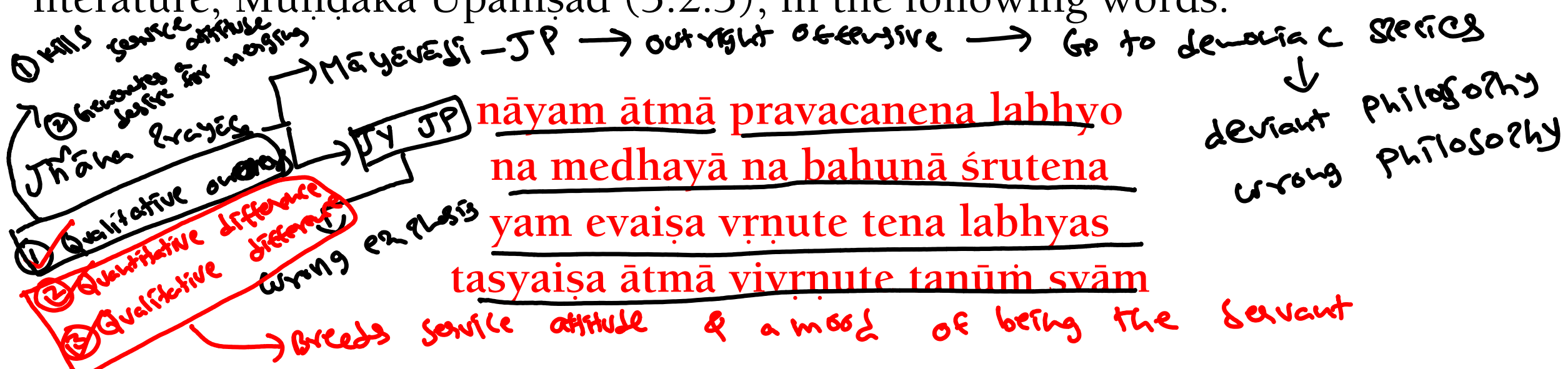


Six Faults that Destroy Bhakti

2. Prayāsa – Over-Endeavoring

Prayāsa – Overendeavoring

Jnāna-prayāsa is hostile to spiritual life; this is explained in the Vedic literature, Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.2.3), in the following words:



nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo
na medhayā na bahunā śrutena
yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas
tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanūṁ svām

① Qualitative over
② Qualitative difference
③ Qualitative wrong
Bred service attitude & a model of being the servant

"The Supreme Lord (ayam ātmā) is not obtained (na labhyo) by expert explanations (pravacanena), by vast intelligence (na medhayā), or even by much hearing (na bahunā śrutena). He is obtained (tena labhyas) only by one whom He Himself chooses (yam evaiṣa vṛṇute). To such a person (tasya), He (esa ātmā) manifests His own form (vivṛṇute tanūṁ svām)."

Prayāsa – Overendeavoring

Therefore devotion is the only way to attain the lotus feet of the Lord. In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.3) Brahmā says to Lord Kṛṣṇa:

jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā namanta eva
jīvanti san-mukharitām bhavadiya-vārtām
sthāne sthitāḥ śruti-gatām tanu-vāñ-manobhir
ye prāyaśo 'jita jito 'py asi tais tri-lokyām

Those who (ye), even while remaining situated in their established social positions (sthāne sthitāḥ), throw away the process of speculative knowledge (jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā) and with their body, words and mind (tanu-vāñ-manobhir) offer all respects (namanta eva) to descriptions of Your personality and activities (bhavadiya-vārtām), dedicating their lives to these narrations (jīvanti), which are vibrated by You personally and by Your pure devotees (san-mukharitām), certainly conquer Your Lordship (jito 'py asi), although You are otherwise unconquerable (prāyaśo ajitah) by anyone within the three worlds (taih tri-lokyām).

