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BHAJANA-KRIYA

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His Divine Grace
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GENEALOGICAL TABLE OF LORD RAMACANDRA'S DYNASTY

Following in the genealogical table of Lord Ramacandra's dynasty, Kusa, the Lord's son, was followed consecutively by Atithi, Nisadha, Nabha, Pundarika, Ksemadhanva, Devanika, Aniha, Pariyatra, Balasthala, Vajranabha, Sagana and Vidhrti. These personalities ruled the world. From Vidhrti came Hiranyanabha, who later became the disciple of Jaimini and propounded the system of mystic *yoga* in which Yajnavalkya was initiated. Following in this dynasty were Puspa, Dhruvasandhi, Sudarsana, Agnivarna, Sighra and Maru. Maru attained full perfection in the practice of *yoga*, and he still lives in the village of Kalapa. At the end of this Age of Kali, he will revive the dynasty of the sun-god. Next in the dynasty were Prasusruta, Sandhi, Amarsana, Mahasvan, Visvabahu, Prasenajit, Taksaka and Brhadbala, who was later killed by Abhimanyu. Sukadeva Gosvami said that these were all kings who had passed away. The future descendants of Brhadbala will be Brhadrana, Urukriya, Vatsavrddha, Prativyoma, Bhanu, Divaka, Sahadeva, Brhadasva, Bhanuman, Pratikasva, Supratika, Marudeva, Sunaksatra, Puskara, Antariksa, Sutapa, Amitrajit, Brhadraja, Barhi, Krtanjaya, Rananjaya, Sanjaya, Sakya, Sudhdoda, Langala, Prasenajit, Ksudraka, Ranaka, Suratha and Sumitra. All of them will become kings one after another. Sumitra, coming in this Age of Kali, will be the last king in the Iksvaku dynasty; after him, the dynasty will be extinguished.

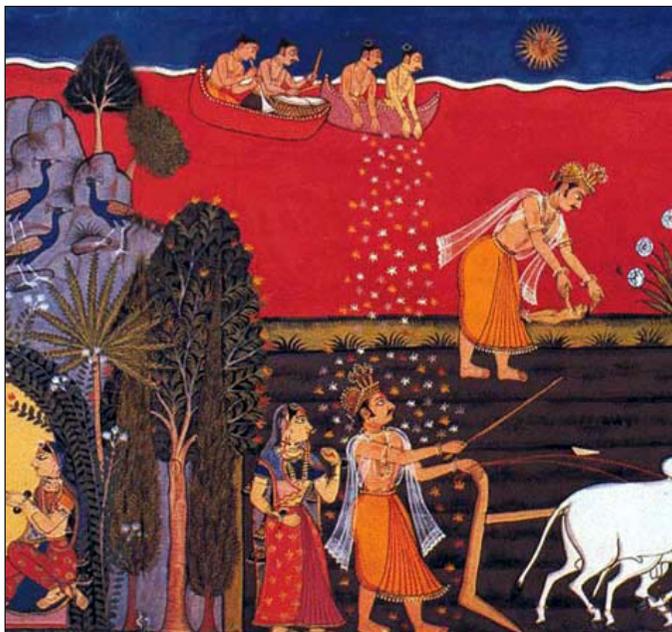
DYNASTY OF MAHARAJA NIMI Sri Sukadeva Goswami

Sri Sukadeva Gosvami said: After beginning sacrifices, Maharaja Nimi, the son of Iksvaku, requested the great sage Vasistha to take the post of chief priest. At that time, Vasistha replied, "My dear Maharaja Nimi, I have already accepted the same post in a sacrifice begun by Lord Indra." "I shall return here after finishing the *yajña* for Indra. Kindly wait for me until then." Maharaja Nimi remained silent, and Vasistha began to perform the sacrifice for Lord Indra. Maharaja Nimi, being a self-realized soul, considered that this life is flickering. Therefore, instead of waiting long

