

Śrī Manah-śikṣā

Splendid Instructions to the
Mind

by Śrī Raghunātha dāsa Gosvāmī

Śrī-govardhana-bhajana: Worship Śrī Govardhana

Verse-11 Bhajana Darpana

Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī offers this particular instruction for himself as well as for everyone else. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the moon of the sky-like heart of devotees, personally gave his govardhana-śilā to Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, who describes this incident in Śrī Gaurāṅga-stava-kalpataruḥ (verse 11), from Stavāvalī:

Verse-11 Bhajana Darpana

**mahā-sampad-dāvād api patitam uddhṛtya kṛpayā
svarūpe yaḥ svīye kujanam api mām nyasya muditaḥ
uro-gunjā-hāraṁ priyam api ca govardhana-śilām
dadau me gaurāṅgo hṛdaya udayan mām madayati**

Although I am a fallen soul, the lowest of men, Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu delivered me from the blazing forest fire of great material opulence by his mercy. He handed me over in great pleasure to Svarūpa Dāmodara, his personal associate. The Lord also gave me the garland of small conchshells that he wore on his chest, and a stone from Govardhana Hill, although they were very dear to him. That same Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu awakens within my heart and makes me mad after him. (quoted from Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Antya-līlā 6.327)

Verse-11 Bhajana Darpana

A govardhana-śilā is a direct manifestation of the Supreme Lord. Worshipping this śilā, or harboring the attitude, “I will never leave Govardhana where Śrī Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī resides,” is also service to Govardhana.

This conception of worship to Govardhana has two meanings.

The first is that the practitioner should respect and worship a govardhana-śilā as one respects the mūrti of the Lord.

Verse-11 Bhajana Darpana

The second meaning is to worship the Lord while residing at Śrī Govardhana, or any of the holy places that surround the hill, where the Lord performed many pastimes.

Residence in the holy dhāma as indicated here is synonymous with Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's instructions of living in Mathurā.

**Nītyā: In accordance with the rules
of devotion**

Verse-11 Bhajana Darpana

Nīti does not indicate simply vaidhī-mārga, or the path where the impetus is scriptural logic and rules.

Those who are eligible for vaidhī-bhakti will worship according to those rules and regulations.

But those on the platform of rāgānuga-bhakti, or spontaneous devotional service, will worship by adopting the rules for rāga-bhakti as set forth by Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

Verse-11

ŚRĪLA BHAKTIVINODA
ṬHĀKURA'S

MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

SONG ELEVEN

MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

Verse-1

vrajera nikuṣja-vane, rādhā-kṛṣṇa sakhī-sane,
līlā-rase nitya thāke bhora
sei dainandina-līlā, bahu-bhāgye ye sevilā,
tāhāra bhāgyera baḍa jora

Fill yourself with the delectable, intoxicating nectar of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's līlā with their sakhīs in the forest bowers of Vraja, and remain drunk on it eternally. One who serves them according to their daily līlā is superlatively fortunate!

MANAḢ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

Verse-2

mana, yadi cāha sei dhana
śrī-rūpera saṅga la'ye, tāñ'ra anucarī ha'ye,
kara tāñra nirdiṣṭa bhajana

Oh heart! If you want that treasure, then along with Śrī Rūpa's associates, become Śrī Rūpa's maidservant, and do worship and bhajana according to Śrī Rūpa's specific instructions.

MANAḤ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

Verse-3

hṛdaye rāgera bhāve, kālocita sevā pā'be,
sadā rase rahibe majiyā
bāhire sādhana-deha, karibe bhajana-geha,
niḥsaṅge vā sādhu-saṅga laiyā,

In a mood of spontaneous pure love, you will receive a service (seva) appropriate to various times [of the day] and become enraptured in the mood of service. Externally, in your form of a practitioner, follow your program of worship (sādhana-bhajana) at home, either in seclusion or in the association of saintly persons (sādhus).

