

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

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Volume-2

Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

Chapter-2

Jñāna: Knowledge

Of the 9 kinds
of service is the
chief.
It is an offering of the
most important sense → mind

2.2.101

bhaktau nava-vidhāyām ca
mukhyaṁ smaraṇam eva hi
tat samagrendriya-śreṣṭha-
mano-vṛtti-samarpaṇam

Of the nine kinds of devotional service (bhaktau nava-vidhāyām ca),
remembrance is the chief (mukhyaṁ smaraṇam eva hi). It is an
offering (tat samarpaṇam) of the activity of the mind (mano-vṛtti),
the most important of all the senses (samagra indriya-śreṣṭha).

↑ Opinion of Pippelāyena

The sage's idea is that remembrance (smaraṇa) is superior to other devotional processes, like hearing and chanting (śravaṇa and kīrtana), because remembrance involves absorbing the mind in thoughts of the Personality of Godhead whereas hearing and chanting engage only the senses of hearing and speech, which are subordinate to the mind and therefore less important.

only the mind
fixed in meditation
can continuously offer
pre-bhakti to the Lord

2.2.102

antar-aṅgāntar-aṅgām tu
prema-bhaktim yathā-ruci
dātum arhaty aviśrāmaṁ
mana eva samāhitam

Only the mind fixed in meditation (mana eva samāhitam) can
unceasingly offer the Lord (dātum arhaty aviśrāmaṁ) that offering
which is the most confidential (antar-aṅga antar-aṅgām): loving
devotional service (prema-bhaktim) that follows one's natural taste
(yathā-ruci).

The sage Pippalāyana reasons that although jñāna and vairāgya bring one close to the Absolute Truth, only devotional service in prema brings one into the most intimate proximity.

↓
insight

And prema can develop only by full concentration of the mind.

Since only the mind, the superintendent of all the senses, can properly engage each sense with its objects, devotional service rendered with the mind is secure, for it is unlikely to become disrupted.

7 characteristics of Prema

- ① The one goal of all disciplines.
- ② The only means to bring Lord under control.
- ③ Prema is attained only by mercy.
- ④ It is the only treasure of the devotees.
- ⑤ mokṣa laghvatā

aśeṣa-sādhanaḥ sādhyah samastārthādhikādhikah

yo vaśī-karaṇe gādho-pāyo bhagavato 'dvayah

tat-prasādaika-labhyo yas tad-bhaktaika-mahā-nidhiḥ

vicitra-paramānanda-mādhurya-bhara-pūritaḥ

mahā-nirvācya-māhātmyah padārthaḥ prema-samjñakah

pariṇāma-viśeṣe hi ceto-vṛtter udeti saḥ

⑥ indescribable glories

⑦ Prema arises from the activities of the mind.

There is one goal (sādhyah) of all disciplines (aśeṣa-sādhanaḥ), one highest attainment of all (samasta artha adhika adhikah), the one potent means (yah gādha-upāyah) to bring the Supreme Lord (bhagavato advayah) under one's control (vaśī-karaṇe). Only by the mercy of the Lord can it be gained (yah tat-prasāda eka-labhyah). It is the rare, exclusive treasure of His devotees (tad-bhakta eka-mahā-nidhiḥ), a treasure rich (bhara-pūritaḥ) with every sort of (vicitra) transcendental ecstasy (paramānanda) and sweetness (mādhurya). Its wonderful glories are beyond the power to describe (mahā-nirvācya-māhātmyah). That attainment is called prema (padārthaḥ prema-samjñakah). It arises (saḥ udeti) from special transformations (pariṇāma-viśeṣe hi) of the functions of the mind (ceto-vṛtteh).

To uphold and further explain the statement of the previous verse, texts 103 through 105 describe seven characteristics of love of God.

First, prema is the goal of all such disciplines as karma, jñāna, and vairāgya.

It is the ultimate goal of existence.

So even though worship of the Supreme Lord is superior to religiosity, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation, prema is superior to formal worship.

Prema, in fact, is the very goal of worship.

Second, prema is the only sure means to bring the absolutely independent Lord under control.

It is the chain with which the Lord's dearest devotees bind His lotus feet to subdue Him, as one would subdue a mad elephant.

Third, prema is attained only by the favor of the Supreme Person, never by one's own strength.

Fourth, prema is the greatest treasure of the Lord's devotees—indeed, their only treasure—for it easily fulfills all their desires.

Fifth, it is full to overflowing with varieties of transcendental bliss so attractive that they ridicule the so-called ecstasy found in impersonal realization of the Supreme.

And therefore, sixth, its infinite glories are beyond description. Finally, seventh, prema arises from the activity of the mind.

From the sixth of these traits of prema we can deduce another, too confidential for Pippalāyana Ṛṣi to mention:

Devotees established in prema join the Supreme Lord in His pleasure pastimes.

We will hear about this from the Lord's personal associates in later chapters, but on Tapoloka, where meditation is predominant, the topic is not befitting to discuss.