nityam bhāgavata-sevayā

for Vasistha, he began performing the sacrifice with other priests. After completing the sacrificial performance for King Indra, the spiritual master Vasistha returned and found that his disciple Maharaja Nimi had disobeyed his instructions. Thus Vasistha cursed him, saying, "May the material body of Nimi, who considers himself learned, immediately fall." For unnecessarily cursing him when he had committed no offense, Maharaja Nimi countercursed his spiritual master. "For the sake of getting contributions from the King of heaven," he said, "you have lost your religious intelligence. Therefore I pronounce this curse: your body also will fall." After saying this, Maharaja Nimi, who was expert in the science of spiritual knowledge, gave up his body. Vasistha, the great-grandfather, gave up his body also, but through the semen discharged by Mitra and Varuna when they saw Urvasi, he was born again. During the performance of the *yajña*, the body relinquished by Maharaja Nimi was preserved in fragrant substances, and at the end of the *Satra-yāga* the great saints and *brāhmaṇas* made the following request to all the demigods assembled there. "If you are satisfied with this sacrifice and if you are actually able to do so, kindly bring Maharaja Nimi back to life in this body." The demigods said yes to this request by the sages, but Maharaja Nimi said, "Please do not imprison me again in a material body." Maharaja Nimi continued: *Māyāvādīs* generally want freedom from accepting a material body because they fear having to give it up again. But devotees whose intelligence is always filled with the service of the Lord are unafraid. Indeed, they take advantage of the body to render transcendental loving service. I do not wish to accept a material body, for such a body is the source of all distress, lamentation and fear, everywhere in the universe, just as it is for a fish in the water, which lives always in anxiety because of fear of death.

The demigods said: Let Maharaja Nimi live without a material body. Let him live in a spiritual body as a personal associate of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and, according to his desire, let him be manifest or unmanifest to common materially embodied people. Thereafter, to save the people from the danger of an unregulated government, the sages churned Maharaja Nimi's



material body, from which, as a result, a son was born. Because he was born in an unusual way, the son was called Janaka, and because he was born from the dead body of his father, he was known as Vaideha. Because he was born from the churning of his father's material body, he was known as Mithila, and because he constructed a city as King Mithila, the city was called Mithila.

O King Pariksit, from Mithila came a son named Udavasū; from Udavasū, Nandivardhana; from Nandivardhana, Suketu; and from Suketu, Devarata. From Devarata came a son named Brhadratha and from Brhadratha a son named Mahavirya, who became the father of Sudhṛti. The son of Sudhṛti was known as Dhṛstaketu, and from Dhṛstaketu came Haryasva. From Haryasva came a son named Maru. The son of Maru was Pratipaka, and the son of Pratipaka was Kṛtaratha. From Kṛtaratha came Devamidha; from Devamidha, Visruta; and from Visruta, Mahadhṛti. From Mahadhṛti was born a son named Kṛtirata, from Kṛtirata was born Maharoma, from Maharoma came a son named Svarnaroma, and from Svarnaroma came Hrasvaroma. From Hrasvaroma came a son named Siradhvaja [also called Janaka]. When Siradhvaja was plowing a field, from the front of his plow [sira] appeared a daughter named Sitadevi, who later became the wife of Lord Ramacandra. Thus he was known as Sira-dhvaja. The son of Siradhvaja was Kusadhvaja, and the son of Kusadhvaja was King Dharmadhvaja, who had two sons, namely Kṛtadhvaja and Mitadhvaja.

O Maharaja Pariksit, the son of Kṛtadhvaja was Kesidhvaja, and the son of Mitadhvaja was Khandikya. The son of Kṛtadhvaja was expert in spiritual knowledge, and the son of Mitadhvaja was expert in Vedic ritualistic ceremonies. Khandikya fled in fear of Kesidhvaja. The son of Kesidhvaja was Bhanuman, and the son of Bhanuman was Satadyumna. The son of Satadyumna was named Suci. From Suci, Sanadvaja was born, and from Sanadvaja came a son named Urjaketu. The son of Urjaketu was Aja, and the son of Aja was Purujit. The son of Purujit was Aristanemi, and his son was Srutayu. Srutayu begot a son named Suparsvaka, and Suparsvaka begot Citraratha. The son of Citraratha was Ksemadhi, who became the king of Mithila. The son of Ksemadhi was Samaratha, and his son was Satyaratha. The son of Satyaratha was Upaguru, and the son of Upaguru was Upagupta, a partial expansion of the fire-god. The son of Upagupta was Vasvananta, the son of Vasvananta was Yuyudha, the son of Yuyudha was Subhasana, and the son of Subhasana was Sruta. The son of Sruta was Jaya, from whom there came Vijaya. The son of Vijaya was Rta. The son of Rta was Sunaka, the son of Sunaka was Vitahavya, the son of Vitahavya was Dhṛti, and the son of Dhṛti was Bahulasva. The son of Bahulasva was Kṛti, and his son was Mahavasi.

