

Śrī Manah-śikṣā

Splendid Instructions to the
Mind

by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

Verse-7

pratisthāśā dhr̥ṣṭā śvapaca-ramaṇī me hr̥di naṭet
katham sādhu-premā spr̥ṣati śucir etan nanu manaḥ
sadā tvam sevasva prabhu-dayita-sāmantam atulam
yathā tām niṣkāśya tvaritam iha tam veṣayati sah

As long as the unchaste (dhr̥ṣṭā), dog-eating woman (śvapaca-ramaṇī) of desire for prestige (pratisthāśā) dances in my heart (me hr̥di naṭet), how can (katham) the chaste and pure (śucih) lady of love for Kṛṣṇa (sādhu-premā) touch it (spr̥ṣati etad)? Therefore, O mind (nanu manaḥ), you should always serve (sadā) (tvam) (sevasva) the incomparable (atulam), beloved devotee commander of Kṛṣṇa's army (prabhu) (dayita) (sāmantam), who will immediately (yathā sah tvaritam) throw out the unchaste woman (tām niṣkāśya) and establish the pure lady of love (tam veṣayati) in the heart (iha).

Verse-7

Notes on the Commentary

by

Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami

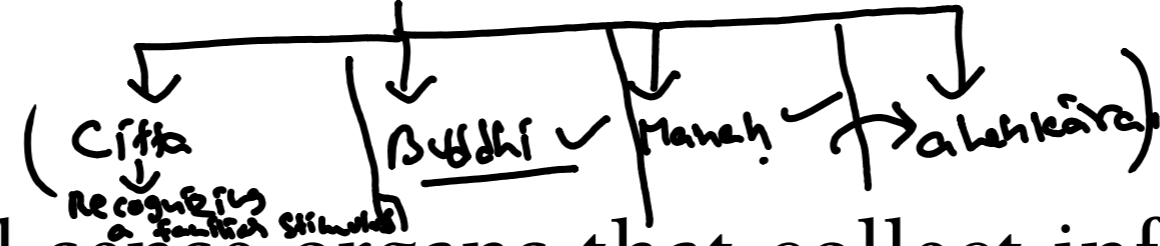
Maharaj

Instructing Our Mind with Love

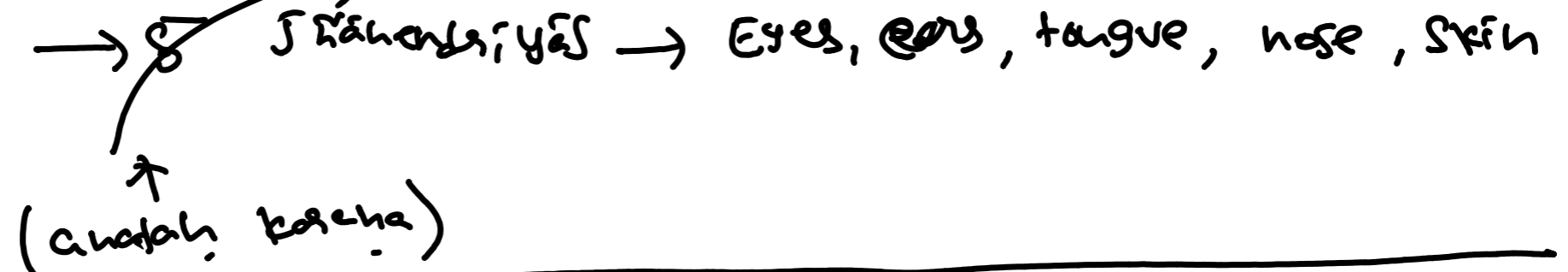
Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

We are trying to understand this book as instructions to the mind.

In accordance with the sāṅkhya philosophy, the mind is one of the sense organs called antaḥ-karāṇa.



We have five external sense organs that collect information from the outside world.



There is one internal sense organ that processes this information.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

However, this sense organ, antaḥ-karaṇa, or svāntaḥ, as Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī calls it in the first verse, has one amazing quality: it does not obey us.

All the other senses more or less obey us, but the mind will think what it wants to because it has a certain independence.

On one hand, this is a “blessing” because the mind is given to us so that it can prove something that even we don’t believe in.

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

The mind is constantly proving to us that we are God even though deep down in ourselves we do not believe it.

But this same blessing is also a curse for us because we can't easily change that programming.

