

uttamā-bhakti-sudhā-laharī

Nectarean Waves of Supreme Devotion

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GURU IN RĀGĀNUGĀ-BHAKTI

posted by New Śrī Haridās Nivās



Those who are attracted to rāgānugā-bhakti are often perplexed at the role the guru plays in it. There are some who maintain he is not necessary, since anyway there is the Paramātmā Who guides one; others say it

is fine to accept him as he can give one invaluable advice on the path and generally it is easier to follow the process with him than without him; while yet others say he is absolutely indispensable and without him one cannot experience premā.

Since it is the scriptures that are our authority, the following is what our bhakti-śāstra has to say about the topic (Sādhana-Dīpikā, 10th chapter):

atha rāgānugā (BRS 1.2.270)–

virājantīm abhivyaktām vraja-vāsi-janādiṣu |
rāgātmikām anusṛtā yā sā rāgānugocyate ||

ṭikā—abhivyaktam suvyaktam yathā syāt tathā vraja-vāsi-janādiṣu virājantīm rāgātmikām bhaktim anusṛtā yā bhaktiḥ, sā rāgānugā ucyate iti yojanā | vraja-vāsi-janādiṣv ity atra jana-padena manuṣya-mātram bodhitam | ādi-padena paṣu-pakṣy-ādayo grhyante | ataevoktam (bhā. 10.29.40) —

trailokya-saubhagam idam ca nirīkṣya rūpaṁ
yat go-dvija-druma-mṛgāḥ pulakāny abibhran | iti |

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virājantīm iti viśeṣeṇa rājamānām, na tu dhāmāntara-pari-vāra-bhaktivad aiśvarya-jñānādinābhibhūtām | anusṛtety atrānusaraṇam nitya-siddha-vraja-vāsi-jana-bhāva-ceṣṭānugamanātmakānukaraṇam | tac ca śrī-kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhānugata-niṣṭham tad evānugatyaṁ iti phalitārthaḥ | tac ca tad-anugatvatve sati tādrśa-kāya-vān-mānasiya-sevā-kartṛtvam ceti |

That devotion which follows rāgātmikā-bhakti shining distinctly in the Vrajavāsīs, be they people or the rest, is called rāgānugā-bhakti.

By “people” only persons are meant while “the rest” refers to animals, birds etc. In Vraja, all the substance, whether moving or non-moving, have a thirst full of premā for Śrī Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, in ŚB 10.21.40 it is said: “The Go, birds, trees, creepers, deer etc who live in Vraja and who have the fortune of the three worlds manifest the ecstatic symptom of bodily hair standing on end when they see Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s beautiful form.”

The word “shining” means that their bhakti is exceedingly radiant, unlike in those associates who live in other spiritual abodes and whose bhakti is overpowered by the knowledge of Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s opulence etc.

“Follows” means following the example of the people who live in Vraja and who are Śrī Kṛṣṇa’s eternal associates by pursuing their mood and behaviour. Indeed, it is by following the beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa, viz., Śrī Gurudeva, that one’s bhajan is to be done – this is what the word “following” refers to. The essence is that rāgānugā-bhakti means becoming a follower of one’s Gurudeva and performing service (to him) through one’s body, speech and mind.

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(14) śrī-kṛṣṇa-preṣṭhādhīnatvaṁ yathāikādaśe
(11.3.21)—

*tasmād gurum prapadyeta jijñāsuḥ śreya uttamam
śābde pare ca niṣṇātām brahmaṇy upaśamāśrayam*
tīkā ca uttamam śreya jijñāsuḥ, śābde brahmaṇi vedākhye
niṣṇātām, anyathā saṁśaya-nirāsakatvāyogyatvād dhe-
toḥ, pare brahmaṇi aparokṣānubhave ca niṣṇātām, anya-
thā yato bodha-saṁcārābhāvāt; pare brahmaṇi niṣṇātātve
dyotakam āha upaśamāśrayam iti |

In the context of becoming dependent on or subordinate to the beloved of Kṛṣṇa, it is said in ŚB 11.3.21:

Therefore, he who is inquisitive about his supreme welfare should approach a guru who is learned in scripture, who has realized the Absolute Truth and who is engaged in practice.

