

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

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Volume-2

Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

Chapter-2

Jñāna: Knowledge

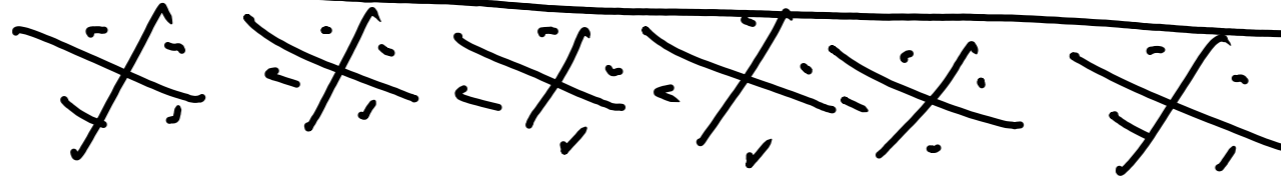
Karma distracts one
 from bhakti
 Vairāgyam ↓
~~Jñānam~~ ↓ → rasa-śoṣakam
~~śoṣakam~~ ↓ → hāni-karam
 But these three ↓
 → they faithfully serve her.

2.2.205

karma vikṣepakam tasyā
vairāgyam rasa-śoṣakam
jñānam hāni-karam tat tac
chodhitam tv anuyāti tām

Ritual duties (karma) distract one (vikṣepakam) from devotional
service (tasyā), renunciation (vairāgyam) dries up one's
transcendental taste for her (rasa-śoṣakam), and knowledge
(jñānam) can do her harm (tat hāni-karam). But these three (tat tu),
when purified (śodhitam), faithfully serve her (tām anuyāti).

Serious Vaisnavas should give up whatever does not serve the purpose of pure devotional service.



The karma-kāṇḍa injunctions of the Vedas obscure the path of devotion with hundreds of obligatory rituals, and practicing detachment from all worldly things dries up the attractive taste of devotional practice.

The indifference recommended in devotional service, however, is distinct from the renunciation undertaken by impersonalists, because devotional renunciation selectively turns away only those things that cannot be used in the Lord's service.

This is described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.42).

bhaktiḥ pareśānubhavo viraktir/ anyatra caiṣa trika eka-kālah:

“Devotion (bhaktiḥ), direct experience of the Supreme Lord (pareśānubhavo), and detachment from other things (viraktir)—these three occur (anyatra ca eṣa trika) simultaneously (eka-kālah) for one who has taken shelter of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”

The pursuit of knowledge weakens bhakti because realizing such truths as the divine nature of the self gives one a feeling of self-satisfaction that quells the strong urge needed to enter the Supreme Lord’s service.

|| 11.20.31 ||

tasmān mad-bhakti-yuktasya
yogino vai mad-ātmanah
na jñānaṁ na ca vairāgyaṁ
prāyaḥ śreyo bhaved iha

Therefore (**tasmād**), for a devotee engaged in bhakti (**mad-bhakti-yuktasya yoginah**), with mind fixed on me (**mad-ātmanah**), the cultivation of knowledge and renunciation (**jñānaṁ ca vairāgyaṁ**) is generally not beneficial for bhakti (**na prāyaḥ śreyo bhaved iha**).

|| 11.20.32-33 ||

yat karmabhir yat tapasā jñāna-vairāgyataś ca yat
yogena dāna-dharmeṇa śreyobhir itarair api

sarvaṁ mad-bhakti-yogena mad-bhaktō labhate 'ñjasā
svargāpavargaṁ mad-dhāma kathañcid yadi vāñchati

Everything that can be achieved by fruitive activities, penance (**yat karmabhir yat tapasā**), knowledge, detachment (**jñāna-vairāgyataś ca yat**), mystic yoga, charity, religious duties (**yogena dāna dharmeṇa**) and all other means of perfecting life (**śreyobhir itarair api**) is easily achieved by My devotee (**sarvaṁ mad-bhaktah labhate 'ñjasā**) through loving service unto Me (**mad-bhakti-yogena**). If somehow or other My devotee desires (**kathañcid mad-bhaktah yadi vāñchati**) promotion to heaven, liberation, or residence in My abode (for service) (**svargāpavargaṁ mad-dhāma**), he easily achieves such benedictions (**sarvaṁ anjasā labhate**).

