

Śrī Tattva-sūtra

Chapter One Tattva-prakarāṇa The Truth

Introduction by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

*sac-cid-ānanda-sandrātmā
sāra-grāhi-jana-priyaḥ
dīna-kāruṇya-pūrābhir
jīyān madana-mohanaḥ*

All glories to Madana-mohana, who is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss. He is dear to the saintly devotees, and He is an ocean of mercy for the fallen souls.

*tat-kṛpāmṛta-bindūdyat-
pipāsa-stokitāśayaḥ
prācīna-tattva-sūtrāṇi
vivṛṇomi yathā-mati*

I, who thirst to taste a drop of Lord Madana-mohana's mercy, shall now write these sūtras describing the eternal truths of spiritual life. As far as I understand, so I shall write.

*praṇamya kṛṣṇa-caitanyaṁ
bharadvājaṁ sanātanam
tattva-sūtraṁ sa-vyakhyānam
bhāṣāyāṁ vivṛtaṁ mayā*

Bowing down before Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa Caitanya, the eternal maintainer of all the worlds, I shall now write this Tattva-sūtra and a commentary upon it.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.11) Sūta Gosvāmī explains:

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

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

In the Yajur Veda, Vājasaneyā-saṁhitā, seventh mantra, it is said:

*yasmin sarvāṇi bhūtāni
ātmaivābhūd vijānataḥ
tatra ko mohaḥ kaḥ śoka
ekatvam 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 Bhagavad-gītā (7.7), the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself declares:

*mattaḥ parataram nānyat
kiñcid asti dhanañjaya
mayi sarvam idaṁ protaṁ
sūtre maṇi-gaṇā iva*

"O conqueror of wealth, there is no truth superior to Me. Everything rests on Me, as pearls are strung on a thread."*

In the maṅgalacaraṇa of the Nārada-pañcarātra, the author of that book declares:

*dhyāyet taṁ paramaṁ brahma
paramātmānam īśvaram
nirīham ati-nirliptaṁ
nirguṇaṁ prakṛteḥ param*

*sarveśaṁ sarva-rūpaṁ ca
sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam
satyaṁ nityaṁ ca puruṣaṁ
purāṇaṁ param avyayam*

"One should meditate on the Supreme Truth, who is known as Brahman, Paramātmā, and Īśvara. His activities are never material. He is never touched by matter. He is never touched by the modes of material nature. He is beyond the world of matter. He is the master of all. He is everything. He is the cause of all causes. He is the eternal truth, the ancient and imperishable Supreme Person."

In the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, Fourth Chapter, it is said:

*yasmād anutaraṁ nāsti
yasmān nāsti bṛhattaram
yena viśvam idaṁ vyāptam
ajena jagad-ādinā*

"Nothing is smaller than He. Nothing is greater than He. He is the unborn creator of the universes. He is present everywhere."

Here someone may protest: Is it not so that Śrī Vyāsadeva and other authors of sūtras must always begin their sūtra books with the word "atha" (now)? The sūtras "athāto brahma-jijñāsā" and "athāto dharma-jijñāsā" are examples of this. This must be done both to bring auspiciousness and to state the topic one wishes to understand. Thus when one writes a book about Brahman or about dharma one must begin with an introduction describing the topic to be discussed in the book. Why has the author of Tattva-sūtra not done this?

If this protest is spoken, I give the following reply: This protest is not correct. Because in the first sūtra of this book the supremely auspicious Supreme Personality of Godhead is described, there is no need for a separate maṅgalācaraṇa to invoke auspiciousness. Also, the subject matter of this book is self-evident, and so it needs no introduction. Therefore, without any introduction, the first sūtra declares:

Sūtra 1

ekaḥ paro nānyaḥ

ekaḥ—one; *paraḥ*—Supreme; *na*—not; *anyaḥ*—another.

The Supreme is one. He has no rival.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

The Śruti-śāstra declares:

ekam evādvitīyaṁ brahma neha nānāsti kiñcana

"There is one Supreme God. He has no rival. There are not many Gods."

Here someone may protest: If it were so that there is only one Supreme God and no other Gods, then that one God would have to perform by Himself all the many duties involved in creating, maintaining, and destroying the universes. He would have to perform them all without any help from anyone else.

To refute this protest, the author of the sūtras speaks the following words:

Sūtra 2

aguṇo 'pi sarva-śaktir ameyatvāt

aguṇaḥ—beyond the modes of material nature; *api*—even; *sarva*—all; *śaktiḥ*—potencies; *ameyatvāt*—because of being limitless.

Because He is limitless, He has all powers, even though He remains beyond the touch of the modes of material nature.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

This sūtra means that the Supreme Personality of Godhead is beyond the modes of nature and He has all powers. This is so because He is limitless, which is to say that he cannot be measured or understood by direct perception of the material senses or by any other material means. This is described in the following words of Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (3.19):

*parāsyā śaktir vividhaiva śruyate
svabhāviki jñāna-bala-kriyā ca*

"His potencies are multifarious, and thus His deeds are automatically performed as a natural sequence."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.2.35) Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī explains:

*bhagavān sarva-bhūteṣu
lakṣitaḥ svātmanā hariḥ
dṛṣyair buddhy-ādibhir draṣṭā
lakṣaṇair anumāpakaiḥ*

"The Personality of Godhead Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is in every living being along with the individual soul. And this fact is perceived and hypothesized in our acts of seeing and taking help from the intelligence."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (4.20.7) it is also said:

*ekaḥ śuddhaḥ svayam-jyotir
nirguṇo 'sau guṇāśrayaḥ
sarvago 'navṛtaḥ sākṣī
nirātmātmānanaḥ paraḥ*

"The individual soul is one, pure, non-material, and self-effulgent. He is the reservoir of all good qualities, and He is all-pervading. He is without material covering, and He is the witness of all activities. He is completely distinguished from other living entities, and He is transcendental to all embodied souls."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.7.23) it is also said:

*atra mām mṛgayanty addhā
yuta hetubhir īśvaram
gṛhyamānair guṇair līngair
agrāhyam anumānataḥ*

"Although I, the Supreme Lord, can never be captured by ordinary sense

perception, those situated in human life may use their intelligence and other faculties of perception to directly search for Me through apparent and indirectly ascertained symptoms."***

In the Nārada-pañcarātra it is said:

*prakṛteḥ param iṣṭam ca
sarveṣam abhivāñchitam
svecchāmayam param brahma
pañcarātrābhidham smṛtam*

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is beyond the world of matter, who is the supreme object of worship, whose desires are all fulfilled, and whom all living entities yearn to attain, is described in the Pañcarātras."

Here someone may protest: You consider the Supreme both beyond the modes of material nature and the master of all potencies. How is it possible to ascribe these two mutually contradictory natures to the Lord?

In the following words the author of the sūtras refutes this protest:

Sūtra 3

viruddha-sāmānyam tasmin na citram

viruddha-sāmānyam—mutually contradictory qualities; *tasmin*—in Him; *na*—not; *citram*—wonder.

No one should be surprised that the Supreme possesses mutually contradictory natures.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

That the Supreme Personality of Godhead possesses mutually contradictory natures should not be a source of wonder. In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (3.19) it is said:

*apāṇi-pādo javano grhīta
paśyaty acakṣuḥ sa śṛṇoty akarṇaḥ*

"Although the Supreme Lord is described as having no hands or legs, He nonetheless accepts all sacrificial offerings and moves very quickly. He has no material eyes, yet He sees everything. He has no material ears, yet He hears everything."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (4.39-40), the Lord declares:

*śraddhavāl labhate jñānam
tat-paraḥ samyatendriyaḥ
jñānam labdhvā param śāntim
acireṇādhigacchati*

"A faithful man who is dedicated to transcendental knowledge and who subdues his senses is eligible to achieve such knowledge, and having achieved it he quickly attains the supreme spiritual peace.*

*ajñāś cāśraddadhānaś ca
saṁśayātmā vinaśyati
nāyaṁ loko 'sti na paro
na sukhaṁ saṁśayātmanaḥ*

"But ignorant and faithless persons who doubt the revealed scriptures do not attain God consciousness. They fall down. For the doubting soul there is happiness neither in this world nor in the next."*

Here someone may ask: How can one understand the truth of this Supreme who has many mutually contradictory natures?

To answer this question the author of the sūtras speaks the following words:

Sūtra 4

sa sac-cid-ānando jñānāgamyo bhakti-viśayatvāt

saḥ—He; *sat*—eternal; *cit*—full of knowledge; *ānandaḥ*—full of bliss; *jñāna*—by knowledge; *agamyah*—not approachable; *bhakti*—of devotional service; *viśayatvāt*—because of being in the range of perception.

He is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss. He cannot be known by ordinary knowledge, for He is known only by devotional service.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

The Supreme Personality of Godhead is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss. He cannot be known by the material mind or described by material words. He is known only by devotional service. The Śruti-śāstra declares:

yad vācānabhyuditaṁ yan mano na manute

"The material mind cannot understand the Supreme. Material words cannot describe Him."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.12.21), the Supreme Lord Himself declares:

bhaktyāham ekayā grāhyaḥ

"I am understood only by devotional service."

In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

brahma sac-cid-ānanda-lakṣaṇam

"The Supreme is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss."

In Brahma-saṁhitā (5.1) it is said:

*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ
sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ
sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*

"Kṛṣṇa, who is known as Govinda, is the supreme controller. He has an eternal, blissful, spiritual body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin, for He is the prime cause of all causes."*

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa is the following explanation of the word sac-cid-ānanda:

*hlādinī sandhinī samvit
tvayy eka sarva-saṁśraye
hlādatāpakarī miśrā
tvayi no guṇa-varjitā*

"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."*

A commentary on this verse follows:

the verse means, "O Supreme Personality of Godhead, in You, who are the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the supreme controller, and the shelter of all, exists one inconceivable potency, which is manifested in three as hlādinī, sandhinī, and samvit." That is the meaning. The question may be asked, "O Lord, what are You like?" The verse explains, "O Lord, You are beyond the material modes of goodness, passion, and ignorance." This means that the material modes, which cause happiness, misery, and mixtures of the two, do not exist in the Lord. It is the potency of spiritual bliss that exists in the Lord. Thus it is said.

In the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, Śakti-māhātmya, First Chapter, Caṇḍī declares:

*tan nātra vismayaḥ kāryo
yoga-nidrā jagat-pateḥ
mahā-māyā hareś caitat*

tayā sammohitam jagat

"No one should be surprised that the Supreme Personality of Godhead enjoys pastimes of yoga-nidrā (mystic sleep). After all, the Lord's illusory potency māyā bewilders the entire material world.

*jñānainam api cetāmsi
devī bhagavati hi sā
balād ākṛṣya mohāya
mahā-māyā prayacchati*

"Entering even the sages' hearts, Goddess Mahā-māyā bewilders the conditioned souls.

*tayā viśṛjyate viśvaṁ
jagad etac carācaram
saiṣā prasannā varadā
nṛṇām bhavati muktaye*

"By her this entire material universe of moving and unmoving beings is created. When she is satisfied she gives the blessing of liberation to the conditioned souls.

*sa vidyā paramā mukter
hetu-bhūtā sanātani
saṁsāra-bandha-hetuś ca
saiva sarveśvareśvarī*

"She is the eternal transcendental knowledge that brings liberation. She is also the potency that binds the conditioned souls in the world of birth and death. She is the goddess of all goddesses."

In Bhagavad-gītā (9.8-9), the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*prakṛtiṁ svām avaṣṭabhya
viśṛjāmi punaḥ punaḥ
bhūta-grāmam imam kṛtsnam
avaśaṁ prakṛter vaśāt*

"The whole cosmic order is under Me. By My will it is manifested again and again, and by My will it is annihilated at the end.*

*na ca mām tāni karmāṇi
nibadhnanti dhanañjaya
udāsīnavad āsīnam
asaktaṁ teṣu karmasu*

"O Dhanañjaya, all this work cannot bind Me. I am ever detached, seated as though neutral."*

In the Hayaśīrṣa-pañcarātra it is said:

*ānando dvi-vidhaḥ prokto
mūrtāmūrta-prabhedataḥ
amūrtasyāśrayo mūrto
mūrtānando 'cyuto mataḥ*

"The Supreme Lord's transcendental bliss is said to be of two kinds: 1. that of His form, and 2. that of His formless aspect. The form of the Lord is the shelter of His formless aspect. Therefore it is the bliss of the Lord's aspect with form that is really eternal and imperishable.

*amūrtaḥ paramātmā ca
jñāna-rūpaś ca nirguṇaḥ
sva-svarūpaś ca kūṭastho
brahma ceti satām matam*

"The Lord's form and His formless aspect are both full of knowledge and beyond the touch of the material modes. These qualities are also present in the original forms of the individual spirit souls.

*amūrta-mūrtayor bhedo
nāsti tattva-vicārataḥ
bhedas tu kalpito vedair
maṇi-tat-tejasor iva*

"In truth, there is no real difference between the Lord's form and His formless aspect. The difference is only an imagination of the Vedas. The two are like a jewel and its splendor."

In the Kapila-pañcarātra it is said:

*dve brahmaṇī tu vijñeye
mūrtam cāmūrtam eva ca
mūrtāmūrta-svabhāvo yo
dhyeyo nārāyaṇo vibhuḥ*

"The Supreme has two aspects: 1. His transcendental form, and 2. His formless aspect. Thus it should be known that all-powerful Lord Nārāyaṇa has a form and is formless also."

In the Hayaśīrṣa-pañcarātra it is said:

*yā yā śrutir jalpati nirviśeṣam
sā sābhidhatte sa-viśeṣam eva
vicāra-yoge santi hanta tāsām
prāyo balīyaḥ sa-viśeṣam eva*

"The Vedas say that the Supreme has no qualities. But they also say that He certainly does have qualities. By carefully considering all the statement of the Vedas, we have come to the conclusion that more weight should be given to the statements affirming the Lord's possession of transcendental qualities."

Here someone may protest: If this is so, and the Supreme Lord is attained by devotional service, then the Supreme Lord must be a resident of the material world, (for devotional services are rendered in the material world).

To refute this idea the author now speaks the fifth sūtra.

Sūtra 5

sa ca satyo nityo 'nādir ananto deśa-kālāparicchedāt

saḥ—He; *ca*—and; *satyaḥ*—real; *nityaḥ*—eternal; *anādiḥ*—without beginning; *anantaḥ*—without end; *deśa*—of space; *kāla*—and time; *aparicchedāt*—beyond the limits.

He is the eternal Supreme Truth, beginningless and endless, for He exists beyond the limits of space and time.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

satyaṁ jñānam ānandaṁ brahma

"The Supreme is the eternal reality, full of knowledge and bliss."

nityo 'vināśī

"The Supreme is eternal. He never dies."

avināśī vā re 'yam ātmā

"The Supreme Lord never dies."

sa-bhūmiṁ sarvataḥ spr̥ṣṭvā vā atyatiṣṭha

"The Supreme Lord is present everywhere in the material world, but He is also beyond it."

In Bhagavad-gītā it is said:

sarvam āvṛtya tiṣṭhati

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is all-pervading."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam it is said:

*naiveśitum prabhur bhūmnā
īśvaro dhāma-māninām*

"Matter has no power to prevail over the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of the spiritual worlds."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.9.10) it is also said:

*pravartate yatra rajas tamas tayoh
sattvaṁ ca miśraṁ na ca kāla-vikramaḥ
na yatra māyā kim utāpare harer
anuvratā yatra surāsurārcitaḥ*

"In that personal abode of the Lord, the material modes of ignorance and passion do not prevail, nor is there any of their influence in goodness. There is no predominance of the influence of time, so what to speak of the illusory, external energy. It cannot enter that region. Without discrimination, both the demigods and demons worship the Lord as devotees."*

In the Kaṭha Upanisad (1.3.15) it is said:

*aśabdam asparśam arūpam avyayam
tathārasaṁ nityam agandhavaṁ ca yat
anādy anantaṁ mahataḥ paraṁ dhruvaṁ
nicārya taṁ mṛtyu-mukhāt pramucyate*

"The Supreme is beyond material sound, touch, form, taste, or smell. He is eternal. He never dies. He has neither beginning nor end. He is beyond the material world. One who takes shelter of Him escapes the mouth of death."

Here someone may protest: If the Supreme Lord is beyond the material world, as you say, then why does He create the material universes in the first place?

To answer this protest, the author of the sūtras speaks the following words:

Sūtra 6

paro 'pi cij-jaḍābhyām vilāsī viśva-siddheḥ

paraḥ—transcendental; *api*—although; *cit*—with conscious beings; *jaḍābhyām*—in inert matter; *vilāsī*—playful; *viśva*—of the material universes; *siddheḥ*—of the completion.

Although He is transcendental, the playful Lord creates the material

universes filled with conscious beings and inert matter.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the Aitareya Upaniṣad (1.1.1) it is said:

sa aikṣata

"With a glance the Supreme Personality of Godhead created the material worlds."

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (6.2.3) it is said:

eko 'ham bahu syām prajāyeya

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead thought: I am one. Let Me become many. I shall father many children."

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad (3.1.1) it is said:

yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante

"The Supreme Absolute Truth is that from which everything is born."*

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

*yad idam kim ca jagat sarvaṁ
prāṇa ejati niḥśrtam
mahad-bhayaṁ vajram udyataṁ
ya etad vidur amṛtās te bhavanti*

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is powerful like a thunderbolt. The entire world moves in fear of Him. They who know this become immortal.

*bhayād asyāgnis tapati
bhayāt tapati sūryaḥ
bhayād indraś ca vāyuś ca
mṛtyur dhāvati pañcamah*

"Out of fear of Him, fire burns. Out of fear of Him, the sun shines. Out of fear of Him, Indra, Vāyu, and Yama act."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.25.42) The Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*mad-bhayād vāti vāto 'yam
sūryas tapati mad-bhayāt
varṣatīndro dahaty agnir
mṛtyuś carati mad-bhayāt*

"It is because of My supremacy that the wind blows, out of fear of Me. The sun shines out of fear of Me, and the lord of clouds, Indra, sends forth showers out of fear of Me. Fire burns out of fear of Me, and death goes about taking its toll out of fear of Me."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.29.1) it is said:

*bhagavān api tā rātriḥ
śāradotphulla-mallikāḥ
vīkṣya rantuṁ manaś cakre
yogamāyām upāśritaḥ*

"Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, full of all opulences, yet upon seeing those autumn nights scented with blossoming jasmine flowers, He turned His mind toward loving affairs. To fulfill His purposes He employed His internal potencies."***

In Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta it is said:

*madhura-madhuram etan maṅgalaṁ maṅgalānām
sakala-nigama-vallī-sat-phalaṁ cit-svarūpam
sakṛd api pariḡitaṁ śraddhayā helayā vā
bhṛgu-vara nara-mātraṁ tārayet kṛṣṇa-nāma*

"The holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa is the sweetest of the sweet and the most auspicious of the auspicious. It is the ripened fruit of the vine of all the Vedas. It is conscious and spiritual. O best of the Bhṛgu dynasty, chanted only once, either with faith or even with contempt and mockery, the holy name of Lord Kṛṣṇa delivers the chanter."

Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī tells Mahārāja Parīkṣit (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 12.3.14):

*kathā imās te kathitā mahīyasām
hitāya lokeṣu yaśaḥ pareyuṣām
vijñāna-vairāgya-vivakṣayā vibhor
vaco vibhūtir na tu pāramārthyam*

"O mighty Parīkṣit, I have related to you the narrations of all these great kings, who spread their fame throughout the world and then departed. My real purpose was to teach transcendental knowledge and renunciation. Stories of kings lend power and opulence to these narrations but do not in themselves constitute the ultimate aspect of knowledge."***

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad (2.95) it is said:

*āvīrbhāva tirobhāva sva-pade
tiṣṭhati tāmasī rājasī sāttvikī*

mānuṣī vijñāna-ghana ānanda-ghanas
sac-cid-ānandaika-rase bhakti-yoge tiṣṭhati

"Whether visible or invisible in this world, My form always stays in My own abode. My form is also present as the Deity of ignorance, the Deity of passion, and the Deity of goodness. My humanlike form, which is eternal and full of transcendental knowledge and bliss, is present when My devotees serve Me with devotion."

In the next sūtra the author refutes the idea that the transcendental potency is different from the Lord Himself.

Sūtra 7

tac-chaktitas tattvādhikyam iti cen na tad-abhedāt

tat—of Him; *śaktitaḥ*—from the potency; *tattva*—truth; *ādhikyam*—more; *iti*—thus; *cet*—if; *na*—not; *tat*—from Him; *abhedāt*—because of non-difference.

If someone claims, "The Lord is different from His potency", then I reply, "No. It is not so, for they are not different".

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

If someone claims that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the creator of the worlds, is different from His potency, then this sūtra is spoken to refute him. Because the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not different from His many potencies, the potencies are not different from Him. This is described in the following words of the Nyāya-śāstra:

śakti-śaktimator abhedah

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of all potencies, is not different from His potencies."

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.8) it is said:

svabhāvīkī jñāna-bala-kriyā ca

"The Lord's potencies of knowledge, power, and action share His own nature. They are not different from Him."

In Viṣṇu Purāṇa (1.22.53) it is said:

eka-deśa-sthitas yāgner
jyotsnā vistāriṇī yathā
parasya brahmaṇaḥ śaktis
tathedam akhilaṁ jagat

"Just as the illumination of a fire, which is situated in one place, is spread all over, the energies of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Parabrahman, are spread all over the universe."*

In the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, Devī-māhātmya, the sage explains:

*etat te kathitam bhūpa
devī-māhātmyam uttamam
evam prabhāvā sā devī
yayedam dhāryate jagat*

"O king, now I will describe to you the glories of the goddess. By her power she sustains the entire world.

*vidyā tathaiva kriyate
bhagavad-viṣṇu-māyayā
tayā tvam eṣa vaiśyaś ca
tathavānye vivekinaḥ*

"She is the potency of Lord Viṣṇu. From her comes transcendental knowledge. You and many others have attained transcendental knowledge by her grace."

In the Nārada-pañcarātra, Second Night, Third Chapter, Lord Śiva explains:

*eka īśaḥ prathamato
dvidha-rūpo babhūva saḥ
eka strī viṣṇu-māyā yā
pumān ekaḥ svayaṁ vibhuḥ*

"The Supreme Lord is one. Still, He is manifested in two forms. One form is female: the potency of Lord Viṣṇu. The other form is male: the all-powerful Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself.

*sa ca svecchāmayāḥ śyāmaḥ
saguṇo nirguṇaḥ svayam
taṁ dṛṣṭvā sundarīm līlām
ratim kartum samudyataḥ*

"His form is dark. All His desires are at once fulfilled. He has all transcendental virtues. He is free of the modes of material nature. Anyone who directly sees Him will fall in love with Him and yearn to enjoy charming pastimes with Him."

Here someone may protest: Is it not so that by creating the material worlds and performing other activities the Supreme Personality of Godhead becomes affected by that activity and His nature becomes different from what it was before? Does He not become enamored of what He has created?

In the next sūtra the author refutes this misconception.

Sūtra 8

kartāpy avikāraḥ svātantryāt

kartā—the creator; *apy*—although; *avikāraḥ*—without change; *svātantryāt*—because of independence.

Because He is supremely independent, He does not become changed, even though He is the creator.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here the protester declares, "whoever creates the material world must of necessity become affected by passionate attachment, hatred, and other like emotions." To this protest the reply is that because He is supremely independent and can do whatever He wishes to do, by His own will the Lord remains peaceful and aloof from material passions. Therefore, even though He is the creator of the material world, the Lord is not affected by material passions. In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (6.19) it is said:

*niṣkalaṁ niṣkriyaṁ śāntaṁ
niravadyaṁ nirañjanam*

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is perfect and complete. He is peaceful and flawless. He is never affected by the material energy. His actions are never material."

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.14) it is said:

*anyatra dharmād anyatrādharmād
anyatrāsmāt kṛtākṛtāt
anyatra bhūtāc cābhāvyāc ca
yat tat paśyasi tad vada*

"You can see the Supreme, who stands beyond material piety and impiety, beyond past and future. Please tell me about Him."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.9.13-16) it is said:

*na cāntar na bahir yasya
na pūrvam nāpi cāparam
pūrvāparam bahiś cāntar
jagato yo jagac ca yaḥ*

*taṁ matvātmajam avyaktaṁ
mārtya-liṅgam adhokṣajam*

*gopikolūkhale dāmnā
babandha prakṛtaṁ yathā*

"the Supreme Personality of Godhead has no beginning and no end, no exterior and no interior, no front and no rear. In other words, He is all-pervading. Because He is not under the influence of the element of time, for Him there is no difference between past, present, and future. He exists in His own transcendental form at all times. Being absolute, beyond relativity, He is free from distinctions between cause and effect, although He is the cause and effect of everything. That unmanifested person, who is beyond the perception of the senses, has now appeared as a human child, and mother Yaśodā, considering Him her own ordinary child, bound Him to the wooden mortar with a rope.*

*tad-dāma bādhyamānasya
svārbhakasya kṛtāgasah
dvy-aṅgulonam abhūt tena
sandadhe 'nyac ca gopikā*

"When mother Yaśodā was trying to bind the offending child, she saw that the binding rope was short by a distance the width of two fingers. Thus she brought another rope to join to it.*

*yathāsīt tad api nyūnaṁ
tenānyad api sandadhe
tad api dvy-aṅgulaṁ nyūnaṁ
yad yad adatta bandhanam*

"the new rope also was short by a measurement of two fingers, and when another rope was joined to it, it was still two fingers too short. As many ropes as she joined, all of them failed. Their shortness could not be overcome."*

In the next sūtra the author reveals that the Supreme Lord does not increase when He creates the universe. Neither does He become less when He destroys the universe.

