

The Ambrosial Ocean of Devotion

A Translation And Commentary on

श्रीश्री भक्तिरसामृतसिन्धु

śrī-śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu

of

Śrī Rūpa Goswami

by

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bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhu

Eastern Division, First Wave:

“Bhakti in General”

sāmānya-bhakti

मङ्गलाचरण

Maṅgalācaraṇa

Auspicious Invocation

अखिलरसामृतमूर्तिः प्रसृमरुचिरुद्धतारकापालिः ।

कलित श्यामाललितो राधाप्रेयान् विधुर्जयति ॥१॥

akhila-rasāmṛta-mūrtiḥ prasṁmara-ruci-ruddha-tārakā-pāliḥ ।

kalita-śyāmā-lalito rādhā-preyān vidhur jayati ॥ 1 ॥

akhila – without a gap, complete, whole; *rasa* – the essential, enjoyable experience of a person or thing; *amṛta* – deathless, eternal, ambrosial; *mūrtiḥ* – body, form, embodiment, personification, manifestation; *prasṁmara* – spread out, extend, radiate; *ruci* – luster, splendor, beauty, inspiration, appetite/taste; *ruddha* – arrest, take hold of, dominate; *tārakā* – the stars, the girl named Tārakā; *pāliḥ* – the galaxy, the girl named Pāli; *kalita* – to tie to oneself, take ownership of; *śyāmā* – the dark night, the girl named Śyāmā; *lalitaḥ* – romantic grace, the girl named Lalitā; *rādhā-preyān* – who is enamoured by Rādhā; *vidhuḥ* – the unique one: the moon, God; *jayati* – be victorious.

– 1 –

Victory to the moon

Who is enamored by the star named “Rādhā”

Who is the embodiment of all flavor and vitality

Whose radiant luster dominates the galaxy of stars

And who owns the romantic graces of the dark night.

– Or –

Victory to moonlike Krishna

Who is enamored by Rādhā

Who is the embodiment of all pleasure and vitality

Whose radiant luster dominates the hearts

of the star-like girl named Tārakā

and the galaxy-like girl named Pāli

And who owns the hearts

of the beautifully dark girl named Śyāmā

and the romantic, graceful girl named Lalitā.

The first śloka of Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu invokes Śrī Rādhā-Krishna and their associates.

Vidhu

The Moon, and God

The central word in this śloka is *vidhu*. A practical and literal translation of this word is “unique.” As such, the term is most often applied to two unique entities: the moon, who is unique amongst all the luminaries of the night sky, and the Supreme Being, who is unique among all beings. In this śloka Rupa Goswami synthesizes both meanings to create an eloquent and instructive double meaning.

Rādhā-Preyān-Vidhu
The Moon/God, Enamoured of “Rādhā”

Rupa Goswami says that the moon is enamored by the star called “Rādhā.” I am not conversant with Vedic cosmology and it’s modern correlations, but the moon is said to pass most closely to a star called “Rādhā.” Since it seems to make it’s entire journey across the dark sky just to come closer to this star, the moon is said to be in love with the Rādhā-star.

Rupa Goswami describes the Supreme Being as “in love with a girl named Rādhā.” This has two effects, (1) it makes explicit that Rupa Goswami is talking directly about Krishna, who is famous as Rādhā’s lover, and (2) it makes it clear that Rādhā is not an ordinary entity for she is most dearly and intimately loved by the Supreme Being.

Like the moon striving to reach his beloved star, Krishna’s every effort and movement focuses on only one thing: to come closer to his dear Śrī Rādhā.

Akhila-Rasāmṛta-Mūrti
The Complete Embodiment of Eternal Pleasures

In Vedic cosmology, the moon is considered the embodiment of all flavor (*rasa*) and vitality (*amṛta*). The moonlight is said to bestow all taste and nutrition to the earth’s vegetation. Like the moon, Krishna is the embodiment of all pleasure (*rasa*) and vitality (*amṛta*). The potencies that radiate from his Being bestow all enjoyment and vigor to the living entities.

If we take the words *rasa* and *amṛta* as one unit (“*rasāmṛta*”) we discover that Krishna is the source not only of all temporary, phenomenal pleasures (*rasa-āmṛta*), but of all eternal, transcendent pleasures (*rasa-amṛta*) as well. The highest pleasure is to love and be loved. Rupa Goswami calls this pleasure “bhakti-rasa.” Later in this book, he will organize bhakti-rasa into twelve basic categories, all of which, in both their phenomenal and transcendental forms, emanate like cooling rays of moonlight from the effulgent Śrī Krishna.

Prasṁmara-Ruci-Ruddha-Tārakā-Pāli
Who’s Radiant Brilliance Dominates “Tārakā” and “Pāli”

The splendor of the moon radiates in all directions, and dominates the galaxy of stars in the night sky. Likewise, Krishna’s splendor beauty radiates in all directions and dominates the hearts of the gopi named Tārakā (“She who is like a star”) and the gopi named Pāli (“She who is like the galaxy”).

Kalita Śyāmā-Lalitā
Who takes hold of “Śyāmā” and “Lalitā”

The moon owns the romantic grace (*lalitā*) of the dark night (*śyāmā*) because without the moon the dark night would be more fearful than romantic, and more troublesome than graceful. Similarly, Krishna owns the hearts of the gopi named *Śyāmā* (“She who is dark and beautiful like Krishna”) and the gopi named *Lalitā* (“She who is graceful in all the arts of romance”). Without Krishna, the hearts of these girls would neither beat nor continue to sustain their lives.

Rādhā

The gopi named *Rādhā* (“She who is devotion personified”) is supreme. Though Krishna “dominates” some gopis and “owns” the hearts of others, Krishna himself, the source of all bliss, is dominated and enthralled by the blissful beauty and charms of *Śrī Rādhā*.

The other gopis gain their ability to similarly affect Krishna depending on how closely they are associated with *Śrī Rādhā*. Most removed is *Tārakā*, who belongs to a group of girls that are competitive towards *Rādhā*. Next is *Pāli*, who belongs to a group who are neutral to *Rādhā*. Next is *Śyāmā*, who belongs to a group who are friendly to *Rādhā*. Next is *Lalitā*, who belongs to *Rādhā*’s own group of intimate friends. The more removed one is from *Rādhā*, the less affect one is able to have on Krishna.

Jayati

Let There Be Victory

Rupa Goswami uses this word in the present tense to remind us that Krishna’s loving relationship with *Rādhā* and her counterparts is supernatural, for Krishna is *vidhu* – the Supreme Being who is beyond all constraints like time and space, and who is therefore fully present and tangible today, in the present.

We who are currently writing and reading these words can also join in the loving relationship between *Rādhā* and Krishna and thus directly experience the embodiment of all pleasure and vitality. The activities of this loving relationship between the soul and the supreme are the subject matter of *Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu*.

