

Sri Madhurya Kadambini

(translation seems better than the other)

(A Cloudbank of Nectar—Una nube cargada de Nīctar)

CHAPTER 1

First Shower of Nectar

Mangalacharana

*hrd-vapre nava-bhakti-sasya-vitateh
sanjivani svagama-
rambhe kama-taparttu-daha-damani
visvapagollasini duran me maru-
sakhino 'pi sarasi-bhavaya bhuyat prabhu-*

*sri-caitanya-krpa-nirankusa-maha-
madhurya-kadambini*

“The mercy of Shri Krishna Chaitanya Mahaprabhu is an uncontrollable cloud bank of exquisitely sweet nectar whose sudden appearance fully rejuvenates the grains of nine-fold bhakti in the field of the heart, extinguishes the burning summer heat of lust and bestows rapture to the universal river of living beings. From far off, may those clouds of the Lord's mercy give satisfaction and pleasure even to this worthless soul, a dried-up tree in the desert.”

“Though previous mahajans (Prahlad, Dhruva, Kumaras, etc.) have taken up the path of *bhakti*, I constantly pay my obeisances to Shrila Rupa Goswami, the Lord's dear one, by whose mercy one now attains the intelligence to see *bhakti* in its complete *rasa* form.”

We will proceed on the basis of *shastra* or scriptural evidence (*shabda praman*), which is the best of all evidences. Thus the Taittiriya Upanishad (*shruti*), after discussing the different coverings (*annamaya*, etc.), emphatically declares that superior to Brahman, who is the shelter or support of these coverings: *brahma puccham pratistha* (2.5.2), is the *param anandamaya purusha* or *paratpara tattva* (most supreme truth) by describing Him as the embodiment of *rasa*: *raso vai sah rasam hy evayam labdhvanandi bhavati*, the Lord is *rasa* itself and, attaining that *rasa*, the *jiva* becomes blissful (2.7.2). In this vein, the Shrimad Bhagavatam, the cream of Vedanta and emperor among all types of evidence, describes Lord Krishna as the full embodiment of *rasa* or pleasure:

*mallanam asanir nram nara-
varah strinam smaro murtiman
gopanam sva-jano 'satam ksiti-
bhujam sasta sva-pitroh sisuh
mrtyur bhoja-pater virah avidusam tattvam
param yoginam
vrsninam para-devateti vidito ragam
gatah sagrajah*

The various groups of people in the wrestling arena regarded Krishna in different ways when He entered it with His elder brother. The wrestlers saw Krishna as a lightning bolt, the ordinary men as the best of men, the women as Cupid incarnate, the cowherd men as their relative, the impious rulers as a chastiser, His parents as their child, the King of Bhoja as death, the unlearned as the universal form, the yogis as the Absolute Truth, and the Vrishnis as their supreme worshipable Deity. (SB 10.43.17)

In the Bhagavad-gita (14.27) as well, the Lord Himself asserts His identity above Brahman: brahmano hi pratisthaham, I am the basis of Brahman. Therefore, the Absolute Truth is none other than the all-blissful transcendental Vrajraja Nandana, Shri Krishna the son of the King of Vraja. He is equipped with transcendental (shuddha sattva) eternal names, forms, qualities, and pastimes. This blissful Lord does not descend to human perceptions of the ear, eye, mind and intellect by any material cause, but rather simply by His own independent will. Just as by His own will, He appeared in the material world as Krishna, in the Yadu dynasty, and Rama, in the Raghu dynasty.

The Lord is not dependent on any material cause for His appearance. Similarly, His non-different energy, devotional service (*bhakti*), in keeping with its self-manifesting nature, is not dependent on any material cause. Thus it is said:

*sa vai pumsam paro dharmo
yato bhaktir adhoksaje
ahaituky apratihata
yayatma suprasidati*

“The supreme occupation (*dharma*) for all humanity is that by which men can attain to loving devotional service unto the transcendental Lord. Such service must be unmotivated and uninterrupted to completely satisfy the self.” (SB .2.6)

The word *ahaituki*, causeless, in this statement, indicates that devotional service appears without any material cause (*hetu*). In such statements as *yadrcchaya mat-kathadau*, “if somehow or other a person becomes attached to hearing about Me” (SB 11.20.8), *mad bhaktim ca yadrcchaya*, “somehow he attains My devotional service” (SB 11.20.11), and *yadrccha-yaivopacita*, the word

yadrichaya must mean by its own independent sweet will. The meaning of *yadiccha* in the dictionary is also “complete independence.” Some people take the word to mean “by good fortune.” That meaning is not suitable here, for then one must inquire about the origin of the good fortune. Is the cause material pious activities (*shubha karma*) or not? If one assumes good fortune is generated from pious activities, this would mean *bhakti* is ultimately generated from material *karma*. *Bhakti* would become dependent on material *karma*. But this is a contradiction to its independent, self manifesting nature. Again, if one considers this good fortune is not due to pious activities, it becomes both indescribable by words and inconceivable. Consequently, an inconceivable entity is insubstantial and cannot describe the cause of *bhakti*.

If one proposes that the cause of *bhakti* is the Lord's mercy, then one must find a reason for that mercy. Thus, this statement, giving rise to further need for explanation, is inconclusive in itself. One may further qualify this statement by saying the cause of *bhakti* is the Lord's unqualified (*nirupadhi*) or causeless mercy. If this mercy is causeless, then one should observe that the Lord bestows it equally everywhere. Since it is not observed to fall on everyone, then this would imply the fault of partiality (*vaishamya*) on the part of the Lord. Thus, the causeless mercy of the Lord also cannot be accepted as the cause of *bhakti*.

Someone may question that the Lord punishes the demonic and protects His devotees--is this not partiality? But this type of partiality the Lord shows towards His devotees does not imply a fault (*dushanam*) in the Lord, rather, it is an ornament (*bhushanam*) which enhances His nature. This affectionate obligation of the Lord to His devotees is called *bhakta-vatsalya*. It is the all-powerful king which subjugates all the Lord's qualities and reconciles all contradictory factors and will be fully discussed in the eighth chapter.

In proposing the unqualified, causeless mercy of the devotee as the cause of devotion in another person, one may object that the devotee's mercy, like the Lord's, can be partial. Considering the case of the *madhyama bhakta*, one finds he does exhibit partiality or discretion in his distribution of mercy. For it is said in the *Bhagavatam*, *prema-maitri-krpapesa yah karoti sa madhyamah*, he exhibits *prema* towards the Lord, friendship to the devotees, mercy to the innocent and disregard for those hostile to *bhakti* (SB 11.3.46). In other words, this partiality is accepted as the natural characteristic of the *madhyama bhakta*. Since the Lord is subservient to His devotee, He lets His mercy follow after the mercy of His devotee and there is no irregularity in this. Now, the cause of that mercy manifesting itself in the devotee is *bhakti* itself residing within his heart. Without the devotee having *bhakti*, there is no possibility of the devotee manifesting mercy to others. *Bhakti* causes the devotee's mercy which causes *bhakti* in another person. *Bhakti* causes *bhakti*. The self-manifesting, causeless, independent nature of *bhakti* is thus concluded.

There is a statement, *yah kenapy atibhagyena jata sraddho ' sya sevane*: a person attains faith in the service of the Lord by extreme good fortune. The words *atibhagyena*, extreme good fortune, should be ultimately understood to mean the

attainment of the mercy of the devotee (*bhakta karunya*), which surpasses (*atikrama*) the fortune that results from material pious activities (*shubha karma*). Here, one should not consider that the devotee is dependent on the will of Lord and therefore cannot initiate the bestowal of mercy. For the Lord accepts subservience to His devotee (*sva--bhaktavashyata*) and gives preeminence to the devotee's position by giving him the power to bestow the Lord's own mercy (*sva-kripa-shakti*). The Lord as paramatma oversees those matters relating to the *jiva*'s external senses, the reward from his past activities, however, He shows special mercy to His devotees (*sva-prasada*). In the *Bhagavad-gita*, *mat-prasadat param santim... mat-samstham adhigacchati...* (BG 18.62 and 6.15). Shri Chakravartipada cites these *slokas* almost as if they were one. The actual wording of the first is *tat-prasadat*, but here since *tat* refers to the Lord, *mat* can also be used. Krishna Himself speaks of His *prasada* or mercy as the means to attain transcendental peace and His supreme eternal realm. This *prasada* takes the form of the Lord's bestowal of His own *kripa shakti*, or power of mercy, to His devotee. In other words, one can receive the Lord's *mecy* through the mercy of the devotee who bestows it, as was previously explained.

There are hundreds of scriptural statements, such as, *svecchavatara caritaih...*, *sveccha mayasya...*, by which it is understood that the Lord appears by His own will. Still, by external vision one may say relieving the burden of evil on the earth planet is the cause of the Lord's advent. In the same way, sometimes it is said prescribed activities (*karma*) performed without personal motives (*nishkama*) act as the door to *bhakti*. There is no harm in such statements. But it is said in the Eleventh Canto of *Shrimad Bhagavatam*:

*yam na yogena sankhyena
dana-vrata-tapo-'dhvaraih
vyakhya-svadhyaya-sannyasaih
prapnuyadyatnavan api*

Even though one engages with great endeavor in the mystic yoga system, philosophical speculation, charity, vows, penances, etc., still one cannot achieve Me. (SB 11.12.9)

Despite charity, austerities, etc. being clearly denied as actual causes of *bhakti*, in another place *Srimad Bhagavatam* says:

*dana-vrata-tapo-homa-
japa-svadhyaya-samyamaih
sreyobhir vividhais canyaih
krsne bhaktir hi sadhyate*

Devotion to Krishna is accomplished by such methods as charity, austerities, *homa*, *japa*, study, sense control, and other pious activities. (SB 10.47.24)

However, this statement refers to *bhakti* in the mode of material goodness (*sattviki bhakti*) which acts as a limb of the system of *jnana*, rather than the

transcendental, fully spiritual *bhakti* in the category of *prema* (*nirguna prema bhakti*). Of course, some people say charity refers to giving to Vishnu and the *Vaishnavas*, *vrata* or austerity refers to such *vratas* as *ekadasi*, *tapas* refers to renunciation of personal enjoyment for attainment of the Lord. Thus they are all *angas* or limbs of *sadhana bhakti*. To say *bhakti* is attained by these *angas* is not incorrect, for this simply means *sadhya* (perfected) *bhakti* is caused by *sadhanabhakti*, *bhakti sanjataya bhaktya* (SB 11.3.31). Thus, the causeless nature of *bhakti* is again concluded. In this way, all contradictory points are settled.

sreyah-srtim bhaktim udasya te vibho

My Dear Lord, devotional service unto you is the unrivalled path for self-realization. (SB 10.14.4)

ko 'vartha apto 'bhajatam svadharmatah

The nondevotee, although fully engaged in dharma, does not gain anything. (SB 1.5.17)

pureha bhuman bahavo 'pi yoginas

In the past many yogis achieved the platform of devotional service by offering their endeavors to You in devotion. (SB 10.14.5)

By these verses it is seen that the accomplishment of results on the paths of *jnana*, *karma* and *yoga* are completely dependent on *bhakti*. Whereas, for the accomplishment of its result, *prema*, the practice of *bhakti* is never dependent even in the slightest way on *karma*, *jnana* or *yoga*. Rather, the Lord declares:

*na jnanam na ca vairagyam
prayah sreya bhaved iha*

Jnana and *vairagya* are not beneficial in the practice of *bhakti*. (SB 11.20.31)

*dharman santyajya yah sarvan mam
bhajeta sa tu sattamah*

He who gives up all paths and simply worships Me is the best amongst men. (SB 11.11.32)

The dependency of *karma*, *jnana* and *yoga* on *bhakti* must be accepted as a fact. *bhakti* is essential in giving the results to the practice of *karma*, *jnana* and *yoga*, but *bhakti* itself is not at all even the least contingent on these practices for its results. It is said:

*yat karmabhir yat tapasa jnana-
vairagyatas ca yat...
sarvam mad-bhakti-yogena*

mad-bhakto labhate 'njasa...