Sukadeva Gosvami said: My dear King Pariksit, all the kings of the dynasty of Mithila were completely in knowledge of their spiritual identity. Therefore, even though staying at home, they were liberated from the duality of material existence.

- Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāna) » Canto 9: Liberation » Chapter Thirteen » Verses: 1-27 » Translations by His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

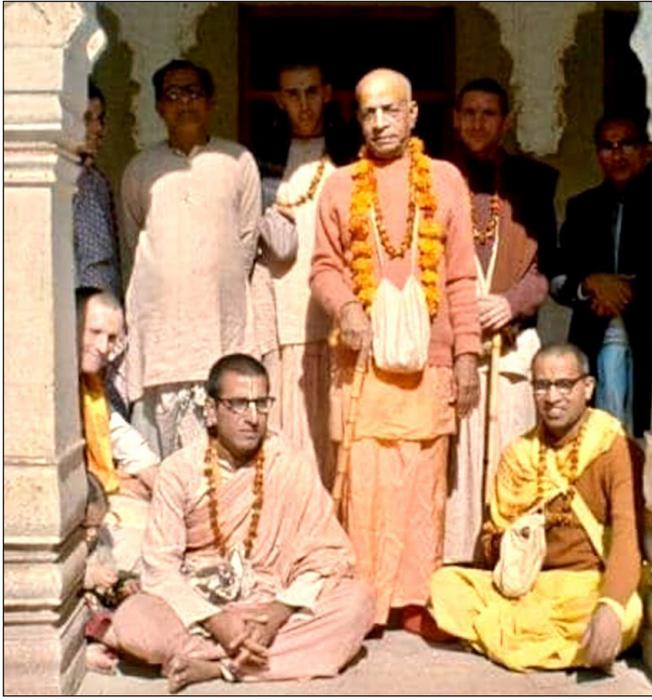
SERVING THE SUPREME LORD

His Divine Grace

A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada

Maharaja Nimi did not want to accept a material body, which would be a cause of bondage; because he was a devotee, he wanted a body by which he could render devotional service to the Lord. Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura sings:

janmāobi more icchā yadi tora
bhakta-gr̥he jani janma ha-u mora
kīṭa-janma ha-u yathā tuyā dāsa



"My Lord, if You want me to take birth and accept a material body again, kindly do me this favor: allow me to take birth in the home of Your servant, Your devotee. I do not mind being born there even as an insignificant creature like an insect." Sri Caitanya Mahāprabhu also said:

*na dhanam na janam na sundarim
kavitam va jagadisa kamaye
mama janmani janmanisvare
bhavatad bhaktir ahaitukyī tvayi*
[Cc. Antya 20.29, Śikṣāṣṭaka 4]

"O Lord of the universe, I do not desire material wealth, materialistic followers, a beautiful wife or fruitive activities described in flowery language. All I want, life after life, is unmotivated devotional service to You." (Śikṣāṣṭaka 4) By saying "life after life" (*janmani janmani*), the Lord referred not to an ordinary birth but a birth in which to remember the lotus feet of the Lord. Such a body is desirable. A devotee does not think like *yogīs* and *jñānīs*, who want to refuse a material body and become one with the impersonal Brahman effulgence. A devotee does not like this idea. On the contrary, he will accept any body, material or spiritual, for he wants to serve the Lord. This is real liberation.

