

Mādhurya-Kādambinī

The Cloudbank of Nectar

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Ṭhākura**

Caturthy Amṛta Vṛṣṭiḥ

The Fourth Shower of Nectar

Niṣṭhā

The Fourth Shower of Nectar

I – Between Bhajana Kriya and Nistha is Anartha Nivrtti

Verse – 1-2

- Previously, in the discussion of the two types of bhajana kriya, anishthita and nishthita, six types of the anishthita bhajana kriya were described.
- Without describing nishthita bhajana kriya, anartha nivritti was discussed.
- Because it says in Shrimad Bhagavatam:

śṛṅvatām sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ
puṅya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ
hr̥dy antaḥ-stho hy abhadraṇi
vidhunoti suhṛt satām

naṣṭa-prāyeṣv abhadreṣu
nityam bhāgavata-sevayā
bhagavaty uttama-śloke
bhaktir bhavati naiṣṭhikī

The Fourth Shower of Nectar

I – Between Bhajana Kriya and Nistha is Anartha Nivritti

Verse – 1-2

- Lord Krishna, who is affectionate to His devotees and situated in their hearts, destroys all inauspicious elements of those who hear topics about the Lord. When the inauspicious elements have been generally destroyed by devotional service, steady devotion to the Lord appears. (SB:1.2.17-18)
- The first verse (srnvatam sva-kathah...) refers to the stage of anishthita or unsteady bhakti, for naistiki bhakti or nishthita bhakti makes its appearance later in the second verse.
- Abhadrani vidhunoti (destruction of inauspicious elements) which appears between these two stages, refers to the stage of anartha nivritti.
- The words nasta-prayesv abhadresu (inauspiciousness is almost destroyed) means at the stage of nishtha, only a small portion of anarthas remains.
- Thus, The proper order according to Shrimad Bhagavatam is bhajana kriya, anartha nivritti, nishtha.
- Therefore in its proper place, nishthita bhakti will be discussed now.

The Fourth Shower of Nectar
II – 5 obstacles to attainment of Nishtha
Verse – 3

- Nishtha means to be endowed with the quality of steadiness, or non-movement (naishchalyam).
- Though a person tries for steadiness every day, while the anarthas are still present, he will not attain steadiness.
- This is due to these five persistent obstacles:
 1. Laya (sleep)
 2. Vikshepa (distraction)
 3. Apratipatti (indifference or disinterest in spiritual topics)
 4. Kashaya (tendency toward bad habits)
 5. Rasasvada (taste for material enjoyment).
- After the stage of anartha nivritti, when these obstacles are almost completely destroyed, one achieves steadiness. Thus, the symptom of nishtha is the absence of the above mentioned obstacles.

The Fourth Shower of Nectar
II – 5 obstacles to attainment of Nistha
Verse – 3

- Laya refers to the tendency to sleep during kirtana, shravana and smarana (japa), in order of increasing tendency.
- Vikshepa refers to distraction toward mundane topics while performing service (i.e., gossiping while doing japa).
- Apratipatti refers to the occasional inability to perform kirtana, etc. in spite of the absence of laya or vikshepa.
- Kashaya means the tendency to indulge in anger, greed, pride, etc due to past bad habit.
- Rasasvada refers to inability to absorb the mind in kirtana if one gets the opportunity for material sense pleasure.

The Fourth Shower of Nectar
II – 5 obstacles to attainment of Nistha
Verse – 3

- Nishthita bhakti appears in the absence of these faults.

tadā rajas-tamo-bhāvāḥ
kāma-lobhādayaś ca ye
ceta etair anāviddham
sthitam sattve prasīdati

At that time (**tadā**), being completely free (**anāviddham**) from the influences of tama and raja guna (**etair rajas-tamo-bhāvāḥ**), such as lust, greed and other impurities (**kāma-lobhādayaś ca**), the heart is satisfied in a state of goodness (**cetaḥ sattve prasīdati**).
(**SB:1.2.19**)

The Fourth Shower of Nectar
II – 5 obstacles to attainment of Nistha
Verse – 3

- Here the word ca is used in its collective sense to refer to all of these unwanted qualities.
- Thus in the stage of nishtha the modes of ignorance and passion are no longer present.
- However, the words etair anavidham (no longer affected by these) indicate that these impurities are still present to some slight degree at the stage of nishtha, but do not act as an obstacle to bhakti.
- All traces will be removed when one reaches the stage of bhava.

The Fourth Shower of Nectar

III – Two types of Nistha

Verse – 3

- Nishtha, steadiness, is of two types:
 1. Concerning bhakti directly (**sakshat-bhaktir-vartani**)
 2. Concerning elements favorable to bhakti (**bhakti-anukula vastur-vartini**)
- Sakshat-bhakti has unlimited forms, still, there are three basic divisions: bodily, vocal and mental (kayiki, vachiki, manasi).
- According to some authorities, first one attains steadiness in bodily services, then in vocal activities (kirtana, etc.), and finally in mental activities (remembering, meditation).
- Others, however, disagree saying that eagerness to serve the Lord in a particular manner develops first according to the individual natures of the devotee, whose bodily, vocal and mental strength may vary.
- Their version is that there is no such progression.

The Fourth Shower of Nectar

III – Two types of Nistha

Verse – 3

- Elements favorable to bhakti refer to humility, giving respect to others, friendliness, and mercifulness.
- However, sometimes steadiness in such qualities may be seen in a self-controlled devotee who has no steadiness in bhakti.
- While elsewhere, steadiness in these qualities may not be perceived in an arrogant devotee who has attained steadiness in bhakti.
- In spite of this, by the presence or absence of steadiness in bhakti itself (sakshat bhakti), rather than in the qualities of bhakti, learned wise men understand the actual presence or absence of nishtha, steadiness.
- Inexperienced perception cannot substantiate the truth.

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III – Two types of Nistha

Verse – 3

- This is confirmed by the cited verses, bhaktir bhavati naistiki, with the appearance of naishtiki-bhakti, tada rajas-tamo-bhavah...etair anavidham, though traces of the qualities born of raja and tama guna may be present, they no longer affect the devotee.
- In summary, what has been shown is that laxity or intensity of effort and difficulty or ease in performance of devotional activities, such as hearing and chanting is the criteria of discriminating the two types of bhakti, namely unsteady and steady.