What is accomplished by karma, *tapas*, *jnana* and *vairagya* is easily attained by My devotee through devotional service alone. (SB 11.20.32-33)

It is also said:

*bhagavad bhakti hinasya jatih
sastram japas tapah
apranasyeva dehasya
manhanam lokaranjanam*

Without devotion to the Lord, good birth, knowledge of scripture, *japa*, *tapas* are like delighting in the decoration of a dead body. (*Hari Bhakti Sudhodaya* 3.12)

Thus, without *bhakti*, all these endeavors become fruitless. As the body depends on the presence of the soul, the very life of *jnana*, karma and yoga depends upon supremely exalted Bhakti-devi. Moreover, the dependence of karma, *jnana* and yoga on conditions of purity in place, time, candidate, materials and performance is famous in the *smriti* scriptures. This is not true of *bhakti*:

*na desa-niyamas tatra
na kala-niyamas tatha
nocchistadau nisedhas ca
sri harer namni lubdhakah*

In chanting the name of the Lord, there is no restrictions concerning place, time, purity, and so on. (*Vishnu Dharma*)

In fact, it is famous for being completely independent.

*sakrd api parigitam
sraddhaya helaya va
bhrguvara nara matram
tarayet krsna nama*

O Bhrguvara, the name of Krishna chanted even once, either with faith or without faith, can deliver any man. (*Padma Purana*, *Prabhas Khand*)

Bhakti is not even dependent on purity of practice, for whether the name is chanted purely or impurely, it will deliver the fallen soul. The same cannot be said of *karma yoga*, where even the slightest impurity is a great obstacle to progress.

*mantra hinah svarato varnato va
mithya prayukto na tam artham aha
yathendra satruh svarato 'paradhat
sa vaga vajro yajamanam hinasti*

If a *mantra* is either intoned or pronounced incorrectly, not only will the mantra not have effect, but it may be harmful. As when *Tvasta* wanted to create the enemy of Indra and by a slight mispronunciation of the words *indra shatru* in the *yajna* those words worked as a thunderbolt for *Vritrasura* who was killed by Indra. (*Paniniya Shiksha*52)

The necessity of internal purity for the practice of *jnana yoga* is well known. Also, it may be seen that *jnana yoga* is dependent on *karma yoga*. For one enters *jnana yoga* by attaining purity of heart, and purity of heart arises from performance of *karma* without personal desire. Because of this dependency, if by accident one who practices *jnana yoga* commits even a small unworthy act (*durachar*), he is condemned by *shastra* as a *vantasi*, an eater of vomit, *sa vai vantasyapatrapah*. Seen in this light, *Kamsa*, *Hiranyakasipu* and *Ravana*, though they were *jnani*s, have not even a speck of fame on this account because of their conduct. On the other hand, on the path of *bhakti*, though one may be afflicted by lust one has the qualification (*adhikara*) to begin the practice. Just by the practice of *bhakti*, lust and other impurities are destroyed

*vikrihitam vraja-vadhubhir idam ca visnoh
sraddhanvito 'nusrnuyad atha varnayed yah
bhaktim param bhagavati pratilabhya kamam
hrd-rogam asv apahinoty acirena dhirah*

Anyone who faithfully hears or chants about the Lord's playful affairs with the young *gopis* of *Vrindavana* having attained the Lord's pure devotional service, he will quickly become sober and conquer lust, the disease of the heart. (SB 10.33.39)

By the tense of the verb *pratilabhya* (having attained) in this verse it is very clear *bhakti* first manifests in the stage where there are still lusty desires in the heart and then, after her manifestation, lusty desires are wiped out. This is due to the fact that *bhakti* is supremely independent (*parama svatantra*). Furthermore, though such impurities as *kama* may sometimes appear in the devotee, the scriptures never condemn that devotee at all:

api cet su-duracaro bhajate mam

Even if a person engaged in devotional service commits the most abominable act (*sudurachara*), he is still considered saintly. (BG 9.30)

*badhyamano 'pi mad bhakto
visayair ajitendriyah prayah
pragalbhaya bhaktya
visayair nabhibhuyate*

My dear *Uddhava*, not having fully conquered his senses My devotee may be harrassed by material desires, but because of unflinching devotion for Me, he will not be defeated by sense gratification. (SB 11.14.18)

The servants of Vishnu judged Ajamila as a devotee. Though the chanting of persons like Ajamila, who uttered the name of the Lord inadvertently out of affection for his son, must be considered *nama-abhasa* (not pure), still they are universally praised as devotees.

Internal purity and purity of place, materials, etc. Are necessary for the accomplishments of the *karmis*, *jnanis* and *yogis*, and their deficiency obstructs progress on those paths. *Bhakti*, however, is the very giver of life to these paths. Thus it is seen that in all respects, the paths of *karma*, *jnana* and *yoga* are dependent on *bhakti*. *Bhakti*, however, is independent. It neither requires any other means for its execution nor is it obstructed by any lack or fault.

Only an ignorant person will say *bhakti* is but a means of attaining *jnana*. For *shastra* emphatically declares the supreme excellence of *bhakti* over even the final goal of *jnana*, *moksha*.

muktim dadati karhicit sma na bhakti-yogam

The Lord easily gives liberation but not *bhakti*. (SB 5.6.18)

*muktanam api siddhanam
narayana-parayanah
sudurlabhah prasantatma
kotisv api maha-mune*

Even among many millions of liberated *jnanis* and perfected *yogis*, a devotee of Lord Narayana is extremely rare. (SB 6.14.5)

If *jnana* sometimes appears to take a superior position to *bhakti*, it is only because *bhakti* is mercifully playing the role of its assistant. Upendra, the Supreme Personality of Godhead Himself, became subservient to Indra to give him support. Exalted, realized souls have confirmed that this revealed not His inferior position but, rather, His unsurpassed mercy. In this manner, *bhakti*, though transcendental and supremely independent, being very merciful, accepts the mode of goodness (*sattviki-bhakti*) and becomes a limb of *jnana* just to give support to *jnana*. This is the understanding of wise men.

Bhaktya sanjataya bhaktya (SB 11.3.31), the fruit of *sadhana bhakti* is *prema bhakti*, which itself is the topmost attainment for mankind (*purushartha shiromani*). Thus the all-pervading, all-attractive, life-giving, super excellent, supremely independent, and self-manifesting nature [*sarva-vyapakatvam*, *sarva-vashikaratvam*, *sarva-sanjivakatvam*, *sarvotkarsha*, *parama-svatantra*, *sva-prakashatvam*] of the exalted energy, *Bhakti-devi*, which arises from the Lord Himself, has been slightly described. If one still prefers a process other than *bhakti*, that person should be considered bereft of all sense of judgement. What else can be said? If one is a human being, but does not take to the process of *bhakti*, then he should not be considered a human being at all:

ko vai na seveta vina naretaram

Only a non-human would refuse to serve the Lord.

Thus ends the First Shower of Nectar of **Madhurya Kadambini** by Mahamahopadhyaya Shrimad Vishvanath Chakravarti describing the superexcellence of Bhakti-devi.

CHAPTER 2 Second Shower of Nectar

In this work one will not find a full dissertation on dualism and monism but, for those who expect it, they may find it in another work called Aishvarya Kadambini.

Pure *bhakti*, unmixed with karma and *jnana*, is like a wish-fulfilling creeper appearing in the field of the senses. This *bhakti* is the refuge of those devotees who firmly vow (*dhrita vrata*) never to seek any fruits except *bhakti*, like bees (*madhu vrata*) who are obsessed with the desire to taste only nectar. The very life of this creeper is a favorable attitude for service for the pleasure of the Lord. Like a touchstone, the very presence of *bhakti* makes the heart and senses gradually lose their iron-like material qualities and acquire pure golden spiritual qualities. As a sprouting creeper grows upwards and unfurls two leaves, in the process of *sadhana bhakti*, two qualities make their appearance. The first is called *kleshaghni* (relief from material distress) and the second is called *shubhada* (beginning of all auspiciousness).

The smooth upper [Shripad Chakravarti uses the words inside and outside. Newly sprouted leaves pointing upwards, their upper surfaces are facing each other and thus, inside, etc.] surface of the two leaves, is the jurisdiction of the king called *raga* (*raga-bhakti*). It is in a superior position due to spontaneous greed for everything pertaining to the Lord, and by genuine affection for the Lord in a particular relationship, *yevam aham priya atma sutas ca...*, I am their own dear son... (SB 3.25.38). The lower surface of the leaves is the domain of another king called *vaidha* (*vaidhi-bhakti*), being in a comparatively lower position. This is because its character has a tinge of roughness being generated from obedience to scriptural rules, and spontaneous deep affection for the Lord is lacking due to absence of an intimate relationship with Him, *tasmad bharata sarvatma*, O Parikshit, thus as the Supersoul, I should be worshipped (SB 2.1.5). However, both *raga* and *vaidhi-bhakti* equally manifest the symptoms of *kleshaghni* (relief from material distress) and *shubhada* (beginning of all auspiciousness).

As both *raga-bhakti* and *vaidhi-bhakti* destroy *klesha*, its five types will now be described. The literal meaning is suffering or affliction, but here, the meaning may be taken as the causes of suffering. These *kleshas* are the cause of sinful and pious activities which result in material misfortune or good fortune. *vidya*: ignorance; to mistake that which is impermanent to be permanent; that which is full of misery to be blissful; that which is impure to be pure; and what is not the self to be the self.

Asmita: false ego; the bodily identification of I and mine; and to accept only direct sense perception as real.

Raga: attachment; the desire for material happiness and those means which will give it.

Dvesa: hatred; the repulsion to unhappiness or the causes of unhappiness.

Abhinivesa: absorption in the body as the basis for sense gratification and fear of death.

The stages in the development of *sinprarabdha* (fructified), *aprarabdh* a (unfructified), *rudha* (pre-seed) and *bija* (seed) are also included in *klesha*.

As both types of *bhakti* eradicate *klesha* similarly, they bestow *shubha* or auspiciousness. *Shubha* or auspiciousness consists of such qualities as disinterest in material affairs, interest in the Supreme Lord, favorable attitude towards the service of the Lord, mercy, forgiveness, truthfulness, simplicity, equanimity, fortitude, gravity, respectfulness, humility, and being pleasing to all [*durvishaya-vaitrishna, bhagavad-vishaya-satrishna, anukulya, kripa, kshama, satya, saralya, samya, dhairya, gambhira, mandatva, amanitva, sarva-subhagatva*].

That *bhakti* bestows these qualities is proven by such verses as the following:

*yasyasti bhaktir bhagavaty akincana
sarvair gunais tatra samasate surah
harav abhaktasya kuto mahad-guna
manorathenasati dhavato bahih*

All the demigods and all their exalted qualities manifest in the person of one who has developed unalloyed devotion for the Supreme Personality of Godhead. However for one who is not a devotee and thus driven by the temporary material desires of his mind, how can there be any good qualities in him? (SB 5.18.12)

bhaktih paresanubhavo viraktir

Devotion, taste for the Lord, and detachment from all else appear simultaneously. (SB 11.2.42)

By this, one should understand that the two symptoms (i.e., destruction of suffering and appearance of all good qualities) occur simultaneously. However, as there is some difference in the rate of unfurling of two leaves, there is a distinction in the pace of the disappearance of the undesirable qualities (ashubha) and the appearance of the auspicious qualities (shubha). The progress of bhakti will be distinguished in this way. Though this is very subtle and difficult to note, the intelligent men have ascertained this through scrutiny of the various effects.

First, the prospective devotee develops shraddha or faith. Shraddha means to have firm trust in the import of the scriptures dealing with bhakti. It also means to have a genuine desire to enthusiastically undertake the activities (sadhana) described in those scriptures. These two types of faith may be either natural (svabhaviki) or being convinced by the preaching of another (balutpadita).

However it develops, faith leads him to take shelter of the lotus feet of the guru, and enquire from him about proper conduct (sadachara). By following his instructions, that person obtains the good fortune of relations with affectionate like-minded devotees and the association of realized devotees (sadhu-sanga).

Next comes bhajana kriya, he begins to practice different types of devotional activities. This also is of two varieties: unsteady (anishthita) and steady (nishthita). Unsteady performance of devotional activities is of six types (in sequential order): false confidence (utsaha mayi), sporadic endeavor (ghana-tarala), indecision (vyudha vikalpa), struggle with the senses (vishaya sangara), inability to uphold vows (niyamakshama), and enjoying the facilities offered by bhakti (taranga rangini).

Utsaha mayi: A brahmana child, having just begun study of the scriptures, thinks he has immediately become a learned scholar worthy of everyone's praise. Similarly, a person just beginning devotional service may develop the audacity to think that he has mastered everything. He is called utsaha mayi, or filled (puffed-up) with enthusiasm.