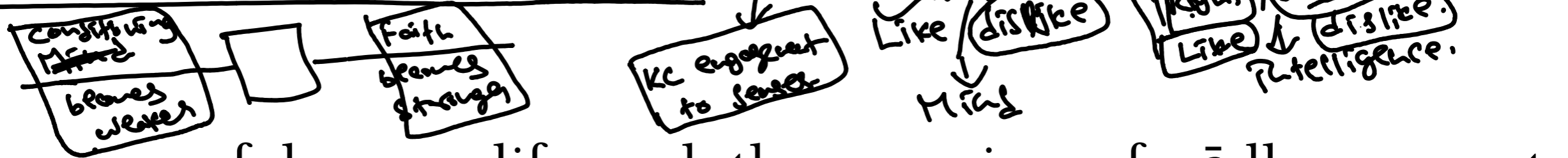
Kṛṣṇa says that depending on what the program in our mind is, we obtain our next body.

At the time of death we cannot tell our mind, “Think about Kṛṣṇa!”

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Even throughout our life we cannot do it.

The mind thinks what it wants to.



The meaning of human life and the meaning of sādhanā are to replace this program in the mind and teach the mind how to think of Kṛṣṇa.

There are basically two ways to do this.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

One way is to explain to the mind that this is good and it is necessary.

↓ ① Through the intelligence.
↓ feel what is right & what is wrong.

The mind will reluctantly do what it has understood to be useful.

We can logically convince the mind.

Therefore the śāstras have their own logic and, generally, people are attracted to logic, various evidences, and philosophy.

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

When someone proves to us in detail that God exists, that Kṛṣṇa is God, we think, "Well, I'll think a bit about that in my spare time."

This is one way and it works to a certain extent, but Caitanya Mahāprabhu says that this method is abalā. → not powerful,

Abalā means deprived of power or having no power.

② Create se. attachment in the mind-

The other way to change the program in our mind is to somehow or other instill it with spiritual desire, with attachment, because the mind thinks of that to which it is attached.

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

We can understand very well what our mind is attached to.

You can try an experiment by shutting yourself in a room for a day and say aloud any thought that crosses your mind; record it and then listen to it.

Or better yet, sit down and chant and listen to what the mind is thinking about.

In Sanskrit, the word rāga comes from the root ranj, which means to color.

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

The mind is colored in a certain way, and rushes to where its attachment is.

Therefore, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu explained a form of spiritual practice of putting spiritual attachment in the mind.

The only problem is where to get spiritual attachment from.

This attachment can only be obtained from someone who has it very strong in their heart.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Therefore, the method of rāgānuga-sādhana is not meditation only on Kṛṣṇa, but also meditation on those who have affection for Kṛṣṇa.

When we understand that we need the same love that lives in the heart of the pure associates of Kṛṣṇa and nothing else, we start thinking about them.

Thinking about them, we try to serve in the same way they serve.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

These attempts eventually lead to their bestowing this affection on us out of their mercy.

Affection is causeless; it is the result of their mercy, which naturally comes to those who are trying to follow in the footsteps of Kṛṣṇa's great devotees.

The problems in this world arise only from lack of love.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Whether it is disease, old age, loneliness, the crimes that are committed, whether it is violence, cruelty, or spite—it is all the result of a single problem: lack of love.

The śāstras, in particular Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, describe that there is a place in God's creation where there is an abundance of love.

This place is called Vraja, Vṛndāvana, part of a place called Vaikuntha which means “a place where there are no problems.”

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

There are no prisons and no police.

There are no means of coercion and even no managers in the
mundane sense.

Everything is done out of love and everything is so simple.

The people there cooperate with each other and love each other
because they all love Kṛṣṇa.

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

This is a society that we are trying to re-create on earth to a certain degree.

All desires other than the desire for love appear in our heart due to this lack of love.

Our heart is empty, giving rise to desires that generally do not make anyone happy.

People go crazy because of these desires, such as their desire for respect, honor, money, and so on.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

What do we actually need?

Only love.

When there is love, we need nothing else. When there is no love, we need everything else.

And when we have everything else it is still not enough.

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

Vāmanadeva says that, “Even if one is in possession of the entire world, it will still be not enough! One will start war with another universe and will try to conquer it.”

Because the greed in the heart is insatiable, when there is a vacuum in the heart due to the absence of God, that vacuum sucks in everything but can't be filled because it is only God who can fill it.

This desire to be near Kṛṣṇa and love Kṛṣṇa the way his devotees love him, without any deception, is the beginning and the foundation of rāgānuga-sādhana.

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

Caitanya Mahāprabhu brought us the method to attaining the same love, completely pure and absolutely selfless.

This is the potential we can develop.

It is not for nothing that the human form is called sādhana-deha—it is because sādhana means a certain practice through which we can achieve the goal (sādhya).

People in this world achieve amazing goals through practice.