MANAḢ-ŚIKṢĀ BHĀṢĀ

Verse-4

yugala-pūjana, dhyāna, nati, śruti, saṅkīrtana,
pancāmṛte seva govardhane
rūpa-raghunātha-pāya, e bhaktivinoda cāya,
dr̥ḍha-mati e-rūpa bhajane

Perform worship of and meditation of the divine couple, offer obeisance to them, hear about them, dance in saṅkīrtana, and bathe Śrī Govardhana with five nectars (pañcāmṛta). Bhaktivinoda longs for the lotus feet of Rūpa and Raghunātha. His heart is fixed unwaveringly on doing bhajana in this way.

Verse-11

Notes on the Commentary

by

Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

Verse-11

samaṁ śrī-rūpeṇa smara-vivaśa-rādhā-giribhṛtor
vraje sāksāt-sevā-labhana-vidhaye tad-gaṇa-yujoh
tad-ijyākhyā-dhyāna-śravaṇa-nati-pañcāmṛtam idaṁ
dhayan nityā govardhanam anudinaṁ tvam bhaja manah

O mind (**manah**), you should (**tvam**) every day (**anudinaṁ**) drink (**dhayan**) the five nectars (**pañcāmṛtam**)—worship, glories, meditation, listening to divine pastimes, and offering obeisances (**tad-ijyākhyā-dhyāna-śravaṇa-nati**)—and worship (**bhaja**) Govardhana (**govardhanam**) according to the rules (**nityā**). In this way, follow the instructions of Śrī Rūpa (**samaṁ śrī-rūpeṇa**) and obtain the direct service (**sāksāt-sevā-labhana-vidhaye**) of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Giridhārī (**rādhā-giribhṛtoḥ**), who are captivated by the god of amorous love (**smara-vivaśa**), in the company of their associates (**tad-gaṇa-yujoh**) in Vraja (**vraje**).

Verse-11 Commentary by Srīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

Five different activities are being recommended here.

In other words, every day we must drink these nectars with Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī.

One must do everything in the line of Rūpa Gosvāmī as we are all rūpānugas.

By these five nectars we should be worshiping Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and all their friends.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

We should worship them by worshiping the Deity form, and chanting their names in kīrtana and japa.

We should meditate on them by hearing their pastimes and activities, for example from Kṛṣṇa Book and Caitanya-caritāmṛta, and we should bow down before them, internally within our hearts and externally praying for their mercy and guidance.

Every day one must worship Govardhana Hill, to daily offer prayers to Govardhana Hill.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sivarama Swami Maharaj

Govardhana is very merciful, and by the mercy of Govardhana one can gain residence in the area of Govardhana.

So this is the meditation.

Verse-11

Notes on the Commentary

by

Śrīla Sacinandana Swami

Maharaj

Verse-11 Commentary by Srīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

Verse eleven binds the preceding verses together and brings them into context.

There is still a question in the air for the readers of Manaḥ-śikṣā.

What exactly is the method for deeply performing our devotional service?

Yes, we have heard about different concepts that can be almost the sambandha-tattva of this verse, but how do we exactly do it?

Verse-11 Commentary by Srīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

This question is answered in the eleventh verse, the crystal of sugar that gives success to the whole year of growing the sugarcane: tilling the field, protecting it from the thieves, harvesting, boiling the sugarcane in huge pots down to molasses—and then one piece of rock sugar is placed into it, and it all crystallizes.

This verse crystallizes all the teachings because it will now tell us what we should do.

In simple language, if we want to have direct service to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, then this is the verse for us.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

We need to think on how to perform these processes, and what absolutely not to do, such as how should we worship the Deity (ijyā), and what is the most important thing we should avoid when worshiping the Deity.

I have seen in my personal attempts to worship Deities that the greatest enemy is a mechanical consciousness.

Jīva Gosvāmī says that Kṛṣṇa is not hungry.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

Kṛṣṇa doesn't need our service.

