

Śrī Manah-śikṣā

Splendid Instructions to the Mind

by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

Verse-1

Bhajana Darpana

by

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

**gurau goṣṭhe goṣṭhālayiṣu sujane bhūsura-gaṇe
sva-mantre śrī-nāmni vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-śaraṇe
sadā dambhaṁ hitvā kuru ratim apūrvām atitarām
aye svāntar bhrātaś caṭubhir abhiyāce dhṛta-padaḥ**

O dear brother! O Mind (**aye svāntar bhrātaḥ**)! Having given up all pride (**sadā dambhaṁ hitvā**), please develop (**kuru**) unprecedented and excessive attachment (**ratim apūrvām atitarām**) to Sri guru, to Sri Vrndavava (**gurau goṣṭhe**), to the Vrajavasis, to all the Vaisnavas, to the brahmanas (**goṣṭhālayiṣu sujane bhūsura-gaṇe**), to the confidential mantra (given by sri guru), to the holy names of Sri Sri Radha-Krsna (**sva-mantre śrī-nāmni**), and to the process of surrendering to the fresh youthful couple of Vraja (**vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-śaraṇe**). Holding your feet (**dhṛta-padaḥ**), I beseech you with sweet words (**caṭubhir abhiyāce**).

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Falling humbly at the lotus feet of Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami, who is respected throughout the universe as a spiritual master, I commence this Sri Bhajana-darpana, which is a commentary on his book Sri Manah-siksa.

Srila Raghunatha severed all family attachments and took complete shelter at the lotus feet of Lord Gauranga, who advented in Kali-yuga as the most munificent incarnation of the Supreme Godhead.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

On Lord Gauranga's request, Srila Svarupa Damodara Gosvami revealed to Raghunatha dasa Gosvami all the recondite conclusions of scriptures on the science of unalloyed devotion.

These twelve verses of Sri Manah-siksa are therefore the source of life and inspiration to the entire Gaudiya Vaisnava community, for by instructing his own mind, Srila Raghunatha dasa Gosvami teaches all Gaudiya Vaisnavas.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

This is the essential spiritual question:

What is the living entity's prime duty when he finally develops heartfelt faith in the topics of Krsna consciousness, a faith which itself is the result of so much piety?

Sri Manah-siksa answers this important question, and in Sri Bhajana-darpana, every point in these verses is explained in detail, and all the inner esoteric meanings revealed.

Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

1 **Śrī Guru:** Guru includes both dīkṣā-guru and śikṣā-gurus (initiating guru and instructing gurus). The types of attachment one should develop towards the gurus while serving them is clearly explained in the next verse (Maṇḍ-śikṣā 2).

2 **Goṣṭha:** Śrī Vraja-dhāma This includes Gokula, Nandīśvara, Govardhana, Śyāma-kuṇḍa, Yāvat and all other places of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in vraja-maṇḍala.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

3 **Goṣṭhālayin:** The residents of Vraja Those who reside in Vraja-dhāma for the purpose of pleasing the Lord through devotional service are called vraja-vāsī-gaṇa.

Vrajavāsī indicates a pure devotee, an elevated uttama-bhāgavata.

Such a person resides in vraja-dhāma, both physically and in meditation, or just in meditation.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

4 **Sujana:** The Vaiṣṇavas, devotees of the Lord Vaiṣṇavas may belong to any Vaiṣṇava sampradāya (school).

Perhaps they may not reside in vraja-dhāma even in meditation, but still they are bona-fide and are devotees of the Supreme Lord, Bhagavān.

These are the intermediate, madhyama-bhāgavata, devotees.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

5 **Bhū-sura-gaṇa**: The brāhmaṇas These are persons who are teachers, priests, intellectuals, scholars, counselors, or healers, and who are firmly fixed in the scriptural duties for their occupation and life stages, varṇāśrama-dharma.

Such persons also teach the worship of the Lord, vaiṣṇava-dharma, to all pious persons, varṇāśrama followers.

They are known as juniors, or kaniṣṭha-bhāgavata.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

6 Sva-mantra: One's dīkṣā-mantra This is the spiritual mantra, or bhagavan-mantra, that a bonafide guru gives as part of initiation (e.g. kāma-gāyatrī).

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

7 **Śrī Hari-nāma:** Primary names of the Supreme Personality of Godhead in relation to the spiritual world and the spiritual eternal function are names like Śrī Hari, Śrī Rādhā-Kānta, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Śrī Govinda, and so forth.

Secondary names, such as Patita-pāvana (the deliverer of all fallen souls), and Paramātmā (Supersoul), are related only to the material world.

One should always take shelter of the Lord's primary names.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

8 **Vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-śaraṇa:** Surrender to the youthful, divine couple of Vraja One should take shelter exclusively and one-pointedly of vraja-yuvā, the divine couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

9 **Dambhaṁ hitvā**: Give up pride.

The varieties of dambha include māyā (illusion and trickery), avidyā (ignorance), kapaṭatā (cheating), asaralatā (lack of direct simplicity) and śāṭhya (deceit and duplicity).

While cultivating pure devotional service, if there is any other motive besides progression in bhakti, then one is engaged in a kind of **cheating or duplicity**.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

If philosophical detachment (jnāna) or good works for material enjoyment (karma) is prominent in the devotional process, then ignorance (avidyā) will be seen as more powerful than bhakti.

If any unfavorable mood is present in the development of bhakti, it is a disguised form of māyā.

One must give up all such things.

When one engages in the cultivation of pure devotional service, illusions about duties of occupation and stage of life (varṇāśrama-dharma), material desires, the self, God, material energy, life's goal, and the process of success will all disappear.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

10 Apūrvā-rati: The love inherent in the soul is pure love for the Lord (ātma-rati is śuddha-rati).

When that pure love in the conditioned soul comes into contact with the dull matter of māyā, it transforms into material attachment.

In pure kṛṣṇa-bhakti, the original, eternal, deeply emotional attachment remains fixed and visible at all times because Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the soul of all souls.

During conditioned life, while performing devotional service, a soul becomes filled with apūrvā-rati, love that has no material precedent, in proportion to the expression of the soul's inherent emotional attachment.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Ślokārtha: Meaning of the Verse

11 **Atitarām kuru**: Make intensive endeavor (atiśaya-vidhāna)

Enthusiastically feel encouraged to progress and take full shelter in the devotional path.

Do not become complacent, thinking, “If I am lucky I will get spiritual success, or, if it is not in my fortune, then I may not achieve it.”

As much as the mercy of guru and Kṛṣṇa combine with one’s own endeavors, one gets spiritual potency.

As much as that spiritual potency manifests, one’s desires to enjoy the fruits of one’s own actions will be diminished.

Instructive Commentary

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Instructive Commentary

To be eligible to receive the pure instructions in this verse, a person should already have achieved faith, śraddhā, in the path of loving devotion to Kṛṣṇa.

Such faith comes from the potency of the association of saintly persons, sādhu-saṅga, manifesting within the heart.

That potency diminishes the tendency to perform karma, actions for material gain.

When śraddhā develops, the first action is to accept and take shelter of an initiating spiritual master, dīkṣā-guru, as well as the dīkṣā-mantra to worship yugala-kiśora, the divine couple Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Instructive Commentary

After receiving the mantra one should worship one's śikṣā- and dīkṣā-gurus with pure devotion and attachment to their lotus feet (ātma-rati).

One should not only respect gurus as saints, using rational intelligence, but one should also deal with one's gurus as well-wishing friends.

Always respect and serve the three types of Vaiṣṇavas [junior, intermediate, and advanced] accordingly to their eligibility, with love and in a friendly manner.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana

Instructive Commentary

One should also develop deep attachment to chanting the mantras and serving the holy name.

One should come to the point of complete surrender to the lotus feet of the divine couple, knowing them to be one's life and soul.

This surrender is called śaraṇāgati.

Verse-1

ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA
ṬHĀKURA'S

MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

SONG ONE

MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

Verse-1

gurudeve, vraja-vane, vraja-bhūmi-vāsī jane,
śuddha-bhakte, āra vipra-gaṇe
iṣṭa-mantre, harināme, yugala-bhajana-kāme,
kara rati apūrva yatane

[Oh mind,] desire to serve the young couple of Vraja with uncommon, wonderful attachment. Gurudeva, the forest of Vraja, the residents of Vraja, the pure devotees and the brāhmaṇas, your iṣṭa-mantra and the holy name

MANAḢ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

Verse-2

dhari, mana, caraṇe tomāra
jāniyāchi ebe sāra, kṛṣṇa-bhakti vinā āra,
nāhi ghuce jīvera saṁsāra

O heart! I beg you, falling at your feet, please love all of them. I know the essence—without devotion for all these, along with devotion for Kṛṣṇa, the soul will not escape the cycle of birth and death (saṁsāra).

MANAḢ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

Verse-3

karma, jṣāna, tapaḥ yoga, sakali ta' karma-bhoga,
karma chāḍāite keha nāre
sakala chāḍiyā bhāi, śraddhā-devīra guṇa gāi,
yāñ'ra kṛpā bhakti dite pāre

Consider that action, knowledge, asceticism, and yoga only further bind one to karma and certainly are unable to free one from it. Renounce all these, O brother, and sing the praise of the goddess of faith, whose grace can bestow devotion.

MANAḢ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

Verse-4

chāḍi' dambha anukṣaṇa, smara aṣṭa-tattva mana,
kara tāhe niṣkapaṭa rati
sei rati-prārthanāya, śrī-dāsa-gosvāmī pāya,
e bhaktivinoda kare nati

Give up all pretenses and meditate on the eightfold truths (guru, Vṛndāvana, Vṛndāvana's residents, Vaiṣṇavas, brāhmaṇas, one's mantra, the holy name, and the process of surrendering) at every moment. Love them all without ulterior motives. With prayers for attaining such love, Bhaktivinoda bows at the lotus feet of Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī.

Verse-1

Notes on the Commentary

by

Śrīla Sivarama Swami

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- **What happens when faith in Krsna-Katha occurs in a jiva?** - One develops “apurvam atitaram rati” to the 8 items mentioned in this verse
- **How one gets this faith?**
- This faith is a very rare commodity. It is not acquired even in a million lifetimes by karma and jnana. It is attained solely through sadhu-sangha.
- **What are the symptoms of lack of this faith?**
 1. No desire to take shelter of Krsna Katha
 2. Inability to assimilate practical instructions from the teachings
- Therefore, without faith even the most intelligent cannot progress

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- **How does this faith develop?** – Through ajnata sadhu-sangha leading to ajnata sukrti.
- This ajnata sadhu-sangha becomes the adhikara for him to get further association.
- **How does this association work?**
- Sadhu-Sangha diminishes the reactions to past sins, and thus there is room for sraddha to enter and develop.
- Śra means heart and dhā means to give. So sraddha means to give your heart
- So, sadhu-sangha refers to the association of faithful devotees which inspires people to give their hearts to Krsna.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- If one develops this faith through sadhu sangha, then one's actions will reflect this faith.
- **What are those actions?** – We receive Sva-Mantre and Sri Namni from the Guru through the process of Diksa.
- Harinama and Gayatri mantra are not ritualistic activities given for some material purpose. They are SUBLIME.
- But, due to lack of faith and knowledge we don't appreciate the instruments and the means of worship we have been given.
- Sometimes we may do extreme austerities, puja, yagya, yantra etc. for improving our worship. But, this is FOOLISHNESS.
- Everything is there in the **Maha-Mantra**.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- When we become further qualified by the chanting of the Maha-Mantra, i.e. reach the stage of mode of goodness, we receive the Gayatri mantra, by which one quickly transcends the three modes.
- Gayatri Mantra :
 1. Is an expansion of the Holy-Name
 2. Gives a clear definition of who is the object of worship through the Maha-Mantra.
- Through this worship, one's faith will mature and one will come to the position of practicing Raganuga Sadhana (Spontaneous Devotional Service).