हृदि यस्य प्रेरणया प्रवर्तितोऽहम्बराकरूपोऽपि ।

तस्य हरेः पदकमलं वन्दे चैतन्यदेवस्य ॥२॥

hṛdi yasya preraṇayā pravartito 'ham varāka-rūpo 'pi |
tasya hareḥ pada-kamalaṁ vande caitanya-devasya || 2 ||

hṛdi – in the heart; *yasya* – of whom; *preraṇayā* – setting in motion, commanding, impelling, inspiring; *pravartitaḥ* – set in motion, performed, accomplished; *aham* – I; *varāka-rūpāḥ* – the insignificant and lowly Rupa; *api* – even, although; *tasya* – by whom; *hareḥ* – Hari; *pada-kamalam* – lotus-like feet; *vande* – prayers; *caitanya-devasya* – to Caitanya Deva.

From within my heart, He inspires me to write this book – even though I am the unqualified and lowly Rūpa. I make prayers to the lotus feet of that Lord Hari, who is Śrī Caitanya-deva.

Here Rupa Goswami identifies Sri Caitanya as Lord Hari who dwells within the heart of all living entities. Despite feeling himself unqualified for the task, Rupa Goswami got the inspiration to write Bhakti-Rasamrita-Sindhu from Sri Caitanya. In addition to this internal inspiration, Sri Caitanya personally explained the subjects that would become Bhakti-Rasamrita-Sindhu to Rupa Goswami on the Dvadasvamedha Ghat in Prayag, India. This traces the origin of Bhakti-Rasamrita-Sindhu to the Personality of Godhead, as is mandatory for religious texts (*dharman tu sakshat bhagavan pranitam*)

विश्राममन्दिरत्या तस्य सनातनतनोर्मदीशस्य ।
भक्तिरसामृतसिन्धुर्भवतौ सदायम्प्रोमोदाय ॥३॥

*viśrāma-mandira-tayā tasya sanātana-tanor mad īśasya ।
bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhur bhavatu sadāyam pramodāya ॥ 3 ॥*

viśrāma – resting, repose, calm, tranquility; *mandira* – dwelling, house, palace, temple; *tayā* – going into; *tasya* – by which; *sanātana-tanor* – the body of “Sanātana” (referring either to Sanātana Goswami, or to God the Eternal; *mat* – my; *īśasya* – Lord; *bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhur* – this Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu; *bhavatu* – let it be; *sadāyam* – eternally, always; *pramodāya* – a source of pleasure.

– 3 –

Let this Bhakti-Rasāmṛta-Sindhu be a restful temple of constant pleasure to my Lord Sanātana.

By poetic use of the phrase “sanatana-tanor mad-isha” Rupa Goswami endows this sloka with double meaning: (1) “Let this Bhakti-Rasamrita-Sindhu be a restful temple of constant pleasure to my master, Sri Sanātana Goswami.” And (2) “Let this Bhakti-Rasamrita-Sindhu be a restful temple of constant pleasure to my Lord, the Eternal (‘sanatan’ – the Supreme Godhead).

भक्तिरसामृतसिन्धौ चरतः परिभूतकालजालभियः ।
भक्तमकरानशीलित मुक्तिनन्दीकात्रमसामि ॥४॥

*bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhau carataḥ paribhūta-kāla-jālabhiyaḥ ।
bhakta-makarān aśīlita-mukti-nandikān namasyāmi ॥ 4 ॥*

bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhau – in the ocean of ambrosial devotion; *carataḥ* – those who move, swim; *paribhūta* – the surrounding, enclosing, encapturing; *kāla* – time; *jālabhiyaḥ* – nets; *bhakta-makarān* – the devotee-sharks; *aśīlita* – being ill-behaved, or showing bad manners towards; *mukti-nandikān* – the rivers of liberation; *namasyāmi* – I do respect.

I respect the devotee-sharks swimming in the ambrosial ocean of devotion, deep beneath the fishing-nets of time, abandoning and deriding the shallow rivers of liberation.

Rupa Goswami compares the bhakta (devotee of Radha, Krishna and Lord Caitanya) to a Shark for three reasons: (1) A shark enjoys the waters as the King of the Ocean; so does a bhakta swim in the Ocean of Devotion, enjoying its ambrosial waters. (2) A shark never leaves the ocean for the land or rivers; Similarly, a bhakta never leaves the ocean of devotion for land-locked material pleasures, nor even for the shallow rivers of spiritual opulence. (3) A shark cannot be caught by fishing-nets because it swims deeply in the ocean; Neither can a bhakta swimming deeply in the ambrosial ocean of devotion be caught by the nets of time, which bring about material existence.

मीमांसकबडवाग्नेः कठिनामपि कुण्ठयन् असौ जिह्वाम् ।
स्फुरतु सनातन सुचिरं तव भक्तिरसामृताम्बोधिः ॥५॥

*mīmāṃsaka-baḍavāgneḥ kaṭhinām-api kuṇṭhayann asau jihvām ।
sphuratu sanātana suciram tava bhakti-rasāmṛtāmbhodhiḥ ॥ 5 ॥*

mīmāṃsaka – a follower of the Mīmāṃsaka philosophical system, who pride themselves as being highly investigative and examining; *baḍau-āgneḥ* – the flame-like words; *kaṭhinām* – harsh, inflexible, cruel; *api* – although *kuṇṭhayann* – causing anxiety; *asau* – that; *jihvām* – tongues; *sphuratu* – quaking, shaking; *sanātana* – O Sanatan Goswami, and/or O Eternal Lord; *suciram* – having a long, good, safe life; *tava* – your; *bhakti-rasāmṛta-ambhodhiḥ* – ambrosial ocean of devotion.

O Sanatana let the resplendent waters of this Bhakti-Rasamrita-Sindhu extinguish the flames that issue from the tongues of Mimamsakas.

Having invoked Radha and Krishna (sloka 1), Sri Caitanya (sloka 2), his guru, Sanatan Goswami (sloka 3) and the community of bhaktas (sloka 4), Rupa Goswami now prays for the benediction that his book never be damaged by interpretations from those who believe the ultimate aim of religion to be ritual (karma mimamsaka) or philosophy (jnana mimamsaka).

भक्तिरस्य प्रस्तुतिरखिलजगन्मङ्गलप्रसङ्गस्य ।
अज्ञेनापि मयास्य क्रियते सुहृदाम्प्रमोदाय ॥६॥

*bhakti-rasya prastutirakhila-jagan-maṅgala-prasaṅgasya ।
ajñēnāpi mayāsyā kriyate suhṛdām pramodāya ॥6॥*

Though I am unqualified, I will write this book about bhakti-rasa – the source of universal auspiciousness - to please my dear friends.

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*etasya bhagavad-bhakti-rasāmṛta-payonidheḥ |
catvāraḥ khalu vakṣyante bhāgāḥ pūrvādayaḥ kramāt ॥7॥*

*tatra pūrve vibhāge 'smin bhakti-bhedānirūpake |
anukrameṇa vaktavyaṁ laharīṇāṁ catuṣṭayam ॥8॥*

*ādyā sāmānya-bhaktāḍhyā dvitīyā sādhanānvitā |
bhāvāśritā tṛtīyā ca turyā prema-nirūpikā ॥9॥*

– 7, 8, 9 –

This ocean of Bhakti-Rasamrita I will divide into four sections: East, South, West, and North. First, the Eastern Ocean, having four waves in it, describes the various stages of bhakti.