Commentary: The person who desires to inquire about his ultimate welfare, i.e. about *rāgānugā*, or *braja-bhakti*, needs to get a guru. What is the guru like?

(First) he is learned in scriptures (*śabda-brahman*) such as Vedas and others. It is necessary for him to have studied *śāstra* in the disciplic succession and to have full knowledge, otherwise he will not be able to dispel the doubts (of his disciples).

(Secondly), he has realized the Absolute Truth. This means that it is necessary for him also to have direct experience (*aparokṣa-anubhava*) of the Absolute Truth (*para-brahman*), otherwise he will not be able to transmit the understanding (to his disciples).

(Third) it is also necessary for him to be engaged in practice – this is the distinctive meaning of his having realized the Absolute Truth.

tatraiva śrīmad-uddhavaṁ prati śrī-bhagavān
(11.10.12)—

*ācāryyo'raṇir ādyaḥ syād antevāsy uttarāraṇiḥ |
tat-sandhānam pravacanam vidyā sandhiḥ
sukhāvahā ||*

tīkā—ādyo'dharaḥ | tat-sandhānam ca tayor madhyamaṁ manthana-kāṣṭham pravacanam upadeśaḥ | vidyā śāstrottham jñātam | tatra sandhau bhavo'gnir iva | tathā ca śrutiḥ—ācāryam pūrva-rūpaḥ antevāsy uttara-rūpaḥ ity ādi | ataeva tad-vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet iti | ācāryavān puruṣo veda iti | naiśa tarkeṇa matir āpaneyā ity ādi ca |

(15) tathā śrī-kṛṣṇa-preṣṭha-guru-saṁsargeṇaiva
tad-bhāvotpattiḥ syāt | nānyatheti bhāvaḥ | ataeva

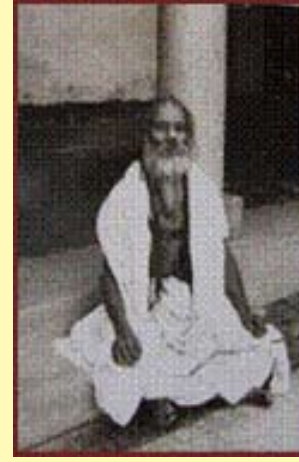
śrī-bhāgavate (11.17.27)—

*ācāryam māṁ vijānīyaṁ nāvamanyeta karhicit |
na marttya-buddhyāsūyeta sarvva-deva-mayo guruḥ*

It was in the connection with this that Kṛṣṇa told Uddhava the following verse (ŚB 11.17.27):

The spiritual master is the lower kindling stick, the disciple is the upper kindling stick, and the instruction given by the guru is the third stick placed in between. The knowledge contained in śāstra (that comes from this instruction) is the fire arising from the contact between the two sticks which brings about happiness.

Śruti (Taittirīya Up. 1.3.5) confirms that too: “Master is the first form, pupil the second form, knowledge the junction, instruction the medium.” Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad (1.2.12) says: “The most elevated subject is



bhakti. In order to learn about it, one needs to choose a guru who is properly behaved, educated and knowledgeable.”

Moreover, Chāndogya Upaniṣad (6.14.2) tells us: “A person who takes shelter of a spiritual master will know the Absolute Truth”. It is also stated in Kaṭha Upaniṣad (1.2.9): “Do not destroy your mind by useless arguments.”

Thus it is only by the union with the guru, the beloved of Kṛṣṇa, that *rāgānugā-bhakti*, or *braja-bhakti*, can originate. There is no other way.

