

The Royal Road Ahead: Bhava and Prema Bhakti

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Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu



Part – 7

Actions of a Person at the stage of Bhava

Actions of a Person at the stage of Bhava

- At that time, his eyes, full of longing, turn towards Krsna to lick the blackness of his limbs, the rosy hue of his lips and eye-rims, the white brilliance of his moon-like teeth shining in his smiling face, the yellow hue of his clothing and ornaments; and begin to bathe his body in unlimited tears.
- Like a hunted animal, here and there, from time to time, freezing his motion, he raises his ears to try to hear the sound of Krsna's flute, the jingling of his anklets, the sweet intonation of his voice, the messages of his wandering footsteps.

Actions of a Person at the stage of Bhava

- And his body erupts in ecstasy on experiencing the longed-for touch of the Lord's tender hands.
- His nostrils open wide again and again, and inhale, anxious to examine the fragrance of his body.
- Hankering to taste the Lord's saliva, his tongue feels great joy on attaining that taste, and he licks his lips.

Actions of a Person at the stage of Bhava

- Sometimes, when he gains the association of the Lord by the Lord's whim, his heart feels exhilarated, and he becomes drunk with the abundance of sweetness, and then, at the departure of the Lord he grieves and becomes despondent.
- In this way the symptoms of sancari bhava decorate his body.

Actions of a Person at the stage of Bhava

- His intelligence, in the states of wakefulness, sleep, and deep sleep, determines to fix itself without deviation on the path of remembrance of Krsna.
- At the time of attaining his spiritual body suitable for performing his eternal service, the indestructible soul enters that body, and the material body becomes almost lifeless.

Actions of a Person at the stage of Bhava

- *atishaya manava*
At this stage the devotee begins to experience extreme possessiveness of Krsna: like a bee, he becomes anxious to imbibe fragrance of Krsna's lotus feet.
- Having obtained the most precious jewel of bhava, the devotee, like a miser, hides it from ordinary people.

Actions of a Person at the stage of Bhava

- As he becomes the residence of renunciation, tolerance, and the other wonderful qualities which manifest themselves at the stage of bhava, advanced devotees will understand his internal status by those external symptoms, but others who see his distracted mind will conclude that he is mad.

Actions of a Person at the stage of Bhava

mugdham mām nigadantu nīti-nipuṇā bhrāntam muhur vaidikā
mandam bāndhava-sañcayā jada-dhiyam muktādarāḥ sodarāḥ
unmattam dhanino viveka-caturāḥ kāmam mahā-dāmbhikam
moktum na kṣamate manāg api mano govinda-pāda-sprhām

Let the sharp moralist accuse me of being illusioned (mugdham mām nigadantu nīti-nipuṇā); I do not mind. Experts in Vedic activities may slander me as being misled (bhrāntam muhur vaidikā), friends and relatives may call me frustrated (mandam bāndhava-sañcayā), my brothers may call me a fool (jada-dhiyam muktādarāḥ sodarāḥ), the wealthy mammonites may point me out as mad (unmattam dhanino), and the learned philosophers may assert that I am much too proud (viveka-caturāḥ kāmam mahā-dāmbhikam); still my mind does not budge an inch from the determination (moktum na kṣamate manāg api mano) to serve the lotus feet of Govinda, though I be unable to do it (govinda-pāda-sprhām). (Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī)

Part-8

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava

vyaktam masṛnitevāntar
lakṣyate rati-lakṣaṇam |
mumukṣu-prabhṛtīnām ced
bhaved eṣā ratiṃ na hi ||

If softness of the heart (^{Softness} masṛnitevāntar ^{Let} ced ^{it}), the symptom of rati (rati-lakṣaṇam), becomes clearly visible (vyaktam lakṣyate) in persons desiring liberation, or in other unqualified persons (mumukṣu-prabhṛtīnām), it is not real rati (eṣā ratiṃ na hi bhaved). (BRS)

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava

Uttamā bhakti
↑
[anvābhīlāṣitē śṛṅgāra.]

- It has been stated that the quality of real rati is having the desire only to please the Lord.
- If other desires are present, it should not be considered rati, in spite of the presence of other symptoms, such as sāttvika-bhāvas. That is explained in this verse.

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava

- If the rati characterized by internal softness (melting of the heart), or what appears to be so, becomes visible in persons, such as those desiring liberation, it should not be considered real rati, because persons desiring liberation have other desires.
- One should not think that if a person has strong desires for things other than Kṛṣṇa, it can be called rati for that particular object (for instance rati for liberation).