The first wave concerns bhakti in general (samanya-bhakti). The second wave concerns bhakti in practice (sadhana-bhakti). The third wave concerns bhakti as it becomes perfect (bhava-bhakti). The fourth wave concerns the perfection of bhakti (prema-bhakti).

Definition of Bhakti

तत्रादौ सुष्ठु वैशिष्ट्यमस्याः कथयितुं स्फुटम् ।

लक्षणं क्रियते भक्तेरुत्तमायाः सतां मतम् ॥१०॥

*tatrādaṁ suṣṭhu vaiśiṣṭyam asyāḥ kathayitum sphuṭam |
lakṣaṇam kriyate bhakter uttamāyāḥ satāṁ matam ॥10॥*

– 10 –

Before explaining the above-mentioned topics, I must first define pure devotional service in accordance with the opinion of great saints.

अन्याभिलाषिताशून्यं ज्ञानकर्माद्यनावृतम् ।
आनुकूल्येन कृष्णानुशीलनं भक्तिरुत्तमा ॥११॥

*anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam |
ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanam bhaktir-uttamā ॥11॥*

– 11 –

“Uttama Bhakti” is activity intended to please Krishna, done as the main pursuit of one without ulterior motive.

Bhakti-rasa is the subject of *Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu*. But before describing the relishable flavor of *Bhakti*, we must first understand what *Bhakti* is. Rupa Goswami therefore defines *Bhakti* in the first division of his book, beginning with this essential śloka.

Uttama Bhakti

Uttama means “highest.” This can indicate being above all material qualities and thus being uncontaminated or “pure” (one could analyze the word *uttama* to mean *uttara-tamasa* – “higher than darkness”). As such, one could translate the phrase *uttama-bhakti* as “Pure Devotion.”

Kṛṣṇa-anu-śīlanam

This phrase indicates that *Uttama Bhakti* consists of endeavor (*śīlanam*) that pleases Krishna. First, we should understand the verb “endeavor.”

Everything one does is a result of how one feels inside, because action and emotion are intrinsically connected. In Sanskrit, and implicitly in all languages, verbs therefore imply both action and emotion. Further, a verb implies two types of action: action that *invokes* an emotion, and action that *expresses* an emotion. Emotion exists in the context of two things: one’s basic relationship with the object of action, and the side effects of the emotional-action.

For example, the verb “to laugh” most often implies the action of laughter and the emotion of happiness. Further, one might laugh to invoke happiness, or to express it. The happiness invoked

or expressed by laughter exists in context of a relationship, most often a friendly one, and amidst side effects – quite often fatigue, or disregard for others. In summary:

To Laugh

Action = Laughter
either -

Laughter that invokes happiness

Laughter that expresses happiness

Emotion = Happiness,
in context of -

A friendly relationship

Emotional side effects like fatigue or disregard for others.

In this śloka the verb is “*kṛṣṇa-anu-śīlanam*” - endeavor that pleases Krishna. This verb implies both activity for Krishna, and affection for him. Further, activity for Krishna might be intended to invoke affection for him, or to express it. Affection for Krishna exists in context of a specific type of relationship with Krishna, and amidst side effects. In summary:

Kṛṣṇa-anu-śīlanam – Endeavor That Pleases Krishna

Action = Activity for Krishna
either -

To invoke affection for him

To express affection for him

Emotion = Affection for Krishna
in context of -

One's personal relationship with Krishna

Emotional side effects associated with an action in that relationship

As the book progresses Rupa Goswami will explain the names and definitions of all these categories of *kṛṣṇa-anu-śīlanam*. In brief, Uttama-Bhakti includes all these endeavors:

Cesta-rūpa = Activity for Krishna

either

- To invoke affection for him (**sādhana-bhakti**)
- To express affection for him (*anubhāva*)

Bhāva-rūpa = Affection for Krishna
in context of -

Ones personal relationship with Krishna

- Just beginning (**bhava-bhakti**)
- Fully developed (**prema-bhakti**)

Emotional side effects associated with an action in that relationship
(*vyabhicārī-bhāva*)

Activity for Krishna involves the body, mind, and/or voice. Such activities may be either in pursuit of pleasing Krishna, or in avoidance of displeasing him. For example, in pursuit of pleasing Krishna one might use one's body to clean Krishna's residence. In avoidance of displeasing him, one might avoid causing injury or pain to others. One might use one's mind to meditate on or remember Krishna, or one might avoid using one's mind to dream up inflated images of one's ego. One might use one's voice to sing for Krishna, or might avoid using it to insult Krishna's devotees. Uttama Bhakti includes all these.

Krishna

Krishna is the object of action and emotion in Uttama Bhakti. However, since Krishna is the Supreme Being he includes everyone and everything. Therefore everyone and everything could be a subsidiary object of action and emotion in Uttama Bhakti.

"Krishna" includes Krishna himself as well as his expansions: other forms of God, all living beings, and the energies that compose the spiritual and material worlds. When one of these three expansions of Krishna is the *immediate* object of action and emotion, and Krishna remains the *ultimate* object, one is still within the purview of Uttama Bhakti.

Anukūlyena

Thus far, Rupa Goswami has defined Bhakti as “endeavor that pleases Krishna.” This definition is still incomplete because it includes activities that accidentally or unwillingly please Krishna. Krishna’s famous evil Uncle Kamsa, for example, vigilantly tried to kill Krishna, but unwittingly brought him pleasure with each attempt by giving him opportunity to protect his friends and family and enjoy moral combat. Since his attitude towards Krishna was not affectionate, it should be explicitly clear that his actions are *not* Bhakti, even though they wound up pleasing Krishna.

Rupa Goswami therefore includes the word *anukūlyena* in his definition of Bhakti. This indicates that Bhakti is always impelled by a favorable attitude towards Krishna. Thus, bhakti is not simply an endeavor that pleases Krishna; it is an endeavor *intended* to please Krishna.

The intention to please Krishna is more important than the actual result. For example, Krishna’s mother often had to chastise or discipline Krishna in various ways that apparently displeased him. Even though the end result was apparently displeasing to Krishna, her action is within the purview of Bhakti, because her intention was loving. On the other hand, the end result of Kamsa’s actions was apparently pleasing to Krishna, but his action is not within the purview of Bhakti, because his intention was hateful.

Thus the *intention* to please Krishna is the inseparable essence of endeavor in Uttama Bhakti.

“Devotion” and “Pure Devotion”

Thus far Rupa Goswami has defined bhakti (“devotion”) as, “*ānukūlyena kṛṣṇānu-śīlanam*” – endeavor intended to please Krishna. Now, he refines this to become a definition of Uttama Bhakti (“pure devotion”) by excluding impurities from it as follows:

Anyābhilāṣitā-śūnyam

This phrase indicates that Uttama Bhakti is free from ulterior motive. Bhakti is an endeavor intended to please Krishna, but what if one undertakes such an endeavor with an ulterior motive? What if one offers something to Krishna with the intention of pleasing him, but with the motive to obtain a reward from Krishna as a result of pleasing him – is this Bhakti?