Sūtra 9

sadaika-rūpaḥ pūrṇatvāt

sadā—always; *eka*—one; *rūpaḥ*—form; *pūrṇatvāt*—because of being perfect and complete.

Because He is perfect and complete, His nature is always unchanged.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In the *Īśa Upaniṣad* it is said:

*pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇam idaṁ
pūrṇāt pūrṇam udacyate*

"The Personality of Godhead is perfect and complete."*

Here someone may ask: If the Supreme Personality of Godhead is perfect and complete, then what motivates Him to He create the material world?

In the next sūtra the author answers this question.

Sūtra 10

kāruṇyam tat-kriyā-hetur nānyad āpta-kāmatvāt

kāruṇyam—compassion; *tat*—of Him; *kriyā*—of the activities; *hetuḥ*—the reason; *na*—not; *anyat*—another; *āpta*—attained; *kāmatvāt*—because of His desires.

Compassion is the motive of His actions. He has no other motive, for His every desire is at once fulfilled without any effort on His part.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Compassion is the motive of the Supreme Lord's actions. He has no other motive, for His every desire is at once fulfilled without any effort on His part. However, the conditioned souls act in a different way. They are busily engaged in various activities to attain their desires.

In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

ātmanaḥ kāmāya sarvaṁ priyaṁ bhavati

"The conditioned souls act to fulfill their material desires."

satya-kāmaḥ satya-saṅkalpaḥ

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead has no need to act to fulfill His desires, for His every wish is at once fulfilled without His having to act."

In the Smṛti-śāstra it is said:

nānavāptam

"There is not anything that the Supreme Personality of Godhead does not attain merely by wishing for it.

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.7.2-3), Vidura asks the following question:

*brahman katham bhagavatas
cin-mātrasyāvikāriṇaḥ
līlayā vāpi yujyerān
nirguṇasya guṇāḥ kriyāḥ*

"O great brāhmaṇa, since the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the complete spiritual whole and is unchangeable, how is He connected with the material modes of nature and their activities? If this is His pastime, how do the activities of the unchangeable take place and exhibit qualities without the modes of nature?"*

*krīḍāyām udyamo 'rbhasya
kāmaś cikrīdiṣānyataḥ
svatas tṛptasya ca katham
nivṛttasya sadānyataḥ*

"Boys are enthusiastic to play with other boys or with various diversions because they are encouraged by desire. But there is no possibility of such desire for the Lord because He is self-satisfied and detached from everything at all times.*

Śrī Maitreya Muni answered in these words (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 3.7.9):

*seyam bhagavato māyā
yan nayena virudhyate*

"Certain conditioned souls put forward the theory that the Supreme Brahman, or the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is overcome by illusion, or māyā, and at the same time they maintain that He is unconditioned. This is against all logic."*

The following commentary is given for this verse:

This verse means, "the idea that the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is the master of inconceivable transcendental potencies and the supreme controller of all, can become bewildered by the illusory potency māyā is an idea that is against all logic."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.3.36) it is also said:

*sa vā idaṁ viśvam amogha-līlaḥ
sṛjaty avatty atti na sajjate 'smin
bhūteṣu cāntarhita ātma-tantraḥ
sad-vargikaṁ jighrati sad-guṇeśaḥ*

"The Lord, whose activities are always spotless, is the master of the six senses and is fully omnipotent with six opulences. He creates the manifested universes, maintains them, and annihilates them without being in the least affected. He is within every living being and is always independent."*

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad (3.6.1) it is said:

*ānandād dhy eva khalv imāni bhūtāni jāyante ānandena jatāni jīvanti ānandaṁ
prayanty abhisamviśanti*

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is bliss. From His bliss all living entities are born. Because of His bliss they remain alive. Departing this world, they attain Him, the supreme bliss."

Chapter Two Cit-padārtha-prakaraṇa Spirit

Introduction by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here someone may ask: To whom does the Supreme Personality of Godhead give mercy when He creates the material universes and performs other activities? Why does He give His mercy to these persons?

To answer this question by showing that the Supreme Personality of Godhead creates the material universes and performs many other activities in order to give mercy to the individual spirit souls, and also by showing, using all the Vedānta scriptures as evidence, the true nature of the individual spirit souls, the author of these sūtras now begins this chapter, which gives an elaborate definition of the word "cit" (spirit).

Sūtra 11

cetanāḥ parānugatās tad-vidhi-vaśyatvāt

cetanāḥ—conscious spirit souls; *para*—the Supreme; *anugatāḥ*—following; *tat*—of Him; *vidhi*—the order; *vaśyatvāt*—because of being under the control.

The many conscious beings are followers of the Supreme, for they must obey His commands.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here the word "cetanāḥ" means "conscious spirit souls". The plural is used here to indicate that the souls are many in number. The word "parānugataḥ" means that the souls are subordinate to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. They are under His control. This is so because they must obey His commands. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

ya ātmani tiṣṭhan ātmānam antar yāmayati

"Residing in the heart, the Supreme Personality of Godhead controls the

individual living entities.

In the Bhagavad-gītā (18.61) it is said:

*īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānām
hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati*

"The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart, O Arjuna, and is directing the wandering of all living entities."*

In the Nārada-pañcarātra, Second Night, First Chapter, Lord Sadāśiva explains:

*jīvas tat-pratibimbaś ca
bhoktā ca sukha-duḥkhaḥ
kecid vadanti taṁ nityam
kāraṇasya guṇena ca*

"The individual spirit soul, who is like a reflection of the Supreme Lord, suffers and enjoys in the material world. Some sages say that this eternal soul has qualities like those of the Lord Himself.

*vidyamānāt tirodhānam
tirodhānāc ca sambhavaḥ
dehād dehāntaram yāti
na mṛtyus tasya kutracit*

"Sometimes the individual soul is visible, and sometimes he disappears. When he disappears, he is born again in another body. The soul never dies. He merely travels from one material body to another."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (7.5-6), the Supreme Personality of Godhead says:

*apareyam itas tv anyam
prakṛtiṁ viddhi me param
jīva-bhūtaṁ mahā-bāho
yayedam dhāryate jagat*

"Besides this inferior nature, O Arjuna, there is a superior energy of Mine, which are all living entities who are struggling with material nature and are sustaining the universe.*

*etad yonīni bhūtāni
sarvānīty upadhāraya
aham kṛtsnasya jagataḥ
prabhavaḥ pralayas tathā*

"Of all that is material and all that is spiritual in this world, know for certain that I am both its origin and dissolution."*

In the Upaniṣads it is said:

śvetaketo tat tvam asi

"O Śvetaketu, you are that."

In the Śrīla Madhvācārya's Tattva-muktāvalī (text 6) it is said:

*sākṣāt tat tvam asīti veda-viṣaye vākyam tu yad vidyate
tasyārtham kurute svakīya-mata-vid bhede 'rpayitvā matim
tac-chabdo 'vyayam eva bhedaka iti tam tatra bhedyo yataḥ
ṣaṣṭhī-lopa-mitā tam eva na hi tad-vākyaṛtha etādṛśaḥ*

"The māyāvādī commentator on the Vedānta claimed that the words `tat tvam asi' are the mahā-vākya, the most important statement of the Vedas. According to his explanation, `tat' means `the Supreme', `tvam' means `you', and `asi' means `are'. He interpreted the words to mean `You are the Supreme', and he claimed there is no difference between the Supreme and the individual spirit souls.

"The Vaiṣṇava commentator on Vedānta interpreted these words in a different way, saying that `tat-tvam' is a possessive compound word (ṣaṣṭhī-tatpuruṣa-samāsa). According to his explanation `tat' means `of the Supreme', and the entire sentence means `you are the servant of the Supreme'. In this way the proper meaning of the scriptural statement is clearly shown."

In the Śrī Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭaka is presented the following opinion held by the devotees of the Lord:

*vāsudevaḥ parā devatā vāsudeva parāt paramātmanaḥ saṅkarṣaṇo jīva ity ādi
jīvayati jīvaṁ karotīti jīvaḥ. na tu svayaṁ jīvaḥ. sa cātmā śabda-brahma para-brahma.
mamobhe śāsvatī tanū iti tad-ukteḥ. tasmād eva jīva-sṛṣṭir ity arthaḥ.*

"The word `Vāsudeva' means `the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is greater than the greatest'. The scriptural statement `saṅkarṣaṇo jīvaḥ' means, `Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa gives life (jīvayati) to the individual spirit souls'. These words do not mean that Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa is Himself an individual spirit soul (jīva). Rather, Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself. This is confirmed by the words `mamobhe śāsvatī tanū'. Therefore the conclusion is that Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, is the creator of the individual spirit souls."

Here someone may protest: Is it not so that the Śruti-śāstras declare, "ayam ātmā brahma" (the individual soul is the Supreme)? Is it not so, then, that the individual spirit souls are not in any way different from the Supreme? Why, then, do you claim that the individual spirit souls are subordinate to and dependent upon the Supreme?

Replying to this protest, the author of the sūtras reveals the truth. He says:

Sūtra 12

te cānādy-anantaḥ para-śakti-viśeṣatvāt

te—they; *ca*—and; *an*—without; *ādi*—beginning; *an*—without; *antaḥ*—end; *para*—fo the Supreme; *śakti*—potency; *viśeṣatvāt*—because of being specific.

They have neither beginning nor end, for they are a specific potency of the Supreme.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

The individual spirit souls have neither beginning nor end, for they are a specific potency of the Supreme, and the potencies of the Lord have neither beginning nor end. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

yathāgner bahavo visphulingāḥ

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is like a great fire, and the individual spirit souls are like sparks of that fire."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (15.7) the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke jīva-bhūtaḥ

"The living entities in this conditioned world are My eternal, fragmental parts."

In the Nārada-pañcarātra, Lord Śiva declares:

*kecid vadanti taṁ nityaṁ
kāraṇasya guṇena ca*

"Some sages say that the eternal individual souls have qualities like those of the Lord Himself."

Lord Śiva again declares:

*kecid vadanty anityaṁ ca
mithyaiva kṛtrimaḥ sadā
pralīyate punas tatra
pratibimbo yathā raveḥ*

"Other sages say that the individual spirit soul is not eternal, that the soul is an illusion, artificial, an imagination, that the soul is like a reflection of sunlight on water, and that, as a reflection eventually disappears, so the individual soul eventually ceases to exist."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (7.5-6), the Supreme Personality of Godhead says:

*apareyam itas tv anyam
prakṛtiṁ viddhi me parām
jīva-bhūtām mahā-bāho
yayedam dhāryate jagat*

"Besides this inferior nature, O Arjuna, there is a superior energy of Mine, which are all living entities who are struggling with material nature and are sustaining the universe.*

In the Bhagavad-gītā (2.28), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*avyaktādīni bhūtāni
vyakta-madhyāni bhārata
avyakta-nidhanāny eva
tatra kā parivedanā*

"All created beings are unmanifest in their beginning, manifest in their interim state, and unmanifest again when they are annihilated. So what need is there of lamentation?*"*

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.18) it is said:

*na jāyate mriyate vā vipaścīn
nāyam kutaścīn na babhūva kaścīn
ajo nityaḥ śāśvato 'yam purāṇo
na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*

"For the soul there is never birth nor death. Nor having once been, does he ever cease to be. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, undying, and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain."*

Here someone may say: Since the individual spirit souls are a specific potency of the Lord, they are in all respects one with Him. They are not in any way different from Him.

Concerned that someone may speak in this way, in the next sūtra the author emphasizes the difference between the individual souls and the Supreme Lord.

Sūtra 13

cid-ānanda-svarūpā api parato bhinnā nitya-satyatvābhāvāt

cit—spirit; *ānanda*—bliss; *svarūpāḥ*—natures; *api*—although; *parataḥ*—from the Supreme; *bhinnā*—different; *nitya*—eternal; *satyatva*—nature; *abhāvāt*—because of the non-existence.

Although they are spiritual and blissful, the individual spirit souls are different from the Supreme, for it is not inevitable that they are always situated in the spiritual reality.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Although they are spiritual and blissful, the individual spirit souls are different from the Supreme. Here is the reason why: it is not inevitable that they are always situated in the spiritual reality. The natural position of the individual spirit souls is to be situated in the spiritual reality. However, it is the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself who places them in that spiritual reality. The Supreme Lord is always situated in that reality. However, for the individual spirit souls it is possible to be placed apart from the spiritual reality.

In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

nityo nityānām

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the one eternal who controls the many eternals."

satyasya satyam

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the controller of all existence."

parāt param

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is greater than the greatest."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (2.45), the Supreme Personality of Godhead says:

nirdvandvo nitya-sattva-sthaḥ

"O Arjuna, be free from all dualities and be established in the self."*

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.1.2) and Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (4.6) it is said:

*samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno
'nīśāya śocati muhyamānaḥ
juṣṭam yadā paśyati anyam īśam
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 the next sūtra the author describes the idea that the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the individual spirit souls are both one and different simultaneously.

Sūtra 14

teṣām paratvam kecid apare bheda itare tūbhayaṃ

teṣām—of them; *paratvam*—status as the Supreme; *kecit*—some; *apare*—others; *bhedam*—difference; *itare*—other; *tu*—but; *ubhayaṃ*—both.

Some say the individual souls are the Supreme. Others say the individual souls are different from the Supreme. Still others say the individual souls are both one and different from the Supreme.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Badarāyaṇa and his followers affirm that the individual souls are the Supreme. Kaśyapāda and his followers affirm that the individual souls are different from the Supreme. Sāṅḍilya and his followers affirm that because the individual souls are part and parcel of the Supreme, the souls are different from the Supreme, and because the souls are part and parcel of the Supreme, the souls are not different from the Supreme. Different kinds of evidence may be produced to support all these different views. For example, in the Upaniṣads it is said:

ayam ātmā brahma

"The individual soul is Brahman."

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.1.1) and Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (4.6) it is said:

*dvā suparṇā sayujā sakhāyā
samānaṃ vṛkṣaṃ praiśasvajāte
tayor anyañ pippalaṃ svādv atty
anaśnann anyo 'bhicakāśīti*

"In 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.*

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (2.2.4) it is said:

*asya visramśamānasya
śarīra-sthasya dehinaḥ
dehād vimucyamānasya
kim atra pariśiṣyate. etad vai tat.*

"The question is asked: When the embodied soul becomes liberated and leaves his material body behind, who will control him? The answer is: The Supreme still controls him."

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (3.14.1) it is said:

sarvaṁ khalv idaṁ brahma taj-jalān iti śānta upāsīta

"This entire world is the Supreme. Therefore a peaceful and saintly person should devote himself to worshiping the Supreme."

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.1.4) it is said:

*prāṇo hy eṣa yaḥ sarva-bhūtair vibhāti
vijānan vidvān bhavate nātivādī
ātma-kṛīḍa ātma-ratiḥ kriyāvān
eṣa brahma-vidān variṣṭhaḥ*

"A sage who understands the Supreme, the life of all that live, will not speak of anyone but Him. Such a sage has fallen in love with the Supreme Lord. He is eager to hear of the Lord's pastimes. He actively serves the Lord. Such a sage is the best of all transcendentalists."

Here someone may say: The conflicting claims of these different philosophies will certainly bewilder the living entities' minds.

Fearing that someone would say this, the author of the sūtras proceeds to explain that there is no real conflict among these seemingly conflicting views. They are separate aspects of a single philosophy. He says:

Sūtra 15

sarveṣāṁ sāmāñjasyaṁ sātva-ta-vijñānasya bhramatvābhāvāt pramāṇa-sad-bhāvāt ca

sarveṣāṁ—of all; *sāmāñjasyaṁ*—correctness; *sātva-ta-vijñānasya*—of one who knows the truth; *bhramatva*—bewilderment; *abhāvāt*—because of the non-existence; *pramāṇa*—evidence; *sad-bhāvāt*—because of the existence; *ca*—and.

All are true, because the evidence of scripture is always true and because the seeming conflict does not bewilder they who know the truth.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

All these sages are correct, because they who know the truth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and understand that these conflicting views are aspects of single philosophy, are not bewildered. These differing views are also correct because the previously quoted passages of Śruti-śāstra, passages that are evidence for these different views, must all be correct. That is the meaning. In Śrīmad-

Bhāgavatam (11.22.4) The Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*māyām madīyām udgrhya
vadatām kim nu durghaṭam*

"All such philosophers spoke under the shelter of My mystic potency, and thus they could say anything without contradicting the truth."***

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad (3.1.1) it is said:

yato vā imāni bhūtāni jāyante yena jatāni jīvanti yat prayanty abhisamviśanti

"All created beings emanate from the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Personality of Godhead. By His power they remain alive. They attain Him at the end."

After thus describing the true nature of the individual spirit souls, the author of the sūtras proceeds to describe the renunciation of all unwanted things. He also describes the means to attain the highest goal in life. He says:

Sūtra 16

vicāra-rāgau cetana-dharmau svarūpa-pravṛtti-bhāvāt

vicāra—thinking; *rāgau*—and loving; *cetana*—of the conscious spirit soul; *dharmau*—two natures; *svarūpa*—own nature; *pravṛtti*—action; *bhāvāt*—because of the existence.

The conscious spirit souls possess thinking and loving, for these two are part of their nature.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Thinking creates knowledge. Therefore knowledge is part of the soul's nature. Loving creates bliss. Therefore bliss is part of the soul's nature. these are part of the soul's nature.

In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

satyaṁ jñānam ānandam

"Eternity, knowledge, and bliss are part of the soul's nature."

In the Vedānta-sūtra (4.1.3) it is said:

ātmeti tv avaḡacchanti grāhayanti ceti

"The wise know and teach the science of the soul."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.7.19), Śrī Prahlāda declares:

*ātmā nityo 'vyayaḥ śuddha
ekah kṣetrajña āśrayaḥ
avikriyaḥ svadṛg-ghetur
vyāpako 'saṅgy-anāvṛtaḥ*

"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."*

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa, Śrī Prahlāda declares:

*yā prītir avivekānām
viṣayesv anapāyinī
tvām anusmarataḥ sa me
hṛdayān nāpasarpatu*

"Fools fall in love with what the material senses see. I am not like them. O Supreme Lord, I have fallen in love with You. I always think of You. I pray that You will never leave my heart."

In Bhagavad-gītā (2.24) the Supreme Personality of Godhead says:

*acchedyo 'yam adahyo 'yam
akledyo 'śoṣya eva ca
nityaḥ sarva-gataḥ sthānur
acalo 'yam sanātanaḥ*

"The individual soul is unbreakable and insoluble, and can be neither burned nor dried. He is everlasting, all-pervading, unchangeable, immovable, and eternally the same."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.1.41-42), Vasudeva Mahārāja says:

*svapne yathā paśyati deham īdṛśam
manorathenābhiniviṣṭa-cetanaḥ
dṛṣṭa-śrutābhyām manasānucintayan
prapadyate tat kim api hy apasmṛtiḥ*

"Having experienced a situation by seeing or hearing about it, one contemplates and speculates about that situation, and thus one surrenders to it, not considering his present body. Similarly, by mental adjustments one dreams at night of living under different circumstances, in different bodies, and forgets his actual position."

Under this same process, one gives up his present body and accepts another (tathā dehāntara-prāptiḥ).*

*yato yato dhāvati daiva-coditam
mano-vikārātmakam āpa pañcasu
guṇeṣu māyā-raciteṣu dehy asau
prapadyamānaḥ saha tena jāyate*

"At the time of death, according to the thinking, feeling, and willing of the mind, which is involved in fruitive activities, one receives a particular body. In other words, the body develops according to the activities of the mind. Changes of body are due to the flickering of the mind, for otherwise the soul could remain in its original, spiritual body."*

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (2.3.10 and 2.3.6) it is said:

*yadā pañcāvatiṣṭhante
jñānāni manasā saha
buddhiś ca na viceṣṭati
tām āhuḥ paramām gatīm*

"When the five senses are peaceful, and when the mind and intelligence do not strive for material things, one attains the highest goal of life. This the wise say."

*indriyāṇām pṛthag-bhāvaṁ
udayāstamayau ca yat
pṛthag utpadyamānānām
matvā dhīro na śocati*

"In the course of life the senses rise and again they set. Aware that he, the soul, is different from the senses, a wise person does not grieve."

In the next sūtra the author describes the root from which desirable and undesirable kinds of love have grown. He says:

Sūtra 17

pare 'nuraktiḥ svabhāvikī śreyas-karī ca itareṣv aupādhikī duḥkha-pradā ca

pare—for the Supreme; *anuraktiḥ*—love; *svabhāvikī*—natural; *śreyas-karī*—bringing bliss; *ca*—and; *itareṣv*—for others; *aupādhikī*—material; *duḥkha*—suffering; *pradā*—bringing; *ca*—and.

Love for the Supreme is natural, spiritual, and brings the highest bliss. Love for what is not the Supreme is artificial, material, and brings only sufferings.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Love for the Supreme is natural, spiritual, and brings the highest bliss. Love for what is not the Supreme, that is to say love for wealth, children, wife, and others, is artificial, material, and brings with it the sufferings of this world of repeated birth and death. That is the meaning here. In the the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (3.8) it is said:

tam eva viditvāti-mṛtyum eti

"By understanding the Supreme one crosses beyond death."

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (4.5) it is said:

ajo hy eko juṣamāno 'nuṣete

"One unborn soul tries to enjoy the world. Another unborn soul renounces the world."

The Supreme Personality of Godhead advises (Bhagavad-gītā 18.66):

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇam vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpēbhyo
mokṣasyiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

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

The Supreme Personality of Godhead again declares in Bhagavad-gītā (9.29):

*samo 'haṁ sarva-bhūteṣu
na me dveṣyo na me priyaḥ
ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā
mayi te teṣu cāpy aham*

"I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. But whoever renders service unto me in devotion is a friend, is in Me, and I am also a friend to him."*

Here someone may ask: If the soul is by nature spiritual and blissful, then how does he come in touch with unwanted material things?

Fearing that someone would ask this question, the author speaks the following words:

Sūtra 18

upādhi-kṛtā hi kleśāḥ

upādhi—the designation of the material body; *kṛtā*—done; *hi*—indeed; *kleśāḥ*—sufferings.

Sufferings are caused by the soul's misidentification with the material body.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Sufferings are caused by the soul's misidentification with the material body. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

kapūya-caraṇaḥ kapūyān yonim āpadyante

"Identifying with matter, the soul takes birth in a mother's womb."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (2.63), the Lord says:

buddhi-nāśāt praṇaśyati

"When intelligence is lost one falls down again into the material pool."*

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (2.3.15) it is said:

*yadā sarve prabhidante
hṛdaye 'sya ku-granthayaḥ
atha mārtyo 'mṛto bhavaty
etav anuśāsanam*

"When all the heart's knots are cut, the mortal becomes immortal. That is the teaching of scripture."

In the Iśa Upaniṣad (mantra 3) it is said:

*asūryā nāma te lokā
andhena tamasāvṛtāḥ
tāmś 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."*

In Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī's Śrī Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu it is said:

kleśas tu pāpaṁ tad-bijam avidyā ceti tat tridhā

"Sin, the root of sin, and ignorance, are the three causes of suffering."

In the Iśa Upaniṣad (mantra 9) it is said:

andham tamaḥ praviśanti
ye 'vidyām upāsate

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

Thus the sufferings of the individual spirit souls are caused by the souls' misidentification with the material body. When the bonds of that misidentification are cut, then the soul attains liberation. To reveal this truth, the author of the sūtras speaks the following words:

Sūtra 19

anartha-nivṛttir muktiḥ sva-pada-prāpakatvāt

anartha—of what is not wanted; *nivṛttiḥ*—renunciation; *muktiḥ*—liberation; *sva*—own; *pada*—nature; *prāpakatvāt*—because of giving.

Because it restores the soul to its original nature, renunciation of materialism brings liberation.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Misidentification with the material body places the soul in an inauspicious condition, a condition that breeds worthless material desires. By renouncing those material desires, the soul becomes free from the cycle of repeated birth and death. This is so because by that renunciation the soul attains its original nature, which is spiritual and full of bliss. That is the meaning here. This is described in the following words of Taittirīya Upaniṣad (2.4.1):

satā saumya tadā sampanno bhavati. ānandaṁ brahmaṇo vidvān na bibheti kutaścana

"O saintly one, a person who knows spiritual bliss never fears."

In Śaṅḍilya's Bhakti-sūtra (3.2.93) it is said:

tad-aikyaṁ nānātvaikatvam upādhi-yoga-hānād āditya-vat

"The soul is both one and different from the Supreme. When he is freed from the material body, the soul is glorious like the sun."

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.17-18) it is said:

etad-ālamanaṁ sreṣṭhaṁ
etad-ālamanaṁ param
etad-ālamanaṁ jñātvā
brahmaloke mahīyate

"Taking shelter of the Supreme is the most auspicious activity. Taking shelter of the Supreme is the most auspicious activity. One who takes shelter of the Supreme becomes glorious in the spiritual world.