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava

vimuktākṣhila-tarṣair yā
muktair api vimṛgyate |
yā kṛṣṇenātigopyāśu
bhajadbhyo 'pi na dīyate ||

sā bhukti-mukti-kāmatvāc
chuddhām bhaktim akurvatām |
hrdaye sambhavaty eśām
katham bhāgavatī ratiḥ ||

How can rati appear (katham bhāgavatī ratiḥ hrdaye sambhavaty) in persons having desires for enjoyment or liberation (eśām bhukti-mukti-kāmatvāt)? Those persons do not perform pure bhakti (śuddhām bhaktim akurvatām). Rati is sought out (vimṛgyate) by those liberated from all desires (vimukta akṣhila-tarṣair muktair api) and is not given immediately by Kṛṣṇa (yā kṛṣṇena na āśu dīyate) even to the devotees (bhajadbhyo api), since it is most secret (atigopya). (BRS)

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava

- Here the author elaborates on the reason why it is not real rati.
- How is it possible for rati to appear where there are desires for material enjoyment or liberation?

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava

- There is a fault in their sādhana: they do not perform pure bhakti.
- Pure bhakti means that it should not be mixed with jñāna, karma or other unacceptable elements.

Part-8

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava

The Two Types of Raty-
ābhāsa

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava

The Two Types of Raty-ābhāsa

^{→ BRS.}
kintu bāla camatkāra-
karī tac-cihna-vīksayā |
abhijñena subodho 'yaṁ
raty-ābhāsaḥ prakīrtitaḥ ||

pratibimbas tathā cchāyā
raty-ābhāso dvidhā mataḥ ||

Though this semblance of rati is very astounding to the innocent (**bāla-camatkāra-karī**), those in knowledge (**kintu yaṁ abhijñena**) understand what it really is (**yaṁ subodhaḥ**) by seeing the characteristics (**tac-cihna-vīksayā**). This is called raty-ābhāsa, a semblance of rati (**raty-ābhāsaḥ prakīrtitaḥ**). This semblance of rati has two types (**raty-ābhāso dvidhā mataḥ**): reflection (prati-bimba) and splendor (chāyā) (**pratibimbas tathā cchāyā**). (BRS)

Part-8

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava

Pratibimba Raty-ābhāsa

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Pratibimba Raty-ābhāsa)

- Rati without motivations for material enjoyment or liberation yields the main form of rati, whereas having attachments produces a semblance of rati.
- This semblance arises through secondary conditions.
- According to the conditions, there are two types of semblance. The first type is described here.

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Pratibimba Raty-ābhāsa)

- The qualities of rati appear (rati-lakṣaṇa-lakṣitaḥ) in the form of a few tears or other symptoms.
↓ Sāttvika bhāvas
- Though this seems to indicate a touch of rati, when the symptoms appear along with desires for enjoyment or liberation, it is called pratibimba.

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Pratibimba Raty-ābhāsa)

- The type of rati for the Lord which is contaminated by desires for enjoyment or liberation is called pratibimba-raty-ābhāsa.
- This pratibimba awards liberation without extreme efforts because of two qualities existing in the Lord—His power to bestow material enjoyment and His power to bestow liberation.

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Pratibimba Raty-ābhāsa)

- This is the extraordinary power of pratibimbaraty-ābhāsa.

Part-8

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava

What causes Pratibimba
Raty-ābhāsa?

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Pratibimba Raty-ābhāsa)

daivāt sad-bhakta-saṅgena
kīrtanādy-anusārinām |
prāyaḥ prasanna-manasām
bhoga-mokṣādi rāgiṇām ||

keṣāmcit hr̥di bhāvendoh
pratibimba udañcati |
tad-bhakta-hṛn-nabhah-sthasya
tat-saṁsarga-prabhāvataḥ ||

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Pratibimba Raty-ābhāsa)

This reflection of the moon of bhāva (bhāva indoh pratibimbah) appears in the hearts of some persons (keṣāncit hr̥di udañcati) who are attached to enjoyment or liberation (bhoga-mokṣādi rāgiṇām), but who become somewhat satisfied by following the aṅgas of bhakti (kīrtanādy-anusāriṇām prāyaḥ prasanna-manasām) through occasional association with real devotees (daivāt sad-bhakta-saṅgena). That moon of bhāva is situated in the sky of the real devotee's heart (tad-bhakta-hṛn-nabhaḥ-sthasya), and it appears as a reflection in the non-devotee for some time by its impressions (tat-saṁsarga-prabhāvataḥ). (BRS)

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Pratibimba Raty-ābhāsa)

- The process by which pratibimba appears is described in this verse.
 - ① association of exalted devotees
 - ② some slight appreciation for dev. friends
- Those who are attached to enjoyment and liberation, through occasional rather than constant association with devotees (daivāt), imitate devotional activities, such as chanting, but with their own goals in mind, and they achieve a general tranquility of mind.

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Pratibimba Raty-ābhāsa)

- But their hearts are still contaminated with those desires, since they have not realized the fault of such desires.
- The devotee's heart is like the sky, which is untouched by other objects, and is thus suitable for the rising of the moon of prema.

