

CHAPTER : II

Treatment of Bhakti in Bhāgavata

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TREATMENT OF BHAKTI IN BHĀGAVATA.

In order to have a comprehensive view of the Bhakti cult of Bhāgavata, it is necessary to know in brief outline the contents of the Bhāgavata and to have an insight for the purpose. The Purāṇas are many, but the one that is most - important is the Bhāgavata Purāṇa. It is one of the greatest Classics in the sacred literature of India, and is the chief basis of the philosophical schools of the Vaiṣṇava ācāryas.

Bhāgavata is believed to be the inspired production (जमाधिभाषा) of Sage Vyāsa, an Avatāra of Lord Viṣṇu. It consists of twelve books, 335 Cantos, 18,000 Verses and 5,76,000 letters. It chiefly treats of the following ten topics viz. -

1. God (अनाम्यतत्त्व)
2. Creation (सृष्टि)
3. Recreation (विसृष्टि)
4. Divine Regulation of the Cosmos (स्थिति)
5. Divine Grace (प्रोक्षण),
6. Desires leading to metempsychosis (उन्नि)
7. Manu Periods and the Divine Government (मन्वन्तर),

8. Life stories of Divine Descents and Devotees - Saints, Wages and Saviours of mankind (अवतार),
9. The way to God (निरोध), and
10. Redemption or beatitude (मुक्ति).

The Chief and the all embracing topic of the above mentioned ten topics is God or the God-head (आत्म), for all the remaining nine topics are intended to serve as an aid to the realisation or attainment of the Divine, the Refuge of one and all, high or low.

The main aim of the above mentioned ten-fold topics is to awaken the soul and to enable him to turn back to God, the source and solace of one and all (आत्म). The origin of the Bhāgavata is due to the contact of Sage Nārada with Vyās, while the latter was in a pensive mood. Sri Nārada told him to sing the glory of God so as to be within the reach of all - the classes as well as the masses (शिवाय लोकस्य भवाय भुनये), and related to him the four-versed (यन्तुः श्लोकी) Bhāgavata revealed to him by Brahma, and advised

him to amplify it (त्वमेतद्विपुलीकुरु).¹

The Bhāgavata equates Śrī Kṛṣṇa with Bhagavān. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa, the most notable of eighteen Mahā-Purāṇas is the practical demonstration of a sublime philosophy of religion incorporated in the Pithy statement that Kṛṣṇa is all in all.²

शिवाय लोकस्य भयाय भूतये | Bh. 1-4-12

1. अहमेवासमग्रं नान्यदस्मिदसत्परम् ।

पश्यादहं यदेतच्च योऽवशिष्येत सोऽस्म्यहम् ॥

श्रुतेऽर्थे यत्प्रतीयेत न प्रतीयेत चात्मनि । ?

तं विधादात्मनो मायां यथाभासो तमः ॥

यथा महान्नि भूतानि भूतेषूप्रावच्येष्वनु । ?

प्रविष्टान्यप्रविष्टानि तथा तेषु न लेष्वहम् ॥

अलावदेव जिज्ञास्यं तत्त्वजिज्ञासुनात्मनः ।

अन्यथैक्यतिरेकाभ्यां यत्स्यात्सर्वत्र सर्वदा ॥

2. कृष्णस्तु भगवान् स्वयम् । Bh 2.9.32 to 35 ?

However, Swāmī Digambarjī believes that we should not speak of Kṛṣṇāvatāra as perfect and other avatāras as partial (*अंशवन्तार*),³ because God is perfect and indivisible and only the perfect comes out of the perfect as revealed in the Śruti.⁴ Bhagavān of the Bhāgavata is the highest metaphysical reality and the Bhāgavata is so called, because it deals with Bhagavān. It not only deals with the life of Kṛṣṇa, but it also describes what he preached through his life, deeds and statements. The climax of Divine sport is reached when all blissful nature of Bhagavān finds its consummation in what the Bhāgavata calls Rāsālīlā.⁵ The Bhagavān is viewed in the Bhāgavata

3. २-वाची द्वाविंशति " श्रीमद् भागवत लूभिका
अथवा भागवतलोचन " भाग - १ पृ. ११३

4. ॐ पूर्णमदः पूर्णमिदं पूर्णात् पूर्णमुदच्यते ।
पूर्णरयं पूर्णमादाय पूर्णमेवावशिष्यते ॥
Br. U Śāntipatha

5. Dr. Siddhesvara Bhaṭṭācārya : " The Philosophy of the Śrīmad-Bhāgavata " Vol. I - P. 48.

not so much as the God of philosophical speculation as the God of Grace such as the heart and the soul need and seek, who inspires personal trust and love, reverence and loyal surrender.

The dominant note of the Bhāgavata is not appeal to reason; but to faith and love, for it believes that the way of Love leads the devotee straight to the Goal, endowing him at once with the deepest insight and highest strength. Sincere love alone can integrate humanity and divinity in indissoluble union. The Bhāgavata asserts again and again that the Divine does come down in man from age to age to help humanity in evolving Godward. The Divine descent may be indirect through inspired agents (i.e. Super men) or direct through incarnation (i.e. saviours). De facto, the whole of the Bhāgavata centres round Bhagavān, the summum bonum of human life, and the essence of all the episodes of the Bhāgavata lies in everlasting God-consciousness and in transcending the dualism (द्वैत) and the pairs of opposites (द्वन्द्व)⁶.

6. 2-4141 दिवालय. " श्रीमद् भागवतपूजि ४।
अर्द्ध भागवतलोचन. भाग-२. पृ. १६.

Bhakti is the main topic of the Bhāgavata and that is why there is frequent repetition of the aphorism - "Imprison God in the inmost heart" (हृदिस्थं कुरु केशवम्) and the advice to treat all the episodes as अर्थवाद - either eulogistic or defamatory, for they are intended to bring into lime light love-devotion. The episodes are not to be regarded as true in the literal sense, but they should be taken in metaphorical sense; otherwise they will seem irrational because of exaggerations and impossibilities involved in them. The last thing to be borne in mind is this that the exploits of child Kṛṣṇa are full of wonders and miracles as Śrī Kṛṣṇa is depicted in the Bhāgavata as the omnipotent, omnipresent and omni-scient God of the universe. Nothing is impossible to the Lord; It is a sort of play to Him (जघान लीलया सर्वान्).⁷

In order to attain to Bhagavān i.e. for God-realisation, Bhāgavata insists on Bhakti, for the way of love is open to all and the easiest and the safest way to approach God. Mumukṣutva (मुमुक्षुत्व), Desire for Release is the minimum qualification

7. २-५-५१ "हृदिस्थं कुरु केशवम्" श्रीमद् भागवतसूत्रिका अध्याय १
भागवतलिलान् भाग-१ पृ ८१

which entitles one to the Path of Devotion. ⁸

The Bhakti cult of the Bhāgavata is catholic and universal. It is the religion for all. It is a perfectly democratic religion; for the Bhāgavata-God is the God of Love who has no caste or sex or nationality. ⁹

Bhakti is defined variously by the advocates of Bhakti as shown below :-

1. Dr. Rādhākṛṣṇan holds that Bhakti is derived from the root भृज् - to serve, and means service of the Lord. ¹⁰
2. According to Nārada, it is intense love for God. ¹¹ Higher love does not mean the love which

8. लक्ष्मणाय नमः शिवाय पुमुमुभिः ।

N. B. S. 33

9. Jadunāth Sinhā : "Cultural Heritage of India"
Vol. IV - P. 158 and 159.

10. डॉ. राधाकृष्णन् : " भगवानकी भक्तिका
विशुद्ध पक्ष " - कल्याण भगवन्नाममहिमा
और प्रार्थना अंक - पृ २५.

