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Śrī Amnāya-sūtra

Part One

Chapter One Śaktimattva-prakaraṇa The Master of All Potencies

Sūtra 1

athāta amnāya-sūtram pravakṣyāmaḥ

atha—now; *ataḥ*—then; *amnāya-sūtram*—the Amnaya-sutra; *pravakṣyāmaḥ*—we will speak.

Now we will speak the Amnāya-sūtra.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

*natvā śrī-kṛṣṇa-caitanyaṁ
jagad-ācārya-vigrahaṁ
kena bhaktivinodena
vaiṣṇavānāṁ prasādataḥ*

*pramāṇair aṣṭabhiḥ ṣaḍbhir
līṅgair vedārtha-nirṇayam
abhidhā-vṛttim āśritya
śabdānāṁ ca viśeṣataḥ*

*triṁśottara-śataṁ sūtram
racitaṁ mahad-ājñayā
paṭhantu vaiṣṇavāḥ sarve
caitanya-pāda-sevinaḥ*

“Bowling down before Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, the teacher of the the entire world, a certain person named Bhaktivinoda, by the grace of the Vaiṣṇavas and by the order of the great souls, has composed 130 sūtras describing the final conclusion of the Vedas, a conclusion attained by studying the eight sources of

evidence, the six signs, and the direct and indirect interpretation of words. May all the Vaiṣṇavas who serve Lord Caitanya’s feet study these sūtras.

Sūtra 2

tattvam ekam evādvitīyam

tattvam—the Absolute Truth; *ekam*—one; *eva*—indeed; *advitīyam*—without a second.

The Absolute Truth is one without a second.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* it is said:

sad eva saumyedaṁ agra āsīd ekam evādvitīyam

“O gentle one, in the beginning only the Absolute Truth, who is one without a second, existed.”

In the *Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* it is said:

*pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇam idaṁ
pūrṇāt pūrṇam udacyate
pūrṇasya pūrṇam ādāya
pūrṇam evāvaśiṣyate*

“The Personality Godhead is perfect and complete, and because He is completely perfect, all emanations from Him, such as this phenomenal world, are perfectly equipped as complete wholes. Whatever is produced of the complete whole is also complete in itself. Because He is the complete whole, even though so many complete units emanate from Him, He remains the complete balance.”*

In *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.9.33) it is said:

*aḥam evāsam evāgre
nānyad yat sad asat param
paścād ahaṁ yad etac ca
yo ‘vaśiṣyeta so ‘smy aham*

“Brahmā, it is I, the Personality of Godhead, who was existing before the creation, when there was nothing but Myself. Nor was there the material nature, the cause of this creation. That which you see now is also I, the Personality of Godhead, and after annihilation what remains will also be I, the Personality of Godhead.”*

In *Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (Madhya 20.152), Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu says:

*kṛṣṇera svarūpa-vicāra śuna sanātana
advaya-jñāna tattvā vraje vrajendra-nandana*

“O Sanātana, please hear about the eternal form of Lord Kṛṣṇa. He is the Absolute Truth, devoid of duality but present in Vṛndāvana as the son of Nanda Mahārāja.”*

Sūtra 3

nityam acintya-śaktikam

nityam—eternal; *acintya*—inconceivable; *śaktikam*—potencies.

He has inconceivable potencies eternally.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* it is said:

*vicitra-śaktiḥ puruṣaḥ purāno
cānyeṣāṃ śaktayas tādṛśasyuḥ
eko vaśī sarva-bhūtāntarātmā
sarvān devān eka evānuviṣṭaḥ*

“The Supreme Lord is the oldest, the original person. His powers are inconceivable. Everything is His potency. He is the Supreme Controller, the Supersoul in everyone’s heart. He alone has entered the hearts of all the demigods.”

In the *Hayāśīrṣa-pañcarātra* it is said:

*paramātmā hari-devas
tac-chaktiḥ śrīr ihoditā
śrī-devī prakṛtiḥ proktā
keśavaḥ puruṣaḥ smṛtaḥ*

“Lord Hari is the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the goddess of fortune is His transcendental potency. He is the Supreme God and she the Supreme Goddess.”

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

*sarveṣāṃ bhāvānām pāvakasyoṣṇatā-vad acintya-jñāna-gocarāḥ śaktayaḥ santy eva.
brahmaṇas tā sva-bhāva-bhūtāḥ svarūpād abhinna-śaktayaḥ.*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead has many inconceivable potencies, all manifested from His transcendental form. As heat is not different from fire, so the Lord’s potencies are not different from the Lord Himself.”

Sūtra 4

nityam sa-viśeṣam

nityam—eternal; *sa*—with; *viśeṣam*—variety.

He has a variety of transcendental qualities eternally.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (6.6) it is said:

*sa vrkṣa-kālākṛtibhiḥ paro ‘nyo
yasmāt prapañcaḥ parivartate yam
dharmāvahaṁ pāpa-nudaṁ bhageśaṁ
jñātvātma-stham amṛtaṁ viśva-dhāma*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is not touched by the material nature, and He is free from the entanglement of the complex tree of material time. He is the origin of the material creation, and it is due to Him only that everything changes. He is the protector of religion and the annihilator of all sinful activities. He is the master of all opulences, and everything rests within Him. He is the Supersoul present in everyone’s heart. Those who understand and worship Him become free from the cycle of birth and death in the material world and return to the eternal spiritual world.”*

*jñāna-śakti-balaiśvarya-
vīrya-tejāṁsy aśeṣataḥ
bhagavac-chabda-vacyāni
vinā heyair guṇādibhiḥ*

“The word Bhagavān means that the Supreme Personality of Godhead has all knowledge, strength, wealth, fame, beauty, and renunciation, and no faults.”

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (*Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu* 2.1.37) explains:

*sadā svarūpa-samprāptaḥ
sarvajño nitya-nūtaṇaḥ
sac-cid-ānanda-sāndrāṅgaḥ
sarva-siddhi-niṣevitaḥ*

“These [5 qualities that *jīvas* cannot possess but that demigods like Śiva can, as well as all Viṣṇu-tattvas] are: 1. Always being situated in one’s original position, 2. being omniscient, 3. being always fresh and youthful, 4. being the concentrated

form of eternity, knowledge, and bliss, and 5. possessing all mystic perfection.”*

Sūtra 5

nityam nirviśeṣam ca

nityam—eternal; *nirviśeṣam*—without qualities; *ca*—and.

He also has no qualities eternally.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad* (1.3.15) it is said:

*aśabdam asparśam arūpam avyayam
tathārasam nityam agandhavam ca yat
anādy anantaṁ mahataḥ param dhruvam
nicāyā tan mṛtyu-mukhāt pramucyate*

“By understanding the Supreme, who has no sound, no touch, no form, no death, no taste, no scent, no beginning, and no end, and who is eternal and greater than the greatest, one is rescued from the jaws of death.”

In the *Hari-varṇa* it is said:

*brahma tejomayam divyam
mahad yad dṛṣṭavān asi
aham sa bhārata śreṣṭham
abhejas tat sanātanam*

“O Bharata, what you see is effulgent Supreme Brahman. I am that eternal Brahman.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*, *Madhya* 6.141) explains:

*nirviśeṣa tare kahe yei śruti-gaṇa
prakṛta niṣedhi kare aprakṛta-sthāpana*

“Wherever there is an impersonal description in the *Vedas*, the *Vedas* mean to establish that everything belonging to the Supreme Personality of Godhead is transcendental and free of mundane characteristics.”*

Sūtra 6

viruddha-dharma-sāmañjasyam tad-acintya-śaktivāt

viruddha—contradictory; *dharma*—natures; *sāmañjasyam*—propriety; *tat*—of

Him; *acintya*—inconceivable; *śaktitvāt*—because of potencies.

Because He has inconceivable potencies, it is proper that He has these mutually contradictory natures.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the *Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad* (3.19) it is said:

*apāṇi-pādo javano grahītā
paśyaty acakṣuḥ sa śṛṇoty akarṇaḥ
sa vetti vedyam na ca tasyāsti vettā
tam āhur āgryam puruṣam mahantam*

“Learned transcendentalists explain that God is the greatest, the original person. He has no material hands, but He can take anything. He has no material legs, but He can travel faster than anyone. He has no material eyes, but He sees everything. He has no material ears, but He hears everything. He knows everything, but no one knows Him.”*

In the *Kūrma Purāṇa* it is said:

*aiśvarya-yogād bhagavān
viruddhārtho ‘bhidhīyate
tathāpi doṣāḥ paramā
naivāharyāḥ kadācana*

“Because He has inconceivable powers, the Supreme Personality of Godhead has many mutually contradictory qualities. There is never any fault in this.”

Śrīla Jayatīrtha Muni explains:

*na kevalam sāmānyato vicitra-śaktir īśvaraḥ kintu sarva-viṣaye sarvadā vidyamāna-
vicitra-śaktiḥ.*

“It is not merely that, in general, the Supreme Lord has wonderful powers; it is that always and in every circumstance His power and glory are wonderful.”

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

*dharma eva dharmitvam nirbheda eva nānā-bhedavattvam arūpitva eva rūpitvam
vyapakatva eva madhyamattvam iti paraspara-viruddhānanta-guṇa-nidhiḥ.*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who possesses all transcendental qualities, is not different from His many qualities and glories. He has a form, and yet He has no form. He is all-pervading, and yet He stands in one place. He is a

great treasure-house of limitless and mutually contradictory transcendental qualities.”

Sūtra 7

sa-viśeṣatvam eva balavad itarānupalabdhe

sa—with; *viśeṣa*—qualities; *tvam*—the state of being; *eva*—indeed; *balavat*—powerful; *itara*—of the other; *anupalabdhe*—unperceived.

Because the Lord’s feature without qualities cannot be perceived, His feature with qualities is more important.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Ṛgveda-saṁhitā it is said:

*tad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padam
sada paśyanti sūrayaḥ
divīva cakṣur ātataṁ
tad viprāso vipanyavo jāgrvāmsaḥ samindhate
viṣṇor yat paramaṁ padam*

“Just as the sun’s rays in the sky are extended to the mundane vision, so in the same way the wise and learned devotees always see the supreme abode of Lord Viṣṇu. Because those highly praiseworthy and spiritually awake brāhmaṇas are able to see the spiritual world, they are also able to reveal that supreme abode of Lord Viṣṇu.”*

In the Varāha Purāṇa it is said:

*sarve nityāḥ śāśvatās ca
devād yasya parātmanaḥ
heyopadeya-rahitāḥ
naiva prakṛtijāḥ kvacit*

“All the varied expansions of the Personality of Godhead are transcendental and eternal, and all of them repeatedly descend to all the different universes of the material creation. Their bodies, composed of eternity, bliss, and knowledge, are everlasting. There is no chance of their decaying, for they are not creations of the

material world. Their forms are concentrated spiritual existence, always complete with all spiritual qualities and devoid of material contamination.”*

*paramānanda-sandoha-
jñāna-mātra ca sarvataḥ
deha-dehi-bhidā cātra
neśvare vidyate kvacit*

“All the forms of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are full of knowledge and bliss. The Supreme Personality of Godhead and His forms are never different.”

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

*akhaṇḍa-tattva-rūpo bhagavān sāmānyākārasya sphūrṭi-lakṣaṇatvena sva-
prabhākārasya brahmaṇo ‘py āśraya iti yuktam eva.*

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead is never different from any of His forms. He is the shelter of the effulgent impersonal Brahman, which is the light emanating from His transcendental form.”

Sūtra 8

svarūpa-tad-rūpa-vaibhava-jīva-prādhāna-rūpena tac caturdhā

svarūpa—own form; *tad-rūpa-vaibhava*—expansions; *jīva*—individual spirit souls; *prādhāna*—matter; *rūpena*—in the form; *tac*—that; *caturdhā*—in four ways.

He has four manifestations: 1. His original form, 2. the forms of His direct expansions, 3. the individual spirit souls, and 4. the world of matter.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.16) it is said:

sa viśva-kṛd viśva-vid ātma-yoniḥ

kāla-karo guṇī sarva-vidyaḥ

prādhāna-kṣetra-patir guṇeśaḥ

samsāra-mokṣa-sthiti-bandha-hetuḥ

“The Supreme Lord, the creator of the cosmic manifestation, knows every nook and corner of His creation. Although He is the cause of creation, there is no cause for His appearance. He is fully aware of everything. He is the Supersoul, the master of all transcendental qualities, and He is the master of this cosmic manifestation in regard to bondage to the conditional state of material existence and liberation from that bondage.”*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

*bhakti-yogena manasi
samyak pranihite ‘male
apaśyat puruṣaṁ pūrṇaṁ
māyām ca tad-apāśrayam*

“Thus he fixed his mind, perfectly engaging it by linking it in devotional service (bhakti-yoga) without any tinge of materialism, and thus he saw the Absolute Personality of Godhead along with His external energy, which was under full control.”*

*yayā sammohito jīva
ātmānaṁ tri-guṇātmakam
paro ‘pi manute ‘nartham
tat-kṛtaṁ cābhipadyate*

“Due to this external energy, the living entity, although transcendental to the three modes of material nature, thinks of himself as a material product and thus undergoes the reactions of material miseries.”*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

ekam evaṁ paramaṁ tattvaṁ svābhāvīkācintya-śaktyā sarvadaiva svarūpa-tad-rūpa-

vaibhava-jīva-pradhāna-rūpeṇa caturdhāvatiṣṭhate.

“Although the Supreme Personality of Godhead is one, by His inconceivable potencies He always has four manifestations: 1. His original form, 2. the forms of His direct expansions, 3. the individual spirit souls, and 4. the world of matter.”

Sūtra 9

acintya-bhedābhedātmakam

acintya—inconceivable; *bheda*—different; *abheda*—not different; *ātmakam*—Self.

Everything is inconceivably different and not different from Him.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (2.2.12) it is said:

eko vaśī sarva-bhūtāntarātmā

ekaṁ rūpaṁ bahudhā yaḥ karoti

tam ātma-sthaṁ ye ‘nupaśyanti dhīrās

teṣāṁ sukhaṁ śāśvataṁ netareṣāṁ

“Wise men who in their hearts see the one Supreme Personality of Godhead, who becomes many and enters everyone’s heart, attain eternal bliss. Others cannot.”

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

yathā mahānti bhūtāni

bhūteṣūccavaceṣv anu

praviṣṭāny apraviṣṭāni

yathā teṣu na teṣv aham

“O Brahmā, please know that the universal elements enter into the cosmos and at the same time they do not enter into the cosmos. Similarly, I Myself also exist within everything created, and at the same time I am outside of everything.”*

In the Padma Purāṇa it is said:

acintyayaiva śaktyaiva
eko ‘vayava-varjitaḥ
ātmānam bahudhā kṛtvā
krīḍate yoga-sampadā

“With the help of His inconceivable mystic potency, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has no material body, becomes many and enjoys pastimes.”

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

sva-mate tv acintya-bhedābhedāv eva.

“Everything is inconceivably different and not different from the Supreme Lord.”

Chapter Two Śakti-prakarāṇa The Potencies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Sūtra 10

hlādinī-sandhinī-samvid iti para-śakteḥ prabhāva-trayam

hlādinī—hladini; sandhinī—sandhini; samvit—samvit; iti—thus; para—transcendental; śakteḥ—of the potency; prabhāva—powers; trayam—three.

The Lord’s three transcendental potencies are: 1. Hlādinī (bliss), 2. Sandhinī

(eternity), and 3. Samvit (knowledge).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.8) it is said:

na tasya kāryaṁ karaṇaṁ ca vidyate
na tat-samaś cābhyadhikaś ca dṛśyate
parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śrūyate
svābhāvīkī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca

“He does not possess bodily form like that of an ordinary living entity. There is no difference between His body and His soul. He is absolute. All His senses are transcendental. Any one of His senses can perform the action of any other sense. Therefore, no one is greater than Him or equal to Him. His potencies are multifarious, and thus His deeds are automatically performed as a natural sequence.”*

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa (1.12.69) it is said:

hlādinī sandhinī samvit
tvayy eka sarva-saṁsthitau
hlāda-tāpa-karī miśrā
tvayi no guṇa-varjite

“O Lord, You are the support of everything. The three attributes hlādinī, sandhinī, and samvit exist in You as one spiritual energy. But the material modes, which cause happiness, misery, and mixtures of the two, do not exist in You, for You have no material qualities.”*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 6.158-159) it is said:

sac-cid-ānanda-maya īśvara-svarūpa
tina aṁśe cic-chakti haya tina rūpa

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original form is full of eternity, knowledge, and bliss. The spiritual potency in these three portions (sat, cit, and ānanda) assumes three different forms.*

ānandāṁśe hlādinī sad-aṁśe sandhinī

cid-amśe samvit yāre kṛṣṇa-jñāna māni

“The three portions of the spiritual potency are called hlādinī (the bliss portion), sandhinī (the eternity portion), and samvit (the knowledge portion). We accept knowledge of these as full knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.”*

Sūtra 11

saiva svato ‘ntaraṅgā-bahiraṅgā-taṭasthā

sā—that; eva—indeed; svataḥ—personally; antaraṅgā—internal; bahiraṅgā—external; taṭasthā—marginal.

Those potencies become: 1. Antaraṅgā (internal potency), Bahiraṅgā (external potency), and Taṭasthā (marginal potency).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (1.3) it is said:

te dhyāna-yogānugatā apaśyan
devātma-śaktim sva-guṇair nigūḍham

“Rapt in meditation, the sages then saw the mysterious potency and transcendental qualities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the first cause, who alone dominates the secondary causes, from time to the individual living entity.”

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (4.5) it is said:

ajām ekām lohita-kṛṣṇa-śuklām

“A unborn man enjoys an unborn red, white, and black woman who bears many children like herself. Another unborn man first enjoys and then forsakes her.”

(Note: The unborn woman is the material nature. The colors red, white, and black are the modes of passion, goodness, and ignorance. The many children are

the ingredients of the material universes. The first unborn man is the conditioned soul. the second unborn man is the soul who, after trying to enjoy matter, finally renounces the world and attains liberation.)

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (4.7) it is said:

samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno
anīśayā śocati muhyamānaḥ

“Although the two birds are on the same tree, the eating bird is fully engrossed with anxiety and moroseness as the enjoyer of the fruits of the tree. But if in some way or other he turns his face to his friend who is the Lord and knows His glories, at once the suffering bird becomes free from all anxieties.”*

(Note: The eating bird is the individual spirit soul, his friend, the other bird, is the Supersoul, and the tree is the material body.)

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa it is said:

viṣṇu-śaktiḥ parā proktā
kṣetrañākhyā tathāparā
avidyā karma-samjñānyā
ṛtīyā śaktir iṣyate

“The potency of Lord Viṣṇu is summarized in three categories, namely the spiritual potency, the living entities, and ignorance. The spiritual potency is full of knowledge, the living entities, although belonging to the spiritual potency, are subject to bewilderment, and the third energy, which is full of ignorance, is always visible in fruitive activities.”*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

śaktiś ca sa tridhā antaraṅgā taṭasthā bahiraṅgā ca.

“The Supreme Personality of Godhead has three potencies: 1. Antaraṅgā (internal potency), Bahiraṅgā (external potency), and Taṭasthā (marginal potency).

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī explains:

cic-chakti jīva-śakti ara māyā-śakti

“The Lord has three potencies: 1. the spiritual potency, 2. the living entities, and 3. the world of matter.”

Sūtra 12

tad-īkṣaṇāc chaktir eva kriyāvati

tat—of Him; īkṣaṇāt—by the glance; śaktiḥ—potency; eva—indeed; kriyāvati—active.

The Lord’s glance pushes His potency into action.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Praśna Upaniṣad (6.3) it is said:

sa īkṣām cakre

“He glanced over the material creation.”*

In the Aitareya Upaniṣad (1.1.1-2) it is said:

sa aikṣata lokān nu sṛja iti. sa imān lokān asṛjāta.

“He glanced over the material creation. Thus He created the entire material world.”*

In the Vāmana Purāṇa it is said:

tatra tatra sthito viṣṇus
tat-tac-chaktiḥ prabodhayan
eka eva mahā-śaktiḥ
kurute sarvam aṅjasā

“Wherever Lord Viṣṇu goes, His potencies follow. The master of great potencies, He does everything very easily.”

In the Bhagavad-gītā (9.10), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

mayādhyakṣena prakṛtiḥ
sūyate sa-carācaram
hetunānena kaunteya
jagad viparivartate

“This material nature, which is one of My energies, is working under My direction, O son of Kuntī, producing all moving and nonmoving beings. Under its rule this manifestation is created and annihilated again and again.”*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu explains:

śakti prādhāna kṛṣṇa icchaya sarvaṁ karta

“Lord Kṛṣṇa wishes, and His potency does everything.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu again explains (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 20.259):

māyā-dvare sṛje teṅho brahmaṇḍera gaṇa
jaḍa-rūpa prakṛti nāhe brahmāṇḍa-karaṇa

“By the agency of the material energy, this same Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa creates all the universes. The dull material energy, known in modern language as nature, is not the cause of the material universe.”*

Chapter Three Svarūpa-prakarāṇa The Real Form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Sūtra 13

svarūpaṁ tri-vidham

svarūpaṁ—own form; tri—three; vidham—kinds.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead has three features.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad it is said:

udgītam etat paramaṁ tu brahma
tasmims trayam su-pratiṣṭhitākṣaram ca
tatrāntaram brahma-vido viditvā
līnā brahmaṇi tat-para yoni-muktāḥ

“The Vedas declare that the Absolute Truth exists in three features. He is the Brahman, the Supersoul in everyone’s heart, and the Supreme Person. They who know Him as the impersonal Brahman merge into Brahman. They who are devoted to His original feature as the Supreme Person escape having to enter a mother’s womb.”

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

vadanti tat tattva-vidas
tattvaṁ yaj jñānam advayam
brahmeti paramātmēti
bhagavān iti śabdyate

“Learned transcendentalists who know the Absolute Truth call this non-dual substance Brahman, Paramātmā, or Bhagavān.”*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu explains (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 20.157):

jñāna yoga bhakti tina sādhanera vaśe
brahma ātmā bhagavān tri-vidhā prakāśe

“There are three kinds of spiritual processes for understanding the Absolute Truth: the processes of speculative knowledge, mystic yoga, and bhakti-yoga. According to these three processes, the Absolute Truth is manifested and Brahman, Paramātmā, and Bhagavān.”*

Sūtra 14

jñāne cin-mātram brahma

jñāne—in jnana-yoga; cit—spirit; mātram—only; brahma—Brahman.

By following jñāna-yoga the undifferentiated spirit, the Brahman, is realized.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kena Upaniṣad (1.4) it is said:

yad vacanābhyuditaṁ yan manasā na manute yac cakṣuṣā na paśyanti yac
chrotreṇa na śṛṇoti yat prāṇena na praṇiti tad eva brahma taṁ viddhi.

“Know that the Brahman cannot be described by the voice, conceived of by the mind, seen by the eyes, heard about by the ears, or breathed with the breath.”

In the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad it is said:

sarvaṁ hy etad brahmāyam ātmā brahma so ‘yam ātmā catuṣpat.

“Everything is Brahman. The Supersoul, present in each of the four quarters, is Brahman.”

In the Bhagavad-gītā (14.27), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

brahmaṇo hi pratiṣṭhāham
amṛtasyāvyayasya ca
śāśvatasya ca dharmasya
sukham aikāntikasya ca

“I am the basis of the impersonal Brahman, which is immortal, imperishable, and eternal, and is the constitutional position of ultimate happiness.”*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu explains:

brahma aṅga-kānti tānra nirviśeṣa prakāśe
sūrya yena carma-cakṣe jyotirmaya bhase

“The manifestation of the impersonal Brahman effulgence, which is without variety, is the rays of Kṛṣṇa’s bodily effulgence. It is exactly like the sun. When the sun is seen by our ordinary eyes, it simply appears to consist of effulgence.”*

Sūtra 15

yoge viśvamaya-parātmā

yoge—in yoga; viśvamaya—everywhere in the universe; parātmā—the Supersoul.

By following the path of yoga the Supersoul, who is present everywhere in the material universe, is realized.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Aitareya Upaniṣad it is said:

ātmā vā idam eka evāgra āsīt. nānyat kiñcana miṣat.

“In the beginning only the Supersoul existed. There was nothing but Him.”

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad it is said:

aṅguṣṭha-mātraḥ puruṣo ‘ntarātmā
sadā janānām hṛdaye sanniviṣṭhaḥ
hṛdā manv-īso manasābhikṣpto
yatra tad vidur amṛtās te bhavanti

“The conditioned soul is small like a thumb, splendid like the sun, and filled with false-ego and material desire. Different from him is the Supersoul, whose form is also very small, but who is filled with intelligence and spiritual knowledge.”

In the Sātvata Tantra it is said:

viṣṇos tu trīṇi rūpāṇi

puruṣākhyāny atho viduḥ
prathamam mahataḥ sraṣṭṛ
dvitīyam tv aṇḍa-saṁsthitam
tṛtīyam sarva-bhūta-stham
tā vijñātvā pramucyate

“Viṣṇu has three forms, called puruṣas. The first, Mahā-Viṣṇu, is the creator of the total material energy (mahat), the second is Garbhodaśāyī, who is situated within each universe, and the third is Kṣīrodaśāyī, who lives in the heart of every living being. He who knows these three becomes liberated from the clutches of māyā.”*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (explains:

paramātmā yeṅho tiṅho kṛṣṇera eka aṁśa
ātmara ātmā hana kṛṣṇa sarva avataṁsa

“The Paramātmā, the Supersoul feature, is the partial plenary portion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the original source of all living entities. It is also Kṛṣṇa who is the original source of Paramātmā.”*

Sūtra 16

tad-avatāra hy asaṅkhyāḥ

tat—of Him; avatāraḥ—incarnations; hy—indeed; asaṅkhyāḥ—countless.

From Him come countless incarnations.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Catur-veda-śikhā, the Lord says:

vāsudevaḥ saṅkarṣaṇaḥ pradyumno ‘niruddho ‘haṁ matyasaḥ kūrmo varāho
ṅṣimho vāmano rāmo rāmo buddha-kalkir aham

“I am Vāsudeva, Saṅkarṣaṇa, Pradyumna, Aniruddha, Matyasa, Kūrma, Varāha, ṅṣimha, Vāmana, Rāma, Paraśurāma, Buddha, and Kalki.”

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.3.26) it is said:

avatārā hy asaṅkhyeyā
hareḥ sattva-nidher dvijāḥ
yathā vidāmsinaḥ kūlyāḥ
sarasaḥ syuḥ sahasraśaḥ

“O brāhmaṇas, the incarnations of the Lord are innumerable, like rivulets flowing from inexhaustible sources of water.”*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 20.245-246) explains:

puruṣāvatāra eka līlāvatāra āra
guṇāvatāra ara manvantarāvatāra
yugāvatāra ara śaktyāveśavatāra

“There are six types of incarnations (avatāras) of Kṛṣṇa. One is the incarnations of Viṣṇu (puruṣa-avatāras), and another is the incarnations meant for the performance of pastimes (līlā-avatāras). There are incarnations that control the material qualities (guṇa-avatāras), incarnations of the Manus (manvantara-avatāras), incarnations in different millenniums (yuga-avatāras), and incarnations of empowered living entities (śaktyāveśa-avatāras).”*

Sūtra 17

sarve cic-chaktimanto maheśvarāḥ

sarve—all; cit—spiritual; śakti—potencies; mantaḥ—possessing; maheśvarāḥ—the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

All these incarnations are the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. They are the masters of the spiritual potencies.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Catur-veda-śikhā it is said:

naivete jāyante naitesām ajñāna-bandho na muktiḥ. sarva eṣa hy ete pūrṇā ajarā
āmṛtāḥ paramāḥ paramānandāḥ.

“The incarnations of the Lord do not take birth. They are never bound by ignorance. They never require to become liberated. They are all perfect and complete. They are free from old-age and death. They are full of transcendental bliss. They are all the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.”

In the Varāha Purāṇa it is said:

svāmśas cātho vibhinnāmśa iti dvedhāmśa iṣyate.

“There are two kinds of amśas. The svāmśas are incarnations of the Lord and the vibhinnāmśas are the individual spirit souls.”

In the Sammohana Tantra it is said:

dharmārtha-kāma-mokṣāṇām
īśvaro jagad-īśvaraḥ
santi tasya mahā-bhāgā
avatārāḥ sahasraśaḥ

“the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the master of all the universes. He is the master of religion, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation. In many thousands of very glorious incarnations, He comes to this world.”

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 20.145) explains:

māyātīta paravyoma sabāra avasthāna
viśve avatari dhari avatāra nāma

“All the expansions of Lord Kṛṣṇa are actually residents of the spiritual world. However, when They descend into the material world, they are called incarnations (avatāras).”*

Sūtra 18

bhaktau pūrṇa-puruṣo bhagavān

bhaktau—in devotional service; pūrṇa-puruṣaḥ—the perfect Supreme

Personality of Godhead; bhagavān—the master of all opulences.

By following the path of devotional service the perfect Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of all opulences, is realized.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (3.8) it is said:

vedāham etaṁ puruṣaṁ mahantaṁ
āditya-varṇaṁ tamaśaḥ parastāt
tam eva viditvāti mṛtyum eti
nānyaḥ panthā vidyate 'yanāya

“I know that Supreme Personality of Godhead who is transcendental to all material conceptions of darkness. Only he who knows Him can transcend the bonds of birth and death. There is no way for liberation other than this knowledge of the Supreme Person.”*

In the Garga-saṁhitā it is said:

pūrṇaḥ puraṇaḥ puruṣottamottamaḥ
parāt paro yaḥ puruṣaḥ pareśvaraḥ
svayaṁ sad-ānandamayaṁ kṛpākaraṁ
guṇākaraṁ taṁ śaraṇaṁ vrajāmy aham

“I take shelter of the perfect Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is older than the oldest, greater than the greatest, the supreme person, the supreme master, full of transcendental bliss, a jewel mine of mercy, and a jewel mine of transcendental virtues.”

Śrī Nimbārka Svāmī explains:

svā-bhāvato 'pasta-samasta-doṣaṁ
aśeṣa-kalyāṇa-guṇaika-rāśim
vyūhāṅginaṁ brahma-paramṁ vareṇyaṁ
dhyāyema kṛṣṇaṁ kamalekṣaṇaṁ harim

“I meditate on Lord Kṛṣṇa, the lotus-eyed Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is completely faultless, who is a treasury of all auspicious virtues, who is the

Supreme, who is the greatest, and who expands in many forms.”

Sūtra 19

audarya-mādhuryaiśvarya-bhedena tat-svarūpam api tri-vidham

audarya—generosity; mādhurya—sweetness; aiśvarya—opulence; bhedena—
with difference; tat—His; svarūpam—nature; api—also; tri—three; vidham—
kinds.

He has three features: Audarya (generosity), Mādhurya (sweetness), and
Aiśvarya (opulence).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.7 and 3.12) it is said:

tam īśvarāṇām paramaṁ maheśvaraṁ
tam devatānām paramaṁ ca daivatam
patiṁ patinām paramaṁ parastāt
vidāma devaṁ bhuvaneśam īḍyam

“We meditate on the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the controller of
all other controllers, and He is the greatest of all the diverse planetary leaders.
Everyone is under His control. All entities are delegated with particular power only
by the Supreme Lord. They are not Supreme themselves. He is also worshipable by
all demigods and is the supreme director of all directors. Therefore, He is
transcendental to all kinds of material leaders and controllers and is worshipable
by all. There is no one greater than Him, and He is the supreme cause of all
causes.”*

mahān prabhur vai puruṣaḥ
sattvasyaīṣaḥ pravartakaḥ
su-nirmalam imaṁ prāptiṁ
īśāno jyotir avyayaḥ

“the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the source of the Brahman effulgence,
and He is imperishable. He is the Supreme Controller. He controls the mode of
goodness, and He awards various kinds of intelligence to the living entities. He is
the controller of spiritual purity and liberation.”*

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

sat-puṇḍarīka-nayanam
meghāmbhram vaidyutāmbaram
dvi-bhujam mauna-mudrāḍhyam
vana-mālinam īsvaram

“I offer my respectful obeisances to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose eyes are lotus flowers, who is splendid like a dark monsoon cloud, whose garments are lightning, who has two arms, who is filled with transcendental knowledge, and who is decorated with a garland of forest flowers.”

In the Manu-saṁhitā it is said:

praśāsitarām sarv/eṣām
aniyāmsam aṇor api
rukṁābham svapna-dhī-gamyam
vidyāt tam puruṣam param

“Please know that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the master and controller of everyone. He is smaller than the smallest. He is splendid like gold. He sometimes appears in a dream.”

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.2.17) it is said:

na yatra kālam nimiṣam paraḥ prabhuḥ

“In that transcendental state of labdhopasānti, there is no supremacy of devastating time.”*

In the Nārada-pañcarātra it is said:

maṇir yathā vibhāgena
nīla-pītādibhir yutaḥ
rūpa-bhedam avāpnoti
dhyāna-bhedāt tathācyutaḥ

“When the jewel known as vaidūrya touches other materials, it appears to be separated into different colors. Consequently the forms also appear different.