In the first of these verses from the Eleventh Canto, the word prāyaḥ (“for the most part”) indicates that duties, knowledge, and detachment may sometimes help to some extent.

Thus the bhakti-śāstras here state that karma, jñāna, and vairāgya may be useful if subordinate to the purpose of bhakti.

Purified of their faults, they can serve devotional service, especially as initial aids to devotional practice.

As stated in the Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa:

↑ interesting verse

① Purification

②

janmāntara-sahasreṣu
tapo-dāna-samādhībhīḥ
narāṇāṃ kṣīṇa-pāpānāṃ
kṛṣṇe bhaktiḥ prajāyate

③

Ekādasi vrata

Charity to vaiṣṇaves & viṣṇu

“Devotion to Kṛṣṇa (kṛṣṇe bhaktiḥ) arises (prajāyate) in persons (narāṇāṃ) whose sinful reactions have been diminished (kṣīṇa-pāpānāṃ) by austerities, charity, and meditation (tapo-dāna-samādhībhīḥ) performed in thousands of consecutive births (janmāntara-sahasreṣu).”

Lotus of P.

→ After one takes up to bhakti through any of the Suktis
→ prior practice of K, V & J may be helpful.

When karma, vairāgya, and jñāna are suitably purified, they can each assist in preparing a spiritual aspirant for the practice of bhakti.

~~Explanation of purification of~~ K, V, & J

Thus karma purified of desire for the fruits of endeavor becomes work done only for the pleasure of the Supreme Lord; vairāgya, developed to the stage of indifference to liberation, becomes a stimulant for the eagerness to serve the Lord; and jñāna, freed from the conception of total oneness, becomes transformed into contemplation of oneself as belonging to the Lord and into meditation on the glories of devotional service.

How does jñāna & Vairagya become 2011?

By the mercy of ☉ & devotees

Even ātmarāmas give up their attachment to impersonal Supreme & accept bhakti

2.2.206

ātmārāmāś ca bhagavat-krpayā bhakta-saṅgataḥ

santyañya brahma-niṣṭhatvam bhakti-mārgam viśanty ataḥ

By the mercy of the Personality of Godhead (bhagavat-krpayā) and by company with His devotees (bhakta-saṅgataḥ), sages who take pleasure in the self (ātmārāmāś) can give up (santyañya) their attachment to the impersonal Supreme (brahma-niṣṭhatvam) and enter the path of devotional service (bhakti-mārgam viśanty ataḥ).

Because bhakti is vastly superior to mukti, impersonalists who have actually realized the Lord's Brahman feature sometimes give up their meditation on the formless to engage in devotional service.

In a prayer to Lord Kṛṣṇa in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.29.3) Śrī Uddhava confirms that the swanlike men who are already liberated can make further progress by entering the path of devotional service:

athāta ānanda-dugham padāmbujam
hamsāḥ śrayerann aravinda-locana
sukham nu viśveśvara yoga-karmabhis
tvan-māyayāmī vihatā na māninaḥ

“Therefore (athāta), O lotus-eyed Lord of the universe (aravinda-locana viśveśvara), swanlike men (hamsāḥ) happily take shelter (sukham śrayerann) of Your lotus feet (padāmbujam), the source of all transcendental ecstasy (ānanda-dugham). But men who take pride (amī māninaḥ) in their accomplishments in yoga and karma (yoga-karmabhih) fail to take shelter of You (implied) and are defeated (vihatā) by Your illusory energy (tvan-māyayā).”

How can impersonalists be elevated to the Lord's devotional service?

Only by the mercy of the Lord.

Because the Personality of Godhead is eager to display the greatness of His devotees and His devotional service, He sometimes blesses self-contented impersonalists by arranging opportunities for them to associate favorably with His devotees.

Then the impersonalists, their discrimination refined by the influence of the devotees, can recognize just how insignificant is liberation.