11. सात्वस्मिन् परमप्रेमरूपा ।

N. B. S. 2.

seeks a return or expects a reward, but the love which, mounting higher and higher in the face of tribulation, aims at the complete mergence of the lover in the beloved. The devotee is indifferent to pleasure and pain, fame or calumny and recognises no other interest, whether of family, nation, religion or ethics, for the higher love of God is his very life-essence. He may be able to live without breathing, but not without the remembrance of the Lord. ¹²

3. Śāṇḍilya defines it as loving attachment to God.¹³ For Śāṇḍilya, it is supreme longing for God for its own sake.

4. According to Patañjali, it is ईश्वर प्रणिधान i.e. meditation on God. ¹⁴

12. Hari Prasād Shāstri : "The Philosophy of Love - The Nārada Sūtras " - P. 11.

13. सा परानुरक्तिरीश्वरे ।
S.B S. 2 .

14. ईश्वर प्रणिधानाद् वा
पातञ्जल योगसूत्र-समाधिपाद १-२३

5. Pārāsarya (i.e. Vyās) defines Bhakti as loving worship of the Divine. ¹⁵
 6. Gargācārya defines Bhakti as love for listening to the stories of the exploits of God. ¹⁶ Hemādrīdeva defines Bhakti as the steadying and absorption of the mind in Bhagavān. ¹⁷ Śrī Madhusūdana Sarasvatī defines Bhakti as the mind's assumption of the Divine Form in its state of liquidity. ¹⁸
 7. Śrī Śaṅkara (in his commentary on Gītā - VIII: 19, XIV:26) says that worship is Bhakti (भजनं भक्तिः). ¹⁹
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15. पूजादिष्वनुराग इति पाराशर्यः ।
N.B.S. 16.
16. कथादिष्विति गर्गः ।
N.B.S. 17.
17. भगवत्तिमनः स्थिरीकरणं भक्तिरिति लक्षणादर्थः
हेमाद्रिदेवः "मुक्ताफल" - V P. 83.
18. द्वयीभावपूर्विका हि मनसो भगवदाकारता
साविकल्पकवृत्तिरुपा भक्तिः ।
दुतस्य भगवद्गुणानां वाहिका गता ।
सर्वेशोभनसोवृत्तिभक्तिरित्यभिधीयते ॥
मधुसूदन सरस्वती : भक्तिरसायन
१-३-पृ. ९.
19. A.K. Majumdar: " Bhakti Renaissance " -P. 4.

8. According to Śrī Rāmānuja, continuous meditation of Dhyāna is Bhakti which is a synonym of Upāsana.²⁰

9. According to Śrī Madhva, Bhakti and Jñāna are practically synonymous terms (भक्त्या ज्ञानं ततो भक्तिः), and the supremacy of Bhakti is made clear by him in his commentary on the Brahma-Sūtra (III.2.19).²¹

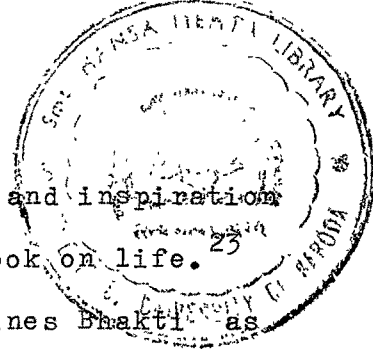
10. Bhakti is defined in Viṣṇu Purāṇa as the same intensity of love for God as the ignorant worldly minded have for sense-objects and sensual pleasures.²²

11. Narendranāth Law holds that the essence of Bhakti lies in the establishment of a personal nexus between the devotee and the Deity, and the expression of the heart's devotion to Him in and through that relation, which becomes to him a

20. A.K. Majumdar: "Bhakti Renaissance"-P. 4.

21. A.K. Majumdar: "Bhakti Renaissance"-P. 5.

22. या प्रीतिरविवेकानां विषयेष्वनपायिनी ।
त्वामनु स्मरतः सा मे हृदयान्माय सर्पतु ॥
विष्णुपुराण - अंश-१-२०-१६



never-failing source of attraction and inspiration colouring all his actions and outlook on life.²³

12. In his Pañcarātra, Nāṇada defines Bhakti as the worship of the Lord with a purified and concentrated mind.²⁴ Pañcarātra believes Bhakti to be

the worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa in his four-fold form

(चतुर्विध) - वासुदेव , संकर्षण , प्रद्युम्न ,

and अनिरुद्ध . The Pañcarātra Saṁhitā deals with

the five topics viz. परमत्त्व , भुक्ति , भुक्ति ,

योग and विषय (संसार). It is hence that

it is called Pañcarātra.²⁵

13. According to Rūpa Goswāmī, Bhakti means loving and constant meditation on nothing but one-Lord Kṛṣṇa. Rūpa Goswāmī also defines Bhakti as the natural and

23. Narendra Nath Law: "Muktaphala" - Prefatory Dissertation - P. xviii.

24. सर्वोपाधि-विनिर्मुक्तं तत्परत्वेन निर्मलम् ।
दृष्टीकेण दृष्टी-केन्द्रा-लेपनं भक्तिरुच्यते ॥
नारदपंचरात्र.

25. डॉ० मुन्शीराम शर्मा - भक्ति का विकास " पृ० २५८

spontaneous flow of love towards God.²⁶

14. Bhakti means always to be in the company of God according to Caitanya.²⁷

15. According to Śrī Rāmāṇa Mahārṣi, Love unbroken like a stream of oil is devotion.²⁸

It will thus be seen that conventional devotion marked by affectionate regard may be considered as the first rung in the ladder of devotion which falls in a hierarchy of Parental regard (वात्सल्य), friendship (मैत्री) and amorous love (कान्ताभावः) recorded by the Bhāgavata as स्नेह , सौहार्द and काम respectively.²⁹

26. अन्याभिलाषिताश्चून्यं ज्ञानकर्मधनान्वृतम् ।

अनुकूल्येन कृष्णानुशीलनं भक्तिरुत्तमा ॥

-रूपगोस्वामी - "भक्तिरसाभृतसिन्धु"

भुक्ति मुक्तिरूपद्वयायतपिशान्ची हृदिवर्तते ।

तावद् भक्तिरसुखस्यात्र कथमभ्युदयो भवेत् ॥

रूपगोस्वामी "भक्तिरसाभृतसिन्धु

प्रचलित-२-११ .

27. कल्याण भक्ति अंक पृ. १७.

28. Golden Jubilee Souvenir - P. 342. 2nd Edition 1949.

29. Siddheśvara Bhaṭṭācārya: "The Philosophy of The Śrīmad-Bhāgavata" - Vol. II - P. 146.

However, for the purpose of widening the scope of Bhakti, the Bhāgavata has taken into account the attitudes such as - relation (of the Vṛṣṇis), fear (of Kāṁsa), hatred (of Śiśupāla), friendliness (of the Pāṇḍavas) and intimacy (of the Gopīs).³⁰ In order, therefore, to accommodate hatred etc. in the general pattern of devotion to Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa, the Bhāgavata redefines devotion as the application and absorption of the mind in Bhagavān Kṛṣṇa. Broadly speaking, it may be said that the Supreme Reality may be pursued either as an object of love or as an object of hatred, the end in view being the same in both, that is, to set the mind firmly on Kṛṣṇa by any means whatsoever.³¹ God is so overflowing with mercy that He gave redemption even to the wicked monstress 'Pūtṇa' who came with the evil motive of poisoning Him,³² and to

30. गोप्यः कामाद् भयात् कैसो द्वेषाच्चैधादयो नृपाः।
सम्बन्धाद् वृष्णायः स्नेहाद् भूयं भक्त्या वयं विभो॥
Bh. 7.1.30.

31. तस्मात् केनाप्युपायेन मनः कुणो निवेशयत।
Bh. 7.1.31.