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- Faith develops further by worshipping both the Siksa and Diksa Gurus, and by taking association of the Vaisnavas.
- At no stage of one's devotional development is Vaisnava association dispensable.
- The quality of faith that we develop is also dependent on the quality of Vaisnavas that we associate with.
- If someone's association threatens to reduce our faith in these 8 things then we must carefully avoid them.
- This verse can be analysed through the 4 questions that Srila Bhaktivinod Thakura asks.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- **Question-1:** What is someone's duty as soon as he develops the faith in the process?
- **Answer-1:** Sarane. Take shelter of Krsna.
- **Question-2:** How to take shelter? What is the practical process?
- **Answer-2:** By developing love for Krsna. This can be received only by Krsna's mercy.
- We cannot manipulate and receive it through some ritualistic activities.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- **Question-3:** How to develop this love for Krsna?
- **Answer-3:** By developing love for these 8 things. We cannot exclude anything from the realm of our attachment. (Example: If one loves the father, then one automatically develops love towards other relatives.)
- In fact, it is easier to achieve Krsna through tadiya upasanam than to achieve Him directly.
- **Question-4:** How will I develop love for all these things?
- **Answer-4:** Dambham-Hitva. Get rid of your pride.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- **What is Surrender?** – BVT says: “External indication of one’s internal cultivation of love and affection for Krsna is Surrender”.
- This is important because many may feel that: “I love Krsna and Prabhupada. It doesn’t really matter what I am doing. What is important is what is inside.”
- But here BVT clearly indicates that internal love should parallel external behaviour. This is surrender.
- One should not argue that that the love that is inside my heart cannot be known by anyone else. – “Whatever is inside must manifest through external behaviours.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- **Vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-śaraṇe** – The emphasis of CM and all the other Goswamis is that we strive to develop attraction to only Radha and Kṛṣṇa, following in the footsteps of the Vrajavasis.
- We respect all the incarnations as Kṛṣṇa only, manifesting His potencies to varying degrees.
- The incarnations exhibit Kṛṣṇa's potencies to varying degrees of depth and extent. But Kṛṣṇa only exhibits these potencies to the ultimate degree. Therefore, Kṛṣṇas tu bhagavan svayam.
- Therefore, developing attachment to Radha and Kṛṣṇa is the highest achievement and the specific gift of Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- This attachment is already there (nitya siddha Krsna prema...). We only have to redevelop it through the process of hearing and chanting (sravanadi suddha citte...).
- The babaji sampradaya believe that receiving the seed means to receive one's svarupa during the time of initiation.
- But, the siddhanta parampara's understanding is that the bhakti lata bija that we receive is the process or sadhana that we receive from the Spriritual master to awaken that dormant love.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- **If Krsna-prema is present within our heart, why do we not feel it? What is the problem?**
- Due to the influence of maya, which is personified by the word Dambha, we are not able to feel the presence of love.
- By this covering of maya we have become more and more attached to things of this world.
- But Kapila says, the solution is “sa eva sadhusu krto.....”. Attachment when focussed on the devotees becomes the means of deliverance.
- So, what is really needed is to dovetail our attachments through the process of Sadhana-Bhakti

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- If you analyse the three words 1. goṣṭhālayiṣu 2. sujane 3. bhūsura-gaṇe, it indicates that from Varnasrama, through Vaidhi sadhana to Raganuga sadhana, all the processes are meant to draw out that attachment, redirect it in such a way that it does not bind us, but rather purifies us and ultimately unearth that love which is present in our hearts
- Therefore, Prabhupada created ISKCON for association, as only in association can we practice sadhana bhakti.
- If one thinks that he can practice without association, he is in Hallucination.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- **How does association help?** – By association the hrdaya-granthi becomes slackened, then one develops faith and becomes qualified to hear.
- **Symptom of Good hearing:** ASSIMILATION of instruction as one hears is the symptom of good hearing.
- Therefore, if one has heard the BG, then he comes to the conclusion of surrender.
- But one cannot directly surrender to Kṛṣṇa. One surrenders to His representative through the formal process of Dikṣa.
- Dikṣa means: “Divyam Jnanam yato dadyad.....Kuryad papasya sanksayam”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- Through Diksa one receives a mantra through which one can always worship Krsna within his mind.
- **How does this sadhana help spiritualize the attachments?**
- When the hrdaya-granthi becomes slackened and ultimately dissipated by sadhana, one develops an inner strength that is proportionate to the degree of slackening.
- For example, sometimes, after having practiced bhakti nicely for a while, one feels very confident and strong, and vice-versa.
- We can feel this inner strength in other advanced vaisnavas also. Example: Prabhupada's strong spiritual presence.
- This vibration is a manifestation of Krsna's internal-potency.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- The result of this development of inner strength is that it attracts the mercy of Krsna and Vaisnavas.
- Therefore, on one side is the endeavour of the devotees and on the other side is the mercy of Krsna and Vaisnavas. Both are important for progress.
- But, sincere endeavour is what attracts mercy. So, they are connected.
- **What are the symptoms of this sublime attachment?** – unimpeded by obstacles such as jnana and karma. To the extent it is unimpeded, to that extent one can have concentration on the sublime.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- **How to receive this Sublime Attachment?** – 2 Qualifications:
1. Laulyam, Eagerness or enthusiasm 2. Humility
- One cannot attract Kṛṣṇa's attention without these 2 qualities.
- On the other hand, it is the opposite of these 2 qualities that hinders our progress, i.e. Lethargy and Pride.
- Lethargy means to think that “Oh, it will happen by itself. I don't have to do anything”.
- Also, RDG says “**Sada** dambham hitva”. The word sada indicates that we may get rid of pride, but it may come back.
- Therefore, there is a process of getting rid of pride.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- **So, How do we get rid of pride?** – By the assistance of Guru.
- Therefore, one should always remember one's Guru before starting any activity so that he can become free of prideful and envious mentality.
- The different aspects of Pride are:
 1. Illusion
 2. Deceit
 3. Pretense
 4. Ignorance
 5. Deviousness
 6. Committing offenses
- These are not pride themselves, but elements which constitute pride.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

1. **Illusion:** To be satisfied and complacent by material accomplishments.
2. **Deceit:** One is satisfied with the externals of spiritual life like dress, demeanor, mannerisms, birth etc. and uses them to portray one's qualifications.
3. **Pretense:** To have anya-abhilasa while practicing Bhakti.
4. **Ignorance:** Forgetfulness of one's spiritual identity
5. **Deviousness:** Arising of alternative motives during the course of one's practice.
6. **Offenses:** Nama Aparadha, Seva Aparadha, Vaisnava Aparadha etc.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- **The 7 demons who represent these 6 types of Pride:**
 1. **Sakatasura**: Pride due to residual bad habits
 2. **Trnavarta**: Pride from scholarship
 3. **Yamalarjuna trees**: Pride due to aristocracy and high birth
 4. **Kaliya**: Pride due to crookedness and devious mentality
 5. **Yajnic Brahmanas**: Pride due to position in Varnasrama
 6. **Aristasura**: Pride due to practicing false religious principles
 7. **Kesi**: Pride from being materially situated in spiritual life, such as being a guru, sannyasi etc.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- While reading these pastimes we should be very open and pray to Krsna to remove all these various kinds of prides.
- **So, how to throw out pride?** – By careful and prayerful reading and hearing of these 7 pastimes related to pride.
- Then one develops “apurvam and atitaram ratim”.
- Apurvam means “anarpita carim cirat” – never freely available before.
- Atitaram means that this is the greatest love that the jiva can ever possess.
- And ratim, attraction, should be for all the 8 items, starting with guru.

Rati for the Guru

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- Gurau includes both Siksa Guru and Diksa Guru.
- Diksa Guru gives Sambandha Jnana by which one is able to overcome anarthas and progress in bhakti.
- Siksa Guru gives the abhideya or the process of cultivating one's relationship with Krsna.
- Both DG and SG may be the same person, although one may have more than one SGs with the permission of the DG.
- The SG instructs and guides the devotee in confidential service of Radha and Krsna
- In our sampradaya Sanatan Goswami is the embodiment of DG and Rupa Goswami the embodiment of SG.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- Both are on equal level and should not be discriminated.
- There is a difference between SG and receiving Siksa.
- One may receive bonafide siksa from many, but SG is an acarya, a liberated soul who gives specific instructions about the details of our sadhana and service to Krsna.
- In one sense, anyone who teaches us something is a guru. But the word SG is reserved for one who opens our eyes of knowledge and shows us Krsna.
- Even if one may not be on that level, one should treat any Guru with great esteem.

Rati for the Vraja

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- The word Gosthe refers to the Vrndavan.
- One of the first things that SP wanted to do after coming to India was to build American house for his disciples to stay in Vrndavan and Mayapur. Else, they would think new York and London to be their homes.
- Even though SP said that “Wherever I go is Vrndavan”, but it takes one time to come to that advanced stage.
- So, one should at least experience Bhauma Vrndavana and see the various pastime places there.
- One of the symptoms of an advanced devotee is Pritis tad vasati sthale. Also, Mathura Vas is one of the 5 potent limbs.

Rati for the 3 Classes of Devotees

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana
Goṣṭhālayiṣu – The Vrajavasis

Sri Vraja-basi-jana are the pure devotees who actually reside in the sacred dhama and render loving service to Sri-Sri Radha and Krsna.

They do not aspire even for Vaikuntha, what to speak of desiring any sense enjoyment or liberation.

In order to render loving service to the Divine Couple they reside in Vraja in person or by meditation, and they are therefore considered to be the very highest level of devotees, or most advanced uttama-adhikaris.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana Sujane – The Vaisnavas

Sujanas are devotees who belong to the four Vaisnava Sampradayas.

Many of them reside in Vraja but not in their spiritual forms.

This means that they are present in Vraja but do not worship Sri-Sri Radha and Krsna in the mood of the Vrndavana pastimes.

Instead, they worship Radha-Krsna in the mood of Rukmini-Dvarakadisa in Dvaraka, or as Laksmi-Narayana with feelings of awe and reverence.

As intermediate devotees they are called madhyama-adhikaris.

Verse-1 Bhajana Darpana
Bhūsura-gaṇe – The Brahmanas

Brahmanas strictly following the rule of varnasramadharma, teaching the science of Vaisnavism, are known as bhusuragana.

They are neophyte devotees, or kanisiha-adhikaris.

Rati for the Sva- Mantra

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- Devotees should know the meanings of these mantras as they are discussed in CC in depth.
- They should meditate on these meanings very seriously and conscientiously . This subject is not to be taken lightly.
- Chanting these mantras is like being requested to do puja 3 times a day.
- This is what Gayatri Mantra means. That's why we should perform acamana and purify ourselves before chanting them.
- This mantra worship is for advanced people. It is meant for those who not only worship with the paraphernalia, but also with their heart.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- When we don't know how to worship with the heart, then we simply get caught up in material thoughts while worshipping.
- Chanting this Gayatri mantra is meant as an internal worship which should be done very seriously by those who are offering themselves to Krsna.
- Very serious business.

Rati for the Sri-Namni

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- The same understanding applies to Sri-Namni.
- Chanting the HNs is also offering ourselves to the service of the Lord.
- It is offering our body, mind and Soul in service of Radha and Krsna in Vrndavana, in their eternal pastimes.
- **First Symptom of Proper Chanting:** One will be very serious and would beg Krsna to accept us and engage in His service.
- **Second Symptom:** Sincere endeavour for avoiding offenses, fully believing that offensive chanting will not deliver the results

*Aye svāntar bhrātaś
caṭubhir abhiyāce
dhr̥ta-padaḥ*

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- We have to beg our mind by falling at its feet because we are trying to get something which is very, very great. Something unprecedented.
- Even Krsna has to come as a devotee to taste that love.
- That unprecedented love is the love of the Gopis, unnata ujjvala rasam.
- Even though other Vrajvasis also are completely satisfied with their loving relationship with Krsna, nothing is more complete than the Gopis conjugal love for Krsna.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- Radha and Krsna are surrounded by the Asta-Sakhis, who are their most intimate associates.
- But, even more intimate are the assistants to the Asta-Sakhis (manjaris).
- They have a mood of friendship and servitude to Radharani, a mood similar to that of the unalloyed love of Raghunatha Dasa Goswami towards Radharani. (The Gopis have a mood of friendship with Radharani)
- Whatever ecstatic emotions Radharani experiences, these Manjaris also experience. This is the purport of atitaram rati.
- Another unique feature of this kind of love is that it does not depend upon direct contact with Krsna.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami

- By serving Radharani and by making arrangements for her and Krsna to meet, these manjaris automatically experience the highest pleasure that Radharani feels, even from a distance.
- This is how SP encouraged us, not to worry about having a direct relationship.
- This most elevated relationship is manifest through the heart, and all the ecstatic feelings experienced by Radharani are experienced by these manjari maidservants.
- It is the nature of this love that brings Krsna completely under control. In fact, this love purchases Krsna.
- Krsna becomes respectful and reverential towards those devotees who follow in the footsteps of Rupa-Raghunatha.

