

Jaiṁa Dharma

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Chapter Seventeen

Nitya-dharma: Sambandha,
Abhidheya and Prayojana

This sublime sādhu-saṅga then bestows the prime devotional sukṛti, giving the aspirant the greatest blessing—attainment of the lotus feet of Śrī Hari.

“The jīva’s initial mood of renunciation and state of awakening consciousness play an indirect, secondary role as stepping stones towards his ultimate devotional goal.”

However, sādhu-saṅga is an indispensable need and is thus the principal means to attain śuddha-bhakti at the lotus feet of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

Q-8

Vrajanātha, “If we place karma, pious works; jñāna, empirical knowledge; vairāgya, renunciation; and viveka, discrimination, as the secondary causes for bhakti, why do we not call them bhakti-pravartaka sukṛti?”

Ⓐ gives intelligence to the sincerely seeking Jiva. ✓

Do all JIVAS sincerely seek Ⓐ? → NO.

Why not?

→ Then → where does the sincere desire in particular JIVAS come from?

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A-8

Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī, “We have strong reservations against accepting this opinion.”

The results of these secondary causes are extraneous to the real goal, most often becoming redundant and ineffective after being awarded.

Karma pushes the jīva into the pool of material enjoyment, dries it up, and then leaves.

Vairāgya and viveka may elevate the jīva only up to the non-dual Brahman realization, but are generally inadequate to elevate him further.

The monistic, non-dual Brahman realization, by its impersonal nature usually deprives the jīva from receiving shelter at the lotus feet of the Supreme Lord.

Therefore, these performances cannot be assertively termed bhakti-pravartaka sukṛti.

Rarely they may ~~elevate someone to the doors of bhakti—but that is the~~
exception, not the rule

Sadhu-saṅga, on the other hand, has no irrelevant side effects; it heaves the
devotee to the highest realization, prema, as confirmed in the Śrīmad-
Bhāgavatam, 3.25.25:

satām prasaṅgān mama vīrya-samvido
bhavanti hr̥t-karṇa-rasāyanāḥ kathāḥ
taj-joṣaṇād āśv apavarga-vartmani
śraddhā ratir bhaktir anukramisyati

“In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Lord is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually advances along the path of liberation, thereafter one is freed, and one’s attraction becomes fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin.”

Q-9

Vrajanātha, “Thus sādhu-saṅga is established as the only bhakti-pravartaka-
sukṛti.

How about the procedure? Is the hearing of hari-kathā from the sādhus then
followed by the attainment of bhakti?”

A-109

Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī, “Very well, I will explain the development step by
step—listen carefully.

While wandering through the different species of life, a jīva upon attaining birth as a human being must perform providentially or otherwise bhakti-pravartaka-sukṛti in the form of any one of the limbs of pure devotional service, such as fasting on Ekādaśī, or on other spiritually important occasions; visiting and respecting the holy places of the pastimes of the Supreme Lord; or hearing kīrtana from the lips of a renounced and humble Vaiṣṇava sādhu.

~~XXXXX~~
However, those persons who purposely desire bhukti and mukti will not get the benefits of bhakti-pravartaka-sukṛti, even by performing any of these activities.

In contrast, if an innocent person, even one devoid of philosophical understanding, performs these activities by accident by chance, or by social custom without desiring bhukti and mukti, he obtains the results of bhakti-pravartaka-sukṛti.

~~XXXXX~~
‘When such sukṛti has been accumulated over many lifetimes, it generates a force that creates śraddhā, which is defined as faith in the practice of śuddha-bhakti.

This śraddhā then gives birth to the desire to associate with pure devotees, which is sādhu-saṅga.

Thereafter, this sādhu-saṅga inspires a gradual increase in bhajana, which initially is the cultivation of sādhana-bhakti, such as meditation and chanting.

“Bhajana destroys the unwanted material desires in the heart, known as anarthas. When the anarthas are uprooted, śraddhā is transformed into niṣṭhā, unflinching faith.”

Through gradual purification, niṣṭhā increasingly generates ruci, taste for bhakti.

Ruci then reveals the sublime beauty of bhakti and is converted into āsakti, strong attachment for bhakti.

When āsakti fully blossoms, bhāva (also known as rati), loving spiritual emotion, floods the heart.

All the different bhāvas in concert create rasa, spiritual mellow, finally leading to kṛṣṇa-prema.

Śraddhē

“The point is that the jīva with (sufficient bhakti-sukṛti) upon seeing a sādhu develops the inclination to associate with such suddha-bhaktas and follow their example.



The essential conclusion is that the first stage of contact with a sādhu creates śraddhā in the heart.