32. पूतना लोकपालघ्नी राक्षसी रुधिराशना।
जिघांसयापि हरये स्तनं दत्त्वाऽऽप सङ्गतिम्॥
Bh. 10.6.35

others like Aghāsura, Bakāsura etc. who were ungodly and quite averse to Him. According to Bhāgavata, what matters is the goal, the complete absorption of the mind in Bhagavān by any means whatsoever, and not what serves as its immediate stimulus. In short, Bhakti is that which unifies Bhakta with Bhagavān, and a true Bhakta is a Gopī who drinks the divine nectar in all possible ways with all his organs. (गोपिः पियति अमृतं इति गोपी). As a matter of fact, Bhakti is an emotional approach to God, and is specially intended for those in whom emotion is the predominant element. The devotee has a sense of utter humility and God loves meakness - the utter prostration of the self.

As a rule, the particular qualities associated with bhakti; love and devotion, mercy and tenderness are to be found more in women than in men. As bhakti emphasizes humility, obedience, readiness to serve, compassion and gentle love, as the devotee longs to surrender himself, renounce self-will and experience passivity, it is said to be more feminine in character. Women expect, suffer, hope and receive. They long for compassion, mercy, peace.

In the Bhāgavata, it is said that the girls prayed to the Supreme Goddess, Kātyāyanī, to get for them Kṛṣṇa as their husband.³³ When they are most truly themselves, women give everything, claim nothing. There is a feminine element in all beings; for the true characteristic of a woman is to love and to be loved. Accordingly Rādhā typifies the loving soul. In relation to God, the devotees are rather like women. The supreme Lord or Bhagavān is the only Man; all others from Brahma downwards are like women (who longed to be united with Him).³⁴ The origin of this type of Bhakti is seen in the South, the land of Dravids, Saint Saṭhakopaswāmī, one of the most famous twelve Alwārs may be considered the true founder of the Bhakti cult of Śrī Rāmānuja. He has written a treatise on Bhakti viz. (अगवद् विषय), and it is regarded as the best book on Bhakti, and in the South, it is believed to be equal

33. कात्यायनि महामाये महायोगिन्यधीपचरि।
नन्दगोप सुतं देवि पतिं मे कुरु ते नमः
Bk. 10. 22. 4.

34. Dr. Rādhākṛṣṇan : "The Bhagavadgītā" -
P. 61-62.

in authority to the Vedas, and is known as Dravida Veda. In this Dravida Veda, he looks upon God as the only man and all others are like women. He preaches love devotion of the Rādhā type or like that of the Gopīs. Bhakti is the utmost love and regard for God as the ignorant have for the sense objects. ³⁵ In fact when we are emptied of ourself (i.e. egoism), God takes possession of us. What is most needed in Bhakti is self-surrender i.e. Ātmanivedana.

We should distinguish here between Bhakti and Prapatti i.e. self-surrender. The difference between Bhakti and Prapatti according to Rāmānuja, is symbolised by the ape-way (i.e. मर्कटकिशोरन्याय) and the cat-way (भार्जोरकिशोरन्याय). The young ape clings fast to the mother and is saved. A little effort on the part of the young one is called for. The mother-cat takes the young one in her mouth. The young one does nothing to secure its safety.

35. या प्रीतिरस्ति विषयेष्वविवेकभाजां,
सैवाच्युते भवति भक्तिर्यदाभिधेया।
भक्तिस्तु काम इह तत्कमनीय - स्ये,
तस्मान्मुने रजनि कामुकवाक्य भङ्गी॥

स्वामी भगवदाचार्य-" (मडित ३॥२३ ")

(अनु. ६ विडोपनिषत् संगति) पृ. २१५

Likewise, in Bhakti Grace is earned to an extent, in Prapatti it is freely bestowed. However, man's effort is involved in the total surrender to the Supreme. It cannot be unintensional or effortless. The Supreme is the same to all beings. The doctrine of grace is not to be interpreted as one of special election. ³⁶

In brief, Bhakti is to believe in God, to love Him, to be devoted to Him and to enter into Him. ³⁷ It is its own reward. ³⁸

According to Nārada and others, the essential features of true Bhakti are as under :-

(1) We require first of all faith (*श्रद्धा*). The Highest Reality has to be assumed or taken on faith

36. Dr. Radhakrsnan : "The Bhagavadgita" - P. 64.

37. Dr. Radhakrsnan : " The Theism of the -
Bhagavadgita" - P. 63.

38. कलरूपत्वात्
N.B.S. 26.

मङ्गल सुतं सगल सुख जानी.

श्रीकृष्णसूत्र - "रामायण" - उच्छ्वासः ५७:५.

५.८५४.

till it reveals itself in the devotee's consciousness.³⁹

(2) The object of devotion should be Bhagavān or Puruṣottama who is immanent in as well as transcendent over the cosmos.

(3) The devotee must have a sense of utter humility. In the presence of the Ideal, he feels that he is nothing. God loves meakness.⁴⁰

(4) Devotion expresses itself as either love for God (प्रीति) or acute pain due to the absence of God (विरह).⁴¹

(5) There is the continual desire in the devotee to serve the Ideal. He talks only about Him; and

39. य इदं नारद प्रोक्तं श्रियानुशासनं विश्वसिति
भ्रद्यते स प्रेष्ठं लभते स प्रेष्ठं लभते इति।
N.B.S. 84

40. ईश्वरस्याप्यभिमान द्वेषित्वात् दैन्यप्रियत्वाच्च।
N.B.S. 27.

41. नारदस्तु तदर्पिताश्वत्थाचारतातद्विरुद्धे
परमव्याकुलतेति।
N.B.S. 19.

thinks only of Him. ⁴² Whatever he does, he does for the glory of God. It is an utter self-giving to the transcendent. ⁴³

(6) The Eternal Infinite presents itself to the human soul in a variety of aspects. In the eye of the true devotee, the lower Gods are forms or aspects of the One Supreme; and the world is a purposive order where the individual obtains whatever he desires. The true devotee feels the

42. तत्प्राप्य तदेवावलोकयति तदेव शृणोति तदेव
भाषयति तदेव चिन्तयति । N:B S. 55.
मच्चित्तामद्भुतप्राणा बोधयन्तः परस्परम् ।
अप्ययन्तश्च मां नित्यं तुष्यन्ति च रमन्ति च ॥
तेषां सत्तत युक्तानां भजतां प्रीति पूर्वकम् ।
ददामि बुद्धियोगं तं येन मामुपयान्ति ते
तेषामेवानुकम्पाऽर्थ महमज्ञानजं तमः ।
नाशायाम्यात्मभावस्थो ज्ञानदीपेन भास्वता ॥

शिव. 10. 9. 11.

43. शुभाशुभकलेर्वै मोक्षयसे कर्मबन्धनैः ।
संन्यासयोग युक्तात्मा विमुक्तो मामुपैष्यसि ॥

शिव. 9. 28.

force of the truth of the oneness of God in the universe. ⁴⁴ A true Bhakta is one who sees the oneness of all life. ⁴⁵

(7). The forms which Bhakti takes are contemplation of God's power, wisdom and goodness; conversing about His qualities with other persons, singing His praises with fellowmen and doing all acts as His service. ⁴⁶

(8). Logical discussions are not of much avail. It is constant (निरंतर) and unmotivated. -

44. वासुदेवः सर्वभिति ।

Gitā. ११९.

45. सर्वभूतेषु यः पश्येद् भगवद्भावात्मनः ।
भूतानि भगवत्यात्मन्येष भागवतोत्तमः ॥

Bh. 11. 2. 45.

