

Six Qualities that Enhance Bhakti

10. Tat-tat-karma-pravartana - Various activities favorable for devotional service

Topic - 12

Angas of Devotional Service

Deity Worship Bestows
the Sadhakas the
Qualification to Hear

Suddha Bhakti Cintamani

- In addition to purifying the heart, deity worship has two other important effects:

1. It increases the devotees' interest to hear about the Lord

2. It bestows the ability to concentrate the mind, which increases the capacity to hear.

Suddha Bhakti Cintamani

- Tending the deity naturally awakens awareness of Kṛṣṇa's personality.
- As devotees become increasingly attached to the person they are worshipping, they want to know more about Him.
- Subsequently, they want to hear about His pastimes and to learn how to serve Him better.

Suddha Bhakti Cintamani

- As they increase their service, their instinctive taste for hearing and reading becomes purified and directed toward topics of the Lord. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.5.13, purport]
- Śrīla Prabhupāda also glorified deity worship as a means to fix the mind: “This deity worship means to train the neophyte devotees how to concentrate upon the form of Kṛṣṇa, especially His lotus feet.” [Lecture, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.15.28, Los Angeles, 6 December, 1973]

Suddha Bhakti Cintamani

- By observing the Lord's form during āraṭi, thinking of Him during the day, and tasting His remnants at meals, devotees naturally remember Him.
- This (regular remembrance) is a form of training that helps new devotees subdue and direct the restless mind.
- When they have achieved a certain measure of success, devotees find reading and hearing much more rewarding.

Suddha Bhakti Cintamani

- We often see new devotees distracted or sleepy while listening to class or reading.
- Learning to fix the mind on the deity helps fix the mind on topics of Krsna.
- Thus deity worship helps devotees stay alert and focused in other devotional acts.

Suddha Bhakti Cintamani

- Through the medium of deity worship, the devotees' dormant attachment to Kṛṣṇa is awakened.
- That attachment naturally increases their qualification for and interest in hearing topics of Kṛṣṇa.
- In this way they overcome the influence of the lower modes and advance happily in Kṛṣṇa consciousness. [Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.2.19]

Suddha Bhakti Cintamani

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But, Deity Worship is not
just for the Neophytes!!!

Suddha Bhakti Cintamani

- And although deity worship is especially recommended for neophytes, Srīla Prabhupāda warns advanced devotees not to neglect it.
[Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.29.16, purport]
- Although they were fully realized souls, associates of the Lord such as Rūpa Gosvāmī and Gadādhara Pandita worshipped their own deities with love and attention.

Suddha Bhakti Cintamani

- While advanced devotees generally worship the Lord by the process of remembrance (smarana), they initiate many neophytes into serving the deity in the temple and show their disciples how to dedicate themselves to caring for Him.

Active and Personal Deity

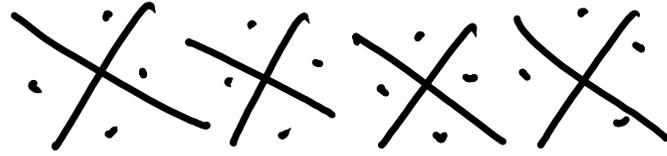
Worship is Most Potent

Suddha Bhakti Cintamani

- Bowing before the deities, chanting their names, and observing āraṭi are certainly parts of the arcana process, but devotees would do well to be more actively involved in the actual worship.
- By cooking for the deities, dressing them, and doing menial services such as washing the floor or making garlands, the devotees can stay conscious of the deity throughout the day and reminded of the standards that please Kṛṣṇa.

Neglect of Deity Worship
leads to Collapse of
Spiritual Community

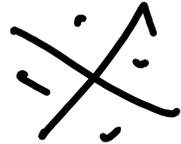
Suddha Bhakti Cintamani



- When senior devotees remain aloof from the deities' welfare, the health of temple projects and the spiritual health of the devotees under their care is weakened.
- If leading devotees act as if they are aloof from the deity, their followers will emulate their behaviour and also become indifferent to hearing and chanting about the Lord.

Suddha Bhakti Cintamani

- It follows that if hearing and chanting are to remain the heartbeat of ISKCON's devotional curriculum, and if devotees are to develop the proper qualification for these practices, then deity worship must be done perfectly.



When Deity Worship is
Properly Managed, the
Deity Manages the
Temple Properly

Srila Prabhupada's Letter to Hayagriva Prabhu

- As GBC you should see the standard is perfectly maintained and that deity worship is perfectly done.
- Then Krishna will give us all protection.
- Neglecting the principles means neglecting Krishna's order.
- So you are one of the chief men of this institution.

Srila Prabhupada's Letter to Hayagriva Prabhu

- Kindly maintain your behaviour to the standard so that others will follow and the whole thing may go on nicely.
- It was said about Lord Caitanya, apani acari prabhu jivere sikhaya; that is, He personally used to practise Himself the injunctions and then He used to teach others.

Srila Prabhupada's Letter to Hayagriva Prabhu

- That is our principle: Unless one is perfectly behaved person, he cannot teach others.
- My only request is that all the GBC members should be strictly to the standard of life and see that others are also following them.
- Then our centres will be well managed. Kindly do that and advise your co-workers to do that."

