

Bhakti Sangha Bhagavatam Class

6.1.17

Youtube Link of the Session:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8MobwRUCAI8>

Verse, Translation and Purport

|| 6.1.17 ||

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

The path followed by pure devotees, who are well behaved and fully endowed with the best qualifications, is certainly the most auspicious path in this material world. It is free from fear, and it is authorized by the śāstras.

Srila Prabhupada's Purport

One should not think that the person who takes to bhakti is one who cannot perform the ritualistic ceremonies recommended in the karma-kāṇḍa section of the Vedas or is not sufficiently educated to speculate on spiritual subjects.

Māyāvādīs generally allege that the bhakti path is for women and illiterates.

This is a groundless accusation.

The bhakti path is followed by the most learned scholars, such as the Gosvāmīs, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Rāmānujācārya.

These are the actual followers of the bhakti path.

Regardless of whether or not one is educated or aristocratic, one must follow in their footsteps.

Mahājano yena gataḥ sa panthāḥ: [Cc. Madhya 17.186] one must follow the path of the mahājanas.

The mahājanas are those who have taken to the path of devotional service (suśīlāḥ sādhave yatra nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇāḥ), for these great personalities are the perfect persons.

As stated in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.18.12):

yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā
sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ

"One who has unflinching devotion to the Personality of Godhead has all the good qualities of the demigods."

The less intelligent, however, misunderstand the bhakti path and therefore allege that it is for one who cannot execute ritualistic ceremonies or speculate.

As confirmed here by the word sadhrīcīnaḥ, bhakti is the path that is appropriate, not the paths of karma-kāṇḍa and jñāna-kāṇḍa.

Māyāvādīs may be suśīlāḥ sādhanavah (well behaved saintly persons), but there is nevertheless some doubt about whether they are actually making progress, for they have not accepted the path of bhakti.

On the other hand, those who follow the path of the ācāryas are
suśīlāḥ and sādhaḥ, but furthermore their path is akuto-bhaya,
which means free from fear.

One should fearlessly follow the twelve mahājanas and their line of
disciplic succession and thus be liberated from the clutches of māyā.

Discussion

Section-I

Is incapacity the cause of Devotees
not accepting Jnana and instead
choosing Bhakti?

Utsāha – Enthusiasm

The state of **apathy** develops from carelessness.

One should practice devotional service without deviation.

This is instructed in the Bhagavad-gītā (6.23) in the following words:

Utsāha – Enthusiasm

taṁ vidyād duḥkha-samyoga-
viyogaṁ yoga-samjñitam
sa niścayena yuktavyo
yogo 'nirvinna-cetasā

Know such a state, separated from all misery (taṁ vidyād duḥkha-samyoga- viyogaṁ), to be yoga (yoga-samjñitam). This yoga must be practiced with determination (sa yogo niścayena yuktavyo), devoid of depression (anirvinṇa-cetasā).

Utsāha – Enthusiasm

In his commentary on this verse, Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣana Mahāśaya has said: ātmanyā yogyatva-mananam nirvedas tad rahitena cetasā "one becomes indifferent to whatever work he feels unqualified for."

Devotional service should be performed in this mentality.

Regarding bhakti-yoga, it is said in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.7-8):

Utsāha – Enthusiasm

Qualification for K.Y & J.Y

nirvinṇānām jñāna-yogo
nyāsinām iha karmasu
teṣv anirvinṇa-cittānām
karma-yogas tu kāminām

"Among these three paths, jñāna-yoga, the path of philosophical speculation, is recommended (jñāna-yogah) for those who are disgusted with material life (nirvinṇānām) and are thus detached from ordinary, fruitive activities (nyāsinām iha karmasu). Those who are not disgusted with material life (teṣv anirvinṇa-cittānām), having many desires yet to fulfil (kāminām), should seek perfection through the path of karma-yoga (karma-yogah).

Utsāha – Enthusiasm

Qualification for Bhakti

yadṛcchayā mat-kathāḍau
jāta-śraddha tu yaḥ pumān
na nirvinno nāti-sakto
bhakti-yogo 'sya siddhi-dah

accumulation of śraddha Sukṛti by association of devotees

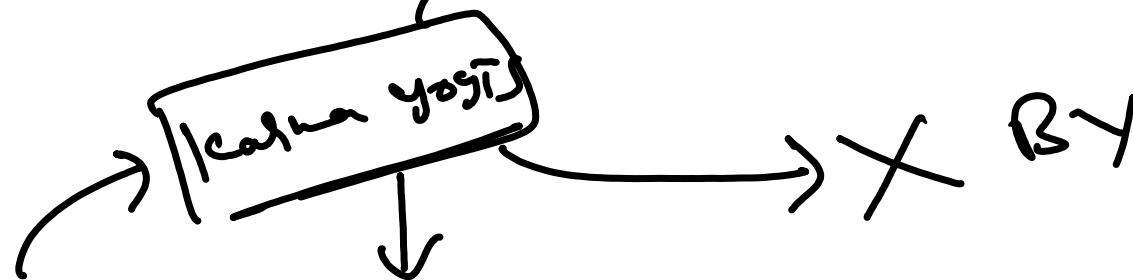
If somehow or other by good fortune (yadṛcchayā) one develops faith (jāta-śraddha) in hearing and chanting My glories (mat-kathā āḍau), such a person, being neither very disgusted (na nirvinna) with nor attached to material life (nāti-sakta), should achieve perfection through the path of loving devotion to Me (bhakti-yogo asya siddhi-dah)."

Utsāha – Enthusiasm

The purport is this: For those who have attained indifference for material activities but have not yet realized spiritual activities, what can remain in their hearts besides indifference?