Similarly, according to the meditational ecstasy of the devotee, the Lord, who is known as Acyuta (infallible), appears in different forms, although He is essentially one.”*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (2.22) it is said:

sei nārāyaṇa kṛṣṇera svarūpa abheda

“Lord Nārāyaṇa and Lord Kṛṣṇa are not different.”

sei govinda sākṣāc caitanya gosai
jīva nistārite aiche dayālu ara nai

“That Govinda personally appears as Caitanya Gosāñi. No other Lord is as merciful in delivering the fallen souls.”*

In the Caitanya-candrodaya, Lord Advaita Prabhu says:

nava-kuvalaya-dhāma śyāmalo vāma-jaṅghā
hita-tad-itara-jaṅghaḥ ko ‘pi divya-kiśoraḥ
tam iva sa sa iva tvaṁ gocaro naiva bhedaḥ
kathayatha rūpyam aho me jāgrataḥ svapna eṣaḥ

“O Lord Caitanya, You are not different from Lord Kṛṣṇa, the divine youth who is dark like a splendid blue lotus. Please reveal to Me this form of Lord Kṛṣṇa.”

Sūtra 20

svena dhāmnātma-śaktyā ca so ‘py avatarati

svena—own; dhāmnā—with abode; ātma—own; śaktyā—with potency; ca—and; saḥ—He; api—indeed; avatarati—descends.

To this world He descends with His own potency and His transcendental abode.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Caitanya Upaniṣad it is said:

gauraḥ sarvātmā mahā-puruṣo mahātmā mahā-yogī tri-guṇātīta-sattva-rūpo
bhaktim loke kāśayati.

“Lord Gaura, who is the all-pervading Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, appears as a great saint and powerful mystic who is above the three modes of nature, and is the emblem of transcendental activity. He disseminates the cult of devotion throughout the world.”*

In the Kena Upaniṣad (3.2) it is said:

tad vaiṣāṁ vijajñō tebhyo prāhurbabhūva

“Understanding them, the Supreme Personality of Godhead appeared before them.”

In the Kālikā Purāṇa, in the Devī-stuti prayers, it is said:

tasya brahmādayo devā
munayaś ca tapo-dhanāḥ
na vivṛṇṇanti rūpāṇi
varṇanīyaḥ katham sa me

“Brahmā, the demigods, and the sages whose wealth is austerity cannot properly describe the transcendental forms of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. How can I describe Them?”

In Govinda dāsa’s Prārthanā it is said:

hari hari baḍa duḥkha rahala marame

gaura kīrtana rase jaga-jana matala
vañcita mo hena adhame

“Alas! Alas! I am very unhappy at heart. Everyone in the world is now intoxicated with the nectar of Lord Gaura’s kīrtana. Only I, the lowest of the low, have been cheated of tasting it.

vrajendra-nandana jei śacī-suta bhela sei

balarāma haila nitāi
dīna hīna jata chila hari-nāme uddhārila
tāra sākṣī jagāi madhāi

“The prince of Vraja has become Śacī’s son. Balarāma has become Nityānanda. The holy name has delivered all the fallen. Jagai and Mādhai are the witnesses to prove that fact.

hena prabhu śrī-carāṇe rati nā janmila kene
na bhajilāma hena avatāra
daruṇa biṣaya biṣe satata majiyā reṇu
mukhe dinu jvalanta aṅgāra

“I do not love the Lord’s feet. I do not worship Him as He appears in this incarnation. Again and again I drink the most terrible poison. My mouth is now burned to ashes.

emana dayālu dātā āra na paiba kothā
pāiyā helāya hārāinu
govinda-dāsiyā kaya anale puḍinu naya
saha jei ātma-ghāti hainu

“He is the most merciful. Still, Govinda dāsa burns in this fire of illusions.

Chapter Four Dhāma-prakaraṇa The Abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Sūtra 21

tat-tat-svarūpa-vaibhavaṁ dhāma-nicayam

tat-tat - various; svarūpa - of forms; vaibhavam - glory; dhāma - of abodes;
nicayam - multitude.

The glories of the Lord's many forms are manifested in many different abodes.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad it is said:

satyena labhyas tapasā hy eṣa ātmā
samyak jñānena brahmacaryeṇa nityam
antaḥ śarīre jyotirmayo hi śubhro
yam paśyanti yatayaḥ kṣīṇa-doṣāḥ

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is attained by truthfulness, austerity, knowledge, and celibacy. Glorious and effulgent, He always stays the heart. They who are faultless gaze on Him."

In the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa it is said:

siddhalokas tu tamasaḥ
pāre yatra vasanti hi
siddhā brahma-mukhe magnā
daityāś ca hariṇā hatāḥ

"Beyond the darkness of matter is the world of the siddhas. The siddhas enter the mouth of Brahman and the demons killed by the Lord also enter."

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Adi 4.64) explains:

sandhi nīra sāra aṁśa śuddha-sattvā nāma
bhagavānera satta haya tahate biśrāma

"The essential portion of the sandhinī potency is śuddha-sattva. Lord Kṛṣṇa's existence rests upon it."*

Sūtra 22

jyotir brahmaṇaḥ

jyotiḥ - effulgence; brahmaṇaḥ - of Brahman.

The abode of Brahman is light.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Praśna Upaniṣad (1.15) it is said:

teṣāṃ evaiṣa brahmaloka yeṣāṃ tapo brahmacaryaṃ yeṣu satyaṃ pratiṣṭhitam.

"They who are austere, celibate, and truthful reside in the world of Brahman."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

ṛṣayo vāta rasanā
śramaṇā ūrdhva-manthinaḥ
brahmākhyāṃ dhāma te yanti
śāntāḥ sannyāsino 'malāḥ

"With a great effort the peaceful sages and pure-hearted ascetics attain the world of Brahman."

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Adi 5.32, 5.37, and 5.38) it is said:

vaikuṅṭhe bahire eka jyotirmaya maṇḍala
kṛṣṇera aṅgera prabhā parama ujjvala

"Outside the Vaikuṅṭha planets is the atmosphere of the glowing effulgence, which consists of the supremely bright rays of the body of Lord Kṛṣṇa."*

nirviśeṣa jyotir bimba bahire prakāśa

"Outside the Vaikuṅṭha planets appears the impersonal reflection of light."*

sāyujyera adhikārī tānhā pāya laya

"Those fit for sāyujya liberation merge into that effulgence."*

Sūtra 23

viśvaṁ paramātmanaḥ

viśvam - the universe; paramātmanaḥ - of the Supersoul.

The abode of the Supersoul is the material world.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (2.3.2,3) it is said:

yad idaṁ kiṁ ca jagat sarvaṁ
prāṇa ejati niḥsṛtam
mahad bhayaṁ vajram udyataṁ
yatra tad vidur amṛtās te bhavanti

"He is the life that moves in this universe. He is a terrifying raised thunderbolt. They who know Him become immortal."

bhayaḍ asyāgnis tapati
bhayaḥ tapati sūryaḥ
bhayaḍ indraś ca vāyuś ca
mṛtyur dhāvati pañcamaḥ.

"Out of fear of Him fire burns. Out of fear of Him the sun shines. Out of fear of Him Indra, Vāyu, and Yama run to perform their duties."

In the Padma Purāṇa it is said:

tri-pād-vibhūter dhāmatvāt
tri-pāda-bhūtaṁ hi tat-padam
vibhūtir māyikī sarva-
proktā padātmikā matā

"Because it consists of three-fourths of the Lord's energy, the spiritual world is called tripāda-bhūta. Being a manifestation of one fourth of the Lord's energy, the material world is called eka-pāda."*

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Adi 5.85 and 86) explains:

antarātmā rūpe tiṅho jagat-ādhāra

prakṛti sahita tāṅra ubhaya sambandha
tathāpi prakṛti saha nāhi sparśa gandha

"Although the Lord is the shelter of everything and although all the universes rest in Him, He, as the Supersoul, is also the support of everything. Although He is thus connected with the material energy in two ways, He does not have the slightest contact with it."*

Sūtra 24

paravyoma bhagavataḥ

paravyoma - the spiritual sky; bhagavataḥ - of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

The spiritual sky is the abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead (bhagavān).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad (2.1.2) it is said:

om brahma-vid āpnoti param. satyam jñānam anantaṁ brahma yo veda nihitaṁ
guhataṁ parame vyoman so 'śnute sarvān kāmān saha brahmaṇā vipaścitā.

"Om. One who understands the Supreme Personality of Godhead attains the spiritual world. One who understands that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternal, all-knowing, limitless, and all-pervading, attains all his desires. In the spiritual world he enjoys with the all-knowing Supreme Person."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (15.6), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

na tad bhāsayate sūryo
na śaśāṅko na pāvakaḥ
yad gatvā na nivartante
tad dhāma paramaṁ mama

"That supreme abode of Mine is not illuminated by the sun or moon, nor by fire or electricity. Those who reach it never return to this material world."*

In the Padma Purāṇa it is said:

tasyāḥ pare paravyoma
tri-pad-bhūtaṁ sanātanam
amṛtaṁ śāśvataṁ nityaṁ
anantaṁ paramaṁ padam

"Beyond the River Virajā is a spiritual nature, which is indestrucible, eternal, inexhaustible, and unlimited. It is the supreme abode consisting of three fourths of the Lord's opulences. It is known as paravyoma, the spiritual sky."*

Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta Adi 5.14,16,17) explains:

prakṛtira para paravyoma nāma dhāma

"Beyond the material nature lies the realm known as paravyoma, the spiritual sky."*

tāhāra upari-bhāge kṛṣṇaloka khyāti

"In the highest region of that spiritual sky is the spiritual planet called Kṛṣṇaloka."*

sarvopari śrī-gokula vrajaloka nāma
goloka-stha śvetadvīpe vṛndāvana dhāma

"Śrī Gokula, the highest of all, is also called Vraja, Goloka, Śvetavīpa, and Vṛndāvana."*

The External Potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead

Sūtra 25

svarūpa-vaibhava-prati-cchavi-rūpa māyā

svarūpa - of the form; vaibhava - potency; prati-cchavi - reflection; rūpa - form; māyā - illusion.

The material energy is the reflected potency of the Lord.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.14) it is said:

na tatra sūryo bhāti na candra-tāraḥ
nemā vidyuto bhānti kuto 'yam agniḥ
tam eva bhāntam anubhāti sarvaṁ
tasya bhāsā sarvaṁ idaṁ vibhāti

"In the sva-dhāma (the abode) of the Lord there is no need of sun, moon, or stars for illumination. Nor is there need of electricity, so what to speak of ignited lamps. On the other hand, it is because these planets are self-illuminating that all-effulgence has become possible, and whatever there is that is dazzling is due to the reflection of that sva-dhāma."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

idaṁ hi viśvaṁ bhagavān ivetaro
yato jagat-sthāna-nirodha-sambhavaḥ
tad dhi svayaṁ veda bhavaṁs tathāpi te
pradeśa-mātraṁ bhavataḥ pradarśitam

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is Himself this cosmos, and still He is aloof from it. From Him only has this cosmic manifestation emanated, in Him it rests, and unto Him it enters after annihilation. Your good self knows all about this. I have given only a synopsis."*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

bahirāṅgayā māyayākhyayā prati-cchavi-gata-varṇa-sāvalya-sthānīya-bahiraṅga-vaibhava-jaḍātma-prādhāna-rūpeṇa. ābhāso jyotir-bimbasya svīya-prakāśad vyavahita-pradeśe kathaṅcid ucchalitaḥ prati-cchavi-viśeṣaḥ.

"The Lord's external material potency is like His reflection. It is like the reflected light of the sun."

Sūtra 26

prādhānādi-pada-vācyā

prādhāna - pradhana; ādi - beginning with; pada-vācyā - by the words.

The material energy is called by the name pradhāna and other names also.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.4.10) it is said:

andham tamaḥ praviśanti
ye 'vidyām upāsate.

"They who engage in the culture of nescient activities shall enter into the darkest region of ignorance."*

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (1.10) it is said:

kṣaram prādhānam

"The material world is a world of repeated death."

In the Mahā-samhitā it is said:

śrī bhūr durgeti yābhinnā
jīva-māyā mahātmanaḥ
ātma-māyā tad-icchā syād
guṇa-māyā jaḍātmikā

"The Supreme Lord's material energy is known as Śrī, Bhū, Durgā, Jīva-māyā, Atmā-māyā, Guṇa-māyā, and Jaḍātmikā."

Śrīla Nimbārka Svāmī explains:

māyā prādhānādi-pada-pravācyā śuklādi-bhedā same 'pi tatra.

"The Supreme Lord's material energy, which consists of the three modes, beginning with the mode of goodness, is called by the name pradhāna and many other names also."

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

tasyāpy ābhāsākhyatvam api dhvanitam.

"The Lord's material energy is called by the name Abhāsa."

Sūtra 27

guṇātmikā sthūla-liṅgābhyām cid-āvaraṇī ca

guṇa - the modes of nature; ātmikā - consisting of; sthūla-liṅgābhyām - with gross and subtle bodies; cit - the soul; āvaraṇī - covering; ca - also.

The material nature, which consists of the modes of material nature, covers the spirit souls with gross and subtle bodies.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (1.4) it is said:

aṣṭakaiḥ ṣaḍbhir viśva-rūpaika-pāśam
tri-mārga-bhedam dvi-nimittaika-moham

"They saw the potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead as a great wheel with a single rim divided first into three and then into sixteen, with 50 spokes, 20

counter-spokes, six groups of eight, one rope, three paths, and an illusion with two causes."

(Note: Śrī Raṅga Rāmānuja explains that the three divisions of the rim are the material modes of goodnes, passion, and ignorance, the sixteen divisions are the five gross elements (earth, water, fire, air, and ether), the five working senses (voice, arms, legs, belly, and genital), the five knowledge-acquiring senses (eyes, ears, tongue, nose, and touch), and the mind. The fifty spokes and 20 counter-spokes are the varieties of material suffering. The six groups of eight are: 1. earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence, and false ego, 2. the outer layer of sin, the inner layer of skin, flesh, blood, bones, marrow, fat, and semen, 3. mercy, forbearance, non-enviousness, diligence, being a source of auspiciousness for others, generosity, and freedom from material desire, 4. the eight mystic powers, 5. piety, knowledge, renunciation, opulence, sinfulness, ignorance, sense-happiness, and poverty, and 6. Brahmā, the prajāpatis, devas, gandharvas, yakṣas, rākṣasas, pitās, and piśācas. The single rope is material desire, the three paths are karma (fruitive action), jñāna (the search for knowledge), and bhakti (devotional service), and the two causes of illusion are sense-pleasure and material-piety._

In the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa it is said:

tan nātra vismayah karyo
yoga-nidrā jagat-pateḥ
mahā-māyām hareś caitat
tayā sammohyate jagat

"It is not surprising that the Supreme Lord's mystic sleep is an illusory potency that bewilders all the world."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (7.14), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

daivī hy eṣa guṇamayī
mama māyā duratyayā

"This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome."*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

yadyapīyam bahiraṅgā tathāpy asyām taṭastha-śakti-mayam api jīvam āvaritum
sāmarthyam astīti. iyam api jīva-jñānam āvṛṇoti.

"The Lord's external potency has the power to cover the marginal potency, which consists of the individual spirit souls. Thus the marginal potency covers the souls' true knowledge."

Sūtra 28

tasmin deśa-kāla-karmādi-jaḍa-vyāpāra-viśeṣāḥ

tasmin - in that; deśa - place; kāla - time; karma - action; ādi - beginning with; jaḍa-vyāpāra-viśeṣāḥ - various material things.

In that external potency are situated time, space, karma, and other aspects of matter.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (4.9) it is said:

chandāmsi yajñā ṛtavo vratāni
bhūtaṁ bhāvyaṁ yac ca vedā vadanti
yasmān mayi sṛjate viśvam etat
tasmiṁś cānyo māyayā sanniruddham

"The Vedas describe a bewildering variety of hymns, prayers, sacrifices, rituals, vows, austerities, history, and predictions of the future. Simply by studying the Vedas it is very difficult for the conditioned soul, illusioned by māyā and trapped in the material world, to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the controller of the illusory potency and the creator of the material universes."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.5.25) it is said:

sā vā etasya sandraṣṭuḥ
śaktiḥ sad-asad-ātmikā
māyā nāma mahā-bhāga
yayedam nirmame vibhuḥ

"The Lord is the seer, and the external energy, which is seen, works as both cause and effect in the cosmic manifestation. O greatly fortunate Vidura, this external energy is known as māyā or illusion, and through her agency only is the entire material manifestation made possible."*

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa explains:

prakṛtiḥ sattvādi-guṇa-sāmyāvasthā tamo-māyādi-śabda-vācyā kālāṁ tu nimitta-
bhūto jaḍa-dravya-viśeṣaḥ karma tu jaḍam adṛṣṭādi vyapadeśyam anādi-viṇāśī ca.

"The Lord's material energy, which consists of the material modes beginning with the mode of goodness, and which is neither created nor destroyed, is called by the names tamaḥ, māyā, and many other names also. In that material energy are situated time, the lifeless material elements, karma, destiny, and many other features of matter."

Sūtra 29

bahiraṅga-vaicitraṁ tu antaraṅga-vaicitra-vikṛtiḥ

bahiraṅga - of the external energy; vaicitraṁ - the wonderful variety; tu - indeed; antaraṅga - of the internal potency; vaicitra - wonderful variety; vikṛtiḥ - transformation.

The wonderful variety present in the Lord's external energy is a perverted reflection of the wonderful variety present in the Lord's internal energy.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad it is said:

asmin dyauḥ pṛthivī cāntarīkṣam otam manaḥ saha prāṇaiś ca sarvaiḥ tam evaikam
jānathaḥ ātmānam anyāvāco vimuñcatha āmṛtasyaiśaḥ prabhuḥ.
etasyaivānandasyānyāni bhūtāni mātram upajīvanti.

"Please know that heaven, earth, outer space, mind, life, and everything else are all the potencies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Please avoid speaking of them in any other way. They are all the Lord's potencies. Everything depends on the blissful Supreme Lord."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.5.37) it is said:

bhūtānāṁ nabha-ādīnāṁ

yad-yad-bhāvya-avarāvam
teṣāṃ parānusāṃsārgād
yathā saṅkhyāṃ guṇān viduḥ

"O gentle one, of all the physical elements, beginning from the sky down to the earth, all the inferior and superior qualities are due only to the final touch of the glance of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu explains:

yaiccha sūryera sthāne bhāsaye ābhāsa
sūrya vinā svataḥ tāra na haya prakāśa

"The Supreme Lord is like the sun. As nothing can be seen without the sun, so nothing is manifested with the Lord."

In the following song Vidyāpati Ṭhākura describes the transcendental realm of Vṛndāvana:

bahiraṅga-prakṛta
vaicitra ihara vikṛti

nava vṛndāvana navīna taru-gaṇa
nava nava vikaṣita phula
navīna vasanta navīna malayānila
matala nava ali-kula

biharai naula kiśora
kāḷindī pulina kuñja nava śobhana
nava nava prema vibhora

navīna rasāla mukula madhu matīya
nava kokila kuñja gāya
nava-yuvati-gaṇa cita umatāyai
nava rase kanane dhāya

nava yuva rājā navīna nāgarī
milaye nava nava bhāti
nīti nīti aichana nava nava khelana
vidyāpati mati mati

"The material world is only a perverted reflection of the spiritual world of Vṛndāvana. Vṛndāvana is eternally new and fresh. The trees there are eternally new

and fresh, the blossoming flowers are eternally new and fresh, the springtime is eternally new and fresh, the Malaya breezes are eternally new and fresh, the buzzing bees are eternally new and fresh, and Lord Kṛṣṇa is eternally youthful and playful. The Yamunā, the riverbanks, and the forest groves are eternally new and eternally beautiful. The pure love is eternally new and fresh. The mango trees, the new buds, and the honey are all eternally new and fresh. The eternally young cuckoos sing in the forest groves. The eternally-young gopīs enjoy eternally-new nectar pastimes in the forests there. Kṛṣṇa is the eternally youthful king. Rādhā is His eternally youthful heroine. Their lover's meeting is eternally new and fresh. Their pastimes are eternally new and fresh. Vidyāpati dāsa thinks of Them again and again."

Chapter Six Jīva-tattva-prakarāṇa The Nature of the Individual Spirit Souls

Sūtra 30

parātma-sūrya-kiraṇa-paramāṇavo jīvāḥ

parātma - of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; sūrya - of the sun; kiraṇa - rays of light; paramāṇavaḥ - atoms; jīvāḥ - the individual spirit souls.

The individual spirit souls are rays of light coming from the sun of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad it is said:

yathāgneḥ kṣudrā visphuliṅgā vyuccaranti evam evāsmād ātmanaḥ sarvāni bhūtāni vyuccaranti.

"As sparks fly from a fire, so the individual spirit souls are manifest from the Supreme."

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (5.9) it is said:

bālāgra-śata-bhāgasya
śatadhā kalpitasya ca
bhāgo jīvaḥ sa vijñeyaḥ
sa cānantyāya kalpate

"If we divide the tip of a hair into one hundred parts and then take one part and divide this into another one hundred parts, that ten-thousandth part is the dimension of the living entity. Knowing this fact, a soul becomes eligible for liberation."*

In the Bhagavad-gītā (7.4-5), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

bhūmir āpo 'nalo vāyuḥ
kham mano buddhir vea ca
ahaṅkāra itiyam me
bhinnā prakṛtir aṣṭadhā

apareyam itas tv anyam
prakṛtiṁ viddhi me param
jīva-bhūtaṁ mahā-baho
yayedam dharyate jagat

"Earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intelligence, and false ego, all together these eight constitute My separated material energies. Besides these, O mighty-armed Arjuna, there is another, superior energy of Mine, which comprises the living entities who are exploiting the resources of this material, inferior nature."*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 20.108-109) explains:

jīvera svarūpa haya kṛṣṇera nitya dasa
kṛṣṇera tatastha śakti bhedabheda-prakāśa

suryamśu kiraṇa yena agni jvala caya

"It is the living entity's constitutional position to be an eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa because he is the marginal energy of Kṛṣṇa and a manifestation simultaneously one and different from the Lord, like a molecular particle of sunshine or fire."*

Sūtra 31

ubhaya-vaibhava-yogyās taṭastha-dharmāt

ubhaya - both; vaibhava - potencies; yogyāḥ - suitable; taṭa - in the margin; stha - staying; dharmāt - because of the nature.

Because the individual spirit souls are situated between them, the souls can stay in either of the Lord's two energies.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad it is said:

asya vā etasya puruṣasya dve eva sthāne bhavata idam ca para-loka-sthānam ca sandhaṁ tṛtīyaṁ svam.

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead has two abodes: the spiritual world and the material world. The individual spirit souls are situated between those worlds."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

tasmād bhavadbhiḥ kartavyaṁ
karmaṇāṁ tri-guṇātmanām
bīja-nirharaṇaṁ yogaḥ
pravāha-paramo dhīyaḥ

"Therefore please destroy the seeds of material actions, which are based on the three modes of nature, and fix your thoughts on the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

Śrī Nimbārka Svāmī explains:

anādi-māyā-parimukta-rūpaṁ tv enaṁ vidur vai bhagavat-prasādat. baddhaṁ ca muktaṁ ca kila baddha-muktaṁ prabheda-bahulyaṁ tathāpi bodhyam.

"By the mercy of the Lord the devotees understand the nature of the beginningless material world and the nature of liberation from it."

Sūtra 32

svarūpataḥ śuddha-cin-mayaḥ

svarūpataḥ - by nature; śuddha - pure; cit - spirit; mayāḥ - consisting of.

By nature they are pure spirit.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.3.11) it is said:

svapnena śarīram api prahatyāsuptaḥ suptān abhicakāśīti śukram ādāya punar eti
sthānam hiraṇmayam puruṣa eka haṁsaḥ.

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is graceful like a swan, wakens the souls sleeping in material bodies and takes them back to His effulgent spiritual abode."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

ātmā nityo 'vyayaḥ śuddha
ekaḥ kṣetrajña āśrayaḥ
avikriyaḥ sva-dṛg-ghetur
vyāpako saṅganāvṛtaḥ

"`Atmā' refers to the Supreme Lord or the living entities. Both of them are spiritual, free from birth and death, free from deterioration, and free from material contamination. They are individual, they are knowers of the external body, and they are the foundation or shelter of everything. They are free from material change, they are self-illuminated, they are the cause of all causes, and they are all-pervading. They have nothing to do with the material body, and therefore they are always uncovered."*

Śrī Śaṅkarācāraya explains:

atha sthitam caitat nyāyato nityam svarūpam caitanya-jyotiṣtamātmanam.

"Thus by logic it is proved that the soul is eternal, conscious, and effulgent."

Sūtra 33

asmad-arthāḥ

asmad - us; arthāḥ - the meaning.

We are the individual spirit souls, each of us endowed with a distinct identity.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (5.8) it is said:

aṅguṣṭha-mātro ravi-tulya-rūpaḥ
saṅkalpāhaṅkāra-samanvito yaḥ
buddher guṇenātma-guṇena caiva
ārāgra-mātro 'py aparo 'pi drṣṭaḥ

"The conditioned soul is small like a thumb, splendid like the sun, and filled with false-ego and material desire. Different from him is the Supersoul, whose form is also very small, but who is filled with intelligence and spiritual knowledge."

In Padma Purāṇa, Uttara-khaṇḍa it is said:

aham-artho 'vyayaḥ kṣetrī
bhinna-rūpaḥ sanātanaḥ
adahyo 'cchedyo 'kledyo
'śoṣya eva ca
evam-ādi-guṇair yuktaḥ
śeṣa-bhūtaḥ parasya vai

"I am the knower of the field of activities that is the material body. I am different from the body. I am eternal. I cannot be burned, cut, moistened, or dried. I have many other spiritual qualities like these."

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (in Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 22.9-10) explains:

vibhinnāmśa jīva tañra śaktite ganana

sei vibhinnāmśa jīva dui ta prakāra
eka nitya mukta eka nitya saṁsāra

"The separated expansions are living entities. Although they are expansions of Kṛṣṇa, they are counted among His different potencies. The living entities (jīvas) are divided into two categories. Some are eternally liberated, and others are eternally conditioned."*

Sūtra 34

jñāna-jñāṛtva-guṇakaś ca

jñāna - knowledge; jñāṛtva - the state of being the knower; guṇakaḥ - the quality; ca - also.

The souls also have the quality of being knowers of knowledge.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.1.9) it is said:

eṣo 'ṇur ātmā cetasā veditavyo
yasmin prāṇaḥ pañcadhā sanniveśa
prāṇaiś cittam sarvam otaṁ prajānām
yasmin viśuddhe vibhāty eṣa ātmā

"The soul is atomic in size and can be perceived by perfect intelligence. The atomic soul is floating in the five kinds of air (prāṇa, apāna, vyāna, samāna, and udāna), is situated within the heart, and spreads its influence all over the body of the embodied living entities."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.10.8) it is said:

vilakṣaṇaḥ sthūla-sūkṣmād
dehād ātmekṣitā sva-dṛk
yathāgni-dāruṇo dāhyād
dāhako 'nyaḥ prakāśakaḥ

"Just as fire, which burns and illuminates, is different from firewood, which is to be burned to give illumination, similarly the seer within the body, the self-enlightened spirit soul, is different from the material body, which is to be illuminated by consciousness. Thus the spirit soul and the body possess different characteristics and are different entities."***

In his commentary on Vedānta-sūtra, Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa explains:

jñā eva ātmā jñāna-svarūpate sati jñātr-svarūpaḥ.

"By its nature the soul possesses knowledge."

Sūtra 35

pareśa-vaimukhyāt teṣām avidyābhiniveśaḥ

pareśa - to the Supreme Personality of Godhead; vaimukhyāt - because of aversion; teṣām - of them; avidyā - ignorance; abhiniveśaḥ - entrance.

Because they rebelled against the Supreme Lord they have entered into ignorance.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.1.1-2) it is said:

dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā
samānam vṛkṣam praiṣasvajāte
tayor anyañ pippalam svādv atty
anaśnann anyo 'bhicakāśīti

"The individual spirit soul and the Supersoul, Supreme Personality of Godhead, are like two friendly birds sitting on the same tree. One of the birds (the individual atomic soul) is eating the fruit of the tree (the sense gratification afforded by the material body), and the other bird (the Supersoul) is not trying to eat these fruits, but is simply watching His friend.*

samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno
'nīśāya śocati muhyamānaḥ
juṣṭam yadā paśyati anyam īsam
` asya mahimānam iti vīta-śokaḥ

"Although the two birds are on the same tree, the eating bird is fully engrossed with anxiety and moroseness as the enjoyer of the fruits of the tree. But if in some way or other he turns his face to his friend who is the Lord, and knows His glories, at once the suffering bird becomes free of all anxieties."*

"

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.37) it is said:

bhayaṁ dvitīyābhiniveśataḥ syād
īśād apetasya viparyaya-smṛtiḥ

"When the living entity is attracted by the material energy, which is separate from Kṛṣṇa, he is overpowered by fear. Because he is separated from the Supreme Personality of Godhead by the material energy, his conception of life is reversed. In other words, instead of being the eternal servant of Kṛṣṇa, he becomes Kṛṣṇa's competitor. This is called `viparyayo 'smṛtiḥ'."*

Śrī Nayanānanda dāsa sings:

kali-ghora timire garāsala jagajana
dharāṇa karama bahu-dūra
asādhane cintāmaṇi vidhi milāula āni
gorā baḍa dayāra ṭhākura

"Plunged by their materialistic deeds into the terrible darkness of Kali-yuga, the people cannot find the cintāmaṇi jewel of Lord Gaura's mercy.

bhāi re bhāi gorā guṇa
kahane nā yāya
kata śata-ānana kata catur-ānana
baraṇiyā ura nāhi pāya

"O my brother! O my brother! No one has told you the glories of Lord Gaura. How great is Lord Brahmā? How great is Lord Śeṣa? They are not as great as Lord

Gaura.

cāri veda ṣaḍ-daraśana paḍiyā se
jadi gaurāṅga nāhi bhaje
kibā tāra adhyayana locana vihīna jena
darpaṇe kibā tāra kaje

"What use are the four Vedas and the six systems of philosophy if one does not worship Lord Gaurāṅga? Why study them? What use is a mirror to a blind man?"

veda vidyā dui kichui nā jānata
sei jadi gaurāṅga jāne sāra
nayanānanda bhaṇe sei se sakala jāne
sarva-siddhi kara-tale tāra

"If one knows the two kinds of Vedic knowledge, he still does not know anything. But if one knows Lord Gaurāṅga, he knows the most precious knowledge. Nayanānanda says: Such a person knows everything. All perfections stay in the palm of his hand."

Sūtra 36

sva-svarūpa-bhramaḥ

sva - own; svarūpa - identity; bhramaḥ - mistake.

They are bewildered about their own identity.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.4.3-4) it is said:

tad yathā tṛṇa-jalāyukā tṛṇasyāntaṁ gatvanyam ākramyātmānam upasamharaty evāyam ātmedaṁ śarīraṁ nihatya vidyāṁ gamayitvānyam ākramyātmānam upasamharati.

"As, coming to the end of one leaf a snail transfers itself to another, so the soul leaves one body and enters another.

ayam ātmedaṁ śarīraṁ nihatyāvidyā gamayitvānyan navataraṁ kalyāṇataraṁ
rūpaṁ kurute pitryaṁ vā gandharvaṁ vā devaṁ prajāpatyaṁ vā brāhmaṁ
vānyeṣāṁ vā bhūtānāṁ.

"As a goldsmith takes one gold object and fashions it into another, so the soul leaves one body and attains another, a better body, the body of a pitā, gandharva, deva, prajāpati, Brahmā, or other exalted being."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.30.4 and 6) it is said:

jantur vai bhava etasmin
yaṁ yaṁ yonim anuvrajet
tasyāṁ tasyāṁ sa labhate
nirvṛtiṁ na virajyate

"The living entity, in whatever species of life he appears, finds a particular type of satisfaction in that species, and he is never averse to being situated in such a condition."*

ātma-jāya-sutāgāraṁ
paśu-draviṇa-vastuṣu
nirūḍha-mūla-hṛdaya
ātmānaṁ bahu manyate

"Such satisfaction with one's standard of living is due to deep-rooted attraction for body, wife, home, children, animals, wealth, and friends. In such association the conditioned soul thinks himself quite perfect."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 20.122) it is said:

māyā-mugdha jīvera nāhi kṛṣṇa-smṛti-jñāna

"The conditioned soul cannot revive his Kṛṣṇa consciousness by his own effort."*

Sūtra 37

viṣama-kāma-karma-bandhaḥ

viṣama - painful; kāma - of material desires; karma - actions; bandhaḥ - bondage.

They suffer in bondage created by material activities.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.4.5) it is said:

sa vā ayam ātmā. . . yathākārī yathācārī tathā bhavati. sādhu-kārī sādhu bhavati
pāpa-kārī pāpi bhavati puṇya-puṇyena karmaṇā bhavati pāpaḥ pāpena.

"As the spirit-soul acts, so he becomes. If he acts piously, he becomes a saint. If he performs sins, he becomes a rogue. He is pious by saintly deeds and a sinner by sins."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.30.7) it is said:

sa dahyamānā sarvāṅgā
eṣām udvahanādinā
karoty avirataṁ mūḍho
duritāni durāśayaḥ

"Although he is always burning with anxiety, such a fool always performs all kinds of mischievous activities, with a hope which is never to be fulfilled, in order to maintain his so-called family and society."*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 22.14) explains:

kāma krodhera dāsa hanā tāra lāthi khāya

"In this way the conditioned soul becomes the servant of lusty desires, and when these are not fulfilled, he becomes the servant of anger and continues to be kicked by the external energy, māyā."*

Sūtra 38

sthūla-liṅgābhimāna-janita-saṁsāra-kleśāś ca

sthūla - the gross material body; liṅga - the subtle material body; abhimāna - identification; janita - created; saṁsāra - in the world of birth and death; kleśaḥ - troubles; ca - also.