46. यः कर्मफलं त्यजति कर्माणि संन्यस्यति
ततो निर्द्वन्द्वो भवति ।
वेदानपि संन्यस्यति केवलमविच्छिन्नानुरागं
लभते ।
स तरति स तरति स लोकांस्तारयति ।

N.B.S. 48 to 50

(निर्हेतुक) devotion that matters most.⁴⁷ There is no commercial spirit of barter in which the devotee gives Bhakti to the Lord in expectation of the good things of the world. The spirit of take and give is condemned both in the Gītā and the Bhāgavata.

(9). The end of the devotee is not an immersion (a merger) in the Eternal Impersonal, but the

47. लक्ष्मणं भक्तियोगस्य निर्गुणस्य ह्युदाहृतम्।

अहेतुक्य व्यवहिता या भक्तिः पुरुषोत्तमे ॥ Bk. 3. 29. 12.

न धनं न जनं न सुन्दरीं;

कवितां वा जगदीश कामये।

मम जन्मनि जन्मनीयवरे,

भवताद् भक्तिरहेतुकी त्यजि ॥-१३ी चैतन्य ; शिक्षाष्टक. ४.

गुण रहितं कामना रहितं प्रतिक्षण वर्द्धमानभविच्छिन्नं

सूक्ष्मतरमनुभयरूपम् । - N. B. S. 54.

तेषां ज्ञानी नित्य युक्त एक भक्तिर्विशिष्यते।

प्रियोहि ज्ञानिनो ऽत्यर्थमहं स च मम प्रियः ॥

उदाराः सर्व एवैते ज्ञानी त्वात्मैव मे मतम्।

आस्थितः स हि युक्तात्मा मामेवानुत्तमां गतिम्

Gīt. 7. 17. 218.

अनन्य-चेता सततं यो मां स्मरति नित्यशः।

तस्याहं सुलभाः पार्थ नित्ययुक्तस्य योगिनः ॥

मामुपेत्य पुनर्जन्म दुःखालयमशापयतम्।

नाप्नुयन्ति भद्राः सत्मानः संसिद्धिं परमां गताः ॥

-Gīt. 8. 14 & 15.

union with the Puruṣottama. Like the Gītā, the Bhāgavata recognises both the types of Bhakti - Nirguṇa (the Formless Divine) as well as the Saguṇa (the Divine with Form); but it believes that when devotion is perfected, Bhakta and Bhagavān reveal themselves as aspects of one life. It is called Parā-Bhakti ⁴⁸ in the Bhāgavata like that of Gopīs and the Bhāgavatottamas.

(10). In a word, all virtue, strength, self-denial and sublimity are born of Bhakti. Bhakti is, thus, quite as efficacious as any other method, and it is some-times said to be greater than others, since it is its own fruition, while others are means to some other ends.

Sri Śaṅkerācārya believes that Bhakti is emotional attachment distinct from knowledge or action. According to some, Jñāna or knowledge is instrumental in the production of Bhakti ⁴⁹ while

48. न तपोभिः न वेदैर्धनं न ज्ञानेनापि कर्मणा ।
इति हि साध्यते भक्त्या प्रमार्जं तत्र गोपिकाः ॥
Bh.Ma. 2-18.

49. तस्या ज्ञानमेव साधनमित्येके ।
N.B.S. - 28.

others say that they are mutually dependent.⁵⁰

However sage Nārada believes that Bhakti is an end in itself.⁵¹ The voice of God in the Gītā declares,

"This is my word of promise, that he who loveth Me shall not perish.⁵² Even if a man of evil conduct turns to Me with a sole and entire love, he must be regarded as a saint",⁵³ because he has turned to God with a settled will and has therefore become a soul of righteousness. In fact, the nature of love

50. अन्योन्याभयत्वमित्यन्ये । - N.B.S. 29.

51. स्वयं फलरूपतेति ब्रह्मबुद्धयः । N.B.S. 30

52. अथो विभूतिं मम भावादिभिस्तामैश्वर्यमष्टाङ्गमनु प्रवृत्तम् ।
मियं भागवतीं वा स्मृत्यन्ति भद्रां परस्य मे तेऽनुवते तु लोके ॥
Bh. 3 25 37.

क्षिप्रं भवति धर्मात्मा शपचच्छान्ति मिगच्छति ।
कौन्तेय प्रतिज्ञा वीहि न मे भक्तः प्रणश्यति ॥ - श्रीव. 9. 31.
ब्रह्माण्डानि विनश्यन्ति देवा इन्द्रादयस्तथा ।
कल्याण भक्तियुक्तस्य मद्भक्तो न प्रणश्यति ॥ ब्रह्मवैवर्तपुराण ।
जगतः प्रलये प्राप्ते नष्टे च कमलोद्भवे ।
मद्भक्ता मेय नश्यन्ति स्वच्छा विशुद्धा धारिणः ॥ - "शौरपुराण "

53. अपि चेत्सुदुराचारी भजते मामनन्यभाक् ।
साधुरेषां स मन्तव्यः सम्यक्पुंसितो हि सः ॥

- श्रीव. 9. 30.

towards God is indescribable just as the taste of the dumb person.⁵⁴ It is said in the Bhāgavata that God gives redemption (मुक्ति), but not Bhakti Yoga,⁵⁵ for Mukti is the handmaid of Bhakti.

Thus Bhakti is said to be superior to Mukti. Moreover, in the glorification of Bhāgavata, Jñāna and Vairāgya are said to be the offspring of Bhakti.⁵⁶ This implies that Bhakti is superior to Jñāna. Besides, Bhakti alone leads to beatitude as revealed in the dialogue between Kapila and his mother Devahūti.⁵⁷ Broadly speaking, the devotees do not

54. अनिर्घचनीयं प्रेमस्वरूपं । भूकास्वादनवत् ।
N B.S. 51 & 52.

55. अस्त्येवमङ्गभगवन् भजतां मुकुन्दो भुक्तिं ददाति
कहिंचित्स्म न भक्तियोगम् । Bh. 5 6 18.
यदि भवति मुकुन्दे भक्तिरानन्दसाम्ना ।
विलुण्ठति चरणाब्जे मोक्ष साम्राज्य लक्ष्मी ॥ "भक्तिरसामृतसिन्धु"

56. अहं भक्तिरिति ख्याता इमौ मे तनयो भवतौ ।
ज्ञान वैराग्यमानौ कालयोगेन जर्जरौ ॥
Bh. m. 1- 48.

57. विसृज्य सत्त्वानन्यांश्च मामेयं विषवतोभुखम् ।
भजन्त्यनन्यया भक्त्या तान्मृत्योरतिपारये ॥
Bh. 3 25. 40.

wish to be oned with God, but love to serve God in all possible ways. ⁵⁸ Bhakti is defined here as the natural and unmotivated flow of the - concentrated mind towards God dominated by the quality of Sattva. Bhakti is said to be far - superior to the perfections (सिद्धिः) attained ? by the Yoga discipline. The cause of Samsāra in fact is want of Devotion and not knowledge. ⁵⁹ Parā-Bhakti, Parama-Prema, Supreme love is the primary object to which the devotee aspires. It burns to ashes all the actions of the conscious and the unconscious mind; and frees the soul from the round of birth and death. ⁶⁰

58. नैकात्म्यं मे स्पृहयन्ति केचिन्मत्याद सेवाभिरता भदीशः।
Bh. 3 25. 34.

59. संसृतिरेषामभक्तिः स्यान्नाज्ञानात् कारणासिद्धेः।
S. 98.

60. सत्त्वं ह्येकमनसो वृत्तिः स्वाभाविकी तु या।
अनिमिता आगच्छती भक्तिः सिद्धेर्गरीयसी॥
जरयत्याशु या कोशं निगीर्णमनसो यथा॥
Bh. 25. 32. 2 33.

