

Śrī Brhad-bhāgavatāmṛta

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Volume-2

Śrī-goloka-māhātmya

The Glories of Goloka

Chapter-2

Jñāna: Knowledge

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.

“One feasible explanation of that statement is that even if by performing some devotional service one has achieved the ultimate goal of life—the satisfaction of the self—attraction to devotional service may still persist, just as subtle remnants of desire for sense gratification may persist for some time even after one has earned liberation.

Even though a liberated person has nothing more to achieve, he may still like to continue doing devotional service simply because he is attracted to the Supreme Lord’s personal qualities.

The persistent urge for reciprocation with a personal Lord is the only reason for such behavior.

Eventually this devotional conditioning will also subside, and the fully matured soul will finally realize himself to be absolutely one with the Supreme.

“You Vaiṣṇavas certainly place great faith in the attractive power of a personal God and His qualities.

According to your Vaisnava doctrine, liberation is only a minor by-product of devotional service, whose main result is the attainment of love for the Supreme Lord’s lotus feet.

So you imagine that by the supposed mercy of the Personality of Godhead and the good association of His devotees, even after one has achieved the final goal of life—satisfaction in the self—one will decide that this goal is of little value and reject it in favor of devotional service.

But for you to acknowledge that devotional service leads to satisfaction in the self is logically inconsistent.

In this way you are negating the real importance of life's goal.”

In texts 208 through 211 the bhakti-śāstras dispel these doubts.

First they point out that one can easily achieve satisfaction in the self
merely by giving up false ego; no engagement in devotional service is
required.



But how can one give up false ego without having performed any
devotional service?

The bhakti-śāstras cite the opinions of authorities like Śrī Vasiṣṭha,
who know the nature of false ego. According to such authorities,
abandoning false ego is easy. The Yoga-vāsiṣṭha-rāmāyaṇa states:

api puṣpāvalalanād
api netra-nimīlanāt
su-karo 'haṅkṛti-tyāgo
matas tat-tattva-vedibhiḥ

“In the opinion (mataḥ) of those who factually understand false ego (tat-tattva-vedibhiḥ), giving it up (ahaṅkṛti-tyāgo) is easier (su-karo) than picking a flower (api puṣpāvalalanād) or closing one’s eyes (api netra-nimīlanāt).”

A nondevotee may ask, “Since devotional service is a type of activity and all activities are driven by ego, how can devotional service develop after ego has been left aside?”

This question comes from a misunderstanding of the Supreme Lord’s personal energies.

Just as one of His special energies provides liberated Vaiṣṇavas with spiritual bodies, another gives them a transcendental ego, the attitude that “I am His servant.”

~~With this spiritual ego, pure devotional service is easily obtained.~~