Because he falsely identifies with the gross and subtle material bodies, the soul suffers in the world of birth and death.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.5) it is said:

avidyāyām antare vartamānaḥ
svayaṁ dhīraḥ paṇḍitaṁ manyamānaḥ
dandrāmyamānaḥ pariyānti mūḍhā
andhenaiva nīyamānā yathāndhāḥ

"Following the path of ignorance even though they think themselves very wise, blind fools become leaders of others. In this way the blind lead the blind."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.30.14) it is said:

tatrāpy ajāta-nirvedo
bhriyamānaḥ svayam-bhṛtaiḥ
jarayopātta-vairūpya-
maraṇābhimukho gr̥he

"The foolish family man does not become averse to family life although he is maintained by those whom he once maintained. Deformed by the influence of old age, he prepares himself to meet ultimate death."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 20.118) it is said:

ata eva māyā tāre deya saṁsāra-duḥkha

kabhu svarga uthāya kabhu narake ḍubāya
daṇḍya-jane rājā jena nadite cubāya

"The illusory energy (māyā) gives the living entity all kinds of misery in his material existence.*

"In the material condition, the living entity is sometimes raised to higher planetary systems and material prosperity and sometimes drowned in a hellish situation. His state is exactly like that of a criminal whom a king punishes by submerging him in water and then raising him again from the water."*

Sūtra 39

tat-sāmmukhyāt sarva-kleśa-hāni-vṛttiḥ svarūpa-prāptiś ca

tat - to Him; sāmmukhyāt - by facing; sarva - all; kleśa - troubles; hāni - destruction; vṛttiḥ - activity; svarūpa - own form; prāptiḥ - attainment; ca - and.

By turning to the Lord and becoming favorable to Him, the soul attains his original form and thus becomes free of all his troubles.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (1.11) it is said:

jñātvā devaṁ sarvaṁ pāśapahāniḥ
kṣīṇaiḥ kleśair janma-mṛtyu-prahāniḥ

"By understanding the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a person becomes free of all material bondage, his sufferings perish, and he escapes the cycle of repeated birth and death."

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.1.3) it is said:

yadā paśyaḥ paśyate rukma-varṇam
kartāram īśaṁ puruṣaṁ brahma-yonim
tadā vidvān puṇya-pāpe vidhūya
nirañjanaḥ paramaṁ samyam upaiti

"Then the individual spirit soul becomes enlightened. Then he sees the effulgent Supreme Personality of Godhead, the creator of all. Casting away the reactions of all pious and sinful deeds, and now pure and untouched by matter, the individual soul becomes liberated like the Lord Himself."

In the Viṣṇu-dharma Purāṇa it is said:

janmāntara-sahasreṣu
tapo-jñāna-samādhībhiḥ
narāṇām kṣīṇa-pāpānām
kṛṣṇa-bhaktiḥ prajāyate

"After thousands of births spent in austerities, study, and meditation, when all their sins are completely destroyed, the living entities can attain devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.9.6) it is said:

tāvad bhayaṁ draviṇa-deha-suhr̥n-nimittam
śoka-spr̥hā paribhavo vipulaś ca lobhaḥ
tāvan mamety asad-avagraha ārti-mūlam
yāvan na te 'nghrim abhayaṁ pravṛṇīta lokaḥ

"O my Lord, the people of the world are embarrassed by all material anxieties. They are always afraid. They always try to protect wealth, body, and friends, they are filled with lamentation and unlawful desires and paraphernalia, and they avariciously base their undertakings on the perishable conceptions of 'my' and 'mine'. As long as they do not take shelter of Your safe lotus feet, they are full of such anxieties."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 20.120) it is said:

sādhu śāstra kṛpāya jadi kṛṣṇonmukha haya
sei jīva nistare māyā tāhāre chāḍaya

"If the conditioned soul becomes Kṛṣṇa conscious by the mercy of saintly persons who voluntarily preach scriptural injunctions and help him to become Kṛṣṇa conscious, the conditioned soul is liberated from the clutches of māyā, who gives him up."*

Sūtra 40

antarāṅgopalabdhis tat-sāmmukhyam

antaram - within; ga - gone; upalabdhiḥ - perception; tat - to Him;
sāmmukhyam - favorableness.

When he becomes favorable to the Lord, the soul can see the Lord face-to-face.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.3.10-12) it is said:

indriyebhyaḥ parā hy arthā
abhyarthaś ca param manaḥ
manasaś ca parā buddhir
buddher ātmā mahān paraḥ

"Higher than the senses are the sense-objects. Higher than the sense-objects is the mind. Higher than the mind is the intelligence. Higher than the intelligence is the soul. Higher than the soul is the mahat-tattva.

mahataḥ param avyaktam
avyaktāt puruṣaḥ paraḥ
puruṣān na param kiñcit
sā kaṣṭhā sā parā gatiḥ

"Higher than the mahat-tattva is the unmanifested. Higher than the unmanifested is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Nothing is higher than the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He is the highest. He is the supreme destination.

eṣa sarveṣu bhūteṣu
gūḍhātmā na prakāśate
dṛśyate tv agryayā buddhyā
sūkṣma-darśibhiḥ

"He is the Supersoul hiding in all living beings, but He does not reveal Himself to them. He is seen only by they who with great intelligence have the power to see spirit."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.32.36) it is said:

ātma-tattvāvabodhena
vairāgyena dṛḍhena ca
iyate bhagavān ebhiḥ
su-guṇo nirguṇaḥ sva-dṛk

"By understanding the science of self-realization and by developing a strong sense of detachment, one who is expert in understanding the different processes of self-realization realizes the Supreme Personality of Godhead as He is represented in the material world as well as in transcendence."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.10.7-8) it is said:

vilakṣaṇa-sthūla-sūkṣmād
dehād ātmekṣita-svadṛk
yathāgnir dāruṇo dahyā
dāhakānyaḥ prakāśakaḥ

"Just as fire, which burns and illuminates, is different from firewood, which is to be burned to give illumination, similarly the seer within the body, the self-enlightened spirit soul, is different from the material body, which is to be illuminated by consciousness. Thus the spirit soul and the body possess different characteristics and are different entities."***

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

sāmmukhyaṁ dvi-vidhaṁ nirviśeṣaṁ ayaṁ saviśeṣaṁ ayaṁ ca. tatra pūrvam
jñānam uttaram tu dvi-vidham ahaṅgrahopasana-rūpaṁ bhakti-rūpaṁ ca.

"The state of being favorable and turning to the Lord is of two kinds: 1. approaching the Lord as the qualityless impersonal Brahman, and 2. approaching the Lord as the Supreme Person who has transcendental qualities. Thus there are two kinds of knowledge: 1. worshiping the impersonal Supreme as one's own self, and 2. worshiping the Supreme Person by serving Him with devotion."

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.14) it is said:

bhramite bhramite yadi sādhu vaidya pāya

tānra upadeśa mantre piśācī palāya
kṛṣṇa-bhakti pāya tabe kṛṣṇa nikṣāta yāya

"Wandering and wandering throughout the universe, the conditioned soul may by chance get the association of a devotee physician, whose instructions and hymns make the witch of external energy flee. The conditioned soul thus gets into touch with the devotional service of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and in this way he can approach nearer and nearer to the Lord."*

Chapter Seven Jīva-gati-prakarāṇa Movements of the Spirit Souls

Sūtra 41

saṁsāra-daśāś catasraḥ

saṁsāra - of the world of birth and death; daśāḥ - the conditions; catasraḥ - four kinds.

Four states of existence prevail in the world of birth and death.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.4.9) it is said:

tasmin śuklam uta nīlam āhuḥ
piṅgalam haritam lohitaṁ ca
eṣa pathā brahmaṇā hānuvṛtteḥ

"The wise say that the path to the Supreme is white, blue, yellow, green, and red."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.12.23) it is said:

adanti caikaṁ phalam asya ḡrdhrā
grāme carā ekam araṇya-vāsāḥ
haṁsā ya ekam bahu-rūpam ijyer
māyā-mayaṁ veda na deva-vedam

"Those lusty for material enjoyment and dedicated to family life enjoy one of the tree's fruits, and swanlike men in the renounced order of life enjoy the other fruit. One who with the help of the bona fide spiritual masters can understand this tree to be a manifestation of the potency of the one Supreme Truth appearing in many forms actually knows the meaning of the Vedic literature."***

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 20.136) it is said:

aiche śāstra kahe karma jñāna yoga tyaji'
'bhaktye' kṛṣṇa vaśa haya bhaktye tānre bhaji

"Revealed scriptures conclude that one should give up fruitive activity, speculative knowledge, and the mystic yoga system and instead take to devotional service, by which Kṛṣṇa can be fully satisfied."*

Sūtra 42

avidyayā karma-daśā

avidyayā - by ignorance; karma - of fruitive work; daśā - the condition.

From ignorance comes the state of performing fruitive works.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.1.8) it is said:

āśā pratikṣe saṅgataṁ sunṛtaṁ
ceṣṭā-pūrte putra-paśuṁś ca sarvān
etaḍ vṛkte puruṣasyālpa-medhaso
yasyānaśnann vasati brahmaṇo gṛhe

"A foolish person in whose home a brāhmaṇa guest does not eat loses all hope. He loses good company, happiness, pious deeds, children, animals, and everything else."

In the Atri-smṛti it is said:

iṣṭā-pūrtam ca kartavyam
brāhmaṇenaiva yatnataḥ
iṣṭena labhyate svargaṁ
pūrte mokṣo vidhāyate

etādṛśyām vimśa-
dharma-śāstra-vidhāyaḥ

"A brāhmaṇa should carefully perform the pious deeds known as iṣṭā and pūrta. By performing iṣṭā he attains Svargaloka. By performing pūrta he attains liberation. This is explained in the twenty dharma-śāstras."

In Vedānta-syamantaka it is said:

bijāṅkurādi vadanādi siddham karma tat khalu aśubham śubham ceti dvi-
bhedam. vedena niṣiddha-narakasyāniṣṭa-sādhanam brāhmaṇa-hananādy-
aśubham. tena vihitam kamyādi tu śubham. tatra svargādīṣṭa-sādhanam
jyotiṣṭomādi-kāmyam ākrte pratyavāya-janakam sandhyopāsanāgni-hotrādi
nityam. putra-janmādy anu bandhi-jāteṣṭyādi naimittikam dūrita-kṣaya-karam
candrāyaṇādi prāyaścittam iti śubham bahu-vidham.

"Karmic reactions are of many kinds, beginning with those lying as seed and those just beginning to sprout. They are also divided into two kinds: auspicious and inauspicious. Those which are inauspicious, such as the murder of a brāhmaṇa, are forbidden by the Vedas. Materialistic actions that are nevertheless auspicious are encouraged by the Vedas. Therefore they who desire to go to Svargaloka or attain other material benefits are encouraged to perform jyotiṣṭoma-yajñas and other Vedic rituals. However, if these are not performed then the daily duties of sandhyopāsana and agnihotra create many obstacles. Thus one should perform the special duties such as the rites at a child's birth and the performance of the candrāyaṇa vow. Thus there are many kinds of auspicious deeds."

Sūtra 43

vidyayā nyāsa-daśā

vidyayā - by knowledge; nyāsa - of renunciation; daśā - the state.

From knowledge comes the state of renunciation.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Upaniṣads it is said:

sa hovāca maitreyi yenāhaṁ nāmāmṛtasyaṁ kim ahaṁ tena kuryam.

"he said: O Maitreyi, what shall I do to become immortal?"

In the Yājñavalkya-smṛti it is said:

sarva-bhūta-hitaḥ śāntas
tridaṇḍī sa-kamaṇḍaluḥ
eka-vayaḥ pārivrajya-
bhikṣārthī grāmam āśrayet.

"Carrying a tridaṇḍī and a kamaṇḍalu, wearing only a single cloth, and concerned for the welfare of all, a sannyāsī may sometimes enter a village in order to beg some alms."

Śrī Śaṅkarācārya explains:

tasmād ete mantrā ātmāno yathātmya-prakāśanenātma-viṣayaṁ svābhāvika-
karma-vijñānaṁ nivartayantaḥ śoka-mohādi saṁsāra-dharma-cic-chakti-sādhanam
ātmaikatvādi-vijñānam utpādayanti.

"Therefore these mantras enable one to renounce materialistic deeds, which bring only grief, illusion, and a host of other disadvantages. These mantras also bring knowledge of the oneness of the Self."

Sūtra 44

audāsīnyān nirdvandva-daśā

audāsīnyā - by indifference; nirdvandva - freedom from duality; daśā - the condition.

From aloofness comes the state of freedom from duality.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kena Upaniṣad (2.2) it is said:

nāham manye suvedeti
no na vedeti veda ca
yo nas tad veda tad veda
no na vedeti veda ca

"I do not think that I understand well. One who does not know, knows. Among us, one who knows, knows, and one who does not know, also knows."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (5.8-9), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

naiva kiñcit karomīti
yukto manyeta tattva-vit
paśyan śṛṇvān spṛśan jighraṇ
āśnan gacchan svapan śvasan

pralapan visṛjan gr̥hnan
unmiṣan nimiṣann api

"A person in the divine consciousness, although engaged in seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, moving about, sleeping, and breathing, always knows within himself that he actually does nothing at all. Because while speaking, evacuating, receiving, or opening or closing his eyes, he always knows that only the material senses are engaged with their objects and that he is aloof from them."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.11.32) it is said:

ājñāyayaiva guṇān doṣān
mayādiṣṭān api svakān
dharmān santyajya yaḥ sarvān
mām bhajet sa ca sattamaḥ

"Such a saintly person must be considered the most learned of men. He perfectly understands that the ordinary religious duties prescribed by Me in various Vedic scriptures possess favorable qualities that purify the performer, and he knows that neglect of such duties constitutes a discrepancy in one's life. Having taken complete shelter at My lotus feet, however, a saintly person ultimately renounces such ordinary religious duties and worships Me alone. He is thus considered to be the best among all living entities."***

"

In Śrī Caitanya-bhāgavata, in the description of Lord Nityānanda's renunciation, it is said:

ahar-niśā bhavāveśe parama uddāma
sarva nādīyāya bule jyotirmaya dhāma

"Day and night He was filled with ecstatic love. The whole land of Nadiyā became effulgent in His presence.

kibā yogī nityānanda kiba tattva-jñānī
jaya jemata icchā na balaye keni

"What kind of yogī was Nityānanda? How was He filled with spiritual knowledge? He did not desire anything of this world."

Sūtra 45

bhaktau sarvatrātma-bhāva-daśā

bhaktau - in devotional service; sarvatra - everywhere; ātma - for the Supreme Personality of Godhead; bhāva - love; daśā - the state.

When devotional service is practiced, the state of love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead comes into being.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Iśa Upaniṣad (1-2) it is said:

īśāvasyam idaṁ sarvaṁ
yat kiñca jagatyām jagat
tena tyaktena bhuñjītha
mā gṛhaḥ kasyasvid dhanam

kurvann eveha karmāni
jjīviṣec chatam samāḥ

evam tvayi nānyatho 'to 'sti
na karma lipyate nare

"Everything animate or inanimate that is within the universe is controlled and owned by the Lord. One should therefore accept only those things necessary for oneself, which are set aside as his quota, and one should not accept other things, knowing well to whom they belong."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.32) it is said:

yat karmabhir yat tapasā
jñāna-vairāgyataś ca yat
yogena dāna-dharmaṇa
śreyobhir itarair api

sarvaṁ yad bhakti-yogena
mad-bhakto labhate 'ñjasā

"Everything that can be achieved by fruitive activities, penance, knowledge, detachment, mystic yoga, charity, religious duties, and all other means of perfecting life is easily achieved by My devotee through loving service unto Me."***

Śrī Gauḍa-pūrṇānanda explains:

ayaṁ prāpañcaḥ khalu satya-bhūto
mithyā na ca śrīpati-saṅgrahaṇa
śuddhatvam etasya nivedanena
svarṇaṁ yathā rājati dhātu-jātam

"Because it is created by the Supreme Lord, this material universe is real. It is not an illusion. When they are offered to the Supreme Lord, the things of this world become pure. They shine like gold.

vairāgya-bhogāv iti bhakti-madhye
sthitāv udāsīnatayā khalu dvau
mahā-prasāda-grahaṇaṁ tu nityaṁ
bhogaḥ kadācit khalu bhaktir eva

"Devotional service stands aloof from both sense gratification and renunciation. By the Lord's great mercy, devotional service is always filled with happiness."

Sūtra 46

viśvaukasām tu prāyaśaḥ karma-daśāpannaḥ

viśva - in the material universe; okasām - of they who make their home; tu - indeed; prāyaśaḥ - for the most part; karma - of fruitive actions; daśā - the state; āpannaḥ - attained.

The residents of the material world are mostly on the level of performing fruitive work.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.3) it is said:

sa tvam priyān priya-rūpaṁś ca kāmān
abhidhyāyān nāciketo 'tyasrākṣiḥ
naityaṁ śrīṅkaṁ vittamayīm avāpto
yasyām majjanti bahavo manuṣyāḥ.

"O Naciketa, you have renounced the pleasures of this world. You do not walk on the path to wealth, a path so many follow."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.5.11) it is said:

loke vyavāyāmiṣa-madya-sevā
nityā hi jantor na hi tatra codanā
vyavasthitis teṣu vivāha-yajña-
surā-grahair āpta-nivṛttir iṣṭā

"In this material world the conditioned soul is always inclined to sex, meat-eating, and intoxication. Therefore religious scriptures never actually encourage such activities. Although the scriptural injunctions provide for sex through sacred marriage, for meat-eating through sacrificial offerings, and for intoxication through acceptance of ritual cups of wine, such ceremonies are meant for the ultimate purpose of renunciation."***

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.147) it is said:

dharmācāri-madhye bahuta `karma-niṣṭha'
koṭi-karma-niṣṭha-madhye eka jñānī śreṣṭha

"Among the followers of Vedic knowledge, most are following the process of fruitive activity and distinguishing between good and bad work. Out of many such sincere fruitive actors, there may be one who is actually wise."*

Sūtra 47

teṣāṁ kadācit saṁsāra-gati-vivekaḥ

teṣāṁ - of them; kadācit - sometimes; saṁsāra - of birth and death; gati - the way; vivekaḥ - distinguishing.

Sometimes the conditioned souls may wish to understand the truth about the path of birth and death.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (1.1) it is said:

kiṁ kāraṇaṁ brahma kutāsma jātaḥ
jīvāma kena kva ca sampratiṣṭhitāḥ
adhiṣṭhitaḥ kena sukhetareṣu
vartāmahe brahma-vido vyavasyam

"The Brahmavādīs say: What is the first, the great cause? From where were we born? How do we remain alive? Where do we go at death? O knowers of Brahman, by whose will are we subject to pleasure and pain?"

In the Brahma-vaivarta Purāṇa it is said:

yāvat pāpais tu malinaṁ
hṛdayaṁ tāvad eva hi
na śāstre satya-buddhiḥ syāt
sambandhaḥ sad-gurau tathā

aneka-janma-janita-
puṇya-rāśi-phalaṁ mahat

sat-saṅgāc chāstra-śravaṇād
eva premādi jāyate

"As long as his heart is polluted with sins, a person cannot understand the truth of the Vedic literatures. After many births of pious deeds, one attains a bona fide spiritual master. Then, by hearing the Vedic scriptures in the association of the devotees, one attains love and devotion for the Supreme Lord."

Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī asked the following question (Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 20.102):

ke āmi kena āmāya jāre tāpa-traya
iha nāhi jāni kemane hita haya

"Who am I? Why do the threefold miseries always give me trouble? If I do not know this, how can I be benefited? "*

Sūtra 48

mocanopāya-jijñāsā ca

mocana - of liberation; upāya - the means; jijñāsā - tyhe desire to know; ca - also.

Then they also desire to know how they may become liberated.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (1.2.12) it is said:

parīkṣya lokān karma-citān brāhmaṇo
nirveda-māyān nāsty akṛtaḥ kṛtena
tad-vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet
samit-pāṇiḥ śrotrīyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham

"Having analyzed the nature of fruitive activities in the material world, one should understand that they are all useless and then one should renounce them all.

"To learn the transcendental subject matter, one must approach a spiritual

master. In doing so he should carry fuel to burn in sacrifice. The symptom of such a spiritual master is that he is expert in understanding the Vedic conclusion and therefore he constantly engages in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.18.38) it is said:

duḥkharkeṣu kāmeṣu
jāta-nirveda ātmavān
ajijñāsita-mad-dharmo
guruṁ munim upavrajat

"One who is detached from sense gratification, knowing its result to be miserable, and who desires spiritual perfection, but who has not seriously analyzed the process for obtaining Me, should approach a bona fide and learned spiritual master."***

Śrī Nimbārka Svāmī explains:

upāśya-rūpaṁ tad-upāśyakasya
kṛpālavō bhaktivatas tataḥ param virodhino rūpaṁ athaitad-āptaye
jñeyā ime 'rthā api pañca sādhubhiḥ

Sūtra 49

asat-saṅga-tyāgena tat-phalodayaḥ

asat - of the impious; saṅga - association; tyāgena - by renunciation; tat - of that; phala - result; udayaḥ - arisal.

By renouncing the association of the impious one attains that result.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad it is said:

yāny asmākaṁ sucaṛitāṇi tāni tvayopāśyāni no itarāṇi.

"One should associate with they who act properly and avoid all others."

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.9) it is said:

naiṣa tarkeṇa matir apaneyā
proktānyenaiva su-jñānāya preṣṭha

"O dear one, the Supreme cannot be understood by material logic or by the words of one who is not enlightened."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.31.34) it is said:

teṣv aśānteṣu mūḍheṣu
khaṇḍitātma-sva-sādhuṣu
saṅgamī na kuryāc chocyeṣu
yoṣit-krīḍā-mṛgeṣu ca

"One should not associate with a coarse fool who is bereft of the knowledge of self-realization and who is no more than a dancing dog in the hands of a woman."*

In the Hari-bhakti-sudhodaya it is said:

yasya yat-saṅgatiḥ puṁso
maṇivat syāt sa tad-guṇaḥ
sākula-dvaitato dhimān
sva-yūthyān eva saṁśrayet

"The association of devotees is like a precious jewel. Therefore a wise man avoids the non-devotees and takes shelter of the Lord's devotees."

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.87) it is said:

asat-saṅga tyāga ei vaiṣṇava ācāra
strī-saṅgi eka asādhu kṛṣṇābhakta āra

"A Vaiṣṇava should always avoid the association of ordinary people. Common people are very much materially attached, especially to women. Vaiṣṇavas should also avoid the company of those who are not devotees of Lord Kṛṣṇa."*

sat-saṅgāc chāstrābhidehya-vijñāsā

sat - of devotees; saṅgāt - by the association; śāstra - of the scriptures;
abhidehya - the menaing; vijñāsā - the desire to know.

By associating with devotees one attains the desire to understand the scriptures.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kena Upaniṣad it is said:

upaniṣadaṁ bho brūhi.

"Please narrate the Upaniṣads to me."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.29-30) it is said:

durlabho mānuṣo deho
dehinām kṣaṇa-bhaṅguraḥ
tatrāpi durlabhaṁ manye
vaikuṅṭha-priya-darśanam

"For the conditioned souls the human body is most difficult to achieve, and it can be lost at any moment. But I think that even those who have achieved human life rarely gain the association of pure devotees, who are dear to the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha.***

ata ātyantikam kṣemam
pṛcchāmo bhavato 'nagha
saṁsāre 'smin kṣaṇārdho 'pi
sat-saṅga-śevadhir nṛṇām

"Therefore, O completely sinless ones, I ask you to kindly tell me what the supreme good is. After all, even half a moment's association with pure devotees within this world of birth and death is a priceless treasure for any man."***

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.14) it is said:

bhramite bhramite yadi sādhu vaidya pāya
tānra upadeśa mantre piśācī palāya

"Wandering and wandering throughout the universe, the conditioned soul may by chance get the association of a devotee physician, whose instructions and hymns make the witch of external energy flee."*

Part Two

Abhidheya-tattva-nirūpaṇa

Description of the Means of Spiritual Attainment

Chapter One

Abhidheya-nirṇaya-prakaraṇa

Determination of What Is the Means of Spiritual Attainment

Sūtra 51

nitya-karma hy evābhidheyam ity eke

nitya - regular; karma - duties; hi - indeed; eva - indeed; abhidheyam - the meaning; iti - thus; eke - some.

Some say that the performance of regular duties is the means of spiritual attainment.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (1.2.1) it is said:

tad etat satyaṁ mantreṣu karmāṇi kavayo yāny apaśyaṁs tāni tretāyāṁ
bahudhā santatāni tāny ācaratya āniyatāṁ satya-kāma eṣaḥ vaḥ panthāḥ sva-kṛtasya
loke.

"That is the Supreme. The wise see Him in the Vedic mantras. Therefore one should perform the many rituals in the three Vedas. They are the path of spiritual attainment in this world."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (3.8 and 19), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

niyatām kuru karma tvam
karma-jyāyo hy akarmaṇaḥ
śarīra-yātrāpi ca te
na prasidhyed akarmaṇaḥ

"Perform your prescribed duty, for doing so is better than not working. One cannot even maintain one's physical body without work."*

tasmād asaktaḥ satatām
kāryam karma samācara
asakto hy acaran karma
param āpnoti puruṣaḥ

"Therefore, without being attached to the fruits of activities, one should act as a matter of duty, for by working without attachment one attains the Supreme."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 24.214) it is said:

dehārāmī karma-niṣṭha yajñikādi jana
sat-saṅge karma tyagi' karaye bhajana

"Those who are in the bodily conception mainly engage in fruitive activity. Those who perform yajñas and ritualistic ceremonies are also considered in the same category. However, when they are all in contact with the pure devotee, they give up their fruitive activity and fully engage in the service of the Lord."*

Sūtra 52

cin-mātrādvaita-jñānam abhidheyam ity apare

cit - spirit; mātra - only; advaita - non-dual; j 24ānam - knowledge; abhidheyam - to be named; iti - thus; apare - others.

Others say that the theory of monism is the means of spiritual attainment.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (it is said:

etad ātmam idaṁ sarvaṁ tat satyaṁ sa ātmā tvam asi śvetaketo.

"The Supreme is everything. He is the truth. O Śvetaketu, you are He."

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.2.7) it is said:

karmāṇi vijñānamayaṁ ca ātmā pare 'vyaye sarva eko bhavanti.

"Then the conscious soul and all he has done become one with the unchanging Supreme."

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad it is said:

ayam ātmā brahma

"The Supreme is the impersonal Brahman."

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad it is said:

ekam evādvitīyam. ahaṁ brahmāsmi.

"Brahman is one without a second. I am that Brahman."

In the Aitareya Upaniṣad (5.3) it is said:

prajñānaṁ brahma neha nānāsti kiñcana.

"The conscious Brahman is one. It is not many."

In the Aṣṭāvakra-saṁhitā it is said:

kṛmayāḥ kva ca saṁsāre
kva prītir viratiḥ kva vā
kva jīvaḥ kva ca tad brahma
sarvadā vīmanasyeme

"What are the worms in this world of birth and death? What is love? What is hatred? What is the individual person? What is the Supreme? These are all illusions."

Śrī Vijñāna Bhikṣu explains:

ātmaivāsti param śatyam
nānyaḥ saṁsāra-drṣṭayaḥ
śuktiko rajatam yadvad
yathā māru-marīcikā

"The Supreme is the only reality. Nothing else can be seen in this world. Everything else is like the silver imagined to glitter on a seashell, or like a mirage in the desert."

Śrī Śaṅkarācārya explains:

rajju sarpavad ātmānam
jīvo jñātvā bhayaṁ vahet
nāham jīvaḥ parātmēti
jñānam cen nirbhayaṁ bhavet

"When a person mistakes a rope for a snake, he becomes afraid. In the same way the individual soul does not understand the truth of his own identity, and for this reason he becomes afraid. When the soul understands, 'I am not an individual soul. I am the Supreme Soul', then he becomes free from all fears."

Sūtra 53

yatra dharmāya karma virāgāya dharmāś cid-rasāya virāgas tatra gauṇa-rūpeṇa
karmaivābhidheyam

yatra - where; dharmāya - for piety; karma - work; virāgāya - for renunciation;

dharmah - piety; cid-rasāya - for the nectar of spiritual bliss; virāgaḥ - renunciation; tatra - there; gaṇa-rūpeṇa - indirect; karma - work; eva - indeed; abhidheyam - to be named.

When fruitive work is performed to gain piety, piety is employed to foster renunciation, and renunciation is employed to gain the nectar of spiritual bliss, then fruitive work can be a secondary tool for attaining success in spiritual life.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Iśa Upaniṣad (15) it is said:

hiraṇmayena patreṇa
satyasyāpihitam mukham
tat tvam puṣann apāvṛṇu
satya-dharmāya dṛṣṭaye

"O my Lord, sustainer of all that lives, Your real face is covered by Your dazzling effulgence. Please remove that covering and exhibit Yourself to Your pure devotee."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

na yasya karma dharmāya
na virāgāya kalpate
na tīrtha-pāda-sevāyai
jīvann api mṛto 'pi saḥ

"One who does not perform pious deeds, who is not inclined to renunciation, and who does not travel to holy places of pilgrimage, is already dead, even though he seems to live."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.5.34) it is said:

evam nṛṇāṃ kriya-yogaḥ
sarve saṃsṛti-hetavaḥ
ata evātma-nāśaya
kalpānte kalpitāḥ pare

"Thus when all a man's activities are dedicated to the service of the Lord, those

very activities which caused his perpetual bondage become the destroyer of the tree of work."*

Śrīla Rāmānujācārya explains:

upāya-buddhyā karmāṇi
mā kurudhvāṁ mahātmakāḥ
karmaṇām eva kainkarye
prāpte bhagavataḥ matiḥ

"O great souls, please do not think that fruitive work is the primary way to attain spiritual advancement. Fruitive work is only a servant to the real way. that is the opinion of the Supreme Lord Himself."

Sūtra 54

yatra cid-rasāya jñānam tatra gauṇa-rūpeṇa j 24ānam abhidheyam

yatra - where; cid-rasāya - for spiritual bliss; j 24ānam - knowledge; tatra - there; gauṇa-rūpeṇa - as secondary; j 24ānam - knowledge; abhidheyam - to be named.

When it is employed in the proper way to attain the nectar of spiritual bliss, the path of knowledge can a be secondary tool to attain spiritual realization.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad it is said:

tam eva dhīro vijñāya
prajñāṁ kurvīta brāhmaṇaḥ

"A brāhmaṇa should employ his intelligence to understand the Supreme."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.19.5), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

tasmāj jñānena sahitam
jñātvā svātmānam uddhava
jñāna-vijñāna-sampanno
bhaja mām bhakti-bhāvataḥ

"Therefore, My dear Uddhava, through knowledge you should understand your actual self. Then, advancing by clear realization of Vedic knowledge, you should worship me in the mood of loving devotion."***

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 24.109 and 113) it is said:

bhakti vinā kevala jñāne mukti nāhi haya
bhakti-sādhana kare ye prāpti brahma laya

"One cannot attain liberation simply through philosophical speculation devotion of devotional service. However, if one renders devotional service, he is automatically on the Brahman platform."*

janma haite śuka-sanakādi brahmamaya
kṛṣṇa-guṇākṛṣṭa haye kṛṣṇera bhajaya

"Although Śukadeva Gosvāmī and the four Kumāras were always absorbed in the thought of impersonal Brahman and were thus Brahmavādīs, they were nonetheless attracted by the transcendental pastimes and qualities of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore they later became devotees of Kṛṣṇa."*

Sūtra 55

cid-viśeṣa-sphūrṭi-sāadhanam abhidheyam iti bhāgyavantaḥ

cit - spiritual; viśeṣa-sphūrṭi - variety; sāadhanam - the means; abhidheyam - to be named; iti - thus bhāgyavantaḥ - the fortunate.

The fortunate souls say that the path of spiritual variety is the true means of spiritual attainment.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Praśna Upaniṣad (1.16) it is said:

teṣām asau virajo brahmaloko na yeṣu jihmam anṛtaṁ na māyā ceti.

"They attain the pure spiritual world, where there are no lies and no illusions."

In the Māthara-śruti it is said:

bhaktir evainam darśayati bhakti-vaśaḥ puruṣo bhaktir eva bhūyasi.

"Devotional service reveals the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes conquered by devotional service."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.25.34-35), the Supreme Lord explains:

naikātmatām me spṛhayanti kecit
mat-pāda-sevābhiratā mad-īhāḥ
ye 'nyonyato bhāgavatāḥ prasajya
sabhājayante mama pauruṣāṇi

"A pure devotee, who is attached to the activities of devotional service and who always engages in the service of My lotus feet, never desires to become one with Me. Such a devotee, who is unflinchingly engaged, always glorifies My pastimes and activities.*

paśyanti te rucirāṅy amba santāḥ
prasanna-vaktrāruṇa-locanāni
rūpāṇi divyāni vara-pradāni
sākāṁ vācam spṛhaṇīyaṁ vadanti

"O My mother, My devotees always see the smiling face of My form, with eyes like the rising morning sun. They like to see My various transcendental forms, which are all benevolent, and they also talk favorably with Me."*

Śrīla Bhaṭṭanātha explains:

nitya-muktaika-bhojyaṁ yat
tat pañcopaniṣanmayam
aprakṛtaṁ divya-rūpaṁ
acakṣur-viṣayaṁ gatam

"The eternally liberated souls enjoy the company of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is described by the five Upaniṣads, whose form is splendid and

transcendental, who is not touched by matter, and who cannot be seen by material eyes."