Verse-1

Notes on the Commentary
by
Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Giving up Pride

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

After some faith has awakened, how do we become fully Kṛṣṇa conscious?

- Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says first of all we must give up dambha.
- Dambha is a word that means deceit, religious hypocrisy, arrogance, and pride.
- So when you want to start Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's guidebook you have to first of all learn to give up pretense, hypocrisy, and deceit.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- As long as we pretend to be someone we are not, we cannot enter the path of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī.
- We only hurt ourselves by keeping up such a farce.
- If you want to advance, give up your pride before Kṛṣṇa makes an arrangement for your pride to be taken.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- According to Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura, a dangerous moment in the life of a devotee is when the thought comes, “I am a Vaiṣṇava. I am a devotee.”
- He says that if we think we are a Vaiṣṇava, then we shall look forward to receiving respect from others.
- If the desires for fame and reputation pollute our hearts, then we shall certainly descend into hell.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- Therefore, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks of this dangerous moment, the thoughts that we are Vaiṣṇavas, that we have done vratas, that we have finished extra rounds for Kārtika, or we have distributed extra books or given a very well-acclaimed lecture!
- If so, then we don't run to Kṛṣṇa—we run in the opposite direction.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

•So Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī's initial instruction is to first give up all pride, because if our bhajana becomes kevala-kaitava (fully cheating), then we cannot progress.

What do we do when respect comes our way?

•Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura said that when we are glorified, we should immediately offer the glorification to our spiritual master and the previous ācāryas.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- For example, if someone says, “you gave a nice lecture,” you should respond, “I just repeated some points that I learned from my spiritual master and the Vaiṣṇavas; I cannot really accept your praise.”
- I recently glorified one devotee who did exceptional service and the devotee said something very pleasing. He said, “I had good helpers. I didn’t do anything.”
- Immediately when praise comes our way, we should deflect it to where it should go, and it usually goes to the previous ācāryas.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī said this on his 60th Vyāsa-pūja.
- Think that the glorifications offered to us really belong to the previous ācāryas.
- We can accept the glorifications and offer all to them. Think, “Those of you who glorify me now are all great personalities. What you are giving to me I am not qualified to accept. So today I am offering it to my guru.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- If we don't use this “transparent” technique, the glorification can kill us.
- If we don't become transparent and let the waters of praise continue on and flow where they belong, then our pipe will burst and blow into pieces and create mishaps.
- My dear devotees, between us and the Lord is a mountain of ahaṁ mameti, the foundations of pride.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- Prideful thoughts create saṁskāras and aggressions from which our whole svabhāva is formed.
- This is also true with praise and respect that is shown physically.
- For example, in India people touch the feet of those they hold in high esteem, and when someone accepts this they can fall ill because they take the karma, which can burn health and mind.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- One should think, “This person touching my feet is thinking I am a specialist in bhakti or because I have white skin, but I am really a mercy case of my spiritual master.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda, whatever good this person sees in me, it is, by your mercy, your investment into me.
- It belongs to you.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- And then we can really see how the karma goes through us and does not make us sick.
- But if it stops at our feet, we can become very ill.

Developing Attraction to Guru

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

How to give up Pride?

•Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, “Develop unprecedented love for guru.”

How do we develop love for our spiritual master or for Śrīla Prabhupāda?

•We can shout, “Prabhupāda!” until our vocal chords ache, but our mind can still shout “me, me, me!” with the same strength.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- To cure this problem, we should meditate on something very nice about the spiritual master that is true.
- Kṛṣṇa is the original guru, the ādi-guru, who reaches the conditioned souls through the vyaṣṭi-gurus (individual gurus).

Now how do these individual personalities become carriers of Kṛṣṇa's mercy?

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- It is because Kṛṣṇa invests his karuṇā-śakti (mercy potency) in the spiritual master.
- This is the way Kṛṣṇa chooses to show his mercy.
- When water is touched by cold, it becomes ice.
- So when Kṛṣṇa shows his compassion for the fallen souls, he becomes the guru-tattva.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- I always like to say that I was a dark end on a dark stone on a dark night in a dark universe.
- No light in my life.
- But my spiritual master found me and saved me by bringing me in contact with this process of Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- It is simply self-deception to call to the Lord and try to surrender to God by trying to jump over Śrī Gurudeva, who is the tangible form of the Lord's presently-occurring mercy before us.
- We can go to God and say, “God, God, God,” and tell him so many things, but if we stand before our spiritual master, it is easily seen what is real and what is unreal.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- Imagination doesn't work when our spiritual master is before us.
- We can't cheat ourselves. It is magical.
- If we turn to our spiritual master with the sincere desire to be helped, we will see how the karuṇā-śakti becomes activated and something wonderful will happen.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Now what to do if faith in guru is lost?

- I want to recommend to you if you can't worship your dīkṣā guru nicely, go to Prabhupāda or look for a śikṣā guru.
- But take to this principle, because Kṛṣṇa has invested his mercy śakti in his devotees.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura tells us how we should see our guru.
- He says do not see the guru as merely a great sage, but rather see him as your intimate and well-wishing friend.
- I personally have come to believe that this understanding is very important in our discipleship.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- We need to come close.
- If the guru is an abstract concept for us, we won't have that heartfelt connection where we can tell him everything, and we won't call upon him like we call to a friend when we are in trouble.

Means of developing Apurva Rati

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- The first verse goes on to explain that we should love vraja-dhāma, the residents of Vraja, and finally Śrī Śrī Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, who are the eternally youthful divine couple of Vraja.
- Kṛṣṇa explains in the Bhāgavatam how we can develop love for him.
- The wives of the brāhmaṇas came to him in the forest and offered a meal.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- They saw Kṛṣṇa standing in the forest twirling a lotus flower with one of his elbows resting on the shoulder of a friend.
- Kṛṣṇa told them, “Just like I am twirling this lotus, I am twirling your heart. Can you feel it?”
- The brāhmaṇas’ wives said, “Yes.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- They wanted to walk with him through the forest where he was herding the cows, but that would have been a violation of social etiquette.
- Highly aristocratic brāhmaṇa ladies walking behind a cowherd boy, adoring him, throwing flowers and singing, “O Kṛṣṇa, O Kṛṣṇa,” ... the whole society would have been scandalized and Kṛṣṇa did not wish this.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

•So he sent them home and told them:

**śravaṇād darśanād dhyānān
mayi bhāvo 'nukīrtanāt
na tathā sannikarṣeṇa
pratiyāta tato gṛhān**

It is by hearing about me, seeing my Deity form, meditating upon me and chanting my names and glories that love for me develops, not by physical proximity. Therefore, please go back to your homes. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 10.23.33)

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- Kṛṣṇa is serious about these points.
- He speaks the same verse to the gopīs, but there is one difference.
- The brāhmaṇa wives return home and the gopīs do not.
- So, again, śravaṇād, it is by hearing about me that you develop love.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- Women like to stare at men, and men like to stare at women.
- So do that to the Deity.
- Then you will develop love for Kṛṣṇa.
- Stare at him. Meditate about Kṛṣṇa, and chant his names and glories.
- Then you will develop love, and not by physical proximity.

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Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- Kṛṣṇa rested his left cheek on his left shoulder in order to play the gamakas (ornamented notes), a vibrato in the ascending and descending modes of the rāgas. Kṛṣṇa tilted his head to the left side.
- At the same time Kṛṣṇa crossed his legs to assume a charming three-fold bending form, which enchanted the three worlds.
- Kṛṣṇa tilted his neck.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- He rested the flute on his lower lip, and then he made his eyebrows dance to attract the attention of Subala and others to the skillfulness of his songs.
- Kṛṣṇa was playing a flute with seven holes, which were covered by his fingers.
- Because Kṛṣṇa never worked, his fingers were softer than those of other men.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- But they were somewhat harder than his other limbs because his fingers would cover the holes of the flute.
- Kṛṣṇa's body is as soft as yoghurt when you touch it.
- It is cooling and so soft.
- In this mood, Kṛṣṇa is there in this beautiful form which we can see in the temples, playing his flute and enchanting the mind.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- Now we have heard about Kṛṣṇa, so now we should stare at Kṛṣṇa with unblinking eyes.
- First see his lotus feet.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda writes:

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- The mind of the conditioned soul on account of its association with the material energy from time immemorial contains heaps of dirt in the form of desires to control material nature.
- This dirt is like a mountain, but a mountain can be shattered when hit by a thunderbolt.
- Meditating on the lotus feet of the Lord acts like a thunderbolt on the mountain of dirt in the mind of the yogī.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- If a yogī wants to shatter the mountain of dirt in his mind, then he should concentrate on the lotus feet of the Lord and not imagine something void or impersonal.
- Because the dirt has accumulated like a solid mountain, one must meditate on the lotus feet of the Lord for quite a long time.
- For one who is accustomed to thinking of the lotus feet of the Lord constantly however, it is a different matter.
- The devotees are so fixed on the lotus feet of the Lord that they do not think of anything else. (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.28.22 purport)

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

•Śrīla Prabhupāda states that if you are a yogī, you take advantage of this process of smaraṇam and meditate on the lotus the feet for a long time.

•But the bhakti-yogīs (us) take special advantage of the process of hearing and chanting in this sambandha, in a relationship where we think of Kṛṣṇa, and make our chanting so wonderful that we feel some devotional feelings.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- There is a ladder in our lives.
- We can go down in the direction of kāma, become degraded, sad, disappointed, frustrated, and keep taking birth after birth, or we can go to the same ladder of desire, but go up to the level of love, to the beginning states of gratitude or appreciation of Kṛṣṇa, feeling closeness to the Lord.
- Then we feel some bhakti, and finally some spiritual energy will really start working intensely in us, and then there will be ruci and āsakti and bhāva someday.
- But we can start now, and it's only a matter of which direction we look.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- Do we want to look toward the material energy, or do we want to look toward guru, toward vraja-dhāma, toward the brāhmaṇas, toward the Vaiṣṇavas, and all these personalities we have heard about in Manaḥ-śikṣā?
- Train the mind to look to these residents of Vraja, the Vaiṣṇavas, and to our dīkṣā-mantras, the holy name, and we will see, without any doubt, that we will become free from this kāma, this selfish desire that only makes us miserable and disappointed.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- When in the association of devotees, something happens.
- A sādhu is someone who practices bhajana and who helps us to do bhajana also.
- So when we come together with proper devotees who practice Kṛṣṇa consciousness and who will preach to us nicely, I can guarantee we will faint when we smell the fragrance of the cup full of honey that will be opened in their association.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- In the association of materialists our heads turn downwards, and down we go.
- In the association of sādhus our heads turn upwards and up we go. It is that simple.
- The entire universe is full of miseries and therefore the inhabitants of this material universe are always shedding tears out of intense grief (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.28.32).

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

- There is a great ocean of water made from such tears.
- But for those who surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the ocean of tears created by kāma and krodha (anger)—the all-devouring enemies of this world—is at once dried up.
- We need only see the charming smile of the Supreme Lord.
- In other words, the bereavement of material existence immediately subsides when we see his charming smile.

Verse-1

Notes on the Commentary
by
Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana
Goswami

The Two Paths of Raganuga Sadhana and the Position of Manah Siksa

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Sri Raghunatha Dasa Goswami makes the point right at the beginning that these instructions are meant to help us serve Kṛṣṇa based on spontaneity by his use of the term rāga (attachment).
- Everything we're doing should be based on our heartfelt aspiration, not on some heartless planning for gain, but on an emotional impulse.

How to form such an attachment?