Yes, it *is* Bhakti, but it *is not* Uttama Bhakti – it is a kind of love and devotion, but not *pure* love and devotion. In pure devotion, one pleases one’s beloved simply for the sake of pleasing him or her, and not to obtain anything in return.

The word *anyābhilāṣitā* is made up of “*anya*” (other), “*abhilāṣin*” (one with desires), and the suffix “*-tā*.” It is joined to the word “*śūnyam*” (void). The whole phrase indicates that Uttama Bhakti belongs to persons who are devoid of other desires, devoid of ulterior motives. However, the suffix “*-tā*,” comparable to the English suffix “-ness,” adds a sense of liberality. Here, it indicates that in Uttama Bhakti a person must have basic desireless-ness. In other words, if one’s basic motivation is to please Krishna one can be within the purview of Uttama Bhakti even if extraneous or ulterior desires, especially in trying circumstances, sometimes arise and subside again beneath one’s prime motivation – to please Krishna.

Jñāna-karmādy-anāvṛtam

This phrase indicates that in Uttama Bhakti, one's endeavor to please Krishna is one's main pursuit; it is not obstructed or overshadowed by any other endeavors.

What are “other endeavors?” Rupa Goswami mentions cultivation of Knowledge (*“jñāna”*), secular and religious endeavor for personal prosperity (*“karma”*) and similar other pursuits (*“adi”*).

What kind of knowledge can obstruct or overshadow one's endeavor to please Krishna? Clearly *not* knowledge about how the pure soul loves God (*prajohana-jñāna*), about how to please God (*abhideya-jñāna*), or about one's relationship with God and his creation (*sambandha-jñāna*); these do not obscure Bhakti, they nourish it. Other types of knowledge *can* obstruct or overshadow Bhakti, even knowledge about the soul and knowledge that produces detachment from the temporary world, when not understood in terms of their eternal relationship with God.

What does it mean to “obstruct or overshadow Bhakti?”

If one thinks one cannot please Krishna without first performing certain religious or secular activities, or without first acquiring extraneous varieties of knowledge, etc. then these things have “obstructed” or “overshadowed” (*anāvṛtam*) one's Bhakti. One with such opinions will give more importance to his or her mundane religious, secular or educational endeavors – and his endeavor to directly please Krishna by hearing about him, glorifying him, remembering him, etc. will diminish and weaken in the shadow of one's other pursuits.

Knowledge and activities that do not directly endeavor to please Krishna are, to some extent, an unavoidable counterpart of survival in this ever-changing world. One must undertake the religious, secular, and educational endeavors appropriate for one's survival and basic prosperity. To do so does *not* overshadow or obstruct Bhakti, as long as one does not consider such pursuits to be more significant than the pursuit of pleasing Krishna.

Conclusion

“Devotion” or “Bhakti” is an endeavor intended to please Krishna. When this endeavor is free from the impurities of ulterior motive and not overshadowed by other endeavors, it is “Uttama Bhakti” or “Pure Devotion.” The remainder of Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu describes Uttama Bhakti and its ambrosial flavor.

यथा श्रीनारदपञ्चरात्रे
सर्वोपाधिविनिर्मुक्तं तत्परत्वेन निर्मलम् ।
हृषीकेण हृषीकेशसेवनं भक्तिरुच्यते ॥१२॥

yathā śrī-nārada-pañcarātre

*sarvopādhi-vinirmuktaṁ tat-paratvena nirmalam ।
hṛṣīkeṇa hṛṣīkeśa-sevanam bhaktir ucyate ॥12॥*

Nārada Pañcarātra: “Bhakti is said to be service done with the senses for the Master of the Senses, purified of all material motivation.”

In Sloka 10 Rupa Goswami said he would define Uttama Bhakti according to the opinions of the great saints (“satam matam”). In Sloka 11, he defined, Uttama Bhakti. Now, in Slokas 12-15, he quotes the teachings of great saints to show how his definition is in accordance with their opinion. Here he quotes Narada Muni.

Hrishikena Sevanam = service done with the senses; parallel to “*anusilanam*” from Sloka 11.
Hrishikeshā = Krishna; the service is done for Krishna. The motivation (*tat paratvena*) for such service is pure (*nirmalam*) because it is free from material designation (*sarvopadhi vinirmukta*). This is parallel to “*anyabhilasita sunyam...*” from Sloka 11.

श्री भागवतस्य तृतीयस्वन्धे च
लक्षणं भक्तियोगस्य निर्गुणस्य ह्युदाहृतम् ।
अहैतुक्यव्यवहिता या भक्तिः पुरुषोत्तमे ॥१३॥

śrī bhāgavatasya tṛtīyaskhandhe ca

*lakṣaṇam bhakti-yogasya nirguṇasya hy udāhṛtam ।
ahaituky avyavahitā yā bhaktiḥ puruṣottame ॥13॥*

Third Canto of Śrī Bhāgavatam¹: **“The definition of transcendental Bhakti-yoga: It is devotion for the Supreme Person that arises without cause and cannot be obstructed.”**

Nirguna-bhakti is synonymous with *uttama-bhakti*. *Ahaituki* (causeless) is synonymous with *anyabhilasita sunyam*. *Avyavahita* (“without intervention, without obstruction, without being hidden, covered, or screen, without termination, ceasation, or lapse”) is synonymous with *jnana-karmady anavṛttam*.

सालोक्यसार्धिसामीप्यसारूप्यैकत्वमप्युत ।
दीयमानं न गृह्णन्ति विना मत्सेवनं जनाः ॥१४॥

*sālokya-sārṣṭi-sāmīpya-sārūpyaikatvam apy uta ।
dīyamānam na gṛhṇanti vinā mat-sevanam janāḥ ॥14॥*

¹ This and the following two Slokas are spoken by Kapila-deva in the Bhagavatam.

“To live on my planet, to possess equal opulence as I, to have a place in my entourage, to possess the same form as I, or to achieve oneness with me – If such things are devoid of my service, devotees will not accept them.”

This sloka indicates the depth of a devotee's freedom from ulterior motive (*anyabhilasita sunyam*). They do not even desire liberations as a fruit of their devotion. *Diyamanam* indicates that they will not even accept such fruits if Krishna personally offers them.

स एव भक्तियोगाख्य आत्यन्तिक उदाहृतः ।
येनातिव्रज्य त्रिगुणं मद्भावायोपपद्यते ॥१५॥ इति ।

sa eva bhakti-yogākhyā ātyantika udāhṛtaḥ |
yenātivrajya triguṇaṁ mad-bhāvāyopapadyate ||15|| iti |

“Certainly that bhakti-yoga is the final goal, for by it one crosses far beyond the three modes of material nature and attains my nature.”