Ghana-tarala: The same child sometimes becomes diligently engaged in his studies and yet, at other times, because of inability to understand the scriptures and lack of real taste, becomes negligent. In the same way, a new devotee will sometimes practice the different activities of devotional service and sometimes neglect them. Being sometimes assiduous and at other times negligent, his endeavor is called ghana-tarala (condensed-dilute, thick-thin).

Vyudha vikalpa: "Shall I just spend my life happily in family life, making my wife and children Krishna conscious and worshipping the Lord? Or should I give them all up and go to Vrindavana and perfect myself by engaging full time in hearing and chanting with no distractions? Shall I wait until the last stage, after enjoying all sorts of pleasures, when I have finally understood that the whole material world is simply a forest fire of affliction? Or should I renounce right now? Consider these verses:

*tam akvetamano mrtyum
trnaih kupam ivavrtam*

Association with woman is the way to death, like a blind well covered by grass. (SB 3.31.40)

*yo dustyjan dara-sutan
suhrd rajyam hrdisprisah
jahau yuvaiva malavad
uttamasloka-lalasa*

Those attachments that are very difficult to give up, beautiful wife, obedient sons, devoted friends, and vast empire, everything the heart desires, Maharaja Bharata them up even in his youth just as stool due to his attraction for the Lord. (SB 5.14.43)

Should I thus give up unreliable family life while still young? On the other hand, it is not proper to renounce immediately. Shouldn't I wait until the death of my old parents before renouncing?

*aho me pitarau vrddhau
bharya balatmajatmajah
anatha mam rte danah
katham javanti dukkhitah*

Alas! My parents are old and my wife is with a mere infant in her arms and other young children. Without me they will have no protection and will suffer unbearably. How will they live without me? (SB 11.17.57)

Moreover, the scripture says:

*evam grhasayakvipta-hrdayo
muhha-dhar ayama trptas
tan anudhyayan mrto
'ndham visate tamah*

If one gives up family life in an un-surfeited state, he will think of family life even after renouncing. If such a fool should die in that condition, he will go the

darkest region of hell. (SB 11.17.58)

By such statements, the Lord depreciates such renunciation. Therefore, for the time being, I will just work to keep my body alive. Later, after satisfying all my desires, I will enter Vrindavana and engage in worship of the Lord twenty-four hours a day. After all, the scriptures points out:

*na jnanam na ca vairagyam
prayah sreya bhavediha*

Jnana and vairagya are not generally beneficial for practicing devotional service. (SB 11.20.31)

According to this text, renunciation is a fault for the culture of bhakti. If it arises from bhakti itself, however, that renunciation is not a fault but an effect (anubhava) of bhakti and subordinate to it. Of course, then there is the famous logic:

*yad yad asramam agat
sa bhiksukas tat tad
anna paripurnam aiksat*

In whatever ashram the *sannyasi* stayed, they always gave him more than enough to eat.

In the life of renunciation there is no worry for maintenance, so maybe I should renounce. But on the other hand:

*tavad ragadayah stenas
tavat kara-grham grham
tavan mono 'nghri-nigaho
yavat krvna na te jamah*

My dear Lord Krishna, until people become Your devotee, their material attachments remain thieves, their homes prisons, and their affectionate feeling for their family foot shackles. (SB 10.14.36)

Household life is a prison only for those who are attached, for a devotee, there is no harm in household life. Thus shall I remain at home and engage in chanting or rather in hearing, or shall I engage in service? Rather, as Ambarisha Maharaja remained in household life and performed all the *angas* of *bhakti*, I shall do likewise.”

In this way, the mind spends time vacillating between household life and renunciation. When one imagines in this way all types of options, it is called *vyudha vikalpa*, or extensive speculation.

Vishaya sangara:

vivayavivta cittanam
vinnvavesah suduratah
varuna dig gatam vastu
vrajannaindram kim apnuyat

One whose heart is absorbed in materialism is far from obtaining devotion to Vishnu. Can a man by going east obtain something which is in the west?

Understanding that material enjoyment is forcibly carrying him away and impairing his steadiness in serving Krishna, the devotee resolves to renounce his addictions and take shelter of the Holy Name. But many times, his attempts at renunciation often end in enjoying what he is trying to renounce. Such a person is exemplified in the *Bhagavatam*:

parityago 'py anasvarah... juvamanas ca tan kaman...

Knowing that sense gratification leads to misery, though he tries to give up his material desires, still he is unable. (SB 11.20.27-28)

This on-going battle with his previously acquired desires for sense pleasure, in which he sometimes meets with victory and sometimes with defeat is called vishaya sangara or struggle with sense pleasure.

Niyamakshama: Then the devotee will resolve, "From today I will chant such and such number of rounds of japa and will pay so many obeisances. I will also perform services for the devotees. I will not talk on any subject except the Lord and I will give up all association with people who talk on material matters." Though he makes such resolutions every day, he is not always able to execute them. This is called *niyamakshama* or inability to follow rules. *Vishaya sangara* is the inability to give up material enjoyment, whereas, *niyamakshama* is the inability to improve his devotional service.

Taranga rangini: Finally, it is well-known that the very nature of *bhakti* is to be attractive, so all types of people become attracted to the devotee, the abode of *bhakti*. And, as the old adage goes, "By the attraction of the populace one becomes wealthy." *Bhakti* produces much opportunity for material gain, worship and position (*labha, puja, pratishtha*). These are weeds around the creeper of *bhakti*. Performing activities, or seeking one's pleasure (*ranga*) amidst these weed-like facilities, which are but small waves (*taranga*) in the ocean of *bhakti*, is called *taranga rangini*, delighting in material facilities.

Thus ends the Second Shower of Nectar of Madhurya Kadambini by Mahamahopadhyaya Shrimat Vishvanath Chakravarti describing the development of *bhakti* as *shraddha, sadhu-sanga*, and *bhajana kriya*, as well as, the divisions of *bhajana kriya*.

CHAPTER 3

Third Shower of Nectar

After *bhajana kriya*, comes *anartha nivritti*, or clearing of bad qualities which obstruct the progress of *bhakti*. *Anarthas* may be classified into four types, according to origin: those arising from previous sinful activity, those arising from previous pious activity, those arising from offenses and those arising from *bhakti*.

Anarthas arising from previous sinful activities fall in the category of the five types of *klesha* previously mentioned: ignorance, false ego, attachment, hatred and fear of death. *Anarthas* arising from pious activities are the addictions to the enjoyments which arise from pious action. Some sages include the *anarthas* arising from pious activities under the categories of the *kleshas* mentioned above.

Anarthas which arise from offenses refers to those arising from the *nama aparadhas*, not *seva aparadhas* (such as entering the temple in a palanquin or with shoes). The *acharyas* have discerned that *seva aparadhas* do not usually have effect being nullified by chanting the Name, by recitation of *stotras* which have the power to cancel the effect of any *seva aparadha* and by constant service. Constant engagement in these activities practically nips in the bud the slightest effect of *seva aparadha*. However, one should not become careless and take advantage of being protected from all effect of *seva aparadha* by the above measures. Then his *seva aparadha* becomes *nama aparadha*, an *anartha* which will obstruct his progress. He is guilty of the *nama aparadha* of committing sin on the strength of the Holy Name, *namno balad yasya hi papabuddhi*. The word *nama* in the phrase *nama aparadha* is being used to represent all the *angas* of *bhakti* that destroy sin and *aparadha*, of which the Holy Name is the primary *anga*. Even according to *dharmashastra* (scriptures dealing with codes of karma), one should not commit sin knowing that he can be exempted from the effect by *prayashchitta* (remedial measures for commission of sin). Then the effect of the sin will not be destroyed but rather increased.

On the other hand, let us consider the force of these types of scriptural statements:

*na hy angopakrame dhvamso
mad-dharmasyod dhavanv
api maya vyavasitah samyan
nirgunatvad anasisah*

O Uddhava, because I have personally established it, the path of devotional service is transcendental and free from any material motivation. Certainly a devotee never suffers even the slightest loss by adopting this path. (SB 11.19.20)

dasarno 'yam japa-matrena siddhidah

Simply by only reciting this ten-syllable *mantra* it will give perfection.

By neglecting or not completing some of the *angas* of *bhakti* does it not produce *nama aparadha*? Never! Committing sin on the strength of the Holy Name refers to the intentional commission of sin thinking that the power of devotional activities will nullify the bad effects. Sin refers to those actions condemned by the scriptures requiring remedial measures. Unlike the path of *karma*, where failure to perform the rite perfectly is condemned, on the path of *bhakti*, the shastra never condemns failure to perform all the *angas*. On this point there is no fear of an offense which will deprive one of results.

*ye vai bhagavata prokta upaya hy atma-labdhaye
anjah pumsam avidusam viddhi bhagavatam hi tan
yan asthaya naro rajan na pramadyeta karhicit
dhavan nimalya va netre na skhalen na pated iha*

Even ignorant persons can very easily come to know the Supreme Lord if they adopt those means spoken by the Supreme Lord Himself, the process known as *bhagavata-dharma* or devotional service to the Supreme Personality of Godhead. O King, in the performance of devotional service he will never be hindered on this path. Even if he intentionally closes his eyes and runs, still he will never stumble or fall. (SB 11.2.34-35)

Here the word *nimilya* (closing the eyes) means the person has eyes (he is not blind) but has closed them. The word *dhavan* (running) means proceeding rapidly placing the feet in an overstepping, unconventional manner. These are the direct meanings. This verse refers to a person who takes shelter of devotional service and is practicing the primary *angas*. The meaning is that such a person suffers no loss of results nor is he deprived of the goal, even if knowing all the *angas* of *bhakti*, he neglects to perform some of the secondary *angas* as if ignorant.

Closing the eyes does not mean ignorance of scripture (*shruti* and *smriti*, considered as one's two eyes) for that contradicts the direct meaning. One should carefully consider the meaning of closing the eyes and running (intentionally neglecting some of the *angas* of *bhakti*, and eagerly pursuing the goal). This and any actions resulting from that mode of progress, does not allow the devotee to commit the thirty-two *seva aparadhas*. The verse describes a person who has sincerely taken shelter of the process of *bhakti* as outlined by the Lord Himself. (In that case there is no question of intentional *seva aparadha*). The thirty-two *seva aparadhas*, beginning with entering the temple on a palanquin or while wearing shoes, etc., should never be intentionally committed. For in the scriptures, a person who intentionally commits a *seva aparadha* is condemned as a two-legged animal: *harer apy aparadhan bah kuryad dvipada-pamsanah*.

If the *nama aparadhas* either long-standing or recent, have been committed

unconsciously (their presence inferred by the effect, lack of advancement), one should chant the Name constantly. By that chanting, one can attain steadiness in *bhakti* and gradually neutralize the offenses. If committed in full knowledge, however, there are some other procedures for their removal.

Sadhu ninda, or criticism of *Vaishnavas*, is the first of the ten offenses against the Holy Name. The word *ninda* means animosity or malice. If by chance this offense occurs, the person should repent, "Oh, I am such a low class person, I have committed an offense to a saintly person!" A person who has been burned by fire seeks relief in fire. According to this logic, he should nullify the offense by lamenting, resolving to come before the *Vaishnava*, falling at his feet, and satisfying him by offering his obeisances, praises and respects. If the *Vaishnava* is not satisfied, the person should render favorable services to him according to his desires for many days. Sometimes the offense is so grievous that the *Vaishnava's* anger does not die.

In extreme remorse, thinking himself most unfortunate and bound for millions of years in hell for his offense, he should give up everything and take full shelter of continuous *nama sankirtana*. By the divine power of *nama kirtana*, certainly, in time that person will be delivered from his offense.

However, he should not justify himself by arguing that *shastra* says, *namaparadhayuktanam namanyeva harantyaigham*: The Holy Name alone is sufficient to deliver an offender. So what is the need of humbling himself by offering repeated respects and service to the *Vaishnava* that he has offended? This type of mentality makes him guilty of further offense. Nor should one be of the mentality to think that the offense of *sadhu ninda* discriminates between types of *Vaishnavas*. It does not refer only to one who is fully and perfectly qualified with all the qualities mentioned in scripture, such as mercifulness, never harming others, and forgiving to all living entities: *krpalur akrta-drohas titiksuh sarva dehinam* (SB 11.11.29). A person cannot minimize his offense by pointing out some defect in the devotee. In answer the scriptures say: *sarvacara vivarjitah sathadhiyo bratya jagadvancakah*, even a person who is of very bad character a cheater, devoid of proper behavior, malicious, devoid of *samskaras*, and full of worldly desires, if he surrenders to the Lord, must be considered a *sadhu*. What to speak of a pure *Vaishnava*.