↓
Jñānīs
↓
accomplished ananta nivṛtti
but not ananta pravṛtti

For them the undifferentiated brahma-jñāna is the topmost achievement.



For those who have not attained indifference for material activities due to lack of spiritual realization, there is no way to cleanse the heart other than karma-yoga.

Utsāha – Enthusiasm

Those who have realized spiritual activities and understood that material activities are insignificant attain **indifference** for all material activities.

↓
Devotees
युक्ता वािरेग्ये

They accept some material activities as a support for their spiritual awakening, but they have no attachment for such activities.

In proportion to the degree that they discuss spiritual topics in devotion, freedom from material association is awakened as an extraneous fruit.

Utsāha – Enthusiasm

- The symptoms of a devotee are given in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.27-8) as follows:

jāta-śraddho mat-kathāsu
nirviṇṇaḥ sarva-karmasu
veda duḥkhātmakān kāmān
parityāge 'py anīśvaraḥ
tato bhajeta mām prītaḥ
śraddhālur dr̥ḍha-niścayaḥ
juṣamāṇaś ca tān kāmān
duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan

Utsāha – Enthusiasm

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 duḥkhātmakaṁ 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 (**śraddhālur 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
*→ anarthe nirvṛttiḥ is still in progress
↓ WORK IN PROGRESS*
- **juṣamāṇaś ca tān kāmān duḥkhodarkāmś ca garhayan** – Unable to give up sense gratification, he sincerely repents for engaging in such acts

Classic Symptoms of Vaidhi Sadhaka

Krsna's instructions to such Sadhakas

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

Utsāha – Enthusiasm

Karma arises from lust, jñāna arises from indifference, and bhakti arises from faith in the Supreme Lord.

The person who has attained faith is naturally disgusted with material activities.

He accepts without attachment only those activities that are favorable for increasing his faith in the Lord.

Section-II

Sections Overview

Part-I

**Mahārāja Parīkṣit express Gratitude
and asks a question**

(SB 6.1.1-6)

|| 6.1.1 ||

śrī-parīkṣid uvāca
nivr̥tti-mārgaḥ kathita
ādau bhagavatā yathā
krama-yogopalabdhenā
brahmaṇā yad asaṁsṛtiḥ

King Parīkṣit said: You have already described (**bhagavatā ādau kathita**) the path of liberation (**nivr̥tti-mārgaḥ**). By gradually progressing on that path properly (**yathā krama-yoga upalabdhenā**), one ends material existence (**asaṁsṛtiḥ**) along with Brahmā (**brahmaṇā**).

The first chapter describes the words of the servants of Yama when the servants of Viṣṇu come to rescue Ajāmila.

Hearing of the suffering of men falling to hell, Parīkṣit became compassionate to them.

He reveals that he has understood the meaning of what was previously explained in order to produce enthusiasm in Śukadeva so that he would answer his question about how to deliver those suffering people.

|| 6.1.2 ||

pravṛtti-lakṣaṇāś caiva
traiguṇya-viṣayo mune
yo 'sāv alīna-prakṛter
guṇa-sargaḥ punaḥ punaḥ

O sage (**mune**)! The symptom of material enjoyment (**pravṛtti-lakṣaṇah**) is taking repeated bodies in the material world (**guṇa-sargaḥ punaḥ punaḥ**) with the object of receiving happiness of Svarga (**traiguṇya-viṣayah**), for the person who is not freed from māyā (**yah asāv alīna-prakṛteh**).

You have described in the Third Canto the symptoms of material enjoyment.

Traiguṇya-viṣayaḥ means “having the goal of happiness on Svarga.”

There is repeated birth by the guṇas for the person who has not destroyed prakṛti, who is subject to saṁsāra.

|| 6.1.3 ||

adharna-lakṣaṇā nānā
narakāś cānuvarṇitāḥ
manvantaraś ca vyākhyāta
ādyah svāyambhuvo yataḥ

You have also described (**anuvarṇitāḥ**) the varieties of hellish life (**nānā narakāḥ**) that result from impious activities (**adharna-lakṣaṇā**), and you have described (**vyākhyāta**) [in the Fourth Canto] the first Manvantara (**ādyah manvantarah**), which was supervised by Svāyambhuva Manu (**yataḥ svāyambhuvah**).

|| 6.1.4-5 ||

priyavratottānapador vaṁśas tac-caritāni ca
dvīpa-varṣa-samudrādri- nady-udyāna-vanaspatīn

dharā-maṇḍala-saṁsthānam bhāga-lakṣaṇa-mānataḥ
jyotiṣām vivarāṇām ca yathedam asṛjad vibhuḥ

You have described the dynasties and characteristics (**vaṁśah tat-caritāni ca**) of King Priyavrata and King Uttānapāda (**priyavrata uttānapadoḥ**), as well as the islands, varṣas, oceans, mountains (**dvīpa-varṣa-samudra-adri**), rivers, gardens, trees (**nady-udyāna-vanaspatīn**), and the condition of the earth (**dharā-maṇḍala-saṁsthānam**) and the luminaries in the sky (**jyotiṣām**) and the lower planets (**vivarāṇām ca**), with their divisions, characteristics and dimensions (**bhāga-lakṣaṇa-mānataḥ**), just as the Lord created them (**yathā idam asṛjad vibhuḥ**).

|| 6.1.6 ||

adhuneha mahā-bhāga
yathaiiva narakān naraḥ
nānogra-yātanān neyāt
tan me vyākhyātum arhasi

O greatly fortunate Śukadeva Gosvāmī (**mahā-bhāga**)! Now (**adhunā**) kindly tell me (**me vyākhyātum arhasi**) how human beings (**yathā naraḥ**) may be saved (**na iyāt**) from the terrible pains (**nānā ugra-yātanān**) of hell (**narakān**).

