

Śrī Manah-śikṣā

Splendid Instructions to the  
Mind

by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

# Verse-9

Notes on the Commentary

by

Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

## Verse-9

mad-īśā-nāthatve vraja-vipina-candram vraja-vane-  
śvarīm tan-nāthatve tad-atula-sakhīve tu lalitām  
viśākhām śikṣālī-vitarāṇa-gurutve priya-saro-  
girindrau tat-prekṣā-lalita-rati-datve smara manah

O mind (**manah**), meditate on (**smara**) Kṛṣṇa, the moon of the Vṛndāvana forest (**vraja-vipina-candram**), as the lord of my leader, Śrī Rādhikā (**mad-īśā-nāthatve**). Meditate on Śrī Rādhikā (**vraja-vana-īśvarīm**) as his most dear object of love (**tad-nāthatve**). Meditate on Śrī Lalitā (**lalitām tu**) as her incomparable friend (**tad-atula-sakhīve**). Meditate on Śrī Viśākhā (**viśākhām**) as the foremost guru (**gurutve**) distributing the teachings of love (**śikṣālī-vitarāṇa**). And meditate on Rādhā-kuṇḍa (**priya-saro**) and Govardhana (**girindrau**) as givers (**datve**) of the sight (**tat-prekṣā**) and love of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa (**lalita-rati**).

## Verse-9 Commentary by Srīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

One may have questions about details of how to go further in this process of bhajana.

↳ Rāgānuga bhājen.

Here the answer is given when Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī says smaraṇam, just meditate.

This meditation is a great science.

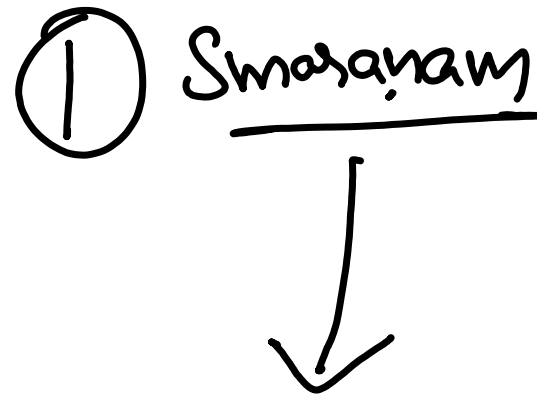
Specifically Jīva Gosvāmī describes five specific stages of meditation which we ultimately cultivate as we develop in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

Just like japa has its stages and devotional service has its stages, everything has a developmental process.

This is called krama.

So it is with smaraṇam.



In the first stage, also called smaraṇam, (one searches with one's mind for the name, the form, and the qualities of the Lord).

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

We are searching, trying to find.

There is no real spontaneous attraction yet.

It's an external effort by the mind, to reach out and try to contact.

Smaraṇam means we are trying to hear, and next thing we know we are thinking about something else.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

Smaraṇam means we are trying to think about Kṛṣṇa's qualities and next thing we are thinking about when it is prasādam time.

So we try and we make an effort but there is a lack of consistency.

② dhāraṇā

Dhāraṇā, the second stage, is when one can withdraw one's mind from external stimulus and actually maintain a slight contact with the different features, names, pastimes, and paraphernalia of the Lord.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

We have all experienced it at some point.

For example, sometimes we start reading some pastime and get so absorbed we forget where we are.

We even forget we are in this material world, and perhaps even forget who we are.

So that is called dhāraṇā.



## Verse-9 Commentary by Srīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

### ③ dhyāna

And the stage of dhyāna is when the mind becomes fixed.

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Dhāraṇā is general, but dhyāna is very specific, when one is actually able to fix one's mind on specific pastimes and forms of the Lord with great detail, and having heard, one is able to visualize all the different topics which one has read in transcendental literatures.

### ④ Dhruvānusmṛti

The fourth stage is called dhruva, or anusmṛti, that is when dhyāna matures to the stage when the meditation is uninterrupted and very deep, with the result that one feels great pleasure, transcendental bliss.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

It is no longer an effort.

In the beginning, reaching out means it's like we are groping.

Dhāraṇā means that we think of our objects of meditation but we don't really have to struggle to keep out the distractions of the material world.

And anusmṛti is when one receives that taste where there is no difficulty in being absorbed in meditating, but the difficulty is getting out of this state of meditation and relating to the material world.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

⑤ *samādhi*

The final stage is samādhi: Jīva Gosvāmī says this is when the only object of meditation is spontaneously manifested in the totality of the mind—in other words without any effort.

This stage of meditation happens of its own accord.