Sometimes a serious offense has been committed against a *Vaishnava*, but the *Vaishnava* does not become angry because of his exalted nature. Still the offender should fall at that devotee's feet and seek ways of pleasing him to purify himself. Though the *Vaishnava* may forgive offenses, the dust of his feet does not tolerate the offenses and delivers the fruits of the offense on the guilty person. For it is said:

*sersyam mahapurusa-pada-pamsubhir
nirasta-tejahsu tad eva sobhanam*

Those who envy exalted saints are certainly diminished by the dust of their

lotus feet. (SB 4.4.13)

Conventional rules cannot be applied, however, to the powerful, spontaneous, most elevated *mah-abhagavatas* who may sometimes bestow fathomless mercy even to the most undeserving or offensive. For instance, though Jada Bharata was made to carry Rahugana's palanquin and the King let loose a torrent of harsh words on him, Jada Bharata bestowed his mercy. In a similar way, Chediraja, the Vasu who flew in the sky, showed mercy to the atheist heretic *daityas* who had come to do him violence. [In Mahabharata there is a story of how Chediraja, on taking the side of the demigods who were arguing with some *brahmarishis*, was cursed by them to fall from his flying chariot to Patala-loka where he continued to perform his bhajana. The story mentioned here is not found in Mahabharata and it is not known where it is from.] In the same way, Shri Nityananda showed mercy to Madhai, even though the most sinful Madhai had injured His forehead causing blood to flow.

The offense of *guror avajna*, or disrespect to guru, the third *aparadha*, may be considered in the same way as the first *aparadha*.

Now we'll consider the second *aparadha* of misunderstanding the position of Vishnu, Shiva and demigods. Conscious beings (*chaitanya*) are of two types: independent and dependent. The independent being is the all-pervading Lord (*ishvara*), and the dependent beings are the particles of consciousness (*jivas*), energies of the Lord, who only pervade individual bodies. *Ishvara chaitanya* is of two types: one is not touched at all by *maya*, and the other, for the Lord's pastimes, accepts the touch of *maya*. The first type of *ishvara* is called by such names as Narayana, Hari, etc.:

harir hi nirgunah saksat purusah prakrteh parah

It is Hari who is directly the non-material Lord transcendental to material nature. (SB 10.88.5)

The second type of *ishvara* is called by such names as Shiva.

*sivah sakti-yutah sasvat
tri-lingo guna-samvrtah*

Shiva voluntarily accepts the three *gunas* and appears to be covered by them. (SB 10.88.3)

Though Shiva appears to be covered by the *gunas*, one should not think that he is in the category of *jiva* for *Brahma-samhita* says:

*ksaram yatha dadhi vikara- visesa-yogat
sanjayate na hi tatah prthag asti hetoh
yah sambhutam api tatha samupaiti karyad
govindam adi-purusam tam aham bhajami*

Shiva is a transformation of the Lord, just as yogurt is a transformation of milk. (*Brahma-samhita* 5.45)

In the *Puranas* and other scriptures as well, Shiva is glorified as Ishvara. In the *Bhagavatam* it is said:

*sattvam rajas tama iti prakrter gunas tair
yuktah parah purusa eka ihasya dhatte
stity-adaye hari-virinci-hareti samjnah
sreyamsi tatra khalu sattva-tanor nram syuh*

The transcendental Personality of Godhead is indirectly associated with the three modes of material nature, namely goodness, passion, and ignorance, and just for the material world's creation, maintenance and destruction He accepts the three qualitative forms of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva. Of these three, all human beings can derive ultimate benefit from Vishnu. (SB 1.2.23)

In this sloka it is also generally understood that Brahma may also be considered as *ishvara*. But Brahma's position as *ishvara* or lord should be understood as power invested in a jiva by the Supreme Lord (*ishvara-avesha*)

*bhasvan yathasma-sakalesu nijesu tejah
svayam kiyat prakatayaty api tadvad atra
brahma ya esa jagad-anda-vidhana-karta
govindam adi-purusam tam aham bhajami*

By the bestowal of power by the Supreme Lord, Brahma is able to create the universe, just as the sun manifests a portion of its own light in effulgent gems like *suryakanta*, etc. (*Brahma-samhita* 5.49)

*parthivad daruno dhumas
tasmad agnis trayamayah
tamasas tu rajas tasmad
sattvam yad brahma-darsanam*

Wood is a transformation of earth, but smoke is better than wood. Fire is still better, for by it we can perform *yajna*. Similarly, passion (*rajas*) is better than ignorance (*tamas*), but goodness (*sattva*) is best because by it one can come to realize the Truth. (SB 1.2.24)

Though the mode of passion is superior to ignorance, still as in smoke one cannot perceive fire, in in smoke-like *raja-guna*, the fire-like effulgent Lord cannot be realized. In the fire-like mode of goodness one can perceive the pure effulgence of the Lord almost like direct realization. As fire, though present within wood, cannot be perceived, so in the mode of ignorance, the Lord though present, is not directly manifest. Just like even in deep dreamless sleep (*susupti*), the characteristic of *tama guna*, one experiences a happiness almost similar to the happiness of

realization of the Lord in His impersonal aspect (*nirbheda jnana sukha*). Considering the tattvas in this way, we can understand the conclusions.

The conscious beings who are dependent on the Lord, *jivas*, are of two types: those who are not covered by ignorance and those who are covered, devatas, men and animals. The uncovered *jivas* are of two types: those under the influence of the Lord's *aishvarya shakti*, and those uninfluenced by that *shakti*. Those not influenced by the Lord's *aishvarya shakti* are broadly two types: those practicing *jnana* who merge into the Lord (a lamentable condition), and those practicing *bhakti* who remain differentiated from the Lord and taste nectarean bliss (a non-lamentable state).

Those who are influenced by the *aishvarya shakti* are of two types: those absorbed in *jnana* belonging to the spiritual sphere (eg. the Four Kumaras), and those absorbed in the functions of creation, etc. of the material sphere (Brahma, etc). Thus one may consider that Vishnu and Shiva are non-different, being the same *ishvara chaitanya*.

A devotee who is without material motivation (*nishkama*) must discern who is worthy of worship or not on the basis of *nirguna* and *saguna*, that is, with no material qualities (Vishnu) and with a touch of material qualities (Shiva, Brahma, etc.). Being different types of *chaitanya*, Brahma and Vishnu are completely distinct, Brahma is *jiva* and Vishnu is *ishvara*. Sometimes, Brahma and Vishnu are described as identical in the Puranas. One should, however, understand this statement by the example of the sun (Vishnu) and the jewel *suryakanta* (Brahma) which is invested with the light of the sun. *Suryakanta* is like a magnifying glass which takes the rays of the sun and manifests the heat of the sun by burning paper, etc. In this way only, Brahma is considered non-different. In some *mahakalpas*, even Shiva is a *jiva* like Brahma invested with power by the Lord:

kvacij java visesatvam harasyoktam vidher iveti

As in Brahma's case, sometimes a particular *jiva* takes the role of Shiva. Thus, Shiva is sometimes classed with Brahma in such statements as:

*yas tu narayanam devam
brahma rudradi daivataih
samat venaiva manyeta sa
pasanha bhaved dhruvam*

A person who considers Narayana as equivalent to Brahma, Shiva and the other devatas is a low rascal. (*Hari Bhakti Vilasa* 1.73)

Those who have not thoroughly researched in the matter say that Vishnu is the Lord, not Shiva; or that Shiva is the Lord, not Vishnu. That since I am a devotee of Vishnu, I will not give regard to Shiva, or visa versa. Such people, deliberately involving themselves in such arguments, also commit *nama aparadha*.

If such offenders can become enlightened by a devotee with thorough knowledge of the matter, then they can realize in what way Shiva and Vishnu are non-different. With this realization, and by performing *nama kirtana*, the person can nullify his offense.

Shruti shastra ninda is the fourth offense of disrespect for shruti scriptures (vedas), considering that they do not mention anything about bhakti and are thus only glorified by worldly-minded people. If one commits this offense, one obtains relief when one has the fortune to understand the subject properly from a knowledgeable devotee. The shrutis very mercifully help the most unqualified people, not following any vedic rules or regulations and blinded by material desires to come to the path of bhakti. Commission of the fourth offense is nullified by using the same mouth that criticized the shastra (such as the shrutis, propounding karma and jnana). One should praise the same scriptures, as well as the practitioners of those scriptures (eg. performers of karma and jnana), and perform loud chanting of the Holy Name. In the same way one should understand the commission and nullification of the other six offenses.

Next are the *anarthas* arising from *bhakti*. As many weeds grow along with the main plant, along with *bhakti* there appears acquisition of material wealth and other facilities, worship and respect by others, a comfortable position and fame (*labha, puja, pratishtha*). By their nature, they have the power to influence the heart of the devotee, expand, and retard the growth of the main plant intended for cultivation (*bhakti*).

Stages in Nullification of the Anarthas

Four types of *anarthas* have been mentioned, namely, those arising from previous sinful activity, from previous pious activity, from *nama aparadha*, and from cultivation of *bhakti*. They have five grades of *anartha nivritti* (nullification): limited to one *anartha* (*ekadeshavartini*), affecting many *anarthas* (*bahudeshavartini*), almost complete (*prayiki*), complete (*purna*), and absolute (*atyantiki*). Thus immediately after starting performance of devotional activities (*bhajana kriya*), there is nullification but it is limited, according to the famous logic: The town burned, the cloth is torn. In other words, when we hear that a town burned, we can imagine that some of it must still be existing, or if a cloth is torn, the pieces are still existing. By continued practice, with the appearance of *nishtha*, the eradication is pervasive (affecting many *anarthas*). With the appearance of *rati* or *bhava*, the eradication is almost complete. With the appearance of *prema*, the eradication is complete. With the attainment of the Lord's association, the eradication is absolute, with no possibility of their reappearance. Thus if one thinks that the following occasional episodes demonstrate *anartha* arising even after attaining the lotus feet of the Lord, by one's intelligence he should throw out that thought from his mind.

In the case of Chitraketu's who had already attained the lotus feet of the Lord, his accidental *maha aparadha* to Shiva was apparent, not real, for there was

no ill effect from his mistake. Both as an associate of the Lord, and assuming the form of a demon (Vritrasura) his wealth of *prema* was still evident.

The cause of the apparent offense of Jaya and Vijaya was a manifestation of their personal desire stimulated by *prema*. The two desired in this way: “O Prabhu! O Lord of Lords! O Narayana! You desire to fight but we do not see a suitable opponent for You. All those available are too weak. Though we are strong, we are not inimical to You. Somehow or other, make us inimical to You, and realize Your desire to fight. We, being Your faithful servants, cannot tolerate to see any lack whatever in Your perfection. Diminish Your quality of affection for your devotees and fulfill our prayer.”

The eradication of the *anarthas* arising from previous sin is as follows. With the performance of *bhajana kriya*, the eradication is almost complete, with the appearance of *nishtha* eradication is complete, and with the appearance of *asakti* it is absolute.

The eradication of *anarthas* arising from *bhakti* is as follows. With the performance of *bhajana kriya*, eradication is limited. With the appearance of *nishtha* it is complete, and with the appearance of *ruchi* it is absolute. The wise self-realized souls have concluded this by thoroughly considering all matters.

One may raise the objection that these stages of extinguishing *anarthas* do not apply to devotees, quoting hundreds of verses from shastra such as:

*amhah samharad akhilam sakrd
daya deva sakala lokasya taranir
iva timirajarlamdha jayati
jagat mangalam harer nama*

As with the sunrise, all darkness is destroyed, in the same way, with one utterance of the Holy Name all sins are destroyed. All glories to the Holy Name who bestows such auspiciousness on the whole universe! (Shri Shridhar Swami)

*na hi bhagavann aghatitam idam
tvad-darsanan nram akhila-papa-ksayah
yan-nama sakrc chravanat
pukaso 'pi vimucyate samsarat*

O My Lord, simply by seeing You, one is immediately freed from all material contamination. This is not impossible because, what to speak of seeing You personally, merely by hearing Your Holy Name once only, even a *candala* can obtain liberation from the material world. (SB 6.16.44)

Or citing Ajamila's case, where simply by his uttering the Lord's name once in *nama-abhasa*, all *anarthas*, even up to avidya (ignorance, the root cause of material bondage), were removed and he attained the lotus feet of the Lord.

