

Bhaktyaloka

- Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura

Bhaktyaloka

- Not written in the form of book.
- Written as a series of essays in Sajjan Toshani (a monthly magazine) , later compiled by gaudiya matha devotees in the form of a book
- Set of twelve essays based on NOI 2 and NOI 3 (6 things favourable and 6 things unfavourable to devotional service)

History of Upadeshamrta

Govinda das wrote in his diary:

On one occasion Mahāprabhu was sitting with His devotees on the shore of the ocean in Jagannath Puri. He was engaged in Krishna katha. The blue ocean reminded Chaitanya Mahaprabhu of Yamuna river. The sand dunes reminded him of Govardhana hill and the various forests surrounding that place reminded him of Vrindavan forest. Then He began bitterly weeping in separation from Krishna. When after some time He became peaceful, He gave the assembled devotees some instructions in a soft and sweet voice.

Those instructions comprise the verses of this Sri Upadeshamrta.

- ✓ Srila Rupa Goswami churned the ocean of Mahaprabhu's instructions and extracted the essence in the form of Śri Upadeśāmṛta.
- ✓ The 11 verses of this book give complete understanding of Gaudiya vaishnava siddhanta and rasa.
- ✓ This book gives us the route from sraddha to prema in just 11 verses. Every verse of this book is non-negotiable. This book is an absolutely non negotiable book in our sampradaya.
- ✓ If one can understand just this one book, the depth of these 11 verses, then we don't need anything else to move forward in our spiritual life and we can very powerfully move forward in our krishna consciousness.

Understanding the relevance of Bhaktyaloka

Flow of Sri Upadeshamrita

NOI- 1

Qualification of being a Jagat Guru

one who can tolerate the six urges is eligible to become a Guru.

vāco vegam manasaḥ krodha-vegam
jihvā-vegam udaropastha-vegam
etān vegān yo viṣaheta dhīraḥ
sarvām apīmām pṛthivīm sa śiṣyāt

How do I tolerate?

If one follows a favourable lifestyle, one gradually learns to tolerate

These 6 urges are conditional urges. These urges are like battle. But if one is properly trained then one is ready to face the battle.

That training means to

Develop the internal wiring

1) Conscious choice of lifestyle.

NOI 2 and NOI 3

Dos and Don'ts of a favourable lifestyle

atyāhāraḥ prayāsaś ca
prajalpo niyamāgrahaḥ
jana-saṅgaś ca laulyaṁ ca
ṣaḍbhir bhaktir vinaśyati

utsāhān niścayād dhairyāt
tat-tat-karma-pravartanāt
saṅga-tyāgāt sato vṛtteḥ
ṣaḍbhir bhaktiḥ prasidhyati

2) Association- The key

NOI 4
NOI 5
NOI 6

This lifestyle can not be followed alone. So we need association of like-minded people!

How do we connect with those like minded people?
How do we gain association?

By following the six exchanges. (NOI 4)

dadāti pratigrhṇāti
guhyam ākhyāti pṛcchati
bhunkte bhojayate caiva
ṣaḍ-vidhaṁ pṛīti-lakṣaṇam

Whom should I have these six exchanges with?

NOI 5

mentally honour a kanistha adhikari (and then have six exchanges), offer respectful obeisances to a madhyama adhikari (and then have six exchanges) and serve and associate with an uttama adhikari (and have six exchanges)

kṛṣṇeti yasya giri taṁ manasādriyeta
dīkṣāsti cet praṇatibhiś ca bhajantam īśam
śuśrūṣayā bhajana-vijñam ananyam anya-
nindādi-śūnya-hṛdam īpsita-saṅga-labdhyā

How to retain the association?

In associating with vaishnavas, the main problem that we might face is their conditionings or their imperfections (svabhav janit dosha or bodily imperfections). How to deal with them?

NOI 6

Ignore the conditionings and the bodily imperfections. Learn to see beyond them. See their faith and neglect the imperfections.

dṛṣṭaiḥ svabhāva-janitair vapuṣaś ca doṣair
na prākṛtatvam iha bhakta-janasya paśyēt
gaṅgāmbhasāṁ na khalu budbuda-phena-paṅkair
brahma-dravatvam apagacchati nīra-dharmaiḥ

Now , we are ready to practice bhakti and follow the favourable lifestyle, in the association of devotees.

But there is a stumbling block. What?

Our own conditioning, that does not allow us to experience the taste of Krishna consciousness.

We expect ruchi before nistha.

We think we will practice nicely after getting taste.

Solution: NOI 7

Practice bhakti with regularity, regulation and respect. Ruchi is rewarded when we steadily practice bhakti.

syāt kṛṣṇa-nāma-caritādi-sitāpy avidyā-
pittopatapta-rasanasya na rocikā nu
kintv ādarād anudinaṁ khalu saiva juṣṭā
svādvī kramād bhavati tad-gada-mūla-hantrī

By doing so ,the taste comes. What should one do after one gets taste?

NOI 8

Reside in vraja and utilize all one's time in chanting, hearing, remembering Lord's nama, rupa, guna, lila.

Absorb oneself in following the footsteps of the vrajavasis.
(Raganuga bhakti)

tan-nāma-rūpa-caritādi-sukīrtanānu-
smṛtyoḥ krameṇa rasanā-manasī niyojya
tiṣṭhan vraje tad-anurāgi-janānugāmī
kālaṁ nayed akhilaṁ ity upadeśa-sāram



At this stage, we are so absorbed in Lord's devotional service that we are battle ready and can easily tolerate these urges (if they at all come).

We are also ready to become a jagad guru and make many followers. But we are no more interested in that!

Because we ourselves are busy following the footsteps of vrajavasis...