Prayāsa – Overendeavoring

In order to further clarify prayāsa, Lord Brahmā says:

śreyah-sṛtiṁ bhaktim udasya te vibho
kliśyanti ye kevala-bodha-labdhave
teṣāṁ asau kleśala eva śiṣyate
nānyad yathā sthūla-tuṣāvaghātinām

"My dear Lord (vibho), devotional service unto You (te bhaktim) is the only auspicious path (śreyah-sṛtiṁ). If one gives it up (ye udasya) simply for speculative knowledge or the understanding that these living beings are spirit souls and the material world is false (kevala-bodha-labdhave), he undergoes a great deal of trouble (kliśyanti). He only gains troublesome and inauspicious activities (asau kleśala eva śiṣyate). His endeavors are like beating a husk that is already devoid of rice. One's labor becomes fruitless (nānyad yathā sthūla-tuṣāvaghātinām)."

Prayāsa – Overendeavoring

The philosophy of monism does not originate in the Absolute Truth;
it is only a demoniac provision.

Jīvaṅī saṅ-mukheritām bharadīya vārtām

Glorification of the knowledge of one's relationship with the Lord is
often heard.

That knowledge is pure and spontaneous-there is no need of prayāsa.

Prayāsa – Overendeavoring

The knowledge given in the Catuḥ-ślokī [the four main Bhāgavatam verses] is acintya bhedābheda, inconceivably, simultaneously one and different.

This knowledge is naturally dormant in the heart of the living entity.

The Lord is like a spiritual sun, and the living entities are like molecular particles of the sun's rays.

Prayāsa – Overendeavoring

The living entity cannot remain in his constitutional form without being subordinate to the Lord, therefore servitorship of the Lord is his constitutional duty.

Cultivation of this constitutional duty is the nature of the living entity. This is the spontaneous-devoid of prayāsa-dharma, or duty, of the living entity.

Prayāsa – Overendeavoring

Although in the conditioned state this dharma is almost dormant and is awakened by sādhana, or spiritual practice, still the prayāsa found in devotional practices is not like that found in the paths of karma and jñāna.

If one takes shelter of the holy name with some respect, then within a short time the obstacles due to ignorance are removed and one's constitutional happiness is reawakened.

But if one gives a place to jñāna-prayāsa, then he has to suffer more.

Prayāsa – Overendeavoring

And if jñāna-prayāsa is renounced in the association of devotees,
then that is a devotional endeavor.

The Lord says in the Bhagavad-gītā (12.2-5):

|| 12.2 ||

śrī-bhagavān uvāca

mayy āveśya mano ye mām

nitya-yuktā upāsate

śraddhayā parayopetās

te me yuktatamā matāḥ

The Lord said: I consider (me matāḥ) those who worship Me (ye mām upāsate), desiring to associate with Me constantly (nitya-yuktā), absorbing their minds in Me (mayy āveśya manah), endowed faith beyond the guṇas (śraddhayā parayā upetāḥ), to be the best knowers of yoga (te yuktatamāḥ).

devotees → *Bhakti*

ye tv akṣaram anirdeśyam avyaktaṁ paryupāsate
sarvatra-gam acintyaṁ ca kūṭa-stham acalaṁ dhruvam

sanniyamyendriya-grāmaṁ sarvatra sama-buddhayaḥ
te prāpnuvanti mām eva sarva-bhūta-hite ratāḥ

But those who (ye tv) worship (paryupāsate) the unnamed (anirdeśyam), formless entity (avyaktaṁ), ~~all-pervading in space and~~ time, the inconceivable (sarvatra-gam acintyaṁ ca), unchanging, eternal Brahman (kūṭa-stham acalaṁ dhruvam akṣaram), completely subduing their senses (sanniyamya indriya-grāmaṁ), looking on all things equally (sarvatra sama-buddhayaḥ), intent on the welfare of all (sarva-bhūta-hite ratāḥ), attain Me alone— in the form of impersonal Brahman (te prāpnuvanti mām eva).

|| 12.5 ||

kleśo 'dhikataras teṣām
avyaktāśakta-cetasām
avyaktā hi gatiḥ duḥkham
dehavadbhir avāpyate

Those who are attached to the impersonal realization (avyakta āśakta-cetasām) encounter extreme difficulties (kleśo dhikataras teṣām). The unmanifest goal (avyaktā hi gatiḥ) brings suffering (duḥkham avāpyate) to those who have bodies (dehavadbhir).