This is all true. One should have no doubt that the Holy Name has in all cases such inestimable power. However, the Holy Name, being unhappy with offenses committed against it, does not manifest its complete power in the offender. This is indeed the reason sinful tendencies continue in the offender. Still, the servants of death have no power to attack such a person (as in Ajamila's case).

*sakrn manah krsna-padaravindayor
nivesitam tad-guna-ragi yair iha
na te yamam pasa-bhrtas ca tad-bhatan
vapne 'pi pasyanti hi carna-niskrtah*

Although not having fully realized Krishna, persons who have even once surrendered completely unto His lotus feet being somewhat attracted by His name, form, qualities, and pastimes have thus performed the true method of atonement. Even in dreams, such persons do not see Yama or his servants carrying nooses. (SB 6.1.19)

Though this is true, they have no means of purification other than becoming free from *nama-aparadha*. Citing the Padma Purana in the discussion on the ten offenses the *Hari Bhakti Vilasa* says:

*namno balad yasya hi papa-buddhir
na vidyate tasya yamair hi suddhih*

Committing sin on the strength of the Holy Name, one cannot be purified even by practicing the regulations of yoga, etc. for thousands of years. (HBV 11.284)

In this verse the word *yama* (*yamair*) refers to the rules and regulations (*yama*, *niyama*, etc.) of *yoga shastra*. In other words, though the *aparadhi* is free from Yama, the lord of death, *yama* (other means of purification) cannot free him of *anartha*.

The case of the offender losing the mercy of the Name is similar to a subordinate who is offensive to his vastly wealthy and capable master (the Holy Name). He is denied proper care, and is treated indifferently by the master. As a result that person comes to suffer poverty and distresses of all sorts. It should be known that a master neglects a servant who is offensive and no one else is capable of helping him (*karma*, *jnana*, *yoga*, etc.). If the offending servant again puts himself at the beck and call of his master, the master gradually shows mercy, and that person's sufferings are step by step eliminated. In the same way, the offending devotee will at first suffer some miseries. As he performs sincere service to the devotees, the scriptures, and spiritual master, the Name will again gradually manifest mercy and gradually eliminate his evil tendencies. Thus one cannot argue against the gradual elimination of *anartha*.

Someone may argue that, I have never committed any offenses. One should not make such statements. Though the offense may not have been done recently, it may have been done in the past, but one can infer the existence of offenses by their effect. The effect of offense is that a person will not manifest any symptoms of prema by performance of *nama kirtana*.

*tad asma-saram hrdayam vatedam
yad grhyamanair hari-nama-dheyaih
na vikriyetatha yada vikaro
netre jalam gatra-ruhesu harsah*

One's heart is certainly steel-framed if, when chanting the Holy Name, there is no change in the heart, tears in the eyes or standing of hairs on the body. (SB 2.3.24)

Seeing the following verse from *Bhakti-rasamrita-sindhu* another doubt arises:

*ke te 'paradha viprendra
namno bhagavatah krtah
vinighnanti nram krtam
prakrtam hyanayanti hi*

Oh foremost of *brahmanas*, what are the offenses against the Name of the Lord which cancel the results of all one's performances, and lead to a material conception even of transcendental topics? (*Bhakti-rasamrita-sindhu*)

In other words, repeatedly hearing and chanting the Lord's name should give prema, serving the sacred tirthas should bestow perfection, tasting repeatedly the ghee, milk and betel prasadam should destroy all desires for sense enjoyment. So what are the grave offenses which cancel these results and cause all these spiritually potent activities to appear material? This very startling and unnerving question is being raised. If this is, so does it follow that a person who commits a nama aparadha becomes averse to the Lord and thus cannot even take shelter of guru or perform devotional activities?

This is true. As during a serious fever, losing all taste for food, a person finds it impossible to eat, so a person who commits a serious offense loses scope for hearing, chanting and performing devotional activities. There is no doubt about this. However, if the fever lessens with time, some taste for food develops. Even then, nourishing foods like milk and rice cannot give their full power of nourishment to the person suffering from chronic fever. They bestow some benefit, but cannot relieve him of his wasted condition. An invalid's diet and medicine can, however, with time, restore him to his previous healthy condition. At that time the full potency of normal food can be utilized by the body. In the same way, after a long period of suffering the effects of *aparadha*, the intensity reduces somewhat and the devotee develops a little taste. Again the devotee becomes qualified for *bhakti*. Repeated doses of hearing and chanting the Lord's Name and performance of other devotional processes, gradually everything is revealed in

progression. The saints have described this progression as follows:

*adau sradha tatah sadhusango 'tha bhajana-kriya
tato 'narta-nivrttih syat tato nistha rucistatah
athasaktis tato bhavas tatah prema bhyudancati
sadhakanamayam premnah pradurbhave bhavet kramah*

Starting with faith, followed by association, *bhajana kriya*, *anartha nivritti*, *nishtha*, *ruchi*, *asakti*, *bhava* and *prema*. (Bhakti-rasamrita-sindhu 1.4.15-16)

Some not only suppose the presence *nama aparadha* due to the absence of symptoms of *prema* and traces of sinful activity in devotees who are practicing the devotional processes such as kirtana. But they also suppose the absence of destruction of the reactions of previous karma (*prarabdha*) by observing the presence of ordinary material distresses. However, Ajamila named his son Narayana and called that name many times every day in what has been ascertained to be in an inoffensive manner. Still, he did not manifest the symptoms of *prema*, moreover, he was also inclined to sinful relation with a prostitute. Yudhisthira had achieved the association of the Supreme Lord Himself and was thus certainly free from past karmic reactions. Still, he had to suffer many apparently ordinary material miseries. As a tree bears fruit only in the proper season, the Holy Name, though pleased with an offenseless person, will reveal its mercy to him only in due time. For the devotee, accumulated sins committed due to previous bad habits have no effect like the bite of a serpent without his poison fangs. The sickness, lamentation and other sufferings undergone by devotees are not the reactions to sins in previous life (*prarabdha*). The Lord Himself has said:

*yasyaham anugrhnami
harisye tad-dhanam sanaih
tato 'dhanam tyajanty asya
svajana duhkha- duhkhitam*

Gradually, I take away all the wealth of the person whom I favor. Being penniless and most miserable, he is rejected by his family and relatives. (SB 10.88.8)

nirdhanatva maha rogo mad anugraha laksanam

The person without the severe malady of material possessions is the object of My mercy.

Thus, the masterful Lord, who always attends to the welfare of His devotee, with the plan to increase the devotee's humility and longing for the Lord, bestows on him all sorts of suffering as His mercy. Having no results due from previous acts, he cannot be said to be suffering the effect of sinful actions from previous lives.

Thus ends the Third Shower of Nectar of **Madhurya Kadambini** by Mahamahopadhyaya Shrimat -Vishvanatha Chakravarti describing the mitigation of all inauspicious elements.

CHAPTER 4

Fourth Shower of Nectar

Previously, in the discussion of the two types of *bhajana kriya*, *anishthita* and *nishthita*, six types of the *anishthita bhajana kriya* were described. Without describing *nishthita bhajana kriya*, *anartha nivritti* was discussed. Because it says in *Shrimad Bhagavatam*:

*srvvatam sva-kathah ksrnah
punya-sravana-kirtanah
hrdy antah stho hy abhadrani
vidhunoti suhrt satam*

*nasta-prayesv abhadresu
nityam bhagavata-sevaya
bhagavaty uttama-sloke
bhaktir bhavati naisthiki*

Lord Krishna, who is affectionate to His devotees and situated in their hearts, destroys all inauspicious elements of those who hear topics about the Lord. When the inauspicious elements have been generally destroyed by devotional service, steady devotion to the Lord appears. (SB:1.2.17-18) The first verse (*srvvatam sva-kathah...*) refers to the stage of *anishthita* or unsteady bhakti, for *naistiki bhakti* or *nishthita bhakti* makes its appearance later in the second verse. *Abhadrani vidhunoti* (destruction of inauspicious elements) which appears between these two stages, refers to the stage of *anartha nivritti*. The words *nasta-prayesv abhadresu* (inauspiciousness is almost destroyed) means at the stage of *nishtha*, only a small portion of *anarthas* remains. Thus, The proper order according to *Shrimad Bhagavatam* is *bhajana kriya*, *anartha nivritti*, *nishtha*. Therefore in its proper place, *nishthita bhakti* will be discussed now.

Nishtha means to be endowed with the quality of steadiness, or non-movement (*naishchalyam*). Though a person tries for steadiness every day, while the *anarthas* are still present, he will not attain steadiness. This is due to these five persistent obstacles: *laya* (sleep), *vikshepa* (distraction), *apratipatti* (indifference or disinterest in spiritual topics), *kashaya* (tendency toward bad habits) and *rasavada* (taste for material enjoyment). After the stage of *anartha nivritti*, when these obstacles are almost completely destroyed, one achieves steadiness. Thus, the symptom of *nishtha* is the absence of the above mentioned obstacles.

Laya refers to the tendency to sleep during *kirtana*, *shravana* and *smarana* (*japa*), in order of increasing tendency. *Vikshepa* refers to distraction toward mundane topics while performing service (i.e., gossiping while doing *japa*).

Apratipatti refers to the occasional inability to perform *kirtana*, etc. in spite of the absence of *laya* or *vikshepa*. *Kashaya* means the tendency to indulge in anger, greed, pride, etc due to past bad habit. *Rasasvada* refers to inability to absorb the mind in *kirtana* if one gets the opportunity for material sense pleasure. *Nishthita bhakti* appears in the absence of these faults. *tada rajas-tamo-bhavah kama-lobhadayah ca yeeta etair anavidddham sthitam sattve pras...dati*. At that time being completely free from the influences of *tama* and *raja guna*, such as lust, greed and other impurities, the heart is satisfied in a state of goodness. (SB:1.2.19) Here the word *ca* is used in its collective sense to refer to all of these unwanted qualities. Thus in the stage of *nishtha* the modes of ignorance and passion are no longer present. However, the words *etair anavidddham* (no longer affected by these) indicate that these impurities are still present to some slight degree at the stage of *nishtha*, but do not act as an obstacle to *bhakti*. All traces will be removed when one reaches the stage of *bhava*.

Nishtha, steadiness, is of two types: concerning *bhakti* directly (*sakshat-bhaktir-vartani*) and concerning elements favorable to *bhakti* (*bhakti-anukula vastur-vartini*). *Sakshat-bhakti* has unlimited forms, still, there are three basic divisions: bodily, vocal and mental (*kayiki, vachiki, manasi*). According to some authorities, first one attains steadiness in bodily services, then in vocal activities (*kirtana*, etc.), and finally in mental activities (remembering, meditation). Others, however, disagree saying that eagerness to serve the Lord in a particular manner develops first according to the individual natures of the devotee, whose bodily, vocal and mental strength may vary. Their version is that there is no such progression.

Elements favorable to *bhakti* refer to humility, giving respect to others, friendliness, and mercifulness. However, sometimes steadiness in such qualities may be seen in a self-controlled devotee who has no steadiness in *bhakti*. While elsewhere, steadiness in these qualities may not be perceived in an arrogant devotee who has attained steadiness in *bhakti*. In spite of this, by the presence or absence of steadiness in *bhakti* itself (*sakshat bhakti*), rather than in the qualities of *bhakti*, learned wise men understand the actual presence or absence of *nishtha*, steadiness. Inexperienced perception cannot substantiate the truth. This is confirmed by the cited verses, *bhaktir bhavati naistiki*, with the appearance of *naishtiki-bhakti*, *tada rajas-tamo-bhavah...etair anavidddham*, though traces of the qualities born of *raja* and *tama guna* may be present, they no longer affect the devotee.

In summary, what has been shown is that laxity or intensity of effort and difficulty or ease in performance of devotional activities, such as hearing and chanting is the criteria of discriminating the two types of *bhakti*, namely unsteady and steady.

Thus ends the Fourth Shower of Nectar of **Madhurya Kadambini** by Mahamahopadhyaya Shrimat Vishvanath Chakravarti where the nectar has begun to flow.