Please explain how a person can avoid going to these hells which have terrible pain.

Just as the means of attaining fortunate and unfortunate results should be known, the means of extinguishing the unfortunate results should be known.

|| 2.4.5 ||

rājovāca—

samīcīnaṃ vaco brahman
sarva-jñasya tavānagha |
tamo viśīryate mahyaṃ
hareḥ kathayataḥ kathāṃ ||

The King said: O sinless *brāhmaṇa* (anagha brahman)! When you, full of knowledge (sarva-jñasya), speak topics of the Lord (hareḥ kathayataḥ kathāṃ), my ignorance is destroyed (tamo viśīryate mahyaṃ). Those words are fitting (tava vacah samīcīnaṃ).

Part-II

Sukadeva Goswami proposes the Path
of Karma and Pariksit Maharaj Rejects
it

(SB 6.1.7-10)

|| 6.1.7 ||

śrī-śuka uvāca

na ced ihaivāpacitiṃ yathāṃhasah
kṛtasya kuryān mana-ukta-pāṇibhiḥ
dhruvaṃ sa vai pretya narakān upaiti
ye kīrtitā me bhavatas tigma-yātanāḥ

kahe-kāndiye atonevat

If a person does not perform (na ced kuryāt) atonement (apacitiṃ) for sins committed (yathā ṃhasah kṛtasya) by his mind, words or actions (mana-ukta-pāṇibhiḥ), he will certainly attain (sah vai dhruvaṃ upaiti) those hells (narakān) which inflict intense pain (tigma-yātanāḥ) after death (pretya) which were described by me (ye me bhavatah kīrtitā).

Testing the proficiency of his student Parīksit to understand his opinion on the matter, Śukadeva first gives the process of atonement according to karma in two verses.

If one does not perform atonement for sins committed by mind, words or actions, singly or together, one attains hell with terrible pain.

|| 6.1.8 ||

tasmāt puraivāśv iha pāpa-niskṛtau
yateta mṛtyor avipadyatātmanā
doṣasya dr̥ṣṭvā guru-lāghavam yathā
bhiṣak cikitseta rujām nidānavit

Therefore (tasmāt), in this world (iha), before death (mṛtyoh purā), one should strive (āśu yateta) to destroy sinful reactions (pāpa-niskṛtau) while the body is not afflicted (avipadyata ātmanā), just as a doctor (yathā bhiṣak) who knows the causes of disease (rujām nidāna-vit), seeing the gravity or lightness of the disease (doṣasya guru-lāghavam dr̥ṣṭvā), prescribes a cure (cikitseta).

Before death, quickly one should do this.

Otherwise if there is much delay, one must perform double the atonement, because the condition will be twice as serious.

One should do this while the body is unafflicted.

When the body is diseased it is impossible to perform atonements.

One should search out an expert in dharma-śāstra who can decide what should be done, just as one approaches a doctor, who can see the seriousness or insignificance of a disease.

|| 6.1.9 ||

śrī-rājovāca

dr̥ṣṭa-śrutābhyām yat pāpam
jānann apy ātmano 'hitam
karoti bhūyo vivaśah
prāyaścittam atho katham

The King said: Though the jīva knows (jānann apy) that sinful acts (yat pāpam) are detrimental (ātmano ahitam) by seeing and hearing (dr̥ṣṭa-śrutābhyām), he helplessly commits sin again (karoti bhūyo vivaśah). What is the use of atonement (prāyaścittam atho katham)?

Parīkṣit criticizes atonement, saying it is unacceptable, in two verses.

One sees a king punishing a criminal and hears about the punishment in hell and understands that sin is not beneficial.

It is seen that a person commits that same sin again even after doing the atonement. How does atonement destroy sin?

If the sin has been destroyed he will not commit sin again.

|| 6.1.10 ||

kvacin nivartate 'bhadrāt
kvacic carati tat punaḥ
prāyaścittam atho 'pārtham
manye kuñjara-śaucavat

After withdrawing from sin (**kvacit nivartate abhadrāt**) one commits the sin again (**kvacit carati tat punaḥ**). I therefore think (**atho manye**) atonement is useless (**prāyaścittam apa artham**), like an elephant bathing (**kuñjara-śaucavat**).

Sometimes in youth one refrains from sin, but again one commits the sin in old age.

Therefore atonement is useless.

The elephant after bathing dirties himself with dust.

**Duties Expected of a Qualified
Practitioner of Vaidhi Sadhana
Bhakti**

Duties Expected of a Qualified Practitioner

(anauṣṭhānato) (doso
(bhakty-aṅgānām) prajāyate
(na karmanām akaraṇād
eṣa bhakty-adhikāriṇām

(niṣiddhācārato daivāt)
(prāyaścittam) (tu) (hocitam)
iti vaiṣṇava-śāstrāṇām
rahasyam tad-vidām matam

The person qualified for bhakti (**eṣa bhakty-adhikāriṇām**) is at fault (**doṣah prajāyate**) for failing to perform all of the important aṅgas of bhakti (**bhakty-aṅgānām akaraṇād**). But he is not at fault for failing to perform the duties of varṇa and āśrama (**na karmaṇām akaraṇād**).

If he, by chance (**daivāt**), happens to commit some sin (**niṣiddha ācārato**), there is no atonement prescribed for him (**prāyaścittam tu na ucitam**). This is the opinion (**iti matam**) of those who know the secret of Vaiṣṇava scriptures (**vaiṣṇava-śāstrāṇām rahasyam tad-vidām**).

It is a fault if those qualified for bhakti fail to perform the required āṅgas of bhakti such as observance of Ekādaśī or Janmāṣṭamī.

It is not a fault if they do not perform varṇāśrama activities.