Chapter Two
Sādhana-prakarāṇa
Activities For Spiritual Advancement

Sūtra 56

bhāgyavatām sat-prasaṅgād ananya-bhaktau śraddhā

bhāgyavatām - of the fortunate souls; sat-prasaṅgāt - because of association with devotees; ananya-bhaktau - in unalloyed devotional service; śraddhā - faith.

By associating with devotees, the fortunate souls attain faith in unalloyed devotional service.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (7.1.1 and 7.19.1) it is said:

adhīhi bhagava iti hopasasāda sanat-kumāraṁ nāradaś taṁ hovāca yad vetthā tena mopasīdatas tu ūrdhvaṁ vakṣyāmīti. . . . yadā vai śraddadhāty atha manuto nāśraddadhān manute śraddadhād eva manute śraddhātv eva vijijñāsītavyeti śraddhām bhagavo vijijñāsā iti.

"Nārada approached Sanatkumāra and said, 'O master, please instruct me.' Sanatkumāra replied, 'First tell me what you know, and then I will teach what is beyond that. . . . When one has faith, then he can meditate. A person who has no faith cannot meditate. A person who has faith can meditate. One should be eager to understand the nature of faith.' "

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.25.25) it is said:

satām prasaṅgān mama vīrya-samvido
bhavanti hṛt-karṇa-rasāyana-kathāḥ
taj-joṣaṇād āśv apavarga-vartmani

śraddhā ratir bhaktir anukramiṣyati

"In the association of pure devotees, discussion of the pastimes and activities of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is very pleasing and satisfying to the ear and the heart. By cultivating such knowledge one gradually becomes advanced on the path of liberation, and thereafter he is freed, and his attraction becomes fixed. Then real devotion and devotional service begin."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.49 and 64) it is said:

sādhu-saṅge kṛṣṇa-bhaktye śraddhā yadi haya
bhakti-phala prema haya saṁsāra yāya kṣaya

"By associating with a devotee, one awakens his faith in devotional service to Kṛṣṇa. Because of devotional service, one's dormant love for Kṛṣṇa awakens, and thus one's material, conditional existence comes to an end."*

śraddhāvān jana haya bhakti-adhikārī

"A faithful devotee is a truly eligible candidate for the loving service of the Lord."*

Sūtra 57

sā tv anyopāyavajam bhakty-unmukhī citta-vṛtti-viśeṣaḥ

sā - that; tu - indeed; anya - other; upāyavajam - born from the methods; bhakti - for devotional service; unmukhī - eager; citta - of the heart; vṛtti - activity; viśeṣaḥ - specific.

Faith is a specific activity performed in the heart. It makes one desire to engage in devotional service. It is different from the other means of spiritual advancement.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.23) it is said:

nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo
na medhayā na bahunā śrutena
yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas
tasyaiṣa ātmā vivṛṇute tanum svām

"The Supreme Lord is not attained by expert explanations, by vast intelligence, nor even by much hearing. He is attained only by one who He Himself chooses. To such a person He manifests His own form."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.11.32) it is said:

ājñāyayaiva guṇān doṣaṁ
mayādiṣṭān api svakān
dharmān santyajya yaḥ sarvān
mām bhajet sa ca sattamaḥ

"Such a saintly person must be considered the most learned of men. He perfectly understands that the ordinary religious duties prescribed by Me in various Vedic scriptures possess favorable qualities that purify the performer, and he knows that neglect of such duties constitutes a discrepancy in one's life. Having taken complete shelter at My lotus feet, however, a saintly person ultimately renounces such ordinary religious duties and worships Me alone. He is thus considered to be the best among all living entities."***

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.59, 60 and 62) it is said:

pūrva ājñā veda karma dharmā yoga jñān
saba sādhi avaśeṣe ei ājñā balavān

"Although Kṛṣṇa has previously explained the proficiency of executing Vedic rituals, performing fruitive activity as enjoined in the Vedas, practicing yoga, and cultivating jñāna, these last instructions are most powerful and stand above all the others.*

ei ājñā-bale bhaktye śraddhā yadi haya
sarva karma tyāga kari śrī-kṛṣṇa bhajaya

"If the devotee has faith in the strength of this order, he worships Lord Kṛṣṇa and gives up all other activities.*

śraddhā śabde viśvāsa kahe su-dṛḍha niścaya

"By rendering transcendental loving service to Kṛṣṇa, one automatically performs all subsidiary activities."*

Sūtra 58

sā ca śaraṇāpatti-lakṣaṇā

sā - that; ca - and; śaraṇa - surrender and taking shelter; āpatti - attainment; lakṣaṇā - characteristic.

Faith is characterized by taking shelter of the Lord and surrendering unto Him.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.18) it is said:

yo brahmāṇaṁ vidadhāti pūrvam
yo vai vedānś ca prahiṇoti tasmai
taṁ hi vedam ātma-buddhi-prakāśam
mumuksur vai śaraṇam ahaṁ prapadye

"Because I desire liberation, let me surrender unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who first enlightened Lord Brahmā in Vedic knowledge through Lord Brahmā's heart. The Lord is the original source of all enlightenment and spiritual advancement."*

In the Bhagavad-gītā (18.66), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpebhyo
mokṣayisyāmi mā śucaḥ

"Abandon all varieties of religion and just surrender unto Me. I shall deliver you from all sinful reactions. Do not fear."*

In the Vaiṣṇava Tantra it is said:

ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ
prātikūlyasya varjanam
rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso
gopṭṛtve varaṇam tathā

ātma-nikṣepa-karpaṇye
ṣaḍ-vidhā śaraṇagatiḥ

"the six divisions of surrender are: 1. the acceptance of those things favorable to devotional service, 2. the rejection of unfavorable things, 3. the conviction that Kṛṣṇa will give protection, 4. the acceptance of the Lord as one's guardian or master, 5. full self-surrender, and 6. humility."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.102) it is said:

śaraṇa lañā kare kṛṣṇe ātmā samarpaṇa
kṛṣṇa tāre kare tat-kāle ātma-sama

"When a devotee thus fully surrenders unto Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, Kṛṣṇa accepts him as one of His confidential associates."*

Sūtra 59

tayā deśika-pādāśrayaḥ

tayā - by that; deśika - of the spiritual master; pada - of the feet; āśrayaḥ - shelter.

Faith leads one to take shelter at a bona fide spiritual master's feet.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.22) it is said:

vedānte paramaṁ guhyaṁ
purā kalpe pracoditam
nāpraśāntāya dātavyaṁ

nāputrāyāśiṣyāya vā

"This ancient Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad, which is the supreme secret of Vedic literature, should not be spoken to one who is not peaceful or in control of his senses, nor to one who is not a dutiful son or an obedient disciple."

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.23) it is also said:

yasya deve para bhaktir
yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthaḥ
prakāśante mahātmanaḥ

"Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.17) it is said:

nr-deham ādyaṁ su-labhaṁ su-durlabhaṁ
plavaṁ su-kalpaṁ guru-karṇadharam
mayānukulena nabhasvateritaṁ
pumān bhavabdhim na taret sa ātma-ha

"When one wants to cross a large ocean, he requires a strong boat. It is said that the human form of life is a good boat by which one can cross the ocean of nescience. In the human form of life one can obtain the guidance of a good navigator, the spiritual master. One also gets a favorable wind by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, and that wind is the instructions of Kṛṣṇa. The human body is the boat, the instructions of Lord Kṛṣṇa are the favorable winds, and the spiritual master is the navigator. The spiritual master knows well how to adjust the sails to catch the winds favorably and steer the boat to its destination. If, however, one does not take advantage of this opportunity, one wastes the human form of life. Wasting time and life in this way is the same as committing suicide."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 23.9) it is said:

kona bhāgye kona jīvera śraddhā yadi haya
tabe sei jīva sādhu saṅga karaya

"If, by a good fortune, a living entity develops faith in Kṛṣṇa, he begins to associate with devotees."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.115) it is said:

guru-pādāśraya-dīkṣā gurura sevana
sad-dharma-śikṣā sādhu mārgānugamana

"On the path of devotional service one must observe the following items: 1. One must accept a bona fide spiritual master. 2. Accept initiation from him. 3. Serve him. 4. Receive instructions from the spiritual master and make inquiries in order to learn devotional service. 5. Follow in the footsteps of the previous ācāryas and follow the directions given by the spiritual master."*

Sūtra 60

tataḥ sādhana-bhaktir navadhā

tataḥ - from that; sādhana-bhaktiḥ - devotional service in practice; navadhā-
ninefold.

Then one engages in the nine activities of sādhana-bhakti devotional service.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.5.6) it is said:

ātmā vā are draṣṭavyaḥ śrotavyo mantavyo nidhidhyāsitavyaḥ.

"One should gaze on the Lord, hear about Him, chant His glories, and meditate on Him."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

śravaṇaṁ kīrtanaṁ cāśya
smaraṇaṁ mahatāṁ gateḥ
sevejyāvanatir dāśyaṁ
sakhyam ātma-nivedanam

"Hearing and chanting about the transcendental holy name, form, qualities,

paraphernalia, and pastimes of Lord Viṣṇu, remembering them, serving the lotus feet of the Lord, offering the Lord respectful worship with sixteen types of paraphernalia, offering prayers to the Lord, becoming His servant, considering the Lord one's best friend, and surrendering everything unto Him (in other words serving Him with the body, mind, and words), these nine processes are accepted as pure devotional service."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.121) it is said:

śravaṇa kīrtana smaraṇa pūjāna vandana
paricaryā dāsya sakhya ātma-nivedana

"After one is established in devotional service, the positive actions are: 1. hearing, 2. chanting, 3. remembering, 4. worshipping, 5. praying, 6. serving, 7. accepting servitorship, 8. becoming a friend, and 9. surrendering fully."*

Sūtra 61

bhagavan-nāma-rūpa-guṇa-līlā-śravaṇam

bhagavat - of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; nāma - name; rūpa - form; guṇa - qualities; līlā - and pastimes; śravaṇam - hearing.

Then one hears about the Supreme Lord's names, forms, qualities, and pastimes.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad it is said:

sa hovaca yajñavalkyaḥ bhavaty etad vyākhyāsyāmi te vyācākṣaṇasya tu me nidhidhyāsva.

"Yājñavalkya Muni said, 'I will tell you about the Supreme Lord. Please listen carefully.'"

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.2.37) it is said:

pibanti ye bhagavata ātmanaḥ satām

kathāmṛtaṁ śravaṇa-puṭeṣu sambhṛtam
punānti te viṣaya-vidūṣitāśayaṁ
vrajanti tac-caraṇa-saroruhāntikam

"Those who drink through aural reception, fully filled with the nectarean message of Lord Kṛṣṇa, the beloved of the devotees, purify the polluted aim of life known as material enjoyment and thus go back to Godhead, to the lotus feet of Him (the Personality of Godhead)."*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

atha krama-prāpta-śravaṇam. tac ca nāma-rūpa-guṇa-līlāmaya-śabdānām śrotra-sparśaḥ. prathamam nāmaṁ śravaṇam antaḥkaraṇa-śuddhy-artham āpekṣam. śuddhe cāntaḥkaraṇe rūpa-śravaṇena tad-ubhaya-yogyatā bhavati. samyag udite ca rūpe guṇānām sphuraṇam sampadyate. nāma-rūpa-guṇeṣu samyak sphuriteṣv eva līlā-nāma sphuraṇam suṣṭhu bhavatīty abhipretya sādhana-kramo likhitam.

"Now will be described the sequence of events in hearing about the Lord. hearing about the Lord occurs when the ears touch sounds of the Lord's names, forms, qualities, and pastimes. First one hears the Lord's holy name, and by this hearing the heart becomes purified. When the heart is thus purified one hears descriptions of the Lord's form. In this way one becomes qualified to hear both the Lord's name and the descriptions of His form. When one hears about the Lord's form, one naturally also hears about the Lord's qualities. When one hears the Lord's name and the descriptions of the Lord's form and qualities, one also comes to hear about the Lord's pastimes. In this way I have written about the sequence of activities in hearing about the Lord."

Sūtra 62

tat-tat-kīrtanam

tat-tat - them; kīrtanam - glorifying.

Then one chants the glories of all these.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad it is said:

samagāyann aste.

"He chants the glories of the Lord."

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad it is said:

vācaṁ brahmety upāste.

"He worships the Lord by describing Him with words.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.1.11) it is said:

etan nirvidyamānānām
icchatām akuto-bhayam
yoginām nṛpa nirṇītaṁ
harer nāmānukīrtanam

"O king, constant chanting of the holy name of the Lord after the ways of the great authorities is the doubtless and fearless way of success for all, including those who are free from all material desires, those who are desirous of all material enjoyment, and those who are self-satisfied by dint of transcendental knowledge."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.5.22) it is also said:

idaṁ hi pumsas tapasaḥ śrutasya vā
sviṣṭasya sūktasya ca buddhi-dattayoḥ
avicyuto 'rthaḥ kavibhir nirūpito
yad uttamaśloka-guṇānuvarṇanam

"Learned circles have positively concluded that the infallible purpose of the advancement of knowledge, namely austerities, study of the Vedas, sacrifice, chanting of hymns, and charity, culminates in the transcendental descriptions of the Lord, who is defined in choice poetry."*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

yadi sākṣād eva mahat-kṛtasya kīrtanasya śravaṇa-bhāgyaṁ na sampadyate tadaiva svayaṁ pṛthak kīrtanam iti. gāna-śakty-abhāve tat śṛṇoti. tad-anumodanam. bahubhir militvā kīrtanam saṅkīrtanam.

"When one is not engaged in hearing the Lord's glories from a great soul, one may personally engage in chanting the Lord's glories. If one has no power to chant the Lord's glories, then one may simply hear. Chanting the Lord's glories becomes a source of great pleasure for the chanter. When many are assembled together to hear and chant the Lord's glories the chanting is called `sañkīrtana'."

Sūtra 63

tat-tat-smaraṇam

tat-tat - of these; smaraṇam - remembering.

Then one remembers all these.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad it is said:

smareṇa vā vijānāti smaram upasveti smaram brahmety upāste.

"By remembering the Lord one worships Him."

In the Nārada Purāṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

viṣayān dhyāyataś cittam
viṣayeṣu viśajjate
mām anusmarataś cittam
mayy eva pravilīyate

"One who turns from material things and remembers Me in his heart, attains Me."

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

tad idaṁ smaraṇam pañca-vidham. yat kiñcid anusandhānam smaraṇam. pūrvataś cittam ākṛṣya sāmyākāreṇa mano-dhāraṇam dhāraṇā. viśeṣato rūpādi-cintanam dhyānam. amṛta-dhārā-vadanavac chinnaṁ tat dhruvānusmṛtiḥ. dhyeya-mātra-sphuraṇam samādhir iti.

"Remembering the Lord progresses in five stages. First one tries to understand the Lord. That is called `smaraṇa'. Then the heart becomes attracted to the Lord. That is called `dharaṇā'. Then one specifically meditates on the Lord's form, qualities, and pastimes. That is called `dhyāna'. Then that meditation drowns one in a flood of nectar. That is called `dhruvānusmṛti'. Then the Lord personally appears before the meditator. That is called `samādhi'."

Sūtra 64

pāda-sevanam

pāda - to the feet; sevanam - service.

Then one serves the Lord's feet.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (2.2.3) it is said:

madhye vāmanam āsīnam
viśvadevā upāsate

"The demigods serve the Supersoul sitting in the middle of the heart."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.21.31) it is said:

yat-pāda-sevābhirucis tapasvinām
aśeṣa-janmopacitam malam dhiyā
sadyaḥ kṣiṇoty anvaham edhitā sati
yathā padānguṣṭha-viniḥṣṭā sarit

"By the inclination to serve the lotus feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, suffering humanity can immediately cleanse the dirt which has accumulated in their minds during innumerable births. Like the Ganges water, which emanates from the toes of the lotus feet of the Lord, such a process immediately cleanses the mind, and thus spiritual of Kṛṣṇa consciousness gradually increases."*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

sevā ca kāla-deśādy-ucitā paricaryādi-paryayā. sevya-pādatvenaiva prāpasya tasya śrī-puruṣottamasya sac-cid-ānanda-ghanatvam evābhipretam. atra pāda-sevāyām śrī-mūrti-darśana-sparśana-parikramānuvrajana-bhagavan-mandira-gaṅgā-puruṣottama-dvārakā-mathurādi-tadiya-tīrtha-sthāna-gamanādayo 'py antar-bhāvyaḥ.

"Service to the Lord is appropriate in all times and places. Service here means service to the feet of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Included in service to the Lord are: seeing and touching the Deity of the Lord, circumambulating the Lord, visiting the temple of the Lord, and going on pilgrimage to holy places like the Ganges, Jagannātha Purī, Dvārakā, and Mathurā."

Sūtra 65

arcanam

arcanam - worship.

One may also worship the Lord.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.10) it is said:

yo devanaṁ adhipo
yasmil loka adhiśritaḥ
ya īse 'sya dvi-padaś catuṣ-padas
tasmai devāya haviṣā vidhema

"With offerings of clarified butter let us worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the master of the demigods, in whom the worlds rest, and who rules the two-footed and the four-footed."

In the Viṣṇu-dharma Purāṇa it is said:

devatāyām ca mantrē
tathā mantra-prade gurau

bhaktir aṣṭa-vidhā yasya
tasya kṛṣṇaḥ prasīdati

"Lord Kṛṣṇa is pleased with the devotee who in eight ways devotedly worships His Deity from, His mantra, and the spiritual master who gave the mantra."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (9.26), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam
yo me bhaktyā prayacchati
tad ahaṁ bhakty-upahṛtaṁ
aśnāmi prayatātmanaḥ

"If one offers Me with love and devotion a leaf, a flower, fruit, or water, I will accept it."*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

śrī-nāradādi-vartmānusāribhiḥ śrī-bhagavatā saha sambandha-viśeṣaṁ dīkṣa-vidhānena śrī-guru-caraṇa-sampāditam cikīrṣādbhiḥ kṛtāyām dīkṣāyām arcanam avaśyam kriyate eva. ye tu sampatti-santo gr̥hasthās teṣām tv arcana-mārga eva mukhyaḥ. tad akṛtvā hi niṣkiñcanavat kevala-smaraṇādi-niṣṭhātve citta-śāṭhya-pratipattiḥ syāt. tathā gārhasṭhya-dharmasya devatā yāgasya śākha-pallavādi-sevaka-sthānīyasya mūla-seka-rūpaṁ tad-arcanam ity api tad-akāraṇe mahān doṣaḥ. kvacid atra mānasa-pūjāsti.

"they who by spiritual initiation are followers of the path of Nārada Muni and other great souls and who thus have a relationship with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a relationship established by their taking shelter of the feet of their spiritual master, must engage in worship of the Supreme Lord. For they who are prosperous householders, the path of worship of the Deity of the Lord is most important. If they ignore this duty and act as if they had no money and were poverty-stricken, merely engaged in meditating on the Lord and serving Him in ways that do not involve the expenditure of money, these cheating activities will not help them. Therefore the householders have a solemn duty to worship the Deity. The example is given that by watering the roots of a tree the branches, twigs, and all else are nourished. The householders' worship of the Deity is like that. If they fail in that duty it is a great fault on their part. If somehow they are not able to worship the Deity directly, they should worship the Deity in meditation.

arcanam api dvi-vidham. kevalam karma-miśraṁ ca pūrvam nirāpkeṣaṇam

śraddhāvatām uttaram vyavahāra-ceṣṭātiśayavattā yādṛcchika-bhakty-anuṣṭhāna-lakṣaṇa-vārtādi-lakṣaṇa-lakṣita-śraddhānām.

"Worship is of two kinds: 1. pure, and 2. mixed with fruitive activities. The former is performed by the who have great faith and who desire only to please the Lord. The latter is performed by they who are mostly engaged in material activities, who have only a little faith, and who engage in devotional service from time to time when they feel so inclined.

āvāhanam cādareṇa sammukhī-karaṇam sthāpanam bhaktyā niṣevanam. sannidhāpanam tadīyatva-darśanam sannirodhanam kriyā samāpti-paryanta-sthāpanam. sakalī-karaṇam tat-sarvāṅga-prakāśanam. atra sūdrādi-pūjitārcā pūjā-niṣedha-vacanam avaiṣṇava-sūdrādi-param eva.

"In worship one respectfully requests the Lord to appear, one approaches the Lord, and one serves the Lord with devotion. One sees everything as the Lord's property, one offers various gifts to the Lord, and one offers all that one has to the Lord. In some places it is said that sūdras and other low-class persons are not eligible to worship the Lord. These words refer only to they who are not Vaiṣṇavas."

Sūtra 66

bhūta-śuddhi-keśava-nyāsāvāhana-vaiṣṇava-cihna-dhṛti-nirmālya-dhāraṇa-caraṇāmṛta-pāna-vrata-pālanādīni tad-aṅgāni

bhūta-śuddhi - consecration of articles; keśava-nyāsa - offering nyasas to Lord Kṛṣṇa; āvāhana - requesting the Lord to appear; vaiṣṇava - of a Vaiṣṇava; cihna - the marks; dhṛti - wearing; nirmālya - the remnants of flowers offered to the Lord; dhāraṇa - taking; caraṇa - of the feet; amṛta - the nectar; pāna - drinking; vrata - vows; pālana - protecting; ādīni - beginning with; tat - of that; aṅgāni - the parts.

Consecration of articles of worship, offering nyāsas to Lord Keśava, requesting the Lord to appear, accepting the marks of a Vaiṣṇava, wearing flower garlands offered to the Lord, drinking the nectar that has washed the Lord's feet, and following vows are included among the activities of worshiping the Lord.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Iśa Upaniṣad (18) it is said:

yuyodhyāsmaj juhuraṇam eno
bhuyiṣṭhaṁ te nāma-uktiṁ vidhema

"O my lord, powerful as fire, omnipotent one, now I offer You all obeisances and fall on the ground at Your feet. O my Lord, please lead me on the right path to reach You, and since You know all that I have done in the past, please free me from the reactions to my past sins, so that there will be no hindrance to my progress."*

In the Bahv-ṛcā-pariśiṣṭa it is said:

sahasrāro nemi neminā tapta-tanuḥ.

"One should worship the Lord, who is like a splendid wheel with a thousand spokes."

In the Chāndogya-pariśiṣṭa it is said:

sa hovāca yājñavalkyas tat pumān ātma-hitaye premṇā hariṁ bhajet.

"Yājñavalkya said: For one's own benefit one should lovingly worship Lord Hari."

In the Vāyu Purāṇa it is said:

āyācaka-pradātā syāt
kṛṣiṁ vṛṭty-artham ācaret
purāṇaṁ śṛṇuyān nityaṁ
śālagrāmaṁ ca pūjāyet

"One should worship the Lord and perform activities that attract Him. One should regularly hear from the Purāṇas and one should regularly worship the Śālagrāma-śilā."

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

tatra bhūta-śuddhir nijābhilāṣita-bhagavat-sevopāyika-tat-pārṣada-deha-bhāvanā-paryantā. ahaṅgropāsanāyāḥ śuddha-bhakter duṣṭatvāt. keśava-vinyāsādīnām

yatrādhamaṅgam viṣayatvaṁ tatra tan-mūrtim dhyātvā tat-tan-mantrāṁś ca japtvaiva tat-tad-aṅgam sparśa-mātram kuryāt. na tu tat-tan-mantra-devatā tatra tatra nyastā dhyāyed yāni cātra vaiṣṇava-vaiṣṇava-cihnāni nirmālya-dhāraṇa-caraṇāmṛta-pānādini aṅgāni teṣāṁ ca pṛthak pṛthaṅ mahātma-vṛndam śāstra-sahasreṣv anusandheyam. tathā śrī-kṛṣṇa-janmāṣṭamī-kārttika-vrataikādaśī-vrata-māgha-snānādikam atraivāntar-bhāvyam.

"Then one should consecrate the articles of worship. One may worship the Lord as one desires, and one may also meditate on becoming one of the Lord's liberated associates. However, one should not meditate on becoming the Lord Himself, for that kind of meditation is wrong and impure. One should offer keśava-nyāsa and other like offerings, one should bow down before the Lord, meditate on the Lord, chant mantras glorifying the Lord, and touch the Deity of the Lord. One should not offer mantras and nyāsas to the various demigods. One should accept the marks of a Vaiṣṇava, wear flower garlands offered to the Lord, drink the nectar that has washed the Lord's feet, and perform other like activities. These are some of the activities of worship of the Lord. Some other activities of worship are one should study thousands of scriptures, one should observe the vows of Śrī Kṛṣṇa-janmāṣṭamī, the month of Kārttika, and the days of ekādaśī, and one should bathe during the month of Māgha."

Sūtra 67

vandanam

vandanam - offering obeisances.

One may also offer obeisances to the Lord.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (4.3-4) it is said:

tvam strī tvam pumān asi
tvam kumāra uta vā kumārī
tvam jirṇo daṇḍena vañcasi
tvam jato bhavasi viśvato-mukhaḥ

"You are a woman. You are a man. You are a boy. You are a girl. As an old man You walk with a cane. You are born again, O all-pervading Lord.

nīlaḥ patāṅgo harito lohitākṣas
taḍid-garbha ṛtavaḥ samudrāḥ
anādimat tvam vibhutvena
yato jātasi bhuvanāni viśvaḥ

"You are the black bee, the green parrot, the red-eyed cuckoo, the storm-cloud with lightning, the seasons, and the oceans. You are everywhere. You are beginningless. The worlds are born from You."

In the Nārāyaṇa-vyūha-stava it is said:

aho bhāgyam aho bhāgyam
aho bhāgyam nṛṇām idam
yeṣām hari-padābjāgre
śiro nyastam yathā tathā

"How greatly fortunate are they! How fortunate are they! How fortunate are they who bow their heads before Lord Hari's lotus feet!"

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

tac ca yadyapi aṣṭāṅgatvenāpi vartate tathāpi kīrtana-smaraṇavat svāntryenāpīty
apretya pṛthag vidhīyate. eka-hasta-kṛtatva-vastrāvṛta-dehatva-bhagavad-agra-
pṛṣṭha-vāma-bhāgātyanta-nikāṭa-garbha-mandira-gatatvādi-mayāparādhā
namaskāre parihartavyāḥ.

"As with hearing and chanting the Lord's glories, one should not offer obeisances whimsically in whatever way one thinks. There is a specific way. One should bow down with the eight parts of his body. One should also avoid the offenses that begin with offering obeisances with only one hand, offering obeisances while one's body is completely covered with cloth, offering obeisances while directly facing the Lord, offering obeisances with the left side not facing the Deity, and offering obeisances from too close within the Deity room."

Sūtra 68

dāsyam

dāsyam - service.

One may also serve the Lord.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad it is said:

sa sadāvalī bhavaty atotthātā bhavati uttiṣṭhan paricāritā bhavati paricarann
upasattā bhavaty upasīdan draṣṭā bhavati.

"One should rise and stand before the Lord. Standing before Him, one should serve the Lord. Sitting down one should gaze upon the Lord."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.9.17) it is said:

yasmāt priyapriya-viyoga-samyoga-janma-
śokāgninā sakala-yoniṣu dahyamānaḥ
duḥkhauśadham tad api duḥkham atad-dhiyāham
bhūman bhramāmi vada me tava dāsya-yogyam

"O great one, O Supreme Lord, because of combination with pleasing and displeasing circumstances and because of separation from them, one is placed in a most regrettable position, within heavenly or hellish planets, as if burning in a fire of lamentation. Although there are many remedies by which to get out of miserable life, any such remedies in the material world are more miserable than the miseries themselves. Therefore I think that the only remedy is to engage in Your service. Kindly instruct me in such service."*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

tac ca śrī-viṣṇor dāsya-mānatvam. astu tāvad bhajana-prayāsaḥ kevalam
tādṛśatvābhimānenāpi siddhir bhavati.

"Now will be described the condition of being a servant of Lord Viṣṇu. By worshipping, honoring, and serving the Lord, a person attains perfection."

Sūtra 69

sakhyam

sakhyam - friendship.

One may become the Lord's friend.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (4.20) it is said:

na sandṛṣe tisthati rūpam asya
na cakṣuṣā paśyati kaścanaivam
hṛdā hṛdi sthaṁ manasā ya enam
evam vidur amṛtās te bhavanti

"They become immortal who know the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose form is not within the perception of material senses, who is not seen by the material eye, whose form in the heart is seen only by the heart of love."

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.1.1) it is said:

dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā

"The Supreme Lord and the individual soul are like two friendly birds."

In the Rāmārcana-dīpikā it is said:

paricaryā parā kecit
prāsādeṣu ca śerate
manuṣyam iva taṁ draṣṭuṁ
vyavahartuṁ ca bandhuvat

"Some who serve the Lord in the temple see the Lord as if He were a human being. They act as if He were their friend or their kinsman."

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

tac ca hita-śāsana-mayaṁ bandhu-bhāva-lakṣaṇam.

"When one loves the Lord as if He were one's friend or kinsman, that love is very auspicious."

Sūtra 70

ātma-nivedanam

ātma - self; nivedanam - surrender.

One may also surrender everything to the Lord.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (2.5.15) it is said:

sa vā ayam ātmā sarveṣāṃ bhūtānāṃ adhipatiḥ sarveṣāṃ bhūtānāṃ rājā tad yathā
ratha-nābhau ca ratha-nemi-caraḥ sarve samarpitā evam evāsminn ātmani sarvāṇi
bhūtāni sarva eta ātmanaḥ samarpitaḥ.

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the master of all living beings. He is like the hub and all others are like the spokes of the wheel. Everyone should offer themselves to Him and surrender to Him."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

evam sadā karma-kalāpam ātmanaḥ
pare 'dhi-yajñe bhagavaty adhokṣaje
sarvātma-bhāvaṃ vidadhān mahīm imām
tan-niṣṭha-viprābhītaḥ śaśāsa ha

"One who always faithfully offers himself and all that he does to the lotus-eyed Supreme Personality of Godhead, becomes the ruler of the world."

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

tac ca dehādi-śuddhānta-paryantasya sarvato-bhāvena tasminn evārpaṇam. tat-
kāryam cātmārtha-ceṣṭā-śūnyatvam.

"The pure-hearted soul should offer his body and everything else to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If one does not do this, but instead acts selfishly for his own benefit, all that he does will become worthless."

Śrīla Yāmuna Muni (Śrī Stotra-ratna, 49) explains:

vapur-ādiṣu yo 'pi ko 'pi vā
guṇato 'sāni yathā tathā vidhaḥ
tad ayaṁ bhavataḥ padābjayor
aham adyaiva mayā samarpitaḥ

"O Lord, whatever I possess in terms of this body and its paraphernalia and whatever I have from the modes of nature today I offer at Your lotus feet."

Chapter Three Sādhana-paripāka-parakaraṇa Obstacles to Spiritual Advancement

Sūtra 71

sādhana-prārambhe daśa-doṣā varjanīyā

sādhana - of devotional service in practice; prārambhe - in the performance;
daśa - ten; doṣā - faults; varjanīyā - to be avoided.

Ten kinds of offenses should be avoided by one engaged in devotional service (sādhana-bhakti).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.24) it is said:

nāvirato duṣcaritān
nāśānto nāsamāhituḥ
nāśānta-mānaso vāpi
prajñānenainam āpnuyāt

"Neither a person who does not avoid sinful deeds, nor a person who is not peaceful, nor a person who is not serious and diligent, nor a person whose heart is

agitated can, even with a great intellectual endeavor, attain the Supreme Lord."

In the Kātyāyana-saṁhitā it is said:

varam huta-vaha-jvālā
pañjarāntar-vyavasthitih
na śauri-cintā-vimukha-
jana-samvāsa-vaiṣamam

"Even if one is forced to live within a cage of iron or in the midst of a blazing fire, he should accept this position rather than live with nondevotees who are through and through against the supremacy of the Lord."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.13.8) it is said:

na śiṣyān anubadhniyād
granthān naivābhyased bahūn
na vyākhyām upayuñjīta
nārambhān ārabhet kvacit

"A sannyāsī must not present allurements of material benefits to gather many disciples, nor should he unnecessarily read many books or give discourses as a means of livelihood. He must never attempt to increase material opulences unnecessarily."*

In Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu it is said:

alabdhe vā vinaṣṭe vā
bhakṣācchadana-sādhane
aviklava-matir bhūtvā
harim eva dhiyā smaret

"If one cannot attain food or shelter, or if one had them but now they are destroyed, one should, with a peaceful mind, always remember Lord Hari."

In the Padma Purāṇa it is said:

śoka-marṣādibhir bhāvair
ākrāntam yasya mānasam
katham tasya mukundasya
sphurti-sambhāvanā bhavet

"Within the heart of a person who is overpowered by lamentation or anger, there is no possibility of Kṛṣṇa's being manifested."*

harir eva sadārādhyah
sarva-deveśvareśvaraḥ
itare brahma-rudrādya
navajñeyā kadācana

"Kṛṣṇa, or Hari, is the master of all demigods, and therefore He is always worshipable. But this does not mean that one should not offer respect to the demigods."*

In the Mahābhārata it is said:

piteva putraṁ karuṇo
no dve jayati yo janam
viśuddhasya hṛṣīkeśas
tūrṇam tasya prasīdati

"A person who does not disturb or cause painful action in the mind of any living entity, who treats everyone just like a loving father does his children, whose heart is so pure, certainly becomes very soon favored by the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

In the Varāha Purāṇa it is said:

samarcanāparādhā ye
kīrtiyante vasudhe mayā
vaiṣṇavena sadā te nu
varjanīyaḥ prayatnataḥ

"O earth goddess, a Vaiṣṇava should always carefully avoid these offenses in devotional service that I have described to you."