If one has a strong desire to serve the Lord, even if he accepts a material body, there is no cause of anxiety, since a devotee, even in a material body,

is a liberated soul. This is confirmed by Srila Rupa Gosvami:

*ihā yasya harer dāsye
karmanā manasā girā
nikhilāsv apy avasthāsu
jīvan-muktaḥ sa ucyate*

"A person acting in Krishna consciousness (or, in other words, in the service of Krishna) with his body, mind, intelligence and words is a liberated person even within the material world, although he may be engaged in many so-called material activities." The desire to serve the Lord establishes one as liberated in any condition of life, whether in a spiritual body or a material body. In a spiritual body the devotee becomes a direct associate of the Lord, but even though a devotee may superficially appear to be in a material body, he is always liberated and is engaged in the same duties of service to the Lord as a devotee in Vaikunthaloka. There is no distinction. It is said, *sādhur jīvo vā maro vā*. Whether a devotee is alive or dead, his only concern is to serve the Lord. *Tyaktvā deham punar janma naiti mām eti* [Bg. 4.9]. When he gives up his body, he goes directly to become an associate of the Lord and serve Him, although he does the same thing even in a material body in the material world.

For a devotee there is no pain, pleasure or material perfection. One may argue that at the time of death a devotee also suffers because of giving up his material body. But in this connection the example may be given that a cat carries a mouse in its mouth and also carries a kitten in its mouth. Both the mouse and the kitten are carried in the same mouth, but the perception of the mouse is different from that of the kitten. When a devotee gives up his body (*tyaktvā deham*), he is ready to go back home, back to Godhead. Thus his perception is certainly different from that of a person being taken away by Yamaraja for punishment. A person whose intelligence is always concentrated upon the service of the Lord is unafraid of accepting a material body, whereas a nondevotee, having no engagement in the service of the Lord, is very much afraid of accepting a material body or giving up his present one. Therefore, we should follow the instruction of Caitanya Mahāprabhu:

mama janmani janmanīśvare bhavatād bhaktir ahaitukī tvayi [Cc. Antya 20.29, Śikṣāṣṭaka 4]. It doesn't matter whether we accept a material body or a spiritual body; our only ambition should be to serve the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

- Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (Bhāgavata Purāṇa) » Canto 9: Liberation » Chapter Thirteen » Verse:09 » Purport by His Divine Grace A.C.Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada.

THE FRUIT OF SERVICE

Srila Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura

Subordination to *Māyā* and subordination to the Lord are not synonymous. It is not possible to take shelter of both of them at the same time. Either we are under *Māyā*'s shelter or we are under Krishna's shelter. If we are subordinate to *Māyā*, it means we are attached to family life or to material life in general. Being subordinate to Krishna means we are attached to Krishna and His service. Therefore Prahlada Maharaja says, "Give up the dark well of family life and take shelter of the Lord by approaching the saintly persons." If due to weakness we are unable to leave home, then at least become detached from family life and worship the Lord in the association of devotees. This will certainly bring you ultimate fortune. If you make a show of serving the Lord while remaining attached to home and family life, then you will not awaken the propensity to serve the Lord. Instead you will remain forever drowned in the ocean of material existence.

After taking shelter of the Lord, if we remain attached to household duties and decide that serving and pleasing one's wife and children is the aim of life, if we remain ever indifferent to serving the Lord, giving more importance to our family life, then what is the use of taking shelter of the Lord? By serving the Lord we must become convinced that we are His eternal servants. Is that happening? We can judge by the fruit. The fruit of service is to want more service and to progressively increase in that way. We should analyze carefully what we are doing. Where is our shelter? In what direction does our mind rush? Don't let yourself be cheated.

A woman leaves her father's house and takes shelter of her husband's house. As a result, her surname is changed. She no longer remains attached to her father's house. It is natural to develop love

for those whom we serve. Serve Krishna and you will become attached to Him.

-Amṛta Vāṇī: Nectar of Instructions of Immortality His Divine Grace Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura Prabhupada » Compiled by Sripada Bhakti Mayukha Bhagavat Maharaja » Adapted and Published by Isvara dasa » Translated from Bengali by Bhumipati dasa.

THE BEST AMONG ALL THE LIMBS OF DEVOTIONAL SERVICE *Srila Bhaktivinoda Thakura*

How many types of cultivation of hearing are there?

"There are three types of cultivation of hearing: hearing about the scriptures, hearing about the holy names and topics of the Lord, and hearing about the devotion-filled discourses. Considering the science about the absolute truth, describing the pastimes of the Lord from *Śrīmad Bhāgavatam*, discussing the characteristics of the *Vaiṣṇavas*, and hearing about the ancient history of the *Vaiṣṇava*'s family, are counted in the category of 'hearing the scriptures'. These are to be understood from hearing about the conclusive statements based on the *Vedānta* written by great personalities after carefully rejecting inconclusive non-*Vaiṣṇavas* statements."