If they commit forbidden acts because of influence of previous vaiṣṇava-aparādha, atonement is not required, since these pure devotees do not have a natural tendency for sinful actions.

↓
Seduker

Bhakti alone acts as atonement. This is the conclusion of the
Vaiṣṇava scriptures.

There is no fault if a person does not perform all the sixty-four aṅgas
of bhakti.

The essential aṅgas are the first twenty and the last five are: chanting,
hearing Bhāgavatam, association with devotees, living in a holy place
and deity worship.

Summary of the Duties Expected of a Sadhaka

1. He is at fault for failing to perform the essential angas of Bhakti.
2. He is not at fault for failing to perform the duties of Varna and Asrama
3. If he commits a forbidden activity, he need not perform the Karma-Kandiya Prayascitta.
4. For such a person, Bhakti alone acts as his atonement.

**Proof of Prayascitta not needed for
Practitioners of Bhakti**

sva-pāda-mūlam bhajataḥ priyasya
tyaktānya-bhāvasya hariḥ pareśaḥ
vikarma yac cotpatitaṁ kathañcid
dhunoti sarvaṁ hr̥di sanniviṣṭaḥ

One who has thus given up all other engagements (**tyakta anya-bhāvasya**) and has taken full shelter at the lotus feet of Hari (**sva-pāda-mūlam bhajataḥ**), the Supreme Personality of Godhead (**pareśaḥ**), is very dear to the Lord (**hariḥ priyasya**). Indeed, if such a surrendered soul accidentally commits some sinful activity (**kathañcid yad vikarma**), the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is seated within everyone's heart (**sarvaṁ hr̥di sanniviṣṭaḥ**), immediately takes away (**dhunoti**) the reaction to such sin (**yat utpatitam**). (SB 11.5.42)

sarva-dharman parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja |
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā sucaḥ

Giving up all dharmas (**sarva-dharman parityajya**), surrender to Me alone (**mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja**). I will deliver you (**ahaṁ tvām mokṣayiṣyāmi**) from all sins (**sarva-pāpebhyo**). Do not worry (**mā sucaḥ**). (BG 18.66)

devarṣi-bhūtāpta-nṛṇām pitṛṇām
na kiṅkaro nāyam ṛṇī ca rājan
sarvātmanā yaḥ śaraṇam śaraṇyam
gato mukundam pariḥṛtya kartam

Anyone who has taken shelter of the lotus feet of Mukunda (**yaḥ gato mukundam śaraṇam**), the giver of liberation (**śaraṇyam**), giving up all kinds of obligations (**pariḥṛtya kartam**), and has taken to the path in all seriousness (**sarvātmanā**), owes neither duties nor obligations (**na kiṅkaro na ayam ṛṇī**) to the demi-gods, sages, general living entities, family members, humankind or forefathers (**deva-rṣi-bhūta-āpta-nṛṇām-pitṛṇām**). (SB 11.5.41)

Part-III

Sukadeva Goswami proposes the Path
of Jnana

(SB 6.1.11-14)

|| 6.1.11 ||

śrī-bādarāyaṇir uvāca
karmaṇā karma-nirhāro
na hy ātyantika iṣyate
avidvad-adhikāritvāt
prāyaścittaṁ 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 (**prāyaścittaṁ vimarśanam**).

By presenting a conclusion, Śukadeva again tests Parīkṣit who has passed the test.

By atonement (karmanā) there cannot be complete (ātyantika) destruction of the sin (karma), but quick relief, because of the condition of the jīva who is qualified by ignorance.

Sin appears repeatedly because of the presence of the seed of sin, ignorance.

The chief atonement is jñāna (vimarśanam), since jñāna removes ignorance.

By presenting the opinion of the jñānīs, Śukadeva again tests Parīksit.

|| 11.2.37 ||

bhayaṃ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syād
īśād apetasya viparyayo 'smṛtiḥ
tan-māyayāto budha ābhajet taṃ
bhaktyaikayeśaṃ guru-devatātmā

For the jīva averse to the Lord (**īśād apetasya**), there will be saṃsāra (**bhayaṃ syād**) consisting of identity with body (**viparyayo**) and lack of identity with the soul (**asmṛtiḥ**), because of his absorption in the material coverings on the soul (**dvitīyā abhiniveśataḥ**), arising from the Lord's māyā (**tan-māyayāto**). Therefore, the intelligent person (**budhah**), taking guru as his Lord and very self (**guru-devatātmā**), should fully worship the Lord (**taṃ īśaṃ ābhajet**) with pure bhakti (**bhaktyaikayā**).

① iśāḍāretasya → Kṛṣṇa bahismukha

② tan māyāyāto → māyā carchā hīn.

③ vīryāyāto/asurātīh → a) forgetfulness of his constitutional position
b) identify with his body.

④ dvitīya abhīnivesā → absorption in matter.

⑤ Bhāgavān Syēd → fear of Saṁsāra.

|| 6.1.12 ||

nāśnataḥ pathyam evānnaṃ
vyādhayo 'bhibhavanti hi
evam niyamakṛd rājan
śanaiḥ kṣemāya kalpate

Diseases do not afflict (na vyādhayo abhibhavanti hi) those who eat proper food (pathyam annaṃ eva aśnataḥ). Similarly (evam), one who follows rules (niyamakṛd) gradually (śanaiḥ) becomes qualified for jñāna (kṣemāya kalpate).

“But if one is sinful, then his heart is impure. How then can he practice jñāna?”

That is true, but jñāna will give relief from the sin (like atonement).

An example is given.