*na jāyate mriyate vā vipāścīn
nāyaṁ kutaścīn na babhūva kaścit
ajo nityaḥ śāśvato 'yaṁ purāṇo
na hanyate hanyamāne śarīre*

"For the soul there is never birth nor death. Nor having once been, does he ever cease to be. He is unborn, eternal, ever-existing, undying, and primeval. He is not slain when the body is slain."*

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.6), Yamarāja says:

*na sāmparāyaḥ pratibhāti bālaṁ
pramādyantaṁ vitta-mohena mūḍham
ayaṁ loko nāsti para iti mānī
punaḥ punar vaśam āsādyate me*

"Fools intoxicated by wealth say this world is all and there is no other. These fools will not be glorious in their next birth. Again and again they will come under my grip."

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.9) it is also said:

*naiśā tarkeṇa matir āpaneyā
proktānyenaiva su-jñānāya preṣṭha
yāntv amāpaḥ satya-dhṛtir batāsi
tvādṛṅ no bhūyān naciketah preṣṭha*

"O dear one, the truth cannot be known by material logic. It is known only by learning it from a self-realized soul. Because you are sincere and determined, you have learned the truth. O dear Naciketa. I pray that my other disciples will be like you."

The words of the sages are our bridge to understand the truth. In the Mahābhārata (Bhīṣma-parva 5.22) it is said:

*acintyāḥ khalu ye bhāvā
na tāmś tarkeṇa yojayet
prakṛtibhyaḥ paraṁ yat tu
tad acintyasya lakṣaṇam*

"Anything transcendental to material nature is called inconceivable, whereas arguments are all mundane. Since mundane arguments cannot touch transcendental subject matters, one should not try to understand transcendental subject matters through mundane arguments."*

In Śrī Vyāsa's Vedānta-sūtra (2.1.11) it is said:

tarkāpratiṣṭhānāt

"Transcendental topics cannot be understood by argument or logic."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.21), Śrī Sūta Gosvāmī explains:

*bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś
chidyante sarva-saṁśayaḥ
kṣiyante cāśya karmāṇi
dṛṣṭa 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 the master."*

Liberation is described in these words of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.10.6):

*muktir hitvānyathā-rūpaṁ
svarūpeṇa vyavasthitih*

"Liberation is the permanent situation of the form of the living entity after he gives up the changeable gross and subtle material bodies."*

Here someone may ask: If it is by the mercy of the Supreme Personality of Godhead that the individual spirit souls are given independence, and if by exercising that independence the souls find only sufferings, then why is that gift of independence considered mercy on the Lord's part?

Fearing that someone would ask this question, the author of the sūtras speaks the following words:

Sūtra 20

jīvanām itarānurakti-hetur īśvara-kāruṇyam tata eva teṣām svātantrya-siddheḥ

jīvanām—of the individual spirit souls; *itara*—for another; *anurakti*—love; *hetuḥ*—the cause; *īśvara*—of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *kāruṇyam*—the mercy; *tataḥ*—then; *eva*—indeed; *teṣām*—of them; *svātantrya*—of independence; *siddheḥ*—from the perfection.

Because by the Lord's mercy they are independent, the individual spirit souls can turn from the Lord and love others in His place.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

To make them powerful and glorious, the Supreme Lord gives independence to

the individual spirit souls. Using this independence, the souls may forget the Lord and become attached to the objects of the material senses. That is the meaning. In the Upaniṣads it is said:

*anena jivenātmanānupraviśya nama-rūpe vyākaravāṇi na taṁ vijānatha ya imā yad
yuṣmākam antaram babhūva*

"Entering with the individual soul, I will create the name and form."

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.1.10) it is said:

*yaṁ yaṁ lokam manasā samvibhāti
viśuddha-sattvaḥ kāmāyate yāms ca kāmān
taṁ taṁ lokam jāyate tāms ca kāmāms
tasmād ātma-jñam hy arcayed bhūti-kāmaḥ*

"A person who is pure in heart attains whatever he desires. He enters whatever world he desires. A person who desires auspiciousness should worship such a self-realized soul."

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (3.2.2) it is also said:

*kāmān yaḥ kāmāyate manyamānaḥ
sakāmabhir jāyate tatra tatra
paryāpta-kāmasya kṛtātmanas tu
ihaiva sarve praviliyanti kāmāḥ*

"One who desires material things is born again to fulfill his desires. A person who attains the Supreme finds that all his desires are fulfilled. All his material desires disappear."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.16.34), the Nāgapatnīs say to Lord Kṛṣṇa:

*anugraho 'yaṁ bhavatā kṛto hi no
daṇḍo 'satāṁ te khala-kalmaṣāpahāḥ
yad daṇḍāśūkatvam amuṣya dehinaḥ
krodho 'pi te 'nugraha eva sammataḥ*

"What You have done here is actually mercy for us, since the punishment You give to the wicked certainly drives away all their contamination. Indeed, because this conditioned soul, our husband, is so sinful that he has assumed the body of a serpent, Your anger toward him is obviously to be understood as Your mercy."***

Chapter Three Acit-padārtha-prakarāṇa Matter

Introduction by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here someone may ask: In what form or with what potency does the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is beyond the modes of nature and whose form is eternal and full of knowledge and bliss, act to create the material universes?

To answer this question, the author of the sūtras begins this chapter, which gives the definition of the word "acit" (matter).

Sūtra 21

māyā-śaktir acid guṇavatī parāvara-kārya-rūpā ca

māyā—illusory; *śaktiḥ*—potency; *acit*—matter; *guṇavatī*—possessing the modes of material nature; *para*—high; *avara*—and low; *kārya*—actions; *rūpā*—forms; *ca*—and.

Matter is the illusory potency, māyā, which controls the modes of nature and creates a variety of forms and actions, from the lowest to the highest.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here the Supreme Lord's potency is named Māyā. In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (4.10) it is said:

*māyām tu prakṛtim vidyān
māyīnam tu maheśvaram*

"Although māyā (illusion) is false or temporary, the background of māyā is the supreme magician, the Personality of Godhead, who is Maheśvara, the supreme controller."*

In the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (4.5) it is also said:

*ajam ekaṁ lohita-śukla-kṛṣṇaṁ
bahvīḥ prajāḥ janayanti sarūpam
ajo hy eko juṣamāno 'nuśete
jahāty enaṁ bhukta-bhogam ajo 'nyaḥ*

"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."

(Translator's 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 His Govinda-bhāṣya commentary on Vedānta-sūtra, Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa explains:

pralaye 'ti-saukṣmyād vibhanārhanu-bhūta-sattvādi-guṇā tamaḥ-śabditā mūla-prakṛtir ajety ucyate sṛṣṭi-kāle tūdbhūta-sattādi-guṇāvibhakta-nāma-rūpā pradhānāvyaktādi-śabditā lohītādy-ākaraḥ utpanneti. mahān avyakte līyate 'vyaktam akṣare 'kṣaram tamasīti śruteḥ.

"At the time of cosmic devastation the three modes of nature become subtle and unmanifested. This is called tamaḥ, the unborn root of matter. At the time of cosmic creation the modes of nature manifest a great variety of names and forms, beginning pradhāna and avyakta. In this way forms of red and other colors are manifested. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said, 'mahān avyakte līyate 'vyaktam akṣare 'kṣaram tamasī' (At the time of cosmic devastation the mahat-tattva merges into the avyakta, the avyakta merges into the akṣara, and the akṣara merges into tamaḥ)."

In the Iśa Upaniṣad (mantra 11) it is said:

*vidyām cavidyām ca yas
tad vedobhayam saha*

"Only one who can learn the process of nescience and that of transcendental knowledge side by side can transcend the influence of repeated birth and death and enjoy the full blessings of immortality."*

In the Sāṅkhya-kārikā, the Supreme Personality of Godhead is described in these words:

*mūla-prakṛtir avikṛtir mahad-
ādyāḥ prakṛti-vikṛtayaḥ sapta
ṣoḍaśakas tu vikāro na
prakṛtir vikṛtiḥ puruṣaḥ*

"The root of matter does not change. From that root seven transformations, beginning with mahat-tattva, are manifested. From them sixteen transformations are manifested. The Supreme Personality of Godhead is beyond the root of matter and its various transformations."

The Supreme Personality of Godhead tells the demigod Brahmā (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 2.9.34):

*rte 'rtham yat pratīyeta
na pratīyeta cātmani
tad vidyād ātmano māyām
yathābhāso yathā tamaḥ*

"O Brahmā, whatever appears to be of any value, if it is without relation to Me, has no reality. Know it as My illusory energy, that reflection which appears to be in darkness."*

In Śāṅḍilya's Bhakti-sūtra (3.1.86) it is said:

tac-chaktir māyā jaḍa-sāmānyāt

"This potency of the Lord is called māyā, for it is material by nature."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (9.10), the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*mayādhyakṣena prakṛtiḥ
sūyate sa-carācaram
hetunānena kaunteya
jagad viparivartate*

"This material nature is working under My direction, O son of Kuntī, and it is producing all moving and unmoving beings. By its rule this manifestation is created and annihilated again and again."*

In the Bhagavad-gītā (7.14), the Supreme Personality of Godhead also declares:

*daivī hy eṣā guṇamayī
mama māya duratyayā
mām eva ye prapadyante
māyām etaṁ taranti te*

"This divine energy of Mine, consisting of the three modes of material nature, is difficult to overcome. But those who have surrendered unto Me can easily cross beyond it."*

The the Kaṇāda-sūtra, Fourth Adhyāya, Second Ahnika, it is said:

sad akāraṇa-van nityam

"Reality is eternal. It was not created by anyone."

In the Vaiśeṣika-sūtra it is said:

niravayavaṁ dravyam avadhīḥ sa eva paramāṇuḥ

"The atom is the smallest unit of matter. It can never be divided."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.11.1-2), Śrī Maitreya declares:

*caramaḥ sad-viśeṣānām
aneko 'samyutaḥ sadā*

*paramāṇuḥ sa vijñeyo
nṛṇām aikya-bhramo yataḥ*

"The material manifestation's ultimate particle, which is indivisible and not formed into a body, is called the atom. It exists always as an invisible identity, even after the dissolution of all forms. The material body is but a combination of such atoms, but it is misunderstood by the common man.*

*sata eva padārthasya
svarūpāvasthitasya yat
kaivalyaṁ parama-mahan
na viśeṣo nirantaraḥ*

"Atoms are the ultimate state of the manifest universe. When they stay in their own forms without forming different bodies, they are called the unlimited oneness. There are certainly different bodies in physical forms, but the atoms themselves form the complete manifestation."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.22.4) The Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*māyām madīyām udgrhya
vadatām kiṁ nu durghaṭam*

"All such philosophers spoke under the shelter of My mystic potency, and thus they could say anything without contradicting the truth."***

Here someone may protest: This potency creates the material world independently, without the help of anyone else. Why must you postulate the existence of a Supreme God?

To answer this protest, the author of the sūtras speaks these words:

Sūtra 22

jaḍatvāt kṛti-sūnyā cetana-preritā bhavati samjñāvat-vat

jaḍatvāt—because of being inert; *kṛti*—activity; *sūnyā*—without; *cetana*—by consciousness; *preritā*—pushed into action; *bhavati*—is; *samjñāvat*—conscious; *vat*—like.

Matter is naturally inert, for it is neither alive nor conscious. When conscious life pushes it into action, matter appears to be alive and conscious.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Matter is naturally inert, for it is neither alive nor conscious. It has no power to perform any action. When conscious life pushes it into action, matter appears to become warm with life. It is under these conditions that matter appears to act,

becoming the creator of the universe. That is the meaning. This is described in Bhagavad-gītā (9.10), where the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*mayādhyakṣena prakṛtiḥ
sūyate sa-carācaram*

"This material nature is working under My direction, O son of Kuntī, and is producing all moving and unmoving beings."*

In the Aitareya Upaniṣad (1.1.1) it is said:

sa aikṣata imāl lokān asṛjata

"With a glance the Supreme Personality of Godhead created the material worlds."

In Bhagavad-gītā (15.14), the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*ahaṁ vaiśvānaro bhūtvā
prāṇināṁ deham āsṛitaḥ
prāṇa-samayuktaḥ
pacāmy annaṁ catur-vidham*

"I am the fire of digestion in every living body, and I am the air of life, outgoing and incoming, by which I digest the four kinds of foodstuff."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, Lord Kapila (3.26.19) explains:

*daivāt kṣubhita-dharminyān
svasyaṁ yonau paraḥ pumān
ādhatta vīryaṁ sāsūta
mahat-tattvaṁ hiraṇmayam*

"After the Supreme Personality of Godhead impregnates material nature with His internal potency, material nature delivers the sum total of the cosmic intelligence, which is known as Hiraṇmaya. This takes place in material nature, when she is agitated by the destinations of the conditioned souls."*

The sāṅkhya ācāryas explain:

prakṛtiḥ kartrī puruṣas tu puṣkara-palāsa-vān nirlepah

"It is the material nature that acts. The Supreme Personality of Godhead remains aloof, like a lotus leaf untouched by water."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.26.17), Lord Kapila explains:

prakṛter guṇa-samyasya

*nirviśeṣasya mānavī
ceṣṭā yataḥ sa bhagavān
kāla ity upalakṣitaḥ*

"My dear mother, O daughter of Svāyambhuva Manu, the time factor, as I have explained, is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, from whom the creation begins as a result of the agitation of the neutral, unmanifested nature."*

In the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa, Devī-māhātmya, Brahmā tells Prakṛti

*tvayaiva dhāryate sarvaṁ
tvayaitat sṛjyate jagat
tvayaitat pālyate devi
tvām atsyante ca sarvadā*

"You maintain everyone. You create the universe. You protect it. It enters you at the end."

In the next sūtra the author shows that the illusory potency, māyā, is a prison for the conditioned souls.

Sūtra 23

sā parānanuraktānām kāravad dehādi-bandhana-rūpā

sā—it; *para*—for the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *an*—without; *anuraktānām*—love; *kārā*—a prison; *vat*—like; *deha*—material bodies; *ādi*—beginning with; *bandhana*—bondage; *rūpā*—the form.

The material world is like a prison where souls who hate the Supreme Personality of Godhead are confined. There the souls are bound with many shackles, such as the material bodies in which they dwell.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here the word "sā" means "the material nature", "para" means "the Supreme Personality of Godhead", and "ananuraktānām" means "of they who, exercising their independence, have no love for the Lord and are fond of disobeying His orders". For such persons the material nature provides a series of shackles, which begin with the material bodies in which the conditioned souls dwell. This is described in the following words of the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (2.2.7):

*yonim anye prapadyante
śarīratvāya dehinaḥ
sthāṇum anye 'nusamyānti
yathā karma yathā śrutam*

"They who do not love the Supreme Personality of Godhead enter a mother's

womb, and again dwell in a material body. Some even become unmoving trees and plants. They attain different stations in life according to their past deeds and according to their thoughts at the moment of death."

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (2.2.1) it is said:

*puram ekādaśa-dvāraṁ
ajasyāvakra-cetasah*

"The unborn Supreme Personality of Godhead, whose heart is supremely pure, also resides in the city of eleven gates that is the material body of the conditioned soul."

In Bhagavad-gītā (14.5), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*sattvaṁ rajasa tama iti
guṇaḥ prakṛti-sambhavaḥ
nibadhnanti mahā-bāho
dehe dehinam avyayam*

"Material nature consists of the three modes: goodness, passion, and ignorance. When the living entity comes in contact with nature, he becomes conditioned by these modes."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (5.18), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*vidyā-vinaya-sampanne
brāhmaṇe gavi hastini
śuni caiva śvapāke ca
paṇḍitaḥ sama-darśinaḥ*

"The humble sage, by virtue of true knowledge, sees with equal vision a learned and gentle brāhmaṇa, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a dog-eater (outcaste)."

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (2.2.4) it is said:

*aśya visramśamānasya
śarīra-sthasya dehinaḥ
dehād vimucyamānasya
kim atra pariśiṣyate. etad vai tat.*

"The question is asked: When the embodied soul becomes liberated and leaves his material body behind, who will control him? The answer is: The Supreme still controls him."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (26.1), Lord Kapila says:

atha te sampravakṣyāmi

*tattvānām lakṣaṇām pṛthak
yad viditvā vimucyeta
puruṣaḥ prakṛtir guṇaiḥ*

"My dear mother, now I shall describe unto you the different categories of the Absolute Truth, knowing which any person can be released from the influence of the modes of material nature."*

Sūtra 24

anādir anantā ca parameśvara-śaktivāt

anādir—without beginning; *anantā*—without end; *ca*—and; *parameśvara*—of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *śaktivāt*—because of being the potency.

Because it is the potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the material nature has neither beginning nor end.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Because it is the potency of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the material nature has neither beginning nor end. In the Smṛti-śāstra it is said:

*prakṛtiṁ puruṣam caiva
viddhy anādī hy ubhāv api*

"Please know that the Supreme Personality of Godhead and His material energy are both beginningless."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.1.1) it is said:

*janmādy asya yato 'nvayad itaraś cārtheṣv abhijñāḥ svarāt
tene bhrama hṛdā ya ādi-kavaye muhyanti yat sūrayaḥ
tejo vāri-mṛdaṁ yathā vinimayo yatra tri-sargo 'mṛśā
dhāmnā svena sadā nirasta-kuhakaṁ satyaṁ paraṁ dhīmahī*

"O my Lord, Śrī Kṛṣṇa, son of Vasudeva, O all-pervading Personality of Godhead, I offer my respectful obeisances unto You. I meditate upon Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa because He is the Absolute Truth and the primeval cause of all causes of the creation, sustenance, and destruction of the manifested universes. He is directly and indirectly conscious of all manifestations, and He is independent because there is no other cause beyond Him. It is He only who first imparted the Vedic knowledge unto the heart of Brahmājī, the original living being. By Him even the great sages and demigods are placed into illusion, as one is bewildered by the illusory representations of water seen in fire, or land seen on water. Only because of Him do the material universes, temporarily manifested by the reactions of the three modes of nature, appear factual, although they are unreal. I therefore meditate upon Him, Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa, who is eternally existent in the transcendental

abode, which is forever free from the illusory representations of the material world. I meditate upon Him, for He is the Absolute Truth."*

Although it has neither beginning nor end, matter is situated within the confines of time and space. The author describes this in the foillowing two sūtras.

Sūtra 25

kālo nārthāntaram baddhānām prakṛti-sambandha-rūpatvāt

kālaḥ—time; *na*—not; *artha*—category; *antaram*—another; *baddhānām*—of they who are bound; *prakṛti*—of matter; *sambandha*—relationship; *rūpatvāt*—because of the nature.

Time is not another major category of existence. It is the intermediary that establishes the relationship between the conditioned souls and the material nature.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Some claim that time is a major category of existence, and they quote the following words of the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa to support their idea:

*kalā-kaṣṭhādi-rūpeṇa
pariṇāma-pradāyini*

"In the form of seconds, minutes, and other parts of its nature, time changes everything in the material world."

The idea that time is a major category of existence is rejected by this sūtra. Time is not a major category. It is merely an intermediary who establishes a relationship.

In Śāṅḍilya's Bhakti-sūtra it is said:

cid-acitor na tṛtīyam

"The major categories are: 1. spirit, and 2. matter. There is no third."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.26.16), Lord Kapila explains:

*prabhāvaṁ pauruṣaṁ prāhuḥ
kālam eke yato bhayam
ahaṅkara-vimūḍhasya
kartuṁ prakṛtim iyuṣaḥ*

"The influence of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is felt in the time factor, which causes fear of death due to the false ego of the deluded soul who has

contacted material nature."*

Sūtra 26

saivādhiṣṭhāna-rūpiṇī deśa-samjñitā

sā—that; *eva*—indeed; *adhiṣṭhāna*—place; *rūpiṇī*—in the form; *deśa*—place; *samjñitā*—called.

Matter provides a dwelling place for the conditioned souls. This place is called, "the three dimensions of material space".

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Matter provides a dwelling place for the conditioned souls. This place is called, "the three dimensions of material space". An example of material space is given in these words of the Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad (4.6-7):

samāne vṛkṣe puruṣo nimagno
'nīśāya 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."*

The "tree" here is the material dwelling place (the body) of the conditioned soul.

Many philosophers assert that the element earth is the resting-place of the other material elements. This is described in the following words of the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (2.1.3):

etasmāj jāyate prāṇo
manaḥ sarvendriyāṇi ca
khaṁ vāyur jyotir āpaḥ
pṛthivī viśvasya dhāriṇī

"From the Supreme Personality of Godhead are born life, mind, all the senses, ether, air, fire, and water. All these rest on the element earth."

In a previous mantra (Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad 2.1.2) it is said:

divyo hy amūrtaḥ puruṣaḥ
sa bāhyābhyantaro hy ajaḥ
aprāṇo hy amanaḥ śubhro
hy akṣarāt parataḥ paraḥ

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is effulgent and transcendental. He is unborn. He is present everywhere in the material world. He is within and without

everything. His form is not material. His life-force is not material. His mind is not material. He is supremely glorious. He is greater than the immortal spirit souls."

In the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa it is said:

ādhāra-bhūtā jagatas tvam ekā

"O material potency of the Lord, you are the resting-place of the entire universe."

In the next sūtra the author reveals the many delusions that bewilder the conditioned souls.

Sūtra 27

jaḍe baddhasyānanda-bhramo vaikunṭha-bhramaś cāsaṅgāt

jaḍe—in the material world; *baddhasya*—of the conditioned soul; *ānanda*—of happiness; *bhramaḥ*—bewilderment; *vaikunṭha*—of the spiritual world; *bhramaḥ*—bewilderment; *ca*—and; *āsaṅgāt*—because of attachment.

Because of attachment to inert matter, the conditioned soul is bewildered about happiness and about the spiritual world.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

The conditioned soul is bewildered about happiness. Because he is attached to the material world, he thinks he will find happiness in the material world: in Svargaloka, in an excellent material body, or in some other way. Because he is attached to the objects in this material world he is also bewildered about the Supreme Personality of Godhead and about the transcendental abode of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.10.26), the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*rajo-'dhikā karma-parā
duḥkhe ca sukha-māninaḥ*

"In the human race the mode of passion is very prominent. Humans are always busy in the midst of miserable life, but they think themselves happy in all respects."*

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.1.12) Naciketa tells Yamarāja, the lord of death:

*svarge loke na bhayaṁ kiñcanāsti
na tatra tvam na jarayā bibheti
ubhe tīrtvā aśanāyāpipāse
śokātigo modate svarga-loke*

"In the spiritual world there is not fear of old age, or of you, O death. There one crosses beyond both of them. In the spiritual world there is no anxiety to attain food and drink. The residents of the spiritual world enjoy transcendental bliss."

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.1.26), Naciketa says:

*śvo 'bhāvā mārtyasya yad antakaitat
sarvendriyāṇām jarayanti tejaḥ
api sarvaṁ jīvitam alpam eva
tavaiva bāhās tava nṛtya-gīte*

"Every human being soon meets his death. Quickly his senses become old and weak. Everyone's life is brief. Your chariots, singing, and dancing will last for only a moment."

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (1.2.12) it is said:

*parīkṣya lokān karma-citān brāhmaṇo
nirveda-māyān nāsty akṛtaḥ kṛtena
tad-vijñānārthaṁ gurum evābhigacchet
samit-pāṇiḥ śrotṛīyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham*

"Seeing the true nature of the heavenly material planets attained by pious deeds, a brāhmāna no longer desires to go there. He becomes renounced and desires to learn the science of transcending the material world.

"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 the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (1.2.10) it is said:

*iṣṭā-pūrtāṁ manyamānā variṣṭhāṁ
nānyac chreyo vedayante pramūḍhāḥ
nākasya pṛṣṭhe sukṛte 'nubhūtvā
imaṁ lokāṁ hīnataraṁ vā viśanti*

"Thinking material pious deeds the best of all actions, and affirming that no other action is better than them, fools go to Svargaloka, enjoy, and then again return to this world or the worlds beneath it."

In Bhagavad-gītā (2.62-63), the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*dhyāyate viśayān puṁsaḥ
saṅgas teṣūpajāyate
saṅgāt sañjāyate kāmāḥ
kāmaṭ krodho 'bhijāyate*

"While contemplating the objects of the senses, a person develops attachment for them, and from such attachment lust develops, and from lust anger arises.*

krodhād bhavati sammohaḥ
sammohāt smṛti-vibhramaḥ
smṛti-bhramaṅśad buddhi-nāśo
buddhi-nāśāt praṇaśyati

"From anger, delusion arises, and from delusion bewilderment of memory. When memory is bewildered, intelligence is lost, and when intelligence is lost, one falls down again into the material pool."*

In his commentary on these words, Śrī Śaṅkarācārya explains:

sarvānarthasya mūlam uktaṁ viṣayābhidhyānam

"Here it is said that contemplation of sense objects is the root of all that is undesirable."

In Bhagavad-gītā (4.9), the Supreme Personality of Godhead also declares:

*janma karma ca me divyaṁ
evam yo vetti tattvataḥ
tyaktvā dehaṁ punar janma
naiti mām eti so 'rjuna*

"One who knows the transcendental nature of My appearance and activities does not, upon leaving the body, take his birth again in this material world, but attains My eternal abode, O Arjuna."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (15.3-4), the Supreme Personality of Godhead also declares:

*aśvattham enaṁ su-virūḍha-mūlam
asaṅga-śastreṇa dṛḍhena chittvā*

*tataḥ padaṁ tat parimargitavyaṁ
yasmin gatā na nivartanti bhūyaḥ*

"The real form of this tree cannot be perceived in this world. No one can understand where it ends, where it begins, or where its foundation is. But with determination one must cut down this tree with the weapon of detachment. So doing one must seek that place from which, having once gone, one never returns."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (15.6), the Supreme Personality of Godhead also declares:

na tad bhāsayate sūryo

*na śaśāṅko na pāvakaḥ
yad gatvā na nivartante
tad dhāma paramam mama*

"That abode of Mine is not illumined by the sun or moon, nor by electricity. One who reaches it never returns to this material world."*

Now the author of the sūtras will reveal the way the soul can become free from these illusions. The author says:

Sūtra 28

vivekena tato vimuktiḥ

vivekena—by discrimination; *tataḥ*—from that; *vimuktiḥ*—freedom.

