

Bhakti Tattva Viveka

Analysis of the Nature of
Bhakti

Chapter 3

Characteristics of *Bhakti*

śuddha-bhakti-svabhāvasya
prabhāvān yat padāśrayāt
sadaiva labhate jīvas
tam caitanyam ahaṁ bhaje

I worship Caitanya (tam caitanyam ahaṁ bhaje) by surrender to
whose feet (yat padāśrayāt) the jīvas always attain (sadaiva labhate
jīvaḥ) the powers (prabhāvān) of the qualities of pure bhakti (śuddha-
bhakti-svabhāvasya).

Qualities manifested in bhakti

Pure bhakti has six qualities by its nature.

Bhakti by its nature destroys suffering, gives auspiciousness, makes liberation insignificant, is most rare, is filled with bliss and attracts Kṛṣṇa.

kleśāghni
śubheda
mokṣa bhāvanā
↓
sudurlabha
↓
śrī kṛṣṇa ākaṣiṇi
śāntānanda viśeṣatā

In sādhana the first two qualities manifest.

In *bhāva* the first four qualities manifest.

In *prema* all six qualities manifest. I will now explain these six qualities.

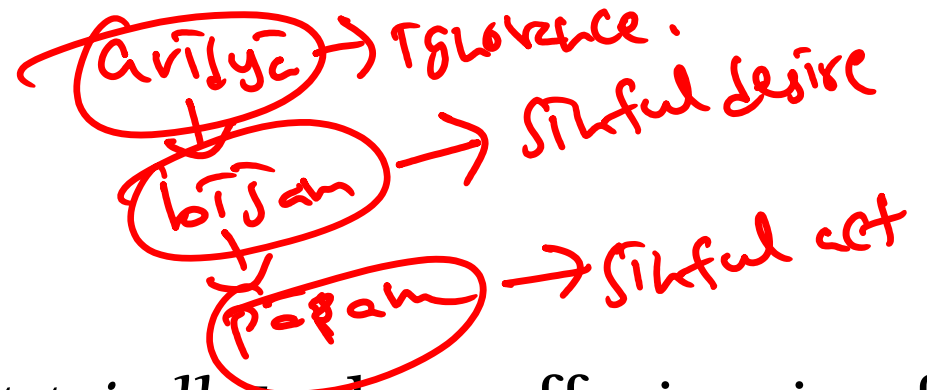
① *kṛṣṇāhī*

Destruction of suffering: types of suffering

For one who takes shelter of pure *bhakti* all his suffering is destroyed by the power of *bhakti*'s nature.

There are three types of suffering.

→ Guide of suffering



Kleśās tu pāpam tad bījam avidyā ceti tat tri-dha: the suffering is of three types—sin, the seed of desire and ignorance. (BRS 1.1.18)

The jīva suffers from the sins he has committed for many births in the past and from the ~~since~~^{ns} he will commit in the future.

In the fifth part of the second chapter of Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta, the major sins were discussed.

Prārabdham bhavet pāpam prārabdham ceti tad vidhā: sins are divided into aprārabdha (causing future suffering) and prārabdha (causing suffering in this life). (BRS 1.1.19)

The sins that a person must suffer for in this life are called prārabdha-pāpa.

The remaining unlimited reactions that the person will suffer for in future lives are called aprārabdha-pāpa.

The aprārabdha sins will become prārabdha in some future life.

In this way the *jīva* must suffer the results of the sins he committed by the law of beginningless karma.

Being born as a *brāhmaṇa*, a *Yavana*, being born in a wealthy family, or having beauty is the result of *prārabdha-karma*.

Being born as a *Yavana* would be a *prārabdha* arising from sinful action.

Jñāna destroys *aprārabdha* but *bhakti* destroys *prārabdha* as well as *aprārabdha* reactions.

If *jñāna* is performed skilfully it destroys only *aprārabdha-karma*.

According *jñāna* scriptures one must suffer *prārabdha-karmas* unavoidably.

Bhāgavatam explains that *prārabdha-karma* is destroyed by *bhakti*:

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 (sadyaḥ) 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). SB 3.33.6

In this example, the low birth which is a *prārabdha-karma* is destroyed by *bhakti*.

Padma Purāṇa explains that *bhakti* destroys *aprārabdha-karma* as well:

aprārabdha-phalam pāpam kūṭam bījam phalonmukham |
kramenaiva praliyeta viṣṇu-bhakti-ratātmanām ||

For those engaged in *bhakti* to Viṣṇu (*viṣṇu-bhakti-ratātmanām*), step by step (*kramenaiva*) the *aprārabdha*, *kūṭa*, *bīja* and *prārabdha-karmas* are destroyed (*praliyeta*).

Bhakti destroys sin in any of its stages of giving effect.

Atonements prescribed in *jñāna* and karma for sin are not necessary for devotees.

Bhakti destroys the seed of sin whereas *karma-yoga* cannot

Sinful desire

Desire to commit sin in the heart is called the seed of sin.

This is destroyed by *bhakti*.

Bhāgavatam says:

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

Although one may neutralize (tais 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 adharmajaṁ) 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

One cannot destroy the seed of sin except by the process of *bhakti*.

When Bhakti-devī resides in the heart, all sinful desires as well as pious desires are removed.

Bhakti destroys ignorance, whereas jñāna alone cannot do

This is explained in the *Padma Purāṇa*:

kṛtānuyātrā-vidyābhir hari-bhaktir anuttamā |
avidyām nirdahaty āśu dāva-jvāleva pannagīm ||26||

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**).

Bhāgavatam says:

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

The devotees (santah), 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

Though one can destroy ignorance to some degree by actions of *jñāna*, one must fall down if one does not take shelter of *bhakti*.

Bhāgavatam says:

ye 'nye 'ravindākṣa vimukta-māninas
tvayy asta-bhāvād avisuddha-buddhayaḥ
āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tatah
patanty adho 'nādr̥ta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ

[Someone may say that aside from devotees, who always seek shelter at the Lord's lotus feet, there are those who are not devotees but who have accepted different processes for attaining salvation. What happens to them? In answer to this question, Lord Brahmā and the other demigods said:] O lotus-eyed Lord (**aravindākṣa**), although nondevotees (**ye anye**) who accept severe austerities and penances to achieve the highest position (**āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam**) may think themselves liberated (**vimukta-māninaḥ**), their intelligence is impure (**avisuddha-buddhayaḥ**). They fall down from their position of imagined superiority (**tataḥ asta-bhāvād patanty adhah**) because they have no regard for Your lotus feet (**anādr̥ta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ**).SB 10.2.32