This substantiates that Bhakti is free from all material taint (*“uttama”* and *“anyabhilasita sunyam”*). The phrase *mad-bhāvāyopapadyate* may also be read as, “becomes qualified to attain pure love for me” if *mad-bhava* is taken as *“bhava-bhakti for kṛṣṇa.”*

सालोक्येत्यादिपद्यस्थभक्तोत्कर्षनिरूपणम् ।
भक्तेर्विशुद्धताव्यक्त्या लक्षणे पर्यवस्यति ॥१६॥

sālokyetyādi-padyastha-bhaktotkarṣa-nirūpaṇam |
bhakter viśuddhatā-vyaktyā lakṣaṇe paryavasyati ||16||

The śloka beginning with “sālokya” substantiate my definition of pure Bhakti by showing the nature of a Bhakta.

Six Qualities of Uttama Bhakti

कृष्णाय शुभदा मोक्षलघुताकृत्सुदुर्लभा ।

सन्दानन्दविशेषात्मा श्रीकृष्णाकर्षिणी च सा ॥१७॥

*klesaghñī śubhadā mokṣa-laghutākṛt sudurlabhā |
sandrānanda-viśeṣātmā śrī-kṛṣṇākarṣiṇī ca sā ||17||*

– 17 –

Uttamā Bhakti removes suffering, bestows auspiciousness, makes light of liberation, is very rare, is composed of condense bliss, and attracts Śrī Krishna.

तत्रास्याः क्लेशघ्नत्वम्

tatrāsyāḥ kleśaghñatvam

Removing Suffering

क्लेशास्तु पापं तद्बीजमविद्या चेति ते त्रिधा ॥१८॥

klesāstu pāpam tad-bījam avidyā ceti te tridhā ||18||

– 18 –

Suffering has three stages: wrong acts, wrong desires, and wrong understanding.

A wrong understanding of self (*avidya* or “ignorance”) causes desires that are not in consonance with the self. These dissonant desires (*vija* or “seeds”) cause one to act in ways not consonant with the self. The reactions from these dissonant actions (*papam* or “sin”) cause suffering (*klesha*).

तत्र पापम्

tatra pāpam

Wrongful Acts

अप्रारब्धं भवेत्पापं प्रारब्धं चेति तदिद्विधा ॥१९॥

aprārabdham bhavet pāpam prārabdham ceti tad dvidhā ||19||

– 19 –

Wrongful Action has two stages: manifest and unmanifest.

Papam (“wrong action” or “sin”) refers to both the act of sin, and the results of sin, which are twofold: manifest (*prarabdha papam*) results directly felt by the performer of sin, and unmanifest (*aprarabdha papam*) results not yet directly felt by the performer.

This and the previous sloka together identify that suffering comes from sin, which is of four distinct stages: (1) *vijam* – desire, (2) *avidya* – ignorance, (3) *prarabdha papam* – manifest sin, and (4) *aprarabdha papam* – unmanifest sin.

तत्र अप्रारब्धहरत्वम्

tatra aprārabdha-haratvam

Removing Unmanifest Sin

यथा एकडशे

यथाग्निः सुसमृद्धार्चिः करोत्येधांसि भस्मसात् ।

तथा मद्विषया भक्तिरुद्धवैनांसि कृत्स्नशः ॥२०॥

yathā ekaḍaśe –

yathāgniḥ susamṛddhārciḥ karoty edhāṁsi bhasmasāt |
tathā mad-viṣayā bhaktir uddhavaināṁsi kṛtsnaśaḥ ||20||

– 20 –

Eleventh Canto [11.14.16]: “A blazing fire consumes wood to ashes, so does devotion to Me consume sins, Uddhava.”

The unmanifest potential for fire is in wood. The sins compared to here to wood are unmanifest sins (*aprarabdha papam*). Bhakti consumes this stage of suffering.

प्रारब्धहरत्वम्

prārabdha-haratvam

Removing Manifest Sin

यथा तृतीये

यन्नामधेयश्रवणानुकीर्तनाद् यत्प्रह्वणद्यत्स्मरणादपि क्वचित् ।

श्वादोऽपि सद्यः सवनाय कल्पते कुतः पुनस्ते भगवन् नु दर्शनात् ॥२१॥

yathā tṛtīye –

*yan-nāmadheya-śravaṇānukīrtanād
yat-prahvaṇad yat-smaraṇād api kvacit |
śvādo’pi sadyaḥ savanāya kalpate
kutaḥ punaste bhagavan nu darśanāt ||21||*

– 21 –

Third Canto [3.33.6]: “Hearing or saying your name, offering you obeisance, or even once remembering you turns even a dog-eater into a priest of ritual. Then what of those who receive your direct audience?”

Rupa Goswami explains this sloka in the next.

दुर्जातिरेव सवनायोग्यत्वे कारणम्मतम् ।
दुर्जात्यारम्भकं पापं यत्स्यात्प्रारब्धमेव तत् ॥२२॥

*durjātir eva savanā-yogyatve kāraṇam matam |
durjāty-ārambhakaṁ pāpaṁ yat syāt prārabdham eva tat ||22||*

– 22 –

Poor birth is considered the cause of being ineligible to perform priestly ritual. Poor birth is the manifestation of previous sin, known as “prārabdham.”

The previous sloka said that even a slight connection with Uttama Bhakti turns a person considered by Vedic standards to be of the poorest birth (a dog eater) into a person considered to be of purest birth (a priest). The condition of ones birth is supposed to be the result of his previous actions, and is therefore a manifest reaction (*prarabdha karma*). Saying that Uttama Bhakti nullifies the effects of a poor birth is thus equivalent to saying that it removes the suffering felt from manifest sinful reactions (*prarabdha papam*).

पद्म पुराने च
अप्रारब्धफलं पापं कूटं बीजं फलोन्मुखम् ।
क्रमेणैव प्रलीयेत विष्णुभक्तिरतात्मनाम् ॥२३॥

padma purāṇe ca –

*aprārabdha-phalaṁ pāpaṁ kūṭaṁ bījaṁ phalonmukham |
krameṇaiva praliyeta viṣṇu-bhakti-ratātmanām ||23||*

– 23 –

Padma Purāna: “All stages of sin – unmanifest, internal, seed, or manifest – are destroyed in turn by Vishnu-Bhakti.”

The Padma Purana here identifies four stages of sin, (1) *aprārabdha phalam* – sin whose fruit has not yet manifest, (2) *kūṭarṁ* – sin which is silent within the heart, (3) *bijarṁ* – sin voiced as desire, and (4) *phalonmukham* – sin whose fruit manifests as suffering.

These four stages are identical with the four stages identified by Rupa Goswami in slokas 18 and 19. (1) Padma Purana’s *aprārabdha phalam* is identical with Rupa Goswami’s *aprārabdha papam*, (2) Padma Purana’s *kūṭarṁ* is synonymous with Rupa Goswami’s *avidya* as they both define latent conditions of the heart which give rise to unnatural desire, (3) Padma Purana’s *bijarṁ* is identical with Rupa Goswami’s *bijarṁ*, and (4) Padma Purana’s *phalonmukham* is synonymous with Rupa Goswami’s *prārabdha papam* as they both define the state of sin that produces the fruit of suffering.