Using the intelligence's power of discrimination, one can become free from these illusions.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here the word "tataḥ" means "from the two previously described illusions", "muktiḥ" means "the individual souls attain freedom", and "vivekena" means "by understanding the truth of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the individual spirit soul".

In the Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad (4.4.12) it is said:

*ātmānaṁ ced vijānīyād
ayam astīti pūruṣaḥ
kim icchan kasya kāmāya
śarīram anusajjate*

"If a person knows the true nature of the soul, and if he thinks, 'I am spirit', then what will he desire in this material world? How will he become attached to his material body?"

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (2.2.9) it is said:

*bhidyate hṛdaya-granthiś
chidyante sarva-saṁśayaḥ
kṣiyante casya karmāṇi
tasmin dṛṣṭe parāvare*

"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."*

The wise transcendentalists are described in these words of Bhagavad-gītā (4.33

and 39):

*śreyān dravyamayād yajñāj
jñāna-yajñāḥ parantapa
sarvaṁ karmākhilam pārtha
jñāne parisamāpyate*

"O chastiser of the enemy, the sacrifice of knowledge is greater than the sacrifice of material possessions. O son of Pṛthā, after all, the sacrifice of work culminates in transcendental knowledge."*

*śraddhāvāl labhate jñānam
mat-paraḥ samyatendriyaḥ
jñānam labdhvāparam śāntim
acireṇādhigacchati*

"A faithful man who is absorbed in transcendental knowledge, and who subdues his senses, quickly attains the supreme spiritual peace."*

In the Bhagavad-gītā (16.16 and 16.21) the Lord also declares:

*aneka-citta-vibhrāntā
moha-jala-samāvṛtāḥ
prasaktāḥ kāma-bhogeṣu
patanti narake 'sucāu*

"Thus perplexed by various anxieties and bound by a network of illusions, one becomes too strongly attached to sense enjoyment and falls down into hell."*

*tri-vidham narakasyedam
dvāram nāsanam ātmanaḥ
kāmaḥ krodhas tathā lobhas
tasmād etat trayam tyajet*

"There are three gates leading to this hell: lust, anger, and greed. Every sane man should give these up, for they lead to the degradation of the soul."*

In the Bhagavad-gītā (7.16), the Lord also declares:

*catur-vidhā bhajante mām
janāḥ sukṛtino 'rjuna
arto jijñasur arthārthī
jñānī ca bharatarṣabha*

"O best among the Bhāratas (Arjuna), four kinds of pious men render devotional service unto Me: the distressed, the desirer of wealth, the inquisitive, and he who is searching for knowledge of the Absolute."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.8.25), Queen Kuntī tells Lord Kṛṣṇa:

*vipadaḥ santu taḥ śaśvat
tatra tatra jagat-pate
bhavato darśanam yat syād
apunar-bhava-darśanam*

"I wish that all those calamities would 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 the Nārada-pañcarātra, Second Night, Second Chapter, it is said:

*śrī-kṛṣṇa-bhakta-saṅgena
bhaktir bhavati naiṣṭhikī
animittā ca sukhadā
hari-dāsyā-pradā śubhā*

"By associating with the devotees of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, one attains unwavering, unmotivated, blissful devotional service, service that eventually allows one to serve Lord Kṛṣṇa directly.

*yathā vrkṣa-latānām ca
navīnaḥ komalaṅkuraḥ
vardhate megha-varṣeṇa
śuṣkaḥ sūrya-kareṇa ca*

*tathaiva bhaktālāpena
bhakti-vrkṣa-navāṅkuraḥ
vardhate śuṣkatām yāti
cābhaktālāpa-mātrataḥ*

"As a tender new sprout on vines or trees grows with the rains and withers with the scorching sunshine, so a new sprout on the tree of devotional service grows by conversing with devotees and withers by conversing with non-devotees."

In Bhagavad-gītā (4.34), the Supreme Personality of Godhead says:

*tad viddhi pranipātena
paripraśnena sevayā
upadeksyanti te jñānam
jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ*

"Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (7.3), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again says:

*manusyānām sahasreṣu
kaścid yatati siddhaye
yatatām api siddhānām
kaścin mām vetti tattvataḥ*

"Out of many thousands among men, one may endeavor for perfection, and out of those who have achieved perfection, hardly one knows Me in truth."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (7.19), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again says:

*bahūnām janmanām ante
jñānavān mām prapadyate
vāsudevaḥ sarvam iti
sa mahātmā su-durlabhaḥ*

"After many births and deaths, he who is actually in knowledge surrenders unto Me, knowing Me to be the cause of all causes and all that is. Such a great soul is very rare."*

Sūtra 29

na ca prākṛta-vad indriya-grāhyatvaṁ vaikuṅṭhasyādhokṣajatvāt

na—not; *ca*—and; *prākṛta*—the material world; *vat*—like; *indriya*—by the material senses; *grāhyatvaṁ* to be grasped; *vaikuṅṭhasya*—of the spiritual world; *adhokṣajatvāt*—because of being beyond the perception of the material senses.

The material senses can perceive the material world, but they cannot perceive the spiritual world in the same way, for that world is beyond their ability to know.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here someone may protest: Do not the scriptures say, "vaikuṅṭhaṁ tad-adhiṣṭhānaṁ draṣṭuṁ te munayo gatāḥ" (Many sages have gone to see the spiritual world)? Many devarṣis, brahmaṛṣis, and other great souls have gone to the spiritual world, seen the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and returned to this world to describe what they have seen. Why have you spoken these mistaken words that will bewilder all who hear them?

To refute this protest, the author of the sūtras begins this passage beginning with sūtra 29.

The Supreme Personality of Godhead and His spiritual world cannot be perceived by the material senses in the same way the material world is perceived by them. This is so because the spiritual world is beyond the knowledge of the material senses (adhokṣaja). That is the meaning. The idea that the spiritual world

can be seen by material senses is an idea created by the illusory energy of the Lord. In truth the spiritual world is beyond the perception of the material senses. In the scriptures it is said:

*vaikuṅṭhaḥ kalpito yena
loko loka-namaskṛtaḥ*

"The spiritual world of Vaikuṅṭha is worshiped by all the worlds."

No one returns from the spiritual world. This is described in Bhagavad-gītā (15.6), where the Supreme Personality of Godhead says:

*tad gatvā na nivartante
tad dhāma paramam mama*

"One who reaches My abode never returns to this material world."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (8.16), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again says:

*mam upetya tu kaunteya
punar janma na vidyate*

"One who attains My abode, O son of Kuntī, never takes birth again."*

In the Tattirīya Upaniṣad (2.4.1) it is said:

yato vaco nivartante

"The descriptive power of speech fails in the realm of the Absolute Truth."*

It is also said:

*tatra sattvaṁ nirmalatvāt
prakāśa-kāmanāmayam*

"The spiritual world is made of pure goodness. There every desire is at once fulfilled."

It is also said:

*vaikuṅṭhaḥ kalpito yena
loko loka-namaskṛtaḥ*

"The spiritual world of Vaikuṅṭha is worshiped by all the worlds."

In the Nārada-pañcarātra, Lord Sadāśiva explains:

goloko nitya-vaikuṅṭho

yathākāśo yathā diśaḥ

"The eternal spiritual world of Goloka is situated in the spiritual sky."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.9.9-11) the following description of Brahmā's vision of Vaikuṅṭha is given:

*tasmai sva-lokaṁ bhagavān sabhājitaḥ
sandarśayām āsa paraṁ na yat-padam
vyapeta-saṅklesa-vimoha-sādhvasaṁ
sva-dr̥ṣṭavādbhiḥ puruṣair abhiṣṭutam*

"The Personality of Godhead, being thus very much satisfied with the penance of Lord Brahmā, was pleased to manifest His personal abode, Vaikuṅṭha, the supreme planet above all others. This transcendental abode of the Lord is adored by all self-realized persons freed from all kinds of miseries and fear of illusory existence.*

*pravartate yatra rajasa tamasa tayoh
sattvaṁ ca miśraṁ na ca kāla-vikramaḥ
na yatra māyā kim utāpare harer
anuvratā yatra surāsurārcitaḥ*

"In that personal abode of the Lord, the material modes of ignorance and passion do not prevail, nor is there any of their influence in goodness. There is no predominance of the influence of time, so what to speak of the illusory, external energy. It cannot enter that region. Without discrimination, both the demigods and demons worship the Lord as devotees.

*tad-darśanāhlāda-pariplutāntaro
hṛṣyat-tanuḥ prema-bharāśru-locanaḥ
nanāma pādāmbujam asya viśva-sṛg
yat-pāramahaṁsyena pathādhigamyate*

"The inhabitants of the Vaikuṅṭha planets are described as having a glowing sky-bluish complexion. Their eyes resemble lotus flowers, their dress is of yellowish color, and their bodily features are very attractive. They are just the age of growing youths, they all have four hands, they are all nicely decorated with pearl necklaces with ornamental medallions, and they all appear to be effulgent."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.14.2), the demigod Brahmā, now freed from illusion, speaks the following prayer:

*asyāpi deva vapuṣo mad-anugrahasya
svecchāmayasya na tu bhūta-mayasya ko 'pi
neṣe mahī tv avasituṁ manasāntareṇa
sākṣāt tavaiva kim utātma-sukhānubhūteḥ*

"My dear Lord, neither I nor anyone else can estimate the potency of this transcendental body of Yours, which has shown such mercy to me and which appears just to fulfill the desires of Your pure devotees. Although my mind is completely withdrawn from material affairs, I cannot understand Your personal form. How, then, could I understand the happiness You experience within Yourself."***

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (2.2.9) it is said:

*hiraṇmaye pare koṣe
virajam brahma niṣkalam
tac chubhram jyotiṣam jyotis
tad yad ātma-vido viduḥ*

"The self-realized souls know that the spiritual world is effulgent, pure, glorious, and never touched by matter."

Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu quoted these words of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.11):

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

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

In the Nārada-pañcarātra it is said:

*jyotir-abhyantare rūpaṁ
atulaṁ śyāmasundaram*

"In the midst of the spiritual world's splendor resides the Supreme Personality of Godhead, His peerless form dark and handsome."

In the Brahma-saṁhitā (5.1) it is said:

*īśvaraḥ paramaḥ kṛṣṇaḥ
sac-cid-ānanda-vigrahaḥ
anādir ādir govindaḥ
sarva-kāraṇa-kāraṇam*

"Kṛṣṇa, who is known as Govinda, is the supreme controller. He has an eternal, blissful, spiritual body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin, for He is the prime cause of all causes."*

In the Iśa Upaniṣad (mantra 8) it is said:

*sa-paryagāc chukram akāyam avraṇam
aśnāviraṁ śuddham apāpa-viddham
kavir manīṣī paribhūḥ svayambhūr
yathāthyato 'rthān vyadadhāc chaśvatībhyaḥ samābhyaḥ*

"Such a person must factually know the greatest of all, who is unembodied, omniscient, beyond reproach, without veins, pure, and uncontaminated, the self-sufficient philosopher, who has been fulfilling everyone's desires since time immemorial."*

In the Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa, the demigods offer these prayers glorifying Lord Kṛṣṇa, who stays in Śrī Rādhā's heart:

*sad eva saumyedam agra
āsīn madhyandino jaguḥ
tvam hi tat paramaṁ brahma
tubhyaṁ nityaṁ namo namaḥ*

"You are the Supreme Brahman, whom the Madhyandina recension of the Veda glorifies with the words 'sad eva saumyedam agra āsīt'. We offer our obeisances to You again and again.

*dve vidye veditavye ca
śabda-brahma param ca yat
tat tvam hi śabda-paramaṁ
brahma tasmai natā vayam*

"The Vedas glorify You with the words, 'dve vidye veditavye'. You are the Supreme Brahman described in the Vedas. We offer our obeisances to You again and again.

*ekam evādvitīyaṁ yad
bṛhad-āraṇyako 'bravit
tad ekam brahma tvam deva
tasmai nityaṁ namo namaḥ*

"The Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad describes You with the words, 'ekam evādvitīyam'. You are the Supreme Brahman described in the Vedas. We offer our obeisances to You again and again.

*eko vai puruṣo yo hi
nityaṁ sad-asad-ātmakam
śruti-dvayasya viṣayaṁ
tvāṁ naumi puruṣo 'vyayam*

"The Vedas glorify You with the words, 'eko vai puruṣaḥ'. You are the imperishable Supreme Person described in the Vedas. We offer our obeisances to You again and again."

Sūtra 30

*indriyāṇi tad-viṣayās taj-jāta-bhāvās ca manasā saha prākṛtās cid-upādhivāj
janyatvāc ca*

indriyāṇi—senses; *tad-viṣayāḥ*—their field of perception; *taj-jāta-bhāvās*—what is born from them; *ca*—and; *manasā*—with the mind; *saha*—with; *prākṛtās*—material; *cit*—of the consciousness; *upādhivāt*—because of material designations; *janyatvāt*—because of having been created; *ca*—and.

The senses and mind, what they perceive, and the results produced by their acts of perception, are all material, for these are all created within the material world and they are all the result of the soul's misidentifying itself as a material body.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

The word "indriyāṇi" here refers to both the knowledge-acquiring senses and the working senses. What the knowledge-acquiring senses perceive is form, taste, smell, sound, and touch. What the working senses do is the five actions, which begin with walking. The results produced by their acts of perception are the mind's activity of accepting some things and rejecting others. All these are material, for they are all created within the material world and they are all the result of the soul's misidentifying itself as a material body. In the Upaniṣads it is said:

evam etasmād ātmanaḥ sarve prāṇāḥ sarvendriyāṇīti tān mano 'srjata

"From the Supreme all the life-airs and all the senses were created. Then He created the mind."

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (2.3.7-8) it is said:

*indriyebhyaḥ parā hy arthā
arthebhyaś ca param manāḥ
manasas tui 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
sa kaṣṭhā sā parā gatīḥ*

"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."

Chapter Four Sambandha-prakarāṇa The Relationship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the Individual Spirit Souls

Introduction by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In order to show the way the individual spirit souls, who were described in the cit-prakarāṇa chapter, may attain the association of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is perfect, complete, eternal, and full of knowledge and bliss, in the beginning of this, the fourth, chapter, the author describes devotional service and the natural and eternal relationship of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and the individual souls.

Sūtra 31

bhaktiḥ pūrṇānuraktiḥ pare

bhaktiḥ—devotion; *pūrṇa*—complete; *anuraktiḥ*—love; *pare*—for the Supreme.

Devotional service means unwavering love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here the word "pare" means "for the Supreme Personality of Godhead", and "pūrṇa-anuraktiḥ" means "unwavering love". The nature of devotional service is described in these words of Taittirīya Upaniṣad (2.7.1):

raso hy evaiṣa rasam labdhvānandī bhavati

"When one understands the Personality of God, the reservoir of pleasure, Kṛṣṇa, he actually becomes transcendently blissful."*

*natvā prabhu-padāmbhojam
premānanda-prakampitaḥ
sañcarāmi prayatnena
bindūn bhakti-sudhāmbudheḥ*

Bowing at the lotus feet of my master, I, trembling with bliss and love, carefully sprinkle these drops from the blissful ocean of devotional service.

*nityānandam ahaṁ naumi
tathā sītā-patim prabhum
haridāsaṁ vaiṣṇavāgryaṁ
paṇḍitaṁ ca gadādharam*

I offer my respectful obeisances to Lord Nityānanda, to Lord Advaita, who is the husband of Sītā, to Haridāsa Ṭhākura, who is the best of Vaiṣṇavas, to Gadādhara Paṇḍita, . . .

*śrī-rūpaṁ tad-bhrātaraṁ ca
vande bhaktān mahā-janān
yeṣāṁ kṛpā-jalotsiktā
śrī-kṛṣṇa-karuṇā-latā*

. . . to Śrī Rūpa Gosvāmī, to his brother Śrī Sanātana Gosvāmī, and to all the exalted devotees of the Lord. Their mercy is the water that has nourished the vine of Lord Kṛṣṇa's mercy upon me.

*narottamādīn vande 'haṁ
prema-bhakti-pravartakān
sārvabhaumaṁ svarūpaṁ ca
govindādīn prabhoḥ priyān*

I offer my respectful obeisances to Narottama dāsa Ṭhākura and all the other preachers of loving devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa. I offer my respectful obeisances to Sārvabhauma Bhaṭṭācārya, Svarūpa Dāmodara, Śrī Govinda, and all the other dear associates of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

*vālmīkiṁ ca vaśiṣṭhaṁ ca
nāradaṁ deva-darśanam
vyāsaṁ vaiyāsakiṁ sūtaṁ
bhavaṁ prahlādam uddhavam*

I offer my respectful obeisances to Vālmīki Muni, Vaśiṣṭha Muni, and Nārada Muni, who all personally saw the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I offer my respectful obeisances to Śrī Vyāsa, Śrī Śukadeva Gosvāmī, Sūta Gosvāmī, Lord Śiva, Prahlāda Mahārāja, Uddhava, . . .

*sanakādīn śaunakādīn
viṣṇurātān mahodayam
bhīṣmaṁ ca kapilān devān
dhruvaṁ prācīnabarhiṣam*

. . . the sages led by Sanaka-kumāra, the sages led by Śaunaka Ṛṣi, noble-hearted King Parīkṣit, Bhīṣma, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Lord Kapila, Mahārāja Dhruva, Mahārāja Prācīnabarhi, . . .

ambariṣaṁ mahātmānaṁ

*nava-yogeśvarāms tathā
sarvān bhāgavatān vande
prācīnān bhakti-kovidān*

. . . the great soul Mahārāja Ambarīṣa, the nine yogendras, and all the great devotees of ancient times, devotees expert in devotional service to the Lord.

*eteśāṁ viśva-manyānām
aṅghri-reṇu-prasādataḥ
mama manda-mater astu
bhakti-vyākhyāna-dakṣatā*

I pray that by the dust from the feet of these great devotees, who are worshiped by all the worlds, my slow mind will become expert in describing the truth of devotional service.

In the Kena Upaniṣad (4.6) it is said:

*tad dha tad vanam nama tad vanam ity upāsitavyam sa yatra tad evam vedabhi
hainam sarvādi bhūtāni samvañchanti*

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is the highest object of worship. All living beings yearn to attain Him."

In the Nārada-pañcarātra it is said:

*sarvopādhi-vinirmuktam
tat-paratvena nirmalam
hṛṣīkena hṛṣīkeśa-
sevanam bhaktir ucyate*

"Bhakti, or devotional service, means engaging all our senses in the service of the Lord, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the master of the senses. When the spirit soul renders service unto the Supreme, there are two side effects. One is freed from all material designations, and, simply by being employed in the service of the Lord, one's senses are purified."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.29.12) it is said:

*ahaituky avyavahitā
yā bhaktiḥ puruṣottame*

"Just as the water of the Ganges flows naturally down towards the ocean, such devotional ecstasy, uninterrupted by an material condition, flows towards the Supreme Lord."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.25.32) it is also said:

*devānām guṇa-līṅgānām
anusrāvika-karmaṇām
sattva evaiika-manaso
vṛttiḥ svābhāvikā tu yā
animittā bhagavati
bhaktiḥ siddher garīyasī*

"The senses are symbolic representations of the demigods, and their natural inclination is to work under the direction of the Vedic injunctions. As the senses are representatives of the demigods, so the mind is the representative of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The mind's natural duty is to serve. When that service spirit is engaged in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, without any motive, that is far better even than salvation."*

In Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.1.11), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains:

*anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam
jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-
śīlanam bhaktir uttamā*

"When first-class devotional service develops, one must be devoid of all material desires, knowledge obtained by monistic philosophy, and fruitive action. The devotee must constantly serve Kṛṣṇa favorably, as Kṛṣṇa desires."*

In Śāṅḍilya's Bhakti-sūtra (1.1.2) it is said:

sā parānuraktir īśvare

"Devotional service means intense love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

This exalted kind of devotional service is not practiced by every devotee. Rather, there are different kinds of devotional service, as described in the following sūtra:

Sūtra 32

tasyāḥ svarūpaṁ phalam upāyaś ceti

tasyāḥ—of that; *svarūpaṁ*—the nature; *phalam*—result; *upāyaś*—method; *ca*—and; *iti*—thus.

Devotional service has both a means and a result.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

The individual spirit souls are of two kinds: 1. the conditioned souls, and 2. the

liberated souls, and the devotional service they perform is also of two kinds: 1. phala-bhakti (devotional service as a goal), and 2. upāya-bhakti (devotional service as a means to attain a goal). The liberated souls engage in phala-bhakti, which is the same as prema-bhakti, the perfect stage of love for Lord Kṛṣṇa. The conditioned souls engage in upāya-bhakti, which is the same as sādhana-bhakti, and which is the means by which one attains the goal of phala-bhakti. It is said:

āyur ghṛtam

"Ghee equals long life."

This means that by eating foods cooked in ghee one attains a long life. As ghee and long life are equated, in the same way sādhana-bhakti is called devotional service because it leads to the final goal: the attainment of prema-bhakti.

In Bhagavad-gītā (9.14), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*satataṁ kīrtayanto mām
japantaś ca dṛḍha-vratāḥ
namasyantaś ca mām bhaktyā
nitya-yuktā upāsate*

"Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, and bowing down before Me, these great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion."*

In this way chanting japa, offering obeisances, and other activities of sādhana-bhakti are described.

In Bhagavad-gītā (18.52-55), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*vivikta-sevo laghv-āśī
yata-vāk-kāya-mānasah
dhyāna-yoga-paro nityam
vairāgyam samupāśritaḥ*

*ahaṅkāram balaṁ darpaṁ
kāmaṁ krodhaṁ parigrahaṁ
vimucya nirmamaḥ śānto
brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

"One who lives in a secluded place, who eats little, and who controls the body and the tongue, and is always in trance, and is detached, who is without false ego, false strength, false pride, lust, anger, and who does not accept material things, such a person is certainly elevated to the position of self-realization.*

brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā

*na śocati na kaṅkṣati
samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu
mad-bhaktim labhate parām*

"One who is thus transcendently situated at once realizes the Supreme Brahman. He never laments nor desires to have anything. He is equally disposed to every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me.*

*bhaktyā mām abhijānāti
yāvan yaś cāsmi tattvataḥ
tato mām tattvato jñātvā
viśate tad anantaram*

"One can understand the Supreme Personality as He is only by devotional service. And when one is in full consciousness of the Supreme Lord by such devotion, he can enter into the kingdom of God."*

In the Nārada-pañacarātra, in the midst of a description of unwavering devotional service, Lord Sadāśiva explains:

*animittā ca sukhadā
hari-dāsyā-pradā śubhā*

"These auspicious, blissful, and unselfish actions bring direct service to Lord Hari.

In the next sūtra the author describes the truth that pure devotional service is directed to the Supreme Personality of Godhead alone.

Sūtra 33

phala-bhakter nānyad aṅgam ekatvāt svataḥ-siddhatvāc ca

phala-bhakteḥ—of phala-bhakti devotional service; *na*—not; *anyat*—another; *aṅgam*—limb; *ekatvāt*—because of being one; *svataḥ-siddhatvāt*—because of being naturally perfect; *ca*—and.

There are no separate subdivisions of phala-bhakti devotional service, for it is one, undivided, and naturally perfect.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Phala-bhakti has no separate subdivisions, because it has a single undivided nature, and because, consisting of activities of passionate love for the Lord, it is naturally perfect. In these ways it is not like sādhana-bhakti. The conclusion of devotional service is given in these words:

nitya-siddhasya bhāvasya

prākṛtyam hr̥di sādhyatā

"At that time eternally perfect love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead is manifested in the heart."

In the Taittirīya Upaniṣad (2.4.1) it is said:

ānandaṁ brahmaṇo rūpam

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead is naturally full of bliss."

