

# Bhakti Tattva Viveka

Analysis of the Nature of  
Bhakti

# Chapter 2

## Analysis of Apparent *Bhakti*

Those who think that the happiness derived from intoxication and association with women is *rati* for the Lord are the most fallen in this world and make the world most fallen. → सहजियेस

*Chāyā-bhakty-ābhāsa*

Now *chāyā-bhakty-ābhāsa* will be discussed.

This is not crooked and devious like *pratibimba-bhakty-ābhāsa*.

Sincerity and eagerness for the truth are always present in chāyā-bhakty-ābhāsa.

INQUIRITIVE

Rūpa Gosvāmī describes it as follows:

kṣudra-kautūhala-mayī cañcalā duḥkha-hāriṇī |  
rateś chāyā bhavet kimcit tat-sādrśyāvalambinī ||

→ some Sādrśyāvalambinī

That which has some similarity to real rati (tat-sādrśya kimcit avalambinī), which possesses a small amount of interest in the Lord (kṣudra-kautūhala-mayī), which is unstable (cañcalā), and which destroys suffering (duḥkha-hāriṇī), is called chāyā-raty-ābhāsa (rateh chāyā bhavet). (BRS 1.3.49)

hari-priya-kriyā-kāla-deśa-pātrādi-saṅgamāt |  
apy ānuṣaṅgikād eṣa kvacid ajñeṣv apīkṣyate ||  
kintu bhāgyam vinā nāsau bhāva-cchāyāpy udañcati |  
yad abhyudayataḥ kṣemam tatra syād uttarottaram |||

This chāyā-raty-ābhāsa appears sometimes even in ignorant people (eṣa kvacid ajñeṣu api īkṣyate) by a combination of performing actions dear to the Lord, observing the festivals of the Lord, residing in the dhāma of the Lord (hari-priya-kriyā-kāla-deśa-pātrādi-saṅgamāt), and associating with the devotees of the Lord (ānuṣaṅgikād apy). Even this chāyā-raty-ābhāsa (kintu asau bhāva-cchāyā apy), which eventually bestows auspiciousness to those people (yad kṣemam abhyudayataḥ tatra syād uttarottaram), appears only with great good fortune (bhāgyam vinā na udañcati). BRS 1.3.50-51

hari-priya-janasyaiva prasāda-bhara-lābhatah |  
bhāvābhāso 'pi sahasā bhāvatvam upagacchati ||  
tasminn evāparādhena bhāvābhāso 'py anuttamah |  
kramaṇa kṣayam āpnoti kha-sthaḥ pūrṇa-śasī yathā |||

By the great mercy of a dear devotee of the Lord (hari-priya-janasya)  
eva (prasāda-bhara-lābhatah), the semblance of bhāva (bhāvābhāso  
api) suddenly becomes real bhāva (sahasā bhāvatvam, upagacchati).  
By offending that devotee (tasminn eva aparādhena), even the best  
bhāvābhāsa (anuttamah, bhāvābhāso, apy) gradually wanes (kramaṇa  
kṣayam āpnoti) just as the full moon in the sky gradually wanes (kha-  
sthaḥ pūrṇa-śasī yathā). BRS 1.3.52-53

There are two types of chāyā-bhakty-ābhāsa: that arising from lack of knowledge of svarūpa and that arising from devotional power of things related to bhakti.

Bhakti-ābhāsa arising from lack of svarūpa-jñāna.

Real knowledge of the devotee (sādhaka), the sādhana and the goal which is the Lord (sādhya) are non-different from the svarūpa of pure bhakti.

When one sees qualities of bhakti without this knowledge and with only a desire to cross the ocean of saṁsāra, it becomes bhakty-ābhāsa arising from lack of svarūpa-jñāna.

Only when svarūpa-jñāna arises does bhakty-ābhāsa turn into pure bhakti.

As long as Vaiṣṇavas in a sampradāya do not take shelter of a śikṣā-guru and obtain svarūpa-jñāna, the spiritual substance given by dīkṣā-guru will not be revealed.



That is, with lack of svarūpa-jñāna, svarūpa-siddha-bhakti will remain in a covered condition, and make its appearance as bhakty-ābhāsa.

2 types of pañcopāsana worshipers

→ do pañcopāsana worship with nityavāṅīśā and a desire to merge in Brahman → Pretibhā bhakti ābhāsa

Those who perform pañcopāsana but do not seek to merge into Brahman and worship the Lord with knowledge of his powers have chāyā-bhakty-ābhāsa.

→ imperfect pañcopāsana worshipers → chāyā bhakti ābhāsa.

There is a great difference between Vaiṣṇavas in a sampradāya and Vaiṣṇavas performing pañcopāsana.

Those in a *sampradāya* have greater faith in the form the Lord with qualities.

Those in *sampradāya* have aspirations of a pure Vaiṣṇava with proper teachings whereas those doing *pañcopāsana* do not have those aspirations along with teachings.

Association with those doing *pañcopāsana* is unpleasant but association with Vaiṣṇavas in a *sampradāya* is pleasant.

Association with devotees turns *chāyā-bhakty-ābhāsa* into pure *bhakti*

If by good fortune the performers of *pañcopāsana* have devotee association and do not have association with impersonalists, becoming purified by the teaching of the *sampradāya*, they can pursue pure *bhakti*.

The two following verses quoted in *Bhakti Sandarbha* proving this.