In the Padma Purāṇa it is said:

nāmno hi sarva-suhṛdo
hy aparādhāt pataty adhaḥ
nindām bhagavataḥ śṛṇvāms

tat-parasya janasya vā

tato no paiti yaḥ so 'pi
yāty adhaḥ sukr̥ta-cyutaḥ

"One who commits offenses to the holy name falls down. One who hears offenses to the Supreme Lord or His devotees loses all his pious deeds and also falls down."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (in Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu) explains:

saṅga-tyāgo vidūreṇa
bhagavad-vimukhair janaiḥ
śiṣyādy-ananubandhitvaṁ
mahārambhādy-anudyamaḥ

"1. One should rigidly give up the company of nondevotees. 2. One should not instruct a person who is not desirous of accepting devotional service. 3. One should not be very enthusiastic about constructing costly temples or monasteries.*

bahu-grantha-kalābhyāsa-
vyākhyā-vāda-vivarjanam
vyavahāre 'py akarpaṇyaṁ
śokādy-avaśa-vārtitā

"4. One should not try to read too many books, nor should one develop the idea of earning his livelihood by lecturing on or professionally reciting Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam or Bhagavad-gītā. 5. One should not be neglectful in ordinary dealings. 6. One should not be under the spell of lamentation in loss or jubilation in gain.*

anya-devān avajñā ca
bhūtān udvega-dayitā
sevanam aparādhānaṁ
udbhava bhava-kāritā

"7. One should not disrespect the demigods. 8. One should not give unnecessary trouble to any living entity. 9. One should carefully avoid the various offenses in chanting the holy name of the Lord or in worshiping the Deity in the temple.*

kṛṣṇa-tad-bhakti-vidveṣa-
vinindādy-asahiṣṇutā
vyatirekatayāmīṣāṁ
daśānāṁ syād anuṣṭhitāḥ

"10. One should be very intolerant toward the blasphemy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, or His devotees. Without following the above-mentioned ten principles, one cannot properly elevate himself to the platform of sādhana-bhakti, or devotional service in practice."*

Sūtra 72

tat tu bhakty-anugata-dainya-dayā-yukta-vairāgyair na tu nirbheda-jñānānugata-sādhana-catuṣṭaya-yoga-karmabhiḥ

tat - that; tu - but; bhakti - devotional service; anugata - following; dainya - humbleness; dayā - mercy; yukta - proper; vairāgyaiḥ - with renunciation; na - not; tu - but; nirbheda - non-dual; jñāna - knowledge; anugata - following; sādhana - methods; catuṣṭaya - four; yoga - by yoga; karmabhiḥ - by fruitive work.

By engaging in devotional service and by cultivating humbleness, mercy, and proper renunciation, one can avoid the previously described offenses. However they who follow the fourfold sādhana of the impersonalists or who follow the paths of yoga or karma, cannot become free of these offenses.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad it is said:

brahma jyeṣṭham upāsate. vijñānaṁ brahma ced veda tasmāc cen na pramādyati.
śarīre pāpmāno hitvā sarvān kāmān samaśnute.

"One should worship the Supreme Personality of Godhead. If one has no understanding of the Supreme Person, then one will be bewildered. With his body he will commit sins. He will be filled with material desires."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is an example of a humble appeal:

maivam mamādhamasyāpi

syād evācyuta-darśanam
hriyamāṇaḥ kāla-nadyā
kvacit tarati kañcana

"I am very fallen. I shall never see the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead face-to-face. I am very embarrassed. Oh, how shall I cross the river of material time?"

In the Skanda Purāṇa is an example of mercy:

ete na hy adbhutā vyādha
tava hiṁsādayo guṇāḥ
hari-bhaktau pravṛttā ye
na te syuḥ para-tāpinaḥ

"O hunter, good qualities like non-violence, which you have developed, are not very astonishing, for those who are engaged in the Lord's devotional service are never inclined to give pain to others because of envy."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.7) is a description of proper renunciation:

vāsudeve bhagavati
bhakti-yoge prayojitaḥ
janayaty āśu vairāgyaṁ
jñānaṁ ca yad ahaitukam

"By rendering devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one immediately acquires causeless knowledge and detachment from the world."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.20) is the following criticism of yoga and karma:

na sādhayati maṁ yogo
na saṅkhyāṁ dharmā uddhava
na svadhyāyas tapas tyago
yathā bhaktir mamorjita

"One may make Kṛṣṇa the goal of mystic yoga, Sāṅkhya philosophy, etc., yet such activities do not please the Lord as much as direct loving service, which one practices by hearing and chanting about the Lord and executing His mission."*

In the Skanda Purāṇa it is said:

antaḥ-śuddhir bahiḥ-śuddhis
tapaḥ-sānty-ādayas tathā
amī guṇāḥ prapadyante
hari-sevābhikāminām

"Purification of consciousness, purification of bodily activities, austerities, peace of mind, etc., all become automatically manifest in the person who is engaged in devotional service."*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (Śikṣāṣṭaka 3) explains:

trṇād api su-nīcena
taror iva sahiṣṇunā
amāninā mānadena
kīrtaniyaḥ sadā hariḥ

"One who thinks himself lower than the grass, who is more tolerant than a tree, and who does not expect personal honor but is always prepared to give all respects to others, can very easily always chant the holy name of the Lord."*

Sūtra 73

sādhana-paripakve sarvānārtha-nivṛttiḥ

sādhana - of devotional service in practice; paripakve - in the mature stage;
sarva - all; anārtha - of unwanted things; nivṛttiḥ - cessation.

When devotional service comes to the stage of maturity, all unwanted obstacles cease to exist.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (7.26.2) it is said:

āhāra-śuddhau sattva-śuddhiḥ sattva-śuddhau dhruvānusmṛtiḥ smṛti-lābhye sarva-
granthinām vipramokṣas tasmai mṛdita-kaśayāya tamaṣaḥ param darśayati
bhagavān sanat-kumāraḥ.

"By performance of yajña one's eatables become sanctified, and by eating sanctified foodstuffs one's very existence becomes purified. By the purification of existence finer tissues in the memory become sanctified, and when memory is sanctified one can think of the path of liberation. In this way Lord Sanatkumāra revealed the spiritual truth, which is on the farther shore of the world of darkness."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.16-19 and 21) it is said:

suśrūsoḥ śraddadhānasya
vāsudeva-kathā-ruciḥ
syān mahat-sevayā viprāḥ
puṇya-tīrtha-niṣevanāt

"O twice-born sages, by serving those devotees who are completely freed from all vice, great service is done. By such service one gains affinity for hearing the messages of Vāsudeva.*

śṛṇvatām sva-kathāḥ kṛṣṇaḥ
puṇya-śravaṇa-kīrtanaḥ
hṛdy antaḥ-stho hy abhadrāṇi
vidhunoti suhṛt satām

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramātmā (Supersoul) in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear His messages, which are virtuous when properly heard and chanted.*

naṣṭa-prāyeṣv abhadreṣu
nityam bhāgavata-sevayā
bhagavaty uttamaśloke
bhaktir bhavati naiṣṭhikī

"By regular attendance in classes on the Bhāgavatam and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact.*

tadā rajas-tamo-bhavaḥ
kāma-lobhādayaś ca ye

ceta etair anaviddham
sthitaṁ sattve prasidati

"As soon as irrevocable loving service is established in the heart the effects of nature's modes of passion and ignorance, such as lust, desire, and hankering, disappear from the heart. Then the devotee is established in goodness, and he becomes completely happy.*

bhidyate hṛdaya-granthis
chidyante sarva-saṁśayaḥ
kṣiyante casya karmāni
drṣṭa evātmanīśvare

"Thus the knot in the heart is pierced, and all misgivings are cut to pieces. The chain of fruitive actions is terminated when one sees the Self as master."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 23.10) it is said:

sādhū saṅga haite haya śravaṇa kīrtana
sādhana bhaktye haya sarvanārtha nivartana

"When one is encouraged in devotional service by the association of devotees, one becomes free from all unwanted contamination by following the regulative principles and chanting and hearing."*

Sūtra 74

svarūpānavāpty-asat-tṛṣṇāparādha-hṛdaya-daurbalyānīty anarthaś" ca catur-vidha\ḥ

svarūpa - original form; anavāpti - non-attainment; asat - for matter; tṛṣṇā - thirst; aparādha - offense; hṛdaya - in the heart; daurbalyāni - weakness; iti - thus; anarthaḥ - the unwanted; ca - also; catuḥ - four; vidha\ḥ - kinds.

1. Misidentification of the self, 2. thirst for material things, 3. offenses, and 4. weakness of heart are four obstacles on the spiritual path.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Misidentification of the self is described in the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.1) in

these words:

sva-bhāvam eke kavayo vadanti
kālam tathānye parimuhyamāṇaḥ

"Some thinkers say the material universe is self-manifested. Other bewildered men say time created the universe."

Thirst for the temporary and unreal things of this world is described in the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.4.22) in these words:

yeṣāṃ no 'yam ātmāyam loka iti te sma putraiṣaṇāyāś ca vittaiṣaṇāyāś ca
lokaīṣaṇāyāś ca vyutthāyātha bhīkṣā-caryam caranti.

"They say, 'The Supreme Lord is the whole world for us.' Renouncing the desire to enjoy children, wealth, or anything else in this world, they become sannyāsīs. They accept alms. They wander over the earth."

Offenses are described in the Íśa Upaniṣad in these words:

asuryā nāma te lokā
andhena tamasāvṛtāḥ
tāṃs te pretyābhigacchanti
ye ke cātma-hano janāḥ

"The killer of the soul, whoever he may be, must enter into the planets known as the world of the faithless, full of darkness and ignorance."*

Weakness of heart is described in the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (2.1.2) in these words:

parā ca kāmān anuyānti bālās
te mṛtyor yānti vitatasya pāśam

"Childish fools who desire material pleasures run into the noose set by death."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.7.44-45) it is said:

kim u vyavahitāpatya-
dārāgāra-dhanādayaḥ

rājya-kośa-gajāmatya
bhṛtyāptā mamatāspadāḥ

"Since the body itself is ultimately meant to become stool or earth, what is the meaning of the paraphernalia related to the body, such as wives, residences, wealth, children, relatives, servants, friends, kingdoms, treasuries, animals, and ministers? They are also temporary. What more can be said about this?*

kim etair ātmanas tucchaiḥ
saha dehena naśvaraiḥ
anarthair artha-saṅkāśair
nityānanda-mahodadhe

"All this paraphernalia is very near and dear as long as the body exists, but as soon as the body is destroyed, all things related to the body are also finished. Therefore, actually one has nothing to do with them, but because of ignorance one accepts them as valuable. Compared to the ocean of eternal happiness, they are most insignificant. What is the use of such insignificant relationships for the eternal living being?*"*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.29) it is said:

jñāne jīvan-mukta daśā painu kari māne
vastutaḥ buddhi-śuddha nahe kṛṣṇa bhakti vine

"There are many philosophical speculators (jñānīs) belonging to the Māyāvāda school who consider themselves liberated and call themselves Nārāyaṇa. However, their intelligence is not purified unless they engage in Kṛṣṇa's devotional service."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.140) it is said:

kāma tyaji' kṛṣṇa bhaje śāstra ajñā māni'

"If a person gives up all material desires and completely engages in the transcendental loving service of Kṛṣṇa, as enjoined in revealed scriptures, he is never indebted to demigods, sages, or forefathers."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta it is also said:

sevā nāmaparādhādi durete varjana

"One should be careful not to commit offenses to devotional service and to the holy name of the Lord."

Sūtra 75

sādhana-yogenācārya-prasādena ca tūrṇam tad-apanayanam eva bhajana-naipuṇyam

sādhana-yogena - by engagement in the activities of devotional service; ācārya - of the spiritual master; prasādena - by the mercy; ca - and; tūrṇam - quickly; tat - them; apanayanam - removal; eva - certainly; bhajana - in devotional service; naipuṇyam - expertise.

By engaging in the activities of devotional service and by the mercy of the spiritual master one becomes free of all these obstacles and one also becomes expert in devotional service.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Praśna Upaniṣad (3.2 to 6.8)) it is said:

tasmai sa hovācāti-praśnān pṛcchasi brahmiṣṭho 'sīti tasmāt te 'haṁ bravīmi. . . te tam arcayantas taṁ hi naḥ pitā yo 'smākam avidyāyāḥ param pāram tārayasīti. namaḥ parama-ṛṣibhyo namaḥ parama-ṛṣibhyaḥ.

"Then he said to him, 'You ask many questions, but because you are devoted to the Supreme Lord, I shall answer them.' . . . (After hearing the answers to all their questions, the students) worshiped the sage and said, 'You are our father. You have taken us to the farther shore of this ocean of ignorance. We offer our obeisances to the great sages. We offer our obeisances to the great sages.'"

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.7.30) it is said:

guru-suśrūṣayā bhaktyā
sarva-lābhārpaṇena ca
saṅgena sādhu-bhaktānām
īśvarārdhānena ca

"One must accept the bona fide spiritual master and render service unto him with great devotion and faith. Whatever one has in one's possession should be offered to the spiritual master, and in the association of saintly persons and devotees one should worship the Lord."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.25-26) Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

yathāgninā hema-mālām jahāti
ghnātaṁ punaḥ svaṁ bhajate svarūpam
ātmā ca karmānuśayaṁ vidhūya
mad-bhakti-yogena bhajaty atho mam

"Just as gold, when smelted in fire, gives up its impurities and returns to its pure brilliant state, similarly, the spirit soul, absorbed in the fire of bhakti-yoga, is purified of all contamination caused by previous fruitive activities and returns to its original position of serving Me in the spiritual world.***

yathā yathātmā parimṛjyate 'sau
mat-puṇya-gāthā-śravaṇābhidhānaiḥ
tathā tathā paśyati vastu sūkṣmam
cakṣur yathaivam jana-samprayuktam

"When a diseased eye is treated with medicinal ointment, it gradually recovers its power to see. Similarly, as a conscious living entity cleanses himself of material contamination by hearing and chanting the pious narrations of My glories, he regains his ability to see Me, the Absolute Truth, in My subtle spiritual form.***

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.45) it is said:

sādhu saṅge tabe kṛṣṇe rati upajaya

"By good fortune, one becomes eligible to cross the ocean of nescience, and when one's term of material existence decreases, one may get an opportunity to associate with pure devotees. By such association one's attraction to Kṛṣṇa is awakened."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.47) it is said:

guru antaryāmī rūpe śikhāya āpane

"Kṛṣṇa is situated in everyone's heart as Caittya-guru, the spiritual master within. When He is kind to some fortunate conditioned soul, He personally gives one lessons to progress in devotional service, instructing the person as the Supersoul within and the spiritual master without."*

Chapter Four Bhajana-krama-prakarāṇa The Stages of Devotional Service

Sūtra 76

tato bhajana-niṣṭhā

tataḥ - then; bhajana - in devotional service; niṣṭhā - faith.

Then one attains faith in devotional service.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (7.20.1) it is said:

yadā vai nistiṣṭhaty atha śraddadhāti nāniṣṭiṣṭhann eva śraddadhāti niṣṭhā tv eva vijijñāsītavyeti niṣṭhām bhagavo vijij 24āsā iti.

"The sage said, 'When one stands in the spiritual truth, he can have faith. One who does not stand in the truth cannot have faith. Therefore, you should try to understand faith.' Then the student replied, 'O master, I wish to understand faith'."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.23.58) it is said:

etām sa āsthāya parātma-niṣṭham
adhyāsītām pūrvatamair mahadbhiḥ
aham tariṣyāmi durānta-pāram
tamo mukundāṅghri-niṣevayaiva

"I shall cross over the insurmountable ocean of nescience by being firmly fixed in the service of the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa. This was approved by the previous ācāryas, who were fixed in firm devotion to the Lord, Paramātmā, the Supreme Personality of Godhead."*

Śrīla Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura sings:

anyābhilāṣa chāḍi' jñāna karma parihāri'
kāya-mane kariba bhajana
sādhu saṅge kṛṣṇa sebā na pūjibo debī deba
ei bhakti parama kāraṇa

"rejecting all other desires, and abandoning philosophical speculation and fruitive work, in the company of the devotees I will worship and serve Lord Kṛṣṇa with my body and mind. I will not worship the demigods and demigoddesses. Devotional service is the reason for my life."

Śrīla Kavirāja Miśra explains:

dīsatu svārājyaṁ vā
viratu tāpa-trayaṁ vāpi
sukhitaṁ duḥkhitam api
mām na muñcatu keśava-svāmī

"He may show me His own kingdom, or He may make me suffer the threefold miseries. Whether I suffer or enjoy, I pray that Lord Keśava never abandon me."

Sūtra 77

rucis tataḥ

ruciḥ - attraction; tataḥ - then.

Then attraction is manifested.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (7.21.1) it is said:

yadā vai karoty atha nistiṣṭhati nākṛtvā nistiṣṭhati kṛtvaiva nistiṣṭhati kṛtiṣv eva vijijñāsītavyeti kṛti-bhagavo vijijñāsā iti.

"The sage said, 'One who performs spiritual activities becomes situated in the truth. One who does not perform spiritual activities does not become situated in the truth. One who performs spiritual activities becomes situated in the truth. Therefore one should try to understand spiritual activities.' Then the student replied, 'O master, I do wish to understand spiritual activities'."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.5.26) it is said:

tatrānv-aham kṛṣṇa-kathā pragāyatām
anugraheṇāśṛṇavam manoharaḥ
tāḥ śraddhayā me 'nupadam viśṛṇvataḥ
priya-śravasy aṅga mamābhavad ratiḥ

"O Vyāsadeva, in that association and by the mercy of those great Vedantists, I could hear them describe the attractive activities of Lord Kṛṣṇa. And thus listening attentively, my taste for hearing of the Personality of Godhead increased at every step."*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

ratir atra rucir iti.

"then one develops love and attraction for the Lord."

Śrīla Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya explains:

lāvaṇyāmṛta-vānyā
madhurima-laharī-paripākaḥ
karuṇyānām hṛdayam
kapoṭa-kiśoraḥ pariṣphuratu

"I pray that Lord Kṛṣṇa, the mischievous youth who is a flood of handsomeness, who is waves of sweet charm, and who is the heart of mercy, may appear before me."

bhavantu tatra janmāni
yatra te muralī-kalaḥ

karna-peyatvam āyāti
kim me nirvāṇa-vārtayā

"O Lord, I pray that I may take birth again and again in a place where my ears may drink the sweet music of Your flute. What is the use of talking to me about impersonal liberation?"

Śrīla Mādhavendra Purī explains:

rasam praśamsantu kavitva-niṣṭhā
brahmāmṛtam veda-śiro niviṣṭhāḥ
vayam tu guñjā-kalitāvataṁsam
grhīta-vamśam kam api śrayāmaḥ

"Those devoted to poetry may praise the nectar of poetry, and those devoted to Vedic study may praise the nectar of impersonal Brahman. We shall praise neither. We shall simply take shelter of a flutist who wears a guñjā-necklace."

Sūtra 78

tata āsaktiḥ

tataḥ - then; āsaktiḥ - attachment.

Then attachment is manifest.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (7.22.1) it is said:

yadā vai sukham labhate 'tha karoti nāsukham labdhvā karoti sukham eva labdhvā
karoti sukham tv eva vijijñāsitavyam iti.

"The sage said, 'One who performs spiritual activities attains happiness. One who does not perform spiritual activities does not attain happiness. Becoming happy in this way, one continues his spiritual activities. Therefore you should try to understand the nature of the spiritual happiness attained in this way.'"

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.6.26-27) it is said:

nāmāny anantasya hata-trapaḥ paṭhan
guhyāni bhadrāṇi kṛtāni ca smaran
gām paryatan tuṣṭa-manā gata-sprhaḥ
kālaṁ pratikṣan vimado vimatsarah

"Thus I began chanting the holy name and fame of the Lord by repeated recitation, ignoring all the formalities of the material world. Such chanting and remembering of the transcendental pastimes of the Lord are benedictory. So doing, I traveled all over the earth, fully satisfied, humble, and unenvious.*

evam kṛṣṇa-mater brahman
nāsaktasyāmalātmanaḥ
kālaḥ prādurabhūt kāle
taḍit saudāmanī yathā

"And so, O Brāhmaṇa Vyāsadeva, in due course of time I, who was fully absorbed in thinking of Kṛṣṇa and who therefore had no attachments, being completely freed from all material taints, met with death, as lightning and illumination occur simultaneously."*

Śrīla Haridāsa explains:

alaṁ tri-diva-vārtayā kim iti sārvabhauma-śriyā
vidūratarā-vārtinī bhavatu mokṣa-lakṣmīr api
kālinda-giri-nandinī-taṭa-nikuṅja-puñjodare
mano harati kevalaṁ nava-tamāla-nīlaṁ mahāḥ

"Enough of this talk about celestial planets! What is the use of a great kingdom on the earth? Even the opulence of liberation should go far away from me! In the groves by the Yamunā's shore a person whose dark complexion is like a young tamāla tree has now stolen my heart."

Śrīla Raghupati Upādhyāya explains:

kaṁ prati kathayitum īše
samprati ko vā pratītim āyāti
gopati-tanayā-kuṅje
gopa-vadhūti-vitaṁ brahma

"To whom can I speak who will believe me when I say that Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is hunting the gopīs in the bushes by the banks of the River Yamunā? In this way the Lord demonstrates His pastimes."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (23.12) it is said:

ruci haite bhaktye haya tabe āsakti pracura

"After taste is awakened, a deep attachment arises."*

Sūtra 79

tato bhāvaḥ

tataḥ - then; bhāvaḥ - ecstatic love.

Then ecstatic love is manifest.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (7.23.1) it is said:

yo vai bhūma sat-sukhaṁ nālpe sukham asti bhūmaiva sukhaṁ bhūmatveva vijijñāsitavya iti.

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is filled with bliss. His bliss is not small. His bliss is very great. You should try to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (5.14) it is said:

bhava-grahya-manojākhyam
bhavābhāva-karam śivam
kāla-sārga-karam devam
ye vidus te juhus tanum

"By knowing the auspicious Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is attained only by love, who is not material, who is the creator and destroyer of the worlds, and who is the creator of time, the individual souls become free from having to

accept another material body."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

kvacid rudanty acyuta-cintayā kvacid
dhasanti nandanti vadanty alaukikāḥ
nṛtyanti gāyanty anuśīlayanty ajaṁ
bhavanti tūṣṇīm param etya nirvṛtāḥ

"Having achieved love of Godhead, the devotees sometimes cry out loud, absorbed in thought of the infallible Lord. Sometimes they laugh, feel great pleasure, speak out loud to the Lord, dance, or sing. Such devotees, having transcended material conditioned life, sometimes imitate the unborn Supreme by acting out His pastimes. And sometimes, achieving His personal audience, they remain peaceful and silent."***

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 23.12) it is said:

āsakti haite citte janme kṛṣṇe prīty-aṅkura

"From that attachment the seed of love for Kṛṣṇa grows in the heart."*

In the words of some Vaiṣṇavas it is said:

parivadatu jano yathā tathāyaṁ
nanu mukharo na vayaṁ vicārayāmaḥ
hari-rasa-madira-madāti-matto
bhuvi viluthāma naṭāma nirviśāmaḥ

"The talkative people will rebuke us. Is it not? we do not care. We will drink the liquor of love for Lord Hari. We will become completely intoxicated. We will roll about on the ground. We will dance. We will experience ecstasy."

Śrīla Kaviratna explains:

jatu prārthayate na pārthiva-padaṁ naindra-pade modate
sandhāte na ca yoga-siddhi-sudhiyāṁ mokṣaṁ na cākāṅkṣati
kālindī-vana-sīmani sthira-taḍin-megha-dyutau kevalaṁ
śuddhe brahmaṇi ballavī bhujā-latā-bandhe mano dhāvati

"My mind never prays for the post of an earthly king. The post of King Indra does not appeal to it. It does not like the yogic perfections. It does not yearn after liberation. It only runs after the pure Supreme Brahman, who, bound by the creeper of a gopī's arm, appears like a dark rain cloud and a stationary flash of lightning in the forest by the Yamunā's shore."

Śrīla Śrīdhara Svāmī explains:

tvat-kathāmṛta-pāthodhau
viharanto mahā-mudaḥ
kurvanti kṛtinaḥ kecic
catur-vargaṁ tṛṇopamaḥ

"O Lord, the saintly devotees, who happily play in the nectar ocean of the narration of Your glories, consider the four puruṣārthas (material piety, economic development, sense gratification, and liberation) to be as insignificant as a blade of grass."

Śrīla Govinda Mīśra explains:

śravaṇe mathurā nayane mathurā
vadane mathurā hṛdaye mathurā
purato mathurā parato mathurā
madhurā madhurā mathurā mathurā

"Mathurā is in my ears. Mathurā is in my eyes. Mathurā is in my voice. Mathurā is in my heart. Mathurā is before me. Mathurā is behind me. Mathurā is sweet. Mathurā is sweet."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.3.25-26) explains:

kṣāntir avyārtha-kālatvaṁ
viraktir māna-śunyaṭā
āśā-bandhaḥ samutkaṇṭhā
nāma-gāne sadā ruciḥ

āsaktis tad-guṇākhyāne
prītis tad-vasati-sthale
ity ādayo 'nubhāvāḥ syur
jāta-bhavāṅkure jane

"When the seed of ecstatic emotion for Kṛṣṇa fructifies, the following nine

symptoms manifest in one's behavior: forgiveness, concern that time should not be wasted, detachment, absence of false prestige, hope, eagerness, a taste for chanting the holy name of the Lord, attachment to descriptions of the transcendental qualities of the Lord, and affection for those places where the Lord resides-- that is, a temple or a holy place like Vṛndāvana. These are called 'anubhāva', subordinate signs of ecstatic emotion. They are visible in a person in whose heart the seed of love of God has begun to fructify."*

Part Three

Prayojana-tattva-nirūpaṇa

Description of the Final Goal

Chapter One

Prayojana-nirṇaya-prakarṇa

What Is the Final Goal

Sūtra 80

avidyā-kalpita-jaḍa-viśeṣo na prayojanam

avidyā - ignorance; kalpita - considered; jaḍa - the inert material world; viśeṣaḥ - specific; na - not; prayojanam - the goal.

The dull material world, which is made of ignorance, is the not the final goal.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (7.24.2) it is said:

go aśvam iha mahimety ācakṣate hasti-hiraṇyam dāsa-bharyām kṣetrānyāyatanānīti
nāham eva bravīmi hovācānyo hy asmin pratiṣṭhita iti.

"People say that wealth is the possession of many cows, horses, elephants, gold, servants, wives, fields, and houses. I do not say these things are wealth. Wealth is something else."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.1.39) it is said:

sa sarva-dhī-vṛtṭy-anubhūta-sarva-
ātmā yathā svāpna janekṣitaikaḥ
tañ satyam ānanda-nidhiṃ bhajeta
nānyatra sajjed yata ātma-pātaḥ

"One should concentrate his mind upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who alone distributes Himself in so many manifestations just as ordinary persons create thousands of manifestations in dreams. One must concentrate the mind on Him, the only all-blissful Absolute Truth. Otherwise one will be misled and will cause one's own degradation."*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

atha jīvas tadīyāpi taj-jñāna-saṃsārgābhāva-yuktatvena tan-māyā-parābhūtaḥ sann
ātma-svarūpa-jñāna-lopān māyā-kalpitopādhyāveśāc ca anādi-saṃsāra-duḥkhena
sambadhyate.

"The conditioned soul is overpowered by the illusory potency māyā. He forgets his original spiritual identity, accepts the illusions māyā places before him, and thus suffers in a world of repeated birth and death that seems to have no beginning."

Sūtra 81

nāpi nirviśeṣaḥ

na - not; api - also; nirviśeṣaḥ - that which has no variety.

Varietyless impersonal liberation is not the final goal either.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad it is said:

amumād ākāsāt samutthāya param jyotī-rūpaṁ sampadya svena
rūpeṇābhiniṣpadyate.

"Then the soul transcends that effulgent sky and approaches the effulgent form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then the soul again manifests his original spiritual form."

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.15) it is said:

tam eva viditvāti mṛtyum eti

"They who know the Supreme Personality of Godhead cross beyond death."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

duravagamātma-tattva-nigamāya tavātta-tanos
carita-mahāmṛtābdhi-parivārtam pariśramāṇaḥ
na parilasanti kecid apavargam apīśvara te
caraṇa-saroja-haṁsa-kala-saṅga-visṛṣṭa-grhāḥ

"O Supreme Lord, the great souls do not yearn to attain impersonal liberation. They taste the nectar ocean of Your transcendental pastimes. They are like cooing swans playing at the lotus flower of Your feet."

Śrīla Gauḍa Pūrṇānanda explains:

tat-padārthaḥ prakṛta-paramānanda-pūrṇāmṛtābdhis
tvam-śabdārtho bhava-bhaya-bhara-vragra-citto 'ti-duḥkhī
tasmād aikyaṁ na bhavati tayor bhinnayor vastu-gatyā
bhedaḥ sevyāḥ sa khalu jagatām tvam hi dāsaḥ tadīyaḥ

"The word `tat' means `the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is a nectar ocean of transcendental bliss'. The word `tvam' means `the individual spirit soul who suffers greatly and whose heart trembles in fear of a host of material troubles'. These two are not one. They are different. That is the truth. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is He who should be served by all the worlds. You are His servant.

yasmin utpatti-māyāt tri-bhuvana-sahitaṁ candra-sūryādi sarvaṁ

yasmin nāsāntam aste vrajati vilayaṁ sva-sva-kālena yasmin
vedair brahmāpi vaktuṁ prabhavati na kadā yaṁ guṇātītam īśaṁ
so 'haṁ vākyaṁ tu kasmād upadiśasi guror manda-bhāgyāya mahyam

"the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the creator of everything, including the three worlds, the sun, the moon, and everything else. He is never agitated or unhappy. In time the entire material world enters into Him. Even the demigod Brahmā and all the Vedas have not the power to describe all His glories. He is the supreme controller and He is beyond the touch of the modes of material nature. Why do you repeat to me that slogan `so 'ham' (I am the Supreme)? Why do you wish to turn me into an unfortunate wretch?

Sūtra 82

paramārthe tasya na prayojanatvaṁ kintu kvacid abhidheyatvaṁ

parama - supreme; arthe - for th goal; tasya - of that; na - not; prayojanatvaṁ - need; kintu - however; kvacit - sometimes; abhidheyatvaṁ - to be named.

Although realization of the impersonal aspect of the Supreme is not the final goal, it is sometimes a useful intermediary stage.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

That the realization of the impersonal aspect of the Supreme is sometimes useful at a certain stage of spiritual development is seen in the following scriptural passages beginning with these words of the Iśa Upaniṣad (7):

yasmin sarvāni bhūtāny
ātmaivābhūd vijānataḥ
tatra ko mohaḥ kaḥ śoka
ekatvaṁ anupaśyataḥ

"One who always sees all living entities as spiritual sparks, in quality one with the Lord, becomes a true knower of things. What, then, can be illusion or anxiety for him?"*

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad it is said:

tat tvam asi śvetaketo

"O Śvetaketu, you are the same."

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

so 'ham ity avadharyātmānam gopālo 'ham iti bhāvayet

"One should think: In quality I am one with Lord Gopāla."

In the Nṛsimha-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

pare brahmaṇi paryavasito bhavet.

"Then one enters into the Supreme."

That realization of the impersonal aspect of the Supreme is not essential and may be neglected entirely is seen in the following scriptural passages beginning with these words of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.3):

jñāne prayāsam udapāsyā namanta eva
jīvanti sanmukharitam bhavadīya-vārtām
sthāne sthitam śruti-gatam tanu-vān-manobhir
ye prāyaso 'jita-jito 'py asi tais trilokyam

"O My Lord Kṛṣṇa, a devotee who abandons the path of empiric philosophical speculation aimed at merging in the existence of the Supreme and engages himself in hearing Your glories and activities from a bona fide sādhu, or saint, and who lives an honest life in the occupational engagement of his social life, can conquer Your sympathy and mercy, even though You are ajita, or unconquerable."*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 6.175) explains:

tat tvam asi jīva hetu pradeśika vākya
praṇava nā māni' tāre kahe mahā-vākya

"The subsidiary vibration `tat tvam asi' (you are the same) is meant for the understanding of the living entity, but the principal vibration is Omkāra. Not caring for Omkāra, Śaṅkarācārya has stressed the vibration `tat tvam asi'."*

Sūtra 83

tat tu sarvatra na praśastam

tat - that; tu - but; sarvatra - everywhere; na - not; praśastam - recommended.