It is not like this.

But, just like a thirsty person becomes satisfied by water alone, similarly Kṛṣṇa becomes like a thirsty person when a devotee offers him water in love.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

I can drink very easily if I pour water into a glass.

It is a purely mechanical activity.

But Kṛṣṇa is not like that.

He will only drink if we offer water plus love or if we offer a flower plus love or if we offer incense plus love.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

Kṛṣṇa didn't go to Duryodhana's house, but he went to Vidura's.

Vidura and his wife were so nervous that she threw away the fruit and offered the peel.

Kṛṣṇa ate the peel!

He missed the meal by Duryodhana, which was prepared by the best cooks in the country.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

In the morning, Duryodhana said, “You didn’t come to my house to eat. Why?”

Kṛṣṇa said, “You don’t love me. I only eat love.”

This is the single ingredient in Deity worship.

We should consider this point before we begin Deity worship.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

The next point is ākhyā.

Ākhyā means nāma-saṅkīrtana but also means glorification in general.

Kīrtana means to sing or discuss the pastimes of the Supreme Lord.

But, again, merely singing the names is not enough.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

We must sing, plus we must do something else.

If we forget the plus, we won't obtain devotional ecstasy.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu asks what that plus is and tells us how we should chant the holy name.

He teaches that we should consider ourselves lower than the blade of grass.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

This means that grass has some use—to feed cows, or to cover the roof of a house.

I am lower than that grass, and have not been of any use for service.

We might say, “I don’t want to think like this!”

Many think, instead, that it would be so nice if I could get into a lift, press a button, and go zwp to pure devotion without such humility.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

Automatic.

However, if we are not in the school of humility, we will be left with false ego and be forced to do offenses.

If we chant minus *tr̥ṇād* api, it is dangerous!

The chanting is a very potent medicine.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

When these powerful processes of devotional service are not used properly, they can cut us.

If we swing a sword forward it cuts the enemy.

If we swing it backwards, it cuts us.

An overload of offenses can really make us materially attached.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

Be aware and avoid aparādha, and chant the holy name in humility.

Very soon, we will attain the ecstatic, soft lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa.

Dhyāna is the next point.

In our meditations, we should avoid speculation and imagining something or other.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

The safest way to meditate is to read from the śāstras and from the prayers of devotees, what they have written are not imaginations.

They are revelations.

Our meditation is done through hearing.

This is so absolutely important. This experience will give us śraddhā (firm faith).

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

It is important when we read Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, especially those parts directly relating to Kṛṣṇa, that we stop and think about what we have read.

First śravaṇam, then mānānām—reflect on what has been read.

Then if this practice is done long enough, as we chant, these things that we have thought about will come up during chanting, by the mercy of the holy name, and we will see things that are so wonderful.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

So read, and afterwards, reflect on what has been read.

If we want to benefit from scriptural study, we need to apply three techniques from the Upaniṣads.

We have to hear, then we have to reflect on what we hear, and then we need to meditate on the text and apply it.

Reflecting is like chewing our food.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

If we want to go even deeper, and I believe most of us want to do that, then we should also pray to get full realization.

Pray to the author; pray to the text.

In the Bhakti-sandarbha, Jīva Gosvāmī mentions that if we want to meditate about Kṛṣṇa, we first have to mediate about the holy dhāma, because Kṛṣṇa can only be found in Vṛndāvana.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

We can read about Vṛndāvana and remember the places in the dhāma.

We will then be able to have a good meditation about Kṛṣṇa.

We should make an effort to chant lovingly, filling our minds with Kṛṣṇa. (Anuccheda 286: atha mukhyaṁ dhyānaṁ śrī-bhagavad-dhāma-gatam ev/ hṛdaya-kamala-gataṁ tu yogi-matam/ smared vṛndāvane ramye ity ādy-uktatvāt).

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

We should hear with directed attention.