Therefore, it is said by Kṛṣṇa in ŚB 11.17.27:

“Know ācārya to be Me. Never disrespect him, and do not envy him considering him a mortal human being. He is all-containing.”

Thus our *bhakti-śāstra* shows that guru in *rāgānugā-bhakti* is indispensable. Indeed, guru is its essence as *rāgānugā* means following the beloved of Śrī Kṛṣṇa. In the next issue we will present further scriptural support for this conclusion.

--taken from the 10th chapter of Śrī Rādhākṛṣṇa dās's *Sādhana-Dīpikā*, as it was published in Śrī Haridās Śāstrī Mahārājī's *śrīmad-bhāgavatīy uttamā-bhakti-nirūpaṇam* (pp. 122-125); translated according to Mahārājī's Hindi translation-commentary

BHAGAVĀN SVAYAM - A DEVOTEE OF GO

posted by Murāri dās, Argentina

Of all the manifestations that Bhagavān has accepted for the pleasure of His devotees, Kṛṣṇa is the most complete and original. This form of God as a human being is very confidential.

kṛṣṇas tu bhagavān svayam

Kṛṣṇa is the original form of God (ŚB 1.3.28)

gudaṁ paraṁ brahma manuṣya-liṅgam

... the Absolute Truth in his form as a human being is confidential. (ŚB 7.15.75)

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

Kṛṣṇa Who is known as Govinda, is the Supreme God. He has an eternal blissful spiritual body. He is the origin of all. He has no other origin and He is the prime cause of all causes. (Brahma-Samhitā 5.1)

govindam ādi-puruṣam

Govinda, the primeval Lord. (Brahma-Samhitā)



The qualities of *Go* are so dear to Śrī Kṛṣṇa that **He Himself, in His best manifestation as described above, is a devotee of *Go*, showing thus the glory of *Go-sevā*:**

He is a *gopa* ("protector of *Go*"), He is the son of *gopas*, His companions are *gopas* and *gopīs*, His abode is Goloka ("home of *Go*"), and He is called by the names of Govinda and Gopāla. Everything in Kṛṣṇa *līlā* is related to *Go*.

"Go Bhagavān ke bhī Bhagavān hain"

"Go is God of even God Himself".

(Śrī Haridās Śāstrī Mahārājī's statement)

"Lord Kṛṣṇa likes *Go* because they exist for the welfare of all. We like Kṛṣṇa because by protecting *Go* He works for the welfare of all."

(gurudeva *darśana*, Questions and answers, uttamabhakti.org forum, Worship of Govardhana Śīla)

And His form is that of a *gopa*:

gopa-rūpiṇam īśvaram

Īśvara in His *gopa* form (ŚB 10.27.18)

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brahman bhagavatas tasya / bhūmnaḥ svacchanda-var-tinaḥ / gopālodāra-caritaṁ / kas tṛpyetāmṛtaṁ juṣan
O brāhmaṇa, the unlimited Bhagavān freely acts according to His own desires. Who could be satiated when hearing the nectar of the magnanimous pastimes He performed as a cowherd boy in Vṛndāvana? (ŚB 10.16.3)

He is the son of *gopas*:

nanda-gopa-kumārāya / govindāya namo namaḥ

Repeated obeisances unto Govinda, the child of Nanda Gopa. (ŚB 1.8.21)

punaḥ punaḥ smārayanti / nanda-gopa-sutaṁ bata

All this reminds us of the son of Nanda Gopa (ŚB 10.47.50)

gopāla-sūnum pitaram jagad-guroḥ

The son of a cowherd man, the father of Lord Brahmā. (ŚB 10.11.50)

Śrī Kṛṣṇa is personally engaged in *Go-sevā*:

*sa eva go-dhanaṁ lakṣmyā / nicketaṁ sita-go-vṛṣam
cārayann anugān gopān / raṇad-veṇur arīramat*

While herding a multitude of cows, the abode of beauty, along with white bulls, he gladdened the cowherd boys while playing His flute. (ŚB 3.2.29)