But the intermediate stage of impersonalism is not always recommended.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Iśa Upaniṣad (12) it is said:

andham tamaḥ praviśanti
ye 'vidyām upāsate
tato bhūya iva te tamo
ya u vidyāyām rataḥ

"Those who are engaged in the worship of demigods enter into the darkest region of ignorance, and still more so do the worshipers of the impersonal Absolute."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.4) it is said:

śreyaḥ sṛtiṁ bhaktim udasya te vibho
kliśyanti ye kevala-bodha-labdhave
teṣāṁ asau kleśala eva śiṣyate
nānyad yathā sthūla-tuṣāvaghātīnām

"My dear Lord, devotional service unto You is the only auspicious path. If one gives it up simply for speculative knowledge or the understanding that these living beings are spirit souls and the material world is false, he undergoes a great deal of trouble. He only gains troublesome and inauspicious activities. His endeavors are like beating a husk that is already devoid of rice. One's labor becomes fruitless."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.2.32) it is also said:

ye 'nye 'ravindākṣa-vimukti-māninas
tvayy asta-bhāvād aviśuddha-buddhayaḥ
āruhya kṛcchreṇa param padam tataḥ

patanty adho 'nādr̥ta-yuṣmad-aṅghrayaḥ

"O lotus-eyed Lord, although non-devotees who accept severe austerities and penances to achieve the highest position may think themselves liberated, their intelligence is impure. They fall down from their position of imagined superiority because they have no regard for Your lotus feet."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 22.29) it is said:

jñānī jīvan-mukta daśā pāinu kari' māne
vastutaḥ buddhi śuddha nahe kṛṣṇa-bhakti vine

"There are many philosophical speculators (jñānīs) belonging to the Māyāvāda school who consider themselves liberated and call themselves Nārāyaṇa. However, their intelligence is not purified unless they engage in Kṛṣṇa's devotional service."*

Sūtra 84

cid-viśeṣa eva prayojanaḥ

cit - spiritual; viśeṣaḥ - variety; eva - indeed; prayojanaḥ - the final goal.

The state of spiritual variety is the final stage of spiritual advancement.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (8.1.2-3) it is said:

brūyad yāvān vā ayam ākāśas tāvān eṣo 'ntar hṛdaya ākāśa ubhe 'smin dyāvā-pṛthivī
antar eva mamāhite ubhāv agniś ca vāyus ca sūrya-candramasāv ubhau vidyun
nakṣatrāṇi yac cāsyehāsti yac ca nāsti sarvaṁ tad asmin samāhitam iti.

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who resides in the spiritual sky, and the individual spiritual soul, who resides in the sky of the heart, may both move among the spiritual and material worlds. They both may enter Agniloka, Vāyuloka, the sun, the moon, the stars, and the lightning. They may enter the spiritual world, which is real, and the material world, which is not an eternal reality."

In Śrī Brahma-saṁhitā (5.29) it is said:

cintāmaṇi-prakara-sadmasu kalpa-vrkṣa-
lakṣāvṛteṣu surabhīr abhipālayantam
lakṣmī-sahasra-śata-sambhrama-sevyamānaṁ
govindam ādi-puruṣaṁ tam ahaṁ bhajāmi

"I worship Govinda, the primeval Lord, the first progenitor, who is tending the cows yielding all desire, in abodes built with spiritual gems, surrounded by millions of purpose trees, and always served with great reverence and affection by hundreds of thousands of lakṣmīs, or gopīs."***

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 20.155) it is said:

svayaṁ bhagavān kṛṣṇa govinda para nāma
sarvaiśvarya pūrṇa yāna goloka nitya dhāma

"The original Supreme Personality of Godhead is Kṛṣṇa. His original name is Govinda. He is full of all opulences, and His eternal abode is known as Goloka Vṛndāvana."*

Chapter Two Sthāyi-bhāva-prakarāṇa Fervent or Continuous Ecstasy

Sūtra 85

viśiṣṭa-bhāvo hi ratiḥ

viśiṣṭa - exalted; bhāvaḥ - love; hi - indeed; ratiḥ - rati.

When spiritual love increases it reaches the stage called `rati'.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad it is said:

ātmaivedaṁ sarvam iti sa vā eṣa evaṁ paśyann evaṁ manvān evaṁ vijānān ātma-
ratim ātma-kṛiḍā ātma-mithuna ātmānandaḥ sa svarād bhavati tasya sarveṣu kāma-
cāro bhavati.

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is everything. One who sees Him, glorifies Him, and understands Him, attains spiritual love (rati), enjoys spiritual pastimes, becomes the Lord's personal associate, is filled with spiritual bliss, is independent, and can go wherever he likes."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (3.17), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

yas tv ātma-ratir eva syāt
ātma-tṛptaś ca mānavaḥ
ātmany eva ca santuṣṭaś
tasya kāryaṁ na vidyate

"But for one who takes pleasure (rati) in the self, whose human life is one of self realization, and who is satisfied in the self one, fully satiated, for him there is no duty."*

In the Agni Purāṇa it is said:

abhimānād ratiḥ sa ca
paripoṣam upeyuṣī
vyabhicārādi samanyāt
śṛṅgāra iti gīyate

"When spiritual love increases it becomes rati. Rati arouses the mellows of conjugal love for Lord Kṛṣṇa."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu, 1.3.1 and 4) explains:

śuddha-sattva-viśeṣātmā
prema-sūryāṁśu-sāmya-bhāk
rucibhiś citta-maśṛṇya-
kṛd asau bhāva ucyate

"When devotional service is situated on the transcendental platform of pure goodness it is like a ray of the sunlight of love for Kṛṣṇa. At such a time devotional service causes the heart to be softened by various tastes, and it is called 'bhāva'

(emotion). "*

āvirbhūya mano-vṛttau
vrajantī tat-svarūpatām
svayam-prakāśa-rūpāpi
bhāsamānā prakāśya-vat

"At that time Lord Kṛṣṇa reveals His splendid original form, manifested in the devotee's meditation."

Sūtra 86

ullāsamayītara-rāga-sūnyā ratiḥ prītiḥ

ullāsamayī - splendid and blissful; itara - other; rāga - passion; sūnyā - without;
ratiḥ - rati; prītiḥ - prīti.

When rati becomes especially splendid and blissful, and when it is passionately directed to Lord Kṛṣṇa alone, it becomes prīti.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad (3.6.1) it is said:

ānando brahmeti vyajānāt. ānandād dhy eva khalv imāni bhūtāni jāyante.
ānandena jātāni jīvanti. ānandaṁ prayanty abhisamviśanti.

"Then he understood that the Supreme is bliss. From the blissful Supreme everything is born. By the power of the blissful Supreme everything lives. Everything enters the blissful Supreme."

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa it is said:

nātha yoṇi-sahasreṣu
yeṣu yeṣu vrajāmy aham
teṣu teṣv acyutā bhaktir
acyute 'stu sadā tvayi

"O Lord, I pray that wherever I go for my next thousand births I may always have unalloyed love for You, the infallible Supreme Personality of Godhead.

yā prītir avivekānām
viṣayeṣv anapāyinī
tvam anusmarataḥ sa me
hṛdayān nāpasarpatu

"O Lord, I pray that I may always remember You. I pray that the love that fools feel for material objects I may feel for You. I pray that love will never leave my heart."

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 23.13) it is said:

sei bhāva gadha haile dhare prema nāma
sei prema prayojana sarvānanda dhāma

"When that ecstatic emotional stage intensifies, it is called love of Godhead. Such love is life's ultimate goal and the reservoir of all pleasure."*

Sūtra 87

ḍṛḍha-mamatātiśayātmikā prītiḥ premā

ḍṛḍha - firm; mamatā - possessiveness; atiśaya - great; ātmikā - of the self; prītiḥ - prīti; premā - love.

When it is very intense, and when the lover becomes very possessive of the beloved, prīti becomes prema.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.23) it is said:

nāyam ātmā pravacanena labhyo
na medhayā na bahunā śrutena
yam evaiṣa vṛṇute tena labhyas
tasyaiṣa ātma vivṛṇute tanuṁ svām

"The Supreme Lord is not attained by expert explanations, by vast intelligence, nor even by much hearing. He is attained only by one who He Himself chooses. To such a person He manifests His own form."*

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

etad viṣṇoḥ paramaṁ padaṁ ye
nitya-yuktāḥ samyujante na kāmātteṣāṁ asau gopa-rūpaḥ
prakāśayet ātma-padaṁ tadaiva

"Free from material desires, the sages always strive to attain Lord Viṣṇu's supreme abode. Lord Viṣṇu, in His original form as a cowherd boy, appears before them and shows them His own abode."

In Śrī Nārada-pañcarātra it is said:

ananya-mamatā viṣṇau
mamatā prema-saṅgatā
bhaktir ity ucyate bhīṣma-
prahlādoddhava-nāradaīḥ

"When one develops an unflinching sense of ownership or possessiveness in relation to Lord Viṣṇu, or, in other words, when one thinks Viṣṇu and no one else to be the only object of love, such an awakening is called bhakti (devotion) by exalted persons like Bhīṣma, Prhalāda, Uddhava, and Nārada."*

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.4.1) explains:

samyāṅ masṛṇita-svānto
mamatvātīśayāṅkitaḥ
bhāvaḥ sa eva sāndrātmā
budhaiḥ prema nigadyate

"When the heart is completely softened and devoid of all material desires and when one's emotional feelings become very strong, one becomes very much attached to Kṛṣṇa. Such purified emotion is known as pure love."*

Sūtra 88

viśrambhātma-premā praṇayaḥ

viśrambha - intimate and confident; ātma - of the self; premā - prema; praṇayaḥ - praṇaya.

When the love becomes intimate and lover confident of his position, prema becomes praṇaya.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad (2.7.2) it is said:

yadā hy evaiṣa etasminn adṛśye 'nātmye 'nirukte 'nilayane 'bhayaṁ pratiṣṭham vindate. atha so 'bhayaṁ gato bhavati.

"Taking shelter of the Supreme, who is invisible to material eyes, not a material person, indescribable by material words, and without a material home, the living entity becomes fearless. He becomes fearless."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.18.24) it is said:

uvāha kṛṣṇo bhagavān
śrīdamānam parājitaḥ

"Defeated, Lord Kṛṣṇa carried Śrīdamā."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 3.3.108) explains:

prāptāyām sambhramādinām
yogyatāyām api sphuṭam
tad-gandhenāpy asaṁsprṣṭā
ratiḥ prāṇāya ucyate

"When there is full knowledge of Kṛṣṇa's superiority and yet in dealings with Him on friendly terms respectfulness is completely absent, that stage is called affection."*

Sūtra 89

kauṭilyābhāsātmaka-bhāva-vaicitrānugūṇa-praṇayo mānaḥ

kauṭilya - of crookedness; ābhāsa - with the reflection; ātmaka - of the self;
bhāva - love; vaicitra - wonder; anugūṇa - favorable; praṇayaḥ - praṇaya; mānaḥ -
māna.

When the dim reflection of crookedness is present, and when the love is both wonderful and pleasing, praṇaya becomes māna, (jealous anger).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad (3.10.4) it is said:

tan-mana ity upāsīta. mānavān bhavati.

"One should worship Him as the supreme mind. Filled with jealous anger, one may worship Him."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

kvacid bhrū-kuṭim ābadhya
prema-samrambha-vihvalāḥ

"Sometimes there would be knitting of the eyebrows. They were overcome with feelings of love."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Ujjvala-nīlamanī, Śṛṅgāra-bheda-kathana, 102) explains:

aher iva gatiḥ premṇaḥ
svabhāva-kutilabhāvāt
ato hetor ahetoś ca
yunor mana udañcati

"The progress of loving affairs between young couples is like the movement of a snake. On account of this two types of anger arise between young couples: anger with cause and anger without cause."*

Sūtra 90

ceto-dravātiśayātmaka-premaiva snehaḥ

cetaḥ - of the heart; drava - melting; atīśaya - great; ātmaka - of the self; prema - prema; eva - indeed; snehaḥ - sneha.

When the heart melts, prema becomes sneha.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (1.4.8) it is said:

tad etat preyaḥ putrāt preyo vittāt preyo 'nyasmād anantaratarāṃ yad ayam ātmā.

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is more dear than sons, more dear than wealth, more dear than anything."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

vīkṣyantaḥ sneha-sambandhā
vicelus tatra tatra ha

nyarundhann udgalad-bāṣpaṃ
autkaṇṭhād devakī-sute
niryāty āgārān no bhadrāṃ
iti syād bāndhava-striyaḥ

"Gazing, they were overcome with love. They went here and there. Eager to see Devakī's son, the women ran from their rooms."

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 3.143-144) it is said:

kāndiyā kahena śacī bāchāre nimāni
viśvarūpa sama nā kariha niṭhurāi

"Understanding that Lord Caitanya had accepted the renounced order of life, Śacīmātā, crying, said to the Lord, 'My darling Nimāi, do not be cruel like Viśvarūpa, Your elder brother'. "*"

sannyāsī haiyā more na dila daraśan
tumi taiche haile mora haibe maraṇ

"Mother Śacī continued: `After accepting the renounced order Viśvarūpa never again gave me audience. If You do like Him, that will certainly be the death of me."*

Sūtra 91

abhilāṣātmaka-sneha eva rāgaḥ

abhilāṣa - desire; ātmaka - of the self; sneha - sneha; eva - indeed; rāgaḥ - rāga.

When the lover's desires are strong, sneha becomes rāga.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (it is said:

ātmānaṁ ced vijanīyād ayam astīti puruṣaḥ. kim icchan kasya kāmāya śarīram
anusañcaret.

"If a person knows the Supreme Personality of Godhead and says, "Here is the Supreme Personality of Godhead", why would he desire to cling to this material body?"

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.8.25) Queen Kuntī tells Lord Kṛṣṇa:

vipadaḥ santu tāḥ śasvāt
tatra tatra jagad-guro
bhavato darśanaṁ yat syād
apunar-bhava-darśanam

"I wish that all those calamities may happen again and again so that we could see You again and again, for seeing You means that we will no longer see repeated births and deaths."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (3.143-145) it is said:

nīlācale navadvīpe yena dui ghara
loka gatāgati vārtā pāba nirantara

"Since Jagannātha Purī and Navadvīpa are intimately related, as if they were two rooms in the same house, people from Navadvīpa generally go to Jagannātha Purī, and those from Jagannātha Purī go to Navadvīpa. This going and coming will help carry news of Lord Caitanya. In this way I will be able to get news of Him.*

tumi saba karite pāra gamanāgamana
gaṅgā-snāne kabhu hābe tānra āgamana

"All you devotees will be able to come and go, and sometimes He may also come to take His bath in the Ganges.*

āpanāra duḥkha sukha tāhān nāhi gaṇi
tara yei sukha tāhā nija sukha māni

"I do not care for my personal happiness or unhappiness, but only for His happiness. Indeed, I accept His happiness as my happiness."*

Sūtra 92

rāgo 'nukṣaṇam viṣayāśrayayor navīnatvam sampādayann anurāgaḥ

rāgaḥ - lobe; anukṣaṇam - at every moment; viṣaya - of the object; āśrayayoḥ - of the shelter; navīnatvam - newness; sampādayann - establishing; anurāgaḥ - anurāga.

When the feelings between the lover and beloved are newer and newer at every moment, rāga becomes anurāga.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad it is said:

etam ānandamayam ātmānam upasaṅkramya imāl lokān kāmāśi kāma-rūpy
anusañcarann etat sāmagāyann āste. habu habu habu.

"The sage always yearns to leave this material world and approach the blissful
Supreme Personality of Godhead."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

yadyapy asau pārśva-gato raho gatas
tathāpi tasyāṅghri-yugam navam navam
pade pede kā vīrameta tat-padā
calāpi yaṁ śrīr na jahāti karhicit

"Although again and again we meet Him in a secluded place, His feet are always
filled with newer and newer bliss. What woman could leave His feet? Even the
goddess of fortune never leaves His feet."

Śrīla Vāsudeva Ghoṣa explains:

nā jāniyā na śuniyā prīti karilāma go
pariṇāme para-māda dekhi
āsāḍha śravaṇa māse ghana deyaḥ barikhaye
emati jharaya duṭi āṅkhi

hera je āmāre dekha mānuṣa ākāra go
manera anale āmi puḍi
jvalanta anale jena puḍiyā raiyāchigo
pākāliyā pātera ḍūnri

āndhuyā purūkhe jena dīna hīna mīna hena
niśvāsa chāḍite nāhi thāni
bāsudeva ghoṣa kahe ḍākāti piritā go
tile tile bandhure hārāi

Sūtra 93

asamordhva-camatkāreṇonmādanam mahā-bhāvaḥ

a - without; sama - equal; ūrdhva - or superior; camatkāreṇa - with wonder;
unmādanam - intoxication; mahā-bhāvaḥ - mahā-bhāva.

When it is intoxicated with wonders that have no equal or superior, anurāga becomes mahā-bhāva.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.2.8) it is said:

yathā nadyaḥ syandamānāḥ samudre
'staṁ gacchanti nama-rūpe vihāya
tathā vidvān nāma-rūpād vimuktaḥ
parāt paraṁ puruṣam upaiti divyam.

"As flowing rivers abandon their names and forms and enter the great ocean, so the enlightened soul abandons his material name and form and meets the effulgent Supreme Personality of Godhead."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.19.16) it is said:

gopīnām paramānanda
āsīd govinda-darśane
kṣaṇam yuga-śatam iva
yāsām yena vinā bhavet

"Gazing at Lord Kṛṣṇa, the gopīs became filled with bliss. A moment without Him seemed like a hundred yugas."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains:

iyam eva ratiḥ prauḍhā
mahā-bhāva-daśām vrajet
yā mṛgyasya vimuktānām
bhaktānām ca varīyāsām

"Among the most exalted of liberated souls love for Lord Kṛṣṇa becomes intensified to the stage known as mahā-bhāva."

Rasa-prakaraṇa
The Rasas

Sūtra 94

sāmagrī-paripuṣṭā ratir eva rasaḥ

sāmagrī - by the ingredients; paripuṣṭā - nourished; ratiḥ - rati; eva - indeed; rasaḥ - rasa.

When it is nourished by various sāmagrīs (ingredients), rati becomes rasa (nectar mellows).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad (2.7.1) it is said:

raso vai saḥ. rasam hy evāyam labdhvānandi bhavati.

"When one understands the Personality of God, the reservoir of pleasure, Kṛṣṇa, he actually becomes transcendently blissful."*

In the Agni Purāṇa it is said:

na bhāva-hino 'sti raso
na bhāvo rasa-varjitaḥ
bhāvayanti rasān ebhir
bhāvyante ca rasa iti

"There is no nectar (rasa) that is empty of love, and there is no love that is empty of nectar. Love creates nectar. Nectar creates love."

Śrīla Bharata Muni explains:

śaktir asti vibhāvādeḥ
kāpi sādharmaṇī kṛtau
pramātā tad-abhedena
svayam yayā pratipadyate

"Ecstatic love creates nectar (rasa). That is the proof that love and nectar are not different."

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.180-182) it is said:

ei saba kṛṣṇa bhakti rasa sthāyi bhāva
sthāyi bhāve mile yadi vibhāvānubhāva

"All these stages combined are called 'sthāyi-bhāva', or continuous love of Godhead in devotional service. In addition to these stages there are 'vibhāva' and 'anubhāva'.*

sattvika vyabhicāri bhāvera milane
kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rasa haya amṛta āsvādane

"When the higher standard of ecstatic love is mixed with the symptoms of 'sattvika' and 'vyabhicāri', the devotee relishes the bliss of loving Kṛṣṇa in a variety of nectarean tastes.*

yaiche dadhi sitā ghr̥ta marīca karpūra
milane rasālā haya amṛta madhura

"These tastes are like a combination of yogurt, sugar candy, ghee (clarified butter), black pepper, and camphor and are as palatable as sweet nectar."*

Sūtra 95

sa ca pañca-vidho mukhyaḥ sapta-vidho gauṇaḥ

saḥ - that; ca - and; pañca - five; vidhaḥ - kinds; mukhyaḥ - primary; sapta - seven; vidhaḥ - kinds; gauṇaḥ - secondary.

The primary rasas are five, and the secondary rasas are seven.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.4.17) it is said:

yasmin pañca-pañcajanā
ākāśaś ca pratiṣṭhitah
tam eva manye ātmānam
vidvān brahmāmṛto 'mṛtam

"A wise man understands the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is worshiped by the devotees in the five rasas. Understanding Him, the wise man becomes immortal. He attains the nectar of transcendental bliss."

In the Varāha Purāṇa it is said:

putra-bhrāṭṛ-sakhitvena
svāmitvena yato hariḥ
bahudhā gīyate vedair
jīyaṁsas tasya te na tu

"In many ways the Vedas glorify Lord Hari, who is loved as the devotee's son, brother, friend, master, and husband."

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta it is said:

rati-bhede kṛṣṇa-bhakti-rase pañca bheda

"The transcendental mellows derived from devotional service are also of five varieties."*

Sūtra 96

śānta-rasaḥ

śānta - peaceful; rasaḥ - rasa.

The first rasa is śānta-rasa (neutrality).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (3.14.1) it is said:

sarvaṁ khalv idaṁ brahma taj-jalān iti śānta upāsita.

"Saying, 'The Supreme is everything', the devotee in śānta-rasa worships the Lord."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

ṛsayo vāta-rasanā
śramaṇā ūrdhva-manthinaḥ
brahmākhyam dhāma te yānti
śāntāḥ sannyāsino 'malāḥ

"The peaceful, pure-hearted, celibate sages go to the spiritual world, the abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.189) it is said:

śānta bhakta nava yogendra sanakādi āra

"Examples of śānta-bhaktas are the nine Yogendras and the four Kumāras."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 23.54) it is said:

śānta-rase śānti rati prema paryanta haya

"The position of neutrality increases up to the point where one can appreciate love of Godhead."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.211) it is said:

śānta-rase svarūpa buddhye kṛṣṇaika niṣṭhāta

"When one is fully attached to Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, one attains the śamatā stage."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.215) it is said:

kṛṣṇa niṣṭhā tṛṣṇā tyāga śāntera dui guṇe

"A person situated on the śānta-rasa platform manifests the two transcendental qualities of detachment from all material desire and full attachment to Kṛṣṇa."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.217-218) it is said:

ei dui guṇa vyāpe sarva bhakta-jñāe
ākāśera śabda guṇa yena bhūta-gaṇe

"These two qualities of the śānta stage spread through the lives of all devotees. They are like the quality of sound in the sky. Sound vibration is found in all material elements.*

śāntera svabhāva kṛṣṇe mamata gandha hina
param brahma paramātma jñāna pravina

"It is the nature of śānta-rasa that not even the smallest intimacy exists. Rather, knowledge of impersonal Brahman and localized Paramātmā is prominent."*

Sūtra 97

dāsyā-rasaḥ

dāsyā-rasaḥ - servitorship.

The next rasa is dāsyā-rasa (servitorship).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Agniveśma-śruti it is said:

aṁśo hy eṣa parasya bhinnam hy ena madhīyire. brahma-dāsā brahma-kitavā iti.

"The individual spirit souls are part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, but still they are different from Him. They are all His servants."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.29.4) it is said:

kiṁ citram acyuta tavaitad aśeṣa-bandho
dāseṣv ananya-śaraṇeṣu yad ātma-sattvaṁ
yo rocayet saha mṛgaiḥ svayam īśvarāṇām
śrīmat-kirīṭa-taṭa-pīḍita-pāda-pīṭhaḥ

"My dear infallible Lord, it is not very astonishing that You intimately approach Your servants who have taken exclusive shelter of You. After all, during Your appearance as Lord Rāmacandra, even while great demigods like Lord Brahmā were vying to place the effulgent tips of their helmets upon the cushion where Your lotus feet rested, You displayed special affection for monkeys such as Hanumān because they had taken exclusive shelter of You."***

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.6.46) it is also said:

tvayopayukta-srag-gandha-
vāso-'laṅkāra-carcitāḥ
uccīṣṭha-bhogino dāsās
tava māyām jayema hi

"My dear Lord, the garlands, scented substances, garments, ornaments, and other such things that have been offered to You may later be used by Your servants. By partaking of these things and eating the remnants of food You have left, we will be able to conquer the illusory energy."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.189) it is said:

dāsya-bhāva-bhakta sarvatra sevaka apāra

"Examples of devotees in dāsya-bhakti are innumerable, for such devotees exist everywhere."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.219-220) it is said:

kevala svarūpa jñāna haya śānta-rase
pūrṇaiśvarya prabhura jñāna adhika haya dāsye

"On the platform of śānta-rasa one only realizes his constitutional position.

However, when one is raised to the platform of dāsya-rasa, he better understands the full opulence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.*

īśvara jñāna sambhrama gaurava pracura

"On the dāsya-rasa platform knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is revealed with awe and veneration."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.221) it is said:

śāntera guṇa dāsya ache adhika sevana

"The qualities of śānta-rasa are also present in dāsya-rasa, but service is added."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 23.54) it is said:

dāsye rati rāga paryanta krameta bāḍaya

"The mellow of servitorship gradually increases to the point of spontaneous love of Godhead."*

Sūtra 98

sakhya-rasaḥ

sakhya-rasaḥ - friendship.

The next rasa is sakhya-rasa (friendship).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.1.1) it is said:

dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhayā
samānaṁ vṛkṣaṁ pariśaṣvajāte

"The individual spirit soul and the Supersoul, Supreme Personality of Godhead, are like two friendly birds sitting on the same tree."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (13.5-6) it is said:

aho 'ti-ramyaṁ pulinaṁ vayasyāḥ
sva-keli-sampan-mṛdulāc ca bālukaṁ
sphuṭaṁ saro-gandha-hṛtāni patrika-
dhvani-pratidhvani-lasad-druma-kulam

"My dear friends, just see how this riverbank is extremely beautiful because of its pleasing atmosphere. And just see how the blooming lotuses are attracting bees and birds by their aroma. The humming and chirping of the bees and birds is echoing throughout the beautiful trees in the forest. Also, here the sands are clean and soft. Therefore this must be considered the best place for our sporting and pastimes.*

atra bhoktavyam asmābhir
divārūḍhaṁ kṣudhārditāḥ
vatsāḥ samipe 'paḥ pītvā
carantu śanakais tṛṇam

"I think we should take our lunch here, since we are already hungry because the time is very late. Here the calves may drink water and go slowly here and there and eat the grass."*

In the Vālmiki Rāmāyaṇa it is said:

so 'haṁ priya-sakhaṁ rāmaṁ
śayānaṁ saha sītayā
rakṣiṣyāmi dhanuṣ-pāṇiḥ
sarvathā jñātibhiḥ saha

"I am the dear friend of Rāma. When He sleeps with Sītā by His side, I will guard Him. I will stand there, surrounded by my kinsmen, and a bow in my hand."

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.190) it is said:

sakhya bhakta śrīdamādi pure bhīmārjuna

"In Vṛndāvana examples of devotees in fraternity are Śrīdamā and Sudāmā. In Dvārakā the Lord's friends are Bhīma and Arjuna."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.222-223) it is said:

śāntera guṇa dāsyera sevana sakhye dui haya
dāsyera sambhrama gaurava sakhye viśvasa maya

"The qualities of śānta-rasa and the service of dāsyā-rasa are both present on the platform of sakhya-rasa. On the platform of fraternity the qualities of dāsyā-rasa are mixed with the confidence of fraternity instead of awe and veneration."*

kāndhe caḍe kāndhe caḍāya kare krīḍā-raṇa
kṛṣṇa seve kṛṣṇe karāya āpana sevana

"On the sakhya-rasa platform the devotee sometimes offers the Lord service and sometimes makes Kṛṣṇa serve Him in exchange. In their mock-fighting the cowherd boys would sometimes climb on Kṛṣṇa's shoulders and sometimes they would make Kṛṣṇa climb on their shoulders."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 23.55) it is said:

sakhya vātsalya rati pāya anurāga sīmā
subalādyera bhāva paryanta premera mahimā

"After the mellows of servitorship there are the mellows of friendship and paternal love, which increase to subordinate spontaneous love. The greatness of the love found in friends like Subala extends to the standard of ecstatic love of Godhead."*

Sūtra 99

vatsalya-rasaḥ

vatsalya-rasaḥ - parental love.

The next rasa is vatsalya-rasa (parental love).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Pārāśrayāṇa-śruti it is said:

amśo hy eṣa parasya yo 'yam pumān utpadyate ca mriyate ca nānā hy eṣān
vyapadiśati piteti putreti bhrātetī ca sakheti ceti.

"The living entity who is born and dies in this world is in truth a part and parcel of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He can be the Supreme Lord's father, son, brother, or friend."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.13.22) it is said:

tan-mātarō veṇu-rava-tvarotthitā
utthāpya dorbhiḥ parirabhya nirbharam
sneha-snutā-stanya-payah-sudhāsavaṁ
matvā param brahma sutān apāyayan

"The mothers of the boys, upon hearing the sounds of the flutes and bugles being played by their sons, immediately rose from their household tasks, lifted their boys onto their laps, embraced them with both arms, and began to feed them with their breast milk, which flowed forth with extreme love specifically for Kṛṣṇa. Actually Kṛṣṇa is everything, but at that time, expressing extreme love and affection, they took special pleasure in feeding Kṛṣṇa, the Parabrahman, and Kṛṣṇa drank the milk from His respective mothers as if it were a nectarean beverage."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.190) it is said:

vātsalya bhakta pitā mātā yata guru jana

"In Vṛndāvana the devotees in parental love are mother Yaśodā and father Nanda Mahārāja, and in Dvārakā the Lord's parents are Vasudeva and Devakī. There are also other superior persons who are devotees in parental love."*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.226-228) it is said:

vātsalye śāntera guṇa dāsyera sevana
sei sei sevanera iṅha nāma pālana

"On the platform of parental love the qualities of śānta-rasa, dāsyā-rasa, and sakhya-rasa are transformed into a form of service called maintenance.*

sakhyera guṇa asaṅkoca agaurava āra
mamatādhikye taḍana bhartsana vyavahāra

"The essence of fraternal love is intimacy devoid of the formality and veneration found in the dāsyā-rasa. Due to a greater sense of intimacy, the devotee functioning in paternal love chastises and rebukes the Lord in an ordinary way.*

āpanāre pālaka jñāne kṛṣṇa pālya jñāna
cāri guṇe vātsalya rasa amṛta samāna

"On the platform of paternal love, the devotee considers himself the Lord's maintainer. Thus the Lord is an object of maintenance, like a son, and therefore this mellow is full of the four qualities of śānta-rasa, dāsyā-rasa, fraternity, and parental love. This is more transcendental nectar."*

Sūtra 100

madhura-rasaḥ

madhura-rasaḥ - conjugal love.

The next rasa is madhura-rasa (conjugal love).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad it is said:

tad yathā priyayā striyā sampariṣvaktō na bahyaṁ kiṁ ca na veda nāntaram
evāyaṁ puruṣaḥ prajñānātmanā sampariṣvaktō na bahyaṁ kiṁ ca na veda
nāntaram.

"Embraced by His beloved, the Supreme Personality of Godhead knows nothing else within or without. Filled with spiritual bliss, He knows nothing else within or without."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.33.25) it is said:

evam sasānkamsu-virājitā niśaḥ
sa satya-kāmo 'nuratābalā-gaṇaḥ
siṣeva ātmany avaruddha-saurataḥ
sarvāḥ śarat-kāvya-kathā-rasāśrayaḥ

"Although the gopīs were firmly attached to Lord Kṛṣṇa, whose desires are always fulfilled, the Lord was not internally affected by any mundane sex desire. Still, to perform His pastimes the Lord took advantage of all those moonlit autumn nights, which inspire poetic descriptions of transcendental affairs."***

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 19.231, 232, 234) it is said:

madhura rase kṛṣṇa niṣṭhā sevā atiśaya
sakhye asaṅkoca lālana mamatādhika haya

"On the platform of conjugal love, attachment to Kṛṣṇa, rendering service unto Him, the relaxed feelings of fraternity, and the feelings of maintenance all increase in intimacy.*

kānta bhāve nijāṅga diyā kareṇa sevana
ata eva madhura rase haya pañca guṇa

"On the platform of conjugal love the devotee offers his body in the service of the Lord. Thus on this platform all five transcendental qualities are present.*

ei mata madhure saba bhāva samahāra
ata eva āsvādādhikye kare camatkāra

"Similarly, on the platform of conjugal love all the feelings of the devotees are amalgamated. The intensified taste is certainly wonderful.*

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 23.57-58) it is said:

rūḍha adhirūḍha bhāva kevala madhure

"Only in the conjugal mellow are there two ecstatic symptoms called 'rūḍha'

(advanced) and adhirḍha' (highly advanced).*

adhirūḍha mahā-bhāva dui ta prakāra

"Highly advanced ecstasy is divided into two categories: madana and mohana. Meeting together is called madana, and separation is called mohana."*

Sūtra 101

uttarottara-mukhya-rasa-prasamsā

uttara - higher; uttara - and higher; mukhya - primary; rasa - rasas; prasamsā - glory.

Each of these primary rasas is more glorious than the previous rasa.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.4.8) it is said:

aṇuḥ panthā vitataḥ purāṇo
mām spr̥ṣṭo 'nuvṛtto mayaiva
tena dhīrā api yānti brahma-vidah
svargaṁ lokam ita ūrdhva vimuktāḥ

"The ancient and subtle spiritual path has touched me. Now I understand it. Following that path, the enlightened souls become liberated. Following it, they ascend to the spiritual world."

In the Brahma-saṁhitā (5.61) it is said:

dharmān anyān parityajya
mām ekam bhaja viśvasan
yādṛśī yādṛśī śraddhā
siddhir bhavati tāḍṛśī

"Abandoning all meritorious performances serve Me with faith. The realization

will correspond to the nature of one's faith."**

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 23.53) it is said:

pañca-vidha rasa śānta dāsya sakhya vātsalya
madhura nāma śṅgāra bhāvetē prābalya

"There are five transcendental mellows: neutrality, servitorship, friendship, paternal affection, and conjugal love, which is also known as the mellow of sweetness. Conjugal love excels all others."*

Sūtra 102

hāsādbhuta-vīra-karuṇa-raudra-bhayānaka-bibhatseti gauṇa-rasaḥ sapta-vidhaḥ

hāsa - comedy; adbhuta - wonder; vīra - chivalry; karuṇa - compassion; raudra - anger; bhayānaka - fear; bibhatsā - horror; iti - thus; gauṇa-rasaḥ - the secondary rasas; sapta-vidhaḥ - seven kinds.