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- There were four schools or sampradāyas preaching vaidhī-sādhana-bhakti and teaching how it should be followed.
- In contrast, Lord Caitanya said that he came specially to teach how to develop the kind of attachment that eternally resides in the hearts of the residents of Vraja.
- Lord Caitanya set the example.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- He cried in the gambhīra and spent sleepless nights listening to the bhajanas sung to him by Rāmānanda Rāya and Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī.
- It was actually Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī who taught this kind of attachment, because the Lord instructed him by saying, “Teach others. Give them a chance to satiate themselves.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Our tradition which Lord Caitanya founded is composed of two schools of thought, or two trends, explaining in a slightly different way the method and principle of developing this attachment.
- One of the schools originated from the instructions initially transferred by Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī to Vakreśvara Paṇḍita.
- Vakreśvara Paṇḍita in turn transferred it to Gopāla Guru Gosvāmī, and Gopāla Guru Gosvāmī transferred it to Dhvānacandra Gosvāmī

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- This is the path called bahiraṅgā-rāgānuga-sādhana or the practice to develop attachment by means of external methods.
- In this school, Svarūpa Dāmodara explained the way we can develop attachment by worshiping Deities.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Gopāla Guru Gosvāmī and Dhyānacandra Gosvāmī wrote a detailed manual (paddhati) of how to worship Kṛṣṇa with attachment, what mantras to chant, how to treat the Lord, how he should be imagined, how to meditate while worshiping Deities.
- In other words, they translated the language of arcana into the language of rāga, the language of attachment.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The other school also goes back to Svarūpa Dāmodara Gosvāmī, from the instructions he gave to Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī.
- When Raghunātha arrived in Puri, having finally escaped from household life, he addressed Lord Caitanya through Svarūpa Dāmodara, “I do not know my duty or the goal of my life. Therefore, please personally give me instructions from your transcendental mouth.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

•Lord Caitanya said, “I don’t know; I’m just thinking about Kṛṣṇa. There’s no sādhana to speak of—I’m just crying for Kṛṣṇa night and day. How can I explain it to you? But if you insist, I can tell you in a few words.”

•And then Caitanya spoke one verse, which explained the fundamental principle.

•He said: amānī mānada haṣā kṛṣṇa-nāma sadā la’be,
vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-sevā mānase karibe (Caitanya-
caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 6.237).

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Externally, we should be humbler than a blade of grass, without an ounce of false pride or desire for honor.
- In addition, kṛṣṇa-nāma sada labe: we should chant the holy name.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We have often heard that we should be humble, and sometimes we walk around bearing a yoke of humility, which lies heavily on us.
- We walk around harassed and oppressed by this humility.
- We have been told more than once that externally we should be chanting the mantra but we think everything internal will come automatically.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- But the school of thought that originated in this verse is about what should be happening in our heart.
- Lord Caitanya explains it in the next line of this verse, vraje rādhā-kṛṣṇa-sevā mānase karibe “Within your mind you should render service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in Vraja.”
- But what that means and what should be happening in our hearts is not an easy question to answer.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Lord Caitanya then told Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī to ask Svarūpa Dāmodara for details.
- Certainly, externally we must be humble.
- Externally, we should try and offer respect to one and all, not expecting it in return.
- Externally, we should chant the holy name, but bhakti is not a mechanical process.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We need to think what should be occurring in our hearts.
- That science is what Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī explains in the Manaḥ-śikṣā.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

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Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- In this first instruction, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, “O my brother, my dear mind, I’m offering my obeisances to you; I’m taking a very humble position.
- I’m taking hold of your feet and I humbly pray to you. Please, give up all your pride: *sadā dambhaṁ hitvā.*”
- He then says, “I pray to you, ‘O mind, try your hardest to develop attachment.’”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The reason for this instruction is contained in the first two lines where he enumerates to whom and to what we should develop our attachment.
- Gurau to Śrī Guru, goṣṭha—Vṛndāvana, goṣṭhālayiṣu—to the residents of Vṛndāvana.
- Sujane means devotees.
- Bhū-sura-gaṇe means brāhmaṇas.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Sva-mantre means in our own dīkṣā-mantras.
- Śrī-nāmnī—the holy name.
- Vraja-nava-yuva-dvandva-śaraṇe—the shelter of the lotus feet of Kiśora-kiśorī.
- Each word or phrase carries an important message, which helps us to have a clearer idea of how we should chant the holy name and perform devotional service.

Addressing the Mind

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- First of all, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī describes his mind.
- He says—svāntaḥ bhrātaḥ—my inner self.
- It is very important to first of all understand what the mind is.
- Sometimes it is very difficult to explain to people that they are not their mind.
- Understanding that we are not the body is easy, but to understand that we are not the mind is difficult.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī explains a very important point about svāntaḥ.
- We should understand that in the conditioned state the soul delegates the functions of our personality to the mind.
- Actually, it is as if there is no soul—it is sleeping.
- All is delegated to the mind.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Therefore, we find it so hard to detach ourselves from our mind.
- For this reason, Raghunātha Dāsa addresses his inner self with much respect.
- The soul is eternal, full of knowledge and bliss. It is pure.
- So where do the vices reside?
- The answer is the mind.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We have merged with it so tightly that we have delegated to our mind the functions of ourselves.
- It has a general power of attorney.
- Whatever we do—it is our mind.
- All of the past life impressions (saṁskāras) make up our personality.
- A child is born a ready-made personality, with an endless stream of desires.
- The seeds of these desires are already in the mind.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- This situation is the reason why we should treat our mind with much respect.
- Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī demonstrates that respect here by saying, “O my dear brother, my mind. I’m addressing to you catubhiḥ.”
- Catubhiḥ means with sweet language.
- In other words, “I want to flatter you, which is a very important point because the mind is very hard to cope with. It is like a sponge absorbing everything.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- An avid material mind, attached to material things, absorbs everything.
- We absorb all of these material impressions, living a material life, and we don't know ourselves how we are going to act.
- The mind is like a vacuum cleaner.
- It accumulates material impressions, storing and classifying them.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- And finally it starts acting, being guided by these impressions that it has absorbed, as if it is us.
- The 19th century Russian poet Nekrasov, when explaining the nature of the Russian peasant, explained the nature of the mind.
- He said, “The Russian peasant is like a bull: once an idea has taken hold of the brain, it’s almost impossible to eradicate.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Arjuna was also speaking about this problem 5000 years ago, how very difficult the mind is to deal with. It has power generated by material impressions.
- Therefore, as the nīti-śāstras explain, in dealing with the mind we remember that an enemy can be treated in different ways.
- If we are stronger than the enemies, we punish them.
- But if we are not sure whether the enemies are stronger or not, we approach them to see if we can win them over.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Some people try to defeat their mind with coercion, trying to rein in their mind through force.
- But if you just try to rein in the mind, it will kick up like a wild, unbroken horse and throw off its rider.
- Therefore, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī takes a tactful approach.
- He says, “O my mind, I love you so much.
- I love you so much; trust me, I wish you well.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- This method is very important.
- Some people try to reform themselves by force, and others say that you should just love yourself, no matter how you behave.
- But Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, “No. I’m addressing you gently, with touching, sweet words—my brother, my mind, you should make some profound changes in yourself, which are bound to be painful.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- This very first verse of the instructions to the mind raises the most important problem for anyone attempting to follow a spiritual path, no matter which path they are following.
- If we are trying to overcome the influence of the material energy, what we first need to overcome is identification with the mind, which is very difficult to conquer.
- In Patanjali Muni's Yoga-sūtras he explains that a person identifies the self who can see with their ability to see or with their tools of sight.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- These two concepts are confused: the tool being used and the self who is using these tools.
- Patanjali explains that this confusion is what is called the false ego, which gives rise to all other difficulties and, in turn, develops into ignorance.
- What tools do we possess?
- These are the mind and senses.
- When we use these tools we identify with them because we derive pleasure from them.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We can run, and since we derive some pleasure in running, we like to identify with the tools that enable us to do so.
- The same happens when we drive a car.
- We feel enjoyment associated with the subtle psychology of dominion over this material nature.
- We are reluctant to take the position of the observer.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- However, we do not like being an observer because the observer cannot really enjoy.
- Unless the observer identifies with what is going on, there is no enjoyment.
- The observer does not enjoy, and the enjoyer does not observe.
- For example, if we are watching two people fighting, we will not be able to enjoy the fight if we do not identify with one of them.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We are given tools and by using them we can experience a feeling or a sensation.
- But having come to the material world to get various experiences, it is very easy and natural for us to identify with those experiences.
- In the moment when we identify with the experiences, we may feel nothing but enjoyment.
- However, the consequences are very sad.
- Any yoga or any spiritual path teaches that we must withdraw and take the position of observers.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī tells us the first thing we must do is detach and look at ourselves with an outward eye.
- This is very difficult to do precisely because there are two aspects of the Lord's illusory energy—āvaraṇātmikā-māyā and prakṣepātmikā-māyā.
- Prakṣepātmikā-māyā makes us identify with the body and the senses; āvaraṇātmikā-māyā covers the mind and gives us the feeling of happiness.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- A very good example of how we voluntarily immerse ourselves even deeper into māyā is by drinking alcohol or taking drugs.
- The chemical substance affects the mind, and the mind changes or transforms.
- Since we identify with the mind, we immediately identify with this changed mind.
- This is prakṣepātmikā-māyā.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The mind changed by drugs or alcohol is experiencing a pseudo liberation.
- A drunken man, for example, feels that he can do anything.
- He identifies with his “liberated mind” that now feels no boundary and, at that very moment, having identified with it, he thinks he is experiencing happiness.
- To the eye of an enlightened person, we are no less a pathetic image than a drunk is.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We are squeezing something out of ourselves, trying to enjoy.
- But a sober person, a yogī, has taken the position of the observer.
- Any control of the mind, any kind of yoga, means that we are somewhat recovering from this state of intoxication.
- Only when we take the position of observers do we cease to create karma.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We all know that the main problem in material life is that anything we do creates karma.
- But as long as we identify with the body and enjoy what we do, we will continue to create karma, because the impressions of what we do remain in our mind as does the enjoyment we derive from our actions.
- There are three possible psychological reactions to the emotions that we experience.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The first reaction, for instance, is when someone comes up to us and insults us in some way.
- A mind identified with all the material qualities immediately becomes filled with self-righteous anger.
- At such times we can manifest our freedom.
- We possess freedom, which means that, having become angry, we can still act differently

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- As a rule, someone who has no freedom, who is completely under the power of the law of karma, who perpetuates the chain of karma, what do they do when they become angry?
- Depending on their level of culture, they either act through their cognitive or acting senses.
- But generally there is no difference.
- If they are intelligent, they will respond, “I am not a fool. You are the fool.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- An unintelligent person will just start fighting.
- This action, whether verbal or physical, is the first kind of karmic reaction.
- The second kind of reaction of a well-mannered person who is trying to be in control is that they suppress their anger.
- The first reaction is to give vent to an emotion.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The second is to try to suppress it, whether by swallowing the words that are burning to be spoken or clenching fists in an effort not to use them.
- But have we ceased to create karma in this way?
- No, because this suppressed emotion goes deeper inside and takes on ugly forms.
- Sooner or later it will force us to act in accordance with our individual karma.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The third option we have is to start preaching to ourselves.
- We start explaining to ourselves what we are doing, and in this way we try to overcome our anger. We attempt to somehow explain or justify it.
- But all these reactions are wrong. Instead, we merely have to observe.
- We need to simply stand back, see that the wave of anger has arisen in our mind, and think, “Mmmm. Anger. Hare Kṛṣṇa.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- All spiritual paths, in essence, give the same advice to look with this outward eye.
- The difference which distinguishes the various spiritual paths is in the method in which we can detach from identification with the body and mind.
- A most effective way to try to look at ourselves with an outward eye is to tolerate.
- Just tolerate and perform our duty.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- When we are tolerating, we are acting as soul.
- The mind is unable to tolerate. It keeps saying, “I can’t. I don’t want.”
- We say, “Shut up, you should!”
- Tolerance is how we can detach ourselves from the mind.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Another way to not identify with all these reactions, with the body, the mind, or with the emotions that take place, is to always be immersed in Kṛṣṇa consciousness and take the standpoint of the scriptures. In the depths of our soul, we should always look at the world from the perspective of Kṛṣṇa's teachings, which he presented in the Bhagavad-gītā.
- The advice that Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī gives in the first verse is that, having given up false identification, we must develop proper identification.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- In other words, the external world we live in constantly forces some role upon us.
- We play the part of a mother, a father, a spiritual master.
- But in reality, we are the servant of the servant of the Lord: *gopī-bhartuḥ pada-kamalayor dāsa-dāsānudāsaḥ*.
- The path of spiritual life is a way of removing the false identification with the material body and with the roles that we play here.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Simultaneously, it is a way of developing our spiritual attachment and attaining our spiritual identity.
- How do we attain this spiritual identity and whom should we identify with?
- Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says that at the beginning we should identify with our attachment to guru.
- Then we have to identify ourselves with the amazing atmosphere of Vṛndāvana, the atmosphere of pure, selfless love.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Then we must somehow or other tie ourselves with the strong threads of friendship and love to the devotees.
- We must understand who we are in this spiritual atmosphere of Vṛndāvana and in the spiritual society of devotees, starting this path by identifying with our guru and by developing attachment to him.
- And then the most important thing that needs to occur will do so, which is to identify with our attachment to the holy name.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Attachment to the holy name will become a part of our personality.
- Ultimately, what all this was started for will take place, and we will take shelter of the eternally youthful couple of Vṛndāvana.
- Therefore, cultivating the position of the observer is not enough.
- In the case of a person following the path of mystic yoga, the ideal is to become an observer.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- But for bhakti, the ideal is to become a servant of Kṛṣṇa.
- We can remain in this state if a prayer is ceaselessly vibrating within.
- Inwardly, no matter what's going on externally, we must chant the holy name.
- We must always be in Vṛndāvana, remembering our spiritual master and the association of devotees.
- Externally we will go on acting in various ways, playing the parts we have to play, but inwardly we must remain devotees.