In other words, by the mercy of the Lord, coming down from the platform of the transcendental realm, the spiritual world comes into the mind and then takes over the entire mind—not some of the mind but all of it.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

One becomes completely absorbed in a particular remembrance of the Lord.

So these are different stages of meditation.

And we begin by practicing the first one, then later the others.

Therefore Śrīla Prabhupāda emphasized the first one, smaraṇam: we should learn how to hear and fix our mind on the sound vibration.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

When we learn how to do that, then gradually that sound vibration will pull us along into deeper and deepest states of meditation.

The question arises, what should we meditate on?

Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī gives us so many nice objects for our mediation.

He writes mad-īśā-nāthatve, the lord of my mistress, namely Kṛṣṇa.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

And we are meditating on, vraja-vane-śvarīm, the queen of the forest of Vṛndāvana, Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī.

Then we meditate on the associates of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī and Lord Kṛṣṇa like atula-sakhīve tu lalitām, Lalitā-sakhī.

Viśākhām, we meditate on Viśākhā who is guru, who teaches, as in the relationship between Caitanya Mahāprabhu and Rāmānanda Rāya.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

Rāmānanda Rāya is Viśākhā. In that relationship, Rāmānanda Rāya is teaching Caitanya Mahāprabhu, Lord Kṛṣṇa, how to be in the mood of Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, and so many things.

Such is the development of Caitanya Mahāprabhu's manifestation of bhāva.

Up until the meeting with Rāmānanda Rāya, Caitanya Mahāprabhu was not able to enter into full rādhā-bhāva because he can't get it unless he gets it from Rādhārāṇī's associates.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

Just like sometimes people ask, “Do I have to go through guru to get to Kṛṣṇa?”

Yes, just like Kṛṣṇa has to go through guru in order to get to Rādhārāṇī.

So, even Kṛṣṇa has to learn that process from Rāmānanda Rāya.

This is why it is called śikṣā.



## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

Viśākhā gives the divine couple so many instructions.

So Lalitā and Viśākhā are two of the foremost gopīs.

We also meditate on priya-saraḥ. Saraḥ means lake and priya-saraḥ means very dear lake.

This phrase in this verse refers to Rādhā-kuṇḍa, which is the very form of pure love of Godhead.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Srīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

Also meditate on girindrau, Govardhan Hill.

When we go to Vṛndāvana then we go to these places.

we go to the birthplace of Lalitā-sakhī.

Just behind there is Varṣāṇā.

We go to Kṛṣṇa's birthplace, and places of all different pastimes.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

Why?

So that we can meditate, and accumulate memories and thoughts,  
and appreciate the moods of all these particular places.

Everything is intimately connected.

Going to the holy places is not just a trip to India.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

It is not just getting away from the headaches of the West or to get a break from saṅkīrtana.

Visitng holy places is all part of a systematically planned process to make us Kṛṣṇa conscious.

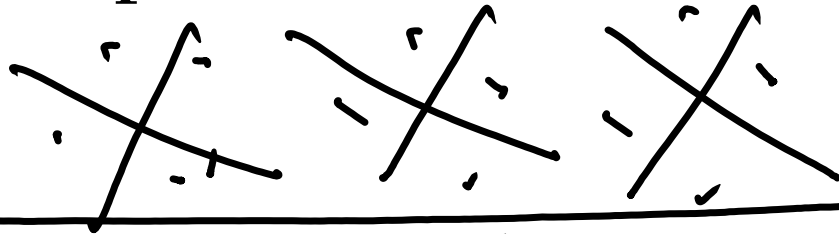
Just like a jigsaw puzzle, every single lesson that we hear, every book, every instruction, everything that Prabhupāda planned and gave us, all fits together—we just have to know which part fits with the other.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

The picture is already there.

We just have to put it all together.

Bhaktivinoda Thākura gives us many prayers in his commentary to this verse about meditation, because prayer is synonymous with smaraṇam, or internal absorption or remembrance.



Prayer is the essence of spontaneous devotional service.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Srīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

One should learn how to pray.

Prayer should not be simply an external thing, but should be a heartfelt call, a personal expression, somehow or other to just get mercy.

When we hear Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī verses from Stava-mālā like the ones quoted in Bhaktivinoda's commentary on this verse, with much detail and descriptions, we should realize that they are non-different from what is being described, and if we know how to hear nicely then we will be able to see the very same thing.

## Verse-9 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

In the same way we can enter into meditation with Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī prayers to Śrīmatī Rādhārāṇī, as well as the Lalitāṣṭakam, and the Yamunāstakam, which is given because Viśākhā-devī is non-different from Yamunā.

Glorifying Yamunā is just like glorifying Viśākhā.

Bhaktivinoda also quotes prayers to Rādhā-kuṇḍa and Govardhan Hill.