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Pratibimba Raty-ābhāsa)

- The reflection of that moon situated in the devotee's heart—not the moon itself—appears within the heart of such contaminated persons.
- A reflection appears because of the impositions (upādhi) caused by other desires.

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Pratibimba Raty-ābhāsa)

- Thus, that reflection is not exactly the same as the original, since it takes support from only a few qualities of the original rati and is a blurred image possessing contamination of other desires.
- A desire for pure bhāva on the other hand produces a complete and pure reflection, because the aspirant takes support of a host of wonderful qualities of bhāva and makes efforts for the correct goal.

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Pratibimba Raty-ābhāsa)

- When that person with other desires becomes separated from the devotee, will that reflection disappear?
- No, by the impressions it leaves in his heart, the reflection of bhāva remains there for some time.

Part-8

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava

Chāyā Raty-ābhāsa

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Chāyā Raty-ābhāsa)

kṣudra-kautūhala-mayī
cañcalā duḥkha-hāriṇī |
rateś chāyā bhavet kiṃcit
tat-sādrśyāvalambinī ||

That which has some similarity to real rati (tat-sādrśya kiṃcit avalambinī), which possesses a small amount of interest in the Lord (kṣudra-kautūhala-mayī), which is unstable (cañcalā), and which destroys suffering (duḥkha-hāriṇī), is called chāyā-raty-ābhāsa (rateh chāyā bhavet). (BRS)

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Chāyā Raty-ābhāsa)

- Here the word chāyā means beauty or splendor.
- Here it also means a reflection of or resemblance to beauty.
- This verse describes this chāyā-raty-ābhāsa, taking into account the meaning of chāyā as “resemblance to beauty” in combination with the word ābhāsa.

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Chāyā Raty-ābhāsa)

- Little interest (kṣudra-kautūhala) means that though the Lord and bhakti are spiritual, the person has interest in them only as material objects.
- Because there is curiosity relating to the Lord, even though material, there is an appearance of a little splendor (kānti).

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Chāyā Raty-ābhāsa)

- That is the meaning of chāyā here.
- Because of the slight attraction to the Lord, there will be slight symptoms similar to those of real rati.
- However, because of its nature as chāyā, it is also unsteady (cañcalā), unlike the ~~pratibimba-raty-~~ābhāsa.

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Chāyā Raty-ābhāsa)

- In prati-bimba-raty-ābhāsa, the attraction to material enjoyment and liberation is very strong, but in chāyā-raty-ābhāsa, the material curiosity about the Lord is transient.
- Still, because of the influence of the Lord in chāyā-raty-ābhāsa, there is gradually a destruction of the suffering of material existence.

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Chāyā Raty-ābhāsa)

- One should not say “This type does not fit within the general category of raty-ābhāsa because it lacks desire for enjoyment and liberation.”
- It is classed as raty-ābhāsa because material curiosity is a form of enjoyment as well (a contamination).

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Chāyā Raty-ābhāsa)

- As well, it does not overlap with pratibimba-raty-ābhāsa, though both types have desire for enjoyment, because chāyā is connected with only a curiosity about the Lord (whereas pratibimba has a strong commitment to material enjoyment or liberation).

Part-8

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava

What causes Chāyā Raty-
ābhāsa?

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Chāyā Raty-ābhāsa)

hari-priya-kriyā-kāla-
deśa-pātrādi-saṅgamāt |
apy ānuṣaṅgikād eṣa
kvacid ajñeṣv apīkṣyate ||

kintu bhāgyam vinā nāsau
bhāva-cchāyāpy udañcati |
yad abhyudayatah kṣemam
tatra syād uttarottaram ||

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Chāyā Raty-ābhāsa)

This chāyā-raty-ābhāsa appears sometimes even in ignorant people (eṣa kvacid ajñeṣu api ikṣyate) by a combination of performing actions dear to the Lord, observing the festivals of the Lord, residing in the dhāma of the Lord ((hari-priya-kriyā)(kāla)(deśa)(pātrādi) saṅgamāt), and associating with the devotees of the Lord (ānuṣaṅgikād apy). Even this chāyā-raty-ābhāsa (kintu asau bhāva-cchāyā apy), which eventually bestows auspiciousness to those people (yad kṣemaṁ abhyudayaataḥ tatra syād uttarottaram), appears only with great good fortune (bhāgyaṁ vinā na udañcati).
(BRS)

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Chāyā Raty-ābhāsa)

- There should be simultaneous participation in the items listed (performing actions dear to the Lord, observing the festivals of the Lord, residing in the dhāma of the Lord, and associating with the devotees of the Lord) in order for chāyā-raty-ābhāsa to manifest in ignorant people.

Raty-ābhāsa – Reflection of Bhava (Chāyā Raty-ābhāsa)

- Because of association with devotees, festivals and other items, this rati is sometimes seen even in ignorant persons--persons who have no good qualities such as tolerance and have no desire to extinguish saṃsāra.