Always Give Up Pride

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- At the moment we are the victims of a false program installed in our mind, a program called karma.
- This program causes us to suffer, making other people around us suffer, too, due to all of the vices residing in our mind.
- And here Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, “There is one thing I beg of you: *sadā dambhaṁ hitvā*—cast away all pride.”
- This is the first request everything is supposed to start with.
- This is the first instruction to the mind.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Sadā dambhaṁ hitvā. Sadā means “once and for all.”
- Hitvā means cast away—cast away once and for all.
- And dambha means pride, deception, or propensity for deception, and hypocrisy.
- Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura goes on to analyze and explain the anatomy of dambha, the anatomy of what we should initially give up.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- To put it simply, dambha is both false ego and the propensity for deception, and not just deception, but self-deception.
- We have to cast away this tendency towards self-delusion in order to reach our spiritual goals.
- For Christians, the mind plays the role of the devil. What we call the mind, they call the devil.
- The devil appears as the serpent, tempting us to eat the apple so we can become God.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- This describes our propensity for deception.
- The mind flatters and charms us, saying we can do anything and be anything.
- Hence Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, “The first step should be sadā dambhaṁ hitvā.”
- We should cast away this dambha (pride) not just once, but always, because the serpent isn’t sleeping, it is there.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura explains that this dambha or pride has six constituents.
- He continues, “First it’s māyā or illusion.”
- We’re all apt to be illusioned, as the famous Russian poet Pushkin said, “Oh, it takes little to assure me! ...
- I am so willingly deceived!”
- Then Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, “Chala—a tendency to deceive.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Not everyone allows the cheating tendency to manifest itself externally, but everyone should know that we all have this propensity to cheat.
- Then there is kapaṭatā, which means hypocrisy or pretence, when we're trying to pretend to be something or someone.
- Then avidyā (ignorance). The fifth is kuṭi-nāṭi (dishonesty).
- And the sixth and the last is depravity or corruptness.
- These make up dambha, which Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī implores us to give up.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We have this dambha (pride) and sometimes we even take up spiritual practice for the sake of becoming famous.
- We study the scriptures and quote them to serve our own purposes.
- That process is what is going on in our minds.
- So, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, “If you want to have a taste for spiritual life, you should, first of all, dispose of this propensity towards deception.
- Don’t let your mind deceive you.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Śrīla Prabhupāda called his translation and commentary of the Bhagavad-gītā “Bhagavad-gītā As It Is” and this term has a deep philosophical meaning.
- It means that we’re not trying to interpret the scriptures the way we want to, to please or benefit ourselves.
- We take it as it is.
- Honesty is the first rule in order to remove this tendency to deceive.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- There was a Muslim living a dissipated life, carousing, drinking, eating and indulging himself.
- A religious leader, mullah, approached him, saying, “My son, don’t you know the Quran says that one shouldn’t do this because one is going to destroy one’s eternal soul?”
- You’re carousing, drinking, and corrupting people.”
- “How come, mullah, that you don’t know the Quran? It says: eat, drink, and have a good time.”
- “My son, there’s more to that line—‘Eat, drink, have a good time and you will destroy yourself.’”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The debauchee replied, “Holy father, no one can follow the scriptures meticulously.
- I prefer following the first line of this verse. It says, ‘Eat, drink, have fun.’”
- The first thing we should understand is that the enemy is within, and it is always ready to deceive us and justify its actions to us.
- It tells we are the best, and it is finding fault with others, saying the fault lies with others, not us.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- One woman who had just joined Kṛṣṇa consciousness said that she loved the Bhagavad-gītā, particularly chapter 16, because it describes that there are only two types of people: the demons and the devotees.
- She said she realized that she was a devotee and the rest are demons.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda called the mind the best lawyer.
- And what is the lawyer paid for?

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The best lawyer is the one who can lie convincingly.
- He's going to win.
- Within us, there is the best of lawyers working for free.
- Always lying: you're always right; you can't be at fault.
- When two devotees were having an altercation, in an attempt to pacify them, I said that one of you may be at fault but the other party could also be wrong.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- And one of the devotees replied, “I’m not sure about him, but as far as I am concerned, I’m one hundred percent confident that I am always right.”
- Thinking yourself always right is the foundation of pride.
- Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says that until we cast away this dambha (pride) manifesting itself through this deception, we will never be able to understand or progress on the spiritual path.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Therefore, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says—sadā dambhaṁ hitvā—always be on your guard and remember that the mind is forever willing to deceive.
- We should always remember that the source of dambha is within us.
- Dambha means identifying with the material body and even more with the material mind, which plays roles.
- We all have a split personality. In the spiritual world, there's no difference between the soul, its mind, its feelings. Here, though, there is a difference.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Sometimes people start doubting whether they feel something or not, and who feels it—is it my mind or myself?
- During a kīrtana we experience some ecstasy, enthusiasm, and inspiration.
- Then suddenly we think, “Is it me who is experiencing and feeling this?”
- And it is hard for people to detach themselves from the mind.
- It is hard to understand that we are the soul.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- I once was on a train with a man who had been drinking.
- In my compartment there were three other drunken men sleeping and snoring, so there was nothing else for me to do but go out into the corridor and chant japa.
- The other person who couldn't sleep approached me while I was chanting and asked, "What are you Buddhists doing here?"
- As the conversation went on, I started to explain to him the nature of the soul.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- I said, “You’re a soul! Just look: everything about you has changed—your mind, your body.
- In your childhood, you were different but the soul remained unchanged.
- You remain unchanged.
- Try to remember what you were like as a child.”
- He kept thinking for a while and then said, “No, it wasn’t me. It was another soul.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The mind is the source of pride.
- It makes us play every role possible.
- In the long run, we try to work these prideful roles into the spiritual realm.
- There is a very important point we have to understand: even being on the spiritual path and theoretically accepting that we are servants—and any authentic spiritual path teaches this position—we don't always reconcile this within.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Jīva Gosvāmī gives a very interesting explanation of what knowledge is.
- He says that knowledge is the essence of experience.
- Knowledge is what we have experienced—it is equal to perception.
- When Kṛṣṇa begins speaking about what knowledge is, he starts with these two words: amānitvam adambhitvam (Bhagavad-gītā 13.8–12).

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- To gain true knowledge or true experience, to approach God, we should first of all cast away our passion for honor, amānitvam, and this pride, adambhitvam, consisting in our ability to deceive and delude ourselves.
- There are two forms of pride that exhibit themselves on the spiritual path.
- At times devotees are naturally naive.
- As a rule, they come with their hearts open and expect a miracle.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Most expect something to happen during or after chanting the mahā-mantra.
- If they experience some miracle, they consider it as proof of genuineness of the spiritual path.
- However, sometimes miracles do not prove that the spiritual path is true.
- In southern India, there lives a so-called incarnation of God who works miracles on a regular basis.
- Although he does some tricks, he can also perform miracles.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Many people can attest that he materialized an object in front of their eyes or he came into their dreams or saved them in some situations.
- At the same time this person claims he is the complete incarnation of God.
- Some people in their frenzy get stigmata on their hands and begin bleeding.
- However, this is not at all proof of the true spiritual experience.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- It is not at all proof of their intimacy with God because the mind can be the cause of all these miracles.
- We can instill something into our own minds and it will work such wonders, making us think, “God must have come to me.”
- There are lots of examples of false spiritual experiences: ‘contactees’, psychics, mediums, magicians, and pseudo incarnations.
- Sometimes we even see devotees trying to rush a miracle—we are so impatient.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We have spent hundreds of lives here in the material world wasting our time, and then at last when we become spiritual, we think, “A miracle must happen now. God must appear before me.”
- And sometimes he may falsely appear to, even with a peacock feather with a blue body.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- I remember chanting the mahā-mantra for the first time with a devotee who continuously had a big blue finger appear before him.
- Patanjali describes false ecstasies or false visions as the last of the obstacles on the spiritual path. This is what is done by one category of sahajiyās.
- They sometimes cry, spin, roll on the floor, in the dust.
- And most surprising is that they sometimes seem to have some love of God.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- But then they go out and smoke a cigarette.
- This is how this self-importance manifests itself through illusion or false visions and how we are reduced to the saḥajiyā level.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda warned again and again not to rush things—advancement is supposed to come naturally.
- Waiting for what is natural is the way the ācāryas describe, and it is not easy.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- It is one type of pride to be impatient.
- We think, “I deserve more than what I have. I need my spiritual experience right here and right now. God should come to me or I should experience some kind of miracle, or I’ll bring myself to some state to make everyone understand I’m the smartest and the most remarkable.”
- This fault resides in the mind.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- But there is even a more profound mistake we can make on the spiritual path.
- When we achieve some success in the practice of our devotional service and learn how to touch people's hearts with the words of the śāstra, from Śrīla Prabhupāda, and our initiating spiritual master, all of a sudden we imagine ourselves to be something important.
- We forget we have received those merits and achievements from our spiritual master and Kṛṣṇa.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We should always remember that we owe God and our spiritual master everything we have.
- On no account should we attempt to claim the credit by saying, “Yes, I made it all happen.”
- Aside from the above, there is another more profound manifestation of pride, which is vanity and conceit.
- Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gave the most amazing definition of humility, because humility is the opposite of vanity and pride.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Sometimes we think we are humble, but we are acting humble only for the sake of showing off how humble we are.
- The mind sometimes says, “Be humble because this is the way of receiving honor from devotees.”
- So we become humble.
- Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura gives a definition of humility we can use to check whether we are humble or not.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- He says that true humility is to not expect anything from anyone.
- Next time when we are going to take offence because someone hasn't done something we expected them to, remember this instruction of Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī—*sadā dambhaṁ hitvā*.
- Keep renouncing pride because it manifests itself in resentment and the mood that someone owes us something, because we are exceptional.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to teach us, “Everyone can see God. Everyone has the way open before them regardless of what family they were born into, regardless of where they come from, regardless of the sins they have committed—even if we are at death’s door, we can still see God.”
- He also taught that the important thing is to develop true humility because it is the basis of the genuine spiritual experience.
- Whatever occurs on the basis of pride is false spiritual experience.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- In this verse, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says sadā dambhaṁ hitvā.
- Sadā—whichever level you've reached be careful of pride.
- Moreover, the higher level you have attained, the more reason you have to become proud.
- We should always monitor this carefully.
- As soon as you become proud, you are bound to fail. This is the instruction Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī gives us.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- He says further that we should just cast away our pride.
- Pride generates attachments; pride is our way to exist in this world; pride is the roles we are playing.
- It is easy to say, “Cast away your pride.”
- But can we cast away our pride?
- How can we exist without any kind of self concept in which we feel satisfied?
- We can't.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Giving up pride means, “Take off all false coverings, all this armor that you have put on. Give up all pride of the roles you are playing here.”
- But what is the problem that we immediately face when we hear this advice?
- We are told, “Give up all the roles that you are playing here in this world.
- Stop being a man or a woman, a mother or a father.
- Stop being a śūdra, vaiśya, kṣatriya, or a brāhmaṇa.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Essentially, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī instructs us to ‘undress,’ because all of these shells are the clothes that we have put on.
- How would we feel if suddenly we had to, even if not physically, but at least internally, uncover ourselves?
- We would feel unprotected and defenseless.
- Pride is a shield, an armor that we have created, a shell that we have put on.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We are like oysters; on top we have a shell and we are inside, thinking, “I am fine. I have protected myself. Let them try to hurt me.”
- When we hear the advice to become a small, defenseless soul and take shelter at the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa, completely giving up pride, it is very difficult to follow this advice and abandon our pride, because we have suffered a great deal.
- We worry that if we become as humble as possible others will exploit us, and that may very well happen.
- This is why at first glance it may seem that such advice is impractical.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- This is the internal work that we must do—*sadā dambhaṁ hitvā kuru ratim apūrvām atitarām*.
- We must try hard to obtain our spiritual identity.
- This is the advice of the first verse.
- We can externally remain what we are and we must remain what we are, playing different roles.
- But internally we must remain a tiny soul who is constantly linked with Kṛṣṇa by millions of ties and who is always looking for ever-new ties, for ever-new affection for Kṛṣṇa.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- In the First Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam Śrīla Prabhupāda tells a story about Nārada Muni that illustrates this verse very well.
- Nārada Muni is a great preacher, and the power of his words and his purity is so strong that everybody he speaks to becomes a devotee.
- Once he preached to a cobra who also became a devotee.
- This reptile was accustomed to biting and hissing and was very spiteful, but when he saw Nārada Muni his heart changed.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- It turned out the cobra could live without the biting and hissing, and instead he became a happy soul.
- This is effective preaching.
- It is the fact that we suddenly see how we can live in a different way without pretending to be something we are not, and no longer having to defend ourselves against anyone.
- This snake saw Nārada Muni and believed him. The snake's heart was changed.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- However, the story of his love for, and devotion to, Kṛṣṇa is quite a sad tale because all those who had previously fled in terror at the sight of him, suddenly realized that the cobra had started to behave strangely by constantly smiling.
- As a result, the villagers eventually became completely impudent toward him.
- Once the snake became a devotee, life became absolutely unbearable with everybody humiliating him.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Finally the cobra found Nārada Muni and said to him, “What have you done to me? I cannot live like this any more. Everyone is beating me because I can no longer bite anyone. Sometimes I want to, but I just can’t.”
- Nārada Muni, looking at the snake, said, “My dear disciple, I did tell you not to bite, but I didn’t tell you not to raise your hood. So from now on you can puff up your hood.”
- He began to behave in this way and, naturally, everyone again started respecting and fearing the snake.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- This parable contains a very deep meaning, for the pride we have is like a snake's venom.
- The advice that Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī gives us is that we should not let the poison of pride reign in our hearts.
- Externally we can “raise our hoods,” and we must go on playing the parts that we have to play, but inwardly we must ceaselessly pray to Kṛṣṇa and chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Attachment to Guru