The seven secondary rasas are: laughter, wonder, chivalry, compassion, anger, disaster, and fear.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

The hāsya-rasa (laughter) is described in the Kena Upaniṣad (3.1):

ta aikṣantāsmākam evāyaṁ vijayo 'smākam evāyaṁ mahimeti.

"Even though the Supreme Personality of Godhead had personally conquered the demons, the demigods became very proud. They declared, 'Ours is the victory! Ours is the glory!'"

The adbhuta-rasa (wonder) is also described in the Kena Upaniṣad (3.2):

yan na vyajānanta kim idaṁ yakṣam iti.

"Unaware that the yakṣa standing before them was the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, the demigods became filled with wonder. They declared, 'Who

is this yakṣa?' "

The vīra-rasa (chivalry) is described in the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad:

vīrān mano rudra ity ādi

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is heroic and powerful."

The karuṇa-rasa (compassion) is described in the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad:

anīśāya śocati muhyamānaḥ

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead laments for the fate of the conditioned souls."

The raudra-rasa (anger) is described in the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad:

eva hi rudreṇa dvitīyāya tastarya imāl lokān īsate īsanībhiḥ

"With His powerful potencies the Supreme Lord angrily rules the worlds."

The bhayānaka-rasa (fear) is described in the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (2.3.2-3):

mahad bhayaṁ vajram udyatam. . .

bhayād asyāgnis tapati
bhayāt tapati sūryaḥ
bhayād indraś ca vāyuś ca
mṛtyur dhāvati pañcamah

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is frightening like a raised thunderbolt. . . Out of fear of Him fire burns. Out of fear of Him the sun shines. Out of fear of Him Indra, Vāyu, and Yama perform their duties."

The bibhatsa-rasa (disaster) is described in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad:

imāni rudraṇy asakṛd avartini bhūtāni bhavanti jāyasva mriyasvety etat tṛtīya-
sthānaṁ tenāsau loke na sampūryate tasmāj jugupsate.

"From the Supreme Personality of Godhead all ferocious monsters are born and in Him they perish. In this way the world is not overcome. From Him all horrors come."

In the Agni Purāṇa it is said:

rāgād bhavati śṛṅgāro
raudraḥ kṣaṇāt prajāyate
vīro 'ṣṭa-bhujah saṅkoca-
bhūr bībhatsā iṣayte

"From passionate attraction comes conjugal love. From anger comes chivalry. From having an eight-armed form disaster is born.

śṛṅgārāj jāyate hāso
raudrāt tu karuṇa-rasaḥ
vīrāc cādbhuta-niṣpattiḥ
syād bībhatsād bhayānakaḥ

"From conjugal love joking and laughter are born. From anger compassion is born. From chivalry wonder is born. From disaster fear is born."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.116) explains:

hasyo 'dbhutas tathā vīraḥ
karuṇo raudra ity api
bhayānakaḥ sa bībhatsa
iti gauṇas ca saptadhā

"Besides the five direct mellows there are seven indirect mellows known as laughter, wonder, chivalry, compassion, anger, disaster, and fear."*

Sūtra 103

gauṇas tu mukhyān paricaranto bhakti-rasābdhim parivardhayanti

gauṇaḥ - the secondary rasas; tu - indeed; mukhyān - the primary rasas;
paricarantaḥ - meeting; bhakti-rasābdhim - the nectar ocean of the bhakti-rasa;
parivardhayanti - causes to increase.

When the secondary rasas meet the primary rasas the nectar ocean of the devotional rasas increases.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad it is said:

yathā nadyaḥ syandamānāḥ samudre
'staṁ gacchanti nama-rūpe vihāya
tathā vidvān nāma-rūpād vimuktaḥ
parāt param puruṣam upaiti divyam.

"As flowing rivers abandon their names and forms and enter the great ocean, so the enlightened soul abandons his material name and form and meets the effulgent Supreme Personality of Godhead."

"

In the Agni Purāṇa it is said:

apāra-kāvya-samsāre
kavir eva prajāpatiḥ
tathā vai rocate viśvaṁ
tathedaṁ parivartate

"In the material world, which is like a shoreless ocean of poets, the demigod Brahmā is the best poet. His poetry pleases the entire world.

śṛṅgāre cet kaviḥ kāvye
jātaṁ rasamayaṁ jagat
sa cet kavir vīta-rāgo
nirasa-vyaktam eva tat

"If a poet writes love-poems, he fills the world with nectar. If he writes poems about renunciation, there is no nectar.

kavibhir yojanīyā vai-

bhāvaḥ kavyādike rasāḥ
vibhāvyaṭe hi raty-ādir
yatra yena vibhāvyaṭe

"It is right that poets write about the nectar of love. They reveal the nectar of love."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 4.1.4 and 4.7.14) explains:

bhaktānām pañcadhoktānām
eṣām madhyata eva hi
kvāpy ekaḥ kvāpy anekaś ca
gauṇeṣv ālambano mataḥ

"Of the the devotees in these five primary rasas some are also situated in one of the secondary rasas, and others are situated in more than one."

amī pañcaiva śāntādyā
harer bhakti-rasā mataḥ
eṣa hāsyādayaḥ prāyo
bibhrati vyabhicāritām

"The rasas beginning with śānta-rasa are the five primary rasas. The secondary rasas, which begin with hāsyā-rasa, act to increase (vyabhcāri) the mellows of the primary rasas."

Chapter Four Rasāsvādāna-prakaraṇa Relishing the Rasas

Sūtra 104

sāmagrī catur-vidhā

sāmagrī - the ingredients; catuḥ - four; vidhā - kinds.

The sāmagrīs (ingredients of rasa) are of four kinds.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad (2) it is said:

brahma catuṣ-pāt.

"Nectar love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead has four ingredients."

In the Agni Purāṇa it is said:

sthāyi-nyasto rati-mukhyā
stambhādyā vyabhicāriṇaḥ
mano-'nukule 'nubhavaḥ
sukhasya vatimrirayate

"When ecstatic love for the Supreme Lord is firmly established, the vyābhicāris, which begin with the ecstatic symptom of being stunned, increase the bliss of the devotee."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.1.4-5) explains:

athāsya keśava-rater
lakṣitāya nigadyate
samagrī paripoṣeṇa
paramā rasa-rūpatā

vibhāvair anubhāvaiś ca
sāttvikair vyabhicāribhiḥ
svādyatvaṁ hṛdi bhaktānām
ānītā śravaṇādibhiḥ
eṣa kṛṣṇa-rati-sthāyī
bhāvo bhakti-raso bhavet

"Love for Kṛṣṇa, Keśava, as previously described, reaches the supreme state of being composed of mellows when its ingredients are fulfilled. By means of vibhāva, anubhāva, sāttvika, and vyabhicārī, hearing and chanting are activated, and the devotee is able to taste love for Kṛṣṇa. Then attachment for Kṛṣṇa, or permanent ecstasy (sthāyi-bhāva), becomes the mellow of devotional service (bhakti-rasa)."*

Sūtra 105

ālambanoddīpanātmako vibhāvaḥ

ālambana - alambana; uddīpana - uddipana; ātmakaḥ - self; vibhāvaḥ - vibhāva.

The first of the sāmāgrī (ingredients of rasa) is vibhāva (the cause bringing about the tasting of love for Kṛṣṇa). Vibhāva is divided in two features: 1. ālambana (support), and 2. uddīpana (awakening).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad it is said:

etad ālambanaṁ śreṣṭham
etad ālambanaṁ param
etad ālambanaṁ jñātvā
brahmaloke mahīyate

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the supreme ālambana of ecstatic love. He is the best ālambana of ecstatic love. One who thus knows Him as the ālambana of ecstatic love becomes glorious in the spiritual world."

In the Agni Purāṇa it is said:

vibhāva-nāma sad-vidhā-
lambanoddīpanātmakaḥ
raty-ādi-bhāva-vargo 'yam
yam ājīvyopajāyate

"Vibhāva has two features: 1. ālambana, and 2. uddīpana. In this way ecstatic love, which begins with rati, increases."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.1.14) explains:

tatra jñeya vibhāvas tu
raty-asvadana-hetavaḥ
te dvidhalambana eke
tathavoddīpana pare

"The cause bringing about the tasting of love for Kṛṣṇa is called vibhāva. Vibhāva is divided into two categories: ālambana (support) and uddīpana (awakening)."*

Sūtra 106

trayodaśa-lakṣaṇātmako 'anubhāvaḥ

trayodaśa - 13; lakṣaṇa - characteristics; ātmakaḥ - self; anubhāvaḥ - anubhāva.

The next sāmāgrī (ingredient of rasa) is anubhāva (subsequent ecstasy). There are thirteen kinds of anubhāva.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad it is said:

bhṛguḥ tasmai yātā viśanti tad vijijñāśasva taṁ trayodaśa prāṇa-mano-vijñānam iti.

"Bhṛgu Muni said: Know that the mind, knowledge, and life-breath manifest thirteen kinds of ecstatic symptoms in love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

In the Agni Purāṇa it is said:

ārambha eva viduṣāṁ
anubhāva iti smṛtaḥ
sa cānubhūyate cātra
bhavaty uta nirucyate

"Subsequent ecstasy is called anubhāva because it is what is experienced (anubhūyate) by the enlightened souls."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.2.2) explains:

nṛtyaṁ viluṭhitāṁ gītāṁ
krośānaṁ tanu-moṭānam

huñkāro jṛmbhaṇam śvāsa-
bhūmā lokān apekṣitā
lālā-sravo 'tṭa-hāsaś ca
ghūrṇā hikkādayo 'pi ca

"Practical examples of anubhāva are as follows: dancing, rolling on the ground, singing very loudly, stretching the body, crying loudly, yawning, breathing very heavily, neglecting the presence of others, drooling, laughing like a madman, wheeling the head, and belching."*

Sūtra 107

aṣṭa-lakṣaṇaḥ sāttvikaḥ

aṣṭa - eight; lakṣaṇaḥ - characteristics; sāttvikaḥ - sāttvika-bhāva.

The next sāmagrī (ingredient of rasa) is sāttvika-bhāva (constitutional or existential ecstasy). Sāttvika-bhāva has eight features.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.1.4) it is said:

prāṇo hy eṣa sarva-bhūtair vibhāti
vijānan vidvān bhavate nāti-vādī
ātma-kriḍa ātma-ratiḥ kriyāvān
eṣa brahma-vidān variṣṭhaḥ

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the life of all. He is the Supersoul splendidly manifest in all living beings. One who knows Him becomes wise. That person turns from the logicians' debates. He meditates on the Lord's pastimes. He loves the Lord. He serves the Lord. He is the best of transcendentalists."

In the Agni Purāṇa it is said:

aṣṭa-stambhādayaḥ sattvād
rajasas tamasaḥ param

"Sāttvika-bhāva has eight features beginning with becoming stunned in ecstasy.

It is called sātṭvika because it is situated in pure goodness, free from any touch of passion or ignorance."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.3.11-12) explains:

cittaṁ satvī-bhavat prāṇe
nyasyaty ātmānam udbhaṭam
prāṇas tu vikriyāṁ gacched
dehaṁ vikṣobhayaty alam
tadā stambhādayo bhāvā
bhakta-dehe bhavaty āmi

"When the devotee feels great ecstatic love in his heart, his transformed life-force agitates his body and then ecstatic symptoms, such as becoming stunned, are manifested on his body.

te stambha-sveda-romāñcāḥ
svara-bhedo 'tha vepathuḥ
vaivarṇyam aśru-pralaya
ity aṣṭau sātṭvikāḥ smṛtāḥ

"There are eight symptoms of existential ecstatic love: becoming stunned, perspiring, standing of the hairs on the body, faltering of the voice, trembling of the body, changing of bodily colors, shedding of tears, and devastation."*

Sūtra 108

sañcāris tu trayastrimśa-lakṣaṇaḥ

sañcāriḥ - sañcāri-bhāva; tu - indeed; trayastrimśa - thirty-three; lakṣaṇaḥ - features.

The next sāmāgrī (ingredient of rasa) is sañcāri-bhāva (continuously existing ecstatic symptoms). Sañcāri-bhāva has thirty-three features.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Aitareya Upaniṣad (3.1.2) it is said:

yad etad dhṛdayam manaś caitat samjñānam ajñānam vijñānam prajñānam medhā
dṛṣṭir dhṛtir manīṣā jūtiḥ smṛtiḥ saṅkalpaḥ kratuḥ asuḥ kāmo vaśa iti. sarvāṅy
evaitāni prajñānasya nāmadheyāni bhavanti.

"The heart, mind, knowledge, perception, wisdom, discrimination, intelligence, vision, patience, thoughtfulness, action, memory, will, talent, reflection, desire, and control are the various parts of wisdom."

In the Agni Purāṇa it is said:

vairāgyādir manaḥ khedo
nirveda iti kathyate

"Renunciation is defined as that condition where the mind is no longer passionate to enjoy the things of this world."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.4.4-6) explains:

nirvedo 'tha viṣādo dainyaṁ
glāni-śramau ca mada-garvau
śaṅkā-trāsā-vega unmādā-
pasmṛti tathā vyādhiḥ

moho mṛtir ālasyam
jāḍyam vṛṇāvahitthā ca
smṛtir atha vitarka-cintā-
mati-dhṛtayo harṣa utsukatvam ca

augryāmarṣāsūyaś
cāpalyam caiva nidrā ca
suptir bodha itīme bhāvā
vyabhicāriṇaḥ samākhyātāḥ

"There are some bodily symptoms that express overwhelming ecstatic love (vyabhicāri-bhāva). They are counted at thirty-three as follows: disappointment, lamentation, humility, guilt, fatigue, intoxication, pride, doubt, apprehension, intense emotion, madness, forgetfulness, disease, confusion, death, laziness, inertness, bashfulness, concealment, remembrance, argumentativeness, anxiety, thoughtfulness, endurance, happiness, eagerness, violence, haughtiness, envy, impudence, dizziness, sleepiness, and alertness."*

bhakti-raso hi māvā-gandha-śūnya-paramārtha-sva-rūpa-gata-cid-vaicitryam

bhakti-raso - the rasas of devotional service; hi - indeed; māvā - of material illusion; gandha - of the scent; śūnya - devoid; parama - supreme; artha - treasure; sva - own; rūpa - form; gata - attained; cid - spiritual; vaicitryam - wonder of variety.

The rasas of devotional service are free from the slightest scent of māvā (the illusory potency of matter). They are a great wonder of spiritual variety. They are the greatest treasure.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.4.21) it is said:

tam eva dhīro vijñāya
prajñām kurvīta brāhmaṇaḥ
nānudhyāyād bahn cchabdād
vāco viglāpataḥ hi tat

"A wise brāhmaṇa will use his intelligence to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead. He will not study other things. Other topics are a waste of words."

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad (1.5-6) it is said:

sakalam param brahmaivaitad. yo dhyāyati rasayati bhajati so 'mṛto bhavati. so 'mṛto bhavati.

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is everything. One who meditates on Him, glorifies Him, and worships Him, and thus enjoys the nectar of transcendental bliss, becomes immortal. He becomes immortal."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.87.23) it is said:

nibhṛta-marun-mano-'kṣa-dṛḍha-yoga-yujo hṛdi yan-
munaya upāsate tad arayo 'pi yayuḥ smaraṇāt
striya uragendra-bhoga-bhuja-daṇḍa-visakta-dhiyo
vayam api te samāḥ sama-dṛśo 'nghri-saroja-sudhāḥ

"Great sages, by practicing the mystic yoga system and controlling the breath, conquer the mind and senses. Thus engaging in mystic yoga and seeing the Supersoul within their hearts, they ultimately enter into the impersonal Brahman along with the enemies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However, the damsels of Vraja, the gopīs, want to embrace Kṛṣṇa and His arms, which are like serpents. Being attracted by the beauty of Kṛṣṇa, the gopīs ultimately tasted the nectar of the lotus feet of the Lord. The Upaniṣads have also tasted the nectar of His lotus feet by following in the footsteps of the gopīs."*

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.131) explains:

sarvathaiva durūho 'yaṁ
abhhaktair bhagavad-rasaḥ
tat-pādāmbuja-sarvasvair
bhaktir evānurasyate

"Nondevotees cannot understand the transcendental mellows experienced between the devotee and the Lord. In all respects this is very difficult, but one who has dedicated everything to the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa can taste the transcendental mellows."*

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.5.112) also explains:

paramānanda-tād-ātmyād
raty-āder asya vastutaḥ
rasasya sva-prakāśatvaṁ
akhaṇḍatvaṁ ca sidhyati

"Attraction to Lord Kṛṣṇa and the various kinds of ecstatic love for Kṛṣṇa all come from the Lord's pleasure potency. In this way the mellows of spiritual love are self-manifest, unbroken, and perfect."

Sūtra 110

śrī-kṛṣṇa-lilāstu sarva-rasa-pratiṣṭhā

śrī-kṛṣṇa-lilā - the pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa; astu - are; sarva-rasa - of all rasas; pratiṣṭhā - the basis.

Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes are the place where all the rasas rest.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad (1.8-9) it is said:

tad u hovāca hairaṇyo gopa-veṣam abhrābham taruṇam kalpa-drumāśritam

"Brahmā said: He appears like a cowherd boy. His complexion is like a monsoon cloud. He stays under a desire tree."

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad (1.54) it is also said:

tasmāt kṛṣṇa eva paro daivas taṁ dhyāyet taṁ rasayet taṁ yajet taṁ bhajet iti. om tat sad iti.

"Therefore, Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One should meditate on Him, glorify Him, serve Him, and worship Him. Om Tat Sat."

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (8.13.1) it is said:

śyāmāc chavalam prāpadye
śavalāc chyāmam prāpadye

"By the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, I take shelter of His transcendental potency, Śrī Rādhā. By the mercy of Śrī Rādhā, I take shelter of Lord Kṛṣṇa."

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa it is said:

yatrāvātīrṇam kṛṣṇākhyam
param brahma narākṛtiḥ

"Lord Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose form is like that of a human being. Now He has descended to the earth."

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (21.101 and 103) it is said:

kṛṣṇera yateka khelā sarvottama nara-lilā

nara-vapu t̄ahāra svarūpa
gopa-veśa veṇu-kara nava kiśora naṭa-vara
nara-līlā haya anurūpa

"Lord Kṛṣṇa has many pastimes, of which His pastimes as a human being are the best. His form as a human being is the supreme transcendental form. In this form He is a cowherd boy. He carries a flute in His hand, and His youth is new. He is also an expert dancer. All this is just suitable for His pastimes as a human being."*

yogamāyā cic-chakti viśuddha-sattva-pariṇati
tāra śakti loka dekhāite
ei rūpa ratana bhakta-ganera gūḍha-dhana
prakṛta kailā nitya līlā haite

"the transcendental form of Kṛṣṇa is shown to the world by Lord Kṛṣṇa's internal spiritual energy, which is a transformation of pure goodness. This jewellike form is the most confidential treasure of the devotees. This form is manifest from Kṛṣṇa's eternal pastimes."*

Sūtra 111

viśuddha-rāga-mārgeṇa saivānuveṣṭavyā

viśuddha - pure; rāga - of spontaneous love; māргеṇa - by the path; sā - that; eva - indeed; anuveṣṭavyā - should be sought.

By following the path of pure and spontaneous love, one should seek entrance into Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad (2.25-26) it is said:

yo vai kāmān kāmāyate sa kāmī bhavati yo tv akāmēna kāmān kāmāyate so 'kāmī bhavati.

"He who lusts after sense pleasures is lusty. He who does not lust after sense pleasure is not lusty."

In the Brahma-saṁhitā (5.56) it is said:

śriyaḥ kāntāḥ kāntaḥ parama-puruṣaḥ kalpa-taravo
drumā bhūmiś cintāmaṇi guṇamayī toyam amṛtam
kathā gānaṁ nāṭyaṁ gamanam api vaṁśī priya-sakhī
cid-ānandaṁ jytoiḥ param api tad āsvādyam api ca

"I worship that transcendental seat, known as Śvetadvīpa, where as loving consorts the Lakṣmīs in their unalloyed spiritual essence practice the amorous service of the Supreme Lord Kṛṣṇa as their only lover, where every tree is a transcendental purpose tree, where the soil is the purpose gem, all water is nectar, every word is a song, every gait is a dance, the flute is the favorite attendant, effulgence is full of transcendental bliss, and the supreme spiritual entities are all enjoyable and tasty."**

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta (Madhya 24.84, 85, and 87) it is said:

rāga-bhakti vidhi-bhakti haya dui rūpa
svayaṁ bhagavatve bhagavatve prakāśa dvi-rūpa

"There are two kinds of devotional activity: spontaneous and regulative. By spontaneous devotional service one attains the Original Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa, and by the regulative process one attains the expansion of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.*

rāga-bhaktye vraje svayaṁ bhagavāne paya

"By executing spontaneous devotional service in Vṛndāvana one attains the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa."*

vidhi bhakte pārṣada dehe vaikuṅṭhete yāya

"By executing regulative devotional service one becomes an associate of Nārāyaṇa and attains the Vaikuṅṭhalokas, the spiritual planets in the spiritual sky."*

Sūtra 112

svena siddha-svarūpeṇa tat-praveśaṁ tu jīva-carama-mahimā

svena - with their own; siddha - perfect; svarūpeṇa - form; tat - into that; praveśaṁ - entrance; tu - indeed; jīva - of the individual spirit souls; carama - final; mahimā - glory.

Regaining their original spiritual forms, the individual souls may enter Lord Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. That is their greatest glory.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (8.12.3) it is said:

atha sa eṣa samprasādo 'smāc charīrāt samutthāya paraṁ jyotī-rūpaṁ sampadya
svena rūpeṇābhiniṣpadyate

"The enlightened soul then leaves his material body behind and goes to meet the effulgent Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then the soul manifests his original spiritual form."

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad it is also said:

eṣa ātmeti hovāca tad amṛtam abhayam etad brahmeti tasya ha vā etasya nāma
satyam iti.

"Then he said: That is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is fearless, eternal, and sweet like nectar. He is the Supreme Reality."

In the Kūrma Purāṇa it is said:

agni-putrā mahātmānas
tapasā strītvam āpire
bhartāraṁ ca jagad-yoniṁ
vāsudevam ajaṁ vibhum

"By performing severe austerities Agni's sons became gopīs. They attained as their husband Lord Kṛṣṇa, the unborn and all-powerful creator of all the worlds."

In the Padma Purāṇa it is said:

te sarve strītvā-sampannāḥ
samudbhūtās ca gokule
hariṁ samprāpya kāmēna
tato mukto bhavārṇavāt

"They all became gopīs and were born in Gokula. They attained Lord Kṛṣṇa as their lover. In this way they were rescued from the ocean of birth and death."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.308) explains:

pati-putra-suhṛd-bhrātr-
pitṛ-van mitra-vad dharim
ye dhyāyanti sadodyuktās
tebhyo 'pīha namo namaḥ

"Let me offer my respectful obeisances again and again to those who always eagerly meditate upon the Supreme Personality of Godhead as a husband, son, friend, brother, father, or intimate friend."*

Sūtra 113

tatraiva tad-bhajanam tad-rasanam śuddha-cin-maye svarūpeṇa sidhyati

tatra - there; eva - indeed; tad - to Him; bhajanam - devotional service; tad - in Him; rasanam - the bliss of the rasas; śuddha - pure; cin-maye - spiritual; svarūpeṇa - with the original form; sidhyati - becomes perfect.

When he regains his original spiritual form, enters Lord Kṛṣṇa's pure spiritual abode, worships and serves the Lord there, and there tastes the nectar of the rasas with Lord Kṛṣṇa, the soul attains perfection.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad (2.12 and 14) it is said:

tāsām madhye hi śreṣṭhā gāndharvīty uccatām hi vaitābhir eva vicāryam.

"Śrī Rādhā, the best of the gopīs, thought for a moment."

tam hi mukhyaṁ vidhāya pūrvam anu kṛtvā tūṣṇīm āsa.

"Accepting Rādhā and their leader, the other gopīs became silent."

In the Brahma-saṁhitā (5.2-4) it is said:

sahasra-patra-kamalaṁ
gokulākhyaṁ mahat padam
tat-karṇikāraṁ tad-dhāma
tad-anantāṁśa-sambhavam

"The superexcellent station of Kṛṣṇa, which is known as Gokula, has thousands of petals and a corolla like that of a lotus sprouted from a part of His infinitary aspect, the whorl of the leaves being the actual abode of Kṛṣṇa.**

karṇikāraṁ mahad yantraṁ
ṣaṭ-koṇaṁ vajra-kīlakam
ṣaḍ-aṅga-ṣaṭ-padī-sthānaṁ
prakṛtyā puruṣeṇa ca

premānanda-mahānanda-
rasenāvasthitam hi yat
jyotī-rūpeṇa manunā
kāma-bījena saṅgatam

"The whorl of that transcendental lotus is the realm wherein dwells Kṛṣṇa. It is a hexagonal figure, the abode of the indwelling predominated and predominating aspect of the Absolute. Like a diamond, the central supporting figure of self-luminous Kṛṣṇa stands as the transcendental source of all potencies. The holy name consisting of eighteen transcendental letters is manifested in a hexagonal figure with sixfold divisions.**

tat kiṅjalkam tad-aṁśānām
tatra patrāṇi śriyam api

"The whorl of that eternal realm Gokula is the hexagonal abode of Kṛṣṇa. Its petals are the abodes of gopīs who are part and parcel of Kṛṣṇa, to whom they are

most lovingly devoted and are similar in essence. The petals shine beautifully like so many walls. The extended leaves of that lotus are the garden-like dhāma, i.e. spiritual abode of Śrī Rādhikā, the most beloved of Kṛṣṇa. " **

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 2.1.10) explains:

kṛṣṇādibhir vibhāvadyair
gater anubhāvadvāni
praudhānanda-camatkarā
kastham apadyate param

"Thus the mixture of ecstatic ingredients of spiritual love for Lord Kṛṣṇa becomes tasty and, being within the perception of the devotee, reaches the highest platform of wonder and deep bliss. " *

Chapter Five Sampatti-prakarāṇa The Supreme Good Fortune

Sūtra 114

adhikāra-krameṇa hy uttarottara-prāptiḥ

adhikāra - of qualifications; krameṇa by degrees; hi - indeed; uttara - higher; uttara - and higher; prāptiḥ - attainment.

As they become qualified, the individual souls attain higher and higher positions.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad it is said:

yato yatas tv ādadīta lavaṇam evaivam vā āra idam mahad-bhūtam anantam aparam
vijñāna-ghanam eva.

"He could understand that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is handsome, glorious, supreme, limitless, and all-knowing."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.21.2, 16 and 18) it is said:

sve sve 'dhikāre yā niṣṭhā
sa guṇaḥ parikīrtitaḥ
viparyayas tu doṣaḥ syād
ubhayor eṣa nirṇayaḥ

"Steadiness in one's own position is declared to be actual piety, whereas deviation from one's position is considered impiety. In this way the two are definitely ascertained."***

kvacid guṇo 'pi doṣaḥ syād
doṣo 'pi vidhinā guṇaḥ
guṇa-doṣārtha-niyamas
tad-bhidām eva bādhate

"Sometimes piety becomes sin and sometimes what is ordinary sin becomes piety on the strength of Vedic injunctions. Such special rules in effect eradicate the clear distinction between piety and sin."***

yato yato nivarteta
vimucyeta tatas tataḥ
eṣa dharmo nṛṇām kṣemaḥ
śoka-moha-bhayāpahaḥ

"By refraining from a particular sinful or materialistic activity one becomes freed from its bondage. Such renunciation is the basis of religious and auspicious life for human beings and drives away all suffering, illusion, and fear."***

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta it is said:

adhikāri bhede rati pañca-prakāra
śānta dāsya sakhya vātsalya madhura āra

"According to the candidate possessing these transcendental qualities (sneha, māna, and so on), there are five transcendental mellows: neutrality, servitorship, friendship, parental love, and conjugal love."*

Sūtra 115

nirguṇa-śraddhā-mūlā hi vaidhī bhaktiḥ

nirguṇa - beyond the modes of material nature; śraddhā - faith; mūlā - the root; hi - indeed; vaidhī - according to rules and regulations; bhaktiḥ - devotional service.

Vaidhī bhakti (devotional service according to regulative principles) is rooted in faith in what is beyond the modes of material nature.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad it is said:

kāmaḥ saṅkalpo vicikitsā śraddhāśraddhā dhṛtir adhṛtir hrīr dhīr bhīr ity etat sarvaṁ mana eva. śraddhām bhagavo vijijñāsa iti.

"He wished to understand the nature of faith in the Supreme Personality of Godhead, in whom stays desire, will, doubt, error, faith, faithlessness, tolerance, intolerance, embarrassment, intelligence, fear, and all else that stays in the heart and mind."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.25.27) Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

sāttviky ādhyātmikī śraddhā
karma-śraddhā tu rājasī
tāmasy adharṁ yā śraddhā
mat-sevāyām tu nirguṇaḥ

"Faith directed toward spiritual life is in the mode of goodness, faith rooted in fruitive work is in the mode of passion, faith residing in irreligious activities is in the mode of ignorance, but faith in My devotional service is purely transcendental."***

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.8) Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

yadṛchhayā mat-kathādau
jāta-śraddhas tu yaḥ pumān
na nirviṇṇo nāti-sakto
bhakti-yogo 'sya siddhi-daḥ

"Somehow or other if one is attracted to talks about Me and has faith in the instructions I have set forth in Bhagavad-gītā and if one is actually detached from material things and material existence, his dormant love for Me will be awakened by devotional service."*

In the Bhagavad-gītā (6.46-47), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

tapasvibhyo 'dhiko yogī
jñānibhyo 'pi mato 'dhikaḥ
karmibhyaś cādhiko yogī
tasmād yogī bhavārjuna

"A yogī is greater than the ascetic, greater than the empiricist, and greater than the fruitive worker. Therefore, O Arjuna, in all circumstances be a yogī.*

yoginām api sarveṣāṁ
mad-gatenāntarātmanā
śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām
sa me yukatatamo mataḥ

"And of all yogīs the one with great faith who always abides in Me, thinks of Me within himself, and renders transcendental loving service to Me, he is the most intimately united with Me in yoga and is the highest of all. That is My opinion."*

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.4.15-16) explains:

ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-
saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriyā
tato 'nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt
tato niṣṭhā rucis tataḥ

āsaktis tato bhāvas
tataḥ premābhyudañcati
sādhakānām ayaṁ premṇaḥ
prādurbhāve bhavet kramaḥ

"In the beginning there must be faith. Then one becomes interested in associating with pure devotees. Thereafter one is initiated by the spiritual master and executes the regulative principles under his orders. Thus one is freed from all unwanted habits and becomes firmly fixed in devotional service. Thereafter one develops taste and attachment. This is the way of sādhanā-bhakti, the execution of devotional service according to the regulative principles. Gradually emotions intensify, and finally there is an awakening of love. This is the gradual development of love of Godhead for the devotee interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness."*

Sūtra 116

ruci-mūlā hi rāgānugā bhaktiḥ

ruci - attraction and love; mūlā - root; hi - indeed; rāgānugā bhaktiḥ - raganuga bhakti.

Rāgānugā bhakti (spontaneous devotional service) is rooted in attraction and love.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (1.4.8) it is said:

tad etat preyaḥ putrāt preyo vittāt preyo 'nyasmāt sarvasmād anantaram yad ayam ātmā.

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is more dear than sons, more dear than wealth, more dear than all else."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.7.11) it is said:

harer guṇakṣipta-matir
bhagavān bādarāyaṇiḥ
adhyagān mahad ākhyānaṁ
nityaṁ viṣṇu-jana-priyaḥ

"Being very much attracted by the transcendental pastimes of the Lord, the mind of Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī was agitated by Kṛṣṇa consciousness. He therefore began to study Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam by the grace of his father."*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

viṣayiṅaḥ svābhāviko viṣaya-samsargecchātīśayamayaḥ premā rāgaḥ. yeṣāṃ ahaṃ priya ātmā sutaś ca sakhā guruḥ suhr̥d daivam iṣṭam ity ādau. tad evaṃ tat-tad-abhimāna-lakṣaṇa-bhāva-viśeṣaṇa-svābhāvika-rāgasya vaiśiṣṭya-sati tat-tad-rāga-prayuktā śravaṇa-kīrtana-smaraṇa-pāda-sevana-vandanātma-nivedana-prāya-bhaktiḥ. teṣāṃ rāgātmikā bhaktir ucyate. yasya pūrvokta-rāga-viśeṣe rucir eva jātāsti tasya rāgātmikāyā bhakteḥ paripāṭiṣv api rucir jāyate. atas tadīyaṃ rāgaṃ rucy-anugatyatīti rāgānugā tasyaiva pravartate.

"The devotees are passionately devoted to the Lord. He is the object of their love. The Lord Himself explains (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.25.38):

" `Because the devotees accept Me as their friend, their relative, their son, their preceptor, benefactor, and Supreme Deity, they cannot be deprived of their possessions at any time.'*

"Ardently loving the Lord, the devotees serve Him by hearing, chanting, and remembering His glories, serving His feet, offering obeisances to Him, and completely surrendering to Him. This ardent devotional service is called rāgātmikā bhakti. From that is manifested ruci (love and attraction). Thus ruci follows rāgātmikā bhakti."