Bhakti arises from the giving up of the objects of the senses and of attachment to them,⁶¹ from constant worship,⁶² from listening to, and singing the glories of the Lord in assemblies of men.⁶³ But principally it is obtained through the kindness of the great ones, i.e. the successful devotees, or through Divine grace⁶⁴. Companionship of the great however, is difficult to obtain⁶⁵. It can be obtained only through the mercy of God,⁶⁶ in-as-much-as there is no difference between God

61. तत्तु विषयत्यागात् सङ्गत्यागाच्च।

N.B.S. 35.

62. अव्यावृत्तभजनात्।

N.B.S. 36.

63. तनोकेऽपि भगवद्गुण श्रवणकीर्तनात्।

N.B.S. 37.

64. मुख्यस्तु महत्कृपयैव भगवत्कृपाले शास्त्रा।

N.B.S. 38.

65. महत्सङ्गस्तु दुर्लभोऽगम्योऽभोध्यश्च।

N.B.S. 39.

66. लभ्यतेपि तत्कृपयैव।

N.B.S. 40

and His goodmen⁶⁷. Evil company should be forsaken by all means,⁶⁸ as it is the source of evil - tendencies.⁶⁹ The evil tendencies like lust, anger, delusion etc., though ordinarily playing in ripples under the breeze of Māyā, behave like the sea by association with the whirlwind of evil company.⁷⁰ Only he crosses over Māyā who avoids evil company, attends upon Godly men and becomes selfless⁷¹ - who retires into solitude, roots out all worldly attachments, does not yield

67. तस्मिन्स्तज्जने भेदाभावात् ।

N.B.S 41

68. दुःखं सर्वधैव त्याज्यः ।

N.B.S 43.

69. काम क्रोध मोह मृति भ्रंश बुद्धि नाश सर्वनाश कारणत्वात् ।

N.B.S. 44.

70. तरङ्गायिता असीमे लङ्गात्समुद्रायन्ति ।

N.B.S 45.

71. कस्तरति कस्तरति मायाम् १ यः सङ्गास्त्यजति
यो महाबुधाय सेवते निर्भमो भवति ।

N.B.S. 46.

to the influences of the three gunas and gives up both acquisition and preservation⁷² - who renounces the fruits of his action, dedicates all actions to God, and thereby rises above the influence of duals (such as pleasure and pain, heat and cold),⁷³ - who puts aside the Vedas and acquires pure, uninterrupted attachment to the Lord⁷⁴. He not only himself crosses over *Māyā*, but also helps others to cross over their *Māyā*.⁷⁵

72. यो विविक्तस्थानं सेवते यो लोकबन्धमुन्मूलयति,
निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवति योगक्षेमं त्यजति । N.B.S 47

73. यः कर्मफलं त्यजति कर्माणि संन्यस्यति ततो
निर्द्वन्द्वो भवति । N.B.S. 48.

74. इति भागवतान् धर्मान् शिक्षन् भक्त्या तदुत्थया ।
नारायणपरो भायामञ्जस्तरति दुस्तराम् ॥
Bh. 11.3 33

वेदानपि संन्यस्यति केवलमविच्छिन्नानुरागं लभते ।
N.B.S. 49.

75. स तरति स तरति स लोकं स्तारयति ।
N.B.S. 50.

The aspirant should not listen to talks about women, wealth and the conduct of atheists.⁷⁶ He should give up egoism, pride etc.⁷⁷ He should avoid argumentation,⁷⁸ and should make God the object of his lust, anger, pride etc..⁷⁹ Not a single moment of life should be wasted.⁸⁰ The sun, by his rising and setting, reduces the days of life of mortal man. He who, therefore, passes his moments without listening to the glories of the Lord, wastes them in vain.⁸¹ Harmlessness,

76. स्त्रीष्यननारितिकवैरिचरित्रं न श्रवणीयम् ।
N.B.S. 63

77. अभिमानदम्भादिकं त्याज्यम् ।
N.B.S. 64.

78. वादो नायत्नमव्ययः ।
N.B.S. 74

79. तदर्पिताश्रितान्चारं सन् कामक्रोधाभिमानादिकं
तस्मिन्नेव करणीयम् ।
N.B.S. 65.

80. सुखदुःखवेच्छाताभादित्यक्ते काले
प्रतीक्ष्यमाणे क्षणाद्धर्मपि व्यर्थं न नेयम् । N.B.S. 77.

81. आयुर्दृश्यते वै पुंसामुद्यन्तस्तं च चन्दनसौ ।
तस्यर्त्ते यत्पुणोनीत उत्तमश्लोकवार्त्तथा ॥
Bh 2.3.17.

Truthfulness, Purity, Kindness, Faith and other excellences of character should be observed.⁸² And after all the Lord alone should be worshipped at all times, with the whole heart and in a faithful spirit.⁸³

De facto, Para-Bhakti and Parama Jñāna are one in essence,⁸⁴ because Para-Bhakti ends in self-surrender and Parama Jñāna ends in self-knowledge and the ultimate experience of both is self-realisation or God-realisation. In fact, God is impersonal (निर्गुण , निरञ्जन and निराकार), but assumes form (i.e. becomes सगुण , साकार) for the sake of the devotee as revealed in the Divine Descents (अवतार) of the Bhāgavata.

82. अहिंसा सत्यशौच दयास्तिकयादि चारित्र्याणि
परिपालनीयानि ।

N. B. S. 78

83. सर्वदा सर्वभावेन निश्चिन्तितो भगवान्नेव भजनीयः ।
N. B. S. 79.

84. ज्ञान योगश्च मन्त्रिणो नैर्गुण्यो भक्ति लक्षणः ।
द्वयो रप्येक एवार्थो भगवच्छब्द लक्षणः ॥

Bh. 3. 32. 32

ति
भगवति ० यान्ति नहिं कधु लेदा ।

श्री जुलसी कृत रामायणः उत्तरकाण्ड. १०८: १३
पृ. १०१५

In essence there is no difference between Personal and Impersonal God, as is seen in ice and water. God is realisable by the interior and not by the exterior; for in the Gītā mind is said to be - superior to the senses, intellect is said to be superior to mind and the inmost self or Ātman is said to be superior to intellect;⁸⁵ and hence, only the interior states of Jñāna or Bhakti can apprehend or comprehend the inmost self or God. The self or the Ātman is beyond the reach of the mind and senses or the speech.⁸⁶

Bhakti is said to be superior to Karma.⁸⁷
Karma may be broadly classified as Sakāma and

85. इन्द्रियाणि पराण्यादुरिन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनः।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्यो बुद्धेः परतस्तु सः॥
Bh. 3. 42.

86. न यत्र चक्षुर्गच्छति न वाग् न च्छति नो मनो।
K. U. 1:3.

87. नैष्कर्म्यमप्यच्युतभाववर्जितं न शोभते ब्रह्म -
मत्तं निरञ्जनम्।
कुतः पुनः शङ्खदध्नीपवरेण चार्पितं कर्म ?
यदप्यकारणम् ॥
Bh. 1.5.12.

Niṣkāma. Sakāma may be divided into शास्त्रानुकूलं (as prescribed in the scriptures) and शास्त्रप्रतिकूलं (as proscribed in the scriptures). According to Bhāgavata, Niṣkāma Karma means action done not for him or her but for the Supreme i.e. dedicated to God. Such disinterested action (Niṣkāma Karma) purifies the heart and evokes love for God i.e. Bhakti. Karma is thus a means to an end, while Bhakti is an end in itself as shown above. Hence, Bhakti is superior to Karma.