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī also says—*kuru ratim apūrvām atitarām*—develop attachment to the guru.
- *Gurau goṣṭhe goṣṭhālayiṣu sujane bhū-sura-gaṇe*—try hard to develop attachment to the guru, the Vaiṣṇavas, the inhabitants of Vṛndāvana, to vraja-dhāma itself, and the brāhmaṇas.
- What does it mean to develop attachment?
- It means that having renounced our material roles, we have to accept our spiritual roles.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- After having broken off our material ties, we should then develop spiritual ties.
- Here Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, “Renounce your material self-designations and develop a spiritual self-designation through attachment to the spiritual.” This is his first instruction.
- Through a strong attachment to apūrvām—an extraordinary attachment to spiritual things—develop your personality in the spiritual world because we are not impersonal there.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- But what is a personality and actually who are we?
- How do we designate our real personality?
- If we are asked who we are in this world, we would say, for instance, “I am the husband of such and such.
- I am the father of these children. I was born in such and such country.
- I have this or that educational background.”
- In other words, our personalities are our relationships.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says to renounce your material ties but develop the spiritual ones straightaway.
- And he begins by saying that the first attachment we should develop is the one to the guru; he makes it a point that we should make every effort to achieve this.
- The point of this instruction is that we can develop such an attachment.
- Here Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says that we shouldn't remain “warm.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- If we want to achieve something in spiritual life, we must develop a strong attachment.
- Where your spiritual attachment begins, there begins the formation of your spiritual personality.
- Essentially, he is explaining how we can change our material personality for a spiritual one.
- But first we need to develop this extraordinarily strong attachment to a guru.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Jīva Gosvāmī explains what a strong attachment to a guru is.
- He first explains why we need an attachment to a guru.
- He quotes verses from Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, chapter seven, which states that the result of serving the guru is that we can remove our faults.
- Just by communicating with the spiritual master, or remembering him, we can see our insignificance, because we can see how great our guru is.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- When we stand before a spotless mirror, which is the heart of our spiritual master, we will see our pride and envy.
- When we see the person who has no envy, we very clearly see our own.
- Narattoma Dāsa Ṭhākura cries, “The only thing I fear is that these faults will go on living in my mind.”
- Therefore, Jīva Gosvāmī says that service to the guru can deliver us from our faults. But that is not all.
- Jīva Gosvāmī also says that there is an exclusive perfection that we can obtain by serving the guru and no one else but the guru.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- According to Nārada Muni, there are different ways of removing faults, but this exclusive perfection is the special mood in which our guru serves Kṛṣṇa, which we cannot obtain from anyone else but from the guru's heart, and only by his mercy.
- So Jīva Gosvāmī says, “It's the greatest gift we can receive, and it only comes due to personal communication with and service to a guru.”
- Without the right mood, we cannot reach the spiritual world.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We chant this mantra: śrī-caitanya-mano 'bhīṣṭam, sthāpitaṃ yena bhū-tale/ svayam rūpaḥ kadā mahyaṃ, dadāti sva-padāntikam (Prema-bhakti-candrikā, verse 2, Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura).
- When serving someone, we should respect his mind and try to penetrate his heart, understanding his mood and in turn develop his service mood.
- If we consider all the things Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī touches upon, we will see that they all possess a certain mood, helping us cast away our enjoying mentality, and developing the true mood of a servant.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- This channel is first of all supposed to occur between the spiritual master and the disciple, having full faith that he can give all blessings.
- A wonderful pastime illustrates this mood.
- Bihārī, a simple man from Vṛndāvana, was Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī's disciple. Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī died when he was 147 years old.
- He was so old that he needed someone to lift his eyelids for him, which had drooped so much over his eyes due to old age.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Bihārī had been carrying his guru in a basket for approximately 40 years, serving him faithfully.
- Once Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī asked his disciple to read Caitanya-caritāmṛta because he could not see.
- Bihārī replied, “Guru Mahārāja, I’d be happy to, but I cannot read or understand Bengali.”
- His spiritual master replied, “If I told you to read, you should read.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- With faith in these instructions, Bihārī opened Caitanya-caritāmṛta, and suddenly found himself reading the Bengali script.
- Everything can come by the guru’s mercy, yasya prasādād bhagavat-prasādo (Śrī Gurvaṣṭakam).
- Another similar incident occurred that displayed the true guru and disciple relationship.
- Once Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī told Bihārī, “Play the mṛdaṅga.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- When Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī was departing this world, he said, “Bihārī, you have been serving me faithfully and unflinchingly.
- You have done so many things for me, whereas I have done none. I feel guilty. Do you want something?”
- Bihārī replied, “What can you give to me?”
- I know that you are a mendicant and penniless.
- You may die in peace and quiet without worrying about me. I will survive somehow; I am still strong.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī said, “If you would like me to, I’ll ask Caitanya Mahāprabhu to provide you with five carts laden with gold, right away.
- What do you want, Bihārī?”
- He said, “I don’t want anything. I want you.
- There’s nothing else I want, just having you by my side.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Pleased by this, Jagannātha Dāsa Bābājī smiled and said, “Thank God.
- I was about to give these five carts to you but I wanted to hear it from you first.
- I’m giving you my blessing that you’ll never experience any problems.
- You are going to have whatever you need.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- All your desires will be fulfilled; you are going to live to be a 100 years old, and I'll always be by your side.
- All the time, you will hear my voice within your heart.”
- According to Rūpa Gosvāmī, after a disciple has been initiated—*viśrambheṇa guroḥ sevā (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhuḥ 1.2.74–75)*—they should begin serving their guru and their service should be filled with the spirit of *viśrambha* (unconditional trust).
- *Viśrambha* is the mood in which Kṛṣṇa communicates with his cowherd friends.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- It means that the disciple is trying to perceive the spiritual master's mood, trying to feel the way he feels without trying to merely imitate.
- Jīva Gosvāmī says that a guru should become like our God, but people find that difficult to understand.
- But he explains: “For karmīs, the guru is God.”
- Why is the guru God for karmīs?
- It is because the spiritual master can fulfill any wish of the disciple.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- He mentions this verse from the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.17.27)—*ācāryaṁ mām vijānīyān nāvamanyeta karhicit*.
- Kṛṣṇa said, “The *ācārya* is non-different from myself, therefore, you should by no means be envious of him.”
- Sarva-deva-mayo guruḥ*—the spiritual master is the representative of all the demigods—which means that the guru can fulfill all our material desires.
- If you want to obtain knowledge, the guru can give it to you.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- But the most valuable thing the guru can give you is bhakti.
- He can bring us nearer to God.
- In another prayer, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, “Everything I have was given to me by my guru. He brought me to Mathurā; he gave me my svarūpa. The guru gave me Govardhana Hill and Rādhā-kuṇḍa; he gave me the company of Rūpa Gosvāmī and Sanātana Gosvāmī.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We should understand that Kṛṣṇa acts through our guru and the Lord's mercy only comes through our guru.
- We should develop loyalty to the spiritual master, trust and love him in our hearts.
- This is what we should work on consciously.
- So here Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, “Attachment to guru is the first thing we should achieve to find our spiritual personality in the spiritual world.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The process is not about being formally initiated or being presented with chanting beads and a new name.
- It is about developing love for the spiritual master, who gives instructions and initiates us into the mantra.
- This is a very important thing for our devotion to develop: love for our spiritual master must be genuine, not false; it should not be a personality cult, but must be based on our spiritual attachment to him.

Attachment to the Dīkṣā Mantra

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says that the mind should be taught to grow attached to spiritual things because this is the nature of our mind.
- It shouldn't be taught how to be attached to material things.
- In this verse, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, “My mind, my brother, my friend, my relative, my comrade, my dear, why do you need all these?”
- Sadā dambhaṁ hitvā—cast away your pride.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Pride is identifying ourselves with the material body, which is essentially identifying with the material world.
- So he says cast away your pride and all of your perceptions of happiness in this world because our perception of happiness in the material world means *īśvaro 'ham ahaṁ bhogī siddho 'haṁ balavān sukhī* (Bhagavad-gītā 16.14).
- “I am the lord, the enjoyer, I am perfect, I am the strongest; I am the most powerful.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Giving up pride is the first step we should take on the spiritual path.
- Having taken it, we will gradually be able to develop the highest spiritual love, which leaves no place for any kind of contamination in the heart.
- Lord Caitanya explains in the last verse of Śikṣāṣṭaka:

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti
Vijnana Goswami

āśliṣya vā pāda-ratām̐ pinaṣṭu mām
adarśanān marma-hatām̐ karotu vā
yathā tathā vā vidadhātu lampaṭo
mat-prāṇa-nāthas tu sa eva nāparaḥ

He explains, “I am not bothered by my own distress or happiness, but if my distress pleases you, I am ready to suffer it. If my distress will be your happiness, my distress will become my happiness for it pleases you.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- This is the kind of real self interest we should strive for, because in the material world all of our emotions, all of our feelings, all of our relationships are contaminated and clouded by selfishness.
- In the long run, we want happiness for ourselves.
- Caitanya Mahāprabhu says love conquers all.
- He gives an example from the Purāṇas to explain this text.
- A faithful wife loved her leper husband sincerely, although he was diseased and a lecher

