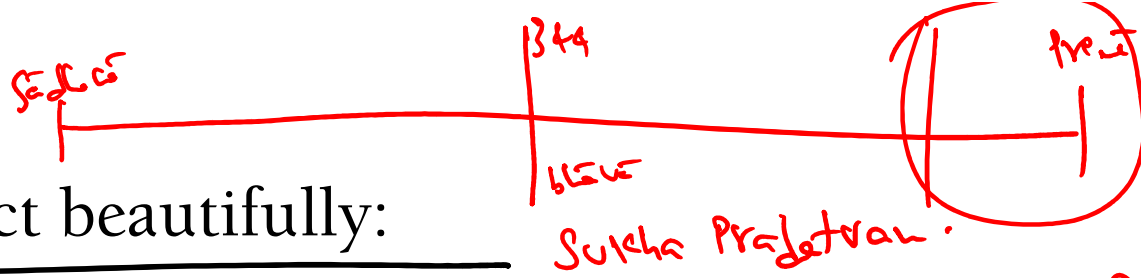


Bhakti Tattva Viveka

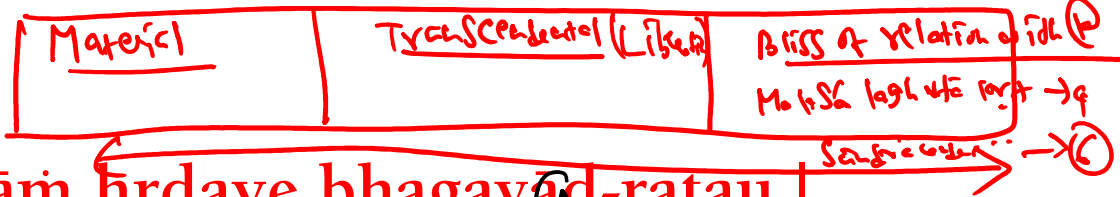
Analysis of the Nature of
Bhakti

Chapter 3

Characteristics of *Bhakti*



Rūpa Gosvāmī describes this fact beautifully:



manāg eva prarūḍhāyām hṛdaye bhagavād-ratau |
puruṣārthās tu catvārās tṛṇāyante samantataḥ ||

When even a little (manāg eva) attraction for the Lord (bhagavād-ratau) grows in the heart (hṛdaye prarūḍhāyām), the four objects of human attainment—artha, dharma, kāma and mokṣā (puruṣārthās tu catvārās)—become like grass, shameful to appear before bhakti (tṛṇāyante samantataḥ). BRS 1.1.33

Bhakti is rare ④ Sudurlabhā

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 1.1.35

The word āsaṅgaiḥ refers to performing worship with great skill.

Without great skill, one cannot attain bhakti.

If one performs actions with great skill for a long time, offenses to the name and Vaiṣṇavas disappear.

At that time by the mercy of devotees, pure bhakti with knowledge of svarūpa appears.

bhāva-bhakti

Expertise in hearing & chanting with attraction.

Attachment

bhāva
perfecter bhakti

jñānataḥ sulabhā muktir bhuktir yajñādi-puṇyataḥ |
seyam sādhana-sāhasrair hari-bhaktiḥ sudurlabhā ||

Liberation is easily attained by jñāna (jñānataḥ sulabhā muktih) and material enjoyment is easily attained by puṇyas such as sacrifice (bhuktir yajñādi-puṇyataḥ), after attaining dedication to those goals by thousands of attempts (seyam sādhana-sāhasraih). However, bhāva-bhakti to the Lord cannot be attained (hari-bhaktiḥ sudurlabhā) if one practices thousands of different sādhanas (seyam sādhana-sāhasrair) (because āsakti will not appear). BRS 1.1.36

Bhāgavatam mentions that *bhakti* is not easily attained.

rājān patīr gurur alam bhavatām yadūnām
daivam priyaḥ kula-patiḥ kva ca kiṅkaro vaḥ |
astv evam aṅga bhajatām bhagavān mukundo
muktim dadāti karhicit sma na bhakti-yogam ||37||

My dear King (rājān aṅga), the Supreme Person, Mukunda (bhagavān mukundah), is actually (alam) the maintainer (patīh) of all the members of the Pāṇḍava and Yadu dynasties (bhavatām yadūnām). He is your spiritual master (guruh), worshipable Deity (daivam), friend (priyaḥ), and the director of your activities (kula-patiḥ). To say nothing of this, He sometimes serves your family as a messenger or servant (kva ca kiṅkaro vaḥ). Those engaged in getting the Lord's favor (bhajatām astu) attain liberation from the Lord very easily (muktim dadāti), but He does not give bhāva-bhakti at all times (karhicit sma na bhakti-yogam). SB 5.6.18

Jīva Gosvāmī gives the following meaning.

“Even though one executes *sādhana-bhakti* with attachment (*āsaṅga*), until the time that one produces intense *āsakti* in that *bhakti*, the Lord does not give *bhāva-bhakti*.”