In the Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.246 and 1.2.248-249), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains:

*sammataṁ bhakti-vijñānaṁ
bhakty-aṅgatvaṁ na karmaṇām*

"Some scholars argue that simply by following the principles of varṇa and āśrama one can gradually rise to the perfections reached by practicing devotional service, but this argument is not accepted by the great authorities."*

*jñāna-vairāgyayor bhakti-
praveśāyopayogitā
īṣāt prathamam eveti
naṅgatvam ucitaṁ tayoh*

"Some scholars recommend that knowledge and renunciation are important factors for elevating oneself to devotional service, but actually that is not a fact. Actually the cultivation of knowledge or renunciation, which are favorable for achieving a footing in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, may be accepted in the beginning, but ultimately they may also come to be rejected, for devotional service is dependent on nothing other than the sentiment or desire for such service. It requires nothing more than sincerity.*

*yad ubhe citta-kāṭhīṇya-
hetu-prāye satāṁ mate
sukumāra-svabhāveyaṁ
bhaktis tad-dhetur īritā*

"It is the opinion of expert devotees that mental speculation and the artificial austerities of yoga practice may be favorable for becoming liberated from material contamination, but they will also make one's heart harder and harder. They will not help at all in the progress of devotional service. These processes are therefore not favorable for entering into the transcendental loving service of the Lord. Actually Kṛṣṇa consciousness, devotional service itself, is the only way of advancing in devotional life. devotional service is absolute. It is both the cause and the effect."*

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 (1.2.15), Śrīla Suta Gosvāmī explains:

*yad-anudhyāsinā yuktaḥ
karma-granthi-nibandhanam
chindanti kovidas tasya
ko nu kuryāt kathā-ratim*

"With sword in hand, intelligent men cut through the binding knots of reactionary work (karma) by remembering the Personality of Godhead. Therefore, who will not pay attention to His message?"*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.16) it is also said:

*śuśrūṣoḥ 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."*

In the Gopī-gītā of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (10.31.14), the gopīs explain:

*surata-varḍhanam śoka-nāśanam
svara-venuṇā suṣṭhu-cumbitam
itara-rāga-vismaraṇam nṛṇām
vitarā vīra nas te 'dharāmṛtam*

"O hero, kindly distribute to us the nectar of Your lips, which enhances conjugal pleasure and vanquishes grief. That nectar is thoroughly relished by Your vibrating flute and makes people forget any other attachment."***

After thus describing the most exalted kind of devotional service, the author of the sūtras now begins his description of upāya-bhakti. He says:

upāya-bhakteḥ parānuśīlanam pratyāhāras cāngam

upāya-bhakteḥ—of upāya-bhakti; *para*—for the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *anuśīlanam*—constant devotion; *pratyāhāras*—renunciation; *ca*—and; *aṅgam*—parts.

Upāya-bhakti has as its parts: 1. intent devotion to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and 2. renunciation of the material world.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In Bhagavad-gītā (18.65), the Supreme Personality of Godhead teaches:

*man-manā bhava mad-bhakto
mad-yājī mām namaskuru*

"Always think of Me and become My devotee. Worship Me and offer your homage unto Me. Thus you will come to Me without fail. I promise you this because you are My very dear friend."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.10.6) it is said:

*muktir hitvānyathā-rūpaṁ
svarūpeṇa vyavasthitīḥ*

"Liberation is the permanent situation of the form of the living entity after he gives up the changeable gross and subtle material bodies."*

In Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.3.49) it is said:

*kṣudra-kautūhala-mayī
cañcala duḥkha-hāriṇī
rateś chayā bhavet kiñcit
tat-sadṛśyāvalambinī*

"At that time, simply by the association of such pure devotees, the moonlike rays from their hearts reflect on him, and by the influence of the pure devotees he may show some likeness of attachment caused by inquisitiveness, but this is very flickering. And if by the manifestation of such shadow attachment one feels the disappearance of all material pangs, then it is called parā attachment."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.12) it is said:

*tac-chraddadhānā munayo
jñāna-vairāgya-yuktayā
paśyanty ātmani cātmānam
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 Vedānta-śruti."*

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.251 and 1.2.254) explains:

*kintu jñāna-virakty-ādi
sādhyam bhaktyāiva sidhyati*

"By engaging in devotional service one naturally attains knowledge, renunciation, and other advantages as a by-product of his service."

*rucim udvahatas tatra
janasya bhajane hareḥ
viṣayeṣu variṣṭho 'pi
rāgaḥ prayo vilīyate*

"Actually, a person who is developing Kṛṣṇa consciousness and still has some attachment to material enjoyment will soon be freed from such a tendency by regularly discharging devotional service under the instruction of a bona fide spiritual master."*

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.3.25) also explains:

*kṣantir avyārtha-kālatvaṁ
viraktir māna-śūnyatā
āśā-bandhaḥ samutkaṇṭha
nāma-gāne sadā ruciḥ*

"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."*

In the next sūtra the author reveals the truth of the various other limbs of this secondary kind of devotional service (upāya-bhakti).

Sūtra 35

śravaṇa-kīrtanādīni parānuśīlanopayogivāt praty-aṅgāni

śravaṇa—hearing; *kīrtana*—glorifying; *ādīni*—beginning with; *para*—for the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *anusīlana*—intent devotion; *upayogivāt*—

because of being appropriate; *praty-aṅgāni*—secondary limbs.

The secondary limbs of upāya-bhakti begin with hearing and chanting, for these activities help to increase intent devotion to the Lord.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

The secondary limbs of upāya-bhakti begin with hearing and chanting, for these activities help to increase intent devotion to the Lord. Hearing and chanting about the Lord are different ways to worship the Lord. In Bhagavad-gītā (9.14) the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

satataṁ kīrtayanto mām

"Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, bowing down before Me, these great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion."*

In the Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.3.1 and 1.3.4) it is said:

*śuddha-sattva-viśeṣātmā
prema-sūryāṁśu-sāmya-bhak
rucibhiś citta-māsṛṇya-
kṛd asau bhāva ucyate*

"By the process of executing regulated devotional service, one is actually elevated onto the transcendental stage, beyond the material modes of nature. At that time one's heart becomes illuminated like the sun.*

*āvirbhūya mano-vṛttau
vrajanti tat-svarūpatām
svayam-prakāśa-rūpāpi
bhāsamāna prakāśyavat*

"After the outward appearance of these ecstatic symptoms, they stay within the mind, and continuation of the ecstasy is called samādhi."*

In the commentary on Śāṅḍilya's Bhakti-sūtras it is said:

*gaṅga-jale kim na vasanti matsyā
devālaye pakṣi-gaṇā vasanti
bhāvojjhitas te na phalaṁ labhante
tīrthāc ca devāyatanāc ca mukhyāt*

"Do fish not live in the Ganges? Do birds not perch on the roofs of temples? Still, they do not become overwhelmed with ecstatic love for the Lord. They do not obtain the spiritual benefits from the holy waters and the Lord's temple."

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.6) explains:

*yatra rāgānavaptatvāt
pravṛttir upajāyate
śāsanenaiva śāstrasya
sā vaidhā bhaktir ucyate*

"When there is no attachment or spontaneous loving service to the Lord, and one is engaged in the service of the Lord simply out of obedience to the order of the spiritual master or in pursuance of the scriptures, such obligatory service is called vaidhī bhakti."*

In Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.293), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī says:

*vaidha-bhakty-adhikāritve
bhāvāvirbhāvanāvadhi
atra śāstram tathā tarkam
anukūlam apekṣate*

"Therefore, in the beginning, everyone should strictly follow the regulative principles of devotional service, according to the injunctions of the scriptures and the spiritual master. Only after the stage of liberation from material contamination can one actually aspire to follow in the footsteps of the devotees in Vṛndāvana."*

In Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.72), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī says:

*hari-bhakti-vilāse 'sya
bhakter aṅgāni lakṣaśaḥ
kintu tāni prasiddhāni
nirdiśyante yathā-mati*

"Hari-bhakti-vilāsa was compiled for the guidance of the Vaiṣṇava and therein are mentioned many rules and regulations to be followed by Vaiṣṇavas."*

Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī (Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu 1.2.264) again explains:

*sā bhaktir eka-mukhyāṅgā-
śrita vā bahu-laṅgikā
sva-vāsanānusāreṇa
niṣṭhātaḥ siddhi-kṛd bhavet*

"There are nine different kinds of devotional service, which are listed as hearing, chanting, remembering, serving, worshipping the Deity in the temple, praying, carrying out orders, serving Kṛṣṇa as friend, and sacrificing everything for Him. Each and every one of these processes is so powerful that if anyone follows even one single one of them, he can achieve the desired perfection without fail."*

In Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.245), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī says:

*kesāñcit kvacid aṅgānām
yat kṣudraṁ śruyate phalam
bahirmukha-pravṛtṭyaitat
kintu mukhyaṁ phalam ratih*

"Some scholars argue that simply by following the principles of varṇa and āśrama one can gradually rise to the perfections reached by practicing devotional service, but this argument is not accepted by the great authorities. The advancement of varṇa and āśrama is merely external. There is a higher principle.* The higher principle is ecstatic love for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. That is the most important attainment."

In Bhagavad-gītā (9.13-14), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*mahātmānas tu mām pārtha
daivīm prakṛtim āśritāḥ
bhajanty ananya-manaso
jñātvā bhūtādim avyayam*

"O son of Pṛthā, those who are not deluded, the great souls, are under the protection of the divine nature. They are fully engaged in devotional service because they know Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, original and inexhaustible.*

*satataṁ kīrtayanto mām
yatantaś ca dṛḍha-vratāḥ
namasyantaś ca mām bhaktyā
nitya-yuktā upāsate*

"Always chanting My glories, endeavoring with great determination, bowing down before Me, these great souls perpetually worship Me with devotion."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (10.8-11), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*ahaṁ sarvasya prabhavo
mattaḥ sarvaṁ pravartate
iti matvā bhajante mām
budha bhāva-samanvitaḥ*

"I am the source of all spiritual and material worlds. Everything emanates from Me. The wise who know this perfectly engage in My devotional service and worship me with all their hearts.*

*mac-cittā mad-gata-prāṇā
bodhayantaḥ parasparam
kathayantaś ca mām nityam
tuṣyanti ca ramanti ca*

"The thoughts of My pure devotees dwell in Me, their lives are surrendered to Me, and they derive great satisfaction and bliss enlightening one another and conversing about Me.*

*teṣāṁ satata-yuktānāṁ
bhajatām prīti-pūrvakam
dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ
yena mām upayānti te*

"To those who are constantly devoted and worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me.*

*teṣāṁ evānukampārtham
aham ajñāna-jaṁ tamaḥ
nāśayamy ātma-bhāva-stho
jñāna-dīpena bhāsvatā*

"Out of compassion for them, I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy with the shining lamp of knowledge the darkness born of ignorance."*

In the Mahābhārata, Śānti-parva, Mokṣa-dharma, it is said:

*sarvāśramābhigāmānām
sarva-tīrthāvagahanam
na tathā phala-daṁ saute
nārāyaṇa-kathā yathā*

"O Sautā, neither following all the rules of varṇāśrama-dharma nor bathing in all holy rivers bring the same result one obtains by hearing and chanting the glories of Lord Nārāyaṇa.

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa it is said:

*tasmād ahar-niśam viṣṇum
saṁsmaran puruṣo mune
na yāti narakam śuddham
saṅkṣiṇākhila-kalmaṣaḥ*

"O sage, a person who day and night remembers Lord Viṣṇu will not go to hell, for he is already purified of all his sins."

In the Viṣṇu Purāṇa it is also said:

*kṛte pāpe 'nutāpe vai
yasya puṁsaḥ prajāyate
prāyaścittam tu tasyaikam
hari-saṁsmaraṇam param*

"The best atonement for sins is remembering Lord Hari."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.5.23) it is said:

*śravaṇam kīrtanam viṣṇoḥ
smaraṇam pāda-sevanam
arcanaṁ vandanam dāsyam
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 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.29.30) the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*naitat tvayā dambhikāya
nāstikāya śathāya ca
aśuśrusor abhaktāya
durvinitāya dīyatām*

"You should not share this instruction with anyone who is hypocritical, atheistic, or dishonest, or with anyone who will not listen faithfully, who is not a devotee, or who is simply not humble."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.21.31), the Supreme Personality of Godhead tells Kārdama Muni:

*kṛtvā dayām ca jīveṣu
datvā cābhayam ātmavān
mayy ātmānaṁ saha jagat
drakṣyasi ātmani cāpi mām*

"Showing compassion to all living entities, you will attain self-realization. Giving assurance of safety to all, you will perceive your own self as well as all the universes in Me, and Myself in you."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (6.29 and 31) the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*sarva-bhūta-stham ātmānaṁ
sarva-bhūtāni cātmani
ikṣate yoga-yuktātmā
sarvatra sama-darśanaḥ*

"A true yogī observes Me in all beings, and also sees every being in Me. Indeed, the self-realized man sees Me everywhere.*

*sarva-bhūta-sthitam yo mām
bhajaty ekatvam āsthitaḥ
sarvathā vartamāno 'pi
sa yogi mayi vartate*

"He is a perfect yogī who, by comparison with his own self, sees the true equality of all beings, both in their happiness and distress, O Arjuna."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (9.29) the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*samo 'haṁ sarva-bhūteṣu
na me dveṣyo 'sti na priyaḥ
ye bhajanti tu mām bhaktyā
mayi te teṣu capy aham*

"I envy no one, nor am I partial to anyone. I am equal to all. But whoever renders service unto Me in devotion is a friend, is in Me, and I am also a friend to him."*

In the final passages of Bhagavad-gītā (18.62-63), the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*īśvaraḥ sarva-bhūtānām
hṛd-deśe 'rjuna tiṣṭhati
bhrāmayam sarva-bhūtāni
yantrārūḍhāni māyayā*

"The Supreme Lord is situated in everyone's heart, O Arjuna, and is directing the wanderings of all living entities, who are seated as on a machine, made of the material energy.*

*tam eva śaraṇam gaccha
sarva-bhāvena bhārata
tat-prasādāt param śāntim
sthānam prāpsyasi śāśvatam*

"O scion of Bharata, surrender to Him utterly. By His grace you will attain transcendental peace and the supreme and eternal abode."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.29.21-27), Lord Kapiladeva explains:

*ahaṁ sarveṣu bhūteṣu
bhūtātmāvasthitaḥ sada
tam avajñāya mām martyaḥ*

kurute 'rca-vidāmbanam

"I am present in every living entity as the Supersoul. If someone neglects or disregards that Supersoul everywhere and engages himself in the worship of the Deity in the temple, that is simply imitation.*

*yo mām sarveṣu bhūteṣu
śāntam ātmānam īśvaram
hitvārcaṁ bhajate maudhyād
bhasmāny eva juhōti saḥ*

"One who worships the Deity of Godhead in the temples but does not know that the Supreme Lord, as Paramātmā, is situated in every living entity's heart, must be in ignorance and is compared to one who offers oblations into the ashes.*

*dviṣataḥ para-kāye mām
mānino bhinna-darśinaḥ
bhūteṣu baddha-vairāgasya
na manaḥ śāntim ṛcchati*

"One who offers Me respect but is envious of the bodies of others and is therefore a separatist never attains peace of mind, because of his inimical behavior towards other living entities.*

*aham uccāvacaḥ dravyaiḥ
kriyayotpannayānaghe
naiva tuṣye 'rcito 'rcayaṁ
bhūta-grāmāvamāninaḥ*

"My dear mother, even if he worships with proper rituals and paraphernalia, a person who is ignorant of My presence in all living entities never pleases Me by the worship of My Deities in the temple.*

*arcādāv arcayet tāvad
īśvaraṁ mām sva-karma-kṛt
yāvan na veda suhṛdi
sarva-bhūteṣv avasthitam*

"Performing his prescribed duties, one should worship the Deity of the Supreme Personality of Godhead until one realizes My presence in his own heart and in the hearts of all other living entities as well.*

*ātmanaś ca parasyāpi
ya karoty antarodaram
tasya bhinna-dṛṣo mṛtyur
vidadhe bhayam ulbaṇam*

"As the blazing fire of death, I cause great fear to whoever makes the least

discrimination between himself and other living entities because of a differential outlook.*

*atha mām sarva-bhūteṣu
bhūtātmanam kṛtālayam
arhayed dāna-mānābhyām
maitryābhinnena cakṣuṣā*

"Therefore, through charitable gifts and attention, as well as through friendly behavior and by viewing all to be alike, one should propitiate Me, who abide in all creatures as their very self."*

In Śrī Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭaka it is said:

*antaḥ prasādayati sodhayatīndriyāni
mokṣam ca tucchayati kiṁ punar artha-kāmau
sadyaḥ kṛtārthayati sannihitaika-jīvān
ānanda-sindhu-vivareṣu nimajjayanti*

"Devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa pleases the heart, satisfies the senses, makes impersonal liberation seem very insignificant, fulfills all desires, and plunges all living entities into an ocean of bliss."

In the next verse the author describes the previously mentioned renunciation aspect of upāya-bhakti.

Sūtra 36

*deha-ratham manah sārathim indriya-hāyām āstikya-jñānena yukta-vairāgyeṇa ca
viṣaya-mārgāc chanair nivartayed eṣa eva pratyāhāraḥ*

deha—body; *ratham*—chariot; *manah*—mind; *sārathim*—charioteer; *indriya*—senses; *hāyām*—horses; *āstikya*—with spiritual; *jñānena*—knowledge; *yukta*—with proper; *vairāgyeṇa*—renunciation; *ca*—and; *viṣaya*—of the sense-objects; *mārgāt*—from the path; *śanaiḥ*—gradually; *nivartayet*—should turn away; *eṣa*—he; *eva*—indeed; *pratyāhāraḥ*—renunciation.

From the path of the sense-objects one should, employing spiritual knowledge and proper renunciation, gradually turn away the chariot of the body, the charioteer of the mind, and the horses of the senses. To do so is proper renunciation of the world.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

The body is here called the chariot because it is controlled by the mind. The mind is called the charioteer, because it controls the senses. The senses are called the horses because they pull the chariot of the body here and there. It is also said:

iha rathī jīvaḥ

"The spirit soul is the passenger in the chariot."

In the Upaniṣads it is said:

ātmānaṁ rāthinaṁ viddhi

"Please know that the spirit soul is the passenger in the chariot."

When a person, using spiritual knowledge and proper detachment, drives the chariot described in these words away from the path of the sense-objects, that action is called proper renunciation. In Bhagavad-gītā (6.25), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*śanaiḥ śanair upamed
buddhyā dhṛta-grhītayā*

"Gradually, step by step, with full conviction, one should become situated in trance by means of intelligence, and thus the mind should be fixed on the Self alone and should think of nothing else."*

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.3.3,4,6, and 9) it is said:

*ātmānaṁ rāthinaṁ viddhi
śarīraṁ ratham eva ca
buddhiṁ tu sārathim viddhi
manaḥ pragraham eva ca*

*indriyāṇi hayān āhur
viśayāms teṣu gocarān
ātmendriya-mano-yuktaṁ
bhoktety āhur manīṣiṇaḥ*

"The individual is the passenger in the car of the material body, and intelligence is the driver. Mind is the driving instrument, and the senses are the horses. The self is thus the enjoyer or sufferer in the association of the mind and senses. So it is understood by great thinkers."*

*yas tu vijñānavān bhavati
yuktena manasā sada
tasyendriyāni vaśyāni
ṣaḍ-aśvā iva sārathēḥ*

"A wise person appropriately uses his mind to control his senses. Thus his intelligence is a good charioteer and his senses are good horses."

vijñāna-sārathir yas tu

*manah-pragrahavān narah
so 'dhvanah param āpnoti
tad viṣṇoḥ paramam padam*

"In this way, with his intelligence as the charioteer and his mind as the reins, a wise person drives his chariot to the supreme abode of Lord Viṣṇu."

In Bhagavad-gītā (5.5, 4.18, 5.2, and 5.6), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*yat saṅkhyaiḥ prāpyate sthānam
tad yogair api gamyate
ekam saṅkhyam ca yogam ca
yaḥ paśyati sa paśyati*

"One who knows that the position reached by means of renunciation can also be attained by works in devotional service and who therefore sees that the path of works and the path of renunciation are one, sees things as they are."*

*karmany akarma yaḥ paśyed
akarmaṇi ca karma ca
sa buddhimān manusyeṣu
sa yuktaḥ kṛtsna-karma-kṛt*

"One who sees inaction in action, and action in inaction, is intelligent among men, and he is in the transcendental position, although engaged in all sorts of activities."*

*sannyāsaḥ karma-yogaś ca
niḥśreyasa-karāv ubhau
tayos tu karma-sannyāsāt
karma-yogo viśiṣyate*

"The renunciation of work and work in devotion are both good for liberation. But of the two, work in devotional service is better than renunciation of works."*

*sannyāsas tu mahā-bāho
duḥkham āptum ayogataḥ
yoga-yukto munir brahma
na cireṇādhigacchati*

"Unless one is engaged in devotional service of the Lord, mere renunciation of activities cannot make one happy. The sages, purified by works of devotion, achieve the Supreme without delay."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (6.20-21), the Supreme Personality of Godhead also says:

yatroparamate cittam

*niruddham yoga-sevayā
yatra caivātmanātmānam
paśyann ātmani tuśyati*

*sukham atyantikaṁ yat tad
buddhi-grāhyam atīndriyam
vetti yatra na caivāyam
sthitaś calati tattvataḥ*

"The stage of perfection is called trance, or samādhi, when one's mind is completely restrained from material mental activities by practice of yoga. This is characterized by one's ability to see the self by the pure mind and to relish and rejoice in the self. In that joyous state one is situated in boundless transcendental happiness and enjoys himself through transcendental senses. Established thus, one never departs from the truth."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (6.28), the Supreme Personality of Godhead also says:

*yuñjann eva sadātmānam
yogī vigata-kalmaṣaḥ
sukhena brahma-saṁsparśam
atyantaṁ sukham aśnute*

"Steady in the Self, being freed from all material contamination, the yogī achieves the highest perfectional stage of happiness in touch with the supreme consciousness."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (6.47), the Supreme Personality of Godhead also says:

*yoginām api sarveṣāṁ
mad-gatenāntarātmana
śraddhāvān bhajate yo mām
sa me yuktatamo mataḥ*

"And of all yogīs, he who always abides in Me with great faith, worshiping Me in transcendental loving service, is most intimately united with Me in yoga and is the highest of all."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (7.28), the Supreme Personality of Godhead also says:

*yeṣāṁ tv anta-gataṁ pāpaṁ
janānāṁ puṇya-karmaṇam
te dvandva-moha-nirmuktā
bhajante mām dṛḍha-vratāḥ*

"Persons who have acted piously in previous lives and in this life, whose sinful actions are completely eradicated, and who are freed from the duality of delusion, engage themselves in My service with determination."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (8.28), the Supreme Personality of Godhead gives His final opinion:

*vedeṣu yajñeṣu tapaḥsu caiva
dāneṣu yat puṇya-phalaṁ pradiṣṭam
abhyeti tat sarvaṁ idaṁ viditvā
yogī paraṁ sthānam upaiti cādyam*

"A person who accepts the path of devotional service is not bereft of the results derived from studying the Vedas, performing austere sacrifices, giving charity, or pursuing philosophical and fruitive activities. At the end he reaches the supreme abode."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (12.5.11-12), Śrīla Śukadeva Gosvāmī gives his final instruction to Mahārāja Parikṣit:

*ahaṁ brahma paraṁ dhāma
brahmāhaṁ paramaṁ padam
evaṁ samīkṣya cātmānam
ātmany adhāya niṣkale*

*daśantaṁ takṣakaṁ pade
lelihānaṁ viśānanaiḥ
na drakṣyasi śarīraṁ ca
viśvaṁ ca pṛthag ātmanaḥ*

"You should consider, 'I am nondifferent from the Absolute Truth, the supreme abode, and that Absolute Truth, the supreme destination, is nondifferent from Me'. Thus resigning yourself to the Supreme Soul, who is free from all material misidentifications, you will not even notice the snake-bird Takṣaka when he approaches with his poison-filled fangs and bites your foot. Nor will you see your dying body or the material world around you, because you will have realized yourself to be separate from them."***

In Bhagavad-gītā (18.54), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*brahma-bhūtaḥ prasannātmā
na śocati na kaṅkṣati
samaḥ sarveṣu bhūteṣu
mad-bhaktiṁ labhate parām*

"One who is thus transcendently situated at once realizes the Supreme Brahman. He never laments nor desires to have anything. He is equally disposed to every living entity. In that state he attains pure devotional service unto Me."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (12.10-11), the Supreme Personality of Godhead tells Arjuna:

*abhyāse 'py asamartho 'si
mat-karma-paramo bhava
mad-artham api karmāṇi
kurvan siddhim avāpsyasi*

"If you cannot practice the regulations of bhakti-yoga, then just try to work for Me, because by working for Me you will come to the perfect stage.*

*athaitad apy asakto 'si
kartuṁ mad-yogam āśritaḥ
sarva-karma-phala-tyāgaṁ
tataḥ kuru yatātmanavān*

"If, however, you are unable to work in this consciousness, then try to act giving up all results of your work and try to be self-situated."*

Here someone may protest: The diṇḍima drum of the Vedic conclusion proclaims, "Knowledge brings liberation!" As for you, why do you emphasize the words "spiritual knowledge"? Why must this knowledge be spiritual in its character?

To refute this objection, the author speaks the following words:

Sūtra 37

jñānān muktiḥ jñānād bandhaś ca

jñānāt—from knowledge; *muktiḥ*—liberation; *jñānāt*—from knowledge; *bandhaś*—bondage; *ca*—and.

One kind of knowledge brings liberation, and another kind of knowledge brings bondage.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

The first kind of knowledge here is spiritual knowledge, or knowledge of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The word "muktiḥ" here means "liberation from material bondage". The second kind of knowledge here is material knowledge, or also the dry theories of the impersonalists. The word "bandhaḥ" here means "bondage in the cycle of repeated births and deaths". In the following words the Supreme Personality of Godhead affirms that material knowledge binds one to the material world. He says (Bhagavad-gītā 14.6):

*sukha-saṅgena badhnāti
jñāna-saṅgena cānagha*

"Those situated in that mode (goodness) develop knowledge, but they become conditioned by the concept of happiness."*

The conclusion of the atheists and blasphemers is given in these words of the Vidvan-moda-taraṅginī:

" `What is action? Who is the seer of things? When and by whom are karmic reactions obtained? How does one attain another birth in this world?' If someone asks these questions, then I reply: These questions have no answers. There is no way anyone can find answers to these questions. The truth is that life is like a flowing river that brings sometimes pleasures and sometimes pains. The material body is temporary. It will die. The truth is that the entire world is unreal. It does not really exist. It is all an illusion."