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- He had lost sleep and his peace of mind because he had fallen in love with a prostitute.
- When his wife asked him what he wanted. He answered, “I want the prostitute.”
- The prostitute was very expensive because she was a royal concubine.
- Kings lined up for her, taking off their crowns and putting them at her feet.
- And this leper with a distorted nose, with his hands trembling, wanted to enjoy her company.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- So, to please her husband, his wife went to serve this woman.
- And when the latter tried to reward her, his wife said, “I don’t need anything.
- However, if you promise to grant my wish, I will tell you what I want.”
- “But of course,” the prostitute replied.
- “Whatever you want. If you want jewelry, I have lots; choose whichever you like.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The faithful wife replied, “I don’t need anything. Just spend a night with my husband.”
- The prostitute agreed.
- So the woman brought her husband in a basket because he couldn’t walk anymore.
- And when her husband saw what his wife had done, he cried out of repentance and love.
- He said, “Take me back home. I don’t want anything else.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- What have I been chasing while having you by my side?”
- She put him on her shoulders and took him back.
- On the way back the leper happened to touch Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, contaminating him with his touch.
- So the ṛṣi cursed him, “You are going to die by sunrise.”
- His wife was resentful.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- She thought, “This is my husband and some ṛṣi has cursed him. He is not going to die. And if it takes the sun not to rise, it won’t rise!”
- And the sun did not rise that day—so strong was the power of her chastity and love.
- It is said that at that moment Brahmā, Viṣṇu, and Maheśvara descended and asked her, “What do you want? We’ll do anything you want because you’ve won us with your love.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- They cured her husband, delivered him from the curse, and sent the sun on its path.
- Love can conquer everything but one should learn to love purely.
- People mistake lust for love.
- When explaining this verse, Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī says that love rather than lust is what distinguishes true bhakti from what prākṛta-sahajiyās do.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Prākṛta-sahajiyās want to enjoy Kṛṣṇa.
- They come to a spiritual movement, which is like the spiritual world, and take to a spiritual practice because they want to enjoy the Lord.
- But they don't sacrifice themselves, which turns their spiritual life into a travesty.
- When we first receive dīkṣā, when we first start chanting the Gāyatrī mantra, we are beginning to restore our true spiritual identity.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The beginning of a mantra contains the bīja om, or klīm.
- This bīja already contains the seed of a relationship, which is the seed of a mantra.
- A mantra ends in namaḥ or svāhā, meaning we are surrendering and renouncing ourselves.
- Kṛṣṇa's name is in the middle of a mantra.
- Any mantra has this structure.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Sprouting through chanting of the holy name, this bīja or seed of a relationship is supposed to lead to self-surrender.
- Caitanya Mahāprabhu speaks about what happens during the dīkṣā ceremony.
- He says: dīkṣā-kāle bhakta kare ātma-samarpaṇa (Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 4.192–193).
- The moment we receive dīkṣā and a mantra from our spiritual master, we should do ātma-samarpaṇa, which means we should sacrifice.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- And the moment we surrender, the moment we receive the mantra—sei-kāle kṛṣṇa tāre kare ātma-sama—Kṛṣṇa makes one equal to himself.
- Caitanya Mahāprabhu goes on explaining what is happening. When a person receives a mantra, with it they receive their spiritual body (siddha-svarūpa).
- At that moment our true relationship comes into being.
- Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura's Jaiva-dharma describes two heroes, Vijaya Kumāra and Vraja-nātha, receiving this mantra from their spiritual master.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Tears came into their eyes and they started to cry, “Gaurāṅga! Gaurāṅga! Gaurāṅga!” Their hair stood on end.
- Their guru looked at them and said, “You purified me today when I saw what had happened to you.”
- The moment we receive a mantra, we should undergo a transformation within the heart.
- After Vijaya Kumāra and Vraja-nātha had received their mantra they summoned all the brāhmaṇas of Navadvīpa, the bābājīs, and all the devotees there. They made a huge feast for everyone.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- And while they were sitting modestly aside waiting for everyone to finish their meal in order to take the remains of their food, they saw Caitanya Mahāprabhu and his associates come to participate in that celebration.
- This is a process that has two conditions.
- Both parties must make the effort.
- In our case we may take a little longer to see Lord Caitanya.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- But, in the long run, a mantra is to change our consciousness so that we begin to see the world in a different way, because we are removing the cataracts of selfishness.
- We chant: om̐ ajnāna-timirāndhasya, jnānānjana-śalākayā.
- Śalākayā means a surgical instrument used to remove a cataract.
- Even in the distant past, they performed eye surgeries and removed this clouding.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- It is like we have a cataract on our eyes removed by our guru.
- And the guru removes it with this mantra instrument and opens our eyes with jnānānjana-śalākayā, or the torch of knowledge.
- Receiving a mantra is called dvija (second birth) and the person who receives this mantra is called a dvija (twice-born).
- Birds are also twice-born.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- First a bird is born in an egg and its second birth is as a bird coming out of the egg.
- What is the difference between the first and the second births?
- The second one enables a bird to fly.
- During our first birth we are figuratively inside a shell, bound hand and foot.
- We are struggling in this conditioning shell wanting to break free. We are naturally free souls.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- We want to love, we want to fly, but we are trapped inside an egg.
- Therefore, we need a guru who'll break this shell of material conditioning.
- The difference between the first and the second birth is that during the second birth one gets unlimited freedom and can fly.
- He gets the whole sky.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- During his first birth he gets a shell.
- He feels much better in this egg than in the mother's body, but still it is cramped.
- Gopa-kumāra is another example of the power of a mantra.
- He had seen the guru and began to serve him on Govardhana, providing him with milk.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Once his guru was chanting a mantra and as soon as he had chanted half of it, he got a lump in his throat.
- He hardly finished the mantra and then fainted.
- Gopa-kumāra ran to fetch some water to bring him to his senses.
- But when he returned his master had vanished.
- So, Gopa-kumāra started chanting the mantra.
- Gradually, the seed, which a mantra is often compared to, sprouted.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- In other words, there are two things that occur during initiation.
- First, our guru puts his spiritual experience into the mantra; when receiving the mantra we receive brahma-*niṣṭhā*, or our spiritual master's spiritual experience.
- All this spiritual experience is supposed to sprout in our heart if our heart is ready to have something sprout within.
- As a rule, a conditioned soul's heart is barren—nothing grows there whether you plant anything or not.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Our heart should be fertile.
- The spiritual master puts certain energy into these words, the energy of his understanding, his realization and spiritual experience.
- Secondly, we make a commitment to grow what we've received.
- A small seed contains the energy necessary to make a tree out of it.
- But if this seed falls down into barren soil, the tree won't grow—this energy is going to be wasted.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- For example, one lady told me that she had read Bhagavad-gītā by Śrīla Prabhupāda.
- When she was reading it for the first time, she was crying from beginning to end.
- When I was reading her letter, I thought, “Why am I not crying?”
- I’ve been reading Bhagavad-gītā for years, but I’ve never gotten tears in my eyes.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- She explained why; she said it was because she had immediately understood that each word in that book was true.
- That is what she realized.
- This is the power that Śrīla Prabhupāda had put into his words; this same power is put into the words of the mantra by the spiritual master.
- But at the same time, the person who has received the mantra should possess certain qualities for this power to manifest itself.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- As I have already mentioned, the heart, or the soil of our heart, should be fertile.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda explained that receiving a mantra is divya jnāna hr̥de prokāśito.
- When we are speaking about divya jnāna, or transcendental knowledge, the seed of that spiritual knowledge is within the mantra.
- In fact, the whole spiritual knowledge is within the mantra.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The essence of divya jñāna is that when we chant a mantra, Madana-mohana, who is a personification of the spiritual master, and gives sambandha-jñāna, becomes attracted to it.
- When chanting the mantra received from the spiritual master, we should understand that our spiritual body is supposed to be growing.
- Śrīla Prabhupāda often laughed when speaking about how Vivekananda received divine knowledge.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- In one of his books, Vivekananda wrote about how he once visited Ramakrishna.
- He said, “Master, give me the knowledge.” Ramakrishna touched his forehead and at that moment, as if an electric discharge occurred between them, Vivekananda fell down to the ground, unconscious, and Ramakrishna fell too.
- Then when they both came to their senses, Ramakrishna said, “I have given you all of my knowledge—there is nothing left in me.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Śrīla Prabhupāda questioned, what kind of knowledge can you give away, leaving nothing for yourself?
- This is nonsense.
- Vaiṣṇava ācāryas say that knowledge (divya jñāna) comes with the sound of a mantra.
- But for the chanting of the mantra to be really effective and for us to get a response, it is said that we should have four qualities.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- When we are chanting a Gāyatrī mantra the first thing we should have is śraddhā—deep faith that the mantra is capable of saving us and creating our spiritual bodies; that, in the long run, it will take us to the spiritual level equal to God himself.
- The second is śaraṇāgati—we should surrender; we should be putting into the mantra the power of our surrender.
- The third is mantra-dhyāna—we should be mediating on the mantra and be deeply focused on the sound of the mantra in our mind.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- And the fourth one is the spirit of self-sacrifice—svāhā—when we are losing ourselves in the mantra.
- These are the ways we should be chanting the words of the mantra.
- When we have these four qualities and chant the main 18-syllable mantra, klīm kṛṣṇāya govindāya gopī-jana-vallabhāya svāhā, we are going to feel the mantra responding.
- In Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta Sanātana Gosvāmī says that a mantra can take one to any level of existence.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- For example, Gopa-kumāra visited all the planets and became Indra.
- He would go to a planet; he'd like it at first because he saw how they worshiped Kṛṣṇa.
- Then a revolution or something would happen, and Indra would be displaced and Gopa-kumāra would become Indra only because he chanted his mantra attentively.
- Then he reached the planet of Brahmā and something happened to Brahmā too; he was displaced and Gopa-kumāra became Brahmā.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- He moved from one level to another, from one planet to another.
- He was going up all due to the mantra.
- Sanātana Gosvāmī explains that his mantra was leading him all the way.
- Sometimes his guru would come to him.
- It is said that we first get a mantra from the guru and then it becomes our guru, our guide. It leads us.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Sanātana Gosvāmī says that a mantra contains the highest relationships.
- If the guru has put these highest relationships into the mantra and we chant it, what level will we reach?
- We tend to be pleased with whatever we reach—Indra or Brahmā.
- In fact, we can be pleased with a million dollars or a skyscraper, or maybe a mansion somewhere in California. We will forget about everything else.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- When Gopa-kumāra would reach a place, he would feel initially satisfied.
- He would also continue to chant the mantra, and at some point a terrible pain would start to break his heart.
- He would begin to feel that the level he reached wasn't what he wanted.
- He became Indra—it wasn't what he wanted; he became Brahmā—it wasn't what he wanted.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- He reached Vaikuṅṭha—again, it wasn't what he wanted. He needed to go further.
- This moving forward is where the power of a mantra lies.
- If we chant a mantra in the proper way, it will prevent us from resting on our laurels or being content with something inferior.
- We will always be striving to get higher and higher; it will help us achieve the highest goal.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Such is the power of a mantra. But for power to become manifest, we should be attached to it; we should chant it properly.
- That's what happens during the initiation (dīkṣā).
- Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says we should have rati for sva-mantre—how we should be attached through understanding what a mantra is.
- And then he says—Śrī-nāma.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- This is the very last thing Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says regarding the beginning of the relationship with the guru.
- Śrī-nāma is the holy name.
- This is what we should get attached to before getting attached to the shelter of the lotus feet of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- If we consider gurau goṣṭhe goṣṭhālayiṣu sujane bhū-sura-gaṇe, we can understand that all the things Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī enumerates here: the guru, Vṛndāvana where the land is made of philosopher's stone, where desire trees grow, and where the residents, the Vaiṣṇavas, the brāhmaṇas, your dīkṣā-mantras and, finally, the holy name have one quality in common.
- They can fulfill any of our desires.
- Our dīkṣā-mantra can fulfill any of our desires.