*yad arcitaṁ brahma-bhavādibhiḥ suraiḥ /
śriyā ca devyā munibhiḥ sa-sātvataiḥ
go-cāraṇāyānucaraiś carad vane /
yad gopikānām kuca-kuṅkumāṅkitam*

Those lotus feet are worshiped by Brahmā, Śiva and all the other gods, by the goddess of fortune, and also by the great sages and Vaiṣṇavas. Upon those lotus feet the Lord walks about the forest while herding the *Go* with His companions, and those feet are smeared with the *kuṅkuma* from the *gopīs*' breasts. (ŚB 10.38.8)

The Lord enjoys pleasing *Go*:

*evam līlā-nara-vapur / nṛ-lokam anuśīlayan
reme go-gopa-gopinām / ramayan rūpa-vāk-kṛtaiḥ*

Thus the Supreme Lord, appearing as a human being to perform His *līlā*, imitated the ways of human society. He enjoyed pleasing His *Go*, *gopas* and *gopīs* with His beauty, words and actions.

Śrīdhara Svāmī: *anuśīlayan* means imitating. In the word *go-gopa-gopinām*, the sixth case (genitive) is used to express the object of the sentence. Pleasing them *rūpa-vāk-kṛtaiḥ*, with His beauty, His words and His activities or pastimes. In order to give pleasure to them, He enacted His enjoyment.

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Jiva Gosvāmī: All of these activities of His were performed for the purpose of giving pleasure to the inhabitants of Śrī Gokula, as stated by the verse beginning with *evam*.

Go and gopas pleased the Lord more than anything else :

*aho 'ti-dhanyā vraja-go-ramanyaḥ /
stanyāmṛtaṁ pītam ativa te mudā
yāsām vibho vatsatarātmajātmanā /
yat-ṭṛptaye 'dyāpi na cālam adhvarāḥ*

O almighty Lord, how greatly fortunate are the Go and ladies of Vṛndāvana, the nectar of whose breast-milk You have happily drunk to Your full satisfaction, taking the form of their calves and children! All the Vedic sacrifices performed from time immemorial up to the present day have not given You as much satisfaction. (ŚB 10.14.31)

--picture taken from mgdas.com

ŚARANĀGATI

posted by New Śrī Haridās Nivās



The path of śaraṇāgati (surrender) is the supreme sādhanā, superior to all others, and is characterized by six attitudes that the successful aspirant adopts:

1. He possesses the desire that the *iṣṭa-deva* (one's beloved deity or one's gurudeva) should always be pleased and happy.
2. He gives up everything that the *iṣṭa-deva* dislikes or does not want.
3. He has complete faith that his *iṣṭa-deva* is always his protector, and is full of auspiciousness and goodness. Even if something inauspicious or unpleasant happens, he nurtures the belief that He will eventually lead him to an auspicious outcome.

He does not get disturbed (excited or depressed) by happy and sad situations that arise from his past *karma* and fully engages in his work with his body, speech and mind.

4. He considers his *iṣṭa-deva* to be his maintainer and protector, and nobody else. This involves giving up the mundane way of thinking in which, during times of trouble, one gives up simplicity and straightforwardness, inventing ideas for cheating others and taking shelter of everybody without discrimination. In the path that leads to the Supreme, such behavior is discarded. With one's *iṣṭa-deva*, one must always be simple and straightforward.

5. He realizes that his *iṣṭa-deva* is the only doer. Neither himself nor the others are doers in the true sense. This realization comes only by pure contemplation of scriptural knowledge.

When this realization is present, one does not feel an excessive liking towards activities that give pleasure, nor does one feel hatred for those that are unpleasant; indeed *rāga* (attachment) and *dveṣa* (hatred) are the causes of material bondage. If the aspirant becomes free from them, he does not become caught in *karma* and gets thus free from *samsāra*.