Just as sickness does not affect persons who eat proper food, a person who follows rules of jñāna can gradually destroy sins.

|| 6.1.13-14 ||

tapasā brahmacaryeṇa śamena ca damena ca
tyāgena satya-śaucābhyām yamena niyamena vā

deha-vāg-buddhijaṃ dhīrā dharmajñāḥ śraddhayānvitāḥ
kṣipanty aghaṃ mahad api veṇu-gulmam ivānalaḥ

By avoiding enjoyments (**tapasā**), by avoiding association with women (**brahmacaryeṇa**), by controlling the mind as much as possible, by controlling the external senses (**śamena ca damena ca**), by giving in charity (**tyāgena**), by following truthfulness and cleanliness (**satya-śaucābhyām**), by following yamas like non-violence and niyamas like japa (**yamena niyamena vā**), the wise men (**dhīrā**), knowers of dharma (**dharmajñāḥ**), filled with faith (**śraddhayānvitāḥ**), destroy even great sin (**kṣipanty aghaṃ mahad api**) arising from the body, words and intelligence (**deha-vāg-buddhi jaṃ**), just like fire destroys a clump of bamboos (**analaḥ veṇu-gulmam iva**).

Two verses elaborate on this.

Tapasā means absence of enjoyment.

Brahmacaryeṇa means not associating with women.

Śamena means “by controlling the mind as much as possible.”

Damena means ‘by controlling the external senses.’

Tyāgena means “by charity.”

Yamena means “by non-violence and other restrictions.”

Niyamena means by japa and other injunctions.

Part-IV

Sukadeva Goswami finally proposes the
Path of Bhakti

(SB 6.1.15-19)

|| 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**).

In the example of the fire destroying bamboo, it is possible that the bamboo can grow up again.

Thus even after practicing jñana, sins can reappear.

Seeing the dissatisfied Parīkṣit, Śukadeva then speaks about the solution according to the devotees.

“Some” here indicates that those who surrender the Vāsudeva are very rare.

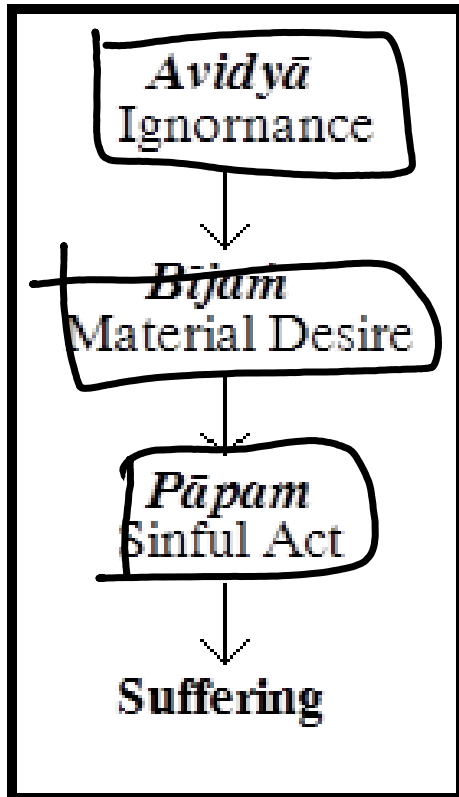
Kevalayā bhaktyā indicates that this bhakti is not only devoid of karma and jñāna (devoid of expecting material benefits or liberation), but in no way depends on karma or jñāna as secondary elements.

Completely (kārtsnyena) indicates that sin is completely uprooted only by bhakti and by no other process, just as only the sun can destroy the fog.

**How Bhakti's destruction of
sin is complete?**

Kleśa-ghnī – Destruction of Suffering

- Kleśa or suffering is three fold. They are papam (sinful act), bijam (sinful desire) and avidya (ignorance).



- Sinful reaction (Papam) is of 2 types.
- Effects that are to be experienced in future lives (Aprarabdha). ✓
✗
- Effects that are to be experienced in this life time (Prarabdha). ✓
✗

Bhakti destroys Aprarabdha Karma

||1.1.20||

yathāgniḥ susamrddhārciḥ
karoty edhāmsi bhasmasāt
tathā mad-viṣayā-bhaktir
uddhavaināmsi kṛtsnaśaḥ

My dear Uddhava (**Uddhava**), just as a blazing fire (**yathā agniḥ susamrddha arcīḥ**) burns to ashes (**karoty bhasmasāt**) all the fuel (**edhamsi**), similarly (**tatha**) devotional service in relationship with Me (**mad visaya bhaktir**) burns to ashes all the sinful reactions (**enamsi kṛtsnaśaḥ**). (SB 11.14.19)

Just like burning firewood is secondary to cooking, burning karma is just secondary to the real goal of bhakti.

Bhakti destroys Prarabdha Karma

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**).

- Such a person, by performing any one of the devotional limbs as mentioned above, destroys these prarabdha karmas which have produced this low birth which prevents him from performing sacrifices.
- Also, performance of bhakti also creates the pious credits and qualities needed for performing sacrifices.
- But, in order to undergo 2nd initiation one should have taken the vedic initiation and learnt the Vedas from a very young age. But the dog eater has missed it.

- The purpose of this verse is not to advocate his immediate performance of sacrifices.
- Therefore, if he wants to perform vedic sacrifices, he has to wait for one more birth because of his lack of proper conduct or sistacara at the young age, while he was still a dog eater.
- Savanaya kalpate also means that he should be given the respect due to a qualified person.

- But one might ask: "How can you say that the prarabdha karma is destroyed? He still has the same body."
- Sinful reactions due to bad birth in the form of acquisition of bad qualities and suffering are removed immediately.
- But the birth itself cannot be changed from one parents to another.
- But bad qualities are definitely destroyed by bhakti.