- (Caitanya Śikṣāṁṛta 3/2)

What happens if one hears the topics of and conclusion about Hari?

"By hearing about the topics and science of Hari one automatically cultivates the scriptures."

- (Jaiva Dharma, Chapter – 8)

By hearing the topics of Hari does one worship the Lord and become detached to material enjoyments?

"By hearing the topics of Hari both cultivation of spiritual science and detachment from material enjoyment are done."

- (Tattva Sutra – 34)

What are the different stages of hearing?

"There are two stages of hearing. The first stage is hearing about the qualities of Krishna from the mouths of the saintly persons, before one's faith develops. By such hearing one certainly develops faith. When one's faith is awakened one develops



a strong desire to hear about the names, forms, qualities and pastimes of Krishna. The second stage is one hears Krishna's holy names etc., from the mouths of the spiritual master and the *Vaiṣṇavas*.”

- (Jaiva Dharma Chapter – 19)

Does hearing during the time of *sādhana* helps the hearing when one attains perfection?

“The hearing on the perfectional stage appears while hearing from the mouths of the spiritual master and the *Vaiṣṇavas* during the time of *sādhana*.”

- (Jaiva Dharma Chapter – 19)

What are the gradual platforms beginning from *śravana daśā* to *sampatti daśā*?

“Hearing about the absolute truth from the mouth of the spiritual master is called '*śravana daśā*'. When a practitioner accepts those instructions in truth, it is called '*varana daśā*'. When he cultivates that mood with blissful remembrance, it is called '*smarana daśā*'. When he is able to properly bring that mood within himself, it is called '*āpana* or '*prāpti daśā*'. And when one separates himself from the temporary material existence and obtains his own desired constitutional form, it is called '*sampatti daśā*'.”

- (Harināma Cintāmani)

How many types of cultivation of chanting are there?

“Cultivation of *kirtana* or chanting is extremely sublime. Reciting the scriptures, glorifying the Lord's names and qualities, offering prayers, making humble appeals, and chanting the holy names softly, are the five kinds of cultivation of *kirtana*. Glorification of the Lord's holy names and qualities are done through discourses, explanations, and singing. Appealing is of three types: prayers, humility and hankering.”

- (Caitanya Śikṣāmṛta 3/2)

Among all the limbs of devotional service, which one is the best?

“It has been described that *kirtana* or chanting is the best among all the limbs of devotional service”

- (Jaiva Dharma –Ch-19)

Why *kirtana* or Chanting is the best?

“Among the three limbs of devotional service namely hearing, chanting and remembering,

Bhāgavata Mahāvidyālaya

nityaṁ bhāgavata-sevayā

chanting is the best of all; because hearing and remembering are included in the chanting”

- (Jaiva Dharma –Ch-19)

— Bhaktivinoda Vānī Vaibhāva Published by Isvara dasa

BHAJANA-KRIYA

Srila Vishvanatha Chakravarti Thakura

There are two kinds of *bhakti*: *sraddha* (devotional service performed with faith) and *misra* (mixed devotional service). Pure devotional service, or *suddha-bhakti* is free from any traces of empirical knowledge or fruitive activity. Pure devotion is like a desire tree or creeper, eternal and unfettered by the concepts of the dualities of birth and death. Yet *Bhakti-devi*. appears on the sensual plane so that those who have embraced this path may perceive her. Those devotees who seek only the sublime nectar of spiritual life and who have denounced any desire outside of the service to the Supreme Lord, accept the shelter of the creeper of devotion.