Prayāsa – Overendeavoring

In karma-prayāsa there is also no benefit.

In the First Canto of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.8) it is said:

dharmah svanuṣṭhitah puṁsām

viṣvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ

notpādayed yadi ratim

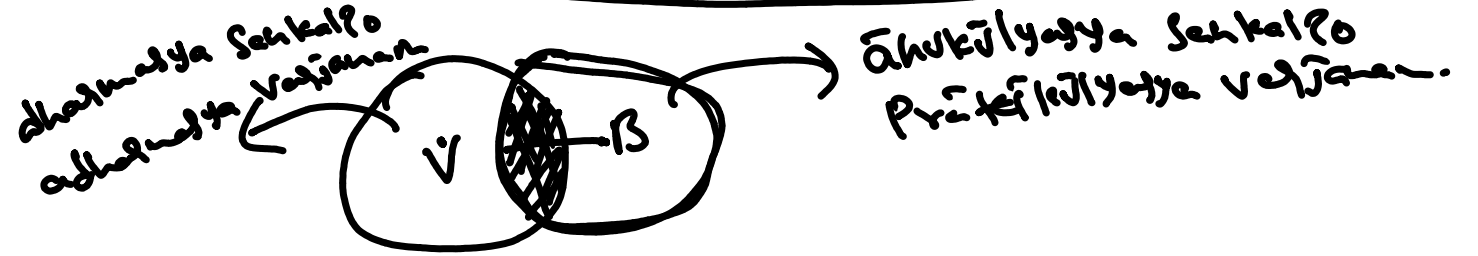
śrama eva hi kevalam

Varṇāśrama-dharma of the human being (dharmah svanuṣṭhitah puṁsām), which does not produce (yadi yaḥ na utpādayed) attraction for topics of the Lord (viṣvaksena-kathāsu ratim), is only wasted effort (śrama eva hi kevalam).

Prayāsa – Overendeavoring

Therefore karma-prayāsa is contrary to devotional principles in the same way as jñāna-prayāsa.

The conclusion is that karma-prayāsa and jñāna-prayāsa are very detrimental.



But a devotee who desires to properly pass his life still accepts his duties according to varṇāśrama, as those duties are favorable to devotional service and counted as part of devotional service

Prayāsa – Overendeavoring

All these activities are no longer called karma.

In these activities, the (svanistha devotees), or devotees addicted to their own line of devotion, bring (karma) and (its results) within the realm of devotional service.

mixed devotees → They have
Divided faith
Split faith
mixed faith.

mixed devotion

The (pariniṣṭhita devotees) or devotees fully addicted to devotional service, perform pious activities that are not contrary to devotional principles only to attract people.

Sādhakās

Prayāsa – Overendeavoring

The devotees who are ^{Siddhas → perfected devotees} (nirapeksa) or neutral, accept activities favourable for devotional service without caring for popular approval.

Jnāna-prayāsa and its resultant prayāsa for the liberation of merging with the Lord are extremely contrary to devotional principles.

If aṣṭāṅga-yoga-prayāsa aims at mystic powers and liberation, then it is also extremely contrary to devotional principles.

Prayāsa – Overendeavoring

The rules for devotional practice and the knowledge of the living entities' relationship of simultaneous oneness and difference are most natural and therefore devoid of prayāsa.

This type of activity and knowledge is only accepted as a means.

If they are accepted as the goal, then they become the source of fault.