CHAPTER 5

Fifth Shower of Nectar

When the devotee takes in his heart the golden medallion of *bhakti*, shining effulgently by the fire of steady practice (*nishtha*) and propelled by its own energy, *ruchi* appears in that *bhakti*. When a person develops a taste for the activities of *bhakti* such as hearing and chanting, vastly greater than attraction for anything else, that is called *ruchi*. Unlike in the previous stages, at the stage of *ruchi* constant performance of devotional activities like hearing and chanting does not result in even the least fatigue. *Ruchi* quickly produces an intense addiction to the activities of *bhakti*. This is similar to the brahmana boy who, after diligently studying the scriptures daily, in time grasps the meaning, and then finds no difficulty at all in applying himself to study. Moreover, he develops a pleasure in the performance his task.

The actual conclusion can be understood by the following example. Due to a defect in the liver, the ability to taste becomes affected and sugar candy becomes distasteful. Sugar candy, however, is also the medicine to cure the defect. Understanding this, an afflicted person will take sugar candy daily though it may be distasteful and, eventually, as it cures his sickness, he will develop a real taste for it. In this way, the *jiva's* heart contaminated by ignorance and the other *kleshas* becomes cured by the medicine of hearing, chanting and the other devotional processes. Eventually, he develops a taste for these activities.

Ruchi is of two types: that which depends on excellence of elements (*vastu-vaishishti-apekshini*), and that which does not (*vastu-vaishishti-anapekshini*). Excellence of elements refers to an excellence of details in relation to the Lord's name, qualities and form, etc. For instance, a person may only experience pleasure from *kirtana* if it is pleasing to the ear and artistically sung. He may only relish topics of the Lord if they are delivered skillfully with poetic ornaments and qualities. He may only enjoy deity worship if all the implements, place, and materials are according to his fancy. This is similar to a person with a weak appetite asking about the variety and quality of preparations in a meal. The cause is a slight impurity in the heart of the devotee. Therefore, if a person depends on the excellency of the material elements of *kirtana*, etc. to experience a spiritual taste, one should understand this as taint of impurity in his heart (*doshabhas*). A person with the second type of *ruchi* will experience great pleasure even from the beginning of any performance of *sravanam*, *kirtana*, etc. If, however, there is excellence of the elements, then he becomes extremely joyful and ecstatic. It means that he has not the slightest trace of impurity in his heart.

“Oh friend, abandoning the nectar of Krishna's names, why are you engaged in useless talks of family pursuits of security and enjoyment? What can I

say to you? I myself am so wicked, though I received the precious jewel of bhakti by the mercy of the spiritual master, I am so unfortunate that I kept it tied in the hem of my cloth. Not knowing its value, I have been searching out a cracked cowrie, a tiny spot of false happiness on the shore of the ocean of material engagements. Wandering here and there, I have passed the years of my life in vain. Not practicing any activity of bhakti, I have simply displayed lethargy. Alas! Such am I or my sense of taste that I lick up bitter-tasting deceitful profane gossip like nectar and remain apathetic to hear the names, qualities and pastimes of the Lord. How unfortunate I am! When I start to hear about the Lord, I comfortably fall asleep, and at the opportunity for vulgar discussion, I prick up my ears and become wide awake. In this way, I have always contaminated the assembly of all the devotees. What sinful acts have I not performed, simply for the satisfaction of my insatiable belly even in my decrepit old age? I do not know for how long and in what type of hell I will have to suffer for all my activities.”

In this way repenting his previous state of consciousness, some day at some place, the devotee becomes like a bee tasting the nectar of the fruit of the **Madhurya Kadambini**.

CHAPTER 6 Sixth Shower of Nectar

After this, when the taste for the activities of bhajana (hearing, chanting, etc.) reaches extreme depth and Krishna becomes the very object of one's devotional activities, one attains to *asakti* or attachment. At the stage of *asakti*, the desire-creeper of *bhakti* bears clusters of buds heralding the swift manifestation of the flowers of *bhava* and then fruits at the stage of prema. The difference between *ruchi* and *asakti* is this: *ruchi* has *bhajana*, devotional practice, as the subject and *asakti* has the Lord, the object of *bhajana*, as the subject. The stage can be decided from the amount of each component. Actually, *ruchi* and *asakti* have both components, but by the intensity of one or the other, *ruchi* and *asakti* become distinguishable from each other. *Asakti* polishes the mirror of the heart to such a condition the reflection of the Lord suddenly seems to be almost visible there.

Oh! My mind is being overwhelmed by material desires, let me fix it on the Lord! In the stage previous to *asakti*, the devotee, on realizing his mind has been overpowered by material objects and desires, by his deliberate effort, almost withdraws his mind and almost fixes it on the Lord's form, qualities and activities. At the appearance of *asakti*, however, absorption of the mind in the Lord is automatic, without effort. A devotee at the stage of *nishtha* cannot detect how and when his mind withdraws from topics of the Lord's qualities, forms, etc. and fixes itself on material affairs. To the contrary, a person at the stage of *asakti* does not perceive how and when his mind spontaneously withdraws from material topics and spontaneously absorbs itself in topic of the Lord. One below the level of *asakti*

can never know this. This spontaneous fixation on the Lord, however, is the symptom of the stage of *asakti*.

Early in the morning, seeing another devotee, he will begin talking. "Where are you coming from? You have, perhaps, a *shalagrama shila* in the small case hanging from your neck? Your tongue is quivering every moment from tasting the nectar of Krishna's name as you chant softly. I don't know why you are giving your darshan to an unfortunate person like me and giving me overwhelming joy. Tell me about all the holy places you have visited. Describe all the saintly souls you have met and what realizations they have blessed you with. In this way, you are perfecting yourself and others also." In this way he will spend some time drinking nectar in intimate conversation. Elsewhere, seeing another devotee, he will say, "The enchanting scripture under your arm is making you appear very elegant, thus I can guess you are very learned and realized. Kindly recite for me one verse of the tenth canto and bring life to the chataka bird of my ears awaiting the raindrops of your nectarean explanations." Hearing the explanation, his air stands on end in ecstasy.

Going elsewhere, seeing an assembly of devotees, he will say, "Oh, today my life will be successful, for the association of devotees will destroy all my sins." Thinking in this way, he will pay repeated obeisances to them falling like a stick on the earth. Being welcomed with affection by the most erudite mahabhagavat, the crown jewel of all devotees, he will sit before him in crouched posture. He humbly begs from him with tears in his eyes, "Oh master, you are the crown jewel of physicians able to eradicate the grave material disease afflicting the living entities in the three worlds. I am the most fallen and depraved person. Please take my pulse and diagnose my malady and advise me what medicine and diet to take. By that miracle drug, give my desired nourishment." Overjoyed with the merciful glance of that mahabhagavat and his trickling nectar of sweet words, he will remain a few days to serve the devotee's lotus feet.

Sometimes wandering in the forest absorbed in emotion, observing the movements of the animals and birds, he will intuitively interpret them as signs of mercy or punishment of Krishna upon himself. "If Krishna is showing His mercy to me, then the antelope in the distance will come towards me three or four steps. If He is not showing mercy, the antelope will turn away." On the outskirts of a village, seeing a small brahmanaboy playing reminding him of the child saint, Sanaka, he will enquire from him, "Will I see Vrajendra Kumara?" "No." Hearing that simple syllable, he will deliberate on whether to take the answer on face value or seek a deeper meaning.

Remaining in his house, with a worn face like a miserly wealthy merchant greedy for treasure, he will be absorbed in thought all day, while dreaming, standing, or sitting. "Where am I going? What am I doing? How will I get my hands on my desired object?" When asked by his relatives what is the matter, he will sometimes act like a mute, at other times he will feign normality. His friends will apologize,

“Recently he's become scatter-brained.” His neighbors will conclude he is an idiot by birth. The followers of mimamsa (philosophy of Jaimini) will consider him a fool. Those who study Vedanta will consider him illusioned. The practitioners of pious activities will say he is misguided. The devotees will say he has attained the essential truth. The offenders will say he is a pretender. But that devotee, oblivious of respect and disrespect, having fallen into the current of the great celestial river of attachment (*asakti*) to the Lord, will simply continue in the same manner.

Thus ends the Sixth Shower of Nectar of Madhurya Kadambini by Mahamahopadhyaya Shrimat Vishvanath Chakravarti discussing enchantment of the heart. **Madhurya Kadambini**

CHAPTER 7

Seventh Shower of Nectar

When *asakti* achieves extreme maturity it is called *rati* or *bhava*. *Bhava* is the immature (budding) stage of the three *sat-cid-ananda* energies of the Lord's *svarupa-shakti*: *sandini*, *samvit* and *hladini*. In other words, *bhakti* actually begins to manifest from the stage of *bhava*. It is thus the blossoming flower of the desire-creeper of *bhakti*. Its outer luster is the quality of *sudurlabha* (rarely achieved), and its inner luster is *moksha laghu krita* (derides even the conception of liberation). Just one atom of *bhava* uproots ignorance completely. Moreover, the profuse release of fragrance of the flower of *bhava* invites Madhusudana and causes Him to appear there. What more can I say? Scented by the fragrances of *bhava*, all the emotions of the heart become like the oil of liquified bunches of sesame seeds, at once fit to smear on all the limbs of the Lord. At the appearance of *bhava*, even a *candala* becomes worthy of respect from Lord Brahma and others.

At that time, his eyes fully long to turn towards Vrajendra Nandana to lick the blackness of His limbs (*uhyama lina*), the rosy hue of His lips and eye-rims (*arunima*), the white brilliance of His moon-like teeth shining in His smiling face (*dhavalima*), and the yellow hue of His clothing and ornaments (*pitima*). They then begin to bathe his body in profuse streams of tears. Like he is running here and there, freezing its motion at every moment and raising his ears, He longs for his ears to be decorated with the earrings of the song of Krishna's flute, the jingling of His anklets, and the sweet intonation of His voice (*sausvarya*) almost like a direct order to serve His lotus feet. Then thinking how the longed for touch of the Lord's tender hands (*kishalya-sparsha*) must be, his body erupts in ecstasy. His nostrils open wide repeatedly and inhale, anxious to examine the fragrance of the Lord's body (*saurabhya*). “Oh, will I ever be able to taste the nectar of the Lord's lips?” Feeling like he has attained that taste (*rasana*), his tongue feels great joy and he licks his lips. Sometimes, feeling like he has obtained direct realization

of the Lord in his heart (*sphurti*, he feels unlimited happiness in his mind. Tasting the rare treasure of the sweetness (*madhurya*) of the Lord, he becomes delirious. Then, at the disappearance of that feeling, he plunges into grief. In this way, it is as if he is decorating his body with the thirty-three symptoms of *sanchari-bhava*. In the states of wakefulness, sleep and deep sleep, his intelligence becomes resolutely fixed as the pilgrim on the path his remembrance of Krishna. His self-conceit (*ahamta*, I) almost gives up the material body of the sadhak as nearly lifeless and practically enters into a *siddha-deha* (spiritual identity) according to his desire to serve the Lord in a specific manner. His sense of possessiveness (*mamata*, mine) becomes like a bee to relish the nectar of the Lord's lotusfeet. Having obtained the most precious jewel of *bhava*, the devotee tries to hide it like a miser from the ordinary people. However, the famous logic says a bright face reveals hidden wealth (the face is the index of the mind). Thus, advanced devotees will recognize his internal status as he becomes the residence of such wonderful qualities as renunciation and tolerance which manifest themselves at the stage of *bhava*. Common people, being unable to discern these qualities, will conclude that his mind is distracted or mad.

This stage of bhava is of two types: that arising from raga bhakti and that arising from vaidhi bhakti. Bhava arising from raganuga bhakti, being excessive in quality (jati) and quantity (praman), is very thick or intense. It is characterized by an absence of awe and reverence with a predominance of the feeling that the Lord is on an equal or lower level. The second type arising from vaidhi bhakti, being somewhat lesser in quality and quantity than the first, with a type of affection for the Lord mixed with perception of the Lord as the all-mighty God, is not so thick. Those two types of bhava are tasted in two different ways in the two types of hearts possessed of two types of spiritual desires in two types of devotees.

As there are different degrees of thickness in the juices of mango, jack fruit, sugar cane or grapes, there are different degrees of sweetness of *bhava*. Thus there are five types of devotees according to the *bhava* in which they are acting: *shantas* (neutral admirers), *dasas* (servants), *sakhas* (friends), *pitri* (elders), *preyasi* (lovers), acting in the five different *bhavas*. That is, the *shantas* are acting in *shanti* (peacefulness), the *dasas* in *priti* (affection), the *sakas* in *sakhyam* (friendship), the *pitri* in *vatsalyam* (parental love), and *preyasis* in *priyata* (conjugal love).