60. śrī-mūrter-anghri-sevane prītiḥ – Attachment to serving the lotus feet of the deity

mama nāma-sadāgrāhī
mama sevā-priyaḥ sadā |
bhaktis tasmai pradātavyā
na tu muktiḥ kadācana ||

I give bhakti (bhaktiḥ pradātavyā), and never
liberation (na tu muktiḥ kadācana), to the person
(tasmai) who is always engaged in chanting My
name (mama nāma-sadā grāhī) and serving Me as
the goal in his life (mama sevā-priyaḥ sadā). (ādi-
purāṇe)

Rupa Goswami's glorification of the last five
items

The power of serving the deity

smerām bhaṅgī-traya-paricitām sāci-vistīrṇa-
dr̥ṣṭīm

vaṁśī-nyastādhara-kiśalayām ujjvalām
candrakeṇa |

govindākhyām hari-tanum itaḥ keśi-
tīrthopakāṅthe

mā prekṣiṣṭhās tava yadi sakhe bandhu-sange 'sti
raṅgaḥ ||

O my friend (sakhe), if you desire to enjoy with your friends and relatives (yadi bandhu-sange raṅgaḥ asti), then do not look (mā preksisṭhāh) upon the form of the Lord called Govinda (govindākhyām hari-tanum itah) wandering near Keśī-tīrtha on the bank of the Yamunā river (keśī-tīrtha upakaṅṭhe), with a slight smile on His lips (smerām), posed with three bends in His body (bhaṅgī-traya-paricitām), eyes glancing everywhere in a crooked fashion (sāci-vistīrna-dṛṣṭim), flute placed on His red lower lip (vaṁśī-nyasta adhara) like a tender bud (kiśalayām), and shining gloriously with a peacock feather (ujjvalām candrakeṇa). (BRS)

Vyāḡa stuti

śrī-bhāgavata artha āsvādah

- ① Mitha reṭih
↳ mutual affection.
- ② Mithah tuṅḷi
- ③ nivṛtti mitha etanah

Relishing Bhāgavatam

61. śrī-bhāgavata artha āsvādah – Relishing Bhāgavatam

nigama-kalpa-taror-galitaṃ phalaṃ
śuka-mukhād amṛta-drava-saṃyutam |
pibata bhāgavatam rasam ālayam
muhur aho rasikā bhuvi bhāvukāh ||

O knowers of rasa (rasikā)! O fortunate souls (bhuvi bhāvukāh)! Constantly drink (muhuh pibata) from the mouth of Śukadeva (śuka-mukhād) the Bhāgavatam (bhāgavatam), the fruit of the tree of the Vedas, which has dropped from the tree to this earth (nigama kalpa-taror-galitaṃ phalaṃ), which is immortal, liquid (amṛta-drava-saṃyutam), which is the essence of sweetness and which includes all types of liberation (rasam ālayam). (SB 1.1.3)

General Explanation of the Verse

61. śrī-bhāgavata artha āsvādah – Relishing Bhāgavatam Jiva Goswami's Commentary

- O paths to the highest bliss (bhāvukāh)! O men who appreciate the love of the Supreme Lord (rasikāh)!
- You, situated on this earth (bhuvi), please relish and internalize (pibata) the fruit called the Bhāgavatam, the very form of rasa (rāsam ālayam), which has dropped down (galitam) to this earth, coming from the tree of the Vedas, which grows in Vaikuṅṭha and gives all types of fruits on its branches and twigs.
- Ah, you have attained that which cannot be easily attained (aho).

Bhāgavatam Rasam

Bhāgavatam Rasam

- Bhāgavatam also means that which belongs to Bhagavān as the proprietor.
- This implies that He alone gives the scripture to His devotees, and thus persons other than them do not have rights to it.

Bhāgavatam Rasam

- The scripture called the Bhāgavatam is indeed tasty or rasavat, but is designated by the word rasa to indicate that it is solely composed of rasa or sweet taste.
- It is sweetness alone and nothing else.
- Moreover, by the word Bhāgavatam (that which is related to Bhagavān, the Lord) it is indicated that sweetness or rasa also belongs to the Lord.

Bhāgavatam Rasam

- Since the Bhāgavatam is the tadīya of the Lord
(dear object related to the Lord), rasa also is the
tadīya of the Lord.

Bhāgavatam rasam → Sweetness
↓
related
to ॐ.

- Thus, the words bhāgavatam rasam can also
mean “rasa or sweetness related to the Lord.”

But, Rasa indicates a relationship of pure
affection for the Lord.

Bhāgavatam Rasam

- This is understood from the statement of results described from reading the Bhāgavatam.

yasyām vai śrūyamāṇāyām kṛṣṇe parama-pūruṣe
bhaktir utpadyate puṁsaḥ śoka-moha-bhayāpahā

Simply by giving aural reception to this Vedic literature (yasyām vai śrūyamāṇāyām), the feeling for loving devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead (kṛṣṇe parama-pūruṣe bhaktih), sprouts up at once (utpadyate) to extinguish the fire of lamentation, illusion and fearfulness (śoka-moha-bhayāpahā). SB (1.7.7)