In the Śrī Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭaka (7.77), Śrīla Ramānanda Rāya explains:

*nirvāṇa-nimba-phalam eva rasānbhijñās
cuṣyantu nāma-rasa-tattva-vido vyaṁ tu
śyāmāmṛtaṁ madana-manthara-gopa-rāma-
netrāñcalaiś culukitāvasitaṁ pibāmaḥ*

"They who cannot taste sweetness will drink the bitter nimba juice of impersonal liberation. We, however, who know what is sweet, drink the dark, sweet nectar the amorous gopīs drank through the corners of their eyes."

In response to Lord Caitanya's questions, Śrī Ramānanda Rāya explained (Caitanya-candrodaya-nāṭaka 7.61):

*pratyāsattir hari-caraṇayoḥ sānurāgeṇa rāge
prītiḥ premātiśayinī harer bhakti-yogena yogē
āsthā tasya praṇaya-rabhasasyopadehena dehe
yeṣāṁ te hi prakṛti-sarasā hanta muktā na muktāḥ*

"They who love Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet and do not love anything else, who delight in bhakti-yoga, the yoga of devotional service, and are not attracted to aṣṭāṅga-yoga or any other kind of yoga, and who place their love in the transcendental form of Lord Kṛṣṇa, and not in their own external material body, are actually liberated and free from the material world. Non-devotees who claim to be liberated are not so."

In Bhagavad-gītā (18.64-66), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*sarva-guhyatamaṁ bhūyaḥ
śṛṇu me paramaṁ vacaḥ
iṣṭo 'si me dṛḍham iti
tato vakṣyāmi te hitam*

"Because you are My very dear friend, I am speaking to you the most confidential part of knowledge. Hear this from Me, for it is for your benefit.*

man-manā bhava mad-bhakto

*mad-yājī mām namaskuru
mam evaiśyasi satyaṁ te
pratijāne priyo 'si me*

"Always think of Me and become My devotee. Worship Me and offer Your homage unto Me. Thus you will come to Me without fail. I promise you this because you are My very dear friend.*

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekaṁ śaraṇaṁ vraja
ahaṁ tvām sarva-pāpēbhyo
mokṣayiśyāmi mā śucaḥ*

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

In the next sūtra the author explains the meaning of the word "yukta" (appropriate) in the phrase "yukta-vairāgya" (appropriate renunciation).

Sūtra 38

vairāgyān muktiḥ vairāgyād bandhaś ca

vairāgyāt—from renunciation; *muktiḥ*—liberation; *vairāgyāt*—from renunciation; *bandhaś*—bondage; *ca*—and.

One kind of renunciation brings liberation, and another kind of renunciation brings bondage.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In this sūtra the author explains the meaning of the word "yukta" (appropriate in the phrase "yukta-vairāgya" (appropriate renunciation). Renunciation is of two kinds: 1. yukta-vairāgya (appropriate renunciation) and 2. phalgu-vairāgya (false renunciation). Proper renunciation is performed when, without being attached to the results of one's work, and acting purely and in a saintly manner, one offers the results of his work to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. This kind of renunciation brings liberation from the bondage of repeated birth and death. In Bhagavad-gītā (6.1), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*anāśritaḥ karma-phalaṁ
kāryaṁ karma karoti ca
sa sannyāsī ca yogī ca*

"One who is unattached to the fruits of his work and who works as he is obligated is in the renounced order of life, and he is the true mystic."*

Other instructions like this may be seen in many verses of Bhagavad-gītā. False

renunciation, on the other hand, is dry, makes the heart hard, makes one proud, is petty, is likened to the renunciation practiced by monkeys living in the forest, and brings the sufferings of repeated birth and death in the material world as its true result. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

na tyāgenaike amṛtatvam

"Not by mere renunciation does one attain liberation."

In Bhagavad-gītā (18.8), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*sa kṛtvā rājasam tyāgam
naiva tyāga-phalam labhet*

"Anyone who gives up prescribed duties as troublesome, or out of fear, is said to be in the mode of passion. Such action never leads to the elevation of renunciation."

In Bhagavad-gītā (3.6), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

mithyācāraḥ sa ucyate

"One who restrains the senses and organs of action, but whose mind dwells on sense-objects, certainly deludes himself and is called a pretender."*

In Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.256), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains:

*prāpañcikatayā buddhyā
hari-sambandhi-vastunaḥ
mumukṣubhiḥ parityāgo
vairāgyam phalgu kathyate*

"When one is not attached to anything, but at the same time accepts anything in relation to Kṛṣṇa, one is rightly situated above possessiveness. On the other hand, one who rejects everything without knowledge of its relationship to Kṛṣṇa is not as complete in his renunciation."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (18.7-8), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*niyatasya tu sannyāsaḥ
karmaṇo nopapadyate
mohāt tasya parityāgas
tamasah parikīrtitaḥ*

"Prescribed duties should never be renounced. If, by illusion, one gives up his prescribed duties, such renunciation is said to be in the mode of ignorance.*"

duḥkham ity eva yat karma

*kāya-kleśa-bhayāt tyajet
sa kṛtvā rājasam tyāgam
naiva tyāga-phalam labhet*

"Anyone who gives up prescribed duties as troublesome, or out of fear, is said to be in the mode of passion. Such action never leads to the elevation of renunciation."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.12.1), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*na rodhayati mām yogo
na saṅkhyam dharmā eva ca
na svadhyāyas tapas tyago
neṣṭā-pūrtam na dakṣiṇā*

"My dear Uddhava, by associating with My pure devotees one can destroy one's attachment for all objects of material sense gratification. Such purifying association brings Me under the control of My devotee. One may perform the aṣṭāṅga-yoga system, engage in philosophical analysis of the elements of material nature, practice nonviolence and other principles of ordinary piety, chant the Vedas, perform penances, take to the renounced order of life, execute sacrificial performances and dig wells, plant trees, and perform other public welfare activities, give in charity, carry out severe vows, worship the demigods, chant confidential mantras, visit holy places, or accept major and minor disciplinary injunctions, but even by performing such activities one does not bring Me under his control."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (18.9 and 18.11), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*kāryam ity eva yat karma
niyataṁ kriyate 'rjuna
saṅgam tyaktvā phalam caiva
sa tyāgaḥ sattviko mataḥ*

"But he who performs his prescribed duty only because it ought to be done, and renounces all attachment to the fruit, his renunciation is of the nature of goodness, O Arjuna."*

*na hi deha-bhṛta śakyam
tyaktuṁ karmaṇy aśeṣataḥ
yas tu karma-phala-tyāgī
sa tyāgīty abhidhīyate*

"It is indeed impossible for an embodied being to give up all activities. Therefore it is said that he who renounces the fruits of action is one who has truly renounced."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (4.20-21), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*tyaktvā karma-phalāsaṅgam
nitya-tr̥pto nirāśrayaḥ
karmany abhipravṛtto 'pi
naiva kiñcit karoti saḥ*

"Abandoning all attachment to the results of his activities, ever satisfied and independent, he performs no fruitive action, although engaged in all kinds of undertakings.*

*nirāśīr yata-cittātmā
tyakta-sarva-parigrahaḥ
śarīraṁ kevalam karma
kurvan nāpnoti kilbiṣam*

"Such a man of understanding acts with mind and intelligence perfectly controlled, gives up all sense of proprietorship over his possessions, and acts only for the bare necessities of life. Thus working, he is not affected by sinful reactions."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (6.17 and 18), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*yuktāhāra-vihārasya
yukta-ceṣṭasya karmasu
yukta-svapnāvabodhasya
yogo bhavati duḥkha-hā*

"He who is temperate in his habits of eating, sleeping, working, and recreation can mitigate all material pains by practicing the yoga system.*

*yadā viniyataṁ cittam
ātmany evāvatiṣṭhate
nispr̥haḥ sarva-kāmebhyo
yukta ity ucyate tadā*

"When the yogī, by practice of yoga, disciplines his mental activities and becomes situated in transcendental, devoid of all material desires, he is said to have attained yoga."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (1.2.8-10), Śrīla Sūta Gosvāmī explains:

*dharmāḥ svānuṣṭhitāḥ puṁsām
viśvaksena-kathāsu yaḥ
notpādayed yadi ratim
śrama eva hi kevalam*

"The occupational activities a man performs according to his own position are only so much useless labor if they do not provoke attraction for the message of the Personality of Godhead.*

*dharmasya hy apavargasya
nārthārthāyopakalpate
nārthasya dharmāikāntasya
kāma-lābhāya hi smṛtam*

"All occupational engagements are certainly meant for ultimate liberation. They should never be performed for material gain. Furthermore, according to sages, one who is engaged in the ultimate occupational service should never use material gain to cultivate sense gratification.*

*kāmasya nendriya-prītir
lābho jīveta yavatā
jīvasya tattva-jijñāsā
nārtho yaś ceha karmabhiḥ*

"Life's desires should never be directed toward sense gratification. One should desire only a healthy life, or self-preservation, since a human being is meant for inquiry about the Absolute Truth. Nothing else should be the goal of one's works."*

In Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.255), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains:

*anāsaktasya viṣayān
yathārham upayujjataḥ
nirbandhaḥ kṛṣṇa-sambandhe
yuktam vairāgyam ucyate*

"When one is not attached to anything but at the same time accepts anything in relation to Kṛṣṇa, one is rightly situated above possessiveness. On the other hand, one who rejects everything without knowledge of its relationship to Kṛṣṇa is not as complete in his renunciation."*

Here someone may ask: Is it not so that if a person falls down from this path of devotional service, then a horrible fate awaits him?

Fearing that someone would ask this questions, the author speaks the following sūtra.

Sūtra 39

pratyahārasampatteḥ para-bhakty-asiddhāv api nādhaḥ-patanam

pratyahāra—of renunciation; *asampatteḥ*—from not being complete; *para*—to

the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *bhakti*—devotional service; *asiddhau*—in imperfection; *api*—also; *na*—not; *adhaḥ*—down; *patanam*—falling.

A devotee will not fall down, even if he has not attained perfection in renunciation and devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Even if he has not attained perfection in renunciation and devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, a devotee, unlike the materialists, will not fall down. Neither will a devotee take birth in a degraded situation. In Bhagavad-gītā (6.40), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*pārtha naiveha nāmūtra
vināśas tasya vidyate
na hi kalyāṇa-kṛt kaścid
durgatim tata gacchati*

"O son of Prthā, a transcendentalist engaged in auspicious activities does not meet with destruction either in this world or in the spiritual world. One who does good, My friend, is never overcome by evil."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (6.25-26), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*śanaiḥ śanair upamed
buddhyā dhṛti-grhītayā
ātma-saṁsthāṁ manaḥ kṛtvā
na kiñcid api cintayet*

"Gradually, step by step, with full conviction, one should become situated in trance by means of intelligence, and thus the mind should be fixed on the Self alone and should think of nothing else.*

*yato yato niścalati
manaś cañcalam asthiram
tatas tato niyamyaitad
ātmany eva vaśaṁ nayet*

"From whatever and wherever the mind wanders due to its flickering and unsteady nature, one must certainly withdraw it and bring it back under the control of the Self."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (6.44), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*pūrvābhyāsenā tenaiva
kriyate hy avaśo 'pi saḥ
jijñāsuraḥ pi yogasya*

śabda-brahm\ativartate

"By virtue of the divine consciousness of his previous life, he automatically becomes attracted to the yogic principles, even without seeking them. Such an inquisitive transcendentalist, striving for yoga, stands always above the ritualistic principles of the scriptures."*

In Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.261), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains:

*kṛṣṇonmukhaṁ svayaṁ yānti
yamaḥ śaucādayas tathā*

"A Kṛṣṇa conscious person, being naturally purified, has no need of developing any other purificatory process of thought or action. On account of his being highly elevated in Kṛṣṇa consciousness, he has already acquired all the good qualities and is following the rules and regulations prescribed for the mystic yoga process."*

In Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.3.43, 1.3.46, and 1.3.54), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī again explains:

*sa bhukti-mukti-kāmatvāc
chuddhām bhaktim akurvataṁ
hṛdaye sambhavaty eṣām
kathāṁ bhāgavatī ratiḥ*

"Even ordinary devotees cannot have such pure attachment for Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, how is it possible for success to be achieved by persons whose hearts are contaminated by the actions and reactions of fruitive activities and who are entangled by various types of mental speculation?"*

*āśramābhīṣṭa-nirvāhī
rati-lakṣaṇa-lakṣitaḥ
bhogāpavarga-saukhyāṁśa-
vyañjakaḥ pratibimbakaḥ*

"Sometimes it is found that a person actually attached to material enjoyment or salvation has the good fortune to associate with pure devotees while they are engaged in chanting the holy name of the Lord. By the good grace of the Lord one may also cooperate and join in the chanting. At that time simply by the association of such pure devotees, the moonlike rays from their hearts reflect on him, and by the influence of the pure devotees, he may show some likeness of attachment caused by inquisitiveness."*

*bhāvo 'py abhāvam āyāti
kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhāparādhataḥ
ābhāsatām ca śanakair
nyūna-jātīyatām api*

"If one commits offenses at the lotus feet of a devotee one's shadow attachment or parā attachment can be extinguished. This extinguishing is like the waning of the full moon, which gradually decreases and at last becomes dark."*

Sūtra 40

pratyāhāra-samṛddhyā sādhanam bhāvas tathaiva bhāvāt premā

pratyāhāra—of renunciation; *samṛddhyā*—with the prosperity; *sādhanam*—activities of devotional service; *bhāvaḥ*—ecstasy; *tathā*—so; *eva*—certainly; *bhāvāt*—from ecstasy; *premā*—pure love.

With the proper development of renunciation one attains active devotional service (sādhana), then ecstasy (bhāva), and finally pure love (prema) for the Lord.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here someone may ask: What are the different levels of advancement in devotional service? To answer this question the author speaks this sūtra.

By regular practice, one makes advancement in renunciation and devotional service. First there is active devotional service (sādhana), then ecstasy (bhāva), and finally pure love (prema) for the Lord. Thus, with the proper development of renunciation, one makes advancement in devotional service, culminating in ecstasy and pure devotional love. The Supreme Personality of Godhead explains (Bhagavad-gītā 9.9):

*ābhyāsa-yogena tato
mām icchāptum dhanañjaya*

"Follow the regular principles of bhakti-yoga. In this way you will develop a desire to attain Me."*

In Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.1-2), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains:

*sā bhaktiḥ sādhanam bhāvaḥ
prema ceti tridhositā
kṛti-sādhyā bhavet sādhyā-
bhāva sa sādhanābhidhā
nitya-siddhasya bhāvasya
prākṛtyam hṛdi sādhyatā*

"The three categories of devotional service are: 1. devotional service in practice (sādhana), 2. devotional service in ecstasy (bhava), and 3. devotional service in pure love of Godhead (prema). When we wish to develop our innate capacity for devotional service, there are certain processes which, by our accepting and executing them, will cause that dormant capacity to be invoked. Such practice is called sādhana-bhakti."*

In Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (, Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī again explains:

*kṛṣṇādibhir vibhāvādyair
gatair anubhavādhvani
prauḍhānanda-camatkāra-
kaṣṭhām āpadyate param*

"With vibhāva and the other features of ecstatic love, one experiences the greatest and most wonderful bliss."

In Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.4.15-16), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī again explains:

*ādau śraddhā tataḥ sādhu-
saṅgo 'tha bhajana-kriyā
tato 'nartha-nivṛttiḥ syāt
tato niṣṭhā rucis tataḥ*

*athāsaktis 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 sādhana-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 a devotee interested in Kṛṣṇa consciousness."*

Chapter Five Siddhānta-prakaraṇa The Final Conclusion

Sūtra 41

jñāna-sūryasya hi raśmayāḥ śāstrāṇi

jñāna—of knowledge; *sūryasya*—of the sun; *hi*—indeed; *raśmayāḥ*—rays; *śāstrāṇi*—the scriptures.

Indeed, the scriptures are rays of light from the sun of transcendental knowledge.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here someone may protest: Is it not so that the various scriptures present different philosophers' very different conclusions of what is the highest good for all living entities. What is the use, then, of your attempt in this Tattva-sūtra to find there a single final, highest conclusion?

If this is said, the the author of the sūtras replies: No. It is not as you say. In this fifth chapter the author of the sūtras describes the final conclusion of all knowledge, the conclusion that shows the highest good for all living entities.

In this sūtra the word "hi" may be interpreted to mean either "indeed" or "because". here the self-manifested original transcendental knowledge of the individual spirit souls is likened to a sun. It is likened to a sun because: 1. It is manifested from the spiritual form of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, 2. it is self-manifested, 3. it destroys the darkness of ignorance, and 4. it reveals all truths. All the scriptures are then likened to rays of light emanating from that sun of transcendental knowledge. That is the meaning. In the Upaniṣads it is said:

ṛcaḥ sāmāni jajñire

"The Supreme Personality of Godhead created the Ṛg and Sāma Vedas."

chandāmsi jajñire tasmād yajus tasmād ajāyata

"The Vedic hymns were born from the Supreme Personality of Godhead. The Yajur Veda was born from Him."

In the Vedānta-sūtra (1.1.3), Lord Vyāsadeva explains:

śāstra-yonitvāt

"Because the Supreme is the author of all the scriptures."

nārāyaṇam namaskṛtya

brāhmāṇam ca svayambhuvam

nāradaṁ tattva-sāra-jñam

kṛṣṇa-dvaipāyanaṁ munim

I offer my respectful obeisances to Lord Nārāyaṇa, to self-born Brahmā, to Nārada, who knows the best of all spiritual truths, and to the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa.

madhvācāryam tato vande

tac-chiṣyāṁ sampradāyinaḥ

kalau yasmin sampradāye

sākṣāc caitanya-vigrahaḥ

*āvirāsīn navadvīpe
sarva-siddhānta-sāgarah
sāragrāhi-gaṇā yasya
sainya-bhūtāḥ kṣitau mataḥ*

I also offer my respectful obeisances to Madhvācārya and the disciples in his sampradāya. In that sampradāya the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who is an ocean of perfect philosophical conclusions, and who manifested His form of Lord Caitanya, came to this earth in the town of Navadvīpa. Lord Caitanya's devotees are like soldiers conquering the earth by preaching the Lord's message.

*na bāhyaṁ lakṣaṇaṁ teṣāṁ
vinā kṛṣṇānuśīlanam
sampradāya-svapakṣatve
sāra-tyāgo bhaved dhruvam*

His followers are not attracted to the external things of this world. They are properly renounced. They are intently devoted to Lord Kṛṣṇa.

*sāragrāhi-janas tasmāt
sampradāya-ratā na hi
yat-sampradāye yat-satyam
tat-sāram iti tan-matam*

They who are eager to find the truth do not limit themselves to their own country or their own community. They are eager to accept the truth and they are not concerned that a speaker of the truth may come from a different community.

*tatra teṣāṁ pramodo hi
tad-dharmiṣu ca mitratā
bahu-saj-jana-sahayād
duḥśādhyam api sidhyati*

They are happy with the truth. They make friendship with persons who are sincere in following the truth. With the help of many saintly friends even the most difficult thing is easily attained.

*mithaḥ sāra-rasālāpo
mithaś cānanda-kāraṇam
sarveṣāṁ sampradāyānām
edad vai phalam adbhutam*

Among themselves such saintly persons relish talking about the truth. Among themselves they feel great bliss. They attain the wonderful result sought by all communities of spiritual men.

*tasmāc chrī-gaura-dasānām
mādhvīya-jana-saṅgrahaḥ*

*tatrāpi bahavaḥ santi
bāhya-cihnāvalambinaḥ*

Many are Lord Caitanya's servants in the Madhva-sampradāya. They are all great souls bearing marks that show they do not really belong in this material world.

*sampradāyānurodhād vā
tat-tattvajñānato 'pi vā
kecit tac-cihna-sūnyās ca
sāragrāhitayā matā*

Because they follow the teachings of the spiritual sampradāya, or because they are not materialistic, these enlightened souls do not bear the marks of the material world.

*lābha-pūrṇā doṣa-muktāḥ
sañcaranty avadhūta-vat
teṣāṃ viśuddha-buddhīnāṃ
kṛṣṇa-tattva-vivekināṃ
namāmi caraṇāmbhojaṃ
yukta-vairāgya-dhāriṇāṃ*

Self-satisfied and faultless, they wander here and there appearing like madmen to outsiders. They are pure at heart and perfectly renounced, for they know the truth of Lord Kṛṣṇa. I bow down before their lotus feet.

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (1.1.4-5) it is said:

*dve vidye veditavya iti ha sma yad brahma-vido vadanti parā caivāparā ca. tatrāparā
ṛg-vedo yajur-vedaḥ sama-vedo 'tharva-vedaḥ.*

"Enlightened souls say there are two kinds of knowledge: 1. transcendental knowledge, and 2. material knowledge. The knowledge of the Ṛg, Yajur, Sāma, and Atharva Vedas is material knowledge.

*śikṣā-kalpo vyākaraṇaṃ niruktaṃ chando jyotiṣaṃ iti atha parā yathā tad akṣaram
adhigamyate*

"The study of phonetics, rituals, grammar, etymology, meter, and astrology are all material knowledge. Transcendental knowledge is the knowledge that brings one to the imperishable Supreme Personality of Godhead."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.3-8), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*kālena naṣṭā pralaye
vāṇīyaṃ veda-samjñitā*

*mayādau brāhmaṇe proktā
dharmo yasyām mad-ātmakaḥ*

"By the influence of time, the transcendental sound of Vedic knowledge was lost at the time of annihilation. Therefore, when the subsequent creation took place, I spoke the Vedic knowledge to Brahmā because I Myself am the religious principles enunciated in the Vedas.***

*tena proktā sva-putrāya
manave pūrva-jāyasā
tato bhṛgv-ādayo gr̥hṇan
sapta-brahma-maharṣayaḥ*

"Lord Brahmā spoke this Vedic knowledge to his eldest son, Manu, and the seven great sages headed by Bhṛgu Muni then accepted the same knowledge from Manu.***

*tebhyaḥ pitṛbhyas tat-putrā
deva-dānava-guhyakāḥ
manuṣyāḥ siddha-gandharvāḥ
sa-vidyādhara-cāraṇāḥ*

*kindevāḥ kinnarā nāgā
rakṣā kimpuruṣādayaḥ
bahvyas teṣām prakṛtayo
rajaḥ-sattva-tamo-bhuvah*

*yābhir bhūtāni bhidyante
bhūtānām patayas tathā
yathā prakṛtiḥ sarveṣām
citrāvacaḥ sravanti hi*

"From the forefathers headed by Bhṛgu Muni and other sons of Brahmā appeared many children and descendants, who assumed different forms as demigods, demons, human beings, Guhyakas, Siddhas, Gandharvas, Vidyādharas, Cāraṇas, Kindevas, Kinnaras, Nāgas, Kimpuruṣas, and so on. All of the many universal species, along with their respective leaders, appeared with different natures and desires generated from the three modes of material nature. Therefore, because of the different characteristics of the living entities within the universe, there are a great many Vedic rituals, mantras, and rewards.***

*evam prakṛti-vaicitryād
bhidyante matayo nṛṇām
pāramparyeṇa keṣāñcit
pāśaṇḍa-matayo 'pare*

"Thus, due to the great variety of desires and natures among human beings, there are many different theistic philosophies of life, which are handed down

through tradition, custom, and disciplic succession. There are other teachers who directly support atheistic viewpoints."***

The Lord also said (Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 11.8.10):

*aṇubhyaś ca bṛhadbhyaś ca
śāstrebhyaḥ kuśalo naraḥ
sarvataḥ sāram ādadyāt
puṣpebhya iva śatpadaḥ*

"Just as the honeybee takes nectar from all flowers, big and small, an intelligent human beings should take the essence from all religious scriptures."***

In the Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.5) it is said:

*avidyāyām antare vartamānāḥ
svayaṁ dhīrā paṇḍitaṁ manyamānāḥ
dandramyamāṇāḥ pariyānti mūḍhā
andhenaiva nīyamānā yathāndhāḥ*

"Thinking themselves wise, they wander here and there in the darkness of ignorance. They are blind men led by another blind man."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.7.51) it is said:

*saṅgraho 'yaṁ vibhūtīnām
tvam etat vipulī-kuru*

"O Nārada, this science of God, Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, was spoken to me in summary by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, and it was spoken as the accumulation of His diverse potencies. Please expand this science yourself."*

In the Yoga-vaśiṣṭha, Third Chapter, Vālmīki tells Bharadvāja:

*dṛśyaṁ nāstīti bodhena
manaso dṛśya-mārjanam
sampannam cet tad-utpannā
parā nirvāṇa-nirvṛtiḥ*

"It is not seen by material eyes. If one is fortunate and his vision becomes cleansed, he will attain transcendental knowledge, renunciation, and liberation."

Śrīmān Anandabodhendhra Sarasvatī comments on this verse:

"Here someone may say, 'Matter and spirit are different. therefore matter cannot see spirit. Therefore, of what use are the scriptures?' Fearing that someone would make this claim, the author has spoken this verse, which begins with the word 'dṛśyam'. Spirit can certainly be seen. But it cannot be seen by material eyes."

With spiritual intelligence spirit may be understood. With purified eyes one may see spirit. Liberation from the world, or the direct perception of spirit is described in the scriptures. That is the result of scripture-study."