- Such a low born practitioner of bhakti does not perform sacrifices, not because of his lack of qualification, but because he has no faith in them as he is endowed with pure bhakti.
- One might ask: "If practice of bhakti removes suffering, why then do I see devotees suffering?"
- Devotee's happiness is due to his practice of bhakti (not punya karma) and his suffering is given personally by the Lord's mercy (not due to bad karma).

yasyāham anuḡṛhṇāmi
hariṣye tad-dhanam śanaiḥ
tato 'dhanam tyajanty asya
svajanā duḥkha-duḥkhitam

If I especially favor someone (yasya aham anuḡṛhṇāmi), I gradually deprive him of his wealth (hariṣye tad-dhanam śanaiḥ). Then (tato) the relatives and friends (svajanā) of such a poverty-stricken man (adhanam asya) abandon him (tyajanty). In this way he suffers one distress after another (duḥkha-duḥkhitam). SB 10.88.8

- Baladev Vidyabhusana – Silk analogy
- Sometimes however, the suffering is a result of offense to the Vaiṣṇavas.

Bhakti destroys Sinful desires (Papa Bija)

|| 1.1.24 ||

tais tāny aghāni pūyante
tapo-dāna-vratādibhiḥ |
nādharmajaṁ tad-hṛdayaṁ
tad apīśāṅghri-sevayā ||

Although one may neutralize (**taiḥ pūyante**) the reactions of sinful life (**tāny aghāni**) through austerity, charity, vows and other such methods (**tapo-dāna-vrata ādibhiḥ**), these pious activities cannot uproot the material desires (**na adharma-jaṁ**) in one's heart (**tad-hṛdayaṁ**). However, if one serves the lotus feet of the Personality of Godhead, he is immediately freed from all such contaminations (**tad api īśa aṅghri-sevayā**). (SB 6.2.17)

Bhakti destroys Avidya

||1.1.25 ||

yat-pāda-paṅkaja-palāśa-vilāsa-bhaktyā
karmāśayaṁ grathitam udgrathayanti santaḥ |
tadvan na rikta-matayo yatayo 'pi ruddha-
sroto-gaṇās tam araṇaṁ bhaja vāsudevam

The devotees (**santaḥ**), by actions of service (**vilāsa-bhaktyā**) to the toes of the lotus feet of the Lord (**yat-pāda-paṅkaja-palāśa**), can very easily overcome (**udgrathayanti**) the knot of ignorance carrying unlimited impressions of karma, tied tightly by action (**karmāśayaṁ grathitam**). Because this is very difficult (**tadvat**), the empty-minded non-devotees—the jñānīs and yogīs (**rikta-matayah**)—although trying to stop the flow of sense activities (**sroto-gaṇāh yatayah api**), cannot do so (**na ruddha**). Therefore you are advised to engage in the devotional service of Kṛṣṇa, the son of Vasudeva (**bhaja tam araṇaṁ vāsudevam**). (SB 4.22.39)

Bhakti destroys Avidya

||1.1.26||

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

As the forest fire burns up a female snake demon (**dāva-jvāla pannagīm iva**), supreme devotion to the Lord (**hari-bhaktir anuttamā**) quickly burns up avidyā completely (**āśu avidyām nirdahaty**) by the knowledge (vidyā) which accompanies bhakti (**kṛta anuyātrā-vidyābhih**). (Padma Purana)

|| 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-prāṇas**) become purified by service to the Lord (**tat-puruṣa-niṣevayā**).

Bhakti-devī should not be used for the insignificant action of pacifying sin.

Śukadeva presents the opinion of the learned according to scriptures while criticizing other opinions.

The devotees offer their very lives to the Lord.

“The Lord may or may not throw me into hell, for committing sin, in order to give me suitable teaching by punishment. The Lord is my goal, I am his.”

Offering himself to the Lord, the devotee thinks in this way.

He does not perform atonements to avoid hell.

He practices pure bhakti.

How does completely surrender manifest?

One performs service to the Lord.

|| 6.1.17 ||

sadhrīcīno hy ayam loke
panthāḥ kṣemo 'kuto-bhayaḥ
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 (sadhrīcīnah), auspicious (kṣemah), and without fear of obstacles (akuto-bhayaḥ).

③

④

②

One should not say that bhakti-yoga is for those who are not capable of practicing jñāna, yoga or austerities.

Sadhrīcīnaḥ means certain, leading to the correct goal.

This is the best process in all respects.

There is no fear of any obstacle.

On this path the practitioners are friendly.

One need not fear that one will not have help as on the path of jñāna.

One need not fear of people becoming envious as when practicing karma.

**Bhakti is Certain and
Auspicious**

Quality – 1

Kleśāghnī – Destruction of
Suffering

Quality – 2

Śubhadā – Bestowal of
Auspiciousness

Śubhadā – Bestowal of Auspiciousness

||1.1.27||

śubhāni prīṇanam̐ sarva-
jagatām anuraktatā |
sad-guṇāḥ sukham ity-
ādīny ākhyātāni manīṣibhiḥ ||

The wise explain that there are four types of auspiciousness (śubha) (**śubhāni ākhyātāni manīṣibhiḥ**): affection for all living entities (**prīṇanam̐**), being attractive to all living entities (**sarva-jagatām anuraktatā**), possession of good qualities (**sad-guṇāḥ**), and happiness (**sukham**), as well as other items (**ity-ādīny**). (BRS)

Subha or Auspiciousness is of Four types

1. Jāgat Prīnanam – Affection for all Jivas

2. Sarva Jāgatam Anurakta – Being attractive

3. Sād Gunadi Pradatvam – Bestowal of all Good qualities

4. Sukha Pradatvam – Bestowal of Happiness

a. Vaiśayikam – Happiness from material things

b. Brāhmanam – Happiness from Brahman realization

c. Aiśvaram – Happiness from the Supreme Lord

Sarva Jagatam Anurakta (SB 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 (**prasannah bhagavān hariḥ**), because of his qualities and friendliness (**guṇair maitry-ādibhir**).