The Bhāgavata is par excellence the Purāṇa which emphasises the value of Bhakti (devotion) as is revealed and illustrated in the dialogue between (a) Kapila and Devahūti (3rd Skandha), (b) Nārada and Yudhiṣṭhira (7th Skandha), (c) King Nimi and the nine Yogeśvaras (11th Skandha), (d) Kṛṣṇa and Uddhava (11th Skandha). Bhakti is also glorified especially in the prayers (स्तुतिः) of (a) Bhīṣma and Kuntī (1st Skandha), (b) Dhruva (4th Skandha) and (c) Prahlāda (8th Skandha). Nārada says to Yudhiṣṭhira, "One should absorb one's mind in Lord Kṛṣṇa, whether it be by fear as in the case of Kāṁsa, or by malice as in the case of Kings like Śiśupāla or by sex instinct

as in the case of the Gopīs or by relation as in the case of the Yādavas or by love as in the case of Yudhiṣṭhira or by Devotion as is the case with me".⁸⁸ Yoges'vara Kavi says to king Nimi that a true devotee dedicates all that he does by means of thought, word or deed to God and regards - himself as an instrument in the hands of God,⁸⁹ attains beatitude.⁹⁰ Yoges'vara Hari says that the

88. कामाद् द्वेषाद् भयात् स्नेहाद् यथा भक्त्येव चरे मनः ।
आयेष्य तदर्थं दित्वा वदस्तेऽतिं गताः ॥
गोप्यः कामाद् भयात् कंसो द्वेषाच्चैधादयो नृपाः ।
तस्मात् केनाप्युपायेन मनः बुद्धौ निवेशयेत् ।
Bh. 7.1.29-31.

89. कार्येण वाचा मनसेन्द्रियैर्वा बुद्ध्याऽऽत्मना
वानुसृतस्वभावात् ।
करोति यद् यत् सकलं परस्मै नारायणायैति
समर्पयेत्तत् ।
Bh. 11.2.36

90. इत्यच्युताङ्घ्रिं भजतोऽनुवृत्त्या भक्तिर्विरक्ति-
र्भगवत्प्रबोधः
भवन्ति वै भागवतस्य राज्ञस्ततः परां भान्ति-
मुपैति साक्षात् ॥
Bh. 11.2.43.

best devotee is he who sees the Divine in every being.⁹¹ Āvirhotra says that one who worships God in the cosmos or the self seated in one's heart is freed from the round of birth and death in no time.⁹² Other Yogeśvaras speak in the same strain praising Bhakti as the best means to God-realisation. Lord Kṛṣṇa says to Uddhava, " A true devotee cares not for Divinity, Īndrahood (महेंद्रपद) ?

91.

सर्वभूतेषु यः पश्येद् भगवद्भाषमात्मनः॥
भूतानि भगवत्यात्मन्येष भागवतोत्तमः॥ Bh. 11. 2. 45.
शृङ्गीत्वापीन्द्रियैरर्चान्यो न द्वेष्टि न हृष्यति
विष्णोर्भाषामिदं पश्यन् स वै भागवतोत्तमः॥ Bh. 11. 2. 48.
देहेन्द्रिय प्राणमनोधियां यो जन्माप्ययक्षुद्भयतर्षकृच्छ्रैः।
संसार धर्मैर्विमुञ्जमानः स्मृत्या हरेर्भागवत प्रधानः॥
न काम कर्मबीजान्तां यस्य चेत्तसि संभयः।
वास्तुदेवैकनिलयः स वै भागवतोत्तमः॥ Bh. 11. 2. 50.
न यस्य स्वः पर इति वित्तेष्वात्मनि वा भिदा।
सर्वभूतसमः शान्तः स वै भागवतोत्तमः॥ Bh. 11. 2. 52.

92.

यजतीश्वरमात्मानमचिरान्मुच्यते हि सः Bh. 11. 3. 55.

Sovereignty of the earth or of the nether world.
He cares neither for the psychic powers (योगसिद्धिः)
attained by the Yoga discipline nor for redemption,
but his mind is centred only in Me." ⁹³ Such a
devotee is dearer to me than Brahmā, संकर्षण ,
Sri (श्री) or my very self. ⁹⁴ As fire burns
the fuel to the ashes, so devotion to Me burns
all actions to ashes. ⁹⁵ God is not attained by -

93. अकिञ्चनस्य दान्तस्य शान्तस्य समचेतसः।
मया संतुष्टमनसः सर्वो सुखमया दिशः॥
न पारमेष्ठ्यं न भदेन्द्रधिष्ठ्यं न सार्वभौमं न रसाधिपत्यम्।
न योगसिद्धिरपुनर्भवं वा मच्चरित्तात्मेच्छति भद्रिनान्यत॥
Bh. 11.14.13 & 14.

94. न तथा मे प्रियतम आत्मयोनिर्न शङ्कुरः।
न च सङ्कुषिणो न भीर्नैवात्मा न यथा भवान्॥
Bh. 11.14.15.

95. यथाग्निः सुभृद्वार्षिः करोत्येधांसि भस्मसात्।
तथा मद्विषया भक्तिरुद्वर्यैनांसि कृत्स्नशः॥
Bh. 11.14.19.

Yoga, Sāṅkhya, Dharma, Svādhyāya, Tapa, Tyāga as easily as by Bhakti.⁹⁶ It would not be too much to say that God is fully realised only by devotion and grace and by no other means as revealed in the Śruti,⁹⁷ for Bhakti purifies even the worst of sinners and the outcasts. A

96. न साधयति मां योगो न सारथ्यं धर्म उद्वय।
न स्वाध्यायस्तपस्त्यागो यथा भक्तिर्नमो जिह्वा॥
भक्त्या ह मे कया ग्राह्यः प्रहृष्टाऽऽत्मा प्रियः सताम्। ?
भक्तिः पुनाति मन्त्रिष्वप्यपाकानपि सम्भवात्॥
Bh. ॥ १५. २०४२।

नालं द्विजत्वं देवत्वभूषित्वं वासुरात्मजम्।
प्रीणताय मुकुन्दस्य न वृत्तं न बहुजता॥
न दानं न तपो नेज्या न शौचनं व्रतानि च।
प्रीयते ऽ भक्त्या भक्त्या हरिरन्यद् विडम्बनम्॥
Bh. ११ ५१ २५२.

न वेदयज्ञाध्ययनेन दानेन च क्रियाभिर्न तपोभिर्यैः।
एवंरूपः शक्योऽहं नृलोके द्रष्टुं त्वदन्येन कुरुप्रवीरः॥
नाहं वेदैर्न तपसान दानेन न चञ्चया।
शक्य एषं विधौ द्रष्टुं दृष्टवानसि मां यथा॥
भक्त्या त्वनन्यया शक्य अहमेपं विधौ ऽर्जुन।
ज्ञातुं द्रष्टुं च तत्त्वेन प्रवेष्टुं च परैतप॥
Bh. ॥ ५४, ५३, ५५.

97 नायमात्मा प्रपचनेन लभ्यो न भेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन।
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्यस्तस्यैव आत्मा विवृणुते तन्स्वम्॥
K.U. १. २. २३.

true devotee purifies the world;⁹⁸ as fire purifies gold. A true devotee cares for nothing but God. He is calm and quiet; and has a tender regard for all life, for he is equi-visioned ?
(समदर्शी) towards all. God ever follows the footsteps of such a devotee to purify Himself by the dust of his true devotees.⁹⁹ Here is seen the glorification and the climax of the Bhakti cult of the Bhāgavata. In the episode of devotee Ambarīṣa, in response to Durvāsā's prayer, Lord ?
Srī Kṛṣṇa says to Durvāsā, " I am as it were dependent on my true devotee, for the true devotee captures my heart by virtue of his single-minded devotion. Because of his constant remembrance of Me, I am in essence the heart of the devotee and vice versa; for the true devotees efface everything from their hearts and are ever rooted and

98. मद्भक्तियुक्तो भुवन् पुनाति । Bh. 11. 14. 24.