So many people communicate, but so few people connect.

So few, and this lack of connection is called anāsaṅga-bhajana.

They are still in their mental worlds, repeating the same old external thoughts.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

So we should fill our minds with the sweetness of Bhagavān.

I request, dear readers, that you make a study of these points in your life.

In summary, when we want to do arcanam, we do so with love and not mechanically.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

The second is kīrtanam plus humility, because if we are not humble, then there will be the ego and then we will commit offenses.

The ego doesn't like Kṛṣṇa to take its place in the heart.

There is one throne in the heart, and at the moment the ego sits on it.

Therefore, tṛṇād api sunīcena.

Verse-11 Commentary by Śrīla Sacinandana Swami Maharaja

The next point is dhyāna.

What should we avoid? Imagination.

Meditation doesn't happen from imagination but from hearing bona-fide sources.

Sat-saṅga means connection, and anāsaṅga means disconnected.

Please take this hope, sat-saṅga-bhajana.

Verse-11

Notes on the Commentary

by

Urmila Devi Dasi

Verse-11 Notes on the Commentary by HG Urmila Devi Dasi

Here at the end of Manaḥ-śikṣā, Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī describes the ultimate goal of intimate service to the divine couple.

While every jīva has an individual eternal service, these five categories are general direction for everyone.

Bhaktivinoda, in his commentary to this verse, also explains the application of these five life-giving services in terms of external devotional activities we do while in this world.

Verse-11 Notes on the Commentary by HG Urmila Devi Dasi

As he does throughout Manaḥ-śikṣā, Dāsa Gosvāmī uses an analogy here.

He tells us to drink these five services, as if they were a medicinal nectar to free us from death.

The service is thus internalized, filling us completely.

Comparing devotional service to a life-giving nectar, and comparing the doing of such service to drinking that nectar, is an often-used metaphor in Vaiṣṇava literature, as in this Bhāgavatam verse (2.2.37):

|| 2.2.37 ||

pibanti ye bhagavata ātmanaḥ satām
kathāmṛtaṁ śravaṇa-puṭeṣu sambhṛtam |
punanti te viṣaya-vidūṣitāśayam
vrajanti tac-caraṇa-saroruhāntikam ||

Those who drink (**pibanti ye**) the sweet pastimes (**kathāmṛtaṁ**) of the Lord and his devotees (**bhagavata ātmanaḥ satām**) held in the cups of their ears (**śravaṇa-puṭeṣu sambhṛtam**) clean their hearts of all contamination (**punanti te viṣaya-vidūṣita āśayam**) and attain the lotus feet of the Lord for service (**vrajanti tac-caraṇa-saroruhāntikam**).

Verse-11 Notes on the Commentary by HG Urmila Devi Dasi

The section of Bhaktivinoda's commentary to verse eleven wherein he discusses Jīva Gosvāmī's stages of meditation is important for bhakti-yogīs at all stages of progress.

The essence of bhakti is to change one's consciousness.

We are to fill our mind, heart, intelligence, and ultimately our very self with awareness of Kṛṣṇa.

Those who aim for perfection in dhyāna-yoga try to reach samādhi mostly through a mechanical process of posture, breathing, and so forth.

Verse-11 Notes on the Commentary by HG Urmila Devi Dasi

The samādhi of the bhakti-yogīs, however, is different.

In bhakti, one achieves full absorption of consciousness in Kṛṣṇa through love.

Materially speaking, all of us have experienced situations where our consciousness becomes absorbed in someone or something because of strong emotional attachment.

Verse-11 Notes on the Commentary by HG Urmila Devi Dasi

We can become so saturated with meditation, we lose awareness of all else.

Similarly, in bhakti we seek to channel all our emotions, all our attachments, all our desires, to Kṛṣṇa, his devotees, and their service.

By doing so, we naturally and easily enter into transcendent awareness, awake to reality and asleep to illusion.