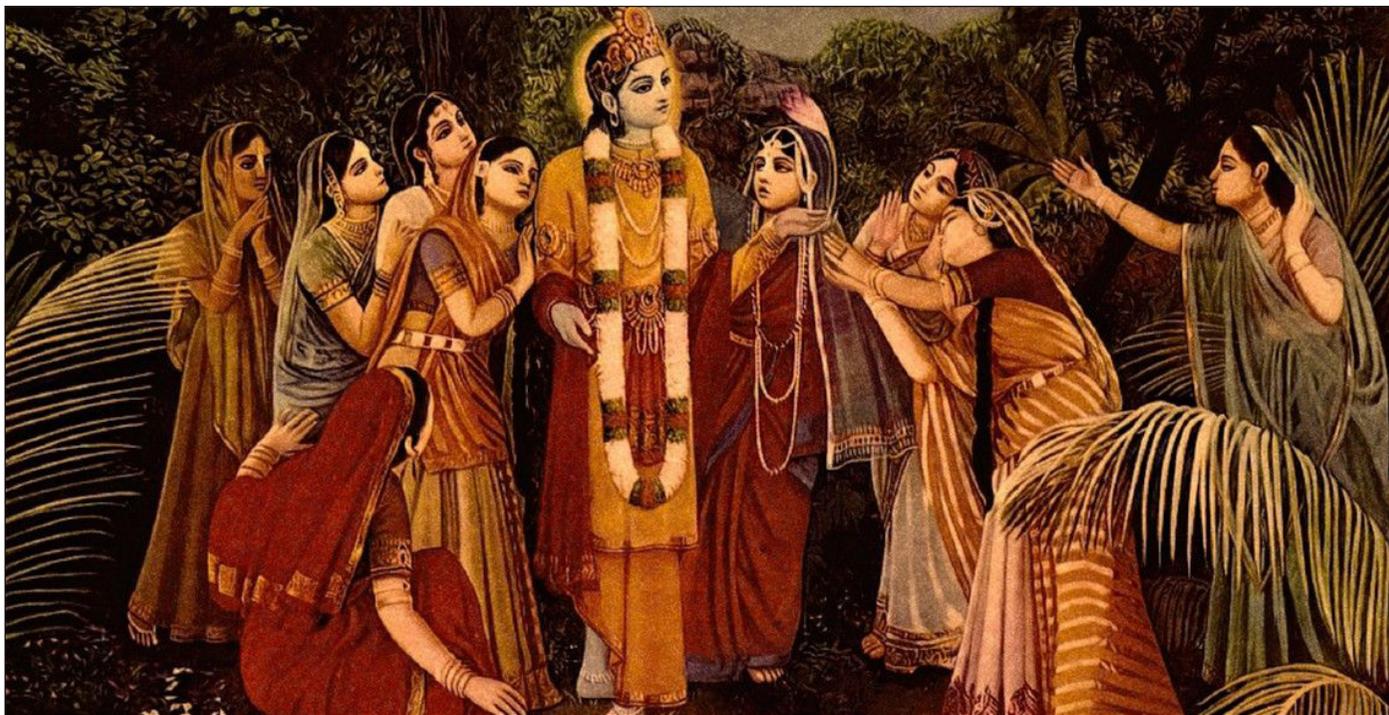
Bhakti-devi is the inspiration for all activities favorable to the process of surrender to the Supreme Lord. Like the touchstone, *Bhakti-devi* gradually converts the iron of material sense perception to the gold of spiritual understanding merely by the power of her association.

The Two Types of *Bhakti*

From this creeper of devotion burgeons two fresh leaves both representing *sādhana bhakti* or regulated devotional service. The first leaf is called *klesaghni* (destroyer of distresses), and the second leaf is known as *subhada* (bestower of good fortune.) (These two leaves may also be described as *vaidhi-bhakti*, regulated devotional service, and *raga-bhakti* spontaneous devotional service. Their difference of mood depends entirely on the practitioner's level of realization). The soft inner core of these two leaves represents the devotee's mood of constant hankering for a loving relationship with the Lord and His eternal associates, When he attains this loving relationship, the devotee feels that he belongs to the beloved Lord and His associates. This elevated stage is known as *rāga-bhakti*, or spontaneous love.

The outer portion of the leaves represents the devotee's dutiful attitude towards Krishna—his spontaneous feelings are curbed by scriptural

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edicts, his mood borders on formality, and lacks cozy familiarity, tenderness, and open expression of his intention and feelings. His relationship is on the platform of *vaidhi-bhakti* or regulated devotional service, and it is not as pure as a relationship in *raga-bhakti*. In actual fact, there is very little difference between these two stages of devotion as far as their ability to destroy distresses and bestow good fortune is concerned.