99. निरपेक्षं मुनिं शान्तं मित्रैर्ऋतमदर्शीनम् ।
अनुव्रजाम्यहं नित्यं पूजयेत्यङ्घ्रिरेणुभिः ॥
Bh. 11. 14. 16.

centred in Me, regardless of everything else.

Hence they make Me subservient to their will,
as a true beloved conquers her husband." 100

In a word, true Bhakti means ever to be united
with God, and never to be separated from Him.

100. अहं भक्तपराधीनो ह्रस्वतन्त्र इव द्विजः ।
साधुभिर्गोस्त हृदयो भक्तैर्भक्त जनप्रियः ॥
नाहमात्मानमाशासे भक्तैः साधुभिर्विना ।
निष्प्रियात्पन्निकीं ब्रह्मन् येषां गतिरहं परा ॥
ये दारागारपुत्रोप्तान् प्राणान् वित्तमिमं परम् ।
दृष्ट्वा मां शरणं याता कथं तास्त्यक्तुमुत्सहे ।
मयि निवृत्तहृदयाः साधवः समदर्शनाः ।
वञ्ची कुर्यन्ति मां भक्त्या सत्स्त्रियः सत्यतिथया ॥
मत्सेवया प्रतीतं च सालोक्यादिचतुष्टयम् ।
नेच्छन्ति सेवया पूर्णः कुतोऽन्यत्कालविद्रुतम् ॥
साधवो हृदयं मम साधूनां हृदयं त्वहम् ।
मदन्यत् ते न जानन्ति नाहं तेभ्यो मनागपि ॥
Bh. 9.4.63 to 68.

ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् ।
मम वर्त्मानुवर्तन्ते मनुष्याः जगत् सर्वशः ॥
Bh. 9.11.

In brief, for God realisation, the physical vital nature is to be cleansed. The mental - intellectual nature is to be purified and then the spiritual nature finds its satisfaction. De facto, man is a complex of vision, will and emotion. He can reach the end by a knowledge of the Supreme reality or by love and adoration of the Supreme Person or by the subjection of his will to the Divine purpose. The several aspects reach their fulfilment in the integral Divine life. God Himself is Sat, Cit and Ānanda - (reality, truth and bliss) सच्चिदानन्द or life, light and love are the inseparable three phases of the same reality. Karma Yoga postulates Sat. All the three systems of Yoga are given due recognition in the Bhāgavata and all of them culminate in Yogeśvara Lord Kṛṣṇa. When the three merge in Ātmanubhava, man becomes one with God. The more one understands God, the more one loves Him. Love and knowledge are in fact the obverse and the reverse of the same fact of Godhood, as heat and light are of the Sun. That is why the

Bhāgavata culminates in Parā-Bhakti. Human progress is, as a matter of fact, [✓]corelated and not dissociated development. Knowledge, feeling and will are different aspects of the one movement of the soul. Self-perfection is the goal in life and Yoga is a means to it. Bhakti may be compared to a bird which has two wings (of love and wisdom) and a tail for its flight. The soul is endowed with Bhakti and Jñāna to serve as two wings. Karma Yoga serves as the tail that maintains the balance.¹⁰¹ It should however, be noted that in the Bhāgavata, Jñāna and Karma are subservient to Bhakti, as Bhakti is the predominant element in the Bhāgavata.¹⁰² ?

101. Swāmī Chidbhavānanda : " The Bhagavad Gītā " - Introduction - P. 62.

102 सकलभुवनमध्ये निर्धनास्तेऽपि धन्याः ।
निपस्यति हृदि तेषां श्री इरेर्भक्तिरेका ॥
इतिरपि निजलोकं सर्वधातो विहाय ।
प्रविशति हृदि तेषां भक्तिसूत्रोपनन्दः ॥
Bh m. 3. १३

यत्र ज्ञानविरागभक्ति संहितं नैकैर्गुणैर्भाविष्यति ।
तच्छृण्वन् प्रपठन् विचारणपरो भक्त्या विमुच्येन्नरः ॥
Bh. m. 6. ४२.

God who is difficult to attain by the embodied ones is easily attained by the single-minded devotees.¹⁰³ There are three types of devotees according to Bhāgavata.

(1) The best devotee (भगवतोत्तम)

is he who sees God in every being;

(2) The second type of devotee (मध्यम)

is he who has love for God, friendliness towards the Godly ones, mercy towards the childish and indifference towards the enemies;

(3) The third type of (प्राकृत) devotee

is he who sees and worships God only in the idol and nowhere else.¹⁰⁴

103. भयान् भक्तिमता लभ्यो दुर्लभः सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
स्वराज्यस्याप्यभिमत एकान्तेनात्मविद्धतिः ॥
Bh. 4.24.54.

104. सर्वभूतेषु यः पश्येद् भगवद्भावमात्मनः ।
भूतानि भगवत्यात्मन्येष भगवतोत्तमः ॥
ईक्ष्वरे तदधीनेषु बालिशेषु द्विषत्सु च ।
प्रेममैत्रीबुधोपेक्षा यः करोति स मध्यमः ॥
आचार्यमेव हरये पूज्यं यः भूद्वये हरे ।
न तद्भवत्तेषु चान्येषु स भक्तः प्राकृतः स्मृतः ॥
Bh. 11.2.45-47

The devotees are most dear to God, for on seeing true devotion God leaves his own abode and dwells in the hearts of his devotees.¹⁰⁵ To favour his devotee Vidūra, Lord Kṛṣṇa left the royal house of Duryodhana and went to Vidūra's home for dinner.¹⁰⁶ Likewise, He went to the cave of Mucukunda to favour him and stood before Bhīṣma who was on the point of death to favour him with His grace.¹⁰⁷ Such is

105. अथ वैष्णवचित्तेषु दृष्ट्वा भक्तिमलौकिकीम् ।
निजलोकं परित्यज्य भगवान् भक्तवत्सलः ॥
Bh. m. 4.1.

106. स्वमेतत् पुरा वृष्टो मैत्रेयो भगवान् किल ।
क्षत्रा वनं प्रविष्टेन त्यक्त्वा स्वगृहमृद्धिमत् ॥
यद्वा अयं मन्त्रकृद्धो भगवानरिवलेखरः ।
पौरवेन्द्रगृहं दित्वा प्रविष्टे शात्मसात्कृतम् ॥
Bh. 3.1.1 & 2.

107. तथाप्येकान्तभक्तेषु पश्य भूपानुकम्पितम् ।
यन्मेऽसंस्त्यजतः साक्षात्कृष्णो दर्शनमागतः ॥
भक्त्याऽऽवेश्य मनो यस्मिन् वाचा यन्नामकीर्तयन् ।
त्यजन कलेवरं योगी भुज्यते काम कर्मभिः ॥
Bh. 1.9.22 & 23.

the greatness of the true devotees of God that they are said to purify even the pure and the holy places (तीर्थानि) because of the presence of God in their hearts.¹⁰⁸ Even an outcast devotee is said to be superior to a Brāhmin.¹⁰⁹

According to Rūpagoswāmī, the glory of Bhakti lies in its six-fold power as shown below :-

- (1) It removes all miseries;
- (2) It gives the highest good;
- (3) It regards even mokṣa as not worth having.

108. भयद्विधा भागवतास्तीर्थाभूताः स्वयं विभो ।
तीर्थाकुर्यन्ति तीर्थानि स्वान्तः स्थेनगदाभूता ॥
Bh. 1. 13. 10.

109. विप्राद् द्विषद्गुणभृतादरविन्दनाभपादारविन्द-
विमुखाच्छवपचंवरिष्ठम् ।
Bh. 7. 9. 10.