Then again, these five *bhava*, by their own energy, obtain *vibhava*, *anubhava*, *sattviki*, *vyabhichari* as their subjects along with their opulences and become the kings known as *sthayi bhavas*. These five *sthayi bhavas* by mixing with these elements transform into the five *rasas*: *shanta*, *daysa*, *sakhya*, *vatsalya* and *ujjala*.

The shruti texts define *rasa* as the very essence of the Lord: *raso vai sah rasam hy evayam labdhv ananda bhavati*, the Lord is *rasa* itself (*rasa-svarupa*, and, attaining that *rasa*, the *jiva* becomes blissful. As water is present in all the streams, rivers and ponds, but is personified in the ocean, *rasa* is present in all the avatars of the Lord, but does not reach perfection in any of them. Rather, it attains its

absolute climax in Vrajendranandana, Krishna, the son of the King of Vraja. When bhava first matures and begins to transform into prema, that very Vrajendranandan, Who is the personification of rasa, is directly realized by qualified devotees.

Thus ends the Seventh Shower of Nectar of Madhurya Kadambini by Mahamahopadhyaya Shrimat Vishvanath Chakravarti discussing flowing of eternal bliss.

CHAPTER 8

Eighth Shower of Nectar

From the creeper of bhakti, which first sprouted two leaves during *sadhana bhakti*, many smooth petals now suddenly appear in the form of anubhavas (the symptoms of ecstasy) attached to the flower of *bhava*. These *anubhavas* are filled with the devotional processes, such as hearing and chanting, and shine brilliantly at every moment. First forming the flower called *bhava*, they finally bring forth the fruit called *prema*. But what is most astonishing about the creeper of *bhakti* is, though its leaves, buds, flowers and fruits mature into the succeeding form, they do not give up their original forms. Together they shine in newer and newer ways.

The devotee's innumerable —*citta vritti*— thoughts were previously bound tightly by the ropes of attachment to family, relatives, house and properties. However when *prema* appears, it easily frees the thoughts from all those attachments. By its inherent power, *prema* transforms those material emotions, into spiritually blissful elements, as if submerging them all in a deep well of transforming nectar. Similarly, all the attachments become spiritualized. Then, with those ropes of spiritual attachment, *prema* binds the spiritualized emotions to the sweetness of the Lord's name, form and qualities. *Prema* manifests its brilliance in this way and immediately puts all material ideals (*purushhartha*) to shame as the sun puts to shame all the constellations in the sky. The nectar which comes from the fruit of *prema* has the essential quality of concentrated bliss (*sandrananda*), and its outstanding nourishing property is its power to attract Krishna (*krishnakarshani*). When the devotee begins to taste that nectar, he does not take heed of any obstacles. Like a miser feverish for treasure, like a thief who has lost all sense of discretion out of absorption in his job, the devotee loses all sense of self-consciousness. —Sometimes, there is an impatience for obtaining the Lord, like a hunger which cannot be satisfied even by eating the most tasty foods day and night. The devotee burns like the sun by that anxiety. He is soothed only by tasting the form, qualities and sweetness of the Lord, which make a momentary appearance, like the coolness of a thousand moons.

The *prema* which exists in the devotee, the receptacle of *prema*, is very astonishing in that simultaneously even its slightest increase pierces the devotee

like a shaft in the form of anxiety by which the devotee at every moment longs for the direct darshan of the Lord, and at the same time, by the intense manifestation of that prema, that shaft is burned by the realization (*sphurti*) of the form, pastimes and sweetness of the Lord. Still he remains unsatisfied.

Simultaneously, this *prema*, arising from its own reservoir, increases slightly, and the devotee longs for direct contact with the Lord at every moment. This hankering burns like a conflagration and tears his body like a sharp arrow. By the intensity of his longing for the Lord he remains unsatisfied with the momentary vision of the Lord's form, qualities and sweetness.

He considers friends as useless as a dry, overgrown well, and his household becomes like a thorn-filled forest. (heavy blow) Food becomes totally distasteful. Praise from other devotees is like the biting of a snake. Daily duties become difficult to perform like death. All the limbs of his body become like an unmanageable burden. The consolation of his comrades is like poison. Even though he remains constantly awake, wakefulness is an ocean of repentance, and his sleep seems to be simply fleeing (destroying) from life. His body seems the target of chastisement for the Lord. His life airs become as lifeless as roasted grains. What he previously took as his life's goal is abandoned as great calamity. Even thinking of the Lord tears his body asunder.

Then prema, assuming the form of a magnet, attracts black Krishna and makes Him appear to the devotee for a moment. At that time, all the senses of the devotee (eyes, nose, ears, tongue, sense of touch) become the receptacles of all the auspicious qualities of Krishna. His supreme beauty, fragrance, melody, youthfulness, tastiness, *audarya* and *karunya*. From tasting the extreme sweetness and ever-freshness of these qualities of the Lord, a greater longing, which at every moment increases, is born in the devotee because of his prema. Poetic words are not adequate to describe the ocean of transcendental bliss which appears at this time.

A traveller on a desert path, burned by the sun's rays during the hot season, finds shelter in a cool place supplied with a hundred vessels of ice-water from a divine pool under the shade of a vast banyan tree densely tangled with branches. An elephant caught in a forest fire without escape is finally bathed by unlimited water from a bank of rain clouds. A person afflicted by mortal disease and craving satisfaction, drinks the nectar, tastes its exquisite sweetness, and experiences unbounded bliss. This cannot be compared...

Then Lord reveals first His beauty (*saundarya*) to the eyes of the devotee in this remarkable condition. On account of the sweetness of that beauty, all the senses and the mind take on the quality of eyes, and obstacles, such as paralysis, shaking and tears, are generated. From this the devotee swoons in bliss. To console the devotee, the Lord next reveals His fragrance to the nostrils of the devotee, and all the devotee's senses take on the quality of the nose to smell. Again the devotee swoons in bliss. The Lord then reveals His sonorous voice to the

devotee's ears: Oh My devotee, I am under your control. Don't be overwhelmed, but fully satisfy your desire by relishing Me. All the senses become like ears to hear and, for the third time, the devotee faints. At the beginning of the swoon, the Lord then mercifully gives the touch of His lotus feet, His hands and His breast to the devotee, and reveals His fresh youthfulness (*saukaumarya*) to the devotee. To those in the mood of servitude, He bestows His lotus feet on their heads, to those in the mood of friendship, He grasps their hands with His. For those in the mood of parental affection, He wipes away their tears with His own hand. For those in conjugal mood, He rewards them with His embrace, touching them with His hands and chest. Then the devotee's senses all take on the sense of touch and the devotee faints for a fourth time in a deep swoon. At the start of the swoon, the Lord then restores him by giving the taste (*saurasya*) from His own lips. This, however, is revealed only to those in the conjugal mood. The devotee's senses take on the sense of taste and he faints for a fifth time. This blissful swoon is so deep that the Lord must revive him by bestowing His *audarya* (generosity). *Audarya* refers to the state in which simultaneously all of the Lord's qualities (His beauty, fragrance, sound, touch and taste) suddenly manifest themselves to the devotee's various senses.

At that time, *prema*, which understands the will of the Lord, increases to the extreme and there is a corresponding extreme increase in the craving.

That *prema* presides as a moon over the ocean of bliss and simultaneously it increases hundreds and hundreds of waves and it agitates and creates an almost destructive friction in the devotee's heart. It then becomes the beautiful ruling deity of his mind in that condition...

This increased *prema*, which usually controls everything as the moon presides over the ocean, then seems to withdraw its powers. It creates in the devotee's heart an almost destructive friction and tearing amongst the simultaneous tastes, a conflict of a hundred waves in the ocean of bliss. Then again, *prema* assumes the role of ruler, the presiding deity, and manifests its specific power which allows the devotee to experience the different tastes simultaneously and without conflict. One should not think that the devotee will not be able to experience with fullness of all the tastes because of their multitude which may cause dilution of the very tastes. Rather, all the senses attain the inconceivable, astonishing, extraordinary quality to perform the functions of the other senses to appreciate the Lord's various qualities. In this way, they can experience more intensely the taste. In these matters, one cannot use material arguments evolved from material experiences. The inconceivable conditions of *prema* are not subject to mundane logic (*acintya*....Even if the devotee wishes to relish all types of sweetness, of *saundarya*, etc., all at once, but like a *chataka* bird wants to drink all raindrops by his beak which is impossible. The devotee tries to experience the sweet tastes of the Lord's beauty, fragrance, sound, touch, taste and *audarya* all at once like the *chataka* bird who tries to catch all the rain drops in his beak. Then the Lord, seeing that all cannot find room in His devotee, considers, "Why am I holding so many wonderful qualities with My self." To let the devotee also partake of them all, the Lord manifests is *kripa shakti* (also called *anugraha*), the

superintendent of all the shaktis, by which the devotee becomes attractive even to the Lord. This shakti is situated like an empress the middle of a lotus whose eight petals are the eight shaktis (*vimala, utkarshini, jnana, kriya, yoga, prahvi, satya, and isani*). This *anugraha* decorates itself in the eyes of the Lord and it appears in different forms as *vatsalya* (affection) in relation to His devotees in the mood of servant, etc. (*dasa, sakha*, etc.). In some cases it appears as *karunya* (compassion). When it appears to in relation to the devotees in conjugal mood it is known as *citta-viddravini akarshani shakti* (which melts the heart of Krishna and attracts Him). Sometimes according to the different moods of the different devotees it is known by other *nams* also. By this *kripa-shakti*, the all-pervading element of the Lord's free will influences the heart and causes great astonishment even in those realized souls who are fully self-satisfied *atmaramas*. By this energy, the one quality called *bhakta vatsalya* (affection for His devotees), like an emperor, rules over all auspicious, spiritual qualities such as *satya, shaucha, daya* and *tapas* mentioned in the First Canto of *Shrimad Bhagavatam*.

The eighteen condemned qualities of illusion, laziness, error, intense lust, fickleness, arrogance, envy, violence, exertion, lamentation, dishonesty, anger, longing, fear, partiality, and dependency on others are not present in the body of the Lord. By the agency of this *bhakta vatsalya*, however, even these qualities become present at times in various avatars, such as Rama and Krishna, and are appreciated by the devotees. But now these faults become excellent qualities.

Attaining the power to taste completely the beauty, fragrance, etc. of the Lord, and tasting each one, the devotee ascends to higher and higher peaks of astonishing experience. His heart melts on incessant realization of the Lord's unheard of bhakta vatsalya. The Lord, displaying His wonderful nature, says, "Oh best of devotees, many births you have given up wife, house and wealth for the sake of My service. You endured the miseries of cold, wind, hunger, thirst and pain, tolerated the contempt of other men, taking to a life of begging. In payment for all your sacrifice, I cannot give you anything. I have become your debtor. Since lordship over the whole earth in the post of demigod and mystic powers are unsuitable for you, how can I give them to you? One cannot give grass and straw, the enjoyment of cows, to a spiritual personality such as you. Though I am unconquerable, today I have been conquered by you. I am taking shelter of the creeper of your gentleness."

Accepting the sweet, affectionate words of the Lord as the ornaments of his ears, the devotee says, "Oh my Lord, my master, oh ocean of unfathomable mercy! You glanced upon me while I was being bitten by an array of crocodiles, the infinite miseries of endless births and deaths amidst the terrifying current of material existence. Oh Lord, transcendental to all the material planets, Your butter-like heart melts as it is filled with mercy. In the form of spiritual master, You destroy ignorance and lust! By manifesting the Sudarsana Chakra of Your wonderful form, You have pierced those crocodiles and freed me from the clutches of their teeth. To fulfil my desire to serve Your lotus feet as a maidservant (*dasi*, You placed the syllables of Your mantra in my ears. You destroyed my suffering, You purified me by the process of constant hearing, chanting, and

remembering Your qualities and name. You made me understand how to perform service to Yourself through the association of Your devotees. I am unintelligent, the lowest of the low, and even one day have not done You service. Such a miserly selfish person deserves to be punished. Contrary to this however, showing Your very self to me, You have made me drink nectar. You have mortified me by saying that You have become my debtor. Now I am thinking what to do. Would I be presumptuous to ask You to pardon all my offenses five, seven, eight, a thousand or a million? I can definitely say it must be more than a trillion. Just let all the reactions to my past activities, intense and long-standing, suffered and to be suffered in the future, remain.