Sad-Gunadi Pradatvam

||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)

Sukha Pradatvam

||1.1.31||

siddhayaḥ paramāścaryā
bhuktir muktiś ca śāśvatī |
nityaṁ ca paramānando
bhaved govinda-bhaktitaḥ ||

Astounding mystic powers (**siddhayaḥ paramāścaryā**), material enjoyment (**bhukti**), eternal happiness in the realization of brahman (**mukti**), and eternal bliss from service to the Lord (**nityaṁ ca paramānando**) all appear from bhakti to Govinda (**bhaved govinda-bhaktitaḥ**). (Tantra)

Quality – 3

**Mokṣa-laghutā-kṛt – Makes
Liberation seem insignificant**

Mokṣa-laghutā-kṛt (Nārada-pañcarātra)

||1.1.34||

hari-bhakti-mahā-devyāḥ
sarvā mukty-ādi-siddhayaḥ |
bhuktyaś cādbhutās tasyāś
ceṭikāvad anuvratāḥ

All the siddhis headed by liberation (**sarvā mukty-ādi-siddhayaḥ**) and all astonishing material pleasures (**adbhutāḥ bhuktyaḥ**) follow after (**tasyāḥ anuvratāḥ**) the great goddess called Hari-bhakti (**hari-bhakti-mahā-devyāḥ**) like fearful maidservants (**ceṭikāvad**). (BRS)

Quality – 4

Sudurlabha – Extremely Rare

Sudurlabha

||1.1.35||

sādhanaughair anāsaṅgair
alabhyā sucirād api |
hariṇā cāśvadeyeti
dvidhā sā syāt sudurlabhā

Bhakti is difficult to attain in two ways (**dvidhā sā syāt sudurlabhā**):
If undertaken in great quantity (**sādhana oghair**) but without
attachment (**anāsaṅgair**), bhakti cannot be attained even after a long
time (**alabhyā sucirād api**); and even if practiced with attachment
(**implied**), Kṛṣṇa does not give bhakti to the practitioner
immediately (**hariṇā ca āśu adeya iti**). (BRS)

Quality – 5

Sāndrānanda-Viśeṣātmā –
Composed of a Special Condensed
Bliss

Sāndrānanda-Viśeṣātmā

||1.1.38||

brahmānando bhaved eṣa
cet parārdha-guṇīkṛtaḥ
naiti bhakti-sukhāmbhodheḥ
paramāṇu-tulām api

The bliss of brahman realization (**brahmānandah**) accumulated by samādhi lasting for half of Brahmā's life (**parārdha-guṇī kṛtaḥ**) cannot compare (**na tulām bhaved**) to one drop (**paramāṇu api**) of the ocean of the happiness of bhakti (**bhakti-sukha ambhodheḥ**).

(BRS)

Sāndrānanda-Viśeṣātmā

||1.1.39||

tvat-sākṣāt-karaṇāhlāda-
viśuddhābdhi-sthitasya me |
sukhāni goṣpadāyante
brāhmāṇy api jagad-guro

O guru of the universe (**jagad-guroh**), on seeing You directly (**tvat-sākṣāt-karaṇa**), I am situated (**sthitasya me**) in a pure ocean of bliss (**viśuddha āhlāda abdhi**). All the happiness of impersonal brahman (**brāhmāṇy api sukhāni**) is as insignificant as the water in the hoof print of a cow (**goṣpadāyante**). (**Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya**)

Quality – 6

Śrī-kṛṣṇa ākarṣiṇī – Attracts Kṛṣṇa
and His associates

Śrī-kṛṣṇa ākarṣiṇī

|| 1.1.41 ||

kṛtvā harim prema-bhājam
priya-varga-samanvitam |
bhaktir vaśīkarotīti
śrī-kṛṣṇākarṣiṇī matā

Bhakti is called śrī-kṛṣṇākarṣiṇī (**bhaktih śrī-kṛṣṇākarṣiṇī matā**) because it makes the Lord addicted to prema (**kṛtvā harim prema-bhājam**) and brings Him under control (**vaśīkaroti**) along with His associates (**priya-varga-samanvitam**). (BRS)

Śrī-kṛṣṇa ākarṣiṇī

||1.1.43||

yūyam nṛ-loke bata bhūri-bhāgā
lokaṁ punānā munayo 'bhiyanti |
yeṣāṁ gṛhān āvasatīti sākṣād
guḍham param brahma manuṣya-liṅgam

My dear Mahārāja Yudhiṣṭhira, all of you [the Pāṇḍavas] (**yūyam nṛ-loke**) are extremely fortunate (**bata bhūri-bhāgā**), for the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa (**sākṣād param brahma**), lives in your palace (**yeṣāṁ gṛhān āvasatīti**) just like a human being (**guḍham manuṣya-liṅgam**). Great saintly persons (**lokaṁ punānā munayah**) know this very well, and therefore they constantly visit this house (**abhiyanti**). (SB 7.10.48)

Bhakti is Free from Fear

॥ 11.2.33 ॥

śrī-kavir uvāca

manye 'kutaścid-bhayam acyutasya
pādāmbujopāsanam atra nityam
udvigna-buddher asad-ātma-bhāvād
viśvātmanā yatra nivartate bhīh

Kavi said: For one whose intelligence is disturbed (**nityam udvigna-buddher**) by falsely identifying himself with the temporary material world (**asad-ātma-bhāvād**) I consider (**manye**) that worship of the Lord's lotus feet (**acyutasya pādāmbuja upāsanam**), which produces fearlessness from the material world (**atra akutaścid-bhayam**), is the highest goal because Paramātmā destroys all fear by that worship (**viśvātmanā yatra nivartate bhīh**).