अहो बतभवपचोऽतो गरीयान् यज्जि ह्वाग्रे वर्तते
नाम तुभ्यम् ।
तेपुस्तपस्ते जुहुयुः सस्नुरार्या ब्रह्मानुचुर्नाम
शृणन्ति ये ते ।

Bh. 3. 33. 7.

चाण्डालोऽपि मुनिप्रेष्ठ विष्णुभक्तो हिजाधिकः ।
विष्णुभक्तिविहीनस्य हिजोपिभवपचाधिकः ॥
B. N. P. 32. 39.

- (4) It is very rare;
(5) It is joy incarnate, and
(6) It draws God to itself. 110.

In the Bhāgavata, Bhakti is classified in various ways. It is spoken of as द्विधा , त्रिधा , चतुर्धा , पञ्चधा , दशधा , एकादशधा and अष्टादशधा as shown below :-

(1) Bhakti is divided into two classes अपरा (secondary) and परा (Primary) or वैधी and रागात्मिका or रागानुगा & according to Caitanya. वैधी means full of rituals, whereas love is the soul of रागात्मिका like that of Rādhā for Kṛṣṇa. In रागात्मिका, there is continuous faith and self-surrender. 111

110. क्लेशादन्ती शुभदा भोक्षालयुता कृत् सुदुर्लभा।
सान्द्रानन्द विशेषात्मा क्वी कृष्णा कर्षणी च सा
B.R S. 13. (स्वविभागे. १. लहरी)

111.

Bhakti

Parā (Primary)

Aparā (Secondary)

Navadhā Bhakti.

Premalakṣaṇā
Bhakti.

Parā-Bhakti.

(2) Bhakti is classified into three classes according to three Gunas viz. Sattva, Rajas, Tamas.¹¹²

(3) Bhakti is divided into four classes viz. Sāttvikī (सात्त्विकी), Rājasī (राजसी), Tāmasī (तामसी) and Nirguṇa (निर्गुणा).¹¹³

112. अभिसन्धाय यो हिंसां दम्भं मात्सर्यमेव वा।
संरम्भी भिन्न हृग्भावं मयि कुर्यात्स तामसः॥
विषयानभिसन्धाय यश्च ऐश्वर्यमेव वा।
उर्ध्वादावर्चयेद्यो मां पृथग्भावः सः राजसः॥
कर्मनिर्हारीमुदिश्य परस्मिन् वा तदर्पणम्।
यजेद्यष्टव्यमिति वा पृथग्भावः स सात्त्विकः॥
श्लो. 3 29. 8. 10.

गौणी त्रिधा गुणभेदादातीदिभेदाद्वा ।
N B S 56.

113. Vide Bh 3-29-9 to 12

(4) The nine-fold Bhakti is related as follows :-

- (a) Listening to the name of God (श्रवणं);
- (b) Chanting His Name (कीर्तनं);
- (c) Recollection of Him (स्मरणं);
- (d) Serving Him (पादसेवनम्);
- (e) Worshipping Him (अर्चनं);
- (f) Saluting Him (वन्दनं);
- (g) Servitude (दास्यं);
- (h) Friendship (सख्यम्) and
- (i) Self-dedication or self-surrender (आत्मनियेदनम्)!14

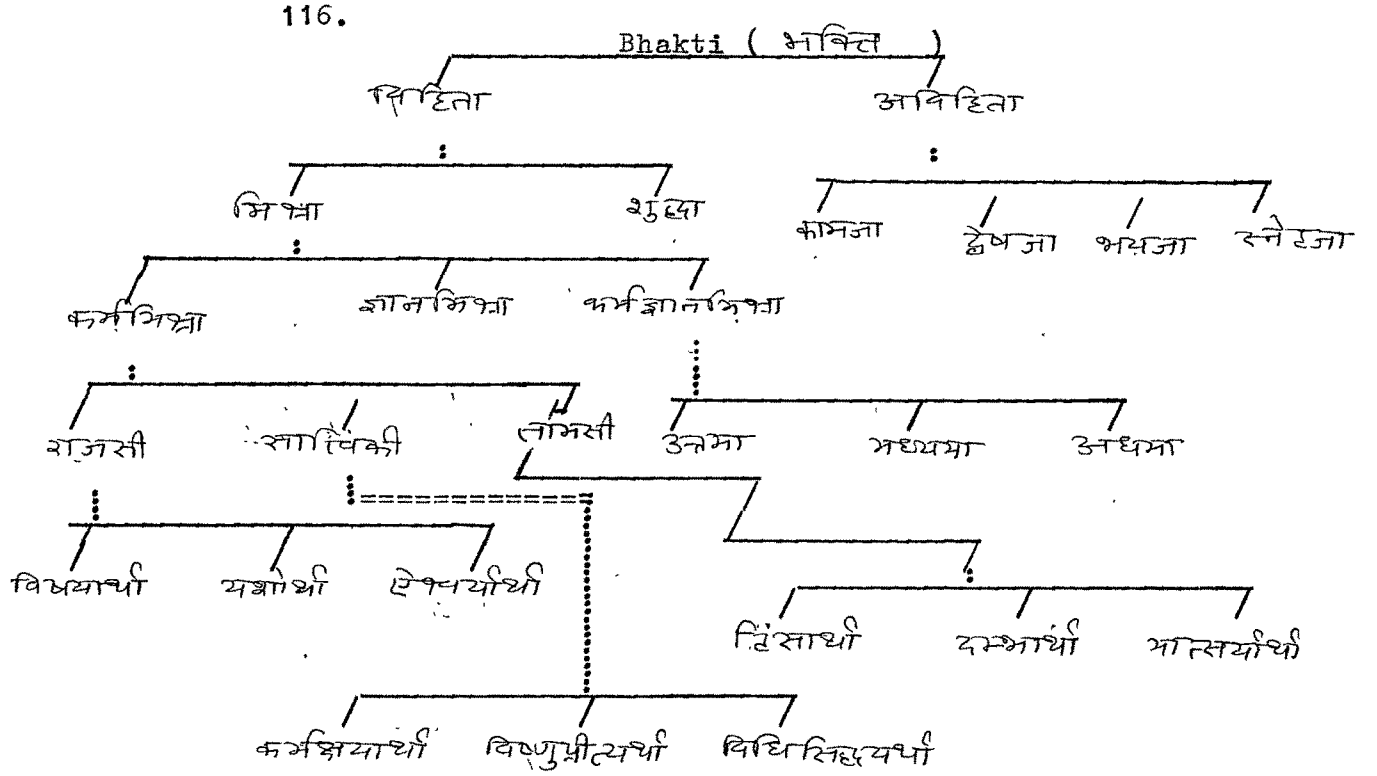
(5) The tenth is Love devotion (Premalakṣaṇā-Bhakti - प्रेमलक्षणाभक्तिः).

(6) The eleventh is Parā-Bhakti - Bhakti par excellence according to Bhāgavata; and according to Nārada also, it is eleven-fold.^{115.}

114. श्रवणं कीर्तनं विष्णोः स्मरणं पादसेवनम्।
अर्चनं वन्दनं दास्यं सख्यमात्मनियेदनम्॥
Bh 7 5 23.

115. गुणमाहात्म्यासंक्षिप्तरूपासक्तिपूजासक्ति-
स्मरणासक्तिदास्यासक्ति सख्यासक्ति कान्तासक्ति-
वात्सल्यासक्यात्मनियेदनासक्ति तन्मयतासक्ति-
परमविरहासक्तिरूपा एकधाप्येकादशधा भवति।
N.B.S. 82.

(7) It is also divided into eighteen classes
as follows :- 116.



In the treatment of the Bhakti of the Bhāgavata, I have reviewed so far the different definitions of Bhakti, the relation of Bhakti to Karma and Jñāna, the beatitude resulting from Bhakti and the glorification of Bhakti in general, as expounded by the well-known advocates of Bhakti and the classification of Bhakti.