There it is also said:

*anyathā śāstra-garteṣu
luthatām bhavatām iha
bhavaty akṛtrima-jñānam
kalair api na nirvṛtiḥ*

"Without proper understanding, one is simply trapped in a cave of the scriptures. By scripture-study one must revive His own dormant spiritual knowledge. Then he may attain liberation."

Sūtra 42

śāstram akṣameṣu baliyo vivekinām naitat tan-mūla-prāpteḥ

śāstram—scripture *akṣameṣu*—among they who are not able; *baliyaḥ*—powerful; *vivekinām*—of they who are wise; *na*—not; *etat*—that; *tat*—of that; *mūla*—of the root; *prāpteḥ*—because of attainment.

For they who are not yet self-realized, scripture is very important. For they who are self-realized this is not so, for such great souls have already attained the perfect spiritual knowledge that is the root from which the scriptures have grown.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here someone may protest: In Bhagavad-gītā (16.23), the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares: "But he who discards scriptural injunctions and acts according to his own whim attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme destination."* After all, the very word "śāstra" comes from the word "śāsana", which means "restriction". Therefore the individual spirit souls are always obliged to follow the restrictions enunciated in the scriptures. How can any good result come from not following the scriptures' rules?

Fearing that someone would voice this protest, the author has spoken this sūtra. Here the word "akṣameṣu" means "they who are not yet self-realized". Such persons cannot act independently. They are governed by the rules of scripture. However, for self-realized souls, who of their own desire do what is right and proper in spiritual life, this is not so. These great souls are not bound by the rules of scripture because they have already attained the perfect spiritual knowledge that is the root from which the scriptures have grown. This means that the self-realized souls have already attained the perfect spiritual knowledge that is the root from which the scriptures have grown. All the scriptures, as well as the Śārīraka and Mīmāṃsā commentaries, are meant for the souls who are not yet self-realized, who stall dwell in the world of ignorance. Therefore the words of the Lord in Bhagavad-

gītā (16.23) mean that for their own good the unenlightened souls, who if given independence would perform forbidden actions, the rules of scriptures are given. The rules in the scriptures are thus given to bring under control the uncontrolled, independent conditioned souls. For the liberated souls a different instruction is given. Lord Kṛṣṇa explains (Bhagavad-gītā 2.52):

*yadā te moha-kalilam
buddhir vyatitarisyati
tadā gantāsi nirvedam
śrotavyasya śrutasya ca*

"When your intelligence has passed out of the dense forest of delusion, you shall become indifferent to all that has been heard and all that is to be heard."*

Lord Kṛṣṇa also explains (Bhagavad-gītā 2.45):

*traiguṇya-visāyā veda
nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna*

"The Vedas mainly deal with the subject of the three modes of material nature. Rise above these modes, O Arjuna." Be transcendental to all of them."*

What is the need for any further explanation? In Bhagavad-gītā (16.23-24), the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*yaḥ śāstra-vidhim utsṛjya
vartate kāma-cārataḥ
na sa siddhim avāpnoti
na sukham na parām gatim*

"But he who discards scriptural injunctions and acts according to his own whim attains neither perfection, nor happiness, nor the supreme destination."*

*tasmāc chāstram pramāṇam te
kāryākārya-vyavasthitau
jñātvā śāstra-vidhānoktam
karma kartum ihārhasi*

"One should understand what is duty and what is not duty by the regulations of the scriptures. Knowing such rules and regulations, one should act so that he may gradually be elevated."*

In the Manu-saṁhitā, Chapter Twelve, it is said:

*bibharti sarva-bhūtāni
veda-śāstram sanātanam
tasmād etat param manye
yaj jantor asya sādhanam*

"The eternal Vedic scriptures maintain and protect all living beings. Therefore, I think they describe the best path for the living entities to follow."

In Bhagavad-gītā, Arjuna asks Lord Kṛṣṇa:

*ye śāstra-vidhiṃ utsrjya
yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ
teṣāṃ niṣṭhā tu ka kṛṣṇa
sattvam aho rajas tamaḥ*

"O Kṛṣṇa, what is the situation of one who does not follow the principles of scripture but worships according to his own imagination? Is he in goodness, in passion, or in ignorance?"*

Lord Kṛṣṇa replied (Bhagavad-gītā 17.28):

*aśraddhayā hutam dattam
tapas taptam kṛtam ca yat
asad ity ucyate pārtha
na ca tat pretya no iha*

"But sacrifices, austerities, and charities performed without faith in the Supreme are nonpermanent, O son of Pṛthā, regardless of whatever rites are performed. They are called asat and are useless both in this life and the next."*

Manu also explains:

*ajñebhyo granthinaḥ śreṣṭhā
granthibhyo dhāriṇo varāḥ
dhāribhyo jñāninaḥ śreṣṭhā
jñānibhyo vyavasāyinaḥ*

"Better than the materialistic fools are they who follow the scriptures. Better than the followers of scripture are they who meditate on the Supreme. Better than the meditators are they who are situated in transcendental knowledge. Better than these enlightened souls are the devotees, who are active in the service of the Supreme Personality of Godhead."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.21.23), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*phala-śrutir iyaṃ nṛṇāṃ
na śreyo rocanam param
śreyo vivakṣayā proktā
yathā bhaiṣajya-rocanam*

"Those statements of scripture promising fruitive rewards do not prescribe the

ultimate good for men, but are merely enticements for executing beneficial religious duties, like promises of candy spoken to induce a child to take beneficial medicine. "***

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.21.3-4 and 11.21.7), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*śuddhāsuddhī vidhīyete
samāneṣv api vastuṣu
dravyasya vicikitsārtham
guṇa-doṣau śubhāśubhau*

*dharmārtham vyavahārārtham
yātrārtham iti cānagha
darśito 'yaṁ mayācāro
dharmaṁ udvahaṭām dhuram*

"O sinless Uddhava, in order to understand what is proper in life one must evaluate a given object within its particular category. Thus, in analyzing religious principles one must consider purity and impurity. Similarly, in one's ordinary dealings one must distinguish between good and bad, and to insure one's physical survival one must recognize what is auspicious and inauspicious. I have revealed this way of life for those bearing the burden of mundane religious principles. "***

*deśa-kālādi-bhāvānām
vastūnām mama sattama
guṇa-doṣau vidhīyeta
niyamārtham hi karmaṇām*

"O saintly Uddhava, in order to restrict materialistic activities, I have established that which is proper and improper among all material things, including time, space, and all physical objects. "*"

In the Rāhasya-siddhānta it is said:

*pravṛttaṁ karma saṁsevya
devānām eti sāmyatām
nivṛttaṁ sevyamānas tu
bhūtāny atyeti pañca vai*

"One who performs his prescribed duties becomes like the demigods. One who renounces his prescribed duties stays in the material world of five elements.

*sarva-bhūteṣu cātmānam
sarva-bhūtāni cātmani
samaḥ paśyann ātma-yājī
svarājyam adhigacchati*

"One who, seeing the Supersoul in all living beings and all living beings in the Supersoul, worships the Supersoul, attains a kingdom as his reward.

*yathoktāny api karmāṇi
parihāya dvijottamāḥ
ātma-jñāne śame ca syād
vedābhyāse ca yatnavān*

*etad dhi janma-sāphalyam
brāhmaṇasya viśeṣataḥ
prāptyaitat kṛta-kṛtyo hi
dvijo bhavati nānyathā*

"One who renounces these prescribed duties and earnestly studies the Vedas to attain spiritual truth, is the best of brāhmaṇas. His life is a great success. It should not be described in any other way"

In the Mahābhārata it is said:

*purāṇam manavo dharmah
saṅgo vedaś cikitsitam
ajña-siddhāni catvāri
na hantavyāni hetubhiḥ*

"The Purāṇas describe the duties of human beings. The Vedas are medicine to cure the soul's disease of residence in the world of matter. The perfect teachings of the four Vedas should never be renounced."

In Bhagavad-gītā (9.32-33), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

*maṁ hi pārtha vyapāśritya
ye 'pi syuḥ pāpa-yonayaḥ
striyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās
te 'pi yānti parām gatim*

*kiṁ punar brāhmaṇāḥ puṇyā
bhaktā rājarṣayas tathā*

"O son of Pṛthā, those who take shelter in Me, though they be of lower birth, women, vaiśyas (merchants), as well as śūdras (workers), can approach the supreme destination. How much greater, then, are the brāhmaṇas, the righteous, the devotees, and saintly kings?"*

Sūtra 43

bhakte na śāstram tad-vidher jñānāvirodhitvāt

bhakte—for a devotee of the Lord; *na*—not; *śāstram*—scripture; *tad-vidheḥ*—of

those rules; *jñāna*—transcendental knowledge; *avirodhitvāt*—because of not contradicting.

The rules of these scriptures do not apply to a devotee of the Lord, for an enlightened devotee never acts against the spiritual truth.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

After explaining that they who are enlightened with transcendental knowledge are free from the rules of scripture, the author of the sūtras now affirms that the devotees are especially free from these rules. The duties and prohibitions of scripture do not apply to a person who is pure in heart, renounced, filled with transcendental knowledge and engaged in devotional service. This is so because the devotee's intent engagement in devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead does not in any way oppose the rules and regulations ordained by the scriptures. Here is the meaning: One attains the highest goal of life by following the rules and regulations of devotional service, not by following the rules and regulations of ordinary, non-devotional, materialistic piety. In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

kim ahaṁ puṇyaṁ nākaravaṁ kim ahaṁ pāpam akaravaṁ tatra kaḥ śoṣakaḥ ko mohah

" `Why should I not perform pious deeds? Why should I sin?' For one who thinks in this way where is calamity? Where is illusion?"

In Bhagavad-gītā (2.52), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*yadā te moha-kalilam
buddhir vyatitariṣyati
tadā gantāsi nirvedam
śrotavyasya śrutasya ca*

"When your intelligence has passed out of the dense forest of delusion, you shall become indifferent to all that has been heard and all that is to be heard."*

In the Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.292-293) it is said:

*nātra śāstram na yuktim ca
tal-lobhottpatti-lakṣaṇam
vaidha-bhakty-adhikārī tu
bhāvāvirbhāvanāvadhi*

*atra śāstram tathā tarkam
anukūlam apekṣate*

"Therefore, in the beginning, everyone should strictly follow the regulative principles of devotional service, according to the injunctions of the scriptures and

the spiritual master. Only after the stage of liberation from material contamination can one actually aspire to follow in the footsteps of the devotees in Vṛndāvana."*

In the Manu-saṁhitā, Chapter Ten, it is said:

*ahimsā satyam astyeyam
śaucam indriya-nigrahaḥ
etaṁ sāmāsikaṁ dharmam
catur-varṇo 'bravīn manuḥ*

"Manu declares that non-violence, truthfulness, religion, cleanliness, and sense-control should be practiced by all four varṇas."

Manu again explains:

*veda-śāstrārtha-tattva-jñō
yatra tatrāśrame vasan
ihaiva loke tiṣṭhan sa
brahma-bhūyāya kalpate*

"A person who knows the true meaning of the Vedas and follows the rules of his āśrama becomes liberated even as he resides in this world."

It is also said:

*anāmnāteṣu dharmeṣu
katham syād iti ced bhavet
yam śiṣṭā brāhmaṇā brūyuh
sa dharmah syād asaṅkitaḥ*

"If someone says, 'What is the religion of the Vedas?' the answer is given, 'The true religion of the Vedas is the religion taught by great transcendentalists'."

It is also said:

*eko 'pi veda-vid dharmam
yam vyavasthed dvijottamaḥ
sa vijñeyaḥ paro dharmo
najñānamudito 'yutaiḥ*

"What a great transcendentalist speaks should be known to be the true religion. True religion is not the opinion of fools."

*avratānām amantrāṇām
jāti-matropajīvinam
sahasraśaḥ sametānām
parisattvaṁ na vidyate*

"There are many thousands of persons who do not follow vows or chant mantras, or who earn a livelihood as professional mantra-chanters or professional brāhmaṇas. These persons have no power to teach what is the real religion, the real truth."

Sūtra 44

bhaktau na varṇāśrama-vidhiḥ sa tasyājñāna-paratvāt

bhaktau—in devotional service; *na*—not; *varṇāśrama-vidhiḥ*—the rules of varṇāśrama; *saḥ*—he; *tasya*—of that; *ajñāna*—of ignorance; *paratvāt*—because of being above.

In devotional service the rules of varṇāśrama-dharma no longer apply, for the devotees of the Lord are above the ignorance of material life.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Are the devotees of the Lord obliged to follow the rules of varṇāśrama-dharma, or are they not obliged to follow them? The author writes this sūtra to answer this question. He says: In devotional service the rules of varṇāśrama-dharma no longer apply. Neophyte, materialistic devotees should follow varṇāśrama-dharma, but advanced devotees, who are situated on the spiritual platform and are free from the grip of the modes of material nature have no use for varṇāśrama-dharma. This pure devotional service is described by the Lord in these words (Bhagavad-gītā 7.19, and 7.17):

jñānavān mām prapadyate

"He who is actually in knowledge surrenders unto Me."*

*teṣāṃ jñāni nitya-yuktā
eka-bhaktir viśiṣyate*

"Of these, the wise one who is in full knowledge in union with Me through pure devotional service is the best."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.18.28) the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*jñāna-niṣṭhā-virakto vā
mad-bhakto cānapekṣakaḥ
sva-liṅgān āśramāṃs tyaktvā
cared avidhi-gocaraḥ*

"A learned transcendentalist dedicated to the cultivation of knowledge and thus detached from external objects, or My devotee who is detached even from desire for liberation, both neglect those duties based on external rituals or paraphernalia.

Thus their conduct is beyond the range of rules and regulations."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (18.66) the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*sarva-dharmān parityajya
mām ekam śaraṇam vraja
aham tvām sarva-pāpēbhyo
mokṣayiṣyāmi mā śucaḥ*

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

Manu explains:

*adhyāpanam adhyayanam
yajanam yājanam tathā
dānam pratigraham caiva
brāhmaṇānām akalpayat*

"A brāhmaṇa should: 1. study, 2. teach, 3. worship the Lord, 4. convince others to worship the Lord, 5. give charity, and 6. accept charity.

*prajānām rakṣaṇam dānam
ijyādhyāyanam eva ca
viśayeṣv aprasaktim ca
kṣatriyasya samāsataḥ*

"A kṣatriya should: 1. protect the citizens, 2. give charity, 3. worship the Lord, 4. study scripture, and 5. not become attached to material sense-objects.

*paśūnām rakṣaṇam dānam
ijyādhyāyanam eva ca
vaṇik-patham kusīdam ca
vaiśyasya kṛṣim eva ca*

"A vaiśya should: 1. protect cows, 2. give charity, 3. worship the Lord, 4. study scripture, 5. engage in banking and commerce, and 6. engage in farming.

*ekam eva tu śūdrasya
prabhuḥ karma samādiśat
eteṣām eva varnānām
śuśrūṣām anasūyayā*

"A śūdra has one duty: without envy he should faithfully serve the other varṇas.

*lokānām tu vivṛddhy-artham
mukha-bāhūru-pādataḥ*

*brāhmaṇaṁ kṣatriyaṁ vaiśyaṁ
śūdraṁ ca niravartayat*

"So the people would prosper, the Supreme Personality of Godhead created the different varṇas. He created the brāhmaṇas from His head, the kṣatriyas from His arms, the vaiśyas from His thighs, and the śūdras from His feet."

In Bhagavad-gītā (18.41-44), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*brāhmaṇa-kṣatriya-viśāṁ
śūdrānāṁ ca parantapa
karmāṇi pravibhaktāni
svabhāva-prabhavair guṇaiḥ*

"Brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas, vaiśyas, and śūdras are distinguished by their qualities of work, O chastiser of the enemy, in accordance with the modes of nature.*

*śamo damas tapaḥ śaucaṁ
kṣantir ārjavam eva ca
jñānaṁ vijñānaṁ āstikyaṁ
brahma-karma svabhāva-jam*

"Peacefulness, self-control, austerity, purity, tolerance, honesty, wisdom, knowledge, and religiousness. These are the qualities by which the brāhmaṇas work.*

*śauryaṁ tejo dhṛtir dākṣyaṁ
yuddhe cāpy apalāyanam
dānam īśvara-bhāvaś ca
kṣatra-karma svabhāva-jam*

"Heroism, power, determination, resourcefulness, courage in battle, generosity, and leadership are the qualities of work for the kṣatriyas.*

*kṛṣi-go-rakṣa-vāṇijyaṁ
vaiśya-karma svabhāva-jam
paricaryātmakaṁ karma
śūdrasyāpi svabhāva-jam*

"Farming, cow-protection, and business are the qualities of work for the vaiśyas, and for the śūdras there is labor and service to others."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (18.47, 6.43, and 6.44), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*śreyān sva-dharmo viguṇaḥ
para-dharmāt svanuṣṭhitāt
svabhāva-niyataṁ karma*

kurvan nāpnoti kilbiṣam

"It is better to engage in one's own occupation, even though one may perform it imperfectly, than to accept another's occupation and perform it perfectly. Prescribed duties, according to one's nature, are never affected by sinful reactions."*

*tatra taṁ buddhi-samyogaṁ
labhate paurva-dehikam
yatate ca tato bhūyaḥ
saṁsiddhau kuru-nandana*

"On taking such a birth, he again revives the divine consciousness of his previous life, and he tries to make further progress in order to achieve complete success, O son of Kuru.*

*pūrvābhyāsena tenaiva
kriyate hy avaśo 'pi saḥ*

"By virtue of the divine consciousness of his previous life, he automatically becomes attracted to the yogic principles, even without seeking them."*

In the Mahābhārata, Śānti-parva, in the description of giving charity, Lord Sadāśiva explains:

*brahma-svabhāvaḥ su-śroṇi
samasarvatra me matiḥ
nirguṇaṁ nirmalaṁ brahma
yatra tiṣṭhati sa dvijaḥ*

"O girl with the beautiful thighs, a brāhmaṇa sees everyone equally..He is beyond the modes of nature. He is pure and always situated in Brahman. That is my opinion.

*karmabhiḥ śucibhir devi
viśuddhātmā jitendriyaḥ
śūdro 'pi dvija-vat sevya
iti brahmābravīt svayam*

"However, even a śūdra who is pure in heart and deed and who controls his senses is equal to a brāhmaṇa, and he should be worshiped. That is the opinion of Lord Brahmā himself.

*svabhāvaṁ karma ca śubhaṁ
yatra śūdro 'pi tiṣṭhati
viśiṣṭaḥ sa dvijāter vai
vijñeya iti me matiḥ*

"A śūdra who finds it natural to engage in auspicious activities is equal to a brāhmaṇa. That is my opinion.

*na yonir nāpi saṁskāro
na śrutam na ca santatiḥ
kāraṇāni dvijatvasya
vṛttam eva tu kāraṇam*

"Neither birth, nor ritual, nor scholarship, nor family designate one as a brāhmaṇa. The way one becomes a brāhmaṇa is by his work.

*jyāyāmsam api śīlena
vihīnam naiva pūjyate
api śūdraṁ ca dharmajñam
yad-vṛttam api pūjayet*

"A so-called high-class person who is degraded in his activities should not be honored, but a so-called śūdra who knows the truth of religion and acts piously is worthy of worship."

Śrī Manu explains:

*japyenaiva tu saṁsiddhyed
brāhmaṇo nātra saṁśayaḥ
kuryād anyān na vā kuryān
maitro brāhmaṇa ucyate*

"By chanting mantras a brāhmaṇa attains perfection. Of this there is no doubt. However, a brāhmaṇa who neglects his brahminical duties is no longer a brāhmaṇa. He is merely a friend to brāhmaṇas.

*cātur-varṇyaṁ trayo lokāms
cāśramaś ca prthak prthak
bhūtaṁ bhāvyaṁ bhaviṣyaṁ ca
sarvaṁ vedāt prasidhyati*

"The four varṇas and āśramas exist in the three worlds in the past, present, and the future also. This is explained in the Vedas."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (2.45), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*traiguṇya-viṣayā veda
nistraiguṇyo bhavārjuna*

"The Vedas mainly deal with the three modes of material nature. Rise above these modes, O Arjuna. Be transcendental to all of them."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (7.11.35), wise and saintly Nārada tells King

Yudhiṣṭhira:

*yasya yal-lakṣaṇaṁ proktaṁ
puṁso varnābhivyañjakam
yad anyatrāpi dṛśyeta
tat tenaiva vinirdīset*

"If one shows the symptoms of being a brāhmaṇa, kṣatriya, vaiśya, or śūdra, as described above, even if he has appeared in a different class, he should be accepted according to those symptom of classification."*

Manu also explains:

*yo 'nadhītya dvijo vedam
anyatra kurute śramam
sa jīvann eva śūdratvaṁ
āśu gacchati sāvayahaḥ*

"A so-called brāhmaṇa who does not study the scriptures should accept the position of another varṇa. If he continues pretending to be a brāhmaṇa, he and his family will become śūdras."

In the Bhagavad-gītā (3.26), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*na buddhi-bhedaṁ janayed
ajñānāṁ karma-saṅginām*

"Let not the wise disrupt the minds of the ignorant who are attached to fruitive action. They should not be encouraged to refrain from work, but to engage in work in a spirit of devotion."*

In the Vedānta-sūtra (1.3.34) it is said:

śuḡ asya tad-anādara-śravaṇāt tadādravaṇāt sūcyate hi

"Because he approached impelled by unhappiness from hearing an insult, the word śūdra here means 'unhappy'."

This sūtra is explained by the passage that begins with these words of Chandogya Upaniṣad (4.1.1):

jānaśrutir hi pauṭrāyanaḥ

"There was a man named Janaśrutir Pautrayana. . . "

The following explanation is seen in a sūtra of Vyāsa (Vedānta-sūtra 1.3.35):

kṣatriyatvāvagatēś cottaratra caitrarathena liṅgāt

"That he is a kṣatriya is understood from the clue related by the caitraratha."

In other sūtras (Vedānta-sūtra 1.3.36-37) it is said:

saṁskārā parāmarṣāt tad-abhāvābhilapāc ca

"This is also so because the scriptures state both the necessity of undergoing the saṁskāras (rituals of purification) and the exclusion of the śūdras from these rituals."*

tad-abhāva-nirdharaṇe ca pravṛtteḥ

"This is so also because care is taken to determine that a student is not a śūdra."

These sūtras are explained by the passage that begins with these words of Chāndogya Upaniṣad (4.4.4):

nāham etad veda bho yad-gotro 'ham asmi

"I do not know into what caste I was born. . . ."

Sūtra 45

ajña-hitārtham grāhyam karma na virodhi

ajña—of the ignorant; *hitārtham*—for the welfare; *grāhyam*—to be accepted; *karma*—activities; *na*—not; *virodhi*—opposing.

Actions for the welfare of the ignorant condition souls should be accepted. These actions do not go against the principles of devotional service.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here someone may protest: Why must the devotees engage in activities? After all the true goal of life is to renounce all activities.

Fearing that someone would speak these words, the author has spoken this sūtra. The word "ajña" here means "they who ignorant, and therefore impure in heart". In order to benefit these persons, who are not qualified to attain transcendental knowledge or engage in devotional service, and to remove such persons' lack of faith in the importance of performing the duties prescribed by the scriptures, the devotees mercifully perform the regular and occasional duties prescribed by varṇāśrama-dharma. That is the meaning. In Bhagavad-gītā (3.21), Lord Kṛṣṇa declares:

yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhaḥ

"Whatever action is performed by a great man, common men follow in his footsteps. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues."*

If it were true that the highest goal of life is attained by renouncing all activities, then to follow this instruction of Bhagavad-gītā will certainly lead one to the destruction of all that is good. The Supreme Personality of Godhead also advises (Bhagavad-gītā 3.20):

*loka-saṅgraham evāpi
sampaśyan kartum arhasi*

"Therefore, just for the sake of educating the people in general, you should perform your work."*

Because the Supreme Personality of Godhead in these words directly orders the acceptance of varṇāśrama duties, these duties are not opposed to the activities of devotional service. However, one should not accept duties that oppose the principles of devotional service, agitate the mind, lead to continued material bondage, create various vices, such as hatred for other living beings, or consist of lustful or forbidden activities. That is the meaning here. In Bhagavad-gītā (12.15), the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*yasmān nodvijate loko
lokān nodvijate ca yaḥ
harṣāmarṣa-bhayodvegair
mukto yaḥ sa ca me priyaḥ*

"He for whom no one is put into difficulty and who is not disturbed by anxiety, who is steady in happiness and distress, is very dear to Me."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (17.6), the Supreme Personality of Godhead also declares:

*karṣayantaḥ śarīra-sthaṁ
bhūta-grāmam acetasaḥ
mām caivāntaḥ-śarīra-sthaṁ
tān viddhy asura-niścayān*

"Those who undergo severe austerities and penance not recommended in the scriptures, performing them out of pride, egotism, lust, and attachment, who are impelled by passion and who torture their bodily organs as well as the Supersoul dwelling within are to be known as demons."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (3.5-9), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*na hi kaścit kṣaṇam api
jātu tiṣṭhaty akarma-kṛt*

*kāryate hy avaśaḥ karma
sarvaḥ prakṛti-jair guṇaiḥ*

"All men are forced to act helplessly according to the impulses born of the modes of material nature. Therefore no one can refrain from doing something, not even for a moment.*

*karmendriyāṇi samyamya
ya āste manasā smaran
indriyārthān vimūḍhātmā
mithyācāraḥ sa ucyate*

"One who restrains the senses and organs of action, but whose mind dwells on sense-objects, certainly deludes himself and is called a pretender.*

*yas tv indriyāṇi manasā
niyamyārabhate 'rjuna
karmendriyaiḥ karma-yogaṁ
asaktaḥ sa viśiṣyate*

"On the other hand, he who controls the senses by the mind and engages his active organs in works of devotion, without attachment, is by far superior.*

*niyataṁ kuru karma tvaṁ
karma jyāyo hy akarmaṇaḥ
śarīra-yātrāpi ca te
na prasiddhyed akarmaṇaḥ*

"Perform your prescribed duty, for action is better than inaction. A man cannot even maintain his physical body without work.*

*tad-arthaṁ karma kaunteya
mukta-saṅgaṁ samācara*

"Therefore, O son of Kuntī, perform your prescribed duties for His satisfaction, and in that way you will always remain unattached and free from bondage."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (3.20-21 and 3.29), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*karmaṇaiva hi saṁsiddhiṁ
asthitā janakādayaḥ
loka-saṅgraham evāpi
sampaśyan kartum arhasi*

"Even kings like Janaka and others attained the perfectional stage by performance of prescribed duties. Therefore, just for the sake of educating the people in general, you should perform your work.*

*yad yad ācarati śreṣṭhas
tad tad evetaro janaḥ
sa yat pramāṇam kurute
lokaḥ tad anuvartate*

"Whatever action is performed by a great man, common men follow in his footsteps. And whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues."*

*prakṛter guṇa-sammūḍhāḥ
sajjante guṇa-karmasu
tān akṛtsna-vido mandān
kṛtsna-vin na vicālayet*

"Bewildered by the modes of material nature, the ignorant fully engage themselves in material activities and become attached. But the wise should not unsettle them, although these duties are inferior due to the performers lack of knowledge."*

Sūtra 46

yathādhikāram avasthitir nopary-adhastvāt

yathā—as; *adhikāram*—qualification; *avasthitih*—situation; *na*—not; *upary*—above; *adhastvāt*—or below.