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

Some run very quickly, some jump very high, some swim very deep, some fly very high.

They can mentally multiply and divide multiple digit numbers if they want to or they can play chess and see twenty moves ahead.

Using various methods of practice we can develop incredible skills.

The most amazing thing is that I can learn to love Kṛṣṇa the way he is loved in Vṛndāvana.

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

This is the most amazing ability, which is given to us at birth, and the sādhana we are practicing is supposed to bring us to the state in which the potential that's built in us fully reveals complete, absolute, pure, and selfless love.

This is what we are looking for.

What are people looking for in the material world?

They are looking for Kṛṣṇa, because the ideal is sought after all the time.

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijana Goswami Maharaja

The śāstras say that to that end we should hear about Kṛṣṇa with faith and in a certain mood.

On the pages of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam we can meet Kṛṣṇa because it is non-different from Kṛṣṇa himself.

That's why in his writings and books Bhaktivinoda Thākura has created a synthesis of these two paths.

- ① ^{Vaidhi} Logic ② ^{Raganuga} attachment.

The first path, vaidhī-sādhana-bhakti, is when we have faith in the śāstras and are convinced by their logic.

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

Thanks to this logic we constantly make efforts in our spiritual practices, such as hearing Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam discourses.

At some point, (hearing the śāstras), we get a spark of attachment for Kṛṣṇa.

↓
Vaidhi gradually takes us to Rāgānuṣa.

Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura speaks about this in a very interesting way in his Kalyāna-kalpataru—“Kṛṣṇa eventually bestows the jewel of independence unto those persons who are attached to the path of rules and regulations, thereby allowing them entrance into the path of spontaneous loving service.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Becoming influenced by such spontaneity, remaining under the shelter of the mellows of unwedded love, the soul finally attains all the symptoms of ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa.”

In other words, when we get attached to adherence to the rules of devotional service, beginning first of all with śravaṇam, we obtain the jewel of freedom.

We do this not because we have to, but because we want to.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

This precious jewel appears in our hearts and becomes the reason we take to the path of rāga, attachment to Kṛṣṇa.

As a result, as Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says, we attain the desire for this secret love of God.

The Unchaste Woman Dancing in the Heart

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

When we have driven deception out of our hearts, all the while there remains one last thing.

There is no cheating any more, but still I want a little something and that is the chief subject matter of the seventh verse.

Pratisthāśā dhr̥ṣṭā śvapaca-ramaṇī me hr̥di natet—Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, “In my heart there is a dancer—śvapaca-ramaṇī.”

Ramaṇī means a woman of easy virtue, a harlot; moreover, she has special dietary preferences, śvapaca.

Prostitute

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Śvapaca means she loves to cook dogs. And dhr̥ṣṭā means she is absolutely shameless.

The name of that dhr̥ṣṭā śvapaca-ramaṇī is pratiṣṭhā-āśā, the desire for respect, honor, and fame.

And then he goes on saying, kathaṁ sādhu-premā spr̥śati śucir etan nanu manaḥ—“Think for yourself, my dear mind, whether prema, which is pure by nature, will touch your heart, if there is this untouchable woman dancing?”

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Perhaps the most interesting word here is **dhṛṣṭā** meaning that she's shameless.

This actually means that all the anarthas have already gone away by virtue of the holy name, but the **shameless** one (the desire for respect) is staying.

Bhaktivinoda Thākura explains that the very last demon is when we want to be distinguished for our devotional service.

A person may say, “Look how well I know the scriptures! I am a great preacher, so now I’m going to save everyone by my preaching!”

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

In other words, when people start deeming themselves to be spiritual master or guru, this anartha is the root of all the other anarthas, in accordance with the teachings of Sanātana Gosvāmī and the Hari-bhakti-vilāsa.

If we don't drive this away, everything else will come back.

The merry woman that's dancing in the heart will call back all the other anarthas, "Come on, come on!"

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says, "As long as she is there, sādhu-premā, pure prema, will never touch the heart. There will be no love in the heart, because it will remain desecrated."

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Kṛṣṇa provides all opportunities to fulfill this desire to be great.

This persisting childish desire for recognition, honor, and to be the center of attention is the last to remain in our hearts, and it desecrates everything else that we are doing.

All other problems come as a result of the envy that appears because of pratiṣṭhā-āśā, the desire for pratiṣṭhā, the desire to be distinguished, to show off, the desire to show that I am special, I am exclusive, and the best.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

Therefore, we can see that true spiritual culture always teaches humility.

Humility is the password through which, to some extent, a person can feel
Kṛṣṇa.