The Causes of Distress and the Means to Neutralize Them

Distress is caused by five things: nescience, false ego, material attachments, envy, and mundane engrossment, all of which essentially represent different aspects of the mode of ignorance. Sinful reactions, which are also part of *klesa* (distress), go through four stages:

prārabdha (already mature)
aprabdha (not yet mature)
kuta (the stage before the seed)
bijam (the seed stage) .

Sins are abominable and they add only partly to man's material distress. The godly traits in man are his aversion towards the temporary, attraction for the divine that is connected to the Supreme, acceptance of that which is favorable to devotional service, mercy, forgiveness, truthfulness, simplicity, impartiality, patience, gravity, respectfulness,

humility, and good fortune. The scriptures (*SB*. 5.18.12) also confirm that the Lord's devotees are automatically embellished with all the excellent qualities that are found in the demigods.

The *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (11.2.42) declares, *bhaktiḥ pareśānubhavo viraktir anyatra caiṣa trika eka-kālah*, that along with devotional surrender and direct perception of the Supreme Lord, aversion to, and detachment from, matter occur simultaneously. This supports the principles discussed earlier that *sadhana-bhakti* destroys distress and bestows good fortune. Now, although both these leaves of *sadhana-bhakti* sprout at the same time there is still a slight difference in their growth. The time lapse between distress being destroyed and good fortune being bestowed is so indistinct that the appearance of the two appear to happen simultaneously. Yet by the subtle symptoms of these two actions, the learned have been able to distinguish the difference.

Bhakti Begins with Faith

The pilgrim undertaking a journey on the path of devotion must have faith (*śraddhā*), a faith synonymous with the firm conviction to act on the words and the instructions of devotional scriptures. Faith is of two kinds: *svabhaviki* (natural) and *balotpadika* (inspired by an external force). Faith gives birth to the desire to surrender to a bona fide spiritual master and to learn from him the proper rules and etiquette of the devotional

science. Sincerely following the spiritual master's instructions bestows upon a disciple the good fortune of wanting to associate with an elevated saint experienced and absorbed in the same devotional mood as the disciple himself aspires for—min other words, a like-minded saintly instructor. At this point begins the stage of *bhajana-kriya*, the platform of serious devotional activities.

Bhajana-kriya

Bhajana kriya is divided into two parts *aniṣṭhitā* (unsteady) and *niṣṭhitā* (steady). When devotional activities are performed on the *aniṣṭhitā* platform, there is no fear of deviation or lethargy. *Aniṣṭhitā* (unsteady devotional service) is further divided into six gradations:

utsahamayi (sudden enthusiasm)

ghana-tarald (sometimes enthusiastic, sometimes lethargic)

vyudha-vikalpa (a stage when doubts assail one's resolve)

visaya-sangara (a stage of internal tug-of-war with material sense enjoyment)

niyamaksama (although one practises regularly, full justice is still not done to the process)

taranga-rangini (attachment to wealth, adoration, distinction, and so on).

Let us first discuss the beginning stage of *bhajana-kriya*—the stage of *utsahamayi*. When a young student begins higher education he is very proud, thinking himself to be a praiseworthy scholar. Such thoughts encourage the student to apply himself and to perform well. Similarly, when a novice commences spiritual life he takes to it so enthusiastically, thinking himself to be somebody special.

The example of the same young scholar explains the stage of *ghanataral*. At times the student concentrates deeply on his studies, but sometimes, because of his inability to understand something, he becomes apathetic. In devotional activities the neophyte goes through similar spells of opposing attitudes sometimes enthusiasm, other times lethargy.

Vyudha-vikalpa is an interesting stage on the path of spiritual life. Sometimes the devotee thinks “I shall convince my wife and family to become *Vaiṣṇavas* and serve the Supreme Lord. I shall convert my house into a temple and remain there happily practicing devotional service.” At other

times he thinks, “I shall leave my family, home, and the rest of my worries behind me and go to *Vṛndavana*. I shall reside there, for it is the holiest of places, and I shall cultivate devotional surrender through the nine practices of devotion.” Or he will say, “Ultimately, I have to give up my home and all my other attachments, then should I not first plunge into the pool of sensual pleasures until I am satisfied?”