भक्तिः

O King! I see that all dharmas have an element of fear.

But bhakti gives fearlessness.

I consider the highest goal to be bhakti from which there is no fear from time, karma or other obstacles.

|| 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 power of the process is explained.

Taking shelter of bhakti, having faith (āsthā means faith), just having faith in the process, what to speak of performing it, a person will never be strongly (pra) affected by pride (mādyeta).

However, in karma or yoga the practitioner becomes proud.

Or na pramādyeta can mean “he never becomes inattentive.” That means the obstacles cannot overpower him.

Moreover, taking shelter of bhakti, whether having his eyes open or closed, while running, the person does not stumble or fall.

Someone may offer an easy process and say “Run with your eyes closed using the method taught by me.” But do not have any doubt.

Running means moving by putting a foot forward and placing it on the earth. One may stumble by going a little and more likely one will fall by moving for a longer time.

But if one performs a little or a lot of one aṅga of the whole of bhakti, there is no loss as there is in karma. One will not lose the result by performing only one aṅga for a short period.

Though one is ignorant at present (closing the eyes), if one performs bhakti without awareness, it is not a fault. What to speak then of performing bhakti with awareness?

There is incentive for Good
Friendships on the Path of
Bhakti

The Glories of Association of Devotees

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

The value of a moment's association with the devotee of the Lord (**lavena api bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya**) cannot be compared (**na tulayāma**) even to the attainment of heavenly planets or liberation from matter (**svargaṁ apunar-bhavam**). What then to speak of (**kim uta**) worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity, which are meant for those who are destined to die (**martyānām āśiṣaḥ**). (**SB 1.18.13**)

yasya yat-saṅgatiḥ puṁso
maṇivat syāt sa tad-guṇaḥ |
sva-kula-rddhyai tato dhīmān
sva-yūthān eva saṁśrayet

A man (**puṁsah**) will attain the qualities (**tad-guṇaḥ syāt**) of the person with whom he associates (**yasya yat-saṅgatiḥ**), just as a crystal takes up the color of the object next to it (**maṇivat**). Therefore (**tato**), the wise man (**dhīmān**) will take shelter of those who have qualities like his own (**sva-yūthān eva saṁśrayet**) for the prosperity of his family (**sva-kula-rddhyai**). (**Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya**)

**dadāti pratigr̥hṇāti
guhyam ākhyāti pṛcchati
bhunkte bhojayate caiva
ṣaḍ-vidham prīti-lakṣaṇam**

Offering gifts in charity (**dadāti**), accepting charitable gifts (**pratigr̥hṇāti**), revealing one's mind in confidence (**guhyam ākhyāti**), inquiring confidentially (**pṛcchati**), accepting prasāda and offering prasāda (**bhunkte bhojayate caiva**) are the six symptoms of love shared by one devotee and another (**ṣaḍ-vidham prīti-lakṣaṇam**). (NOI – 4)

kṛṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ manasādriyeta
dīkṣāsti cet praṇatibhiś ca bhajantam īsam
śuśrūṣayā bhajana-vijñam ananyam anya-
nindādi-śūnya-hṛdam īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā

One should mentally honor (**manasā ādriyeta**) the devotee who chants the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa (**kṛṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ**), one should offer humble obeisances (**praṇatibhih**) to the devotee who has undergone spiritual initiation [dīkṣā] (**dīkṣāsti cet**) and is engaged in worshiping the Deity (**bhajantam īsam**), and one should associate with (**īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā**) and faithfully serve (**śuśrūṣayā**) that pure devotee who is advanced in undeviated devotional service (**ananyam bhajana-vijñam**) and whose heart is completely devoid of the propensity to criticize others (**ananyam anya-nindādi-śūnya-hṛdam**). (NOI – 5)

|| 6.1.18 ||

prāyaścittāni cīrṇāni
nārāyaṇa-parāṇmukham
na niṣpunanti rājendra
surā-kumbham ivāpagāḥ

O King (**rājendra**)! Much atonement (**prāyaścittāni cīrṇāni**) does not purify (**na niṣpunanti**) persons who are opposed to Nārāyaṇa (**nārāyaṇa-parāṇmukham**), just as many rivers do not clean a liquor pot (**surā-kumbham iva āpa-gāḥ**).

Positive and negative statements are used to show that bhakti destroys all sin whereas jñāna and karma do not.

The plural number is used to indicate that all karma and jñāna processes do not purify the person without faith in Nārāyaṇa, even after hearing about the excellence of bhakti and the devotee.

Bhakti however purifies even those without jñāna or karma, since that was stated in verse 15.

|| 6.1.19 ||

sakṛṇ 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**).

This purification does not depend on a solid basis of bhakti.

Even once remembering the Lord is sufficient, what to speak of many times.

Even thinking with the mind is sufficient, what to speak of hearing or uttering the name of the Lord.

The mind which is materially attracted (tad-guṇa-rāgi) is sufficient, what to speak of a mind without material attractions.

Thinking even in dreams is sufficient what to speak of actual meditation.

Such persons have accomplished all atonement (niśkṛtāḥ).

From this statement the following should also be understood.

If a devotee practicing pure bhakti happens to commit sin again, it is like the bite of snake without fangs.

Those sins have no significant effect.

That condition should not be compared to the elephant taking bath--
the karmī who again commits sin.

It is said:

**api cet sudurācāro bhajate mām ananya-bhāk |
sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ samyag vyavasito hi saḥ ||**

Even if the most sinful person worships me with no other desire than
to please me, I consider that person to be my devotee, as he has fixed
himself completely in me. BG 9.30