Śiva in Skanda Purāna says in relation to gaining desired results from  
chāyā-bhakty-ābhāsa:

dīkṣā-mātreṇa kṛṣṇasya narā mokṣam labhanti vai |  
kiṁ punar ye sadā bhaktyā pūjayanty acyutaṁ narāh ||

→ without proper śikṣā → chāyā-bhakti-ābhāsa

Just by dīkṣā into Kṛṣṇa worship a person gets liberation. What to  
say of those who worship the Lord with bhakti.

Ādi-varāha Purāna speaks of those having chāyā-bhakty-ābhāsa, not pratibimba-bhakty-ābhāsa, among the performers of pañcopāsana:

janmāntara-sahasresu samārādhya vṛṣa-dhvajam |  
vaiṣṇavatvaṁ labhed dhīmān sarva-pāpa-kṣaye sati ||

After worshipping Śiva for thousands of births and destruction of all  
sins, a wise person becomes a Vaiṣṇava.

The conclusion of scripture is this.

In *pañcopāsana* first one worships Durgā.

Then one progresses to the worship of Sūrya, and then Ganeśa.

Then one worships Śiva, and finally Viṣṇu.

From worship of Viṣṇu in *pañcopāsana* one attains worship of Viṣṇu in an authorized *sampradāya*.

At this time one attains pure *bhakti*.

In all the scriptural statements it is seen that *chāyā-bhakty-ābhāsa* gradually transforms into pure *bhakti* after association with devotees.

②

*Chāyā-bhaktyābhāsa* by contact with devotional items

*Bhaktyābhāsa* arising from contact with items that stimulate *bhakti* is seen everywhere in the scriptures.

These items include tulasī, mahāprasāda, the dust from the feet of devotees, prasāda of devotees, Ekādaśī, the deity, holy places, Gaṅgā, and appearance days of the Lord.

Even contacting these items without being aware, the jīva obtains auspiciousness.

Even if one contacts these items while being offensive, one gets a similar result, chāyā-bhakty-ābhāsa.



For instance a *brāhmaṇa* wears an amulet with a Visnu mantra on his chest.

A Rākṣasa desiring to devour the *brāhmaṇa* touches it and immediately develops *bhakti*.

A mouse thinks of stealing a ghee wick near a *tulasī* plant.

In trying to do so, the lamp lights up the *tulasī* plant brightly.

Seeing this, the mouse flees.

When the mouse dies, the servants of Viṣṇu protect it from the servants of death.

This is the result of offering light to *tulasī*.

A female servant performs vows on Kṛṣṇa's appearance day.

The master associates with the servant.

By this *ābhāsa* association, the master attains *bhakty-ābhāsa*.

Cleaning the Lord's temple with other intentions yields a similar result.

Ajāmila's story is also famous.

The hunter who accidentally observed Śiva Caturdaśī vows attained a spiritual result since this devotion to Śiva is an *ābhāsa* of *bhagavad-bhakty-ābhāsa*.

These incidents are profusely related in *Mahābhārata* and the Purāṇas.

Quoting verses would make this work too long.

O devotees! Seeing such amazing results from *bhakty-ābhāsa* should not surprise you.

All these results arise from the unparalleled influence of pure *bhakti*.

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## Summary

If *jñāna* and *yoga* are not done purely and if they do not take a little help from *bhakty-ābhāsa*, they yield no result. ✗

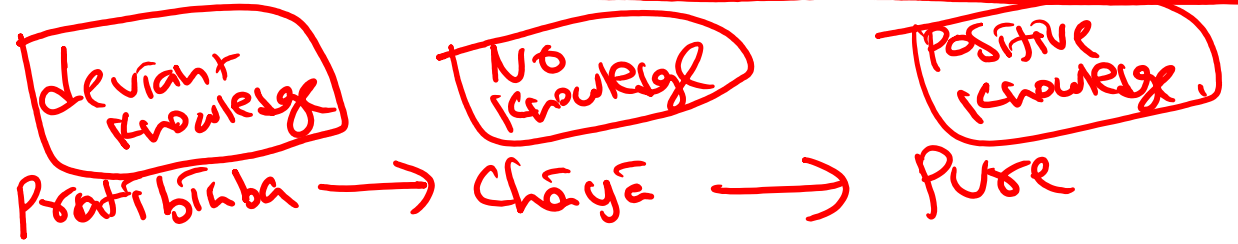
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Only *Bhakti-devī* is completely independent.

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She easily gives results to anyone who does some activity for her.

Since such results are seen in *bhakty-ābhāsa*, *bhakty-ābhāsa* is not the recommended process.



Pure *bhakti* is to be performed.

Those who desire the most auspicious result should not give a place to *pratibimba-bhaktyābhāsa* in their hearts and, surpassing *chāyā-bhakty-ābhāsa* by the strength of the shelter of real devotees, should take shelter of the lotus feet of pure Bhakti-devī.

Please accept this conclusion of the Vaiṣṇavas of the universe.

pratibimbas tathā chāyā bhedāt tattva-vicārataḥ  
bhaktyābhāsa dvidhā so 'pi varjanīya rasārthibhiḥ

By deliberating on the truth it is concluded that there are two types of *bhakty-ābhāsa*—*pratibimba* and *chāyā*. Those who desire to taste *bhakti-rasa* should exclude both types of *bhakty-ābhāsa* from their hearts.

With *pratibimba-bhakty-ābhāsa* the *jīva* commits offense.

With *chāyā-bhakty-ābhāsa* the *jīva* is incomplete.

The *jīva* should perform only pure *bhakti*.