This śraddhā then inspires the jīva to see and approach the sādhus in a new light: the aspiring jīva now sees the sādhus as his gurus.

This is the second stage of sādhu-saṅga.

Another term for this increased level of śraddhā is śaraṇāpatti, surrender.

↑
R̥iṅgata śeṣhu saṅga

The first stage of sādhu-saṅga is defined as coming into circumstantial contact with Śrī Hari's sacred places, festival days, paraphernalia, and śuddha-bhaktas; and thereby becoming a recipient of mercy.

The Bhagavad-gītā, 18.66, describes śaraṇāpatti, the result of the first stage of sādhu-saṅga, in the following verse:

sarva-dharmān parityajya mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvāṁ sarva-pāpebhyo mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ

“Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reaction. Do not fear.”

“These ‘all varieties of religion’ include smarta, aṣṭanga-yoga, sāṅkhya, jñāna, vairāgya, etc., which are all naimittika-dharma.”

~~ॐ~~ ~~ॐ~~ → (Pre-requisite)

Abandoning them has to be accompanied by the proper realization that such performances will never bestow prayojana, the prime necessity of human existence.

The Supreme Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Hero of Vraja, the embodiment of eternity, absolute knowledge and bliss is the sole goal of human existence.

Knowing this, the jīva must relinquish the desire for the bhukti and mukti of naimittika-dharma and practice śaraṇāpatti to Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

This is real śraddhā. When the heart of the jīva is controlled by such śraddhā, he sheds tears of remorse and applies himself to following a pure Vaiṣṇava sādhu.



Thus at this second stage, sādhu-saṅga brings the jīva to the point of finding the shelter of a guru.”

Q-10

Vrajanātha, “What are the different anarthas of the jīva?”

A-10

Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī, “There are four types of anarthas: sva-svarūpa aprāpti, ignorance about one’s own true identity; asat-trṣṇā, hankering after illusory phenomena; aparādha, offences; and hṛdaya-daurbalyam, weakness and hesitancy of the heart.”

“When the jīva forgets that he is a minute, pure, transcendental part and parcel of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, and the eternal servitor of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, he becomes materially entrapped and oblivious of his true spiritual identity.”

ṭatva-vibhava

This is the first anartha of the jīva, known as sva-svarūpa aprāpti.

Next, the jīva, identifying himself with the material body, becomes attached to material objects and projecting his ego onto them he desires to enjoy and exploit them to gain illusory, fleeting pleasures.

Thus, the jīva wallows in the second anartha known as asat-trṣṇā, hankering after illusory phenomena, which is divided into the three categories of such material desire: putra-īśānā, for sons; vitta-īśānā, for wealth; and svarga-īśānā, for paradise.

The aparādhas are ten in number—they will be discussed in detail later.

Finally, the results of hṛdaya-daurbalyam are grief and distress, plus a host of other problems.

“These four types of anarthas are the concomitant results of the nescience that covers the jīva.

By following the process of devotional service to Śrī Kṛṣṇa in the association of pure devotees, these anarthas are gradually annulled.

The path of yoga—consisting of the four parts: pratyāhāra, withdrawal from sense-objects; yama, self-control; niyama, restraint; and vairāgya, renunciation—is not a means to free oneself from material anxiety, for it cannot award ultimate perfection and is filled with problems and the danger of falldown and failure.

To become ultimately purified by this path is only a most distant possibility.

“On the other hand, the method of śuddha-bhakti in sādhu-saṅga is easy to follow and totally immune to the ravages of anxiety.

The material involvement of the jīva is reduced to the same extent as his anarthas are decreased, and his material attachments and coverings recede as his svarūpa is re-established.”

Q-11

Vrajanātha, “May the jīvas who are free from anarthas be called liberated?”

A-11

Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī, “Consider these verses from the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,
6.14.3-5:”

rajobhiḥ sama-saṅkhyātāḥ pāṛthivair iha jantavaḥ
teṣāṃ ye kecanehante śreyo vai manujādayaḥ

“In this material world there are as many living entities as there are atoms.
Among these living entities, a very few are human beings, and among them,
few are interested in following religious principles.’”

prāyo mumuksavas teṣām kecanaiva dvijottama
mumukṣūṇām sahasreṣu kaścin mucyeta sidhyati

“O best of the brāhmaṇas, Śukadeva Gosvāmī, out of many persons who follow religious principles, only a few desire liberation from the material world. Among many thousands who desire liberation, one may actually achieve liberation, giving up material attachment to society, friendship, love, country, home, wife and children. And among many thousands of such liberated persons, one who can understand the true meaning of liberation is very rare.’”

muktānām api siddhānām nārāyaṇa-parāyaṇaḥ
sudurlabhaḥ praśāntātmā koṭiṣv api mahā-mune

“O great sage, among many millions who are liberated and perfect in knowledge of liberation, one may be a devotee of Śrī Nārāyaṇa, or Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Such devotees who are fully peaceful are extremely rare.”