Attachment to the Holy Name

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Nāma (the holy name) may fulfill any of our desires.
- Nāma is cintāmaṇi, the philosopher's stone, which can elevate us to any level. From the Padma Purāṇa:

**nāma cintāmaṇiḥ kṛṣṇaś
caitanya-rasa-vigrahaḥ
pūrṇaḥ śuddho nitya-mukto
'bhinnatvān nāma-nāminoḥ**

- But Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī appeals to us to develop pure attachment, to change our attitude from, “How can I benefit from it?” to, “What am I supposed to want?”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- I am supposed to want the highest love, not anything else, only love for Kṛṣṇa.
- The true attachment to the holy name is when I chant it in such a mood.
- But there can be bhukti-nāma, which is when the holy name gives bhukti (material enjoyment), and there is mukti-nāma—when the holy name gives us liberation.
- When we are chanting the holy name, we should be asking Kṛṣṇa, “Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa, bring me closer to you. Kṛṣṇa, purify my heart.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that when chanting the holy name, we should not have any desires.
- But we can still have one desire—the desire to purify ourselves.
- At first prema-bhakti seems like a very abstract thing.
- If love is too abstract then, at least, when we are chanting the holy name, we should have this desire, “Kṛṣṇa, make my heart pure.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- When we chant the holy name, we should feel that something is saving us.
- Rūpa Gosvāmī glorifies the holy name in Nāmāṣṭakam as the only thing that can save us.
- He says, “O Kṛṣṇa! You manifest in two forms: vācya and vācaka. You can be an object of description—vācya—like Kṛṣṇa himself. And your second form is vācaka—the name.”
- They are non-different, but, nevertheless, there is some difference.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The difference is that the name is more merciful than Kṛṣṇa himself.
- We can offend Kṛṣṇa, but if we start crying Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare we can get tears of ecstasy.
- We can offend Kṛṣṇa, and we can offend the holy name but the holy name can even forgive the offence we committed towards God.
- The holy name can deliver us from numerous offences.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Therefore, when we are chanting the holy name, we should have this feeling that something is saving us.
- Jīva Gosvāmī says that in Kali-yuga persons can only become great devotees under the condition that they serve the holy name and give it to others.
- We should give the holy name out of mercy, out of compassion, and in the right way, in a joyful way.
- It is said that the holy name is the aṅgī of devotional service.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- In Nectar of Devotion, Rūpa Gosvāmī enumerates 64 angas (limbs) of bhakti.
- But chanting of the holy name is not an aṅga, it is aṅgī, the body itself.
- Chanting the holy name is the most important part of devotional service and the most essential thing we can do.
- If we do it properly, in a proper mood, in a proper state, we can get everything.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Rāmānanda Rāya and Svarūpa Dāmodara asked Lord Caitanya, “How should one chant the holy name to receive prema?”
- What is the method of chanting the holy name?
- What is supposed to be happening in the heart?
- We also chant the holy name, but feel no prema.”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Caitanya Mahāprabhu smiled and said, “What is the method of chanting the holy name to receive prema?”
- *Tr̥ṇād api sunīcena taror api sahiṣṇunā/ amāninā mānadena kīrtanīyaḥ sadā hariḥ.* (Śrī Śikṣāṣṭaka, verse 3)
- If I chant the holy name in this humble state of consciousness, in this state of mind, prema becomes attracted by this chanting of the holy name.”

Attachment to the Divine Couple

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, “O my mind! Take the shelter of the divine couple of Vṛndāvana Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa.”
- Such shelter is the reason why Caitanya Mahāprabhu came to this world.
- Nowhere else can we get what we can get from Lord Caitanya, because lots of people worship Kṛṣṇa.
- The Śrī and Madhva sampradāyas worship Kṛṣṇa, the Rāmānuja sampradāya worships Kṛṣṇa, and the Nimbārka sampradāya worships Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- But nowhere are Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa worshiped as Lord Caitanya's followers do.
- What's the difference between worshiping Kṛṣṇa and worshiping Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa?
- When he is by her side his heart is all syrup.
- When he is by her side, he gets sweeter.
- When Śrīmatī Rādhārāni is by his side, he is even sweeter because he feels she loves him.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- And when he feels her love, he is eager to become sweeter.
- It is said that when Rādhā is approaching Kṛṣṇa, she makes him get sweeter.
- And when Kṛṣṇa gets sweeter she loves him even more.
- And Kṛṣṇa becomes even sweeter.
- This is a chain reaction.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī says that this situation is the paradox of love.
- He says one of the paradoxes of spiritual love is that it is eternal.
- But despite being eternal, it is ever growing.
- It is impossible to understand how something infinite may be ever expanding.
- How can Kṛṣṇa's everlasting sweetness become even sweeter?

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Here Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, “Try to understand that you should get attached to them, not just Kṛṣṇa.”
- We should get attached to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa because in this case Śrīmatī Rādhārāni enables us to taste Kṛṣṇa’s sweetness more than we can.
- Prabhodhānanda Sarasvatī compares Kṛṣṇa’s sweetness with a drop of the ocean of sweetness one experiences when seeing Kṛṣṇa and Śrīmatī Rādhārāni together.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- The miracle that Caitanya Mahāprabhu brought and gave us is a chance to worship this love.
- In Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes that Caitanya Mahāprabhu didn't come to give people ordinary religion.
- Caitanya Mahāprabhu doesn't care. He is indifferent to ordinary religions.
- During a Rathayātrā celebration in Ivanovo, I got a glimpse of what the Lord's indifference to ordinary religion might be like.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Ivanovo is a poor town. According to statistics, it is the poorest town in Russia.
- For the parade, a businessman who had arranged for the Rathayātrā to be held brought boxes of bananas and oranges to be distributed from the chariot.
- The guest of honor was supposed to give the bananas and oranges to the crowd of hungry Ivanovo residents, who had only seen bananas in picture books and had eaten oranges only in their early childhood, which they had received from Santa.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Śrīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Everybody was quite indifferent to the festival until we started to throw the bananas, and then the crowd became really enthusiastic.
- Immediately the people developed apūrvā-rati—an extraordinary attachment in their hearts, and everyone went running after the chariot. In the first six minutes I relished handing out the fruit—I felt like God.
- There was a crowd around me stretching out their hands crying, “Give me! Give me!”

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- People were smiling, praying, quivering—and you couldn't help but feel so generous, magnanimous, and able to make anyone happy.
- Finally, if I wasn't giving in the way they wanted, people start pulling and poking me as if saying, “Can't you see? I want a banana.”
- And it went on for two hours until the bananas were gone.
- And then suddenly all at once they lost interest in me. Nobody cared about me anymore. I remained the same, but the bananas were gone.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Srīla Bhakti Vijnana Goswami

- Therefore, Caitanya Mahāprabhu says ordinary religion—where people serve God just to get something from him—is not interesting.
- No one needs such religion; we only need pure love. It is pure love that can make us happy.
- Here Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī is begging his mind,
- “My mind! Try and understand what you need. You don’t need anything else—you don’t need bananas, dates, pears, diamonds, emeralds—you only need love for Kṛṣṇa. You can only get pure love if little by little you develop attachment.”

Verse-1

Notes on the Commentary
by
Urmila Devi Dasi

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- In his book *Jaiva-dharma*, Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura writes, “Śrī Manaḥ-śikṣā has laid down a systematic procedure (paddhati) for one to enter into and become absorbed in the pastimes of Śrī Śrī Rādhā Kṛṣṇa; one should follow it without guile.”
- A paddhati is a kind of instruction manual.
- Verse one first of all establishes the audience for these verses—who is qualified to take up these instructions and follow this procedure.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- Those who study and practice these verses are expected to be initiated by a spiritual master into the chanting of the holy name and the Gāyatrī mantras.
- Otherwise, there is no possibility of having “unprecedented and excessive attachment” for what one does not have.
- A reader who does not yet have a guru, or one whose guru has not yet given initiation (dīkṣā) is not, however, forbidden from studying this work to know what is ahead.

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Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- Certainly, anyone even somewhat interested in this subject can put into practice some portions of the book, on the principal of sv-alpam apy asya dharmasya, trāyate mahato bhayāt (Bhagavad-gītā 2.40), even a little progress on this path protects from fear and is not lost.
- Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī joins together the concepts of having great love for others with giving up our inner pride.
- If we explore that relationship, we will find that love and humility must go together.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- Even in ordinary life, when we are convinced that we are great and so deserve to have others serve us, we can neither serve them selflessly nor appreciate and value the service they do for us.
- Thus, the essence of love—being fascinated by the beloved, valuing the beloved, and caring for the beloved—cannot happen authentically in the presence of pride.
- Certainly in the spiritual realm, *saprema-bhakteḥ paramānukūlaṁ dainyaṁ mahā-puṣṭi-karam* (Bṛhad-bhāgavatāmṛta 3.5.74), utter humility nourishes pure love.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- We should note, however, that the giving up of pride required to begin following this instruction manual cannot be absolute, because the last obstacle we must abandon—the desire for fame and honor as explained in verse seven—undoubtedly involves pride.
- After all, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes in his purport to Bhagavad-gītā 13.8–12, “Humility means that one should not be anxious to have the satisfaction of being honored by others.”
- First, we have already explained that any authentic love at all, even a small degree of love, demands at least some measure of humility.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- Indeed, our depth of humility and depth of love are proportional.
- Second, because this path of bhakti—as we will see in verses four through seven—involves facing and rejecting deep, ugly, and embarrassing evil in our heart, a lack of pride is essential.
- Proud persons rarely admit fault in their actions, what to speak of faults in their motives and desires.
- Third, one of the main methods of spiritual progress that Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī repeatedly gives is to beg for mercy, to cry out for help.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- Proud persons cannot do so, as Queen Kuntī explains (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 1.8.26):

**janmaiśvarya-śruta-śrībhir
edhamāna-madaḥ pumān
naivārhaty abhidhātuṃ vai
tvām akiṣcana-gocaram**

- Considering how the lack of pride is essential in these three ways, with each step in the procedure given in Manaḥ-śikṣā, we must let go of at least enough pride to take that step.
- By the time someone has followed the instructions to arrive at verse eight, no further pride remains at all.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- We should especially note that we are told in verse one to have great love for our gurus, the spiritual masters who show us the path, instruct us, and initiate us into the chanting of mantras.
- Kṛṣṇa tells us in the Bhagavad-gītā that we must serve a guru to receive transcendental knowledge.
- Such service, however, is not merely official, nor in the mood of an employee.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- As Śrīla Prabhupāda explains in his purport to Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 17.15: “The words snigdha (very peaceful) and su-snigdha (affectionate) are used in verses fourteen and fifteen respectively, and they are also found in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.1.8): brūyuh snigdhasya śiṣyasya guravo guhyam apy uta.
- ‘A disciple who has actual love for his spiritual master is endowed, by the blessings of the spiritual master, with all confidential knowledge.’
- Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī has commented that the word snigdhasya means prema-vataḥ.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- The word prema-vataḥ indicates that one has great love for his spiritual master.”
- Thus the exchange of service and knowledge between guru and disciple is that of love.
- Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī also instructs us in the principle that everyone who loves God should love all persons and places connected with God.
- We may ask how to have “the concept of kinship completely reposed” (Nectar of Devotion, chapter 19) in Kṛṣṇa if we are to spread our love among the list given here in verse one.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- The answer is found in the Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, (11.11.43–45):

My dear Uddhava, ... one may worship me among the brāhmaṇas by respectfully receiving them as guests, even when uninvited. I can be worshiped within the cows by offerings of grass and other suitable grains and paraphernalia for the pleasure and health of the cows, and one may worship me within the Vaiṣṇavas by offering loving friendship to them and honoring them in all respects. ..., and one may worship me within all living entities by seeing the Supersoul within all of them, thus maintaining equal vision.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- If we want to know more about how to love the Vaiṣṇavas, then we can study the six loving exchanges that Rūpa Gosvāmī lists in his Upadeśāmṛta, verse four.
- It is of particular interest how Bhaktivinoda defines the beginner, intermediate, and advanced devotees in his commentary to verse one.
- We may note that understandings of devotees' levels of realization are described according to different parameters in various parts of the śāstras and by various ācāryas.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- These descriptions are not necessarily parallel.
- In other words, an intermediate devotee according to one set of criteria may not be an intermediate devotee according to another set of criteria.
- Just as in embodied life a human matures physically, socially, intellectually, and so forth, but maturation in one area may not be equivalent to maturation in another, so spiritually someone might be understood as a beginner in one way, and an intermediate in another way.

Verse-1 Notes on the Commentary by Urmila Devi Dasi

- Such is explained in Mādhurya Kaḍambinī.
- Niṣṭhā-sādhana-bhakti must be achieved in body, mind, and words, and this steadiness in each generally happens sequentially, not simultaneously.
- The general order is to first achieve steadiness in body, then speech, then mind.
- However, the order of where steadiness is achieved may vary from one practitioner to another.
- Of course, it is expected that at some point a person is at the highest level overall.

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