6. He acknowledges the greatness and supremacy of the *iṣṭa-deva* and his minuteness before Him.

The idea of what entails śaraṇāgati is summarized in the following verse:

*ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ prātikūlyasya varjanam |
rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso goṭṛtve varaṇam tathā |
ātma-nikṣepa-kārpaṇye ṣaḍ-vidhā śaraṇāgatiḥ ||*

1. *ānukūlyasya saṅkalpaḥ*: nurturing such attitudes, feelings and desires, and performing such actions that give happiness and pleasure to one's *iṣṭa* and all living beings.
2. *prātikūlyasya varjanam*: giving up all those attitudes, feelings, desires and actions that make them unhappy or cause them pain.
3. *rakṣiṣyatīti viśvāso*: the faith that "He will protect me".
4. *goṭṛtve varaṇam tathā*: considering and soliciting one's *iṣṭa-deva* to be one's protector.
5. *ātma-nikṣepa*: recognizing that the Īśvara is the doer and no one else has doership.
6. *kārpaṇyaḥ*: acknowledging that the Īśvara is the master and one is inferior with respect to Him at all times.

--taken from Śrī Haridās Śāstrī Mahārājī's Dina-Candrikā, p. 41-42

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Beef in Ancient India? (part 1)

posted by Āditya dās, Israel

It has been seen that for the last 100 hundred years foreigners as well as some scholars of our own country are trying to prove from the Scriptures of Sanatana Dharma that during the Vedic period not only ordinary meat, but beef was taken. Beef eating was not only customary, but it was an essential item. Let us consider the background of such investigations and their propagation.

During the British period, when it was discovered that beef tallow was being applied in cartridges, mutiny broke out in the army during the year 1857. Since then, the Britishers were anxious to remove the feeling of reverence for the cow from the minds of the Hindus.

With this object in view, they provided that European scholars become proficient in Sanskrit and ultimately mis-interpret the Scriptures of Sanatana Dharma, and the results of these so-called findings were propagated with ulterior motives. In support of this, please read the article entitled 'Western Indologists - A Study in motives' appended to this book.

Our countrymen were also utilised to find out such instances from the Scriptures of Sanatana Dharma as would wipe out from the Hindu mind the feeling of reverence for the cow and also the feeling that it is unkillable.

It appears that the first Indian victim to this stragem was Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra. He was born in 1822. It is said that he belonged to a Vaishnava family of Bengal. His essay 'Beef in Ancient India' was first published in the year 1872, i.e. fifteen years after the mutiny, in the journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal.

Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra had to study a number of Vedic texts for preparing this essay and he has also commented on several of them. About four years after the publication of 'Beef in Ancient India', when no protest was made from any quarter, the Calcutta University conferred the degree of Doctor of Laws (LL. D.) on Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra in the year 1876.

Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra's voluminous work was published in two volumes under the title 'Indo-Aryan' by W. Newman & Co., Calcutta, in 1881 and the article 'Beef in Ancient India' was incorporated as chapter VI of its first volume.

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This particular essay was published in the form of a booklet for the first time in the year 1926 from Calcutta by one Swami Bhoomanand. This was done just after Mahatma Gandhi had taken up the work of cow protection which is clear from his presidential address on 25th June 1925 at Belgaon at the Go-Raksha Parishad and his subsequent activities.

In the preface to the booklet, on pages i & ii from line 17th onwards, the publisher Swami Bhoomanand has written with great pride:

"In my long residence in Punjab and in my travels from Alwar to Peshawar, I came in contact with many educated Hindu gentlemen but I was sorry to find that most of them did not study their own scriptures, and, being ignorant of the manners and customs of their ancestors, were necessarily very narrow in their outlook

I myself do not pretend to be a Sanskrit scholar, **but my studies of our ancient books, mostly in English and vernacular translations, have opened my eyes** to this fact, that the Hindu society was not always just like the present one. For instance, we find in the Vedic literature, the ultimate authority and the fountain of knowledge, clear evidence of inter-caste marriages, widow marriage, elaborate yajnas, animal sacrifices, drinking of soma juice and the eating of food which is at present prohibited in the Hindu Society."

