas
tyakta-svajana-bāndhavāḥ

They perform (**kurvanti ye**) steady *bhakti* to me (**mayi dr̥dhām bhaktim**) with exclusive devotion (**ananyena bhāvena**), giving up all actions to attain me (**mat-kṛte tyakta-karmāṇas**), giving up friends and relatives (**tyakta-svajana-bāndhavāḥ**).

Verse Summary: How to identify such a devotee? -
Primary characteristics of such a devotee – Ananya and
dr̥dha bhakti

||1.1.29||

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

The devatās constantly dwell (**surāḥ samāsate**) with all good qualities (**sarvair guṇaih**) in (**tatra**) that person who has pure bhakti for the Lord (**yasya akiñcanā bhagavaty bhaktir āsti**). There are no good qualities in the non-devotee (**harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇā**) who chases after (**dhāvatah**) temporary material objects (**asati bahiḥ**) with desire for material pleasure (**manorathena**). (SB 5.18.12)

Section-III Krsna further explains the Process of Knowledge and Liberation (8-12)

|| 13.8-12 ||

amānitvam adambhitvam ahimsā kṣāntir ārjavam
ācāryopāsanam śaucam sthairyam ātma-vinigrahaḥ

indriyārtheṣu vairāgyam anahaṅkāra eva ca
janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi- duḥkha-doṣānudarśanam

asaktir anabhiṣvaṅgaḥ putra-dāra-grhādiṣu
nityam ca sama-cittatvam iṣṭāniṣṭopapattiṣu

mayi cānanya-yogena bhaktir avyabhicāriṇī
vivikta-deśa-sevitvam aratir jana-saṁsadi

adhyātma-jñāna-nityatvam tattva-jñānārtha-darśanam
etaj jñānam iti proktam ajñānam yad ato 'nyathā

Freedom from pride (**amānitvam**); lack of ostentation (**adambhitvam**); non-violence (**ahimsā**); forbearance (**kṣāntir**); sincerity (**ārjavam**); worship of the teacher (**ācāryopāsanam**); purity (**śaucam**); steadiness (**sthairyam**); control of the mind (**ātma-vinigrahaḥ**); detachment from enjoyment of sense objects (**indriyārtheṣu vairāgyam**); lack of identification with body (**anahaṅkāra eva ca**); understanding (**anudarśanam**) that all states of existence such as birth, death, old age and disease (**janma-mṛtyu-jarā-vyādhi**) give rise to suffering (**duḥkha-doṣa**); freedom from attachment to others (**asaktir**), lack of identification with the condition of sons and others (**anabhiṣvaṅgaḥ putra-dāra-grhādiṣu**); equanimity of mind (**nityam ca sama-cittatvam**) in the face of desirable or undesirable events (**iṣṭa-anīṣṭa-upapattiṣu**); devotion to me with undeviating attention (**mayi cānanya-yogena bhaktir avyabhicāriṇī**); resorting to solitary places (**vivikta-deśa-sevitvam**) with distaste for crowds (**aratir jana-saṃsadi**); constant engagement in knowledge of the self (**adhyātma-jñāna-nityatvam**); and always keeping in mind the goal of liberation (**tattva-jñānārtha-darśanam**)—all of these are declared to be knowledge (**etaḥ jñānam iti proktam**). What is otherwise is ignorance (**ajñānam yad ato 'nyathā**).

SVCT Commentary to BG 13.8-12 (amanitvam adambhitvam verse)

- The twenty factors to be used for gaining that knowledge are first mentioned in five verses.
- Of these, eighteen are common to both the devotees and the jñānīs.
- However the devotees zealously engage in the one element mentioned in the eleventh verse, mayi cānanya-yogena bhaktir avyabhicāriṇī.

SVCT Commentary to BG 13.8-12 (amanitvam adambhitvam verse)

- The other seventeen items manifest automatically for those who engage in that one item.
- The bhaktas do not devote effort to the seventeen items individually.
- This is the tradition.
- The last two items are especially for the jñānīs

Srila Prabhupada's Commentary to BG 13.8-12 (amanitvam adambhitvam verse)

- Of all the descriptions of the process of knowledge, the most important point is described in the first line of the eleventh verse.
- *Mayi cānanya-yogena bhaktir avyabhicāriṇī*: the process of knowledge terminates in unalloyed devotional service to the Lord.
- So if one does not approach, or is not able to approach, the transcendental service of the Lord, then the other nineteen items are of no particular value.

Srila Prabhupada's Commentary to BG 13.8-12 (amanitvam adambhitvam verse)

- But if one takes to devotional service in full Kṛṣṇa consciousness, the other nineteen items automatically develop within him.
- As stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.18.12), *yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ*.
- All the good qualities of knowledge develop in one who has attained the stage of devotional service.

Section-III Qualities that Endear one to Krsna (13-20)

|| 12.15 ||

yasmān nodvijate loko
lokān nodvijate ca yaḥ
harṣāmarṣa-bhayodvegair
mukto yaḥ sa ca me priyaḥ

He who does not agitate others (**yasmān na udvijate loko**), nor is agitated by others (**lokān na udvijate ca yaḥ**), he who is free from material emotions such as joy, jealousy, fear and anxiety (**yaḥ harṣa-amarṣa-bhaya-udvegair muktaḥ**), is dear to Me (**sa ca me priyaḥ**).

SVCT Commentary to BG 12.15 (Verses talking about qualities that endear a devotee to Krsna)

- Moreover, it is said:

**yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā
sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ**

- One who has unflinching devotion for the Personality of Godhead has all the good qualities of the demigods.
- By this statement it is understood that other qualities which please the Lord also automatically appear by the constant performance of bhakti to Me.
- Please hear about these. Five verses describe these qualities.

The Fourth Shower of Nectar

III – Two types of Nistha

Verse – 3

- Nishtha, steadiness, is of two types:
 1. Concerning bhakti directly (**sakshat-bhaktir-vartani**)
 2. Concerning elements favorable to bhakti (**bhakti-anukula vastur-vartini**)
- Sakshat-bhakti has unlimited forms, still, there are three basic divisions: bodily, vocal and mental (kayiki, vachiki, manasi).
- Elements favorable to bhakti refer to humility, giving respect to others, friendliness, and mercifulness.

The Fourth Shower of Nectar

III – Two types of Nistha

Verse – 3

- However, sometimes steadiness in such qualities may be seen in a self-controlled devotee who has no steadiness in bhakti.
- While elsewhere, steadiness in these qualities may not be perceived in an arrogant devotee who has attained steadiness in bhakti.
- In spite of this, by the presence or absence of steadiness in bhakti itself (sakshat bhakti), rather than in the qualities of bhakti, learned wise men understand the actual presence or absence of nishtha, steadiness.
- Inexperienced perception cannot substantiate the truth.