They then give up their hopes for liberation, give up all the trouble it entails, become attracted to the Supreme Lord's glories, and enter the path of bhakti to serve the Lord in various ways.

2.2.207

The Lord's personal
energy grants those
liberated souls spiritual
bodies with which they
worship the Lord

muktāś cāśya tayā śaktyā
sac-cid-ānanda-dehitām
prāpitās te bhajante taṁ
tādṛśaiḥ karaṇair harim

śakti-śakti

The Lord's personal energy (tayā śaktyā) grants those liberated souls (asya muktāḥ) spiritual bodies of eternity, knowledge, and bliss (sac-cid-ānanda-dehitām). And with the spiritual senses thus acquired (tādṛśaiḥ prāpitāḥ karaṇair), those souls worship Lord Hari (te bhajante taṁ harim).

Impersonalists who are jīvan-mukta, liberated even in this life, can be elevated to devotional service because they are still living in material bodies.

But what of those who have attained complete liberation and no longer have material bodies?

Without a body and senses, how is it possible to serve the Supreme Lord by the devotional methods like hearing, chanting, worshiping, and offering prayers?

To clear this doubt, the bhakti-śāstras here indicate that even the liberated souls who have “merged” into Brahman continue to exist as individual persons, even though they may be called mukta and siddha.

Using these two words, Mahārāja Parīkṣit states in the Sixth Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (6.14.5):

जिवान-मुक्ता ✓ Liberation → सिद्धि ✓
(muktānām) api (siddhānām)
nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ
su-durlabhaḥ praśantatmā
koṭiṣv api mahā-mune

O great sage (mahā-mune)! Greater than those who are jīvanmukta
and greater than those who attain liberation (muktānām api
siddhānām) is the devotee of Lord Nārāyaṇa (nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ).
Such a devotee, who is in śānta or other rasas (praśantātṁā), is very
rare (su-durlabhaḥ), even among ten million people (koṭiṣv api).

Out of millions of such rare liberated impersonalists, one very fortunate soul may realize this natural fact.

Since intelligence is dormant in the “merged” soul, it can be reawakened.

Even the liberated souls who have merged into the formless divine light of the spiritual sky retain their eternal spiritual bodies, complete with spiritual mind and senses.

Nothing, even liberation, can ever deprive a jīva of these assets.

Thus when a liberated soul gains the favor of the Supreme Lord's
personal energy, his spiritual body and senses are reawakened for
hearing and chanting the glories of Lord Hari and acting in other
ways for the Lord's pleasure

One can become
an asthāreṇa very
by abandoning the FE
But, such a banding is
very easy

2.2.208

svārāmatā tv ahaṅkāra-
tyāga-mātreṇa sidhyati
su-karo 'tīva tat-tyāgo
matas tat-tattva-vedibhiḥ

Ātma - yati
↑
Self - Satisfaction
ātma rāmatā

One can attain the state of satisfaction in the self (svārāmatā tv
sidhyati) merely by abandoning false ego (ahaṅkāra-tyāga-mātreṇa).
Those who understand the Supreme Lord in scientific truth (tat-
tattva-vedibhiḥ) think (matah) this (tat-tyāgo) very easy to do (atīva
su-karo).

According to the impersonalists, the satisfaction found in realizing one's identity with the Supreme is the final goal of existence.

Vaiṣṇavas are naive, the impersonalists think, to insist that devotion to the personal aspect of the Supreme is a higher goal than the perfect satisfaction of the self.

Māyavādīs criticism of devotees

The impersonalists, therefore, criticize the Vaiṣṇavas as follows: "You devotees of Bhagavān believe that one cannot achieve anything of spiritual worth unless one has performed at least a little devotional service to the Supreme Lord."

In your view, unless one first earns some devotional credits one cannot obtain even the material opulences found on the various planets up to Brahmaloaka, what to speak of ultimately realizing Brahman and becoming fully satisfied in the self.

“How, then, can one possibly attain the satisfaction of the self? If you say ‘By having first performed some devotional service,’ you contradict yourselves, because that would render meaningless the scriptural statement you have cited—‘Even liberated sages become devotees and perform devotional service.’

One cannot start in the future something one has already begun.