By characterizing unmanifest sin (*aprārabdha papam*) as “*kūṭarṁ-unmukham*” this sloka indicates that unmanifest sin nourishes ignorance (*kūṭarṁ / avidya*). This reveals sin to be a self-perpetuating cycle that begins with a grain of willful ignorance (*avidya* or *kūṭarṁ*). This ignorance, which is essentially an unnatural conception of self, produces unnatural desires, which in turn impel unnatural actions (“sin”). These actions generate manifest (*prārabdha*) as well as unmanifest (*aprārabdha*) reactions. These unmanifest reactions produce ignorance (*kūṭarṁ / avidya*) and thus restart the cycle of sin with increased velocity.

This sloka contends that the cycle can be broken by Vishnu-Bhakti, which eradicates all stages of sin in the following order: first *aprārabdha*, then *avidya/kūṭarṁ*, then *bijarṁ*, and finally *prārabdha*.

बीजहरत्वम्

bīja-haratvam

Removing Desire for Sin

यथा षष्ठे

तैस्तान्यघानि पूयन्ते तपोदानव्रतादिभिः ।

नाधर्मजं तद्दुदयं तदपीशाद्विसेवया ॥२४॥

yathā ṣaṣṭhe –

tais tāny aghāni pūyante tapo-dāna-vratādibhiḥ ।

nādharmajarṁ tad dhṛdayaṁ tad apīśādvisevayā ॥24॥

– 24 –

In the Sixth Canto [6.2.17]: “Sins can be purified by austerity, charity, vows, and other religious observances, but only Service to the feet of the Lord can purify the heart and the birth place of irreligiosity.”

This sloka admits that there are other means to remove suffering, but establishes that besides Uttama Bhakti no means can permanently remove suffering. The “birth place of irreligious action” (*adharmaja*) is irreligious desire (*bijam*).

अविद्याहरत्वम्

avidyā-haratvam

Removing Ignorance

यथा चतुर्थे

यत्पादपङ्कजपलाशविलासभक्त्या कर्माशयं ग्रथितमुद्ग्रथयन्ति सन्तः ।

तद्वन् न रिक्तमतयो यतयोऽपि रुद्ध स्रोतोगणास्तमरणं भज वासुदेवम् ॥२५॥

yathā caturthe –

yat-pāda-paṅkaja-palāśa-vilāsa-bhaktyā

karmāśayaṁ grathitam udgrathayanti santaḥ ।

tadvan na rikta-matayo yatayo 'pi ruddha-

srota-gaṇās tam araṇam bhaja vāsudevam ॥25॥

– 25 –

Fourth Canto [4.22.39]: “By devotion to His pleasant lotus-petal-like toes, saints untie the hard knot binding them to desire and action. But those without such a mood cannot stop the flow of the senses, though they try and try. Therefore be devoted to the most worthy Vasudeva.”

As denoted in slokas 23 and 18, ignorance (*avidya* or *kūṭam*) is the knot binding one to desire (*bijam* or, in this sloka, *āśa*), which in turn binds one to sinful action (*pāpam*, or in this sloka, *karma*). This sloka indicates that only Uttama Bhakti can untie this knot of Ignorance.

पादौ च

कृतानुयात्राविद्याभिर्हरिभक्तिरनुत्तमा ।

अविद्यां निदर्हत्याशु दावज्वालेव पन्नगीम् ॥२६॥

pādme ca –

kṛtānuyātrā-vidyābhir hari-bhaktir anuttamā ।

avidyāṁ nidarhatyāśu dāvajvāleva pannagīm ॥26॥

– 26 –

Padma Purana: “Knowledge follows naturally from the practice of devotional service to Hari, and destroys ignorance like a forest fire destroys snakes.”

Rupa Goswami’s discussion of the first quality of Uttama Bhakti, the Removal of Suffering, concludes with this sloka. He contends herein that Uttama Bhakti is the best means of obtaining relief from distress, for it removes all stages of suffering, and is the only means to eradicate the root cause, ignorance.

शुभदत्वम्

śubhadatvam

Bestowing Auspiciousness

शुभानि प्रीणनं सर्वं जगतामनुरक्तता ।
सद्गुणाः सुखमित्यादीन्याख्यातानि मनीषिभिः ॥२७॥

*śubhāni prīṇanam sarva-jagatām anuraktatā ।
sadguṇāḥ sukham ity ādīny ākhyātāni manīṣibhiḥ ॥27॥*

– 27 –

The wise describe the main characteristics of “auspiciousness” as that which (1) is universally endearing and beneficial, (2) generates saintly character, and (3) bestows happiness.

तत्र जगत्प्रीणनादिद्वयप्रदत्वम्

tatra jagat-prīṇanādi-dvaya-pradatvam

Bestowing Universal Endearment and Benefit

यथा पाद्रे
येनार्चितो हरिस्तेन तर्पितानि जगन्त्यपि ।
रज्यति जन्तवस्तत्र जङ्गमाः स्थावरा अपि ॥२८॥

yathā pādme –

*yenārcito haris tena tarpitāni jaganty api ।
rajanyaṁti jantavas tatra jaṅgamāḥ sthāvarā api ॥28॥*

– 28 –

Padma Purana: “One who worships Hari satisfies the entire universe. Thus everyone, even the immobile entities, hold him dear.”

The auspicious person holds everyone dear, and everyone holds him dear. He therefore acts for the benefit of everyone, and everyone wishes to benefit him.

सद्गुणादिप्रदत्वम्

sadguṇādipradatvam

Bestowing Saintly Character

यथा पञ्चमे

यस्यास्ति भक्तिर्भगवत्यकिञ्चना सर्वैर्गुणैस्तत्र समासते सुराः ।

हरावभक्तस्य कुतो महद्गुणा मनोरथेनासति धावतो बहिः ॥२९॥

yathā pañcame –

yasyāsti bhaktir bhagavaty akiñcanā

sarvair guṇais tatra samāsate surāḥ |

harāv abhaktasya kuto mahad-guṇā

manorathenāsati dhāvato bahiḥ ||29||

– 29 –

Fifth Canto [5.18.12]: “All saintly qualities and the gods themselves are found in one with pure devotion to God. But what good quality can exist in those devoid of devotion, whose minds race to externals?”

सुखप्रदत्वम्

sukhapradatvam

Bestowal of “Happiness”

सुखं वैषयिकं ब्राह्ममैश्वरं चेति तन्निधा ॥३०॥

sukhaṁ vaiṣayikaṁ brāhmam aiśvaraṁ ceti tat-tridhā ||30||

– 30 –

Happiness is of three types: (1) from objects, (2) from the soul, and (3) from God.

यथा तन्त्रे
सिद्धयः परमाश्चर्या भुक्तिमुक्तिश्च शाश्वती ।
नित्यं च परमानन्दो भवेद्गोविन्दभक्तिः ॥३१॥

yathā tantrē

*siddhayaḥ paramāścaryā bhukti-muktiś ca śāśvatī |
nityam ca paramānando bhaved govinda-bhaktiḥ ॥31॥*

– 31 –

Tantra: “Wondrous mystic perfections, everlasting sensory pleasure and liberation, and eternal, supreme bliss manifest from devotion to Govinda.”