Or he may think, The scriptures speak of family and wife being like a dark and dismal well. Should I not leave home this very moment? Sometimes the scriptures encourage me to perceive that this material life, family connections, wife, children are abominable and to renounce them. Yet how can I do that? My parents are old and infirm, who will take care of them? Besides, if I should leave home prematurely, with my material desires to enjoy still unfulfilled, my mind will continue to dwell on sense pleasures until my final days. This would be a disaster! Therefore, I can understand from my own thoughts that I am too weak to follow the Lord's instructions and renounce family life. For now I shall live simply. When the proper time comes I shall hasten to *Vṛndavana* and spend my days and nights in deep meditation on the pastimes of the Supreme Lord.”

The scriptures (SB. 11.20.31) say that neither knowledge nor renunciation is helpful in performing devotional service; since renunciation cannot give birth to *bhakti*, practicing renunciation separately is unnecessary. After one is situated in devotional service, however, renunciation is an asset because then renunciation proves not only the effectiveness of *bhakti* but also its superiority. It is both wrong and foolish to cultivate knowledge and renunciation separately once a person enters the path of devotional service.

A famous aphorism in logic is, “When the renunciate goes begging from door-to-door, he finds all the family larders full with grains because he is given charity.” Basing his argument on this logic the aspiring devotee thinks, “I must take up renunciation”. Next moment he comes across another scriptural maxim (SB. 10.14.36) stating that unless one develops loving devotion to the Lord his home is a prison. So he says to himself, “Must I remain in household life and try to develop devotional

surrender to the Lord? Maybe I should practice hearing about Krishna or chanting Krishna's name and fame. Should I emulate Ambarisa Maharaja and simultaneously perform all the nine devotional activities?" When *bhajana-kriya* goes through this state of doubt and vacillating resolve it is known as *vyudha-vikalpa*.

Visaya-sangara is the stage when conflicting doubts and arguments are resolved in the devotee's heart and he is convinced about the path of renunciation. Scripture states that just as an object lost in the west cannot be found in the east, similarly, a person engrossed in materialistic activities will never become attached to Krishna. The devotee feels that his desires for sensual enjoyment are forcing him towards fulfilling them, and so his attraction for chanting and devotional service becomes weak. Therefore he thinks he should immediately discard those desires and wholeheartedly chant the holy name, although even in the process he may sometimes fall victim to sense gratification. The devotee still remains convinced of the scriptural truth that perfection can be achieved through devotional service. And although he may fall prey to sense enjoyment, he rebukes himself and feels remorseful, always continuing his devotional practices. Thus the devotee wages a war against his desire for sense gratification: sometimes the victor, sometimes the defeated. When he does fall victim, the devotee at this stage of unsteady devotional service still feels regret and revulsion at his weakness.

The next stage of unsteady devotional service is *niyamaksama*, where the devotee vows to increase his devotional activities. He resolves to chant sixty-four rounds daily, offer one hundred prostrated obeisances to the Deities and the *Vaiṣṇavas*; serve the senior devotees; avoid talking about mundane topics; shun the company of materialistic minded people, and so on. Daily he makes these vows, but at the last moment he is unable to honor them. The difference between *visayasangara* and *niyamaksama* is that in the former the devotee is helpless to give up material sense pleasures, and in the latter he is unable to increase and improve his devotional activities.

Now let us discuss *taranga-rangini* the last stage of *aniṣṭhitā* devotional service. In describing the nature of *bhakti* it is said that everyone is attracted



towards the reservoir of *bhakti*, the devotee. The devotee himself becomes a treasure-house of good qualities and mercy. These characteristics attract people who, in turn, crown the devotee with wealth, adoration, distinction and position. Although these accolades come to him as by-products of *bhakti* they nevertheless may stunt the spontaneous growth of the creeper of devotion if he uses them for his self-aggrandizement. *Taranga* means "waves" and *rangini* means "play". Therefore, in the vast unlimited ocean of *bhakti* these by-products are waves that create tempests in devotional life. The devotee aspiring for pure devotion sees these waves to be harmless, only gleefully playing and cresting.

- Madhurya-Kadambini - Srila Visvanatha Cakravarti Thakura Translated
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!! Sri Sri Nitai Gaurchandra Jayati !!

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