Previously, I compared Your dark limbs to the monsoon cloud, to the blue water lily and to the sapphire; I compared Your effulgent face to the moon, and Your tender feet, to newly sprouted leaves. Now these analogies seem like a pile of burned mustard seeds compared to a golden mountain, or like a chick pea in comparison to a touchstone, like a jackal in comparison to a lion, or a mosquito in comparison to Garuda. By my poor intelligence, I have clearly committed offense to You. Such inapt poetry meant as praise unto Yourself is accepted by the common people. But after seeing the opulence of the Sri Murti for a while I have just become shameful and like an impatient cow my voice wordings will not defile the desire creeper of your beauty with the teeth of comparison. I am like an unsettled cow threatened by the sudden appearance of Your form. But I cannot defile the desire tree of Your beauty even with my destructive comparisons."

In this way, the devotee praises the Lord, and the Lord becomes more pleased with the devotee. Then He reveals all the favorable accoutrements necessary for the devotee's particular relation to the Lord, imbued with excellent *rasa*: Shri Vrindavana, the desire tree, the *maha yoga pitha*, the most dear daughter of Vrishabhanu, Her associates such as Lalita and her manjaris, His own friends such as Subala, the cows maintained by Him, the Yamuna River, Govardhana, forests such as Bhandira, Nandishvara Hill, all the mothers, fathers, brothers, friends and servants there, and the other vrajavasis. The Lord submerges the devotee in the enchanting tidal wave of bliss and then disappears with His entourage.

Recovering consciousness after some moments, the devotee, anxious to see the Lord again, opens his eyes, and not seeing the Lord, he begins crying. "Was I merely dreaming? No, no, I was not dreaming, because I have neither drowsiness, nor any contamination in my eyes from sleep. Was it some hallucination? No, for a hallucination could never give real bliss. Or was it from some defect in the mind? No, because all the symptoms of unsteady mind are absent. Was it the fulfillment of some material desire? No, no material fancy could ever approach what I have seen. Was it a momentary meeting with the Lord? No, because it is completely different from all previous visions of the Lord that I remember." In this way, the devotee remains in uncertainty. Lying upon the dusty earth, he prays constantly for the same experience. Not obtaining it, he laments, weeps, rolls on the ground, wounds his own body, faints, recovers, stands, sits, runs about, and wails like a madman. Sometimes he remains silent like a sage and sometimes like a social

misfit, he fails to perform his daily obligatory duties. Like a person possessed of spirits, he talks incoherently. Unto a devotee friend who comes asking privately what is the matter, he explains what he has experienced. He recovers for a moment, and the friend explains, "That was, by good fortune, a direct meeting with the Lord." Satisfied with that explanation, he becomes happy.

Then again he laments, "No longer do I have that association. Was it a shower of mercy from some great devotee of the Lord upon this unlucky soul? Or was it by mere chance, or was it the result of some past honest endeavor? Or perhaps it was simply the causeless mercy of the Lord. By some indescribable fortune I have attained the Lord, but then, because of a grave offense, I have lost Him again. Without life, without intelligence, I cannot ascertain the truth. Where shall I go? What shall I do and how? Whom to ask? I am completely vacant, without soul, without shelter, scorched by a conflagration. The three worlds seem to be devouring me. Giving up this worldly association, I will live in solitude for some time."

Doing this, he laments further. "Oh lotus-faced Lord, You are possessed of streams of nectar, bedecked with fragrant garlands which scent all the forests, attracting swarms of vibrating bees! Just for a moment may I serve Your Lordship again? Having once tasted Your sweetness, I cannot aspire for anything else."

He begins to roll on the ground, breathe heavily, faint, and lose his mind. Suddenly seeing the Lord everywhere, he rejoices, embraces, laughs, dances and sings, and when the Lord disappears again, he becomes ill with remorse, and weeps. Behaving in this way, he withdraws his very life symptoms and he loses awareness of whether he has a body or not. Then, not aware that his material body has passed to the elements, he understands only that his desired Lord, the ocean of mercy, has manifested Himself. Engaging him in service, He is leading him to His own house. Thus the devotee reaches the final goal.

*adau sraddha tatah sadhu sango'tha
bhajana kriya tato' nartha nivrttih
sya tato nistha rucis tatah athasaktis
tato bhavas tatah premabhyudacati*

First appears faith, then association with devotees, devotional activities, clearing of obstacles, steadiness, taste, attachment, bhava and finally prema.

The stages of devotion mentioned in this verse have been described as they are. *Sneha, mana pranaya, raga, anuraga*, and *mahabhava*, successively specialized tastes, are progressively higher fruits on the creeper of *bhakti*. Because the material body of the devotee cannot tolerate the friction of extremes of all those tastes, they are not manifested in his body. Thus these tastes have not been described here. *Ruchi, asakti, bhava* and *prema*, which can be experienced, have already been described. The scriptural quotations have not been supplied, however, as this would create an obstacle in comprehension of those states. They are applied now.

ruchi:

*tasmins tada labdha rucer mahamune
priyasravasy askhalita matir mama*

“O great sage, as soon as I got a taste of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, my attention to hear of the Lord was unflinching.” (SB 1.5.27)

asakti:

*gunesu saktam bandhaya
ratam va pumsi muktaye*

“The state in which the consciousness of the living entity is attracted by the three modes of material nature is called life. But when that same consciousness is attached to the Supreme Personality of Godhead, one is situated in the consciousness of liberation.” (SB 3.25.15)

bhava:

priya sravasy anga mama bhavad ratih

“Thus listening attentively, my taste for hearing of the Personality of Godhead increased at every step.” (SB 1.5.26)

prema:

*prematibhara nirbhinna
pulakango'ti nirvrtah
ananda samplave lano
napasyam ubhayam mune*

“O Vyasadeva, at that time, being exceedingly overpowered by feelings of happiness, every part of my body became separately enlivened. Being absorbed in an ocean of ecstasy, I could not perceive either myself or the Lord.” (SB 1.6.17)

symptoms of ruchi:

*ta ye pibanty avitrso
nrpa gahha karnais
tan na sprsanty asana
trh ubhaya soka mohah*

“They drink with attentive ears, without being satisfied, O King, and they are not touched by fear, lamentation and illusion.” (SB 4.29.40)

symptoms of asakti:

*srnvan subhadrani rathanga paner
janmani karmani ca yani loke
gatani namani tad arthakani
gayan vilajjo vicared asangah*

“An intelligent person who has controlled his mind and conquered fear should give up all attachment to material objects such as wife, family and nation. He should wander freely without embarrassment, hearing and chanting the holy names of the Lord, the bearer of the chariot wheel.” (SB 11.2.39)

symptoms of *bhava*:

*yatha bhramyaty ayo brahman
svayam akarsasannidhau
tatha me bhramyate cetas
cakrapaner yadrcchaya*

“O brahmanas, as iron attracted by a magnetic stone moves automatically toward the magnet, my consciousness, having been changed by His will, is attracted by Lord Visnu, who carries a disc in His hand. Thus I have no independence.” (SB 7.5.14)

symptoms of *prema*:

*evam vratah sva priya nama kartya
jatanurago druta citta uccaih
hasaty atho roditi rauti gayaty
unmadavan nrtyati loka bahyah*

“When a person is actually advanced and takes pleasure in chanting the holy name of the Lord, who is very dear to him, he is agitated and loudly chants the holy name. He also laughs, cries, becomes agitated and chants just like a madman, not caring for outsiders.” (SB 11.2.40)

momentary vision of the Lord:

*pragayatah sva varyani
tartha padah priya sravah
ahuta iva me saghram
darsanam yati cetas*

“The Supreme Lord Krishna, whose glories and activities are pleasing to hear, at once appears on the seat of my heart, as if called for, as soon as I begin to chant His holy activities.” (SB 1.6.33)

association of the Lord:

*pasyanti te me rucirany amba santah
prasanna vaktraruna locanani
rupani divyani vara pradani
sakam vacam sprhanayam vadanti*

“O My Mother, My devotees always see the smiling face of My form, with eyes like the rising morning sun. They like to see My various transcendental forms,

which are all benevolent, and they also talk favorably with Me.” (SB 3.25.35)

The devotee's reaction to associating with the Lord:

*tair darsanayavayavair udara
vilasa haseksita vama suktaih
hrtatmano hrta pranams ca bhaktir
anicchato me gatim anva prayunkte*

“Upon seeing the charming forms of the Lord, smiling and attractive, and hearing His very pleasing words, the pure devotee almost loses all other consciousness. His senses are freed from all other engagements, and he becomes absorbed in devotional service. Thus in spite of his unwillingness, he attains liberation without separate endeavor.” (SB 3.25.36)

vaso yatha parikrtam madiramadandhah (SB 11.13.36)

These verses taken from *Bhagavatam* should be considered.

The substance of this is as follows. *Ahankara* is of two types: *ahanta* (consciousness of I) and *mamata* (consciousness of mine). By *jnana* these two are destroyed and liberation is attained. By directing these two towards body (I am this body), house (this is my house), etc. bondage results.

I am the follower of the Lord. I am the servant of the Lord. The Lord with His associates, an ocean of sweetness with His form, qualities and pastimes is to be served by me. If one thinks in this way, identifying oneself as the Lord's servant and making the Lord along with His associates are the object of one's possession, it is called *prema*. *Prema* is in this way distinct from both bondage and liberation, and is properly called the crown jewel of all human goals. There is a sequence in this.

When the materialistic aspect of *ahanta* and *mamata* is extremely deep, one remains fixed in the cycle of birth and death. When a particle of faith, by good fortune is born and one thinks of becoming a *Vaishnava* and serving the Lord, the materialistic aspect becomes slightly spiritualized (*gandha*) and the *jiva* becomes qualified for devotional service. At the stage of *sadhu sanga*, the spiritualization becomes more condensed and his material attachments are *atyantiki*. At the stage of *anishthita bhajana kriya*, the spiritualization of I and mine is specific, localized in one place, whereas the material aspect is still in full force (*purna*).

At the stage of *nistha*, spiritualization becomes detectable in many places, and the materialistic influence is still prominent (*prayiki*). At the stage of *ruchi*, spiritualization of I and mine becomes dominant, nearing completion (*prayiki*) and the materialistic concept of I and mine becomes localized in certain issues. At the stage of *asakti*, the spiritual aspect of I and mine becomes complete (*purna*) and the material aspect becomes a trace (*gandha*). At the stage of *bhava*, the

spiritual aspect becomes thorough (*atyantiki*) and the material aspect becomes like an empty shadow. At the stage of *prema*, the spiritual aspect becomes extremely intense (*paramatyantiki*) and the material aspect is completely absent.

At the stage of *bhajana kriya*, meditation on the Lord is momentary with a tinge of material topics. At the stage of *nistha* meditation, there is a trace (*abhas*) of other topics. At the stage of *ruchi*, other topics are absent and the meditation is long lasting. At the stage of *asakti*, meditation becomes very deep. During *bhava*, meditation is marked with the Lord. At the stage of *prema*, in contrast to simply seeing the Lord, there is direct association with the Lord.

*madhurya varidheh krsna
caitanya duddhatai rasaih
iyam dhinotu madhury
maya kadambana jagat*

The cloud bank has lifted the *rasa* from the ocean of sweetness personified, Shri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu. May the sweet bank of clouds satisfy the thirsty world by distributing that *rasa*.

Remaining constantly with devotees, he sits with them conversing about the nectarean pastimes of the Lord relishing and glorifying them again and again, to the exclusion of all other topics. He enters the sacred dham and becomes fixed in the pure unalloyed service of the Lord (*seva-nishtha*). Ignorant people think he is going crazy.

He attempts to learn the new dance step of the devotees' joyful process of meditating on and serving the Lord, and *ruchi*, the dance instructress, takes him by the two hands to personally teach him. Thus, he begins to experience extraordinary, unimaginable bliss. Who can describe in what realm of bliss will he reside when, in time, he is made to dance by the two head mistresses of dance, *bhava* and *prema*?

Thus ends the Eighth Shower of Nectar of *Madhurya Kadambini*
by Mahamahopadhyaya Shrimat Vishvanath Chakravarti discussing the attainment of taste for devotional service.