Mystic perfections (siddhi) and sensory pleasure (bhukti) are both in the category of Happiness from Objects (vaisaya sukha – see sloka 30). Liberation (mukti) is in the category of Happiness from the Soul (brahmana sukha). Supreme eternal bliss (paramananda) is in the category of Happiness from God (aisvara sukha).

यथा हरिभक्तिसुधोदये च
भूयोऽपि याचे देवेश त्वयि भक्तिर्दृढास्तु मे ।
या मोक्षान्तचतुर्वर्गफलदा सुखदा लता ॥३२॥

yathā hari-bhakti-sudhodaye ca

*bhūyo 'pi yāce deveśa tvayi bhaktir dṛḍhāstu me |
yā mokṣānta-caturvarga-phaladā sukhadā latā ॥32॥*

– 32 –

Hari-Bhakti-Sudhodaya: “Repeatedly I ask, O Master of the gods; Grant me steadfast devotion to you, for that devotion is a vine whose fruits are the four human goals,² up to final liberation, and all the happiness thereof.”

Thus sloka confirms that Uttama-Bhakti bestows all categories of happiness. Rupa Goswami has demonstrated that Uttama Bhakti bestows auspiciousness for it makes the Bhakta universally endeared and beneficial (sloka 28), develops his or her saintly character (sloka 29), and bestows all categories of happiness (slokas 30 -32).

² The fruits of the four human goals are: 1. pleasure (kama), 2. economic prosperity (artha), 3. righteousness (dharma), and 4. liberation (moksa).

मोक्षलघुताकृत्

mokṣa-laghutā-kṛt

Making Even Liberation Seem Trivial

मनागेव प्ररुढायां हृदये भगवाद्रतौ ।

पुरुषार्थास्तु चत्वारस्तृणायन्ते समन्ततः ॥३३॥

*manāḡ eva prarudhāyām hṛdaye bhagavāḍ-ratau ।
puruṣārthās tu catvārās tṛṇāyante samantataḥ ॥33॥*

– 33 –

When affection for God slightly awakens in the heart, the four goals of human life seem equal to straw.

यथा श्री नारदपाञ्चरात्रे

हरिभक्ति महादेव्याः सर्वमुक्त्यादिसिद्धयः ।

भुक्तयश्चाद्भुतस्तस्य चेटिकावदनुव्रताः ॥३४॥

yathā śrī nārada-pāñcarātre –

*hari-bhakti mahā-devyāḥ sarva-muktyādi-siddhayaḥ ।
bhuktayaś cādbhutas tasya ceṭikāvad anuvratāḥ ॥34॥*

– 34 –

Narada Pancaratra: “Hari Bhakti is the Supreme Goddess, and all other accomplishments – including liberation, perfection, and wondrous pleasures – are hand-maids attending her attentively.”

Rupa Goswami says that all other goals of life seem trivial when compared to achieving pure affection for God. This Sloka, quoted from Narada Pancaratra, illustrates the point by comparing Uttama Bhakti to the Supreme Goddess and all other achievements to her servants.

सुदुर्लभा

sudurlabhā

Very Rare

साधनाउघैरनासन्गैरलभ्य सुचिरादपि ।
हरिणा चाश्वदेयेति विधा सा स्यात्सुदुर्लभा ॥३५॥

*sāadhanāughair anāsangair alabhyā sucirādapi ।
harinā cāśv adeyeti dvidhā sā syāt sudurlabhā ॥35॥*

– 35 –

There are two reasons Uttama Bhakti is very rare: (1) One cannot obtain it by diligently and prolongedly performing sadhana without attachment, and (2) Hari is reluctant to bestow it.

Explaining this sloka requires referencing two other slokas yet to come in Bhakti Rasamrita Sindhu. First, in sloka 1.1.46, Rupa Goswami explains that Uttama Bhakti's hallmark of being "very rarely achieved" (sudurlabha) refers to the achievement of Uttama Bhakti at the stage of Bhava.³

Second, in sloka 1.3.6, Rupa Goswami explains that Bhava-Bhakti is attainable by two means, through practice or by Krishna's blessing.

This being said, the current sloka means, "Bhava Bhakti is very rarely attained because (1) although it can be attained by practice, even diligent and prolonged practice will not achieve bhava-bhakti if that practice is without deep and sincere attachment to Krishna, and (2) although it can be attained by Krishna's blessing, he is reluctant to bestow such blessings."

तत्र आद्या

tatra ādyā

About the first

यथा तान्त्रे

ज्ञानतः सुलभा मुक्तिर्भुक्तिर्यज्ञादिपुण्यताः ।
सेयं साधनसाहस्रैर्हरिभक्तिः सुदुर्लभा ॥३६॥

yathā tāntre –

³ Rupa Goswami will define Bhava Bhakti in 1.3.2. Meanwhile, it is sufficient to know that Bhava Bhakti is the stage in which one's practice of Uttama Bhakti becomes perfect and love of God begins to become an integral part of one's essential personality.

*jñānataḥ sulabhā muktir bhuktir yajñādi-puṇyatāḥ |
seyaṁ sādhana-sāhasrair hari-bhaktiḥ sudurlabhā ||36||*

– 36 –

Tantra: “Liberation comes easily by jnanayoga. Sense gratification comes easily by performing sacrifice, but Hari Bhakti remains very difficult to attain even after practicing t thousands of times.”

In the previous sloka, Rupa Goswami clarified that sadhana (practice), even if diligent and prolonged, cannot attain bhava-bhakti as long as it is “without attachment.” Ahead, in sloka 1.4.15-16, Rupa Goswami will clarify that sadhana must progress through various stages of purification until it eventually comes to the stage of “attachment” (asakti).⁴ Only when Sadhana is executed with intense and sincere attachment to Krishna can it awaken Bhava-Bhakti.

द्वितीया

dviṭīyā

About the second

यथा पाञ्चमस्कान्धे

राजान् पतीर्गुरुरलं भवतां यदूणां दैवं प्रियः कुलपतिः क्व च किङ्करो वः ।
अस्त्वेवमङ्ग भजतां भगवान् मुकुन्दो मुक्तिं ददाति कर्हिचित्स्म न भक्तियोगम् ॥३७॥

yathā pāñcama-skāndhe –

*rājān patīr gurur alaṁ bhavatām yadūṇām
daivaṁ priyaḥ kula-patiḥ kva ca kiṅkaro vaḥ |
astv evaṁ aṅga bhajatām bhagavān mukundo
muktiṁ dadāti karhicit sma na bhakti-yogam ||37||*

– 37 –

Fifth Canto [5.6.18]: “O King! Lord Mukunda became the protector of your family, your teacher, god, friend, family-head, and even your servant because of the strong affection you have for him. Thus, he may grant one liberation but not easily bhakti.”

As said in sloka 35, Bhava-bhakti can be attained by Krishna’s blessing, but he is reluctant to bestow such blessings. This sloka explains why. When fully developed, affection for God attracts

⁴ The stages Sadhana must pass through are: *anartha-nivṛtti* (“removal of impurities”), *niṣṭha* (“fixedness”), *ruci* (“taste for Bhakti”), and finally *asakti* (“attachment to Krishna”).

the Supreme and places him subordinate, as illustrated in this sloka from the Fifth Canto of Bhagavat Purana. Krishna is very reserved about granting such a powerful blessing.