“One who is free from anarthas is a śuddha-bhakta, a very rare personality indeed.”

Even amongst many millions of liberated persons, a śuddha-bhakta of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is rarely found.

Therefore, there is not a more extraordinary saṅga in this world than that with a śuddha-bhakta of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.”

Q-12
Vrajanātha, “Is the term Vaiṣṇava only applied to the grha-tyāgī, renounced order of Vaiṣṇavas?”

A-12

Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī, “A śuddha-bhakta of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is a Vaiṣṇava.”

It matters not whether he is a householder or a renunciate, a brāhmaṇa or a caṇḍāla, a wealthy person or a poor man.

The measure of his śuddha-bhakti to Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the degree of his elevation in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and his position as a Vaiṣṇava.”

Q-13

Vrajanātha, “You said earlier that the conditioned jīvas within the material world display five levels of consciousness.”

And that bhaktas either on the stage of sādhana-bhakti or bhāva-bhakti are counted amongst those who are under the subjugation of māyā.

At what stage of devotional development is a bhakta considered māyā-mukta, liberated from māyā?"

A-13

Faith

→ Beyond — 3 modes

Raghunātha dāsa Bābājī, “As soon as the jīva is initiated into śuddha-bhakti, he receives the designation māyā-mukta jīva, a liberated soul.”

प्रेम

However, he is only truly emancipated from the subjugation of māyā when he has fully matured in sādhana-bhakti.

Prior to this maturity, the jīva is only liberated to the extent he has attained svarūpa-gata-māyā-mukti, awareness of his constitutional spiritual nature and liberation from false ego.

Vastu-gata-māyā-mukti, complete liberation, takes place when the jīva is completely freed from his gross and subtle material bodies and established in his svarūpa and transcendental service.

Sincere adherence to the process of sādhana-bhakti ignites at some stage the spark of bhāva-bhakti.

If the flame of bhāva-bhakti is kept burning and the jīva has thus become firmly fixed in this elevated state of spiritual consciousness, then at the time of leaving the gross body, his subtle body will also dissolve and he will obtain his pure transcendental svarūpa and transcendental service.

“The material conditioning of the jīva remains therefore throughout the period of sādhana-bhakti, even spilling over into the beginning stage of bhāva-bhakti, though only residual amounts persist.

Therefore, the authorities in our line have included sādhana-bhakti and bhāva-bhakti within the five levels of consciousness considered māyā-kavalita, under the influence of māyā.

The gross materialist seeking bhukti and the jñānī seeking mukti most certainly also belong to these five levels.

“Amongst those souls who are liberated, complete emancipation from subservience to māyā is only eventually accomplished by those jīvas blessed with śuddha-bhakti to Śrī Hari.



The imprisonment of the jīva began when the jīva forgot his position as the eternal servant of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

This forgetfulness is the original offence of the jīva and is the root of all the jīva's subsequent offences.

Only the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa can forgive all these offences and nothing else.

Therefore, the mercy of Śrī Kṛṣṇa is alone the indispensable instrument that can fully release the jīva from the captivity of māyā.

“The monistic philosophers cultivating empirical knowledge are under the false impression that just by acquiring knowledge one can attain mukti.

However, it is impossible to attain complete mukti without the benediction of Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

In the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, 10.2.32-33, this point is explained:

ye 'nye 'ravindākṣa vimukta-māninas
tvayy asta-bhāvād aviśuddha-buddhayaḥ
āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ
patanty adho 'nādrta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ

“O lotus-eyed one, those who think they are liberated in this life, but do not
render devotional service to You, must be of impure intelligence. Although
they accept severe austerities and penances, and rise to the spiritual position,
to the impersonal Brahman realization, they fall down again because they
neglect to worship Your lotus feet.’”

tathā na te mād̥hava tāvakāḥ kvacid
bhraśyanti mārgāt tvayi baddha-sauhr̥dāḥ
tvayābhiguptā vicaranti nirbhayā
vināyakānīkapa-mūrdhasu prabhu

“O Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mād̥hava! Your intimate and
surrendered devotees are held captive by the bonds of love they have for Your
lotus feet. Hence, they are not afraid of falling down from the path of bhakti,
unlike those who proudly consider themselves as vimukta-māninas, liberated.
O Lord, Your devotees are so well protected by You that they dauntlessly
dance on the heads of those who try to hinder them.””