The above extract from the preface of the booklet brings out clearly the purpose behind its publication and propagation. How the people, ignorant of Sanskrit, are misled by such misinterpreted articles would be clearly evident from the various articles published in this book.

Hereafter, the cow protection movement gained momentum in 1967. A fresh reprint of the booklet 'Beef in Ancient India' was published in June 1967 by Manisha Granthalaya Private Ltd., Calcutta. Several copies were distributed free. Whether they were distributed by the publishers or somebody else, could not be traced.

After Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra came Shri Pandurang Vaman Kane, L.L.B., Advocate, Bombay High Court. He wrote 'History of Dharmasastra' in several volumes and parts, which has been published by the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Poona. He has also tried to justify meat and beef eating by quoting from several religious texts.

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They did not rest content at all this. Beside of publication of the article 'Beef in Ancient India' by Raja Rajendra Lala Mitra, 'Beef-eating clubs' were formed to propagate beef eating on an extensive scale. The following extract is self-evident:

"There were those among the intellectuals in touch with the British who were dazzled by the new ideas. The new light in their eyes was so bright that they thought the light within themselves was darkness."

They took, so to speak, Macaulay at his word and set out to westernize themselves in thought, mind and spirit. They formed beef-eating clubs and gloried in the defiance of caste 'superstition'."

The advocates of acception rather than the mutineers were the real revolutionaries of 19th century India."

(INDIA, PAKISTAN AND THE EAST by Percival Spear, published by OUP, 1949 edition, page 182, lines 9 to 13 and 28 to 30).

Lord Macaulay's famous words are quoted below:

"English education would train up a class of persons - Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect."

The prime objective of these people has been to conceal such provisions of the scriptures as prohibit meat or beef eating, and instead place before them in a prominent manner, words of scriptures misinterpreted to mean meat-eating. Such people got recognition not only from the British Government but also from the present Government of India and they were also honoured by the so-called modern anglophilic society. People hankering after such honour, though having little or no knowledge of Sanskrit and religious literature, also write from time to time articles in English in favour of beef eating referring to misinterpreted passages from scriptures. They get them published in newspapers and magazines and thus mislead simple people.

Any article giving correct and logical interpretation does not find place in these newspapers and/or magazines as it goes contrary to such anglophilic views. The common man is misled to think that articles of highly placed and learned people which get so much publicity must be authentic especially when they are citing the scriptures. Thus they get astray that Sanātana Dharma scriptures do not prohibit, but on the other hand, prescribe meat as well as beef eating. How deceptive and incorrect are such notions, will be clear beyond doubt from articles published in this book.

--taken from "A Review of 'Beef in Ancient India'", pp. 6-9, published as "Introduction"

MAKHAN CHOR



"While stealing butter, the Lord chanced to see His own reflection in a jewel-studded pillar. In His child-like innocence, He thought His reflection to be another young boy.

He then addressed His reflection thus: "Oh! You are my friend. Look, I have set aside your equal share of butter. But please do not

complain to my mother or else she will spank me (for stealing butter)."

May Lord Hari, Who in the form of a little boy was thus pleading with His own reflection, protect you."

"Wiping, with His hands, His unctuous, fragrant lips, smeared as they are, with all the milk, yoghurt and butter stolen by Him,

Smelling His hands again and again (for the remnants of any butter), He instantly rubs them against the strap bearing a little tinkling bell around His waist,

His large eyes, His roving eyeballs, throwing their gaze in every direction, over and over again, the naughty, playful, little cowherd boy, Gopāla, slowly approaches His mother."

--taken from Mahārājī's Padyāvalī, translated by Gaurav Raina, ślokas 141 and 145, both by Anonymous

--picture from exoticindia.es

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