If we look at Vedic culture, from the very beginning it explains that God does
everything, not us.

There are many achievements in Vedic history which are anonymous; no one
puts any signatures to them.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Most of the names we don't know, not even the number of holy persons there were, what to speak of their names.

History has not preserved them, and they did not want to be noted.

For example, we practically know nothing about Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, one of the greatest ācāryas in our sampradāya—essentially the next one after Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Practically speaking, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu made Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī his successor.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

He sent him his āsana, kaupīna, and bahiḥ-vāsa, all of which are still preserved in the temple of Rādhā-Ramaṇa.

Even Rādhā-Ramaṇa himself came to him in response to his prayers. But Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī asked Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja, “Please don’t say a word about me!”

If someone starts to be aware of himself as a guru, or imagine himself to be a guru, then that’s the end of his spiritual life.

Love is out of the question, the only thing left in the heart is vanity.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

The more Kali-yuga evolves, the more this problem also deepens.

The word guru in Hindi initially meant a master; now in Hindi it is almost a swear word.

Besides everything else, guru also means a trickster.

This spiritual vanity is a very dangerous thing and it can haunt us up to the very end.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

For instance, the famous Kumbha Mela in India is practically the best fair of spiritual vanity.

The gurus gather there, seated on jewel-bedecked silver thrones on top of elephants.

Recently even the elephants went out of fashion—they put the silver throne on top of a jeep.

This behavior is a very sad thing, because actually we must understand that if I'm a true devotee I should not expect honor.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

Moreover, if I am a true devotee, I will expect to be reproached by others.

Mādhavendra Purī wrote a wonderful verse where he says, “Let other people think that I have gone mad; let my friends think I am totally confused; let my relatives say that I am a complete fool; and let those who know the Vedas consider me just some proud fool.”

If we are a true devotee, we can expect people not to like that we live a life of complete and absolute devotion; they will start reproaching us.

This is something important that we must remember.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī gives a solution, he says, ~~pratiṣṭhāśā dhr̥stā~~
śvapaca-ramaṇī me hr̥di natet: that śvapaca-ramaṇī—this shameless
prostitute is dancing, kathaṁ sādhu-premā spr̥śati—so how can pure prema
touch my heart?

Śucir etan nanu manaḥ—think for yourself how the pure can touch the
impure.

My heart becomes untouchable because this woman there has cast off all
restraint.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñāna Goswami Maharaja

So, he gives a solution to how we can protect ourselves from this problem:
sadā tvam̐ sevasva prabhu-dayita-sāmāntam atulam—constantly serve the
servant of the Lord.

Not Kṛṣṇa, but the servant of the Lord: prabhu-dayita-sāmāntam—the best
of the servants of the Lord (sāmānta means a general).

Yathā tām niṣkāśya tvaritam iha taṁ veśayati sah—then very quickly that
woman will be banished from your heart.

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

In other words, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says that to expel that woman from the heart the cure is association with the devotees, association in the process of service with the understanding of their greatness.

When internally I am with them, I understand what true devotion is, who I am, and what the scale of my so-called devotion is.

The Hitopadeśa starts with a very instructive story about a tiger who represents the bogus sādhu.

Its hidden meaning is to learn how to distinguish a true sādhu from a pretender.

Verse-7 Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

He's standing on the banks of a lake where there is an innocent traveler passing by.

The tiger says, "Come here, my dear, come, I have a golden bracelet for you. I've repented all my sins; yes, I didn't used to be a vegetarian but now I am!"

The tiger says to the traveler that there are eight kinds of religiosity.

These are performance of sacrifices, study of scriptures, distribution of donations, performance of ascetic feats, truthfulness, patience, forgiveness, and lack of greed.

Verse-7 Commentary by Srīla Bhaktivijñana Goswami Maharaja

So he says, “Look at me—you can imitate the first four: you can perform sacrifices, you can perform penance, you can study the scriptures, you can give a donation—all this you can do with a contaminated heart, but the last four are impossible to imitate. It’s impossible to pretend to be truthful!”

It is a cheater who is saying that and he is exposing himself.

He says that it is impossible to pretend to be patient; it is impossible to pretend to be able to forgive; and it is impossible to pretend to have no greed.

Because the tiger speaks like this, the meaning in this fable is that even these can be imitated.

Even these qualities do not serve as criteria, actually.

If we want to know the true criterion for understanding who is a sādhu and who is not a sādhu, then it is not enough to just listen to what the person says.

We need to examine him and look at the way he associates.

The criterion that Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī is giving here is very important, which is that a person should not internally deem himself to be a guru, and this means that he must always seek higher association. He must always consider himself to be a disciple.