सान्द्रानन्दविशेषात्मा

sāndrānanda-viśeṣātmā

Composed of Condensed Bliss

ब्रह्मानन्दो भवेदेष चेत्परार्धगुणीकृतः ।
नैति भक्तिसुखाम्भोधेः परमाणुतुलामपि ॥३८॥

*brahmānando bhaved eṣa cet parārdha-guṇīkṛtaḥ ।
naiti bhakti-sukhāmbhodheḥ paramāṇu-tulām api ॥38॥*

– 38 –

The infinite bliss that arises from attaining selfrealization is an infinitesimal drop in the ocean of bhakti’s happiness.

यथा हरिभक्तिसुधोदये
त्वत्साक्षात्करणाह्लादविशुद्धाब्धिस्थितस्य मे ।
सुखानि गोष्पदायन्ते ब्राह्मण्यपि जगद्गुरो ॥३९॥

yathā hari-bhakti-sudhodaye –

*tvat-sākṣāt-karaṇāhlāda-viśuddhābdhi-sthitasya me ।
sukhāni goṣṭpadāyante brāhmāṇy api jagad-guro ॥39॥*

– 39 –

Hari Bhakti Sudhodaya: “Being in your direct company generates the ocean of pure bliss in which I am now plunged. In comparison, even the happiness self-realization seems as small as a puddle in a cow’s hoofprint, O teacher of the world.”

तथा भावार्थदीपिकायां च
त्वत्कथामृतपाथोद्यौ विहरन्तो महामुदः ।
कुर्वन्ति कृतिनः केचित्चतुर्वर्गं तृणोपमम् ॥४०॥

tathā bhāvārtha-dīpikāyām ca –

*tvat-kathāmṛta-pāthoghau viharanto mahāmudah |
kurvanti kṛtinah kecit caturvargam tṛṇopamam ||40||*

– 40 –

Bhāvārtha Dīpikā: “Those who enjoy hearing of your ambrosial pastimes alone truly consider the four goals of life to be like straw.”

श्रीकृष्णाकर्षिणी

śrī-kṛṣṇākarṣiṇī

Attracting Śrī Krishna

कृत्वा हरिं प्रेमभाजं प्रियवर्गसमन्वितम् ।
भक्तिर्वशीकरोतीति श्रीकृष्णाकर्षिणी मता ॥४१॥

*kṛtvā harim premabhājam priya-varga-samanvitam |
bhaktir vaśīkarotīti śrī-kṛṣṇākarṣiṇī matā ||41||*

– 41 –

Worshipping Hari with pure love makes him equally enchanted with the worshipper. Thus we consider that one with Bhakti can attract Śrī Krishna.

[Comment forthcoming]

यथैकादशे

न साध्यति माम्योगो न सांख्यं धर्म उद्धव ।
न स्वाध्यायस्तपस्त्यागो यथा भक्तिर्ममोर्जिता ॥४२॥

yathaikādaśe –

*na sādhyati mām yogo na sāṅkhyam dharma uddhava |
na svādhyāyas tapas tyāgo yathā bhaktir mamorjitā ||42||*

– 42 –

Eleventh Canto [11.14.20]: “I cannot be attained by yoga, nor study, nor religion, O Uddhava; nor by recitation of scripture, by austerity, or by renunciation. Thus only love (Bhakti) can conquer me.”

सप्तमे च नारओक्तौ
यूयं नृलोके बत भूरिभागा लोकं पुनाना मुनयोऽभियन्ति ।
येषां गृहानावसतीति साक्षाद्गुढं परं ब्रह्म मनुष्यलिङ्गम् ॥४३॥

saptame ca nāraoktau –

*yūyaṁ nṛloke bata bhūribhāgā
lokaṁ punānā munayo'bhiyanti ।
yeṣāṁ grhānāvasatīti sāksād
guḍhaṁ paraṁ brahma manuṣya-lingam ॥43॥*

– 43 –

Seventh Canto, Nārada [7.10.48]: “You are the most fortunate persons in this world. Even the saints who purify the world desire to live in your home, for there the Supreme directly manifests in the most secret human form.”

अग्रतो वक्ष्यमाणायास्त्रिधा भक्तेरनुक्रमात् ।
द्विशः षड्भिः पदैरेतन् माहात्म्यं परिकीर्तितम् ॥४४॥

*agrato vakṣyamānāyās tridhā bhakter anukramāt ।
dviṣaḥ ṣaḍbhiḥ padairetan mātmyam parikīrtitam ॥44॥*

– 44 –

In the beginning, I mentioned that Uttama Bhakti has three stages of development. Each stage has two of these six glorious and famous qualities.

The first and second qualities, relief from distress and bestowal of auspiciousness, begin to be felt in the initial stage of Uttama Bhakti, called “Sadhana”. The third and fourth qualities, making even liberation seem trivial and being very rarely achieved, are characteristics of Uttama Bhakti’s second stage, “bhava.” The final two qualities, being composed of condensed bliss and attracting Sri Krishna, are manifest in Uttama Bhakti’s final stage, “prema.”

Each of the three stages of Uttama Bhakti contain the qualities of the stages before it. Thus sadhana has qualities one and two, while bhava has these two, plus the third and fourth quality, and prema has all four previous qualities, plus the fifth and six.

Each quality manifests sequentially (anukramat). Thus each quality becomes fully mature only at the stage of prema. It may be inferred that the qualities continue to expand through the various substages of prema, up to and including the highest stage of prema, “mahabhava.”

किंच

Endnotes

स्वल्पापि रुचिरेव स्याद्भक्ति तत्त्वावबोधिका ।
युक्तिस्तु केवला नैव यदस्या अप्रतिष्ठता ॥४५॥

*svalpāpi rucir eva syād bhaktitattvāvabodhikā |
yuktis tu kevalā naiva yadasyā apratiṣṭhatā ॥45॥*

– 45 –

Just a little attraction will make the truth of bhakti understandable, not intelligence alone, which is unstable.

तत्र प्राचीनैरप्युक्तम्
यतेनापादितोऽप्यर्थः कुशलैरनुमातृभिः ।
अभियुक्ततरैरन्यैरन्यथैवोपपाद्यते ॥४६॥

tatra prācīnair apy uktam –

*yatenāpādito ‘py arthaḥ kuśalair anumātr̥bhiḥ |
abhiyuktatarair anyair anyathaivopapādyate ॥46॥*

– 46 –

The elders say: “The conclusion established by the intellectual is soon replaced by the conclusion of one with subtler intellect.”

इति श्री श्री भक्तिरसामृतसिन्धौ
पूर्वभागे भक्तिसामान्य लहरी प्रथमा

*iti śrī śrī bhakti-rasāmṛta-sindhau
pūrva-bhāge bhakti-sāmānya laharī prathamā*

**This concludes the First Wave of the Eastern Ocean
of Śrī Śrī Bhakti Rasāmṛta Sindhu,
on the topic of Bhakti in General.**