Thus, one may take support of the nine types of *bhakti* during *sādhana* and worship the Lord but the Lord does not give that person pure (*bhāva*) *bhakti* until he develops deep attraction (*āsakti*) for *rati* with knowledge of his pure *svarūpa*, which is the goal of *sādhana-bhakti*.

That person's bhakti will be a *chāyā-bhāvābhāsa* condition.

Bhakti produces intense bliss ⑤ Sāhāyānāṁ viśeṣāṁ

Previously it was mentioned that Bhagavān had an eternal *svarūpa* of consciousness and bliss, and the *jīva* was a particle of consciousness and bliss, like a ray of the sun.

Thus the *jīva* to some extent possesses bliss and consciousness as his nature.

Normally people think of bliss as material happiness, but if one were to gather all material happiness together it would be meagre in comparison to spiritual bliss. → Bliss of Prema

The bliss in the material world is extremely limited and temporary.

Spiritual bliss is a condensed or intense substance.

Bhakti is the very form of that intense bliss.

The *jīva* has no bliss to compare to that of *bhakti*.

It is natural to the *jīva*.

The happiness of Brahman is nothing in comparison since the bliss of Brahman is the undifferentiated happiness produced by thinking of the opposite of material happiness.

That bliss is not eternal for the *jīva* but is only the contemplated happiness opposite to matter.

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

The bliss of brahman realization (brahmānandaḥ) 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 1.1.38

↓
para bhakti

The meaning is that no matter how much the bliss of Brahman is increased, it can never compare with the bliss in the *jīva's svarūpa*.

The bliss of the *jīva's svarūpa* is natural.

Since the bliss of Brahman is a particular type of happiness produced from actions contrary to the *jīva*, that bliss is not natural.

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

There are many similar statements in the scriptures.

For fear of enlarging the work, more verses are not quoted.

Bhakti attracts Kṛṣṇa

⑥ Śrī Kṛṣṇa ākaṅkṣiṇī
↓ ↓ ↓
desires Kṛṣṇa attracts.

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

Bhakti is called śrī-kṛṣṇākarsīṇī (bhaktih śrī-kṛṣṇākarsīṇī 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 1.1.41

The meaning is this.

As long as pure bhakti does not arise during sādhana, one performs actions with bhaktyābhāsa.

→ bhakti mixed with k, j, y
→ भक्त्याभसा

In that condition bhakti is hard to attain.

When pure bhakti arises during sādhana, the actions of bhakti take on beauty.

Realization of the jīva's siddha-svarūpa and the Lord's siddha-svarūpa becomes prominent among the various beauties.

In that *bhakti* great attachment with longing (*āśakti*) arises.

When that state of practice arrives, pure *sādhana-bhakti* transforms into *rati* or *bhāva-bhakti* and finally *prema*.

In *bhāva* condition, the *bhakti* attracts Kṛṣṇa with his associates but in *prema*, *bhakti* makes the devotee enjoy the highest *rasa* as a participant in Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

This topic will be explained in detail later.

Summary

'Considering all this, (the servant of the Vaiṣṇavas of the universe) has
written five verses.

BUT

kleśaghñī śubhadā-bhaktir yaḍa sā sādhanātmikā
hr̥daye baddha-jīvanānam taṭastha-lakṣaṇānvitā
kleśaghñī śubhadā mokṣa-laghutā-kṛt sudurlabhā
sā bhaktir bhāva-rūpeṇa yāvat tiṣṭhati cetasi
prema-rūpā yaḍa bhaktis tadā tat tad guṇānvitā.
sāndrānanda-viśeṣātmā śrī-kṛṣṇākaraṣaṇi ca sā
muktānām eva sā śaśvat svarūpānanda-rūpinī
sambandha-svarūpā nityam rājate jīva-kṛṣṇayoḥ
bhakyābhāseṇa yā labhyā muktir māyā-nikrntanī
sā katham bhagavad-bhakteḥ sāmyaṁ kāṅkṣati ceṭikā

Bhakti has three stages: sādhana, bhāva and prema. Sādhana has two qualities: destruction of suffering and bestowal of auspiciousness.

Kṛesṭāgnī

śubhadhē

Bhāva has four qualities: (destruction of suffering), (bestowal of auspiciousness), (disregard for liberation) and (rarity).
(no Kṛṣṇa-āgṛhāṇa kṛt) (Sudrābha)

Prema has six qualities: destruction of suffering, bestowal of auspiciousness, disregard for liberation, rarity, intense bliss, and being attractive to Kṛṣṇa. (As long as the jīva is in a conditioned state, rarity, intense bliss, and being attractive to Kṛṣṇa are the qualities related to the jīva's svarūpa and the other three are secondary.) (*This sentence is not in the sanskṛt*)

When the *jīva* is in a liberated state *bhakti* takes the form of pure bliss and eternal service between the *jīva* and Kṛṣṇa.

Liberation, which destroys the coverings of the *jīva*, is attained by *bhaktyābhāsa*.

That liberation is one ordinary servant among many servants of Bhakti-devī.

How can she desire to be equal to Bhakti-devī?