One should accept the role for which he is qualified, the role that is neither above nor beneath his qualification.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here someone may protest: If renunciation of work is better than performance of duties, then even ignorant persons will attain the real goal of life by renouncing their duties. Since this is so, what is the use of performing one's duties?

Fearing that someone would raise this protest, the author has spoken this sūtra. One should accept the role for which he is qualified, the role that is neither above nor beneath his qualification. That is the meaning of this sūtra. In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.21.2), the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*sve sve 'dhikāre yā niṣṭhā
saguṇaḥ parikīrtitaḥ
viparyayas tu doṣaḥ syād
ubhayor eṣa niścayaḥ*

"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."***

In Bhagavad-gītā (3.35), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*sva-dharme nidhanam śreyaḥ
para-dharmo bhayāvahaḥ*

"Destruction in the course of performing one's own duty is better than engaging in another's duties, for to follow another's path is dangerous."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.14.21), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*bhaktyāham ekaya 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."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.21.2), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*sve sve 'dhikāre ya niṣṭhā
saguṇaḥ parikīrtitaḥ
viparyayas tu doṣaḥ syād
ubhayor esa niścayaḥ*

"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."***

When Lord Kṛṣṇa had concluded His teaching in Bhagavad-gītā, Arjuna spoke these words (Bhagavad-gītā 18.73):

*naṣṭa-mohaḥ smṛtir labdhā
tvat-prasādān mayācyuta
sthito 'smi gata-sandehaḥ
kariṣye vacanam tava*

"My dear Kṛṣṇa, O infallible one, my illusion is now gone. I have regained my memory by Your mercy, and I am now firm and free from doubt and am prepared to act according to Your instructions."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.29.40), Uddhava asks Lord Kṛṣṇa:

*namo 'stu te mahā-yogin
prapannam anuśādhi mām
yathā tvac-caraṇāmbhoje
ratiḥ syād anapāyinī*

"Obeisances unto You, O greatest of yogīs. Please instruct me, who am surrendered unto You, how I may have undeviating attachment to Your lotus feet."***

Manu also explains:

*yaṁ vadanti tamo-bhūtā
mūrkhādharmam atad-vidah
tat-pāpaṁ śatadhā bhūtvā
tad-vaktṛṇ anugacchati*

"They who follow the foolish and impious teachings of the ignorant teachers attain sinful reactions a hundred times over."

In Bhagavad-gītā (18.47), the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*śreyān dva-dharmo viguṇaḥ
para-dharmāt svanuṣṭhitāt
sva-dharme nidhanaṁ śreyaḥ
para-dharmo bhayāvahaḥ*

"It is better to engage in one's own occupation, even though one may perform it imperfectly, than to accept another's occupation and perform it perfectly. Prescribed duties, according to one's nature, are never affected by sinful reactions."*

Manu also explains:

*yo 'vamānyeta te mūle
hetu-śāstrāśrayād dvijaḥ
sa sādhubhir bahiṣkāryo
nāstiko veda-nindakaḥ*

"A brāhmaṇa who criticizes the conclusion of the scriptures is ostracized by righteous people. He who blasphemes the Vedic scriptures is an offender."

In Bhagavad-gītā (5.18), the Supreme Personality of Godhead declares:

*vidyā-vinaya-sampanne
brāhmaṇe gavi hastini
śuni caiva śvapāke ca*

paṇḍitāḥ sama-darsinaḥ

"The humble sage, by virtue of true knowledge, sees with equal vision a learned and gentle brāhmaṇa, a cow, an elephant, a dog, and a dog-eater (outcaste)."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (3.29.28-34), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*jīvāḥ śreṣṭha hy ajīvānām
tataḥ prāṇa-bhṛtaḥ śubhe
tataḥ sa-cittāḥ pravarās
tataś cendriya-vṛttayaḥ*

"Living entities are superior to inanimate objects, O blessed mother, and among them living entities who display life-symptoms are better. Animals with developed consciousness are better than them, and better still are those who have developed sense-perception.*

*tatrāpi sparśa-vedibhyaḥ
pravarā rasa-vedinaḥ
tebhyo gandha-vidaḥ śreṣṭhās
tataḥ sabda-vido varāḥ*

"Among the living entities who have developed sense-perception, those who have developed the sense of taste are better than those who have developed only the sense of touch. Better than them are those who have developed the sense of smell, and better still are those who have developed the sense of hearing.*

*rūpa-bheda-vidas tatra
tataś cobhayatodataḥ
teṣāṃ bahu-padāḥ śreṣṭhās
catuṣ-pādas tato dvi-pāt*

"Better than those living entities who can perceive sound are those who can distinguish between one form and another. Better than them are those who have developed upper and lower sets of teeth, and better still are those who have many legs. Better than them are the quadrupeds, and better still are the human beings.*

*tato varṇās ca catvāras
teṣāṃ brāhmaṇa uttamaḥ
brāhmaṇeṣv api veda-jño
hy artha-jño 'bhyadhikas tataḥ*

"Among human beings, the society which is divided according to quality and work is best, and in that society, the intelligent men, who are designated as brāhmaṇas, are best. Among the brāhmaṇas, one who has studied the Vedas is the best, and among the brāhmaṇas who have studied the Vedas, one who knows the actual purport of Veda is best.*

*artha-jñāt saṁśaya-cchettā
tataḥ śreyān sva-dharma-kṛt
mukta-saṅgas tato bhūyān
adogdhā dharmam ātmanaḥ*

"Better than the brāhmaṇa who knows the purpose of the Vedas is he who can dissipate all doubts, and better than him is one who strictly follows the brahminical principles. Better than him is one who is liberated from all material contamination, and better than him is a pure devotee, who executes devotional service without expectation of reward.*

*tasmān mayy arpitāśeṣa-
kriyārthātmā nirantaraḥ
mayy arpitātmanaḥ puṁso
mayi sannyasta-karmaṇaḥ
na paśyāmi paraṁ bhūtam
akartuḥ sama-darśanāt*

"Therefore I do not find a greater person than he who has no interest outside of Mine and who therefore dedicates all his activities and all his life, everything, unto Me without cessation.*

*manasaitāni bhūtāni
praṇamed bahu-mānayan*

"Such a perfect devotee offers respects to every living entity."*

In the Bhagavad-gītā (4.34), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*tad viddhi pranipātena
paripraśnena sevayā
upadeksyanti te jñānaṁ
jñāninas tattva-darśinaḥ*

"Just try to learn the truth by approaching a spiritual master. Inquire from him submissively and render service unto him. The self-realized soul, can impart knowledge unto you because he has seen the truth."*

Sūtra 47

kāmyetara-bhaktir na śastā citta-vikṣepatvād anitya-phalatvāc ca

kāmya—objects of desire; *itara*—to others; *bhaktiḥ*—devotion; *na*—not; *śastā*—glorious; *citta-vikṣepatvāt*—because of agitating the mind; *anitya*—temporary; *phalatvāt*—because of results; *ca*—also.

Devotion to any object other than the Supreme Personality of Godhead is not

recommended, for such devotion agitates the mind and is temporary by nature.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here someone may protest: On the path of performing pious deeds (karma), where one worships the demigods, pitās, and others, many benefits are obtained. Why, then, do you say that this path of pious deeds is not good?

Fearing that someone would raise this protest, the author speaks this sūtra. Here the word "kāmya" means "the result of lusty desires", "itara" means "other than the Supreme Personality of Godhead", devotional service offered to any one of the many millions of individual spirit souls is not recommended by the devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, for such devotion merely agitates the mind. There are many, many demigods and pitās and others, many many Śruti and Smṛti scriptures describing them, many many rules and regulations to follow in many many different kinds of yajñas and worship offered to them. All this keeps the worshiper very very busy in many many different kinds of activities. In this way the worshiper's mind becomes agitated and he becomes influence by the material mode of passion. This is described in Bhagavad-gītā (2.41), where Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

*bahu-śakhā hy anantāś ca
buddhayo vyavasāyinām*

"The intelligence of they who are irresolute is many-branched."*

These many kinds of demigod-worship bring only temporary results. As farming and commerce brings results that are very short-lived, so the wealth, good children and other benefits attained in this lifetime as well as the residence in Devaloka, Piṭṛloka and other benefits attained in the next lifetime are all very temporary and short-lived. That is the meaning.

In the Śruti-śāstra it is said:

agniṣṭomena sarva-kāmo yajeta

"A person filled with material desires should perform an agniṣṭoma-yajña."

In the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (8.1.6) it is said:

yatheha karma-cito lokāḥ kṣiyate evam amutra puṇya-cito lokāḥ kṣiyate

"As the benefits gained from pious deeds in this world are soon lost, so the benefits gain in the worlds of the devas are also lost very soon."

In Bhagavad-gītā (9.25), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

yānti deva-vratā devān

*pitṛn yānti pitṛ-vratāḥ
bhūtāni yānti bhūtejyā
yānti mad-yājino 'pi mām*

"Those who worship the demigods will take birth among the demigods, those who worship ghosts and spirits will take birth among such beings, those who worship ancestors go to the ancestors, and those who worship Me will live with Me."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (9.22-25), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*ananyāś cintayanto mām
ye janāḥ paryupāsate
teṣāṃ nityābhīyuktānām
yoga-kṣemaṃ vahāmy aham*

"But those who worship Me with devotion, meditating on My transcendental form, to them I carry what they lack and preserve what they have.*

*ye 'py anya-devata-bhaktā
yajante śraddhayānvitāḥ
te 'pi mām eva kaunteya
yajanty avidhi-pūrvakam*

"Whatever a man may sacrifice to other gods, O son of Kuntī, is really meant for Me alone, but it is offered without true understanding.*

*aham tvam sarva-yajñānām
bhoktā ca prabhur eva ca
na tu mām abhijānanti
tattvenātaś cyavanti te*

"I am the only enjoyer and the only object of sacrifice. Those who do not recognize My true transcendental nature fall down.*

*yānti deva-vratā devān
pitṛn yānti pitṛ-vratāḥ
bhūtāni yānti bhūtejyā
yānti mad-yājino 'pi mām*

"Those who worship the demigods will take birth among the demigods, those who worship ghosts and spirits will take birth among such beings, those who worship ancestors go to the ancestors, and those who worship Me will live with Me."*

In Bhagavad-gītā (9.30), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*api cet su-durācāro
yajate mām ananya-bhāk
sādhur eva sa mantavyaḥ
samyag vyavasito hi saḥ*

"Even if one commits the most abominable actions, if he is engaged in devotional service, he is to be considered saintly because he is properly situated."*

In the Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.2.60), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī explains:

*śāstrataḥ śruyate bhaktau
nṛ-mātrasyādhikāritā*

"Every man has the birthright to accept devotional service and to become Kṛṣṇa conscious.* This is proved with evidence from many scriptures."

In the Bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu (1.1.38), Śrīla Rūpa Gosvāmī again explains:

*brahmānando bhaved eṣa
cet parārdha-guṇī-kṛtaḥ
naiti bhakti-sukhāmbodheḥ
paramāṇu-tulām api*

"Even one drop of happiness in Kṛṣṇa consciousness stands beyond comparison with an ocean of happiness derived from any other activity."*

In the Tantras it is said:

*jñānataḥ sulabhā muktir
bhuktir yajñādi-puṇyataḥ
seyam sādhana-sāhasrair
hari-bhaktiḥ su-durlabhā*

"By cultivating transcendental knowledge one easily attains liberation, and by performing yajñas and pious deeds one easily attains sense gratification. However, even after thousands of spiritual struggles it is still very difficult to attain devotion to Lord Hari."

Sūtra 48

pratyakṣānumānābhyām bhāgavata-siddhānta eva garīyān vijñānamayatvāt sarva-siddhāntāśrayatvāc ca

pratyakṣa—by direct perception; *anumānābhyām*—and philosophical speculation; *bhāgavata*—of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *siddhānta*—the conclusion; *eva*—indeed; *garīyān*—better; *vijñānamayatvāt*—because of being filled with transcendental knowledge; *sarva-siddhānta*—of all conclusions; *āśrayatvāt*—because of being the shelter; *ca*—and.

Direct perception and logical inference both confirm that devotional service is the highest truth, for devotional service is filled with transcendental knowledge and is the resting place of all truth.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here someone may ask: In this, the concluding chapter of your book, what do you consider the final conclusion, the highest truth?

Thinking that someone would ask this question, the author speaks this sūtra. He says that direct perception and logical inference, which are two of the great evidences to discern what is the truth, both confirm that devotional service is the highest truth. This truth of devotional service, which was described in the Mahābhārata by Lord Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna, in the Eleventh Canto of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam by Lord Kṛṣṇa to Uddhava, in the four famous verse of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam to Lord Brahmā, in the very first verse of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam, and in many other places in the scriptures in many philosophical dialogues with many questions and answers. Thus the view held by the devotees of the Supreme Personality of Godhead is the highest view, the highest truth. It is a truth higher and better than what is taught by the proponents of fruitive work, philosophical speculation, or other views. That is the meaning.

Because it is filled with pure transcendental knowledge, and because it is thus the best of all conclusions, the conclusion accepted by all noble-hearted and spiritually intelligent persons in all countries and at all times past, present, and future, and because it is the root from which all truths have come, devotional service is the highest truth, the conclusion better than all other conclusions. This is confirmed by Lord Kṛṣṇa, who in Bhagavad-gītā (10.10) declares:

*dadāmi buddhi-yogaṁ taṁ
yena mām upayānti te*

"To those who are constantly devoted and worship Me with love, I give the understanding by which they can come to Me."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (12.13.15) it is said:

*sarva-vedānta-sāraṁ tat
śrī-bhāgavatam iṣyate
tad-rasāmṛta-tṛptasya
nānyatra syād ratiḥ kvacit*

"Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is accepted as the essence of all Vedic literature and Vedānta philosophy. Whoever tastes the transcendental mellow of Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam is never attracted to any other literature."*

Manu explains:

*pratyakṣaṁ cānumānaṁ ca
śāstraṁ ca trividhāgamam
trayaṁ su-viditaṁ kāryaṁ
dharma-śuddhim abhīpsatā*

"Direct perception, logical inference, and scripture are three methods one may employ to understand pure religion."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.7.20), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*ātmano gurur ātmaiva
puruṣasya viśeṣataḥ
yat-pratyakṣānumānābhyāṁ
śreyo 'sāv anuvindate*

"An intelligent person, expert in perceiving the world around him and applying sound logic, can achieve real benefit through his own intelligence. Thus sometimes one acts as one's own instructing spiritual master."***

In Bhagavad-gītā (6.5), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*uddhared ātmanātmānaṁ
nātmānam avasādayet
ātmaiva hy ātmano bandhur
ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ*

"A man must elevate himself by his own mind, not degrade himself. The mind is the friend of the conditioned soul, and his enemy as well."*

Sūtra 49

caitanyaḥ sarvācāryasyāvīrbhāve na gurv-antaram

caitanyaḥ—of Lord Caitanya; *sarva*—all; *ācāryasya*—of the ācārya; *āvīrbhāve*—in the appearance; *na*—not; *guru*—guru; *antaram*—another.

Now that Lord Caitanya, the teacher of all, has appeared in this world, there is no need for any other teacher.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

Here someone may ask: How is it possible to understand this knowledge of devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead without first taking shelter of a spiritual master?

To answer this question, the author speaks this sūtra. he says: Now that Lord Caitanya, the teacher of all saintly Vaiṣṇavas who know the spiritual truth, has appeared in this world, there is no need for any other teacher. That is the meaning.

In the Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad it is said:

*yo brahmāṇaṁ vidadhāti pūrvam yo vai vedāms ca prahiṇoti tasmai taṁ ha devam
ātma-buddhi-prakāśaṁ mumukṣur vai śaraṇam ahaṁ prapadye*

"It was Kṛṣṇa who in the beginning instructed Brahmā in Vedic knowledge and who disseminated Vedic knowledge in the past.* I, who desire liberation, surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa, who enlightens the intelligence with transcendental knowledge."

In Bhagavad-gītā (10.11), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*teṣāṁ evānukampārtham
aham ajñāna-jam tamaḥ
nāśayamy ātma-bhāva-stho
jñāna-dīpena bhāsvatā*

"Out of compassion for them, I, dwelling in their hearts, destroy with the shining lamp of knowledge the darkness born of ignorance."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.17.27), Lord Kṛṣṇa explains:

ācāryaṁ mām vijānīyāt

"One should know the ācārya as Myself and never disrespect him in any way."*

In the Nārada-pañcarātra, Guru-māhātmya, it is said:

*guruś ca jñānodgiraṇāj
jñānaṁ syān mantra-tantrayoḥ
tat tantraṁ sa ca mantraś ca
kṛṣṇa-bhaktir yato bhavet*

"The spiritual master teaches the truth of spiritual mantras and the process of worshipping the Lord. It is because of his teaching of mantras and worship that devotional service to Lord Kṛṣṇa is possible.

*sahasra-dala-padmaṁ ca
sarveṣāṁ mastake mune
tatraiva tiṣṭhati guruḥ
sūkṣma-rūpeṇa santatam*

"O sage, at the highest place in the spiritual world is a thousand-petal lotus flower. In a spiritual form, the spiritual master resides there eternally."

In the Hari-bhakti-vilāsa it is said:

kṛpayā kṛṣṇadevasya

*tad-bhakta-jana-saṅgataḥ
bhakter māhātmyam ākarṇya
tam icchan sad-gurum bhajet*

"By the mercy of Lord Kṛṣṇa, by the association of devotees, and by hearing the glories of devotional service, one desires to engage in devotional service. At that time one finds a spiritual master and dutifully worships him."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.20.17), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*nr-deham adya sulabham su-durlabham
plavam sukalpaṁ guru-karṇadhāram
mayānukūlena nabhasvateritam
pumān bhavābdhim na taret sa ātma-hā*

"When one wants to cross a large ocean he requires a strong boat. It is said that this human form of life is 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 Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.3.21), the Yogeśvara explains:

*tasmād gurum prapadyeta
jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare ca niṣṇātam
brahmaṇy upasamāśrayam*

"Any person who seriously desires to achieve real happiness must seek out a bona fide spiritual master and take shelter of him by initiation. The qualification of his spiritual master is that he must have realized the conclusion of the scriptures by deliberation and be able to convince others of these conclusions. Such great personalities, who have taken shelter of the Supreme Godhead, leaving aside all material considerations, are to be understood as bona fide spiritual masters."*

In the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (1.2.12) it is said:

*tad-vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet
samiṭ-pāṇiḥ śrotriyaṁ brahma-niṣṭham*

"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 the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (6.14.2) it is also said:

ācāryavān puruṣo veda

"One who approaches a bona fide spiritual master can understand everything about spiritual realization."*

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (11.18.38-39), the Supreme Personality of Godhead explains:

*duḥkharkeṣu kāmēṣu
jāta-nirveda ātmavān
ajijñāsitam adharmo
gurum 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."***

*tāvat paricared bhaktaḥ
śraddhāvān anasūyakaḥ
yāvad brahma vijānīyān
mām eva gurum ādṛtaḥ*

"Until a devotee has clearly realized spiritual knowledge, he should continue with great faith and respect and without envy to render personal service to the guru, who is nondifferent from Me."***

It is also said:

*madhu-lubdho yathā bhrīṅgaḥ
puṣpāt puṣpāntaram vrajet
jñāna-lubdho tathā dehī
guror gurv-antaram vrajet*

"As a bee greedy for honey flies from flower to flower, so a man greedy for transcendental knowledge goes from teacher to teacher."

In Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam (2.9.36), the Supreme Personality of Godhead again explains:

*etāvad eva jijñāsyam
tattva-jijñāsunātmanaḥ*

*anvaya-vyatirekābhyām
yat syāt sarvatra sarvadā*

"A person who is searching after the Supreme Absolute Truth, the Personality of Godhead, must certainly search for it up to this, in all circumstances, in all space and time, and both directly and indirectly."*

It is also said:

*brahmānandaṁ ca bhittvā vilasati śikharaṁ yasya yatrāṭṭa-nīḍaṁ
rādhā-kṛṣṇakhyā-lilāmaya-khaga-mithunaṁ bhinna-bhāvena hīnam
yasya cchāyā bhavābdhi-śrama-śamana-karī bhakta-saṅkalpa-siddher
hetuś caitanya-kalpa-druma iha bhuvane kaścana prādurāsīt*

"Far past the bliss of Brahman is the nest of the two birds of Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa's transcendental pastimes, two birds that are not different from each other. That nest is placed on the branches of the kalpa-druma tree of Lord Caitanya. The shade of that tree brings relief from the sufferings of repeated birth and death. To fulfill the devotees' desires, that Caitanya tree has appeared in this world."

Sūtra 50

pare pūrṇānuraktir itareṣu tulyā jaḍe yukta-vairāgyaṁ ceti sāra-grāhi-matam

pare—for the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *pūrṇa*—full; *anuraktiḥ*—love; *itareṣu*—for others; *tulyā*—equal; *jaḍe*—in the material world; *yukta*—proper; *vairāgyam*—renunciation; *ca*—also; *iti*—thus; *sāra-grāhi-matam*—the opinion of they who accept the truth.

They who know the truth give all their love to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, are equally friendly to all living beings, and are appropriately detached from this dull and inert material world.

Commentary by Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura

In this sūtra the final conclusion is clearly expressed. Here the word "pare" means "for the Supreme Personality of Godhead", "pūrṇa" means "unbroken" and also "filled with bliss", and "anuraktiḥ" means "the natural love in the living entity's heart". That is the meaning. "Itareṣu" means "for the individual spirit souls, who are different from the Supreme Personality of Godhead", and "tulyā" means "equal love for all spirit souls". here is the meaning: A madhyama-adhikārī devotee sees all living entities in three classes: 1. the great souls to whom all respect should be offered, 2. the like-minded devotees, with whom friendship should be made, and 3. the people in general, to whom compassion should be shown. However, an uttama-adhikārī devotee does not see these three classes of living beings. Because he sees the Supersoul, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, present in the heart of every living being, such a devotee loves all living beings equally, thinking them all equally his brothers. "Jaḍe" means "dull and inert

matter", and "yukta-vairāgya" means "appropriate renunciation of material things, such as wealth, children, wife, friends, home, country, and the like. This is the opinion of exalted Vaiṣṇava who know the truth, who do not unnecessarily try to cause dissension among the various Vaiṣṇava sampradāyas. What more need be said? Thus all the statement in this book have been supported with many quotes from the scriptures. Now this Tattva-sūtra is completed.

*hārītānvaya-sambhūto
gopīnāthābhidhaḥ kṛtī
vivṛtiṁ tattva-sūtrāṇām
cakāra viduṣām mude*

To please the learned devotees, a saintly devotee named Gopīnātha dāsa, who was born in a family of Vaiṣṇava authors, wrote these sūtras.

*jagannātha-kṣetra-vāsī
mukti-maṇḍapa-panḍitaḥ
jagannātha-prasādena
tad-vyākhyānam acīkarat*

By the mercy of Lord Jagannātha, Gopīnātha dāsa, a resident of Jagannātha Purī and a learned scholar among the liberated souls, wrote these sūtras.

*grantha-gaurava-bhītyā ca
saṅkṣiptaṁ vivṛtaṁ mayā
vistārayantu sudhiyo
bahu-vyākhyāna-yuktibhiḥ*

With great respect, I (Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura) have written a brief commentary on these sūtras. May the intelligent and learned Vaiṣṇavas write many more commentaries on this book, commentaries filled with learned explanations and arguments.