Sūtra 117

mahima-jñāna-yuktā hi prathamā

mahima - of opulence; jñāna - knowledge; yuktā - endowed; hi - indeed; prathamā - the first.

In the first kind of devotion (vaidhī bhakti) the devotees are aware of the Lord's opulence.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (1.1.4) it is said:

dve vidye veditavye parā caivāparā ca. tatrāparā ṛg-vedo yujur-veda ity ādi.

"There are two kinds of knowledge: superior and inferior. The knowledge of the Ṛg Veda and Yajur Veda is inferior knowledge."

In the Pañcarātra it is said:

māhātmya-jñānam uktam ca
su-dṛḍhaḥ sarvathādhikaḥ
sneho bhaktir iti proktas
tayā sārṣṭy-ādinānyathā

"In this strong devotional service one is aware of the opulences of the Lord. In this way one attains the liberations that begin with sārṣṭi-mukti."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.4.14) explains:

mahima-jñāna-yuktaḥ syād
vidhi-mārgānusāriṇām

"They who follow the path of vidhi-bhakti are especially aware of the Lord's glory and opulence."

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

tato vidhi-mārga-bhakti-vidhim apekṣeti sa durbalā

"In the weaker form of devotional service, vaidhī bhakti, one is aware of the Lord's glories and opulences."

Sūtra 118

kevalā hi dvitīyā prabalā ca

kevalā - unmixed; hi - indeed; dvitīyā - second; prabalā - powerful; ca - also.

In the second kind of devotion (rāgānugā bhakti) the devotees are not aware of the Lord's opulences. This kind of devotion is completely pure. It is not mixed with anything else. It is very powerful.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (1.5) it is said:

atha parā yayā tad akṣaram adhigamyate yatra tad adṛśyam agrāhyam agotram
avarṇam acakṣuḥ śrotram tad-apāṇi-pādam nityam vibhum sarva-gaṭam su-
sūkṣmam tad avyayam yad bhūta-yoniṃ paripaśyanti dhīrāḥ.

"The superior knowledge enables one to understand the imperishable Supreme Personality of Godhead. With this superior knowledge the enlightened souls are able to see the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who cannot be seen by material eyes or understood by the material mind, who has no material family, no material caste, and no material eyes, ears, hands, or feet, who is eternal, all-powerful, all-pervading, very subtle, and unchanging, and who is the creator of all."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.1.31) it is said:

gopyaḥ kāmād bhayāt kaṃso
dveṣāc caidyādayo nṛpāḥ
sambandhād vṛṣṇayaḥ snehād
yūyaṃ bhaktyā vayaṃ vibho

"My dear King Yudhiṣṭhira, the gopīs by their lusty desires, Kāṃsa by his fear, Śiśupāla and other kings by envy, the Yadus by their familial relationship with Kṛṣṇa, you Pāṇḍavas by your great affection for Kṛṣṇa, and we, the general devotees, by our devotional service, have obtained the mercy of Kṛṣṇa."*

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains:

rāgānugāśritānāṃ tu
prāyaśaḥ kevalo bhavet

"They who take shelter of rāgānuga-bhakti (spontaneous love for Lord Kṛṣṇa) feel love that is pure and unmixed with anything else."

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

iyam ca svatantraiva pravartata iti prabalā ca jñeyā.

"Rāgānugā bhakti is very powerful. It does not depend on anything else."

Sūtra 119

āsakti-paryantā sādhana-bhaktiḥ

āsakti - attachment; paryantā - up to; sādhana-bhaktiḥ - sādhana-bhakti.

Sādhana-bhakti (devotional service in practice) continues up to the stage of āsakti (attachment).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.1.7) it is said:

bṛhac ca tad divyam acintya-rūpaṁ
sūkṣmāc ca tat sūkṣmataram vibhāti
dūrāt sa-dūre tad ihānti ke ca
paśyatsv ihaiva nihitaṁ guhāyām

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the greatest. He is splendid and transcendental. His form is beyond the understanding of the material mind. He is more subtle than the most subtle. He stays far away from the impious. The devotees see Him in their hearts."

In the Nārāyaṇa-pañcarātra it is said:

bhāvonmatto harau kiñcin
na deva-sukham ātmanaḥ

"In that stage one becomes intoxicated with love for Lord Kṛṣṇa."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.193) explains:

vaidha-bhakty-adhikārī tu
bhāvāvirbhāvanāvadhīḥ
atra śāstraṁ tathā tarkaṁ
anukūlam apekṣate

"By engaging in vidhi-bhakti the devotee attains ecstatic love for Lord Kṛṣṇa. This is confirmed by both scripture and logic."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.3.8) also explains:

sādhanaḥbhiniveśas tu
tatra niṣpādayān rucim
harāv āsaktim utpadya
ratiṁ sañjanayaty asau

"By engaging in sādhana-bhakti the devotee attains attraction to Lord Kṛṣṇa, attachment to Him, and then love for Him."

Sūtra 120

bhāvān mahā-bhāva-paryantā hlādinī-sāra-samavetā samvid-rūpā siddhā bhaktiḥ

bhāvān - from bhava; mahā-bhāva-paryantā - up to maha-bhava; hlādinī - hladini-sakti; sāra-samavetā - the best; samvid-rūpā - the potency of knowledge; siddhā - perfect; bhaktiḥ - devotion.

The stages that begin with bhāva and end in mahā-bhāva are called siddhā bhakti (perfect devotional service). In these stages the samvit śakti (potency of transcendental knowledge) and hlādinī akti (potency of transcendental bliss) are manifested.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Sauparṇa-śruti it is said:

sarva-dinam upāsīta yāvad vimuktiḥ. muktā hy enam upāsate.

"Until one is liberated, one should worship the Lord every day. After attaining liberation, one should continue to worship the Lord."

In the Bṛhat Tantra it is said:

yathā śrīr nitya-muktāpi
prāpta-kāmāpi sarvadā

upāste nityaśo viṣṇum
evam bhakto bhaved api

"Even though she is eternally liberated, and even though all her desires are at once fulfilled, Goddess Lakṣmī continues to worship Lord Viṣṇu eternally. Every devotee acts in that way."

Śrīla Nārada Muni explains:

bhadram uktaṁ bhavadbhis tu
muktis turyā parāt parā
nir-ahaṁ yatra cit-sattā
sa-turyā muktir ucyate

"You have described the highest liberation, where spiritual truth is present and the false identification with the material body is absent."

pūrṇāhantāmayī bhaktis
turyātītā nigadyate
kṛṣṇa-rāma-mayaṁ brahma
kvacit kutrāpi bhāsate

"Beyond that kind of liberation is the liberation of devotional service. In that kind of liberation the proper identification of the living entity as a spirit soul is manifested. In that liberation Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is splendidly manifest."

nirbijendriyatā tatra
ātma-sthaṁ kevalaṁ sukham
kṛṣṇas tu paripūrṇātmā
sarvatra sukha-rūpakāḥ

"In that devotional liberation the spiritual senses of the spiritual form of the liberated soul are filled with bliss. There Lord Kṛṣṇa, the original Supreme Personality of Godhead, enjoys blissful pastimes."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains:

syād dhṛḍheyam ratiḥ premṇā
prodyān snehaḥ kramād ayam

syān manaḥ praṇayo rāgo
'nurāgo bhāva ity api

"Love for Lord Kṛṣṇa grows more and more intense, manifesting different stages known as rati, prema, sneha, māna, praṇaya, rāga, anurāga, and bhāva."

bījam īkṣu sa ca rasaḥ
sa-guḍaḥ khaṇḍa eva saḥ
sa śarkarā śitā sa ca
sa yathā syāt śitotpalā
iyam eva ratiḥ prauḍhā
mahā-bhāva-daśām vrajet

"As sugar-cane juice becomes thicker as it proceeds to become molasses, granules, and finally rock-candy, so love of Lord Kṛṣṇa gradually becomes more and more intense."

In the Siddhānta-ratna it is said:

tathā ca hlāda-samvidoḥ samavetayoḥ sāro bhaktir iti sidhyati. tat-sāratvaṁ ca tan-nitya-parikarāśrayaka-tan-ānukūlyābhilāṣa-viśeṣaḥ.

"In the highest stage of devotional service, the Lord's samvit potency and hlādinī potency are manifested. There the eternal associates of the Lord desire to serve Him in many ways."

Sūtra 121

upādhi-viyoge svarūpodayo hi muktiḥ

upādhi - material designations; viyoge - in separation; svarūpa - of the original form; udayo - rising; hi - indeed; muktiḥ - liberation.

Liberation is that stage where, leaving his material body behind, the soul again manifests his original spiritual form.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad it is said:

sa ātmāpahatāpāpmāvirajo vimṛtyur viśoko 'vijighatso 'pipāsaḥ satya-kāmaḥ satya-saṅkalpaḥ sa vijijñāsitavyaḥ.

"Know that the liberated soul is free from destruction, sin, passion, death, grief, hunger, and thirst. All his desires are at once fulfilled."

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa it is said:

nirastātiśayāhlāda-
sukha-bhāvaika-lakṣaṇā
bheṣajam bhagavat-prāptir
ekāntātyantikī matā

"Meeting with the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a meeting that is filled with the greatest bliss, is the final cure for the disease known as continued residence in the material world."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.10.6) it is said:

muktir hitvānyathā-rūpaṁ
sva-rūpeṇa vyavasthitiḥ

"Liberation is the permanent situation of the form of the living entity after he gives up the changeable gross and subtle material bodies."*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

sva-rūpeṇa vyavasthitiḥ nāma sva-rūpa-sākṣāt-kara ucyate.

"The phrase `sva-rūpeṇa vyavasthitiḥ' in this verse means that the original form of the spirit soul is again manifested."

Sūtra 122

sā svarūpa-siddhā vastu-siddhā ceti dvi-vidhā

sā - that; svarūpa-siddhā - svarūpa-siddhā; vastu-siddhā - vastu-siddhā; ca -

also; iti - thus; dvi-vidhā - two kinds.

There are two kinds of liberation: 1. svarūpa-siddhā (perfection of one's original form) and 2. vastu-siddhā (perfection of opulences).

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Svarūpa-siddhā mukti is described in Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.4.7):

yadā sarve pramucyante
kāmā ye 'sya hr̥di sthitāḥ
atha mārto 'mṛtā bhavaty
atra brahma samaśnute

"When all material desires have fled from his heart, the soul trapped in the world of birth and death becomes immortal. Then he enjoys the company of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

Vastu-siddhā mukti is described in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (8.12.3):

atha sa eṣa samprasādo 'smāc charīrāt samutthāya param jyotī-rūpaṁ sampadya
svena rūpeṇābhiniṣpadyate

"The enlightened soul then leaves his material body behind and goes to meet the effulgent Supreme Personality of Godhead. Then the soul manifests his original spiritual form."

Svarūpa-siddhā mukti is also described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.3.33):

yatreṁe sad-asad-rūpe
pratiśiddhe su-samvidā
avidyayātmani kṛte
iti tad brahma-darśanam

"Whenever a person experiences, by self realization, that both the gross and subtle bodies have nothing to do with the pure self, at that time he sees himself as well as the Lord."*

Vastu-siddhā mukti is also described in Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.3.34):

yady eṣoparatā devī
māyā vaiśārādī matiḥ
sampanna eveti vidur
mahimni sve mahīyate

"If the illusory energy subsides and the living entity becomes fully enriched with knowledge by the grace of the Lord, then he becomes at once enlightened with self realization and thus becomes situated in his own glory."*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī describes the condition of a person liberated even in this life:

akiñcanasya dāntasya
śāntasya sama-cetasah
mayā śāntuṣṭa-mānasah
sarva-sukhamayā diśah

tatrotkrantavasthāyām saivāntimā muktiś ca pañcadhā. salokya-sārṣṭi-sarūpatā-sāmīpya-sāyujyeti bhedena. eṣa ca pañca-vidhāpi guṇātītā sayujye ca antara-sākṣāt-kāra eva. tathāpi prakāṣa-sphurti-lakṣaṇam tat suṣupti-vadanatim prakāṣa-sphurtilakṣaṇād brahma-sāyujyād bhidyate.

"In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.13) it is said:

"`One who does not desire anything within this world, who has achieved peace by controlling his senses, whose consciousness is equal in all conditions, and whose mind is completely satisfied in Me finds only happiness wherever he goes.'***

"Final liberation is described in this verse. There are five kinds of liberation: 1. to be one with the Lord, 2. to achieve residence on the Lord's planet, 3. to have the Lord's opulences, 4. to possess bodily features similar to the Lord's, and 5. to gain personal association with the Lord. These kinds of liberation are beyond the touch of the modes of material nature. In these kinds of liberation the Lord directly appears before His devotee. Only in the liberation where the soul becomes one with the Lord does the Lord not directly appear."

Sūtra 123

sā bhakter anapāyinī saha-cārī

sā - that; bhakter - of devotional service; anapāyinī - constant; saha-cārī - companion.

Liberation is the eternal companion of devotional service.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad (1.14) it is said:

bhakti-rahasya-bhajanam tad ihāmutropādhi-nairasye naivāsmīn manasaḥ
kalpanam etad eva ca naiṣkarmyam.

"Devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa is performed when the heart no longer desires any material benefit to be obtained in this life or the next. That is freedom from the bonds of karma."

In the Nārada-pañcarātra it is said:

hari-bhakti-mahā-devyāḥ
sarvāmuktādi-siddhayaḥ
bhuktayaś cādbhutās tasyās
ceṭikāvad anuvratāḥ

"Liberation and a host of wonderful pleasures and perfections are the servants and followers of devotional service."

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

prītyaiva atyantika-duḥkha-nivṛttiś ca, sa prītim vinā tat-svarūpasya tad-
dharmāntara-vṛndasya ca tat-sākṣāt-kāro na sampadyate. yatra sa tatrāvaśyam eva
sampadyate. yāvaty eva prīti-sampattis tāvaty eva tat-sampattiḥ. sukham ca
nirupādhi-prītyāsvādu. tasmāt puruṣeṇa saiva sarvadā anveṣṭavyeti.

"Prīti puts an end to sufferings. Without prīti the Lord does not directly appear. Therefore prīti must be manifested. To the extent that prīti is manifested, to that extent one attains good fortune. Because of prīti one becomes free from the material body and is able to enjoy spiritual happiness. Therefore the spiritual aspirant should strive to attain prīti."

Sūtra 124

bhaktiḥ kadācij jñāna-vairāgya-parisevitā

bhaktiḥ - devotional service; kadācit - sometimes; j 24āna - by knowledge;
vairāgya - and renunciation; parisevitā - served.

Devotional service is sometimes served by knowledge and renunciation.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (2.1.2) it is said:

parācaḥ kāmān anuyānti bālās
te mṛtyor yānti vitatasya pāśam
atha dhīrā amṛtatvaṁ viditvā
dhruvam adhruveṣv iha na prārthayante.

"Fools follow their material desires and run into the noose of death. The wise know what is eternal. They do not seek anything in this world where nothing is eternal."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.12) it is said:

tac chraddadhānā munayo
jñāna-vairāgya-yuktayā
paśyanty ātmani cātmānaṁ
bhaktyā śruta-grhītayā

"The seriously inquisitive student or sage, well equipped with knowledge and detachment, realizes that Absolute Truth by rendering devotional service in terms of what he has heard from the Vedānta-śruti."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.7) it is said:

vāsudeve bhagavati
bhakti-yogaḥ prayojitaḥ
janayaty āśu vairāgyaṁ
jñānaṁ ca yad ahaitukam

"By rendering devotional service unto the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one immediately acquires causeless knowledge and detachment from the world."*

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.248, 249, and 251) explains:

jñāna-vairāgyayor bhakti-
praveśāyopayogitā
īṣat prathamam eveti nāṅgatvam ucitaṁ tayoh

yad ubhe citta-kāṭhinya-
hetū prāye satāṁ mate
sukumāra-svabhāveyaṁ
bhaktiṁ tad-dhetur īritā

kintu jñāna-viraktādi-
sādhyāṁ bhaktyaiva sidhyati.

"In the beginning spiritual knowledge and renunciation may be appropriate for devotional service, but they are not really a part of devotional service, and in the end they become inappropriate. Spiritual knowledge and renunciation tend to make the heart very hard, but devotional service makes the heart very soft. Whatever good a person would have attained by spiritual knowledge and renunciation he attains perfectly by engaging in devotional service."

Sūtra 125

svatas tad-apekṣā-sūnyā svatantrā ca

svatas - naturally; tad - eith them; apekṣā - relationship; sūnyā - devoid;
svatantrā - independent; ca - also.

Devotional service is independent. It does not depend on knowledge and renunciation.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad it is said:

ānando brahmaṇo vidvān
na bibheti kutaścana

"He who knows the blissful Supreme Personality of Godhead never fears."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.20, 21, and 24), the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Lord Kṛṣṇa, said:

na sādhayati mām yogo
na saṅkhyam dharma uddhava
na svādhyayas tapas tyāgo
yathā bhaktir mamorjitā

"My dear Uddhava, neither through aṣṭāṅga-yoga (the mystic yoga system to control the senses), nor through impersonal monism or an analytical study of the Absolute Truth, nor through study of the Vedas, nor through practice of austerities, nor through charity, nor through acceptance of sannyāsa can one satisfy Me as much as one can by developing unalloyed devotional service unto Me."*

bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyaḥ
śraddhayātmā priyaḥ satām
bhaktiḥ punāti man-niṣṭhā
śvapākān api sambhavāt

"Being very dear to the devotees and sādhus, I am attained through unflinching faith and devotional service. This bhakti-yoga system, which gradually increases attachment for Me, purifies even a human being born among dog-eaters. That is to say, everyone can be elevated to the spiritual platform by the process of bhakti-yoga."*

vāg gadgadā dravate yasya cittam
rudaty atbhikṣnam hasati kvacic ca
vilajja udgāyati nṛtyate ca
mad-bhakti-yukto bhuvanam punāti

"A devotee whose speech is sometimes choked up, whose heart melts, who cries continually and sometimes laughs, who feels ashamed and cries out loudly and then dances, a devotee thus fixed in loving service to Me purifies the entire universe."***

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.157-161) explains:

proktena lakṣaṇenaiva

bhakter adhikṛtasya ca
aṅgatve munir āste 'pi
nityādy-akhila-karmaṇām

"A person always engaged in the activities of devotional service attains the good qualities of true renunciation already described.

jñānasyādhyātmikasyāpi
vairāgyasya ca phalguṇaḥ
spaṣṭatārthaṁ punar api
tad evedaṁ nirākṛtam

"An impersonalist, however, does not attain true renunciation. His renunciation is false.

dhana-śiṣyādibhir dvārair
yā bhaktir upapādyate
vidūratvād uttamatā-
hānyā tasyāś ca nāṅgatā

"One should not be very eager to accumulate money and disciples. They can distract the devotee and they are not necessary parts of devotional service.

viśeṣaṇatvam evaiṣām
saṁśrayanty adhikāriṇām
vivekādin yato 'mīṣām
api nāṅgatvam ucyate

"To be expert in philosophy and able to discern what is true and what is not, is not a necessary feature of a person engaged in devotional service.

kṛṣṇonmukhaṁ svayaṁ yānti
yamāḥ śaucādayas tathā
ity eṣām ca na yuktā syād
bhakty-aṅgāntara-pātītā

"Purification of consciousness, purification of bodily activities, austerities, peace of mind, etc. all become automatically manifest in a person who is engaged in devotional service.* Therefore the devotee need not endeavor separately to

attain them."

Sūtra 126

sā jīva-svabhāva-mahima-rūpā

sā - that; jīva - of the individual spirit souls; svabhāva - own nature; mahima - glory; rūpā - form.

Devotional service reveals the glory of the soul's true nature.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad it is said:

eṣāsya paramā gatiḥ eṣāsya paramā sampad eṣāsya paramo loka eṣāsya parama ānanda etasyaivānandasyānyāni bhūtāni mātram upajīvanti.

"Devotional service is the supreme goal, the supreme wealth, the supreme abode, and the supreme bliss. All blisses come from it."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.32) it is said:

aho bhāgyam aho bhāgyam
nanda-gopa-vrajaukasām
yan mitraṁ paramānandaṁ
pūrṇa-brahma sanātanam

"How greatly fortunate are Nanda Maharaja, the cowherd men, and all the inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi! There is no limit to their good fortune because the Absolute Truth, the source of all transcendental bliss, the eternal Supreme Brahman, has become their friend."*

Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī explains:

svarūpa-śakti-sambandhān māyāntardhāne saṁsāra-nāśaḥ. yeṣāṁ tu mate muktāv ānandānubhāvo nāsti teṣāṁ pum-arthatā na sampadyate. svato 'pi vastunaḥ sphuraṇābhāve nirarthakatvāt. na ca sukham ahaṁ syām iti kasya vid-icchā. kintu sukham aham anubhavāmīty eva. tat-sampatti-lābhāt sve mahimni svarūpa-

sampattāv api mahīyate pūjyate prakṛṣṭa-prakāśo bhavatīty arthaḥ.

"By the touch of the potency that reveals the soul's original form, the illusory potency māyā disappears and the cycle of repeated birth and death is broken. Thus liberated, the soul experiences transcendental bliss. In this way one attains the real goal of life. As long as one does not seek this real goal of life the true reality will not be manifested to him. Therefore a person who desires spiritual knowledge never says, 'I am happy in the material world with material things'. However, when he attains spiritual knowledge, he says, 'Now I am happy'. The word 'mahimni' here means 'when the opulence of his original spiritual form is manifested', and 'mahīyate' means 'is worshiped'. In this way the glory of the soul is manifested. That is the meaning."

Sūtra 127

baddhānām sā kevalam sādhu-prasaṅga-jā

baddhānām - of the conditioned souls; sā - that; kevalam - only; sādhu - of devotees; prasaṅga - from association; jā - born.

Devotional service takes its birth among conditioned souls only when they associate with saintly devotees.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.23) it is said:

yasya deve parā bhaktir
yathā deve tathā gurau
tasyaite kathitā hy arthāḥ
prakāśante mahātmanaḥ

"Only unto those great souls who have implicit faith in both the Lord and the spiritual master are all the imports of Vedic knowledge automatically revealed."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.51.53) it is said:

bhavāpavarga-bhranmato yadā bhavej
janasya tarhy acyuta-sat-samāgamah
sat-saṅgamo yarhi tadaiva sad-gatau

parāvareṣe tvayi jāyate ratiḥ

"O my Lord! O infallible Supreme Person! When a person wandering throughout the universes becomes eligible for liberation from material existence, he gets an opportunity to associate with devotees. When he associates with devotees, his attraction for You is awakened. You are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the highest goal of the supreme devotees and the Lord of the universe."*

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 22.83) explains:

kṛṣṇa-bhakti janma mūla haya sādhu-saṅga

"The root cause of devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa is association with advanced devotees."*

Śrīla Rāmānuja Svāmī explains:

vaiṣṇavānām hi saṅgatyā
samyag jñānaṁ prajāyate
tena niśreyasa-prāptir
bhaviṣyati su-niścayam

"By associating with saintly devotees one attains transcendental knowledge. In this way one certainly attains the best thing that can be attained.

ataḥ sarvātmanā kāryā
vaiṣṇavānām hi saṅgatiḥ
prātikūlādi-saṁsarga-
mānasam bhāṣaṇādayaḥ

"One should whole-heartedly associate with saintly Vaiṣṇavas. With all one's heart one should do good to them. One should converse with them and associate with them in various ways."

su-dūrataḥ parityājyāḥ
prāpannānām mahātmanām
ayaṁ hi caramopāyo
nānyopāyas tataḥ param

"One should stay far away from nondevotees. Association with great souls who are surrendered to the Lord is the great way to make advancement in devotional service. There is no way better than this."

Sūtra 128

bhagavat-kṛpā-hetukā

bhagavat - of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; kṛpā - the mercy; hetukā - the cause.

The Lord's mercy is also the cause of attaining devotional service.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.20) it is said:

aṅor aṅīyān mahato mahīyān
ātmasya jantor nihitaḥ guhāyām
tam akratuḥ paśyati vīta-śoko
dhātuḥ prasādān mahimānam ātmanah

"Both the Supersoul (Paramātmā) and the atomic soul (jīvātmā) are situated on the same tree of the body within the same heart of the living being, and only one who has become free from all material desires as well as lamentations can, by the grace of the Supreme, understand the glories of the soul."*

In the Nārada-bhakti-sūtra it is said:

mukhyatas tu mahat-kṛpayaiiva bhagavat-kṛpā-leśād vā.

"Primarily one attains devotional service by the mercy of the great devotees, but one may also attain it from a small particle of the mercy of the Supreme Lord Himself.

Śrīla Vallabha Svāmī explains:

mahatām kṛpayā yāvad
bhagavān dayayiṣyati

tāvad ānanda-sandohaḥ
kīrtamānaḥ sukhāya hi

"By the mercy of great souls one attains the mercy of the Supreme Lord. In this way one becomes glorious and blissful."

Sūtra 129

āmnāya-prabhāvā ca

āmnāya - the Vedic literatures passed down through the disciplic succession;
prabhāvā - power; ca - also.

The Vedic knowledge, passed down through the disciplic succession, is another cause of devotional service.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (1.1-3) it is said:

brahmā devānām prathamah sambabhūva viśvasya kartā bhuvanasya goptā. sa brahma-vidyām sarva-vidyā-pratiṣṭhām atharvāya jyeṣṭha-putrāya prāha. atharvena yaṁ pravadeta brahmātha vārtām purovācāngire brahma-vidyām sa bhāradvājāya satyavāhāya prāha bhāradvājo 'ṅgirase parāvaram. śaunako ha vai mahāśālo 'ṅgirasam vidhivad upasannaḥ papraccha. kasmin bhagavo vijñāpte sarvam idaṁ vijñātam bhavatīti.

"Lord Brahmā, who is the first-born of the demigods and the creator and protector of the worlds, spoke this knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the best of all knowledge, to his eldest son, Atharvān. Atharvān then spoke this spiritual knowledge to ṅgirā Muni, and ṅgirā Muni spoke it to Satyavāha Muni of the Bhāradvāja dynasty. Noble-hearted Śaunaka Muni respectfully approached ṅgirā Muni and asked: O master, what is the one Reality by knowing whom all else becomes known?"

In the Padma Purāṇa it is said:

sampradāya-vihīnā ye
mantrās te viphalā mataḥ
ataḥ akalu bhaviṣyanti

catvāra sampradāyinaḥ

śrī-brahma-rudra-sanaka-
vaiṣṇavaḥ kṣiti-pāvanāḥ
catvāras te kalau bhāvyā
hy utkale puruṣottamāt

"Unless one is initiated by a bona-fide spiritual master in the disciplic succession, the mantra he might have received is without any effect.* For this reason four Vaiṣṇava disciplic successions, inaugurated by Lakṣmī-devī, Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, and Sanaka-kumāra, will appear in the holy place of Jagannātha Purī in Orissa and purify the entire earth during the age of Kali."

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa, who wrote a commentary on Vedānta-sūtra, explains (Śrī Prameya-ratnāvalī 1.7):

śrī-kṛṣṇa-brahma-devarṣi-
bādarāyaṇa-samjñakān
śrī-madhva-śrī-padmanābha-
śrīman-nṛhari-mādhavān

akṣobhya-jayatīrtha-śrī-
jñānasindhu-dayānidhīn
śrī-vidyānidhi-rājendra-
jayadharmān kramād vayam

puruṣottama-brahmaṇya-
vyāsātīrthānś ca samstumaḥ
tato lakṣmīpatiṁ śrīman-
mādhavendraś ca bhaktitaḥ

tac-chiṣyān śrīśvarādvaita-
nityānandān jagad-gurum
devam īśvara-śiṣyaṁ śrī-
caitanyaṁ ca bhajāmahe
śrī-kṛṣṇa-prema-dānena
yena nistaritaṁ jagat

"With the great devotion we glorify the spiritual masters in the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava disciplic succession. A list of their names follows: 1. Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, 2. Brahmā, 3. Nārada, 4. Vyāsa, 5. Madhvācārya, 6. Padmanābha, 7. Nṛhari, 8. Mādhava, 9. Akṣobhya, 10. Jayatīrtha, 11. Jñānasindhu, 12. Dayānidhi, 13. Vidyānidhi, 14. Rājendra, 15. Jayadharmā, 16. Puruṣottama, 17. Brahmaṇya, 18. Vyāsātīrtha, 19. Lakṣmīpati, 20. Mādhavendra Purī, and 21. Śvara Purī, Advaita Prabhu, and Nityānanda Prabhu (who were all disciples of

Mādhavendra Purī). We worship Ísvara Purī's disciple, Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who delivered the entire universe by granting the gift of Kṛṣṇa-prema, pure love for Lord Kṛṣṇa."

Sūtra 130

puruṣa-ceṣṭā hy adṛṣṭa-janany atha sādharmaṅ sarvātmanā sevyāḥ

puruṣa - of a person; ceṣṭā - the activities; hi - indeed; adṛṣṭa - of destiny; janani - the mother; atha - therefore; sādharmaṅ - saintly devotees; sarvātmanā - with all one's heart; sevyāḥ - should be served.

A person's actions are the mother of his future destiny. Therefore with all one's heart one should serve the saintly devotees.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad it is said:

sa vā ayam puruṣo jāyamānaḥ śarīram abhisampadyamānaḥ. pāpmabhiḥ samsrjyate
sa utkraman mriyamānaḥ pāpmano vijahāti.

"Taking birth, the soul enters a material body. Here he has a choice. He may commit sins, or he may, on dying, leave all his sins behind."

In the Praśna Upaniṣad (6.8) it is said:

tvam hi naḥ pitā yo 'smākam avidyāyāḥ param pāram tārayasīti. namaḥ parama-
ṛṣibhyo namaḥ parama-ṛṣibhyaḥ.

"(After hearing the answers to all their questions, the students) worshiped the sage and said, 'You are our father. You have taken us to the farther shore of this ocean of ignorance. We offer our obeisances to the great sages. We offer our obeisances to the great sages.'"

In the Padma Purāṇa it is said:

arādhānānām sarveṣām
viṣṇor arādhānam param

tasmāt parataram̐ devi
tadīyānām samarcanam

"My dear Devī, although the Vedas recommend worship of demigods, the worship of Lord Viṣṇu is topmost. However, above the worship of Viṣṇu is the rendering of service to Vaiṣṇavas, who are related to Lord Viṣṇu."*

na śūdrā bhagavad-bhaktās
teṣām bhāgavatā narāḥ
sarva-varṇeṣu te śūdrā
ye na bhaktā janārdane

"The devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead are never to be considered sūdras. The word śūdra can be applied only to they who are not devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (5.5.2) it is said:

mahat-sevām dvāram āhur vimuktes
tamo-dvāram yoṣitām saṅgi-saṅgaḥ

"One can attain the path of liberation from material bondage only by rendering service to highly advanced spiritual personalities. For those who are not interested in such activities, who associate with people fond of women and sex, the path to hell is wide open."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.18.13) it is said:

tulayāma lavenāpi
na svargaṁ nāpunar-bhavam
bhagavat-saṅgi-saṅgasya
martyānām kim utāśiṣaḥ

"The value of a moment's association with the devotee of the Lord cannot even be compared to the attainment of heavenly planets or liberation from matter, and what to speak of worldly benedictions in the form of material prosperity, which are for those who are meant for death."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.2.29) it is said:

durlabho mānuṣo deho
dehinām kṣaṇa-bhaṅguraḥ
tatrāpi durlabham manye
vaikuṅṭha-priya-darśanam

"For the conditioned souls, the human body is most difficult to achieve, and it can be lost at any moment. But I think that even those who have achieved human life rarely gain the association of pure devotees, who are dear to the Lord of Vaikuṅṭha."***

In the Nārada-bhakti-sūtra it is said:

nāsti teṣām jāti-vidyā-rūpa-kula-dhana-kriyā-vibhedah.

"Differences of birth, education, beauty, family, wealth, and good deeds do not apply to they who are devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu (Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya 22.54) explains:

sādhu-saṅga sādhu-saṅga sarva śāstra kaya
lava mātra sādhu-saṅge sarva siddhi haya

"The verdict of all revealed scriptures is that by even a moment's association with a pure devotee one can attain all success."*

Śrīla Balarāma dāsa explains:

bhaire sādhu-saṅga kara bhala haiyā
sa bhava tariyā jabe mahānanda sukha pabe
nitāi caitanya guṇa ganya

"O brother, please associate with the saintly Vaiṣṇavas. In this way you will cross the ocean of repeated birth and death. Please chant the glories of Lord Caitanya and Lord Nityānanda. In this way you will become filled with bliss.

caurāśi lakṣa-janma kariyā śrama
bhalai durlabha deha panyā
mahater dayā-diyā bhakti-paye na caliyā
janma jāya akaraṇe bhaiyā

"After a great labor of many thousands of births you have attained this rare human body. By the mercy of the great souls please engage in devotional service. Then you will put an end to repeated birth and death.

mālā mudrā kari beśa bhajanera nāhi leśa
phiri āmi loka dekhāiyā
mākhālera phala lāla dekhite sundara bhāla
bhaṅgile se deya phelāiyā

"I do not have any of the garlands, rings, or garments of devotional service. I am only a huckster. I have thrown away all that is beautiful.

candana tarura kāche jāta bṛkṣa latā āche
ātma sama kare bāyu diyā
hena sādhu-saṅga sāra nāi balarāma chāra
bhāva-kūpe rahilāñ paḍiyā

"I am like a vine born among sandal trees. Balarāma dāsa did not attain the treasure of association with saintly devotees. That is why he remains in this blind well of birth and death."